
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION
AND TRAINING IN EUROPE
AUSTRIA

SYSTEM DESCRIPTION



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 - Apprenticeship training leading to EQF level 4, ISCED 354 (Lehrlingsausbildung).
 - School-based VET programmes offered at intermediate vocational schools (berufsbildende mittlere Schulen, BMS) leading to EQF level 4, ISCED 354. The three- to four-year VET programmes offered at intermediate vocational schools aim to impart full VET qualifications that entitle graduates to immediately exercise professional activities at intermediate qualification level/skilled worker's level. These programmes are offered in different specialist areas, including in technology, the business sphere, fashion, tourism, agriculture and forestry and in the social sphere..
 - School based VET programmes offered at colleges for higher vocational education (berufsbildende höhere Schulen / BHS), leading to EQF level 5, ISCED 354/554. Programmes provide in-depth general education and high-quality specialist training in different specialist areas including in technology, the business sphere, fashion and design, arts and crafts, tourism, agriculture and forestry as well as elementary pedagogy. This programme type belongs to the upper secondary level. In ISCED, however, it is divided between two levels: the first three years are classified as ISCED 354 (no interim qualification is offered at this level), year four and five are classified as ISCED 554..
 - Healthcare programmes leading to ISCED 351, 353. Following specific programmes are offered in the field of healthcare: Care assistance programmes: care assistance programme, level 1 (Pflegeassistenz); care assistance programme, level 2 (Pflegefachassistenz). Medical assistance programmes: disinfection assistance (Desinfektionsassistenz); plastering assistance (Gipsassistenz); laboratory assistance (Laborassistenz); mortuary assistance (Obduktionsassistenz); operating theatre assistance (Operationsassistenz); surgery assistance (Ordinationsassistenz); radiology assistance (Röntgenassistenz); medical assistance (Medizinische Fachassistenz).
 - Nursing programme leading to ISCED level 454 (Diplomierete/r Gesundheits- und Krankenpfleger/in, GuK).
 - Add-on VET programmes leading to EQF level 5, ISCED 554 (Aufbaulehrgänge) Add-on VET programmes provide in-depth general education and high-quality specialist training in different specialist areas including in technology, the business sphere, fashion and design, arts and crafts, tourism, agriculture and forestry as well as elementary pedagogy..
 - Post-secondary VET school programmes leading to EQF level 5, ISCED 554 (Kollegs). Post-secondary school programmes provide high-quality specialist training in different specialist areas including in technology, the business sphere, fashion and design, arts and crafts, tourism, agriculture and forestry as well as elementary pedagogy..
 - Master craftsperson et al. programmes and qualifications offered at ISCED level 554. There are various programmes subsumed under this category: master craftsperson programme (Meisterschule); industrial master programme (Werkmeisterschule, WMS); building craftsperson programme (Bauhandwerkerschule)..
 - Bachelor programmes at Universities of Applied Sciences (Fachhochschulen, FH) leading to EQF level 6, ISCED 665.
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- References.

CHAPTER 1.

Summary of main elements and distinctive features of VET

VET in Austria has the following main features:

- VET ranks high; about 70% of each age cohort opt for a VET path at the end of compulsory education (1) .
- early leaving is comparatively low at 7.3% in 2018 and a ‘safety net’ for young people has been in place for many years. In 2017, the training obligation until age 18 was introduced: all young people who are not in education and training, or in a job, must participate in mainstream school-based programmes, apprenticeships or other recognised training;
- school-based VET and apprenticeships (dual track training) coexist. They cover nearly all economic sectors and lead to different qualification levels (either EQF 4 or 5).
- there is a variety of VET programmes at tertiary level and for adults.

Distinctive features (2) :

- the broad range of available VET programmes is not only reflected in the various types of training and qualification levels but also in the fields of study, which include business, engineering, tourism, fashion, design, arts, and agriculture. Programmes can be adapted to regional economic contexts and skill needs, and allow learners to develop their strengths and talents in the best possible way.
- all programmes at upper secondary level, whether school-based or dual-track, combine VET with general education and theory with practice. Work-based learning is central to VET, particularly in apprenticeships where learners spend 80% of their training time in a company. School-based VET is also practice-oriented, including learning in workshops, labs, training restaurants and practice firms, complemented by mandatory work placements in companies. Project and diploma assignments as part of the final exam of the five-year VET programme (EQF 5) are often set by companies or carried out with their collaboration. Many teachers have experience in business and industry, which, for certain areas, is also an admission requirement;
- much attention is paid to the acquisition of key competences (e.g. team work, digital and entrepreneurial skills). At least one foreign language is mandatory – in some study fields (such as tourism) up to three – and is also used as a working language at several schools. Competence-orientation is a key principle in VET;
- the number of apprentices (within the dual VET-track) being trained is driven by company demand. On completion of compulsory education, young people apply for apprenticeship places in companies and conclude a training contract with them. Apprentices are also assigned to the respective school-based programme, which is mandatory;
- many VET programmes are offered outside the formal education system. A diverse range of institutions offers continuing training and progression opportunities to complement or upgrade people’s initial qualifications.

CHAPTER 2.

Main challenges and policy responses

Despite its wide recognition, VET faces several challenges:

- basic skills: OECD-PISA results in recent years suggest that the share of learners with low achievement in reading literacy and maths is comparatively high. Companies tend to point to young apprentices' basic skills gaps. This drives the current government's goal that no young person should leave compulsory education without having achieved basic competence levels in reading, writing and maths.
- early leaving from education and training: early leaving rates from education and training have been comparatively low and a 'safety net' for young people has been in place for many years. What used to be an offer became a training obligation until age 18 in 2017: all young people who are not in post-compulsory education and training, or in a job, must participate in mainstream school-based programmes, apprenticeships or other recognised training until the age of 18.
- value of non-formal training: Austria has a relatively segmented education system; permeability is limited, particularly between non-formal and formal programmes at higher levels. Public perception of formal and non-formal qualifications is not the same. The national qualifications framework (NQR) is expected to provide a new perspective on them, as assignment to NQF levels is based on learning outcomes, irrespective of the institutional context in which they were acquired.

Data from VET in Austria Spotlight 2017 (3) .

CHAPTER 3.

External factors influencing VET

3.1 Demographics

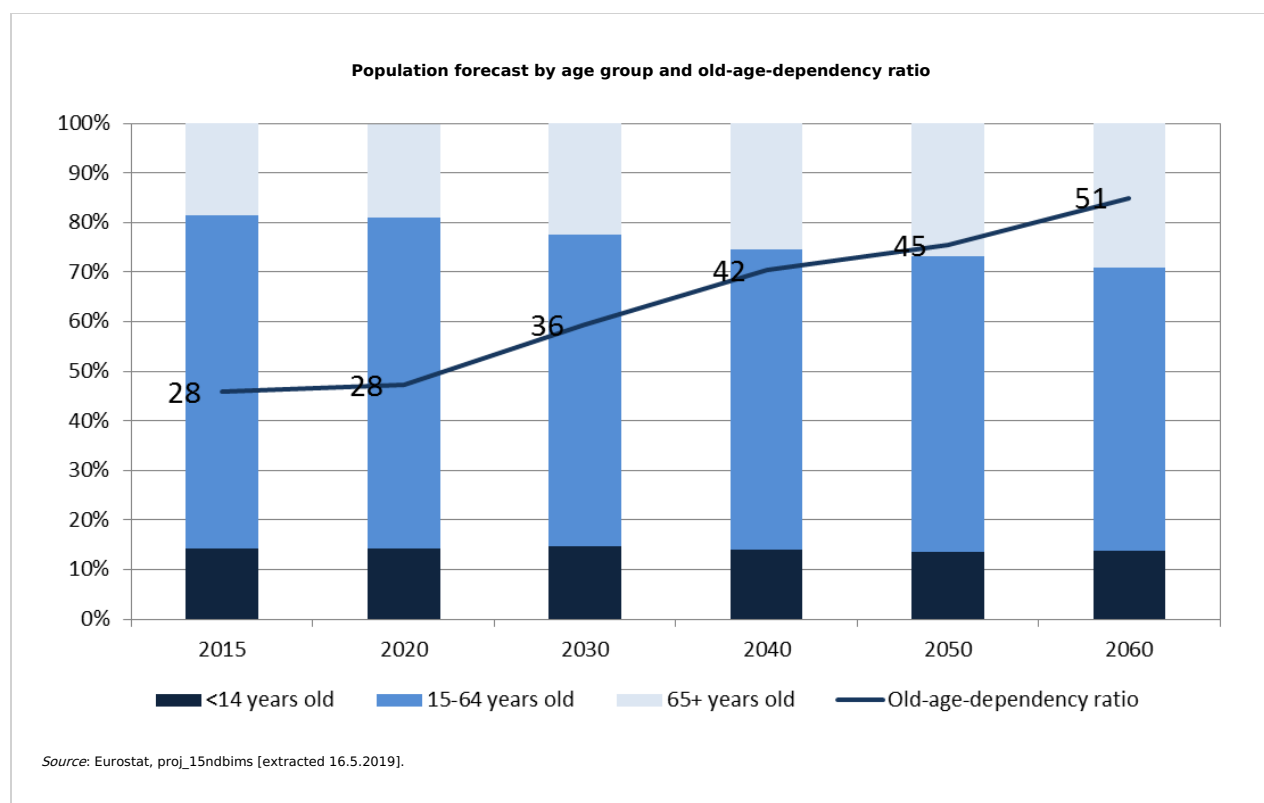
Population in 2018: 8 822 267 (4)

The continuous increase in the size of the population since the mid-1980s is mainly due to the growing influx of foreign nationals, rising particularly sharply in recent years. Overall, roughly 16% of the Austrian population are foreign nationals (5) .

It increased since 2013 by 4.4% mainly due to migration (6) . According to the projection of Statistics Austria, based on assumptions on fertility, mortality and migration, the population will continue to grow to nine million people by 2022, to over 9.3 million by the year 2030 and to 9.53 million people by 2040 (+8% compared to 2018) (7) .

The demographic development reveals that the population is ageing, as in many other EU countries. In 2015 only 18.5% of the Austrian population were aged 65 years or older; the share of this population segment in the population overall is expected to increase to over 29% by 2060.

The old-age dependency ratio (8) will also continue to rise. In 2016 the number of people aged 65 and above, in relation to the 15 to 64 year-olds, was still slightly more than one to four (27.4%); projections show this ratio reaching about one to two by 2060. This means there will be less than two people in employment for every pensioner (9) .



The demographic structure and dynamics in Austria – mainly driven by migration and an aging society – will have an impact on available resources as well as on the demand for education (10) .

Because of migration, support structures (such as classes in German) have been created for the acquisition of German as a foreign language (language of instruction) and measures have been taken to make it possible for migrants to complete VET programmes: these include transition courses, the 'b.mobile' programme (11) of the Austrian economic chambers.

The demographic development towards an 'aging society' will have an impact on the education sector. In order to keep pace with the (future) requirements of the economy, lifelong learning (LLL) will become imperative. Therefore it is/will be necessary to encourage participation of older employees in further and higher qualification (VET) programmes (12) .

3.2 Economics

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are the backbone of the Austrian Economy: 99.6% of all enterprises are SMEs. Around 330 000 such enterprises employ nearly two million people (2016) (13) .

87% of them are micro-enterprises with fewer than ten employees. 11% are small enterprises employing between ten and 49 people, around 2% are medium-sized enterprises with 50 to 249 employees. Overall more than 1.9 million people are self-employed or work in dependent employment in Austrian SMEs. This means that SMEs provide work to around two thirds of the entire workforce. The share of large enterprises in the total number of Austrian companies is only 0.4%. But they employ roughly one third of all employees. Especially for SMEs – and particularly for micro and small enterprises – vocational education and training (VET) that is properly differentiated and adjusted to current and future requirements is very important because these companies, as a rule, do not have their own in-house HR (development) and research departments (14) .

Since the 1960s, the Austrian economy has undergone fundamental changes. In 1960, agriculture and forestry still boasted an 11% share in the gross value

added. The services sector, at around 42%, was behind the manufacturing sector (47%). In the 1970s, structural change started and continues today; it has led to a shrinking of the primary and secondary sectors to the benefit of the tertiary sector. Today more than 70% of the value added is created in this sector, which also employs around 70% of the workforce. In response, new specialisations and qualifications have been introduced in the education sector (mainly in wholesale and retail trade, tourism, healthcare) to meet the requirements of the economy. In addition, increasing attention is being paid to teaching key competences, which play a major role in the services-oriented economy (15) .

The most important manufacturing sectors (by turnover 2017) and export sectors of the Austrian economy with the dominance of SMEs are (16) :

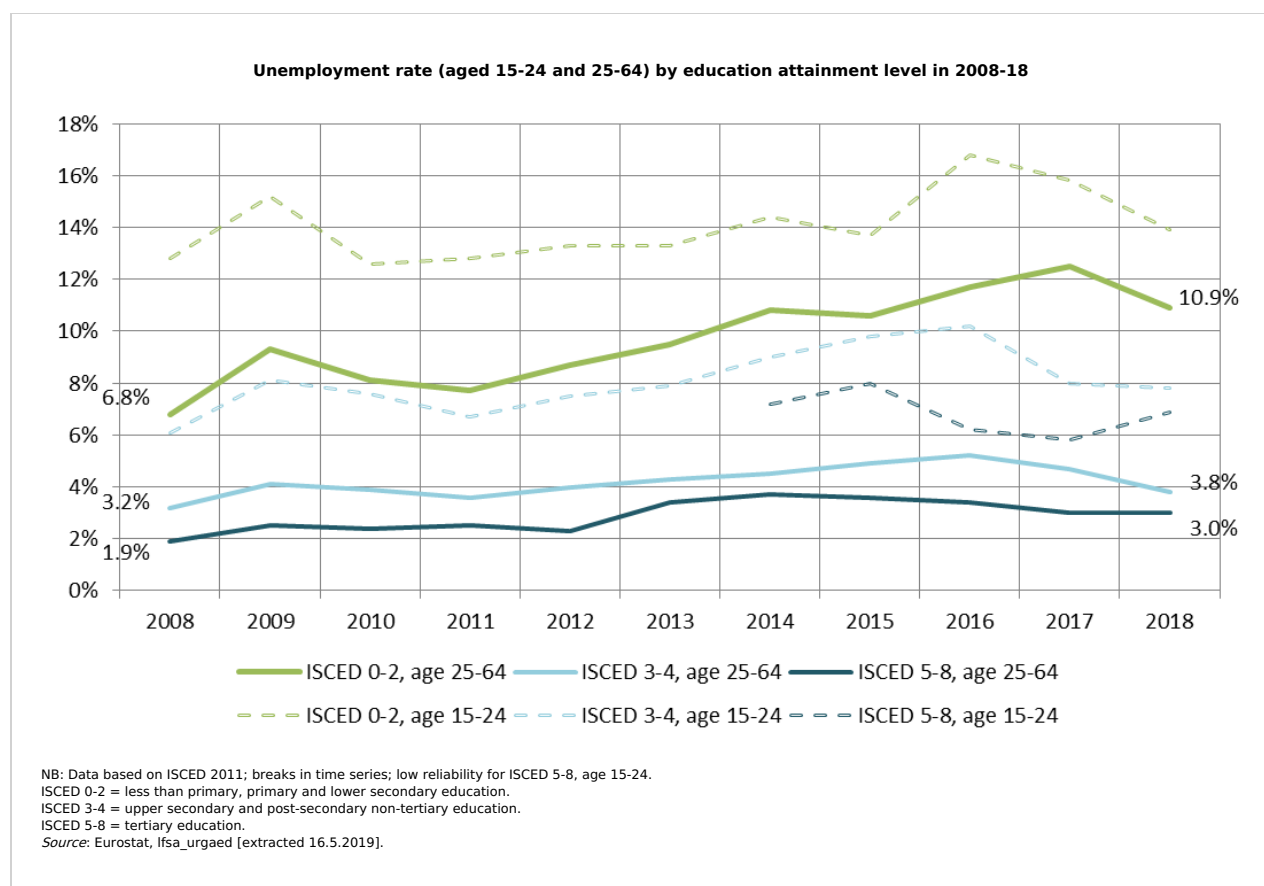
- energy supply;
- machinery and motor vehicles;
- metals and metal products;
- electrical and electronic equipment;
- food and feed;
- petroleum, chemical and pharmaceutical products;
- plastic, glass, wood, paper products.

In terms of foreign trade, tourism, environmental technology, construction and infrastructure, creative industries, training and the service sector are strong sectors (17) .

3.3 Labour market

In Austria around 200 professions are regulated (18) ; they require a specific professional qualification when accessing or exercising them. Certificates/diplomas are generally very important, although for most jobs they are not a formal requirement.

Total unemployment (2018): 4.3% (6 % in EU-28); it increased by 0.9 % percentage points compared to 2008 (19) .

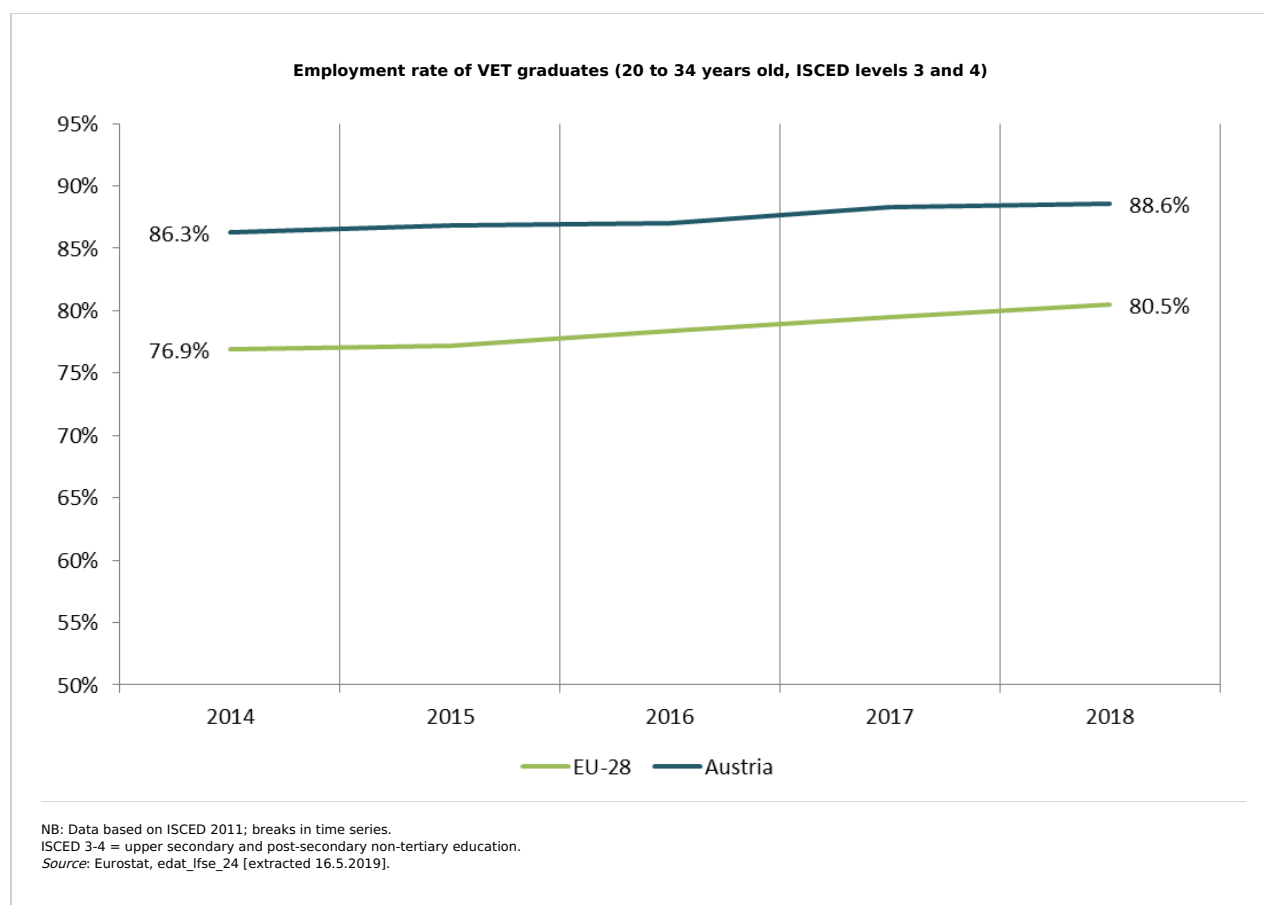


Unemployment differs strongly for persons with low-, medium- and high-level formal education.

In 2018 the unemployment rate of persons (aged 25-64) without an upper secondary qualification was 10.9%, almost three times higher than of persons with at least upper secondary education (3.8%) and even higher than of people with tertiary education background (3%).

Younger people (aged 15-24) with no or lower formal qualifications are especially affected by significantly higher unemployment risks and rates. However, in 2018, Austria had the sixth lowest unemployment rate (13.9%) in an EU-28 comparison (21.9%) among young people (15 to 24 year-olds). This is particularly due to the varied VET programmes offered at the upper secondary level (20) .

The employment rate of 20 to 34 year-old VET graduates increased from 86.3% in 2014 to 88.6% in 2018; it is 8.1 percentage points above the EU 28-average (80.5%) (21) .



The employment of 20-34 year-old VET graduates of ISCED levels 3 and 4 increased to 88.6% (+2.3 pp) between 2014 and 2018 (22) .

This is due to the wide range of vocational programmes at upper secondary level, which make it possible for graduates to enter the labour market directly (23) .

The employment rate and the change between 2014 and 2018 in the employment rate of 20-34 year-old VET graduates at ISCED levels 3 and 4 is higher compared to that for all 20-34 year-old graduates (2014: 83.5%, 2018 84.5%) (24) .

[4] NB: Data for population as of 1 January. Eurostat table tps00001 [extracted 16.5.2019].

[6] NB: Data for population as of 1 January. Eurostat table tps00001 [extracted 16.5.2019]

[8] Old-age-dependency ratio is defined as the ratio between the number of persons aged 65 and more over the number of working-age persons (15-64). The value is expressed per 100 persons of working age (15-64).

[11] See https://www.wko.at/site/fachkraeftepotenzial/b_mobile.html

[18] See <http://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/regprof/index.cfm>

[19] Source: Eurostat, une_rt_a [extracted 20.5.2019].

[21] Eurostat table edat_ifse_24 [extracted 16.5.2019].

[22] NB: Breaks in time series. Eurostat table edat_ifse_24 [extracted 16.5.2019].

[24] NB: Breaks in time series. Eurostat table edat_ifse_24 [extracted 16.5.2019].

CHAPTER 4.

Education attainment

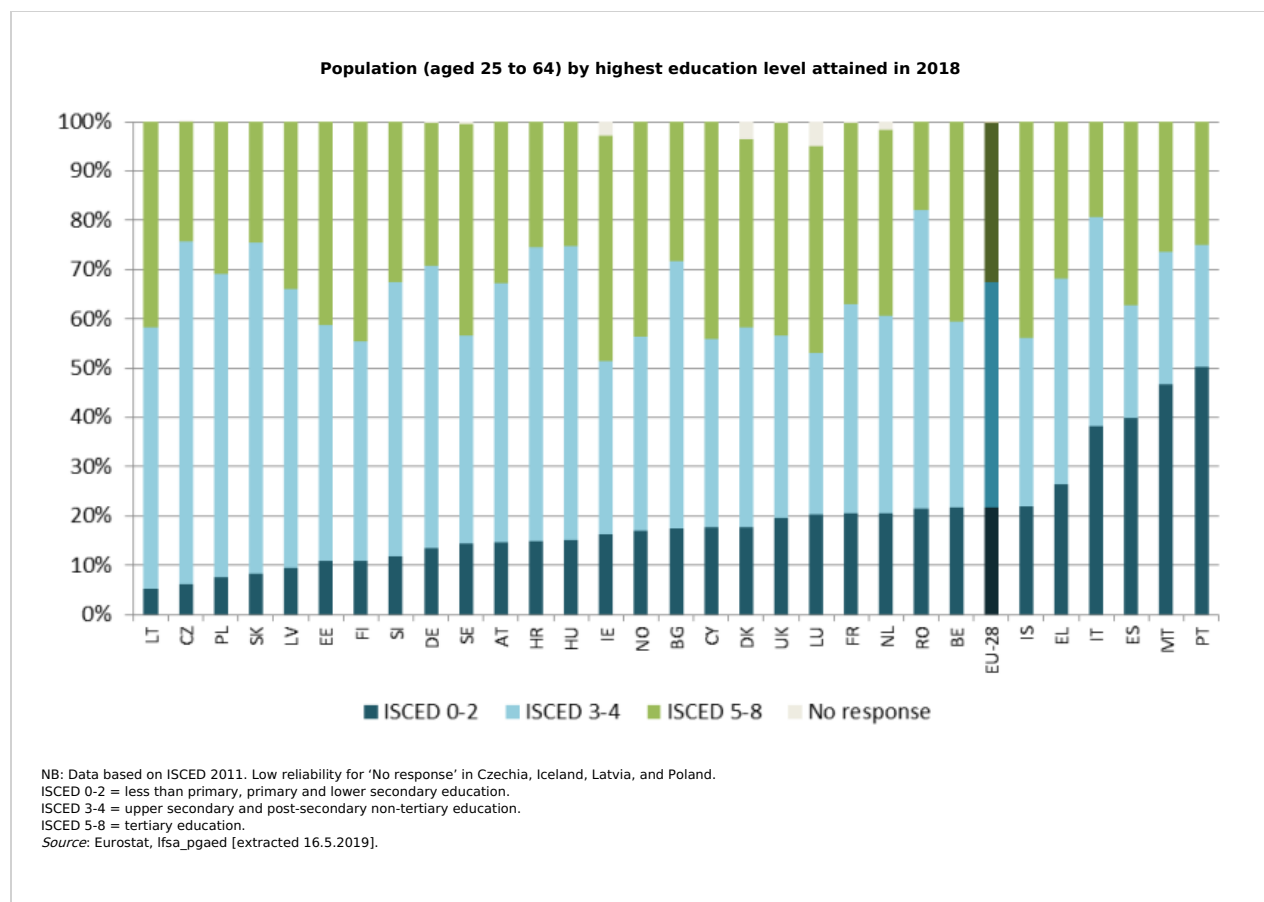
4.1 Share of high, medium and low level qualifications

In 2018 more than half of 25 to 64 year-olds (52.6%) acquired a qualification in an education programme at ISCED Level 3 or 4, i.e. an apprenticeship diploma or a qualification from a school for intermediate vocational education or a general secondary school. This also reflects the importance of the upper secondary sector within the Austrian education system.

About one third of the population (32.7%) between the ages of 25 and 64 years completed a tertiary education programme, also including 'short programmes' (ISCED 5) below the bachelor degree, such as the qualification obtained at a five-year school-based VET programme or at an industrial master college.

But many programmes aiming at vocational further and higher qualifications (such as the engineer qualification, the financial accountant qualification, qualifications obtained in the police force) are offered outside the formal education system and are not included in ISCED (25) .

The share of the population with no or low-level qualifications (ISCED 0-2) is significantly lower (14.7%) compared to the EU-28 average (21.8%), and the share of the medium-qualified (52.6 % at levels 3-4) significantly higher (EU-28: 45.7%). The shares of the high-qualified (ISCED 5-8) are almost balanced (AT: 32.7%, EU-28: 32.2%).



For more information about VET in higher education in Austria please see the case study from Cedefop's changing nature and role of VET in Europe project [(25a)]

4.3 VET learners by level

In Austria nearly 70% of all upper secondary education VET learners (ISCED level 3) are enrolled in vocational programmes compared to 47.2% in the EU-28 average (2017) (26) .

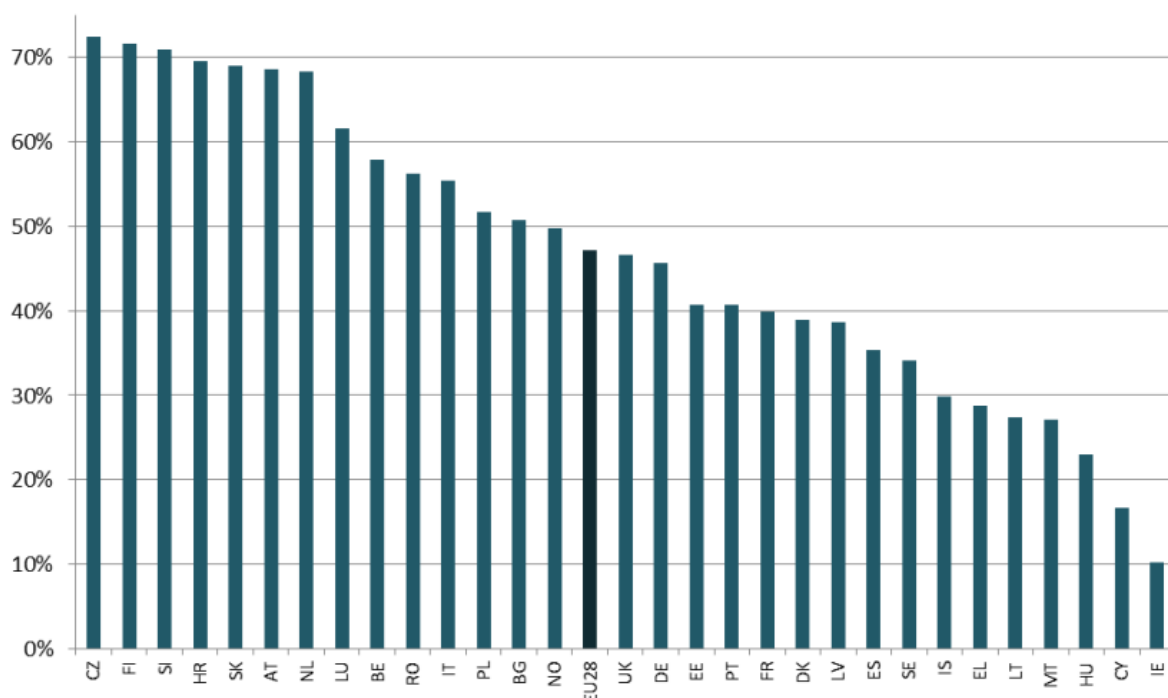
This is primarily due to the high attractiveness and inflow of approximately 40 % – a relative constant rate since the mid- 1990s – of an age cohort to the apprenticeship training in Austria.

Share of learners in VET by level in 2017

lower secondary	upper secondary	post-secondary
not applicable	68.6%	100%

Source: Eurostat, educ_uoe_enrs01, educ_uoe_enrs04 and educ_uoe_enrs07 [extracted 16.5.2019].

Share of initial VET learners from total learners at upper secondary level (ISCED level 3), 2017



NB: Data based on ISCED 2011.

Source: Eurostat, educ_uoe_enrs04 [extracted 16.5.2019].

4.4 Female share

Around 70% of each age cohort opts for a VET programme at the end of compulsory education (27) . There are more male learners in these programmes (80% choose a VET programme) than female ones (70%) (28) .

Education choices of females and males in IVET differ:

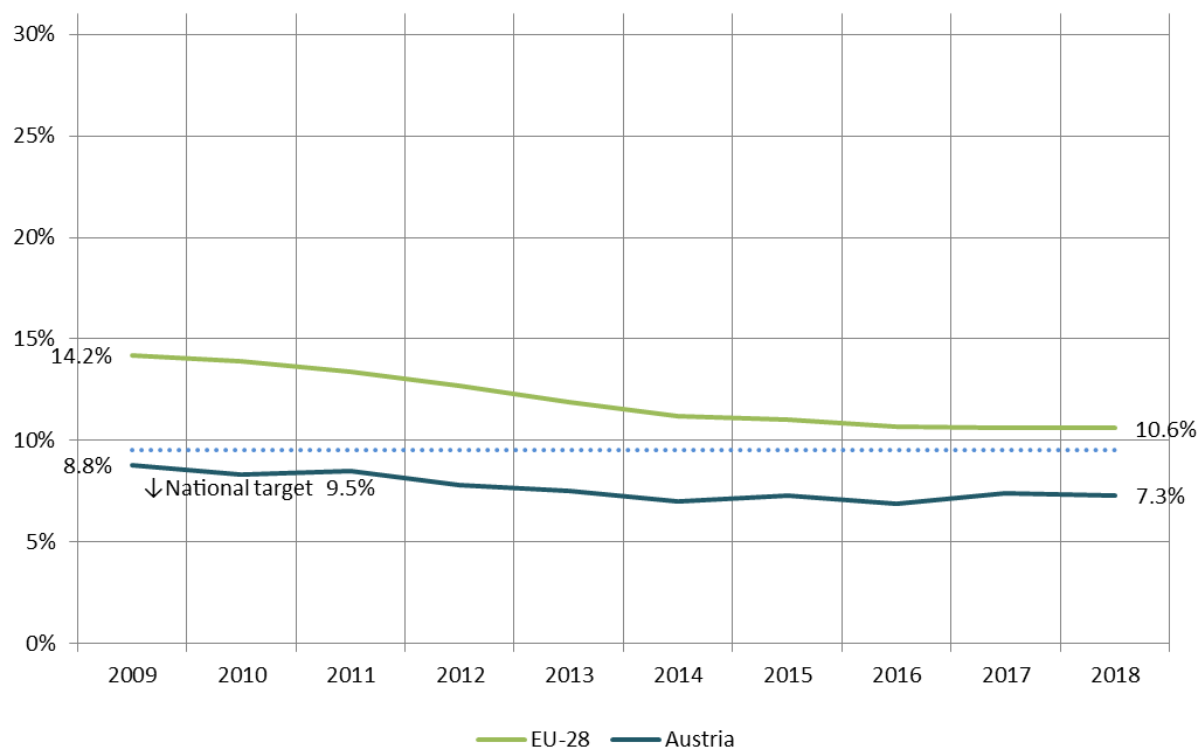
- young males are traditionally overrepresented in apprenticeship training (77 %) with the main focus on technical trades and crafts. They also favour technical branches in school-based VET;
- young females generally prefer school-based VET with commercial, economic, social, healthcare and pedagogical programme orientation.

4.5 Early leavers from education and training

In Austria the share of early leavers from education and training – 18 to 24 year-olds, who have not graduated from upper secondary level and are currently not in education and training – has further decreased from 8.8% in 2009 to 7.3% in 2018. The national target of 9.5% in 2020 has already been passed and is clearly below the EU-28 average (10.6%) with the European benchmark of less than 10% for 2020.

This relatively favourable figure in comparison to the EU-28 is attributed to the wide and differentiated range of education and training programmes after compulsory schooling, especially apprenticeship training and the VET school sector.

Early leavers from education and training in 2009-18



NB: Share of the population aged 18 to 24 with at most lower secondary education and not in further education or training.

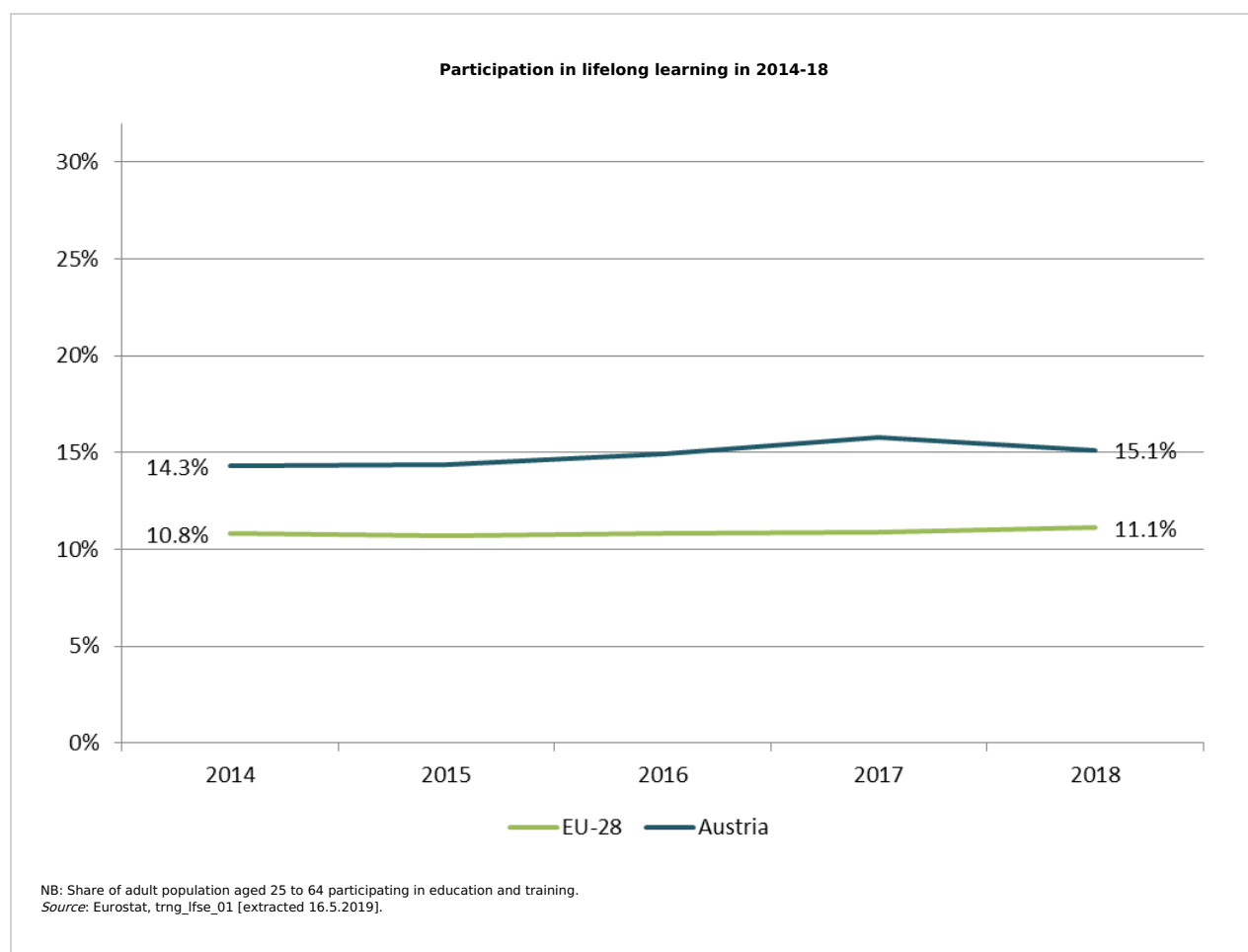
Source: Eurostat, edat_ifse_14 [extracted 16.5.2019] and European Commission: https://ec.europa.eu/info/2018-european-semester-national-reform-programmes-and-stability-convergence-programmes_en [accessed 14.11.2018].

4.6 Participation in lifelong learning

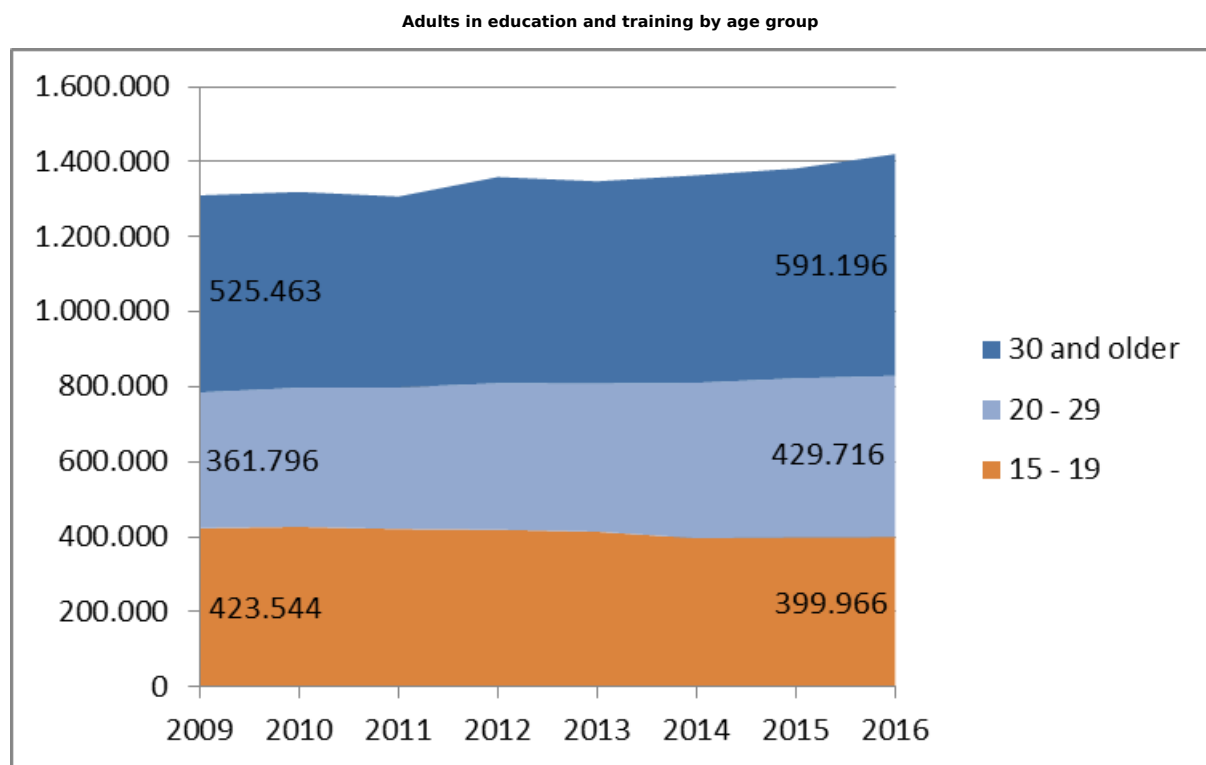
Austria has already achieved, even exceeded, the EU benchmark for lifelong learning of 15%, reaching 15.1% in 2018. The Austrian government in 2011 upgraded the national target for adults aged 25 to 64 years to take part in lifelong learning to 20% by 2020 (29) .

LLL participation is generally higher among women than men and is clearly above the EU-28 average (11.1%) (30) .

Especially in an aging society, lifelong learning (LLL) will become imperative to keeping pace with the (future) requirements of the economy. Encouraging participation of older employees in further and higher qualification programmes is essential (31) .



4.7 VET learners by age



Source: National data (Statistics Austria, Micro Census – Labour force survey).

According to the labour force survey, around 400 000 people between 15 and 19 were in education and training (IVET) in 2016. Just below 430 000 people aged 20 to 29 were in IVET or CVET; more than 590 000 people at the age of 30 and above participated in an education and training programme.

[29] <https://www.qualifikationsregister.at/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Strategie1.pdf>

CHAPTER 5.

VET within education and training system

Structure of the Austrian education system:

- kindergarten or preschool education (ISCED 0);
- primary level (ISCED 1);
- lower secondary level (ISCED 2);
- upper secondary level (ISCED 3-4);
- post-secondary non-tertiary level (ISCED 5);
- tertiary level (ISCED 5-8).

General compulsory schooling starts at the age of six and lasts nine years. To promote equality of opportunity and employability, a training obligation up to the age of 18 has been established after completion of compulsory schooling; this means that young people are obliged to take part in a training programme or attend an educational measure up to the age of 18.

- primary level (four years, learners aged 6 to 10): before entering the four-year primary school, half-day attendance at nursery school/kindergarten is obligatory. For children with special educational needs (SEN) integrative classes are set up at primary school or there are specific special needs schools which are geared towards the education requirements of individual types of disability;
- lower secondary level (four years, learners aged 10 to 14): at this education level learners can choose to follow general secondary education offered at the academic secondary school (AHS) or at the new secondary school (NMS). In these school types, the learners with SEN can either attend integrative classes or the fifth to eighth grade of a special needs school. To switch from primary school to NMS or the lower cycle of AHS, learners need a positive final certificate of the fourth class of primary school; for entering the lower cycle of AHS, additional performance requirements (such as specific marks in the main subjects) and possibly an entrance examination are foreseen;
- upper secondary level (one to five years, learners aged 15 to 19): the first school year of upper secondary education is, at the same time, the final year of compulsory education. Compulsory education ends after attendance of nine school years; there is no separate compulsory school certificate. At the upper secondary level, learners can choose between general and (pre-)vocational education programmes. Many of these programmes support direct entry to the labour market, provide access to post-secondary programmes and/or lead to the tertiary sector either directly or upon acquisition of higher education entrance qualifications;
- post-secondary and tertiary level (different durations; learners aged 19+): higher VET programmes (which aim to provide further and higher qualifications, especially for holders of initial VET qualifications), many of which are organised in cooperation with work-based learning in companies, are offered in the formal education context (schools and universities) but also the non-formal context (outside schools in adult education institutions). Higher education programmes, which lead to Bologna qualifications and are primarily academically oriented and designed as pre-professional, are offered at universities, universities of applied sciences and university colleges of teacher education;
- education outside the formal education system: many adult education establishments provide programmes for personal and professional continuing education. There are also programmes which make it possible for adults to acquire qualifications in the formal education sector. For the unemployed and those threatened by unemployment, programmes are offered as part of active labour market policy.

At secondary level, learners can choose from various pre-VET and VET options in different occupations/ sectors:

- different types of one- or two-year pre-VET (*Polytechnische Schule*, PTS, ISCED 341; *berufsbildende mittlere Schule*, BMS, ISCED 351): learners acquire general education, key competences and basic vocational skills preparing them for further school-based VET, apprenticeships and simple jobs on the labour market;
- three- to four-year school-based VET (*berufsbildende mittlere Schule*, BMS, ISCED 354, EQF 4): learners strengthen their general education and acquire the respective occupational competences and qualifications to perform medium-level jobs. Those who complete an add-on programme or take the *Berufsreifeprüfung* (exam for people whose initial VET does not automatically qualify them for entry into higher education) also obtain general access to higher education studies;
- five-year school-based VET (*berufsbildende höhere Schule*, BHS, ISCED 354-554, EQF 5): combining theory and practice, these programmes offer high-quality occupation-related training while strengthening learners' general education. They lead to double qualifications for senior positions in business and general access to higher education at the same time (*Reife- und Diplomprüfung*);
- apprenticeships (dual track training) (ISCED 354, EQF 4) in some 200 occupations and trades for learners from age 15 onwards, after compulsory education. They lead to qualifications at medium level. Graduates can progress to qualify, for instance, as master craftsperson or, following additional exams, access tertiary level training in a related field. By completing the *Berufsreifeprüfung* or an add-on programme they can also obtain general access to higher education;
- training for occupations in the health sector: access to programmes preparing for care and medical assistant professions (ISCED 351 and 353) and other occupations in the health sector (ISCED 351) requires completed compulsory education, being of minimum age, and/or a specific qualification. Training to become a specialist and general care nurse (ISCED 454) is being upgraded to bachelor level. This process will be completed by 2023.

VET at post-secondary level

The introduction of ISCED-2011 has had the result that a series of VET programmes which had formerly been classified as 'post-secondary, non-tertiary' are now considered as 'tertiary'. Due to this change in classification, the number of post-secondary programmes is now reduced while the number of tertiary programmes has risen. ISCED Category 4 basically only comprises schools for healthcare and nursing (ISCED 454). However, the programme to become a specialist and general care nurse offered in this school is being upgraded to a bachelor programme at universities of applied sciences. This process will be completed by 2023, so no VET programmes at ISCED level 4 will be provided in the future.

VET at tertiary level

At tertiary level (ISCED 5 to 8) a wide range of VET programmes are offered. These are provided at higher education institutions, in particular by universities of applied sciences and university colleges of teacher education.

- Bachelor and master programmes provided at the universities of applied sciences (FH, ISCED 665 / 767) are offered both as full-time and also as part-time in the evening (with extended overall programme duration). A period of work placement is a mandatory part of the bachelor programme curriculum. The programmes are completed with an academic thesis followed by a final exam. Successful completion of an FH master's programme entitles graduates to access subject-related PhD courses at university.
- Teacher education programmes offered by university colleges (PH, ISCED 665) aim to train compulsory school teachers for the type of education selected in a four-year bachelor programme. These PH programmes focus on imparting knowledge and skills related to teaching and didactics as well as their application in school life. There are practical teacher training phases within the bachelor programme as well as an induction period, a one-year phase in which graduates teach at a school under the supervision of a mentor.

Tertiary VET is also provided in special schools or in adult learning centres. This includes add-on courses (*Aufbaulehrgänge*) and post-secondary VET programmes (*Kollegs*), which both lead to the same qualification as offered by the five-year school-based VET programme at secondary level. There are also special schools offering the industrial master programme (*Werkmeisterschule*) and the building craftsperson programme (*Bauhandwerkerschule*). Preparation for the master craftsperson examination (*Meisterprüfung*) is offered by master craftsperson schools (*Meisterschulen*) within the formal education system or by adult learning centres, which are not considered to be part of the formal system.

CHAPTER 6.

Apprenticeship

Learners can acquire qualifications in one of the 200 legally recognised apprenticeship programmes with different area specialisations (construction, electro, information technology, wholesale and retail) offered at ISCED 354 level (EQF 4). Apprenticeship training takes place at two places of learning: in the training company and at vocational school. A prerequisite for taking part in an apprenticeship is the successful completion of nine years of compulsory education. Learners need to find themselves an apprenticeship place in a company to be able to access this programme. Once a training company is found, learners need to sign an apprenticeship agreement with the authorised apprenticeship trainer, which is recorded by the apprenticeship offices (*Lehrlingsstellen*).

There is an Austrian-wide training regulation (*Ausbildungsordnung*) for every apprenticeship. It includes the job profile (*Berufsbild*), a type of curriculum for the company-based part of training, which lays down the minimum knowledge and skills to be taught to apprentices by companies. The competence profile (*Berufsprofil*), which is also part of the training regulation, formulates in a learning- outcome-oriented manner the competences apprentices acquire by the end of their training in both learning sites. The social partners are essentially in charge of taking decisions about what in-company curriculum and/or competence profile an apprenticeship occupation is based on and they exert a decisive impact on the structure and content of apprenticeship training via their work in relevant advisory councils.

At the end of the apprenticeship period, every apprentice can take the apprenticeship-leaving examination (LAP), comprising practical and theoretical parts. The apprenticeship qualification can also be acquired via a so-called exceptional admission. For this purpose, relevant periods of professional practice and attendance of relevant course events are credited as a substitute for formal apprenticeship training.

Following successful completion of the LAP, graduates have various progression options, such as taking the master craftsman exam for a skilled craft. Access to HE programmes can be acquired by taking the exam called *Berufsreifeprüfung* (BRP) during or after the apprenticeship training. For many, an apprenticeship also forms the basis for a self-employed career. Almost 40% of managers in the business sphere have completed an apprenticeship.

The increasing tendency for young people to want to acquire a professional qualification, preferably in apprenticeship training, combined with the fact that the willingness of companies to train apprentices has decreased, has led to the expansion of supra-company training (*ÜBA, Überbetriebliche Berufsausbildung*). Originally conceived as a temporary education offer until entry to a regular, company-based apprenticeship, ÜBA was incorporated as an equivalent part of dual VET in 2008. Now it is possible for young people who do not find a company-based apprenticeship post or have not been accepted by a VET school to spend the entire duration of the training in an ÜBA, which is funded publicly through Public Employment Service Austria. The school-based part of apprenticeship training is provided at the regular vocational school.

The heterogeneity of people interested in dual VET has also resulted in the establishment of inclusive VET in 2003. Inclusive VET is mainly intended for young people who, at the end of compulsory schooling, have special educational needs and have not graduated from lower secondary level. It can be implemented in two variants, either the training period can be extended by one or two years, or only selected competences of an apprenticeship are taught (partial qualifications). Partial qualifications are supported by vocational training assistance (*Berufsausbildungsassistenz*). This advises and supports the training companies and young people before and during the training.

A relevant apprenticeship training scheme has also been set up for especially talented young people who find learning easy: in 2008 the 'apprenticeship with the matriculation certificate' scheme (*Lehre und Matura*) was introduced; this enables apprentices to acquire the *Berufsreifeprüfung* (BRP) parallel to their apprenticeship training and to attend preparatory courses and complete partial exams free of charge. Since 1997 they have also had the option to complete the entire BRP after obtaining their apprenticeship diploma (32) .

Learn more about apprenticeships in the national context from Cedefop's European database on apprenticeship schemes:
<http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/data-visualisations/apprenticeship-schemes/scheme-fiches>

CHAPTER 7.

VET governance

The responsibilities for VET at the upper secondary level are widespread: pre-vocational schools and most of the mainly school-based VET programmes are under the responsibility of the education ministry. This ministry is responsible for tasks such as preparing important school legislation, elaborating framework curricula, selecting, paying and providing further training for teaching staff, and maintaining schools.

The Ministry of Agriculture is responsible for building and maintaining five-year school-based VET programmes in agriculture and forestry and for selecting and paying teachers at these schools. The costs for teachers at three- to four-year VET schools of agriculture and forestry are shared equally by the Ministry of Agriculture and the provinces.

The education directorates in the provinces are responsible for enforcing school legislation, including quality assurance, school supervision and education control.

The competences for dual VET are within the spheres of the Ministry of Economy, which is responsible for the legal bases and content of the company-based part, and the Ministry of Education, which is responsible for the complementary school-based training (curricula, selection of staff).

The social partners are also involved significantly in the governance structure of apprenticeship training (designing the training regulations, carrying out the assessment procedures).

The funding of the company-based part of apprenticeship training is taken on by the training companies; State subsidies are also available. The school-based part is funded by the Ministry of Education. The costs of paying teachers are shared with the provinces. The Ministry of Agriculture and the provinces are responsible for dual VET in agriculture and forestry.

The health ministry is responsible for the legal basis of programmes in the healthcare sector. The provinces pay the teachers who are employed in these training establishments. Their construction and maintenance is also largely taken on by the provinces on behalf of the Federation.

CHAPTER 8.

VET financing mechanisms

For VET (33) at the upper secondary level, the education ministry is responsible for paying teachers and providing further training for teaching staff, and maintaining schools.

The Ministry of Agriculture is responsible for building and maintaining five-year school-based VET programmes in agriculture and forestry and for selecting and paying teachers at these schools. The costs for teachers at schools of agriculture and forestry are shared equally by the Ministry of Agriculture and the provinces.

The funding of the company-based part of apprenticeship training is taken on by the training companies; State subsidies are also available. The school-based part is funded by the Ministry of Education. The costs of the paying teachers are shared with the provinces. The Ministry of Agriculture and the provinces are responsible for dual VET in agriculture and forestry.

Teachers in programmes in the healthcare sector are paid by the provinces. The construction and maintenance of the training establishments is also largely taken on by the provinces on behalf of the Federation.

The funding of CVET depends on what type of training is attended. In most cases, the costs of CET are borne by the participants and/or companies. There are, however, a number of measures (such as educational leave) and financial subsidies (in the form of grants and tax relief) in order to (partially) cover expenses. All these initiatives aim to serve as incentives to take part in CET in order to improve the companies' economic situation and strengthen the CET participants' position in the labour market.

Model calculation: Comparison of the public expenditure for IVET, per learner/apprentice for one year (2016)

Programme	Costs per person/apprenticeship place and year (in EUR)	Total public expenses per person/ apprenticeship place and year (in EUR)
Dual VET (company and VET school)	VET school: 4 927 State subsidies: 1 548	6 475
Supra-company training (training in a state-funded workshop and at VET school)	VET school: 4 927 PES: 12 018 Province: 1 148	18 092
School-based VET programmes	10 660	10 660

Source: Dornmayr/Nowak 2018 (34) .

CHAPTER 9.

Teachers and trainers

9.1 VET teacher types

VET has the following types of teacher:

- general subject teachers (in school-based VET programmes, including VET schools of apprenticeship training);
- VET-subject teachers (in school-based VET programmes, including VET schools of apprenticeship training);
- IVET trainers (in-company trainer in apprenticeship training);
- trainers (in adult learning centres).

Teachers

The training of teachers (35) changed when the Federal Act on the New Teacher Training Scheme came into force in July 2013. Since then, all teachers have been trained as part of tertiary bachelor and master programmes (ISCED 6 and 7) at universities and university colleges of teacher education.

The study offer for teachers at secondary level comprises the following two programmes:

- teacher training programme for secondary general education programmes (ISCED 2 to 5): this programme qualifies graduates to teach learners aged between 10 and 19 years old in the general education subjects offered at a secondary level programme;
- teacher training programme for secondary VET (ISCED 2 to 5): this programme qualifies graduates to teach learners aged between 14 and 19 years old in the VET subjects or packages of subjects of secondary VET chosen in the study programme.

All teacher training programmes require a one-semester introductory and orientation period (*Studieneingangs- und Orientierungsphase* or StEOP).

The master programme can be completed immediately after the bachelor programme. In any case, new teachers are accompanied by a mentor in their first year of service (one-year induction year). From 2029 it will no longer be possible to complete the master programme on a part-time basis.

IVET trainers:

As well as having a minimum age of 18 years, an IVET trainer needs to furnish proof of certain qualifications. This proof can take the form of the IVET trainer exam, the IVET trainer course, or a substitute for exam or course attendance (such as the master craftsperson exam, or completion of the industrial master college). Most IVET trainers carry out their training as part of their main work but larger companies often have full-time trainers.

IVET trainer courses are offered by the adult education establishments of the social partners. In 40 periods of instruction completed with an expert interview, they aim to impart the necessary pedagogical, psychological, training plan-related and training method-specific as well as legal knowledge and skills required for the training of apprentices. The course contents are the same as those of the IVET trainer exam.

CVET trainers:

There are no regulations on the required qualifications of trainers in adult learning centres/CVET provider institutions, though relevant know-how in the subject they teach is essential. In many cases these are individuals who practise a profession and impart relevant specialisations. Commercial and technological courses, for example, are taught by practitioners from business, and language classes by native speakers. Didactic skills are not required, but people with teaching practice are preferred. Trainers mainly exercise their profession in a self-employed capacity.

9.2 Continuing professional development of teachers/trainers

CPD for teachers:

According to the new Service Code (*Dienst- und Besoldungsrecht*) (36), all teachers – irrespective of the school at which they teach and which subject they teach – are obliged to undergo further development measures to improve their profession-oriented competences. By order they are required to attend in-service training events for up to 15 hours per school year while there are no lessons. In-service training programmes may be connected with absence from teaching only if in the significant interest of the service.

CPD events are primarily offered by university colleges of teacher education (PHs). Teachers can register for these events via the system 'PH-Online' in order (depending on the duration of the event) to be granted leave by the school management or the school supervision to attend this event.

CPD measures are financed by provincial funds. These funds are provided directly to the provider establishment so that participation is free of charge for the teachers.

CPD for trainers:

There is no CPD obligation for IVET trainers. However, CPD programmes are offered at adult education establishments; in some cases, in-house CET programmes are also available. In recent years so-called IVET trainer colleges (*Ausbilderakademien*) and IVET trainer forums have been set up in most Austrian provinces with the aim of providing CPD specifically for IVET trainers. For the most part they are coordinated by the regional economic chambers in cooperation with the respective chamber's CET institution. Most of them offer certification in various stages. They also promote experience exchange and networking between IVET trainers. The latter is also the goal of regional and sector-specific get-togethers for IVET trainers.

The Economic Chamber funds measures related to the CPD of IVET trainers in their interaction with apprentices, such as pedagogy, didactics, personal development, diversity. A prerequisite for support is minimum participation of eight hours. The funding covers 75% of the course fees but no more than € 1 000 per trainer and calendar year.

[35] For detailed information about the training of teachers and trainers in Austria, see Eurypedia: https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/teachers-and-education-staff-1_en and <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/teachers-and-trainers>

[36] See https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/Dokument.wxe?Abfrage=BgbAuth&Dokumentnummer=BGBLA_2013_I_211

CHAPTER 10.

Shaping VET qualifications

10.1 Anticipating skill needs

Existing VET programmes are regularly developed, updated and adjusted to guarantee that VET is business- and labour-market-oriented. One major goal of this adjustment process is to achieve congruency between VET and employment as well as between qualification supply and demand, attempting to appraise future developments at an early stage and respond to them. In Austrian VET there are different anticipation processes that lead to curriculum adjustments. Major stakeholders in this process include the social partners, which can frequently support coordination between educational provision and qualification requirements and/or make statements on curriculum drafts. The outcomes of various analyses of qualification requirements are also considered in this process.

Mechanisms and processes to anticipate qualification requirements

The most important include:

- skill needs studies: these are mostly conducted for specific sectors and industries (e.g. timber, IT), but also for regions (such as federal provinces) and education programmes (certain specialisations of colleges for higher vocational education, dual VET, etc.). The main beneficiaries of these studies are stakeholders in these sectoral/regional areas as well as staff responsible for the curriculum and other areas in the VET pathways that are of relevance for the specialisations;
- skills barometer of PES Austria (AMS-QB) (37) : this online system, which was set up in 2002, summarises current and foreseeable labour market trends and qualification requirements and makes them accessible to the general public in a structured format via the internet. The AMS-QB uses existing written data (e.g. from skill needs studies) and information gathered in interviews with experts from the various occupational areas. Contents refer to the whole of Austria, and they are complemented by summary information presented for every province and analyses of job ads;
- 'New skills' activities: in 2009 a standing committee on new skills was founded at PES Austria. This committee, in which relevant ministries, the social partners and their CET provider establishments are represented, functions as advisory board for PES Austria in questions concerning the design of education offers within active labour market policy and the activities to be undertaken to identify future skills needs. Since the committee's foundation, roundtable discussions have been held in which company experts from various vocational areas (such as HR) and education experts (e.g. representatives of providers) have discussed and exchanged information about current and future skills needs/trends. This should give providers a first-hand picture on skills requirements of the economy to be able to design or adjust their offers adequately. Besides these roundtable (group) discussions, one-to-one/in-depth expert interviews (mainly with key companies of a vocational area) have also been conducted. Other New Skills activities have included presentations and information events, to inform learners, employers and CET interested people about skills requirements and trends. Since 2018 the New Skills activities have focussed on the subjects 'digitalisation' and 'Industry 4.0'.

See also Cedefop's skills forecast (38) and European skills index (39) .

10.2 Designing qualifications

In the following, the processes during the development of curricula are presented for various VET programmes.

School-based VET

The educational objectives and content of VET schools at the upper secondary level are laid down in framework curricula. They are issued by the education ministry. Although the acquisition of professional competences has always been a key goal of VET, competences have been defined explicitly in the curricula since 2012 as a result of the development of the national qualifications framework and its orientation towards learning outcomes. The competence-oriented curricula specify the knowledge and skills that learners have acquired by the end of their training and which qualify them to act appropriately in different situations at work. As well as subject-related competences, interdisciplinary competences are also listed as they are considered of major importance in Austrian VET.

Initiatives towards curriculum reforms and/or the introduction of new subjects/area specialisations are launched by the education establishments themselves or by the Ministry of Education. In so-called curriculum steering groups and working groups, teachers and experts of the Ministry of Education, in collaboration with representatives of the economy, prepare draft curricula for the respective subjects. As well as a number of other institutions, the social partners also receive the drafts to issue their statements. In the implementation of the framework curricula, schools are entitled to change the number of lessons of individual subjects autonomously within a given framework or develop their own focuses, taking account of (regional) economic requirements.

Special curricula can be established for individual school locations as school pilot projects to be able to respond swiftly and flexibly to current developments such as in technology, society or on the labour market.

Dual VET (apprenticeship)

The training content for every apprenticeship occupation is laid down in training regulations (for the company-based part) and curricula (for the school-based part). The Ministry of Economy issues the in-company curriculum and the competence profile (the activity description formulating the competences which apprentices need to have acquired by the end of their training at the company and vocational school) as part of the training regulation. The initiative to modernise existing and develop new in-company curricula/competence profiles (new apprenticeship occupations) is usually launched by companies or the social partners. The Federal Advisory Board on Apprenticeship (BAB) – which comprises social partner representatives and advises the Ministry of Economy in dual VET issues – also introduces proposals or prepares expert opinions about possible reforms. The specific designing of in-company curricula/competence profiles, and the orientation towards current and future qualification requirements, is generally conducted by BAB subcommittees or the education research institutes of the social partners, mainly *ibw* Austria – Research & Development in VET. Framework curricula for vocational schools within the framework of apprenticeship training are designed in a similar way to those for school-based VET. Framework curricula are laid down in analogy to company-based training.

Programmes at universities of applied sciences (UAS)

The initiative to modify existing or introduce new fields of study at UAS frequently comes from the business sphere. For the curriculum, which is prepared by a development team, an application for accreditation needs to be submitted to the Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria (AQ Austria). An important part of this application is proof that the economy has a demand for graduates and the planned degree programme can expect demand from potential participants. This proof can be furnished, for example, in the form of needs and acceptance analyses. The accreditation of a degree programme is granted for a maximum of six years by the Ministry of Education following a decision by AQ Austria. During that time it is possible to make necessary adaptations by submitting change applications. Upon expiry of this period, it is necessary to submit an application for reaccreditation, which follows the same rules as the initial accreditation.

Continuing vocational education and training (CVET)

CVET finds it easiest to adjust programmes to skills requirements and to respond to the economy's needs most quickly. Providers often cooperate with professional organisations and companies to tailor their offers to needs. They also use the information from skills needs analyses and the results of the New Skills activities.

- [37] See <http://www.ams.at/qualifikationsbarometer>
- [38] <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/data-visualisations/skills-forecast>
- [39] <https://skillspanorama.cedefop.europa.eu/en/indicators/european-skills-index>

CHAPTER 11.

Quality assurance

Quality assurance in VET is a highly differentiated and permanent process.

The regular updating of curricula and training plans is a major part of quality assurance and many other measures are taken to maintain the attractiveness of VET among learners and companies and to safeguard the recognition of the qualifications.

The VET Quality Initiative (QIBB) for school-based VET (40) was introduced in 2004, setting up the framework conditions in a way that successful teaching and learning is guaranteed. For this purpose, processes have been defined and instruments introduced which enable systematic planning, observation, documentation, evaluation of and reflection on the quality of procedures and results (41) .

Another major element of quality assurance at five-year school-based VET programmes is the partly standardised final examination, which was introduced in the school year 2015/16. It consists of standardised exams in the language of instruction (most often German, but also Slovene, Croatian and Hungarian), in applied mathematics and in a foreign language (English, French, Italian or Spanish). The assignments for these exams, as well as the duration and time of their implementation, are laid down centrally for the whole of Austria. The uniformly defined exam assignments and assessment criteria mainly aim to ensure the objectivity and reliability of the exam results and promote the transparency and comparability of the final exam.

In dual VET, many quality-assuring measures are carried out in addition to the regular adjustment of apprenticeship occupations to economic and technological developments. These measures include the accreditation of training companies: every company that wants to train apprentices is obliged to undergo an accreditation process. This consists of an examination by the apprenticeship office with the cooperation of the Chamber of Labour to check if the company meets the legal and corporate prerequisites for apprenticeship training to teach the knowledge and skills foreseen in the competence profile.

In 2013 the Ministry of Economy set up a clearing office for apprenticeship-leaving examinations at ibw Austria – Research and Development in VET (42) . This office's main task is to safeguard a uniform quality standard by examining the assignments of the apprenticeship-leaving examination, the evaluation guidelines and proposed solutions for compliance with the respective examination regulation, subject-related correctness, practical relevance and didactic quality. The apprenticeship-leaving examination is organised by the apprenticeship offices and is taken before a board of examiners. This ensures that training and validation are separated, which significantly contributes to objectivity and quality assurance.

Also in 2013 the quality management in apprenticeship training initiative (QML) was launched by the social partners with the objective of reducing the number of apprenticeship dropouts and increasing the success rate in apprenticeship-leaving examinations. The QML builds on annually evaluated indicators of apprenticeship dropouts, the number of those who (do not) attempt to take the apprenticeship-leaving examination as well as (un)successful apprenticeship-leaving exams. In the case of apprenticeship occupations where the dropout rate or the failure rate in the apprenticeship-leaving examination are relatively high, more in-depth analyses are carried out jointly with the competent sectoral representations to find the reasons as far as possible and take related measures (such as adapting the in-company curricula, improving career guidance, and measures to support apprentices including private tutoring or coaching, IVET trainer courses, and supporting materials for training companies).

Quality-assurance measures are also taken in the post-secondary and tertiary sectors, as in the definition and implementation of master craftsperson and proof of competence examinations. The main basis for this is formed by the *European guidelines on quality assurance in higher VET* (43) , which have been developed in analogy to the Standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European higher education area (ESG) with substantial involvement of Austria.

[40] See <http://www.qibb.at>

[41] With the Education Reform Act (*Federal Law Gazette*, I No 138/2017 https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/Dokumente/BgblAuth/BGBLA_2017_I_138/BGBLA_2017_I_138.pdf#sig), in force since autumn 2017, new regulations regarding quality assurance at schools have been introduced. This act foresees the establishment of a monitoring system which comprises quality management and resource controlling. QIBB is to be merged with SQA, the quality management system of general education schools, and further developed. First results of this extensive reform are to be expected for 2020.

[42] See <http://www.ibw.at> [accessed 23.4.2019].

CHAPTER 12.

Validation of prior learning

Validation of non-formal and informal (prior) learning is a topic gaining international importance. In Austria, major importance is traditionally attached to formal education qualifications from the school-based, dual and higher education sectors. However, learning also increasingly takes place outside formal education in adult learning institutions, on the job, and within the framework of voluntary activities. Rapid changes on the labour market – due to technology and globalisation – require a formal pathway to be followed by the need to learn, brush up and deepen existing knowledge. To promote competence acquisition outside the formal education context and encourage lifelong learning, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Science, published a strategy to validate non-formal and informal learning in 2017 (44). This strategy introduces a framework for the further development, coordination and network formation of existing validation approaches. The goal is to promote quality and foster trust as well as enhance visibility and access to validation offers.

[44] See <https://bildung.bmbwf.gv.at/euint/eubildung/vnfil.PDF> [accessed 20.4.2019].

CHAPTER 13.

Incentives for learners

There are various incentives for VET learners (or their families) irrespective of the type of education and training they have chosen (45) :

- for learners who have reached full legal age and attend a school or HE institution, family allowance is prolonged and still granted until their 24th birthday; in certain cases this entitlement can be further prolonged;
- learners for whom family allowance is received may apply to a public transport authority for free transport on the route between their home and school/training company (*Schülererfreifahrt*); in this case, they need to pay a flat-rate contribution of EUR 19.60 a year. Where no public means of transport is available, they may apply for a school or home commuting grant;
- required school textbooks are provided to learners free of charge;
- the Schooling Allowances Act (*Schülerbeihilfengesetz*) (46) provides for the following three types of allowance:
 - school allowance is granted to learners from grade 10 onwards who attend an upper secondary programme and are in need of financial support;
 - boarding school and travel allowance (*Heim- und Fahrtenbeihilfe*) are offered to learners from grade 9 onwards, in case that they cannot stay in their parents' house because the school location is too far away. Financial need must also be proven. The basic amounts of school allowance and boarding school allowance are EUR 1130 and EUR 1380 per year; they can be increased or reduced depending on financial needs. Travel allowance is EUR 105 per year. A further extraordinary allowance may be granted in cases of 'social hardship';
 - special allowance is granted to learners, who have been working for at least one year and for the last six months before their final exam, where they stop working to prepare for the exam.

In IVET, the following financial incentives are available for apprentices (47) :

- apprentices can apply for state funding for attending a preparatory course for the apprenticeship-leaving examination (up to 100 % of the course fees);
- the second or third attempt to sit the apprenticeship-leaving examination is free of charge (no examination fees or material costs);
- language courses and foreign work placements organised within the Erasmus+ programme are part-funded by the state (EUR 15 per day).

Attending CVET programmes is financially supported (directly and indirectly) by the state, the provinces or municipalities. The social partners provide the following funding as do individual companies:

- provinces and municipalities, as well as social partners, provide funding for course fees in various forms (education cheques, educational accounts, education vouchers). Preferred funding target groups are employees, young people, and those at a disadvantage on their respective regional labour markets;
- companies often partly fund the CVET activities of their employers by providing direct funding or allowing their employers to attend courses during paid working hours;
- PES Austria finances skills training and retraining measures within the framework of active labour market policies;
- PES Austria is also responsible for the education leave scheme. Any employee who has been employed within the last twelve months for a minimum period of six months may take educational leave. During this, IVET or CVET as well as language courses may be attended, resumed or completed both in Austria and abroad. Written proof must be furnished that education measures of at least 16 to 20 weekly hours have been taken. During the leave period, subsidies are granted to the level of the unemployment benefit that the employee would get in the event of unemployment. There is a minimum and a maximum daily rate, depending on prior earnings;
- employees have the possibility to write off costs as expenses for occupationally relevant CVET measures when filing their tax returns at the end of each year.

[45] For more information about funding in education, see Eurypedia: https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/funding-education-1_en

[46] See <https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=Bundesnormen&Gesetzesnummer=10009531>

[47] See <https://www.wko.at/service/bildung-lehre/Lehrlinge.html>

CHAPTER 14.

Incentives for enterprises to boost their participation in VET provision

In 2008 a new funding scheme was introduced for training companies offering apprenticeship posts. This scheme is not only intended to increase the number of apprenticeship posts offered but also improve the quality of training. Within this funding scheme, there are various types of support (48) :

- basic support (*Basisförderung*): every training company is entitled to basic support. This comprises three gross apprenticeship remunerations in line with the collective agreement in the first apprenticeship year, two in the second year, and one each in the third and fourth years. The training company can apply for basic support at the end of the respective apprenticeship year;
- training alliances and additional VET courses: subsidies also cover inter-company and supra-company VET measures and the acquisition of competences which go beyond the in-company curriculum. Attending a preparatory course for the apprenticeship-leaving exam can also be funded;
- apprenticeship for adults: the training of adults (18+) is funded if they are paid as unskilled workers, i.e. more than apprenticeship remuneration.
- companies where apprentices pass the apprenticeship-leaving exam with good results or distinction can also apply for grants;
- subsidies are also available for CET measures for IVET trainers;
- financial means are also available for measures taken for apprentices with learning difficulties (such as tutoring courses).

Other benefits cover non-wage labour costs:

- there are reduced rates for the company's health insurance contribution for apprentices (3.35 % instead of 7.65 %) and for the unemployment insurance contribution (2.4 % instead of 6 %);
- the contribution to accident insurance for apprentices is waived throughout the entire apprenticeship.

Public Employment Service Austria (AMS) also runs apprenticeship post support schemes designed to integrate problem groups into the labour market. Companies receive a flat-rate grant towards the costs of an apprenticeship. The grant includes the following categories of apprentice:

- young women in apprenticeships with a low proportion of women (below 40%)
- disadvantaged apprenticeship post seekers (young people who have mental or physical disabilities or emotional problems, learning deficits, or who are socially maladjusted)
- adult apprentices (18+) with qualification/employment problems (e.g. dropouts)

In CVET, training providers can also receive subsidies in order to be able to offer courses free of charge. Two initiatives are relevant in connection to vocational training:

- adult learning initiative (49) : financed by national and ESF means, the aim is to enable young people and adults to acquire basic skills (reading skills, basic skills in German or in another language, mathematical and digital skills) and the compulsory schooling qualification free of charge.
- apprenticeship training and HE entrance exam (50) : from autumn 2008 apprentices can attend preparatory courses for the *Berufsreifeprüfung* (HE entrance examination for graduates of NQF level 4 VET qualifications) and take the four partial exams free of charge.

[48] See https://www.wko.at/service/bildung-lehre/Gesamtuebersicht_Foerderarten_lehre.html

[49] See <https://www.initiative-erwachsenenbildung.at/initiative-erwachsenenbildung/was-ist-das/>

[50] See <https://bildung.bmbwf.gv.at/schulen/bw/bm/index.html>

CHAPTER 15.

Guidance and counselling

There is considerable diversity of institutions, providers and initiatives in the field of information, counselling and guidance on learning and occupations. The main providers are the education institutions, the public employment service and the social partners. Counselling and guidance is offered at the following levels in education institutions:

(a) all schools of lower and upper secondary level offer counselling and guidance from the fifth school grade through counsellors and career guidance officers. They are available for schoolchildren and parents and provide information about possible education paths, access requirements, as well as the qualifications and entitlements to be acquired. They also give young people a basic overview of continuing education and training options. Guidance is conducted by teachers who have the relevant qualifications and who are termed, depending on the school type, school counsellor (*Schülerberater/in*) or education counsellor (*Bildungsberater/in*) and provide their counselling services in addition to their teaching activity. In the final two years of lower secondary level, career guidance is a compulsory subject totalling 32 hours a year. The aim of these lessons includes improving the learners' decision-making competence, social skills, determination and perseverance. Short periods of work placement at companies and personal contacts with people from different occupations aim to help learners examine their career aspirations and take independent decisions;

(b) career guidance plays a particularly important role at prevocational schools as this school type is at the interface between obligatory and further schooling. Career guidance aims to inform learners and parents about regional possibilities in apprenticeship training and, in vocational guidance classes, prepares them for so-called real-life encounters (such as days of practical work experience) as well as important information events and job information fairs;

(c) in school-based VET programmes at upper secondary level (BMS and BHS) (51) teachers with specialist qualifications also work as career guidance officers. Learners at BMS and BHS have already taken their first decision about their professional career. But, thanks to the good level of general education provided at schools, the entire range of professional development options is also open to them;

(d) most universities offer both psychological counselling offices and career planning centres, bodies which are within the sphere of responsibility of the science ministry. The psychological student counselling services at universities and university of applied sciences (*Fachhochschule*) offer general course guidance, psychological counselling, psychotherapy, aptitude diagnostics, coaching, and supervision, etc. to holders of the upper secondary school-leaving certificate and HE students. Career planning centres at universities support students on their entry into the world of work by offering one-to-one counselling, information events on topics such as job applications and CVs, as well as individualised career planning. The centres also organise seminars on areas such as presentation techniques, rhetoric and IT, as well as events such as careers fairs and company presentations;

(e) in the CET sector education counselling and career guidance is becoming increasingly important. This is particularly evident in the establishment of comprehensive education databases (52) , an Austria-wide platform for education counselling, and the merger of institutions to guarantee independent and supra-institutional information and guidance services. Major adult learning establishments, such as the institutions run by the social partners frequently offer their own guidance services. More than 60 career guidance centres (BIZ) of AMS offer comprehensive information about occupations, their contents and requirements, about initial education and training, CET paths, the labour market and employment options across Austria. Apart from information material in the form of brochures, information leaflets and videos, The Public Employment Service Austria (AMS) also develops information databases on occupations and on initial and continuing education and training programmes for different target groups (53) . For apprenticeship post seekers, AMS operates the online apprenticeship post platform <http://www.ams.at/lehrstellen> jointly with the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber.

EURES (European job mobility portal) advisors who are employed at AMS provide information about job offers and working conditions in other countries of the European Economic Area. Anyone who is interested can use the information and service offers provided by BIZ free of charge. Print media, videos and online databases are available for customers to obtain information themselves. For young people in need of career guidance there is a selection of tools (e.g. the compass for apprenticeship occupations, interest test). The advisors working at BIZ provide support in information search and are available for one-on-one counselling talks to assist in career and education decisions. BIZ also provides services for specific target groups (learners, teachers, parents) and on specific topics (career guidance, presentations of occupations, job applications, days of technology for girls). AMS offers one-on-one counselling talks for people registered as unemployed. These talks aim to match the jobseekers' personal requirements, strengths and intentions with the situation on the labour market. There is also the possibility to take part in training programmes and courses (vocational guidance courses, training for job applications, job trials, skills training and qualification courses). In special cases, (young) women can take advantage of assistance in career choice, skills training and qualification. AMS also supports school-based information activities by means of a large number of brochures, career guidance films, occupational information and CET databases on the internet, and by organising events and trade fairs.

The different chambers offer education counselling and career guidance. The chambers of labour and trade unions provide these services mainly via their joint adult learning institutions: the vocational training institutes (bfi). They publish information material and organise information events. The counselling services of the economic chambers and their adult education institutions, the institutes for economic promotion (WIFIs), focus on IVET and CVET. These services are offered across Austria at several locations in the BIZ. With the career guidance tool (54) the economic chambers have their own web portal where job descriptions, VET and CVET options, tips on career choice and job applications, as well as a large variety of service materials, are offered, in some cases in several languages. The career guidance centres of the Economic Chambers provide comprehensive information material on a self-service basis and organise events geared towards the world of work, such as sector presentations, school and information events, as well as training for job applications. As well as information for groups (such as school classes), one-on-one counselling talks are also offered. The institutes for economic promotion's career guidance officers offer individualised counselling services on the basis of comprehensive psychological testing procedures (55) .

Please see:

- Guidance and outreach Austria national report (56) ;
- Cedefop's labour market intelligence toolkit (57) ;
- Cedefop's inventory of lifelong guidance systems and practices (A1) .

[51] BMS (*Berufsbildende mittlere Schule*): school for intermediate vocational education; BHS (*Berufsbildende höhere Schule*): college for higher vocational education.

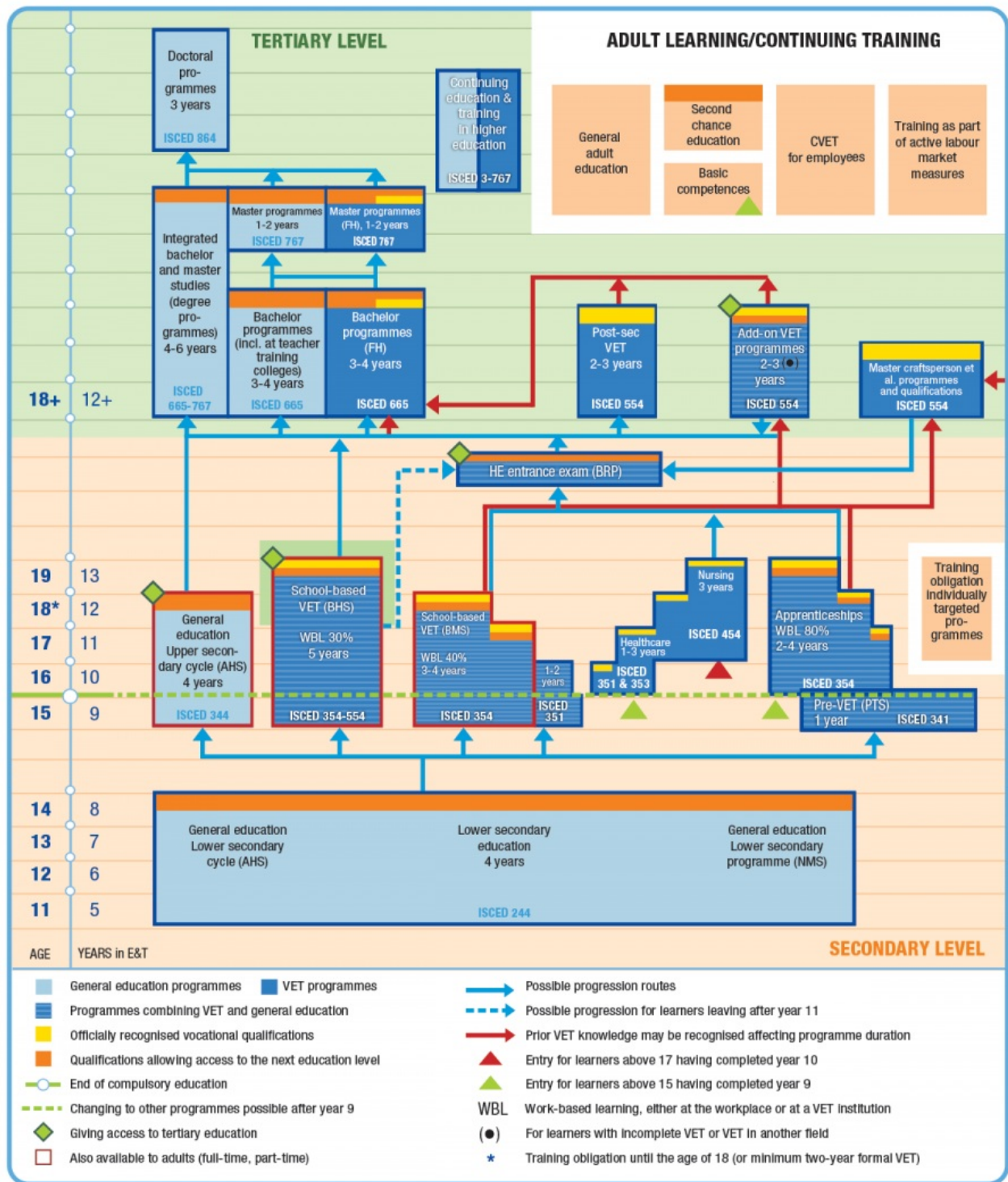
[52] <http://www.erwachsenenbildung.at> ; <http://www.eduvista.com>

[53] Accessible online at <http://www.ams.at/berufsinfo>

[54] <http://www.bic.at>

[56] <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/guidance-and-outreach-inactive-and-unemployed-austria>

Vocational education and training system chart



NB: Simplified. ISCED-P2011.

Source: Cedefop and ReferNet Austria, 2019.

VET Programme Types

Pre-VET (PTS)
1 year
ISCED 341

Pre-VET programme (Polytechnische Schule, PTS), leading to ISCED 341

EQF level	Not yet assigned to the NQF	ISCED-P 2011 level	341
Usual entry grade	9	Usual completion grade	9
Usual entry age	14	Usual completion age	15
Length of a programme (years)	1 year		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?	 The compulsory E & T age is 15. Obligatory schooling covers a period of nine years (i.e. from 6 years until 15 years). The pre-VET programme is accessible to learners from age 14.	Is it part of formal education and training system?	
Is it initial VET?	 The pre-VET programme offers both general-education and subject-specific classes in different specialist areas. Every learner is obliged to choose one specialist area from all areas offered at the respective school location. In principle, there are six specialist areas (metal, electronic engineering, construction, wood, wholesale and retail trade/office, services/tourism), with every school being entitled to offer other specialist areas autonomously while taking the needs of the local economy into account (e.g. mechatronics, healthcare and social affairs). A mix of theoretical information and practical experiences (e.g. as part of company tours and days of company-based practice in training workshops or companies, or as part of practical work experiences in classes) aims to help learners to become familiar with the world of work and additionally provide them with targeted orientation and preparation for their future profession, which they still need to choose.	Is it continuing VET?	
Is it offered free of charge?		Is it available for adults?	 However, 96 % (2017) are 14 when they start the pre-VET programme (58) .
ECVET or other credits	Not applicable		
Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)	• one-year full-time school-based programme • covers theoretical teaching and practical experiences (e.g. as part of company tours and days of company-based practice in training workshops or companies, or as part of practical work experiences in classes); • career guidance plays a particularly important role because this school type is at the interface between obligatory and further schooling		
Main providers	Public schools		
Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies	20%		
Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)	• a mix of theoretical teaching and • practical experiences (e.g. as part of company tours and days of company-based practice in training workshops or companies, or as part of practical work experiences in classes)		
Main target groups	Programme is accessible to young people and adults. People with migrant background (non-German first language) made up 33% of all learners who followed this pre-VET programme in the school year 2016/17 (59) .		
Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)	For entering this programme learners need to have completed eight school years.		

Assessment of learning outcomes	• regular assessments (written, oral exams) during the school year in each subject • mid-term and end-of-term reports • if a learner fails a subject (i.e. receives a 'not sufficient' in the end-of-term report, i.e. performance does not meet minimum pass level) he can (voluntarily) repeat the school year to get a positive certificate. In case the learner does not repeat the school year, he has to attend another training programme until the age of 18 (training obligation until 18)
Diplomas/certificates provided	School leaving certificate (<i>Abschlusszeugnis</i>) On successful completion of this programme, learners receive the certificate, which is recognised by VET and labour market authorities as graduates can enter further education programmes or the labour market for carrying out simple tasks.
Examples of qualifications	With a certificate of this pre-VET programme holders can enter the labour market to carry out simple tasks.
Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	Graduates can progress to • further education programmes at upper secondary level (general education and VET); • CVET programmes; • training programmes within the 'training obligation until 18'; • labour market (for carrying out unskilled work).
Destination of graduates	According to Statistics Austria (2016/17) (60) , graduates choose the following options: • dual VET programmes (59%); • school-based VET programme – intermediate level (BMS, 9%); • school-based VET programme – higher level (BHS, 5%); • other programmes (e.g. general education programmes, 2%); • class repetition (3%); • no further education or unknown (23 %) (e.g. labour market entry) (61) (62) .
Awards through validation of prior learning	
General education subjects	
	It offers both general-education and subject-specific classes in different specialist areas.
Key competences	
	One of the key aims of the programme is to develop and foster key competences in all subjects and through teaching methods (project work, open forms of teaching, etc.) (63) .
Application of learning outcomes approach	
	The curriculum is currently under revision. One aim of this curriculum reform is to introduce learning outcomes. However, also the present curriculum foresees competences which learners should acquire. Nevertheless, as a result of the development of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), which was formally introduced in 2016, competences/learning outcomes have to be defined explicitly in all new curricula.
Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners	Allocation of learners at upper secondary level / 9th school grade (2016/17) (64) : 17%: pre VET programme 16%: one to four-year school-based VET programmes at intermediate level 37%: five-year school-based VET programmes (higher level) 28%: general education 2%: special needs school/inclusive education

[59] BMBWF (2018). *Statistical guide 2017: key facts and figures about schools and adult education in Austria*. Vienna: BMBWF. https://bildung.bmbwf.gv.at/schulen/bw/ueberblick/zahlenspiegel_2017.pdf?6mfso8

[60] Statistics Austria (2018). *Bildung in Zahlen 2016/17, Tabellenband [Education in numbers: 2016/17]*. Vienna: Statistics Austria. https://www.statistik.at/web_de/services/publikationen/5/index.html?includePage=detailedView§ionName=Bildung&pubId=509

[61] Statistics Austria (2018). *Bildung in Zahlen 2016/17, Tabellenband [Education in numbers: 2016/17]*. Vienna: Statistics Austria. https://www.statistik.at/web_de/services/publikationen/5/index.html?includePage=detailedView§ionName=Bildung&pubId=509

[62] The statistics refer to a period before the introduction of the training obligation (https://www.refernet.at/images/05_News_AB_18_10.2016_EN.pdf). Today, learners have to remain in education and training until the age of 18.

[63] See curriculum of PTS: https://pts.schule.at/fileadmin/Polytechnische_Schule/Lehrplan_Fachbereichsinfos/PTS_Lehrplan-2012_Auflage_2018.pdf

[64] Statistics Austria (2018). *Bildung in Zahlen 2016/17, Tabellenband [Education in numbers: 2016/17]*. Vienna: Statistics Austria. https://www.statistik.at/web_de/services/publikationen/5/index.html?includePage=detailedView§ionName=Bildung&pubId=509

School-based VET programmes

1-2 years

ISCED 351

School-based VET programmes (berufsbildende mittlere Schulen, BMS), leading to ISCED 351. These programmes are offered as one- to two-year programmes, which primarily aim to provide pre-professional qualifications rather than a full VET qualification. These programmes focus on areas such as hospitality services, agriculture, nutrition, social activities, etc. They serve as preparation for certain apprenticeship trades or as bridge courses to VET programmes which require a certain entry age (e.g. health programmes which can only be accessed at the age of 17).

EQF level	Not yet assigned to the NQF	ISCED-P 2011 level	351
Usual entry grade	9	Usual completion grade	9 to 10
Usual entry age	14	Usual completion age	15-16
Length of a programme (years)	From 1 to 2 years		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?	 The compulsory E & T age is 15. Obligatory schooling covers a period of nine years (i.e. from 6 years until 15 years). One- to two-year school-based pre-VET programmes are usually attended by 14 to 16-year old learners.		
Is it initial VET?	 These programmes include general education, basic vocational competences and key competences which prepare learners for more specific VET pathways (at upper secondary schools or in dual training) and for simple tasks on the labour market.		
Is it offered free of charge?	 These programmes are financed by the public, school attendance is free of charge for learners.		
		Is it part of formal education and training system?	
		Is it continuing VET?	
		Is it available for adults?	
ECVET or other credits	Not applicable		
Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)	One- to two-year pre-VET programmes are • full-time and • practice-oriented.		
Main providers	Public schools (and a few private schools)		
Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies	20%		
Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)	• practice-oriented tuition (e.g. in workshops at school, in school kitchens etc.) • practical experiences (e.g. work shadowing, company tours, company-based practical days)		
Main target groups	Most learners enter these programmes at the age of 14. However, they are also open for adults. People with migrant background (non-German first language) made up 27% of all school-based VET programmes learners (one to two-year programmes plus three to four-year programmes) in the school year 2016/17. (66)		
Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)	The entry requirements are • positive completion of the eight grade, • a minimum age of 14 years.		
Assessment of learning outcomes	• regular assessments (written, oral exams) during the school year in each subject • mid-term and end-of-term reports		
Diplomas/certificates provided	School leaving certificate (<i>Abschlusszeugnis</i>) The certificates of the one- to two-year pre-VET programmes are recognised by VET and labour authorities, i.e. graduates can enter further education programmes or the labour market for carrying out simple tasks.		
Examples of qualifications	These one- and two-year school-based VET programmes prepare learners for carrying out simple tasks on the labour market in different areas such as hospitality services, agriculture, nutrition, social activities, etc. The programmes take place in respective schools such as Schools of Social Care Professions (<i>Schulen für Sozialbetreuungsberufe</i>) (67) .		

Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	Graduates may progress to • dual VET programmes; • school-based VET programmes (three- to four-year programmes and five-year programmes); • postsecondary/tertiary VET programmes (e.g. healthcare); • CVET programmes; • training programmes within the 'training obligation until 18'; • labour market.
Destination of graduates	Information not available
Awards through validation of prior learning	
General education subjects	 These programmes include both general-education and subject-specific classes in different specialist areas.
Key competences	 One of the key aims of these programmes is to develop and foster key competences in all subjects and through various teaching methods (project work, open forms of teaching, etc.).
Application of learning outcomes approach	 With the development of the National Qualifications Framework learning outcomes have been made more explicit in the curricula of all VET programmes.
Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners	Allocation of learners at upper secondary level / 10th school grade (2016/17): (68) 36%: dual VET programmes 13%: one to four-year school-based VET programmes (intermediate level) 27%: five-year school-based VET programmes (higher level) 24%: general education

[66] BMBWF (2018). *Statistical guide 2017: key facts and figures about schools and adult education in Austria*. Vienna: BMBWF.
https://bildung.bmbwf.gv.at/schulen/bw/ueberblick/zahlenspiegel_2017.pdf?6mfso8

[67] <https://www.abc.berufsbildendeschulen.at/vet-schools-and-higher-colleges-in-austria/>

[68] Statistics Austria (2018). *Bildung in Zahlen 2016/17, Tabellenband [Education in numbers: 2016/17]*. Vienna: Statistics Austria.
https://www.statistik.at/web_de/services/publikationen/5/index.html?includePage=detailedView§ionName=Bildung&pubId=509

EQF 4
Apprenticeships
WBL 80%
2-4 years
ISCED 354

Apprenticeship training leading to EQF level 4, ISCED 354 (Lehrlingsausbildung)

EQF level	4	ISCED-P 2011 level	354
Usual entry grade	10	Usual completion grade	11 to 13
Usual entry age	15	Usual completion age	17 to 19
Length of a programme (years)	From two to four years, usually three years (two thirds of apprenticeship professions)		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?	 Apprenticeship starts after compulsory education. A prerequisite for taking up apprenticeship training is completion of nine years of compulsory schooling. About one third of apprentices complete this period by attending a one-year prevocational school.		
Is it initial VET?			
Is it offered free of charge?	 Attendance at a vocational school for apprentices is free of charge. The training company is obliged to grant leave of absence to the apprentice for attending the programme offered at the vocational school while continuing to pay the apprenticeship remuneration. As compensation the company has the possibility to apply for public subsidies ('basic funding'). The training at the company is funded by the companies themselves. The young people are paid an apprenticeship remuneration by their employer; this is usually regulated in the (sectoral or company) collective agreement. As support for training companies, however, a number of public subsidies are available.		
		Is it part of formal education and training system?	
		Is it continuing VET?	
		Is it available for adults?	 Around 23% start an apprenticeship at age 18 and above (69) .
ECVET or other credits	Not applicable		
Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)	dual programmes consist of 80% workplace training in a company, 20% training in a vocational school		
Main providers	Training companies (enterprises, free professions such as lawyers, and supra-company training providers on behalf of Public Employment Service Austria)		
Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies	> 80%		
Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)	Apprenticeships as dual track training combine: - company-based training (80%); - attendance of VET school for apprentices (20%).		
Main target groups	Apprenticeship training is accessible to young people and adults. Apprenticeship training is also available for learners with special educational needs either by: - prolongation of the apprenticeship period by one or at maximum two years; - acquisition of a partial qualification. Young people who are trained in a prolonged apprenticeship period are also obliged to attend a vocational school. The training is completed with the apprenticeship-leaving examination. The acquisition of partial qualifications is restricted to selected competences of an in-company curriculum. There is also an obligation to follow a programme offered at a vocational school, the extent being adjusted to the individual situation of the apprentice. The final examination covers the previously determined competences. The level achieved is determined by professional experts and one member of the vocational training assistance. The partial qualification is accompanied by vocational training assistance; this aims to advise and support the training companies as well as the young people before and during the training. Both forms of training are offered by training companies. (Young) people who do not find an apprenticeship post in a company, can complete apprenticeship training at supra-company training providers (<i>überbetriebliche Berufsausbildung, ÜBA</i>), which offer company-like conditions in workshops on behalf of the Public Employment Service Austria as part of active labour market policy. As for the school part, ÜBA-apprentices attend the regular VET school for apprentices. People with migrant background made up less than 11% of all apprentices in 2017 (70) .		

Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)	The only entry requirement to enrol in apprenticeship training is the fulfilment of compulsory schooling (nine school years).
Assessment of learning outcomes	After fulfilling the apprenticeship period, apprentices normally register for the apprenticeship-leaving examination (<i>Lehrabschlussprüfung</i> / LAP). This exam aims to establish whether the candidate has acquired the skills and competences required for the respective apprenticeship occupation and is able to carry out the activities specific to the occupation himself or herself in an appropriate manner. The exam consists of a practical and a theoretical examination. Provided that the apprentice has met the education objectives of the last year of the programme offered at the vocational school, he is only required to do the practical part of the exam. The subjects the exam covers are laid down in the national exam regulation (<i>Prüfungsordnung</i>) for each apprenticeship occupation (71) . If the candidate fails parts of his exam, he can retake these parts.
Diplomas/certificates provided	After passing the apprenticeship-leaving examination (<i>Lehrabschlussprüfung</i> / LAP) the graduate receives the apprenticeship diploma (<i>Lehrabschlussprüfungszeugnis</i> / LAP-Zeugnis). It certifies that the holder has the skills and competences required for the respective apprenticeship occupation and is able to carry out the activities particular to the occupation himself or herself in an appropriate manner (72) . Apprenticeship diplomas are fully recognised by VET and labour authorities and highly appreciated in the labour market and economy. All apprenticeship-leaving exams are assigned to EQF level 4 (73) .
Examples of qualifications	In 2018, there were 218 state-recognised apprenticeship occupations (74) , such as brick layer, bank clerk, hotel and catering assistant or dental technician.
Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	After passing the apprenticeship-leaving examination, graduates can either remain in the labour market or acquire further qualifications: • master craftsperson or aptitude examination; • add-on courses (ISCED 554) (<i>Aufbaulehrgänge</i>) with a duration of three years that lead to the qualification of a five-year school-based VET programme (BHS); • higher entrance exam (<i>Berufsaufnahmeprüfung</i>, BRP), which grants access to higher education programmes.
Destination of graduates	Apprenticeship training focusing on different specialist areas (construction, electronic engineering, information technology, wholesale and retail trade, etc.) aims at the acquisition of a vocational qualification at intermediate level. For many, apprenticeship training is also the basis for a career as an entrepreneur. Around 35% of executives in business have completed apprenticeship training. The education-related employment career monitoring (<i>Erwerbskarrierenmonitoring</i>, BibEr) of Statistics Austria done for the graduation year 2013/14 (75) , analysed labour market status 18 months after graduation. Results show that graduates are primarily orientated to the labour market entry (compared to other education pathways): • 73% of the apprenticeship graduates were employed and only 5% continued in (formal) education; • approximately 12% were registered as jobseekers at the public employment service (AMS) (76) . This can be considered as positive indication of the job mobility of apprenticeship graduates due to a high labour demand for skilled workers and qualified specialists.
Awards through validation of prior learning	✓ The Vocational Training Act (<i>Berufsausbildungsgesetz</i>, BAG) (77) also opens access to the apprenticeship-leaving exam to those who have not completed any formal training (apprenticeship or school), providing them with the possibility of acquiring a formal professional qualification. In concrete terms, they must meet the following conditions: • be above 18 years old; • furnish evidence that they have acquired the knowledge and skills required for the respective apprenticeship occupation, such as by exercising a relevant semi-skilled or other practical activity of appropriate length or by attending a relevant course event; • completion of at least half of the period stipulated for the respective apprenticeship occupation is accepted as evidence if there is no other possibility of entering into an apprenticeship contract for the remaining apprenticeship period. The 2011 amendment to the Vocational Training Act has extended access to the apprenticeship-leaving exam. The new regulation specifies that apprenticeship offices can arrange for the practical apprenticeship-leaving examination to be taken in two parts. The first part comprises identification of the exam candidate's existing qualifications while in the second part he/she is required to prove the remaining skills. This provision applies if exam candidates • are aged 22 or over; • have, as part of higher qualification schemes, completed educational measures rated as suited by the Regional Advisory Board on Apprenticeship (78) .
General education subjects	✓ The focus of education at vocational schools is on occupation-oriented specialist instruction (with about 65%), which also includes practical training in workshops and/or laboratories. The rest covers general subjects (such as German, mathematics) (79) .
Key competences	✓ The competence-oriented curricula specify the knowledge and skills that learners need to have acquired by the end of their training and which qualify them to act appropriately in different situations at work. As well as subject-related competences, related key competences are also listed which vary according to the specific apprenticeship training (e.g. team work, digital and entrepreneurial skills). At least one foreign language is mandatory in all programmes. Key competences are considered of major importance in the VET sector.

Application of learning outcomes approach	 The competence profile (<i>Berufsprofil</i>), which is also part of the training regulation, formulates in a learning outcome-oriented manner the competences apprentices acquire by the end of their training in both learning sites. Although the acquisition of professional competences has always been a key goal of VET, competences have been defined explicitly in the curricula since 2012; this is a result of the development of the national qualifications framework and its orientation towards learning outcomes (80) .
Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners	Allocation of learners at upper secondary level / 10th school grade (2016/17) (81) : 36%: apprenticeship programmes; 13%: one to four-year school-based VET programmes (intermediate level); 27%: five-year school-based VET programmes (higher level); 24%: general education programme.
[70]	Dornmayr, H.; Nowak, S. (2018). <i>Lehrlingsausbildung im Überblick 2018: Strukturdaten, Trends und Perspektiven</i> [Apprenticeship overview 2018: structural data, trends and perspectives]. Vienna: ibw. Research report; No 193 https://ibw.at/bibliothek/id/481/
[71]	See https://www.bmdw.gv.at/Nationale%20Marktstrategien/LehrberufeInOesterreich/ListeDerLehrberufe/Seiten/liste.aspx [accessed 20.4.2019].
[72]	BMWFW (2014). <i>Apprenticeship: dual vocational education and training in Austria: modern training with a future</i> . https://www.bmdw.gv.at/Nationale%20Marktstrategien/LehrlingsUndBerufsausbildung/Documents/HP_Die%20Lehre%20Englisch_2014_27%208.pdf
[73]	For more details, see the Austrian qualifications register: https://www.qualifikationsregister.at/nqr-register/nqr-zuordnungen/
[74]	Including 15 agricultural and forestry apprenticeships occupations. See: BMDW; WKO (2018). <i>Lehrberufe in Österreich – Ausbildungen mit Zukunft</i> . [Apprenticeship in Austria: training with a future]. https://www.bic.at/downloads/de/broschueren/lehrberufe_in_oesterreich_2018.pdf See also: ibw (2019). <i>Lehrberufsbezeichnungen Deutsch-Englisch</i> [Dual VET qualifications German-English]. https://ibw.at/bibliothek/id/278/
[75]	The aim of this project is to render the employment career statistically evaluable of all persons living in Austria after their leaving a formal educational institution. Especially the transition from education to the labour market represents an important chapter in the employment biography. The variety of attributes allows for analyses of various aspects of those careers at the start as well as during their further development on the labour market. http://www.statistik.at/web_en/statistics/PeopleSociety/education_culture/monitoring_education_related_employment_behaviour/index.html
[76]	For the remaining 10% no data are available. Dornmayr, H.; Nowak, S. (2018). <i>Lehrlingsausbildung im Überblick 2018: Strukturdaten, Trends und Perspektiven</i> [Apprenticeship overview 2018: structural data, trends and perspectives]. Vienna: ibw. Research report; No 193. https://ibw.at/bibliothek/id/481/ See also http://www.statistik.at/web_de/statistiken/menschen_und_gesellschaft/bildung_und_kultur/bildungsbezogenes_erwerbskarrierenmonitoring_biber/1157
[77]	https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=Bundesnormen&Gesetzesnummer=10006276
[78]	https://www.bmdw.gv.at/Nationale%20Marktstrategien/LehrlingsUndBerufsausbildung/Documents/HP_Die%20Lehre%20Englisch_2014_27%208.pdf
[79]	https://www.bmdw.gv.at/Nationale%20Marktstrategien/LehrlingsUndBerufsausbildung/Documents/HP_Die%20Lehre%20Englisch_2014_27%208.pdf
[80]	Tritscher-Archan, S. (2016). <i>Vocational education and training in Europe – Austria</i> . Cedefop ReferNet VET in Europe reports. http://libserver.cedefop.europa.eu/vetelib/2016/2016_CR_AT.pdf
[81]	Statistics Austria (2018). <i>Bildung in Zahlen 2016/17, Tabellenband</i> [Education in numbers: 2016/17]. Vienna: Statistics Austria. https://www.statistik.at/web_de/services/publikationen/5/index.html?includePage=detailedView&sectionName=Bildung&publd=509

EQF 4
School-based VET (BMS)
WBL 40%
3-4 years
ISCED 354

School-based VET programmes offered at intermediate vocational schools (berufsbildende mittlere Schulen, BMS) leading to EQF level 4, ISCED 354. The three- to four-year VET programmes offered at intermediate vocational schools aim to impart full VET qualifications that entitle graduates to immediately exercise professional activities at intermediate qualification level/skilled worker's level. These programmes are offered in different specialist areas, including in technology, the business sphere, fashion, tourism, agriculture and forestry and in the social sphere.

EQF level	4	ISCED-P 2011 level	354
Usual entry grade	9	Usual completion grade	11 to 12
Usual entry age	14	Usual completion age	17 to 18
Length of a programme (years)	From 3 to 4 years		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?	 The compulsory E & T age is 15. Obligatory education covers a period of nine years (i.e. from 6 years until 15 years). Learners can start the three- to four-year BMS programmes at age 14, so in this case it still covers compulsory education.		
Is it initial VET?			
Is it offered free of charge?	 These programmes are financed by the public, school attendance is free of charge for the learners.		
		Is it part of formal education and training system?	
		Is it continuing VET?	
		Is it available for adults?	 These programmes can also be attended by adults. However, most of the learners are between 14 and 17 when they enter these programmes. (82)
ECVET or other credits	Not applicable		
Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)	Three- to four-year VET programmes at intermediate level are: • offered full-time at VET schools; • practice-oriented tuition (e.g. learning in workshops and labs) in some fields; • obligatory work placements during the summer months, • in technical three and a half-year programmes; (<i>Fachschulen mit Betriebspraktikum</i>): obligatory work placement in the last semester (83) .		
Main providers	Most of these intermediate vocational schools are public schools, some are private schools with public status.		
Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies	40%		
Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)	• learning in workshops and labs • work placements during the summer months and in some fields also during the tuition period		
Main target groups	These school-based VET programmes are accessible to young people and adults. For people in employment programmes are organised in the evening. People with migrant background (non-German first language) made up 27% of all BMS learners (one to two years programme plus three- to four-year programmes) in school year 2016/17 (84) .		
Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)	The entry requirements are • positive completion of the eight grade; • depending on previous qualifications (e.g. obtained at new secondary school or the lower cycle of academic secondary school), the desired programme type and places on offer, previous educational performance (i.e. the marks achieved in the main subjects) or an entrance examination are additional selection criteria; • minimum age of 14 years.		

Assessment of learning outcomes	- regular assessments (written, oral exams) during the school year in each subject - mid-term and end-of-term reports - qualification exam - if learners fail a subject (e.g. after the first year), they can take an exam at the beginning of the following year. If they fail more than three subjects, they have to repeat the entire class. If learners fail the qualification exam, they can re-do it.
Diplomas/certificates provided	School leaving certificate (<i>Abschlusszeugnis</i>) The school leaving certificates are fully recognised by VET and labour authorities and highly appreciated by labour market and economy.
Examples of qualifications	Three- and four-year programmes for intermediate vocational education providing professional education in different specialist areas (business, technology, agriculture, social affairs, tourism, etc.) lead to professional qualifications at the intermediate level. Programmes can be offered, e.g. at : - Schools of Engineering, Arts and Crafts (<i>Technische, gewerbliche und kunstgewerbliche Fachschulen</i>) - Schools of Agriculture and Forestry (<i>Land- und forstwirtschaftliche Fachschulen</i>) - Schools of Business Administration (<i>Handelsschule</i>) - Schools of Management and Services Industries (<i>Fachschule für wirtschaftliche Berufe</i>) - Schools of Tourism (<i>Fachschulen für Tourismus</i>) (85)
Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	Graduates have the following progression possibilities: - add-on programmes - post-secondary VET courses <i>Berufsreifeprüfung</i>: exam for people whose initial VET does not automatically qualify them for entry into higher education - dual VET programmes - subject specific CVET options (e.g. master craftsperson examination, aptitude examination, industrial master school etc.)
Destination of graduates	Information not available
Awards through validation of prior learning	✗
General education subjects	✓ The curricula and training contents focus on deepening of general education and VET at intermediate qualification level.
Key competences	✓ Key competences play a crucial role in all programme types of the VET sector in Austria (86) .
Application of learning outcomes approach	✓ Although the acquisition of professional competences has always been a key goal of VET in Austria, competences have been defined explicitly in the curricula since 2012 – which is a result of the development of the National Qualifications Framework and its orientation towards learning outcomes.
Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners	Allocation of learners at upper secondary level / 10th school grade (2016/17) (87) : 36%: apprenticeships 13%: one to four-year school-based VET programmes (intermediate level) 27%: five-year school-based VET programmes (higher level) 24%: general education

[83] BMBWF - The educational offer of technical, commerce, arts and crafts schools: <https://bildung.bmbwf.gv.at/schulen/bw/bbs/tgkg.html>

[84] BMBWF (2018). *Statistical guide 2017: key facts and figures about schools and adult education in Austria*. Vienna: BMBWF. https://bildung.bmbwf.gv.at/schulen/bw/ueberblick/zahlenspiegel_2017.pdf?6mfso8

[85] <https://www.abc.berufsbildendeschulen.at/vet-schools-and-higher-colleges-in-austria/>

[86] See Tritscher-Archan, S., Petanovitsch, A. (2016). *Key competences in vocational education and training – Austria*. Cedefop ReferNet thematic perspectives series. https://cumulus.cedefop.europa.eu/files/vetelib/2016/ReferNet_AT_KC.pdf

[87] Statistics Austria (2018). *Bildung in Zahlen 2016/17, Tabellenband [Education in numbers: 2016/17]*. Vienna: Statistics Austria. https://www.statistik.at/web_de/services/publikationen/5/index.html?includePage=detailedView§ionName=Bildung&pubId=509

EQF 5
School based (BHS)
WBL 30%
5 years
ISCED 354/554

School based VET programmes offered at colleges for higher vocational education (*berufsbildende höhere Schulen / BHS*), leading to EQF level 5, ISCED 354/554. Programmes provide in-depth general education and high-quality specialist training in different specialist areas including in technology, the business sphere, fashion and design, arts and crafts, tourism, agriculture and forestry as well as elementary pedagogy. This programme type belongs to the upper secondary level. In ISCED, however, it is divided between two levels: the first three years are classified as ISCED 354 (no interim qualification is offered at this level), year four and five are classified as ISCED 554.

EQF level	5	ISCED-P 2011 level	ISCED 354 (programme duration 1-3 years) ISCED 554 (programme duration 4-5 years)
Usual entry grade	9	Usual completion grade	13
Usual entry age	14	Usual completion age	19
Length of a programme (years)	5 years		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?	✓ The compulsory E & T age is 15. Obligatory education covers a period of nine years (i.e. from 6 years until 15 years). These school-based VET programmes are usually attended by learners between 14 and 19.	Is it part of formal education and training system?	✓
Is it initial VET?	✓	Is it continuing VET?	✗
Is it offered free of charge?	✓ These five-year VET programmes leading to higher VET and HE entrance qualification are financed by the public, school attendance is free of charge for learners.	Is it available for adults?	✓ The degree obtained at a college for higher vocational education (<i>berufsbildende höhere Schulen / BHS</i>) can, as an alternative to the five-year day form, also be acquired by way of three other education programmes: • add-on courses (ISCED 554, <i>Aufbaulehrgang</i>): these modular courses usually cover three years and lead graduates of intermediate VET tracks (from schools and dual VET) to the BHS qualification. Learners with non-subject-specific VET qualifications have to attend a one- to two-semester bridge course (<i>Vorbereitungslehrgang</i>) before entering an add-on course; • post-secondary VET courses (ISCED 554, <i>Kollegs</i>): Kollegs mainly target graduates of general education schools, i.e. people who have not completed an initial VET pathway. A prerequisite for admission to Kollegs is successful completion of the HE entrance examination. Kollegs are provided in a modular two-year day form or a three-year evening form and are completed with a qualification examination; • courses offered at colleges for higher vocational education for people in employment (ISCED 554, BHS for professionals): this programme type, which is organised in the evening, leads to a BHS-qualification. Access requirements are a minimum age of 17 years and active employment.
ECVET or other credits	Not applicable		
Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)	Five-year VET programmes leading to higher VET and HE entrance qualification: • are full-time and practice-oriented, • include learning in workshops and labs, training restaurants, and practice firms, • are complemented by mandatory work placements of several weeks during the summer months, • comprise project and diploma assignments as part of the final exam that are often set by companies or carried out with their collaboration ⁽⁸⁸⁾.		
Main providers	Most colleges for higher vocational education (<i>berufsbildende höhere Schulen / BHS</i>) are public schools, some are private school with public status.		
Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies	30%		

Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)	• learning in workshops and labs, training restaurants, and practice firms • mandatory work placements of several weeks during the summer months • project and diploma assignments as part of final exams that are often set by companies or carried out with their collaboration
Main target groups	Five-year VET programmes leading to higher VET and HE entrance qualification are accessible to young people and adults (e.g. for people in employment organised in the evening). People with migrant background (non-German first language) made up nearly 19% of all school-based higher VET programmes learners in school year 2016/17 (89) .
Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)	The entry requirements are: • positive completion of the eight grade; • depending on previous qualifications (e.g. programmes offered at new secondary school or at the lower cycle of academic secondary school), the desired programme type and places on offer, previous educational performance (i.e. the marks achieved in the main subjects) or an entrance examination are additional selection criteria; • a minimum age of 14 years.
Assessment of learning outcomes	• regular assessments (written, oral exams) during the school year in each subject • mid-term and end-of-term reports • higher education entrance examination (90) • if learners fail a subject (e.g. after the first year), they can take an exam at the beginning of the following year. If they fail more than three subjects, they have to repeat the entire class. If learners fail the Matura exam, they can re-do (parts of) it
Diplomas/certificates provided	Graduation with a <i>Reife- und Diplomprüfungszeugnis</i>, i.e. HE entrance qualification and higher VET qualification (= double qualification). The qualification is fully recognised by VET and labour authorities and highly appreciated by labour market and economy.
Examples of qualifications	Five-year VET programmes leading to higher VET and HE entrance qualification are available in different areas which are offered by different providers, e.g.: • Colleges of Engineering, Arts and Crafts (<i>Höhere technische, kunstgewerbliche und gewerbliche Lehranstalten</i>) • Colleges of Business Administration (<i>Handelsakademien</i>) • Colleges of Management and Service Industries (<i>Höhere Lehranstalten für wirtschaftliche Berufe</i>) • Colleges of Agriculture and Forestry (<i>Höhere Land- und Forstwirtschaftliche Schulen</i>) • Colleges for Elementary Pedagogy (<i>Bildungsanstalten für Elementarpädagogik</i>) (91)
Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	• graduates obtain general access to postsecondary and tertiary education (studies at university, UAS, universities of teacher training). • they can also enter a range of CVET options. • they can also directly enter the labour market.
Destination of graduates	Information not available
Awards through validation of prior learning	✓
General education subjects	✓
	Programmes provide in-depth general education and high-quality specialist training in different specialist areas
Key competences	✓
	Key competences play a crucial role in all programme types of the VET sector in Austria (92) .
Application of learning outcomes approach	✓
	With the development of the National Qualifications Framework learning outcomes have been made more explicit in the curricula of all VET programmes.
Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners	Allocation of learners at upper secondary level / 10th school grade (2016/17) (93) : 36%: apprenticeship 13%: one to four-year school-based VET programmes (intermediate level) 27%: five-year school-based VET programmes (higher level) 24%: general education

[88] Cedefop (2018). *Spotlight on vocational education and training in Austria*. Luxembourg: Publications Office.
http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/8127_en.pdf

[89] BMBWF (2018). *Statistical guide 2017: key facts and figures about schools and adult education in Austria*. Vienna: BMBWF.
https://bildung.bmbwf.gv.at/schulen/bw/ueberblick/zahlenspiegel_2017.pdf?6mfs08

[90] See https://www.refernet.at/images/02_News_AT_RDP_neu_05_2016_EN.pdf [accessed 8.5.2019].

[91] <https://www.abc.berufsbildendeschulen.at/vet-schools-and-higher-colleges-in-austria/>

[92] See Tritscher-Archan, S., Petanovitsch, A. (2016). *Key competences in vocational education and training – Austria*. Cedefop ReferNet thematic perspectives series. https://cumulus.cedefop.europa.eu/files/vetelib/2016/ReferNet_AT_KC.pdf

[93] Statistics Austria (2018). *Bildung in Zahlen 2016/17, Tabellenband [Education in numbers: 2016/17]*. Vienna: Statistics Austria.
https://www.statistik.at/web_de/services/publikationen/5/index.html?includePage=detailedView§ionName=Bildung&publd=509

Healthcare programmes leading to ISCED 351, 353. Following specific programmes are offered in the field of healthcare: Care assistance programmes: care assistance programme, level 1 (Pflegeassistenz); care assistance programme, level 2 (Pflegefachassistenz). Medical assistance programmes: disinfection assistance (Desinfektionsassistenz); plastering assistance (Gipsassistenz); laboratory assistance (Laborassistenz); mortuary assistance (Obduktionsassistenz); operating theatre assistance (Operationsassistenz); surgery assistance (Ordnationsassistenz); radiology assistance (Röntgenassistenz); medical assistance (Medizinische Fachassistenz)

EQF level	Not yet assigned to the NQF	ISCED-P 2011 level	Care assistance programmes: 351 Medical assistance programmes: 353
Usual entry grade	10 to 11 Care assistance programmes: - care assistance programme, level 1: 10 - care assistance programme, level 2: 11 Medical assistance programmes: 10	Usual completion grade	10 to 12 Care assistance programmes: - care assistance programme, level 1: 10 - care assistance programme, level 2: 12 Medical assistance programmes: 10-12
Usual entry age	16 to 17 Care assistance programme, level 1: 16 Care assistance programme, level 2: 17 Medical assistance programmes: 16	Usual completion age	18 to 19
Length of a programme (years)	From 1 to 3 years Care assistance programmes: - care assistance programme, level 1: 1.600 hours, 1 year (full-time) or 1.5 years (part-time) - short training course for persons who successfully completed studies of human medicine or dental medicine: 680 hours (94) - care assistance programme, level 2: 3.200 hours, 2 years Medical assistance programmes: - disinfection assistance (650 hours): 1 year - plastering assistance (650 hours): 1 year - laboratory assistance (1 300 hours): 2 – 2,5 years - mortuary assistance (650 hours): 1 year - operating theatre assistance (1 100 hours): 2 years - surgery assistance (650 hours): 1 year - radiology assistance (1 300 hours): 2 – 2,5 years - medical assistant (2 500 hours): 3 years (95)		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?		Is it part of formal education and training system?	
Is it initial VET?	 concerning the care assistance programme, level 1 Yes and no, concerning the care assistance programme, level 2 and the medical assistance programme.	Is it continuing VET?	Yes and no, concerning the care assistance programme, level 2 and the medical assistance programmes.
Is it offered free of charge?	- programmes offered in public schools are financed by the public, attendance is free of charge for the learners - training courses for adults offered by different providers are fee-based with different funding opportunities	Is it available for adults?	
ECVET or other credits	Not applicable		
Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)	Theoretical instruction in schools/training courses and work placements in hospitals etc. alternate during the entire training.		

Main providers	Care assistance programmes: • public schools for healthcare (mostly at hospitals); • public schools for social professions; • different providers offering training courses for adults (also upskilling programmes). Medical assistance programmes: • public schools for medical assistant professions; • different providers offering training courses for adults.
Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies	Care assistance programmes: 40% (96) Medical assistance programmes: min. 50% (97)
Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)	Theoretical instruction in schools/training courses and work placements in hospitals etc. alternate during the entire training.
Main target groups	Programmes are open to young people, adults and unemployed (training courses financed by the Public Employment Service).
Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)	Entry requirements differ among the specific programmes: Care assistance, level 1: • minimum age of 17 years • successful completion of compulsory education (ninth school grade) • medical fitness (medical certificate) • trustworthiness (judicial record) • command of the German language (at least level B2) • admission interview and standardised admission procedure (98) (99) Care assistance, level 2: • minimum age of 17 years • successful completion of the tenth school grade or nursing assistant qualifications • medical fitness (medical certificate) • trustworthiness (judicial record) • command of the German language (at least level B2) • admission interview and standardised admission procedure (100) (101) Medical assistance programmes: • minimum age of 17 (18) • successful completion of the compulsory schooling (ninth school grade) • medical fitness (medical certificate) • trustworthiness (judicial record) (102)
Assessment of learning outcomes	Ongoing und regular assessment during the programme.
Diplomas/certificates provided	Care assistance, level 1: • final exam before an examination commission / certificate Care assistance, level 2: • final exam before an examination commission / certificate Medical assistance programmes: • final exam before an examination commission / certificate The qualifications are fully recognised by VET and labour authorities and highly appreciated by labour market.
Examples of qualifications	Care assistance programmes: • care assistant (<i>Pflegeassistent/in</i>) • (special) care assistant (<i>Pflegefachassistent/in</i>) Medical assistance programmes: • disinfection assistance (<i>Desinfektionsassistentenz</i>) • plastering assistance (<i>Gipsassistentenz</i>) • laboratory assistance (<i>Laborassistentenz</i>) • mortuary assistance (<i>Obduktionsassistentenz</i>) • operating theatre assistance (<i>Operationsassistentenz</i>) • surgery assistance (<i>Ordinationsassistentenz</i>) • radiology assistance (<i>Röntgenassistentenz</i>) • medical assistance (<i>Medizinische Fachassistentenz</i>)
Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	Graduates of care and medical assistance programmes can progress to: • the labour market (prerequisite for carrying out the profession is the registration on the healthcare profession register) (103) ; • further education programmes at upper secondary level (for additional qualifications in specialist areas or higher-status healthcare professions; a variety of fast-track training programmes are available) (104) ; • CVET programmes. Graduates of level 2 of the care assistance programme can additionally take the: • <i>Berufreifeprüfung (BRP)</i>, enabling them to enter higher education institutions (105) .
Destination of graduates	information not available

Awards through validation of prior learning	✓	Competences acquired non-formally or informally must be validated by the principle of the school or the head of the training provider offering care/medical assistance programmes by way of procedures accepted by the health ministry (106) . For care assistance programmes, level 1: the duration of the training course is reduced for persons who successfully completed studies of human medicine or dental medicine: 680 hours (107) .
General education subjects	✗	
Key competences	✓	Key competences play a crucial role in all school types of the VET sector in Austria (108) .
Application of learning outcomes approach	✓	With the development of the National Qualifications Framework learning outcomes have been made more explicit in the curricula of all schools in the VET sector.
Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners		Information not available

- [96] https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/Dokumente/BgblAuth/BGBLA_2016_II_301/COO_2026_100_2_1298110.pdf#sig
- [97] https://www.sozialministerium.at/cms/siteEN/attachments/9/0/5/CH4138/CMS1411979671365/healthcareprofessions_in_austria_2017.pdf
- [98] https://www.sozialministerium.at/cms/siteEN/attachments/9/0/5/CH4138/CMS1411979671365/healthcareprofessions_in_austria_2017.pdf
- [99] <http://www.bic.at/berufsinformation.php?beruf&pflgeassistentin&brfid=968&tab=3>
- [100] https://www.sozialministerium.at/cms/siteEN/attachments/9/0/5/CH4138/CMS1411979671365/healthcareprofessions_in_austria_2017.pdf
- [101] <http://www.bic.at/berufsinformation.php?beruf&pflgeassistentin&brfid=968&tab=3>
- [102] https://www.sozialministerium.at/cms/siteEN/attachments/9/0/5/CH4138/CMS1411979671365/healthcareprofessions_in_austria_2017.pdf
- [103] https://www.sozialministerium.at/cms/siteEN/attachments/9/0/5/CH4138/CMS1411979671365/healthcareprofessions_in_austria_2017.pdf
- [104] <https://www.bildungssystem.at/en/health-professions/vet-for-healthcare-professions/>
- [105] <https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung/Bundesnormen/10010064/BRPG%2c%20Fassung%20vom%2010.05.2019.pdf>
- [106] https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung_and_https://www.sozialministerium.at/cms/site/attachments/0/8/1/CH4043/CMS1538051085664/gesundheitsberufe_2019.pdf/Bundesnormen/20009672/PA_PFA-AV%2c%20Fassung%20vom%2009.05.2019.pdf
- [107] https://www.sozialministerium.at/cms/siteEN/attachments/9/0/5/CH4138/CMS1411979671365/healthcareprofessions_in_austria_2017.pdf
- [108] See Tritscher-Archan, S., Petanovitsch, A. (2016). *Key competences in vocational education and training – Austria*. Cedefop ReferNet thematic perspectives series. https://cumulus.cedefop.europa.eu/files/vetelib/2016/ReferNet_AT_KC.pdf

Nursing programme leading to ISCED level 454 (Diplomierte/r Gesundheits- und Krankenpfleger/in, GuK)

EQF level	Not yet assigned to the NQF	ISCED-P 2011 level	454 This programme is being upgraded at the moment. Until the end of 2023 this secondary-level programme will be transferred into a tertiary bachelor's programme offered at universities of applied sciences (109)
Usual entry grade	11	Usual completion grade	13
Usual entry age	17	Usual completion age	20
Length of a programme (years)	3 years (4 600 hours)		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?	✗	Is it part of formal education and training system?	✓
Is it initial VET?	✓	Is it continuing VET?	✓ (for adults with relevant IVET or professional experience)
Is it offered free of charge?	School programmes are financed by the public, school attendance is free of charge for the learners.		Is it available for adults? ✓
ECVET or other credits	Not applicable		
Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)	Theoretical instruction in schools and work placements in hospitals etc. alternate during the entire training.		
Main providers	public schools for nurses (110)		
Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies	> 50 % (111)		
Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)	Theoretical instruction in schools and work placements in hospitals etc. alternate during the entire training.		
Main target groups	Programmes are accessible to young people and adults.		
Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)	Schools for nurses (until 31.12.2023): - minimum age of 17; - successful completion of tenth school grade; - medical fitness (medical certificate); - trustworthiness (judicial record); - admission test or interview (112) . UAS bachelor programmes: - general university entrance qualifications or relevant professional qualifications; - professional aptitude and medical fitness.		
Assessment of learning outcomes	Ongoing und regular assessment during the programme.		
Diplomas/certificates provided	Schools for nurses (until 31.12.2019): - written thesis, diploma examination before an examination commission/diploma UAS bachelor programmes: - bachelor examination The qualification is fully recognised by VET and labour authorities and highly appreciated by labour market.		
Examples of qualifications	Qualified nurse		
Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	Graduates can progress to - the labour market (in nursing professions; prerequisite for carrying out the profession is the registration in the healthcare profession register) (113) - further education programmes at upper secondary level (for additional qualifications in specialist areas, higher-status healthcare, teaching professions or managerial task; a variety of fast-track training programmes are available) (114) (115) - CVET programmes <i>Berufsreifeprüfung (BRP)</i> as higher education entrance exam (116)		

Destination of graduates	information not available
Awards through validation of prior learning	 • short training course for care assistants, level 2: 2 years • short training course for medical non-commissioned officers: 1 year • short training course after specialised basic training in paediatric or psychiatric nursing: 1 year • short training course for midwives: 2 years • short training course for persons, who successfully completed studies of human medicine: 1 year and 6 months (117)
General education subjects	
Key competences	 Key competences play a crucial role in all school types of the VET sector in Austria (118) .
Application of learning outcomes approach	 With the development of the National Qualifications Framework learning outcomes have been made more explicit in the curricula of all schools in the VET sector.
Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners	In 2016/17 19 598 learners were registered in healthcare schools. Data on the allocation of learners to different programmes are not available (119) . At the UAS in the study year 2018 2 767 learners were registered in bachelor nursing programmes (120) .

[110] As from 1.1.2014 it is foreseen that this programme will be provided only by universities of applied sciences (UAS) and not any longer by public schools for nurses.

[111] <https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung/Bundesnormen/10011179/GuK-AV%2c%20Fassung%20vom%2010.05.2019.pdf>

[112] https://www.sozialministerium.at/cms/siteEN/attachments/9/0/5/CH4138/CMS1411979671365/healthcareprofessions_in_austria_2017.pdf

[113] https://www.sozialministerium.at/cms/siteEN/attachments/9/0/5/CH4138/CMS1411979671365/healthcareprofessions_in_austria_2017.pdf

[114] https://www.sozialministerium.at/cms/siteEN/attachments/9/0/5/CH4138/CMS1411979671365/healthcareprofessions_in_austria_2017.pdf

[115] <https://www.bildungssystem.at/en/health-professions/vet-for-healthcare-professions/>

[116] <https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung/Bundesnormen/10010064/BRPG%2c%20Fassung%20vom%2010.05.2019.pdf>

[117] https://www.sozialministerium.at/cms/siteEN/attachments/9/0/5/CH4138/CMS1411979671365/healthcareprofessions_in_austria_2017.pdf

[118] See Tritscher-Archan, S.; Petanovitsch, A. (2016). *Key competences in vocational education and training – Austria*. Cedefop ReferNet thematic perspectives series. https://cumulus.cedefop.europa.eu/files/vetelib/2016/ReferNet_AT_KC.pdf

[119] Statistics Austria (2018). *Bildung in Zahlen 2016/17, Tabellenband [Education in numbers: 2016/17]*. Vienna: Statistics Austria. https://www.statistik.at/web_de/services/publikationen/5/index.html?includePage=detailedView§ionName=Bildung&pubId=509

[120] <https://suasprod.noc-science.at/XLCubedWeb/WebForm/ShowReport.aspx?rep=004+studierende%2f002a+fachhochschulen%2f010+ordentliche+studierende+an+fhs+-+zeitreihe+wintersemester.xml&toolbar=true>

EQF 5
Add-on VET programmes
2-3 years
ISCED 554

Add-on VET programmes leading to EQF level 5, ISCED 554 (Aufbaulehrgänge) Add-on VET programmes provide in-depth general education and high-quality specialist training in different specialist areas including in technology, the business sphere, fashion and design, arts and crafts, tourism, agriculture and forestry as well as elementary pedagogy.

EQF level	5	ISCED-P 2011 level	554
Usual entry grade	12	Usual completion grade	13
Usual entry age	18	Usual completion age	20 to 21
Length of a programme (years)	From 2 to (mostly) 3 years		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?	✗	Is it part of formal education and training system?	✓
Is it initial VET?	✗ To access this programme, learners need to have an IVET qualification.	Is it continuing VET?	✓ The programme is accessible to adults with relevant IVET or professional experience.
Is it offered free of charge?	✓ School programmes are financed by the public, school attendance is free of charge for the learners. For schools of private provider organisations tuition fees need to be paid.	Is it available for adults?	✓ Add-on programmes lead graduates of intermediate (EQF 4) VET programmes (school-based and dual VET programmes) to the same qualification as obtained in five-year school-based VET programmes (<i>berufsbildende höhere Schulen, BHS</i>)
ECVET or other credits	Not applicable		
Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)	• practice-oriented • learning in workshops and labs, training restaurants, and practice firms • mandatory work placements (except for programmes for people in employment) • project and diploma assignments as part of the final exam (often set by companies or carried out with their collaboration) ⁽¹²¹⁾		
Main providers	Most schools offering these post-secondary programmes are public schools, some are private schools with public status.		
Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies	30%		
Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)	• learning in workshops and labs, training restaurants, and practice firms • mandatory work placements of several weeks during the summer months • project and diploma assignments as part of final exams that are often set by companies or carried out with their collaboration ⁽¹²²⁾		
Main target groups	These programmes are mainly targeted at adults.		
Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)	The entry requirements are: • successful completion of initial VET (school-based or dual VET programme in the respective field); • VET graduates with a non-field related qualification have to attend a bridge course prior to entering an add-on course.		
Assessment of learning outcomes	• regular assessments (written, oral exams) during the school year in each subject • mid-term and end-of-term reports • HE entrance examination If learners fail a subject (e.g. after the first year), they can take an exam at the beginning of the following year. If they fail more than three subjects, they have to repeat the entire class. If learners fail the Matura exam, they can re-do (parts of) it.		
Diplomas/certificates provided	<i>Reife- und Diplomprüfungszeugnis</i> , i.e. HE entrance qualification and higher VET qualification (= double qualification) The qualification is fully recognised by VET and labour authorities and highly appreciated by labour market and economy.		

Examples of qualifications	After successfully completing an add-on programme, graduates can carry out higher-level tasks in the vocational field which the programme was about (i.e. in engineering, in management and service industries, in agriculture and forestry, in administration, etc.). Add-on programmes do not lead to specific professions. The qualification (<i>Abschlusszeugnis</i>) opens up a broad range of activities in a specific vocational field.
Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	Graduates: • obtain general access to tertiary education (studies at universities, universities of applied science and universities of teacher training); • can enter a range of CVET options; • can directly enter the labour market.
Destination of graduates	Information not available
Awards through validation of prior learning	✓
General education subjects	✓
Key competences	✓ Key competences play a crucial role in all school types of the VET sector in Austria (123) .
Application of learning outcomes approach	✓ With the development of the National Qualifications Framework learning outcomes have been made more explicit in the curricula of all schools in the VET sector.
Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners	Information not available

[121] Cedefop (2018). *Spotlight on vocational education and training in Austria*. Luxembourg: Publications Office.
http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/8127_en.pdf

[122] Cedefop (2018). *Spotlight on vocational education and training in Austria*. Luxembourg: Publications Office.
http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/8127_en.pdf

[123] See Tritscher-Archan, S., Petanovitsch, A. (2016). *Key competences in vocational education and training – Austria*. Cedefop ReferNet thematic perspectives series. https://cumulus.cedefop.europa.eu/files/vetelib/2016/ReferNet_AT_KC.pdf

Post-secondary VET school programmes leading to EQF level 5, ISCED 554 (Kollegs). Post-secondary school programmes provide high-quality specialist training in different specialist areas including in technology, the business sphere, fashion and design, arts and crafts, tourism, agriculture and forestry as well as elementary pedagogy.

EQF level	5	ISCED-P 2011 level	554
Usual entry grade	12	Usual completion grade	13
Usual entry age	18	Usual completion age	20 to 21
Length of a programme (years)	From 2 (mostly) to 3 years		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?	✗	Is it part of formal education and training system?	✓
Is it initial VET?	✗	Is it continuing VET?	✓ The programmes are accessible to adults with a higher education entrance qualification.
Is it offered free of charge?	✓ <i>Kolleg</i> programmes are financed by the public, attendance is free of charge for learners. For programmes of private provider organisations tuition fees need to be paid.	Is it available for adults?	✓ Post-secondary VET school programmes lead graduates of general education programmes to the same qualification as obtained in five-year school-based VET programmes (<i>berufsbildende höhere Schulen, BHS</i>)
ECVET or other credits	Not applicable		
Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)	• practice-oriented • learning in workshops and labs, training restaurants, and practice firms • mandatory work placements (except for programmes for people in employment) • project and diploma assignments as part of the final exam (often set by companies or carried out with their collaboration)⁽¹²⁴⁾		
Main providers	Most schools offering these tertiary programmes are public schools, some are private schools with public status.		
Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies	30%		
Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)	• learning in workshops and labs, training restaurants, and practice firms • mandatory work placements of several weeks during the summer months • project and diploma assignments as part of final exams that are often set by companies or carried out with their collaboration⁽¹²⁵⁾		
Main target groups	These programmes are mainly targeted at adults.		
Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)	Higher education entrance qualification		
Assessment of learning outcomes	• regular assessments (written, oral exams) during the school year in each subject • mid-term and end-of-term reports • diploma examination (<i>Diplomprüfung</i>) If learners fail a subject (e.g. after the first year), they can take an exam at the beginning of the following year. If they fail more than three subjects, they have to repeat the entire class. If learners fail the Matura exam, they can re-do (parts of) it.		
Diplomas/certificates provided	<i>Diplomprüfungszeugnis</i> In combination with the higher education entrance qualification (<i>Reifeprüfung</i>), graduates of the post-secondary VET school programmes have the same qualification as graduates from five-year school-based VET programmes at upper secondary level (<i>berufsbildende höhere Schule, BHS</i>). The qualification is fully recognised by VET and labour authorities and highly appreciated by labour market and economy.		

Examples of qualifications	After successfully completing a post-secondary VET school programme, graduates can carry out higher-level tasks in the vocational field which the programme was about (i.e. in engineering, in management and service industries, in agriculture and forestry, in administration, etc.). Post-secondary VET school programmes do not lead to specific professions. The qualification (<i>Abschlusszeugnis</i>) opens up a broad range of activities in a specific vocational field.
Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	Graduates of post-secondary VET school programmes • obtain general access to tertiary education (studies at university, universities of applied science, universities of teacher training); • can enter a range of CVET options and • can directly enter the labour market.
Destination of graduates	Information not available
Awards through validation of prior learning	✓
General education subjects	✓
Key competences	✓ Key competences play a crucial role in all school types of the VET sector in Austria. (126)
Application of learning outcomes approach	✓ With the development of the National Qualifications Framework learning outcomes have been made more explicit in the curricula of all schools in the VET sector.
Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners	Information not available

[124] Cedefop (2018). *Spotlight on vocational education and training in Austria*. Luxembourg: Publications Office. http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/8127_en.pdf

[125] Cedefop (2018). *Spotlight on vocational education and training in Austria*. Luxembourg: Publications Office. http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/8127_en.pdf

[126] See Tritscher-Archan, S.; Petanovitsch, A. (2016). *Key competences in vocational education and training – Austria*. Cedefop ReferNet thematic perspectives series. https://cumulus.cedefop.europa.eu/files/vetelib/2016/ReferNet_AT_KC.pdf

EQF EQF: 6 (master craftsperson qualification); the other qualification in this VET programme category are not yet classified

Master craftsperson et al.

programmes

and qualifications

ISCED 554

Master craftsperson et al. programmes and qualifications offered at ISCED level 554. There are various programmes subsumed under this category: master craftsperson programme (Meisterschule); industrial master programme (Werkmeisterschule, WMS); building craftsperson programme (Bauhandwerkerschule).

EQF level	EQF: 6 (master craftsperson qualification); the other qualification in this VET programme category are not yet classified	ISCED-P 2011 level	554
Usual entry grade	12	Usual completion grade	13 to 14
Usual entry age	18	Usual completion age	19 to 20
Length of a programme (years)	From 1 to 2 years Duration varies among the different specific programmes: • master craftsperson programmes: 1 to 2 years • industrial master programme: mostly 2 years • building craftsperson programme: mostly 2 years		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?	✗	Is it part of formal education and training system?	✓
Is it initial VET?	✗	Is it continuing VET?	✓
Is it offered free of charge?	✗	Is it available for adults?	✓
ECVET or other credits	Not applicable		
Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)	• special tuition in theory and practice • instruction by experts from the specific professions/fields • some programmes are full-time, some are part-time		
Main providers	• CET providers of the social partners (e.g. WFI, bfi) • public schools (offering also school-based VET programmes at upper secondary level)		
Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies	60%		
Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)	• learning in workshops and labs • focus on learning from real-work situations		
Main target groups	These programmes target adults with relevant IVET qualifications plus professional practise and the intention of acquiring intrapreneurship and entrepreneurship competences.		
Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)	• minimum age of 18 years • successful completion of an initial VET path at upper secondary level		
Assessment of learning outcomes	• in industrial and building craftsperson programmes: final examination • graduates of master craftsperson programmes can sit the master craftsperson examination offered by Master Craftsperson Authorities		
Diplomas/certificates provided	Final certificate (<i>Abschlusszeugnis</i>) The qualifications are fully recognised by VET and labour authorities and highly appreciated by labour market and economy.		
Examples of qualifications	• industrial master • building craftsperson		

Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	Graduates can • directly enter the labour market (asset for improving in-company career options or changing companies); • set up one's own company or take over a business; • can enter a range of CVET options; • on certain conditions can obtain access to a bachelor degree programmes at a University of Applied Science; • have access to the <i>Berufsreifeprüfung</i> (BRP) which grants access to higher education institutions.
Destination of graduates	Information not available
Awards through validation of prior learning	
General education subjects	
Key competences	 Key competences play a crucial role in all school types of the VET sector in Austria (127) .
Application of learning outcomes approach	 With the development of the National Qualifications Framework learning outcomes have been made more explicit in the curricula of all schools in the VET sector.
Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners	Information not available

[127] See Tritscher-Archan, S.; Petanovitsch, A. (2016). *Key competences in vocational education and training – Austria*. Cedefop ReferNet thematic perspectives series. https://cumulus.cedefop.europa.eu/files/vetelib/2016/ReferNet_AT_KC.pdf

EQF 6
Bachelor programmes
(FH)
3-4 years
ISCED 665

Bachelor programmes at Universities of Applied Sciences (Fachhochschulen, FH) leading to EQF level 6, ISCED 665

EQF level	6	ISCED-P 2011 level	665
Usual entry grade	12+	Usual completion grade	15+
Usual entry age	18+	Usual completion age	20+
Length of a programme (years)	From 3 to 4 years - day form: 3 years - evening form (part-time basis): 4 years (128)		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?	✗		
Is it part of formal education and training system?	✓		
Is it initial VET?	Yes and no depending on the qualification obtained before entering a bachelor programme		
Is it continuing VET?	Yes and no depending on the qualification obtained before entering a bachelor programme		
Is it offered free of charge?	✓ In general, bachelor programmes offered at Universities of Applied Sciences are financed by the public, so attendance is free of charge for the learners. Providers of study programmes are, however, entitled by law to charge tuition fees (2019: 363.36 EUR per semester) (129) .		
Is it available for adults?	✓		
ECVET or other credits	180 ECTS (130)		
Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)	- Bachelor programmes are research- and practice-oriented - a period of work placement is a mandatory part of the curriculum. - some are based on the dual principle, where theory and practice in enterprises alternate (131)		
Main providers	Universities of Applied Sciences		
Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies	40 %		
Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)	- learning in workshops and labs - mandatory work placements - bachelor thesis is often set by companies or carried out with their collaboration		
Main target groups	Bachelor programmes target adults with a higher entrance qualification (<i>Matura</i>). However, also graduates of intermediate VET programmes, which do not end with a HE entrance examination, can – under certain conditions (work experience, entrance examination) – enter bachelor programmes at UAS.		
Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)	- HE entrance qualification - work experience, if required - entrance examination, if required		
Assessment of learning outcomes	- regular assessments during the study year - course certificates and examinations - bachelor thesis (132) A failed course or bachelor exam can be repeated twice. A single repetition of a study year is possible (133) .		
Diplomas/certificates provided	A bachelor degree is given to learners who successfully completed their bachelor thesis and passed the bachelor examination. The bachelor qualification is fully recognised by VET and labour authorities so graduates can follow further studies or enter the labour market.		
Examples of qualifications	Qualifications in accordance to the specific study field.		
Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	Graduates can further progress to a master programme offered at ISCED level 767.		
Destination of graduates	Information not available.		

Awards through validation of prior learning	✓
General education subjects	✗
Key competences	✓
Application of learning outcomes approach	✓
Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners	Information not available

[130] <https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung/Bundesnormen/10009895/FHStG%2c%20Fassung%20vom%2006.04.2017.pdf>

[131] Cedefop (2018). *Spotlight on vocational education and training in Austria*. Luxembourg: Publications Office.
http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/8127_en.pdf

[132] <https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung/Bundesnormen/10009895/FHStG%2c%20Fassung%20vom%2006.04.2017.pdf> [accessed 15.5.2019].

[133] <https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung/Bundesnormen/10009895/FHStG%2c%20Fassung%20vom%2006.04.2017.pdf> [accessed 15.5.2019].

EQF 7
Master programmes
(FH)
1-2 years
ISCED 767

Master programmes at Universities of Applied Sciences (Master-Studiengänge an Fachhochschulen) leading to EQF level 7, ISCED 767

EQF level	7	ISCED-P 2011 level	767
Usual entry grade	16+	Usual completion grade	17+
Usual entry age	21+	Usual completion age	22+
Length of a programme (years)	From 1 to 2 years: - day form: 1 year - evening form (part-time basis): 2 years (134)		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?	✗	Is it part of formal education and training system?	✓
Is it initial VET?	✗	Is it continuing VET?	✓
Is it offered free of charge?	✓	Is it available for adults?	✓
In general, master programmes offered at Universities of Applied Sciences are financed by the public, so attendance is free of charge for the learners. Providers of study programmes are, however, entitled by law to charge tuition fees (2019: 363.36 EUR per semester) (135) .			
ECVET or other credits	60 or 90 or 120 ECTS (136)		
Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)	- Master programmes are research-oriented. - some programmes are based on the dual principle, where theory and practice in enterprises alternate (137)		
Main providers	Universities of Applied Sciences		
Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies	20 %		
Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)	- learning in workshops and labs - master thesis is often set by companies or carried out with their collaboration		
Assessment of learning outcomes	- regular assessments during the study year - course certificates and examinations - master thesis (138) A failed course or master exam can be repeated twice. A single repetition of a study year is possible (139) .		
Diplomas/certificates provided	Master thesis followed by a master examination before an exam commission/diploma The Master qualification is fully recognised by VET and labour authorities and highly appreciated by labour market and economy.		
Examples of qualifications	Qualifications in accordance to the specific study field (140)		
Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	Graduates can further progress to doctoral programmes.		
Destination of graduates	Information not available		
Awards through validation of prior learning	✓		
General education subjects	✗		
Key competences	✓		
Application of learning outcomes approach	✓		
Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners	Information not available		

[136] <https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung/Bundesnormen/10009895/FHStG%2c%20Fassung%20vom%2006.04.2017.pdf>

[137] Cedefop (2018). *Spotlight on vocational education and training in Austria*. Luxembourg: Publications Office.
http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/8127_en.pdf

[138] <https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung/Bundesnormen/10009895/FHStG%2c%20Fassung%20vom%2006.04.2017.pdf>

- [139] <https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung/Bundesnormen/10009895/FHStG%2c%20Fassung%20vom%2006.04.2017.pdf>
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