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## Austrian Apprenticeship Training in Figures 2011

### Structural Data, Trends and Prospects

The ibw “Austrian Apprenticeship Training in Figures 2011” study, which has been published every year since 2000, has come out in a revised and newly designed format in 2011. The key objective has remained unchanged: to generate a compact set of data for training managers, policy-makers and academics in the form of an overall overview of the key indicators which are available on the apprenticeship training system in Austria and can be collected and processed. Another objective is to make a scientifically founded contribution to educational policy discussions in Austria based on these empirical data.

#### Major facts on apprenticeship training in Austria

##### International comparative data:

- Among all EU countries, in 2010 Austria holds the **second lowest unemployment rate of people below the age of 25** (8.8%).
- In 2009 this ‘youth unemployment rate’ increased less in Austria (during the international financial and economic crisis) than in the EU overall and was again declining in 2010 (compared to the EU average).
- In 2010, the share of early school leavers (18- to 24-year-olds who have not acquired any upper secondary qualification and do not take part in any IVET and CVET programme) in Austria (8.3%) is also clearly below the EU average (14.1%) (note: VET = vocational education and training, IVET = initial VET, CVET = continuing VET).
- Therefore, when looking at it from the reverse perspective, the share of 20- to 24-year-olds who hold at least an upper secondary qualification in Austria in 2010 is also higher (85.6%) than **in the EU overall** (79.0%). In the upper secondary sector, Austria boasts the **highest share of VET** (students at VET schools and colleges) within the EU.
- of 15-year-olds). In addition, the effects of the international financial and economic crisis can also be felt. In late 2010, 129,899 apprentices were in training, almost 2,000 fewer than in late 2009 (131,676).
- The number of apprentices is developing very differently in the Austrian provinces: in the period 1990-2010 there were **actually increases in apprenticeship figures in Vorarlberg (+5%) and Tyrol (+2%)**, whereas considerable **losses** could be observed in the provinces **Burgenland (-25%), Styria (-24%) and Carinthia (-20%)**. The majority of apprentices by far are found in **Upper Austria** (27,591 apprentices in late December 2010).
- Broken down by **economic sectors**, the strong decline in the number of apprentices in the crafts and trade section since the mid-1990s stands out in particular. Growth can mainly be seen in the field of non-chamber members and supra-company apprenticeship training.
- The **number of apprentices in the 1st year of training** increased somewhat in 2010 (2010: 39,761, 2009: 39,605 apprentices).
- The **apprenticeship beginners’ rate** - i.e. the share of apprentices in their 1st year among 15-year-olds - has remained **relatively constant** since the mid-1990s. **Some 40% of teenagers of each age group take up apprenticeship training**. In 2010 this share was even slightly higher (41.8%).

##### National key data:

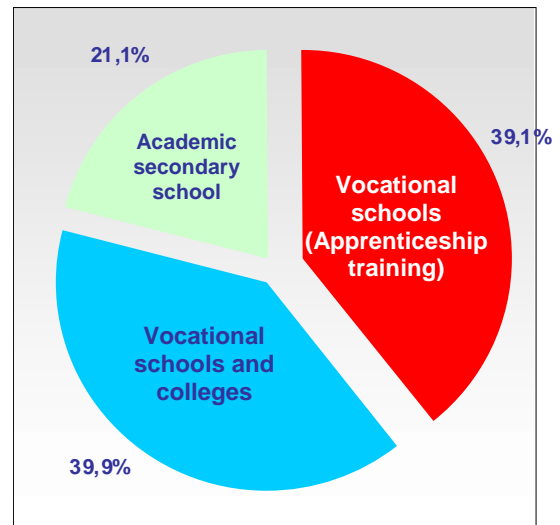
- The **number of apprentices** in Austria is closely associated with demographic development (number

- The **apprentices' average age in their 1st apprenticeship year** is increasing a little (2010: **16.4 years**).
- An analysis of the **apprentices' previous qualifications in their 1st apprenticeship year** reveals that in the school year 2009/10, slightly more than one third of students (**36.4%**) in their first classes (10th grade) of part-time vocational school had previously attended **pre-vocational school**, 16.0% a VET school, 15.2% a lower secondary school, and 9.9% a VET college.
- The **share of female apprentices** increased slightly until about 1990 and has recently stabilised at a relatively constant level (at **some 34%**).
- **A particularly pronounced focus on a few apprenticeship occupations** can still be noted **among female apprentices**. In late 2010 almost 50% (48% to be precise) of female apprentices were trained in merely 3 apprenticeships (retail trade, office assistance, hairdresser). Among male apprentices the share of the 3 most frequently attended apprenticeships combined was only slightly above 25%.
- Whereas the number of training providers in Austria had remained largely stable for a long period (at slightly below 40,000) after the late 1990s, a clear **decline in the number of training providers** can again be noted in recent years - with this certainly also due to the impact of the international financial and economic crisis and the decreasing number of 15-year-olds (i.e. suitable apprentices). For many companies it has become difficult to find teenagers/apprentices with sufficient basic qualifications (e.g. in arithmetic, languages). Given the often rising occupational requirements and further technological developments, deficits in basic competences weigh even heavier. This decline in the number of training companies (based on chamber members) totalled almost 1,000 enterprises each in 2009 and 2010.
- In the same period, 2009 and 2010, the number of company-based apprenticeship posts declined considerably more than the number of apprentices overall. The **number of apprentices in companies fell in 2009 and 2010 by about 4,000 each** (from 128,233 in 2008 to 120,437 in 2010).
- Closely connected with the development of apprenticeship figures (and therefore probably also linked with the current decline) is demographic development, i.e. the availability of (suitable) teenagers/apprenticeship seekers. **By approximately 2015 a clear drop in the number of 15-year-olds** can be expected. According to the main scenario of Statistics Austria's population projection, the number of 15-year-olds will decrease from 100,434 at the interim peak in 2007 to 84,282 in 2016.
- The integration of young people with a migration background into the (upper secondary) IVET system can be seen as a particular challenge for the overall very successful Austrian VET system but also as particular potential for recruiting additional apprentices and skilled workers. The **share of teenagers with a migration background drops sharply from the 9th school year onwards**. Among young people with a migration background who leave the Austrian (upper secondary) IVET system early, incidentally, **no gender-specific differences worth mentioning** can be found.
- The **underrepresentation of young people with a migration background** in the upper secondary IVET system is **especially pronounced in the apprenticeship sector**. Whereas (in the school year 2009/10) the share of teenagers who do not speak German as their mother tongue was still 23.2% at pre-vocational school (by the way, exactly the same as primary schools), it was merely 8.8% at part-time vocational school. Even in the upper cycle of academic secondary school (12.7%) and VET colleges (11.7%) the share of teenagers who do not speak German as their mother tongue is higher.
- Furthermore, in the school year 2009/10 **only about half of teenagers with a migration background** (here defined as non-Austrian citizenship or non-German mother tongue) **at age 14** (key date 1 Sept.) **were already in year 9**, which means it can be assumed that many of them already fulfil the (nine years of) compulsory schooling before reaching year 9. Overall, however, the share of 14-year-olds who already attended year 9 was about 77% in the school year 2009/10.
- Currently available data does not allow a precise calculation of a **drop-out rate from apprenticeship**. But it can by all means be assumed that the drop-out rate from apprenticeships - defined as the share of apprenticeship beginners who do not complete any apprenticeship - is **clearly below 17%**.
- As many as around **6%** of all apprentices take part in the **Apprenticeship with Matura** scheme (official title: *'Berufsmatura: Apprenticeship with Reifeprüfung'*) (note: *Matura* and *Reifeprüfung* are German for the upper secondary certificate). Related participant figures have increased significantly since the project was launched (in 2008).

- The number of participants in **supra-company training programmes commissioned by Public Employment Service (AMS)** in the training year 2010/11 totalled 12,702. These included **10,384 participants in supra-company apprenticeship training according to §30b of the Vocational Training Act or BAG**, 267 participants in measures based on the Youth Guarantee Act or JASG (which are expiring), **1,899 participants in an integrative (inclusive) IVET programme commissioned by AMS**, and 152 participants in another supra-company training commissioned by AMS.
- In late December 2010 a total of **5,173 apprentices were in an integrative IVET programme**, 490 more than in the previous year. Since the establishment of integrative IVET (or *IBA* in German) in 2003, the number of young people has continually increased. Overall, the overwhelming majority of *IBA* apprentices (63%) in 2010 are also trained in companies. In 2010, around 71% of *IBA* apprentices are completing integrative IVET in the form of a prolongation of the apprenticeship period, some 29% in the form of a partial qualification.
- In 2010, according to the statistics of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber *WKO*, 58,568 **apprenticeship-leave exams** were completed (exam attempts) - slightly more than in 2009 (55,207). The number of successfully completed exams was 48,359 (**82.6%**) in 2010. Therefore the **success rate** was slightly above the year 2009 (82.5%). Broken down by economic sectors, the highest share of passed exams is found (also) in 2010 in the bank and insurance section (94.7%), the lowest (76.9%) in the field of supra-company training establishments (§8b, §29, §30, §30b of the *BAG*). 17% of apprenticeship-leave exam attempts were conducted in the form of an exceptional admission (according to §23 (5) *BAG*).
- In the school year 2009/10 **almost 40% of students in year 10** were attending a **VET school or college (BMHS) or part-time vocational school (apprenticeship) each**, 21% an academic secondary school (cf. Diagram 1). The long-term observation (differentiated by VET school and college) in the school years 1994/95 to 2009/10 reveals: the share of students in part-time vocational schools (apprenticeship training) was declining in these 15 years (from 43.8% to 39.1%), whereas VET colleges in particular posted gains (from 22.5% to 25.9%). In the individual analysis, however, apprenticeship training (part-time vocational schools) is still by a wide margin the quantitatively

tively most significant IVET pathway at the level of year 10 (39.1% of students)

**Diagram 1: Distribution of students in year 10 (school year 2009/07)**



Source: Statistics Austria, BMUKK + ibw calculations

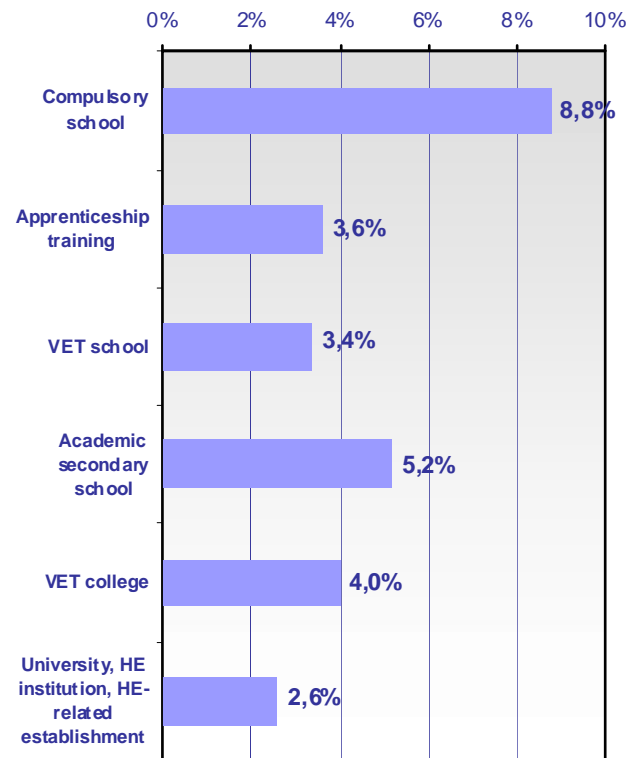
- For 2010 the Microcensus Labour Force Survey identified as the **highest educational attainment of 20- to 24-year-olds** a VET college or academic secondary school in 36.9% of cases and the **apprenticeship diploma for 34.4%**. **14.1% of 20- to 24-year-olds in 2010 did not have any qualification exceeding compulsory schooling.**
- According to a model calculation for 2009/10 and 2010/11, **total public funds for (company-based) dual apprenticeship training** are estimated to be a **maximum of EUR 5,647 per apprenticeship post** (note: costs for part-time vocational school and the subsidisation scheme for apprenticeship posts). Public funds per trainee are therefore clearly below the costs per student at VET schools and colleges (EUR 8,902) and supra-company IVET commissioned by AMS (EUR 17,046). This means that company-based apprenticeship training requires **by far the lowest public funds** of the three analysed and most important IVET forms at upper secondary level.
- The breakdown of youth unemployment rates by provinces reveals a very pronounced negative correlation with the apprenticeship beginners' rate, i.e. **the youth unemployment rate tends to be lower the more teenagers of an age group complete an apprenticeship**. As this also applies to the unemployment rate of 20- to 24-year-olds, who as a rule have already completed an apprenticeship pathway, this illustrates **the positive effect of dual training on the**

**labour market integration of teenagers and young adults.**

- In the next years ‘**demographic pressure**’ on **skilled labour availability** is expected from **two sides**: from a **declining number of job entrants** (teenagers) and an **increasing number of job leavers** (retirements). This development can be illustrated particularly clearly by comparing the number of 20-year-olds (assumed average age of job entrants) with the number of 60-year-olds (assumed average retirement age). From 2015 onwards there will be more 60-year-olds in Austria than 20-year-olds. At the **peak of this demographic ‘gap’ in 2024** a total of 135,006 60-year-olds will compare with merely 91,807 20-year-olds in Austria, i.e. 60-year-olds will exceed 20-year-olds by more than 40,000 people.
- Regarding the analysis **by educational level** (cf. Diagram 2) the **calculation of the unemployment rate** (according to the international definition) reveals the following: in 2010 the unemployment rate of those whose highest educational attainment was compulsory schooling was 8.8% in Austria. The unemployment rate of academic secondary graduates was 5.2%. In this analysis, the maximum rate of all other groups (educational levels) was 4%. The **lowest unemployment rates** in 2010 are shown for **graduates of a university/HE institution (2.6%), a VET school (3.4%) and an apprenticeship (3.6%)**. According to this calculation mode, the unemployment rate for Austria in 2010 was 4.4%.

**Diagram 2: Unemployment rate by highest educational attainment (2010)**

(Unemployment rate according to the international definition)



Source: Statistics Austria (Microcensus Labour Force Survey)

- **In absolute figures the majority of vacancies** in Austria in 2010 were clearly offered for **graduates of an apprenticeship/master craftsperson exam**. In (at least) 206,036 job ads in print media, in 177,375 vacancies registered with AMS and in (at least) 2,558 online ads, graduates of an apprenticeship/master craftsperson exam were sought.
- **88.5% of apprenticeship graduates** in 2010 were **either employed or economically active in line with their qualification** - i.e. at least at the skills level corresponding with their previous IVET pathway.

The entire study can be obtained from ibw in a printed form (ibw research report no. 163, ISBN 978-3-902742-43-8) or [online](#).