



Structures of Education,  
Initial Training  
and Adult Education  
Systems in Europe

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If you wish to have more detailed information on education systems in Europe, we warmly recommend that you consult the EURYBASE database (<http://www.eurydice.org>) and the CEDEFOP monographs (<http://www.cedefop.gr>)

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## INTRODUCTION

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Europe is characterized by a very wide variety of education and training systems. In order that this diversity should be fully appreciated, EURYDICE, the information network on education in Europe and the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP) jointly published *Education and Initial Training Systems in the European Union* for the first time in 1990. This book was updated in 1995 and then again in 1999/2000. Given the number of countries it now covers<sup>1</sup> and the amount of data available, this most recent update has been placed for consultation on the EURYDICE Network website (<http://www.eurydice.org>), instead of being distributed in printed paper form. In this way, it may be accessed by a maximum number of readers and updated on a more regular basis.

Descriptions relating to individual countries in turn include basic information on the administration and structure of their systems of education and initial vocational training at all levels, as well as brief accounts of their higher education and systems for initial and in-service teacher training, and of the status of teachers. EURYDICE and CEDEFOP have also used this latest update to add a chapter on adult education, which is an important topic in relation to the development of lifelong learning in Europe.

As in the previous edition, the information is structured with respect to a common table of contents to facilitate inter-country comparisons while ensuring that special features peculiar to each system are duly emphasized.

The first chapter within each country section is devoted to a short presentation of the country concerned, together with the basic principles governing its education and training, the division of responsibilities and then more specific information (relating to administration, inspection, financing, private schooling and advisory bodies). The major reforms of education systems are also considered.

The other chapters deal in turn with pre-primary education, compulsory and post-compulsory education (general, technical and vocational), the initial vocational training of young people and higher education. Here also, the way these chapters are structured depends on each national context. Where pre-primary education is not in reality separate from primary education, or where compulsory education spans different levels, no artificial division has been created. In the case of all countries, a brief description of the aims and structure of the level of education concerned is followed by further headings devoted to the curriculum, assessment, teachers and statistics.

Initial vocational training is the subject of a chapter in its own right, as it is generally provided outside the ordinary education system, whether as part of schemes for apprenticeship, the special training of young people or vocational integration. This is followed by a chapter on higher education, in which a summary description is supplemented by sections on admission, fees, the academic year, courses, qualifications and assessment.

As indicated above, this latest updating also provides for the first time a general description of the way formal systems of general education and vocational training for adults are organized. The legislative framework and financing of this kind of education are also covered.

The situation regarding teachers is dealt with in a specific section for each level of education discussed. Also provided are statistics on the number of pupils, students, teachers and educational institutions and, where figures are available, on pupil or student/teacher ratios,

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<sup>1</sup> **The European countries taking part in the Community Programme in Education, Socrates.**

attendance and attainment rates or, yet again, on the choice of branches of study or areas of specialization.

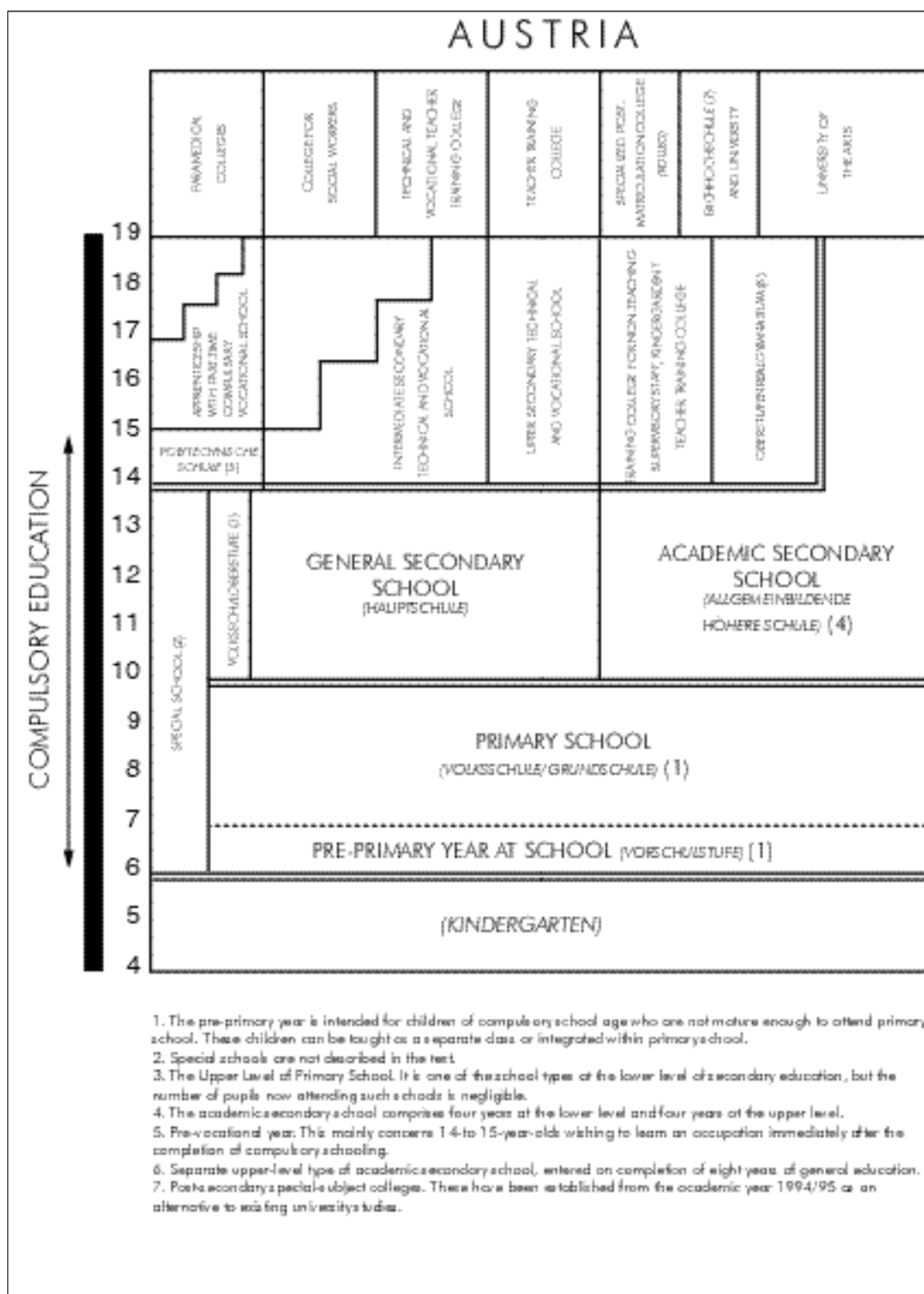
The description for each country is preceded by a diagram of its education system with explanatory notes. Here again, the way the diagrams are presented has, as far as possible, been standardized so that common – and differing – features of the various systems can be more easily identified and compared.

The National Units in the EURYDICE Network have drafted the descriptions for their countries, each using the same proposed outline of content as a common framework. The information on initial vocational training and on adult education has been prepared in close collaboration with members of the documentary information network of CEDEFOP (in the case of the European Union and EFTA/EEA countries) and the National Observatories of the European Training Foundation – ETF (as regards the ten countries of central and eastern Europe). We are extremely grateful to them and to all those who were involved in this project, both in the EURYDICE European Unit in Brussels and at CEDEFOP in Thessaloniki, for their invaluable contribution to this fundamental source of information which is vital to a better understanding of education and training systems in Europe.

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# 1. RESPONSIBILITIES AND ADMINISTRATION

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## 1.1 Background

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Austria is a federal State with a total area of 83,855 square kilometres, consisting of nine provinces (*Länder*). The population amounted to 8,072,200 and Vienna, the capital, had 1,600,280 inhabitants in 1997. According to the last census in 1991, 67% of the population live in urban areas.

A monarchy up until 1918, Austria is now a parliamentary democracy with a Constitution, established in the period between 1920 and 1929, based on republican, democratic, federal and legal principles, as well as the principle of the separation of powers.

The Federal President is the supreme representative of the State, elected directly by the people for a six-year term. The National and Federal Chambers are the legislative bodies of the Republic, the National Chamber (*Nationalrat*) being the most important. The members of the Federal Chamber (*Bundesrat*) come from the parliaments of the nine *Länder*. The Federal Government is formed by the Federal Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor and Federal Ministers. The *Land* parliaments serve as the legislative bodies at *Länder* level. The regional administration is headed by a regional government in each *Land*.

The municipalities enjoy a constitutionally guaranteed right to self-administration, although they are subject to the administrative control of the *Land*. They have an elected municipal council led by the mayor, who is elected either by the municipal council or, depending on the legislation of the *Land*, by the inhabitants in direct elections.

In Austria there is an organisational and institutional division between Church and State. Religion is taught in schools; dispensation from instruction is possible. The predominant religion is Roman Catholicism.

The official language is German. The legal system guarantees the rights of local ethnic groups (Slovenians, Croats, Hungarians, Czechs, Slovaks, Roma and Sinti). This guarantee is also extended to schooling for ethnic groups.

In 1997, the gross domestic product of Austria

was shared among the different employment sectors as follows: primary sector 1.4%, secondary sector 32.3%, tertiary sector 66.3%. The unemployment rate was 4.4% (1997).

## 1.2 Basis of the school system: principles and legislation

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According to the School Organisation Act of 25 July 1962 "it shall be the task of the Austrian school to foster the development of the talents and potential abilities of young persons in accordance with ethical, religious and social values and the appreciation of that which is true, good and beautiful, by giving them an education corresponding to their respective courses of studies. It shall give young people the knowledge and skills required for their future lives and occupations and train them to acquire knowledge on their own initiative".

The Austrian legal system guarantees general access to public schools without distinction of birth, gender, race, status, class, language or religion. Private sector schools, in contrast, may select pupils according to religion, language or gender, although such selection is rarely applied.

## 1.3 Distribution of responsibilities for the organisation and administration of the education and training system

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In Austria, education has always been a most sensitive area, heavily disputed among political decision-makers. This explains the pragmatic distribution of responsibilities between different bodies and entities. The existing legal framework therefore renders attempts at amending education laws very difficult.

The Federal Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs (*Bundesministerium für Unterricht und Kulturelle Angelegenheiten*) has overall

responsibility for primary and secondary education, including general education and vocational schools. The work experience part of initial vocational training is the responsibility of the Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs.

The largest area of non-university higher education falls under the responsibility of the Federal Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs, while the Ministry of Science and Transport is responsible for universities, art colleges and *Fachhochschulen*.

As is the case with government administration in general, responsibilities for legislation and implementation in school education are divided between the Federation and the *Länder*. This division is made as follows:

- The Federation has exclusive responsibility for legislation and implementation with regard to the entire field of general secondary schooling, intermediate and upper technical and vocational education and training for kindergarten teaching and non-teaching staff, and with regard to the conditions of service and staff representation rights of teachers at these schools.
- The Federation is responsible for legislation, and the individual *Länder* are responsible for implementation with regard to the conditions of service and staff representation rights of teachers at public sector schools of compulsory education.
- The Federation is responsible for basic legislation, and the *Länder* are responsible for issuing and implementing laws with regard to the organisational structure of federal education authorities in the *Länder* and the external organisation of public sector schools of compulsory education. External organisation includes the development, construction, maintenance and approval of schools, but also the establishment of pupil numbers per class and teaching periods. All basic legislation has a framework character and is expressed through implementing laws promulgated by the *Landtage*, the legislative bodies at *Länder* level.
- The *Länder* are responsible for legislation and implementation as, for example, with regard to nursery schools (*Kindergarten*).

### School authorities at federal level

Separate federal bodies have been established wherever the Federation is responsible for implementation. These are:

- District School Boards at the level of political "districts";
- Provincial School Boards at the level of the *Länder*; and
- the Federal Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs for the entire territory.

The District and Provincial School Boards are the federal school authorities in the *Länder*. The Austrian system of administration is characterised by a two-tier hierarchy. Provincial School Boards have designated jurisdiction in matters referred to a District School Board, while the Federal Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs deals with cases referred to Provincial School Boards in the first instance.

### Federal Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs

In general, the Federal Government introduces draft laws, known as government bills, in the National Council. Drawn up by the Federal Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs, these drafts have first been submitted to the Collegiate Councils in the District and Provincial School Boards for an expert opinion. Basic laws enacted by the Federation will normally prescribe a deadline by which the *Länder* must issue pertinent implementing laws (six months to one year). Implementing laws are passed by the *Landtag*. More detailed provisions are contained in the individual constitutions of the *Länder*.

The Federal Minister for Education and Cultural Affairs promulgates curricula on the basis of the School Organisation Act. All curricula provide for areas of school autonomy, which schools can but are not required to use. The Ministry endorses textbook lists for every subject. While there is no ban on selecting non-listed textbooks, these will not be made available free of charge.

The preparatory groundwork for curricular development has been entrusted to teachers' working groups set up for virtually all subjects. Within the framework of lists approved by the Ministry, textbooks are selected by Teachers' Conferences which are established by law and which, together with the school head and school partnership bodies, comprise the decision-making bodies within a school.

## Provincial School Boards

Provincial School Boards are directed by the Provincial Governor (as chairman of the Provincial School Board); for all practical purposes he/she is assisted in the fulfilment of his/her duties by an Executive Chairman. The central body within a Provincial School Board is the Collegiate Council, made up of voting members and members with consultative status. Voting members are represented on the Collegiate Council in accordance with the balance of power held by the political parties in the provincial *Landtag*. They are mostly pupils' parents and teachers' representatives.

It is one of the major tasks of the Collegiate Council to submit proposals for the appointment of teachers and head teachers at intermediate and upper secondary schools. The Federal Minister selects one of three candidates suggested, who will then be appointed by the Federal President. Collegiate Councils also issue general directives on existing laws and ordinances (e.g. curricula) and submit expert opinions on draft laws and regulations.

## District School Boards

District School Boards are headed by the District Governor. The Collegiate Councils at district level are structured and set up on the same basis as those at provincial level.

The Collegiate Council at district level issues general directives and submits expert opinions on draft laws and regulations, for example with regard to curricula.

## Offices of the Provincial Government

The implementation of matters falling under the responsibility of the individual *Länder* is carried out by executive authorities at provincial level - the so-called Offices of the Provincial Government (*Amt der Landesregierung*).

Their most important task is the maintenance of public sector schools of general compulsory education and the appointment of teachers and head teachers at these schools. However, in all those matters not set down in law the District and Provincial School Boards have to be consulted.

## School autonomy

From the school year 1993/94, the 14th amendment to the School Organisation Act empowers schools to issue their own curricular regulations autonomously by a two-thirds vote of the School Committee or the School Forum. The former consists of teachers', pupils' and parents' representatives, while in the latter, which is established in compulsory schools, only teachers and parents are involved. General secondary schools have 16 units (lessons) spread over four years, and academic secondary schools have eight lessons within the first four years to use as they wish.

Provisions governing school autonomy at pre-vocational schools enable a flexible response to the vocational interests of pupils and the respective demands of the particular region.

Intermediate and upper secondary technical and vocational schools offer pupils the possibility of choosing between different study courses. Within certain limits, schools can also determine the pupil numbers required for creating new classes and dividing existing ones.

A 1995 provision on the organisation of school time gives schools the possibility of declaring five school-free days per school year for important school or public events. By virtue of having time available to allocate as they see fit, schools are given the opportunity to organise their internal in-service training programme in a more flexible way.

Efforts have also been undertaken to extend schools' financial autonomy. Under certain provisions laid down by law, schools can rent out school rooms or parts of school property (e.g. their gymnasium or sports grounds) to third parties and choose how the income they receive is allocated, as long as it is used for school purposes. The same applies to external funding received from sponsoring or commercial activities at school. Moreover since 1998, so-called quasi-legal bodies can be established at Federation schools, which have the power to conclude legal business as determined by law.

All Austrian schools can, in a limited way, control the funds allocated to them by the school authorities. For intermediate and upper secondary technical and vocational colleges this can serve the procurement of computers and technical equipment (financial autonomy). This makes occupation-oriented, project-based forms of education (e.g. "company practice") easier to implement.

## 1.4 Inspection/supervision/ guidance

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Austria's education system is characterised by a long tradition of school inspection. Federal school authorities in the *Länder* are responsible for primary and secondary education (District School Councils, Provincial School Councils). At *Länder* level, school inspection is carried out by provincial school inspectors who are responsible for a specific school type. At compulsory school level, provincial school inspectors are assisted by district school inspectors, and in intermediate and upper secondary education by subject inspectors.

There are a few schools (e.g. the upper secondary schools in the fields of agriculture and forestry, one intermediate school in the field of forestry, a number of upper secondary vocational schools in Vienna, etc.) which come directly under the Federal Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs.

## 1.5 Financing

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Schools of compulsory education (primary schools, general secondary schools, special schools, pre-vocational schools and vocational schools) are maintained by the *Länder*, municipalities or municipal associations.

While most of the schools in general compulsory education are maintained by municipalities or municipal associations, part-time compulsory vocational schools are maintained by the *Länder*.

Maintaining and operating a school includes the establishment, maintenance and repair of the school buildings, payment of overheads, purchase of equipment and teaching aids, provisions for the school doctor, and the employment of the necessary auxiliary staff (caretakers, maintenance staff, etc.). The employment of teachers at compulsory schools is exclusively the responsibility of the *Länder*. Teachers in public sector schools of compulsory education are employed by the *Länder*, which pay the cost of their salaries. However, the *Länder* are fully compensated for this cost by the Federation in the process of fiscal adjustment. (The sole exception being teachers at compulsory vocational schools, where this refund is granted only up to 50%.)

Public sector schools of compulsory education are not allowed to charge tuition fees. Transport

to and from school using public transport facilities is free. Textbooks are provided to pupils free of charge, and they are entitled to keep them. In recent years, a contribution of 10% from the pupils has been introduced both for transport to and from school and for textbooks.

Intermediate and upper secondary schools are established and maintained by the Federation, which bears the full cost, including teachers' salaries. Teachers do not enter into an employment contract with the school in this case either, but with the Federation. The same is true for intermediate and upper secondary schools with respect to the absence of tuition fees, free transport and textbooks as for compulsory education.

Austrian schools have relatively few funds of their own to administer. Reforms are under way to increase their financial autonomy.

All Universities and Art Colleges have been established by the State and are predominately financed from the state budget.

## 1.6 Advisory and consultative bodies

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The following advisory bodies have been set up and attached to the Federal Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs, mainly to advise the Federal Minister:

- The School Reform Commission (*Schulreformkommission*) is composed of members delegated by the political parties represented in the National Council, the Provincial School Boards, and interest groups, as well as university professors of education.
- The Centre for Educational Development (*Zentrum für Schulentwicklung*) consists of different departments. Each department specialises in a particular area. Department I is concerned among other things with the supervision of school experimentation projects; Department II concentrates on evaluation and educational research; and Department III concentrates on basic principles and concepts for modern language teaching.
- The Parents' Advisory Board (*Elternbeirat*) comprises representatives of the main associations of parents and related organisations. It usually meets

several times in the course of a school year under the chairmanship of the Federal Minister for Education and Cultural Affairs or an official appointed by him.

- The Federal Pupils' Advisory Board (*Bundesschülervertretung*) brings together pupils' representatives and representatives of youth organisations. It usually meets four times in the course of a school year under the chairmanship of the Federal Minister for Education and Cultural Affairs or an official appointed by him.

### Educational and careers guidance

Approximately 2,500 school guidance counsellors and educational consultants provide counselling services at all Austrian schools (with the exception of primary schools). Full-time teachers are partially released from their normal activities to provide counselling. Guidance counsellors receive on-going training on the basis of a common curriculum.

Their work focuses on providing:

- information on the educational options offered at their particular school;
- information on educational options offered by the education system as a whole.

Pupils and guidance counsellors also work together closely with the institutions of the

Labour Exchange. These counsellors are also available for presentations at parents' evenings and one-to-one counselling during consultation hours.

### 1.7 Private schools

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The Austrian Constitution lays down the right to establish private schools. Most private schools are run by the churches or special interest groups (chambers). There are two basic types of private schools: those that teach the official curriculum and those that have their own curriculum.

The amount of support given to private schools depends in large part on who runs them. Those run by an officially recognised church can claim to have their teaching staff paid by the State. These teachers remain federal employees (at intermediate and upper secondary schools) or provincial employees (in compulsory education). Private schools that are not run by an officially recognised church cannot claim to have their teaching staff paid by the State. On the basis of a private contract, these schools may be treated in the same way as those run by an officially recognised church.

All private schools may apply to the Federal Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs for a subsidy for extraordinary expenses on the basis of a private contract, for example, for building costs.

## 2. PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION (*Vorschulerziehung*)

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Nursery school (*Kindergarten*) is the traditional form of pre-primary education for children aged three to six in Austria. However, it does not form part of the education system. Nursery school is optional and children attend at their parents' initiative.

Ninety percent of all five-year-old children in Austria currently attend nursery schools (in 1960/61 the corresponding figure was only

23.5%). There are striking regional differences in the degree of nursery school provision.

## 2.1 Organisation

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Anyone wishing to open a nursery school has to comply with a number of conditions to ensure that the educational mandate of the nursery school is observed. There are public kindergartens (established and maintained by the Federation, the *Länder* or the municipalities) and private kindergartens. Some of the private kindergartens are administered by educators and parents as autonomous groups. The majority of kindergartens have been set up by the municipalities (almost 75%).

Staff and operational costs are generally borne by the administering body. The contributions made by the *Länder* to the cost of the establishment and operation of a kindergarten vary considerably; this is true for private kindergartens in particular.

Private kindergartens that are run by associations, churches or religious orders receive grants towards meeting the cost of staff and overheads on certain conditions, either on a discretionary basis, or according to a fixed percentage rate in accordance with the applicable Nursery School Act. Private kindergartens run by other bodies than the above-mentioned generally do not receive any financial support.

Some kindergartens do not charge any fees at all, while many municipalities charge a kindergarten attendance fee according to a graded scheme adjusted to net family income. Private kindergartens similarly charge varying amounts.

Kindergartens are either full day or half day. Half-day kindergartens are open from at least 7 a.m. to 12 a.m., with the possibility of lunch. Full-day kindergartens are open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. and include lunch. Parents may pick up their children whenever they want. Many kindergartens are open throughout the year.

## 2.2 Curriculum/assessment

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Nursery education focuses on developing the child's personality as a whole and is not primarily concerned with preparing children for school.

To achieve this objective, kindergartens are run in small, generally coeducational, groups (either age groups or so called "family groups" - 3-, 4- and 5-year-olds mixed together) taking individual styles and approaches into account and systematically providing different games and materials. First and foremost, a child at nursery school should have the chance of gaining experiences through appropriate play activities without the pressure of time or achievement.

## 2.3 Teachers

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Kindergarten teachers are either trained in special schools at upper secondary level or in special training colleges at post-secondary level. The latter provide a two-year teacher training course that is also open to individuals who may not have passed a school-leaving examination but have worked in related occupational fields. The latter have to pass a special entrance examination or vocational school-leaving examination. These colleges constitute a major reform in the kindergarten sector.

## 2.4 Statistics

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Children aged three to five in public kindergartens	
Children	217,724
Staff	29,123
Kindergartens	4,553

Source: Austrian Central Statistical Office (ed.), *Krippen, Kindergärten und Horte (Kindertagesheime)*, Berichtsjahr 1997/98, Beiträge zur Österreichischen Statistik, Volume 1,280, Vienna 1998.

## 3. COMPULSORY EDUCATION

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Compulsory schooling in Austria lasts nine years and is required of all children permanently residing in Austria, regardless of their nationality.

Compulsory school age starts on 1 September following the child's sixth birthday and ends at the age of 15 (nine years).

Attendance in public schools in Austria is free of charge. Parents are obliged to register their child at the appropriate school - in most cases the school nearest to the place of residence - and to make sure that he/she attends on a regular basis. If a child has his/her sixth birthday between 1 September and 31 December, and provided he/she is physically and mentally mature enough to attend classes, he/she may - at the discretion of the head teacher - be admitted early to the first year of primary school.

The nine years of compulsory schooling can be completed in either of the following ways:

- years 1 to 4  
primary school;  
special school (1).
- years 5 to 8  
general secondary school;  
years 1 to 4 of academic secondary school;  
upper level of primary school (1);  
upper level of special school (1).
- year 9  
pre-vocational school ;  
continuation of primary school, general secondary school or special school (2);  
year 1 of an intermediate or upper secondary vocational and technical college;  
year 1 of a kindergarten teacher training college or a training college for non-teaching supervisory staff;  
year 5 of an academic secondary school.
- (1) These schools are attended by a small fraction of each age level only.
- (2) For pupils who have had to repeat one or several years.

There is no certificate marking the end of compulsory education, but the annual report issued at the end of year 9 mentions that the pupil has completed compulsory education.

All pupils of school age in Austria complete the

compulsory education requirement in one school type or the other.

### School time

Depending on the *Land*, the school year in Austria starts on the first or second Monday in September and ends on the Friday between June 27 and July 3, or July 4 and 10 respectively. There are two semesters, separated by a one-week holiday, the last week of January or one of the first three weeks in February. The main summer holidays are the months of July and August. Other holidays are at Christmas and at Easter.

Head teachers are responsible for ensuring that the total number of weekly lessons as laid down in the curriculum is evenly spread over the days of the week. Primary schools have a five- or six-day week, secondary schools often still have a six-day week. On the basis of a six-day week there are about 215 school days per year. In general, classes must not begin before 8 a.m. or last longer than six hours in the morning (if the afternoon is free) or five hours (if there are afternoon classes). A lesson lasts for 50 minutes. Sufficient breaks of at least five minutes, but no longer than 20 minutes, are to intersperse the lessons.

### 3A Primary education (*Volksschule*)

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While primary schools actually extend beyond the primary level (years 1 to 8, including the upper level of primary school), they are currently represented almost exclusively by primary school proper (years 1 to 4), as the upper level, covering secondary level, has been more or less abolished. The objective of *Volksschule* (*Grundschule* or primary school) is to provide a common basic education for all pupils. In this context, the social integration of handicapped children is to be taken into account. *Grundschule* consists of a lower (*Grundstufe I*) and an upper (*Grundstufe II*) level. The lower level includes years 1 and 2 and, if necessary, also the pre-primary level. The upper level

consists of years 3 and 4. The years in the lower level can be organised separately or together.

### Pre-primary year at school

The pre-primary year is designed to foster the development of children of compulsory school age who are not yet mature enough to attend primary school proper. It precedes primary school. However, unlike nursery school, the pre-primary year is part of the school system.

The pre-primary year can be run separately as a class or integrated into the lower level (first or second and possibly pre-primary year) of primary school.

All children of compulsory school age must report to the *Volksschule* responsible for their district. All children of compulsory school age who are ready to attend school enter the first year. The head teacher will attempt to determine whether the child will be able to follow the teaching in the first year without being subjected to excessive physical or mental demands or whether it would be more appropriate for the child to attend some form of pre-primary year. In keeping with the child's abilities or needs, he or she can take up to three years to master the learning skills taught at the lower level of primary school.

Even children with delayed development and ones with seeing, hearing or other disabilities must register at school. It has been possible to integrate handicapped children socially into the normal school system since 1993.

It became possible in the 1999/2000 school year to transfer children in the lower level of primary school to the next higher or next lower year even during the course of the school year.

Children who only turn seven between 1 September and 31 December of the current school year and who would not be over-challenged by the demands of the first year of school can be accepted early into the first year. This early attendance of the first year is calculated as part of the duration of compulsory education. If it turns out that the child is out of his/her depth after being accepted early into the first school year, the early acceptance is revoked. In such cases, the child can be directed to the pre-primary year. It is possible to make such changes up to the end of the current calendar year.

The educational content of the pre-primary year comprises compulsory practical exercises in the following subjects, totalling 20 weekly lessons:

- religious instruction
- local history, geography, biology

- road safety
- language and oral expression
- early mathematics
- singing and music-making
- exercises in rhythm
- drawing
- crafts
- physical education
- playing.

In the pre-primary year there is no assessment of achievement; the annual report is a certificate of attendance.

## 3A.1 Organisation

Classes are coeducational. The maximum number of pupils per class is 30, and each primary school year corresponds to one class. If the number of pupils in each year is too small, several years may be combined in one class. Teachers are class teachers and spend the four years with the same class of children.

Pre-primary classes are often accommodated in a primary school, which might be located in the same building as, or in a building adjacent to, a general secondary school, depending on the local situation.

## 3A.2 Curriculum

At present, two slightly varying sets of approved subject hours for primary schools exist. One is as follows:

Compulsory subjects	Years and number of weekly lessons			
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
Religious instruction	2	2	2	2
Local history, geography, biology	3	3	3	3
German, reading, writing	7	7	-	-
German, reading	-	-	7	7
Mathematics	4	4	4	4
Music	1	1	1	1
Drawing	1	1	-	-
Drawing, writing	-	-	2	2
Handicraft	1	1	2	2
Physical education	2	2	3	3
Compulsory practical exercises				
Modern foreign language	x <sup>1</sup>	x <sup>1</sup>	1	1
Road safety	x <sup>2</sup>	x <sup>2</sup>	x <sup>2</sup>	x <sup>2</sup>
Total number of weekly lessons	21	21	25	25

1. Thirty-two annual lessons for each year to

be considered during the planning of lesson times for individual subjects in primary school. This will not alter the total number of hours per week.

2. Ten annual lessons for each year to be considered during the planning of lesson times for individual subjects in primary school. This will not alter the total number of hours per week.

The teaching of a modern foreign language is possible beginning in the first year of the regular school system (it becomes compulsory from September 2003).

From the 1998/99 school year, there are plans to make a modern foreign language a compulsory practical exercise (i.e. without assessment of achievement) in the primary school curriculum beginning in the first year. Transitional arrangements can be made through the 2002/2003 school year for schools encountering organisational difficulties in providing this compulsory practical exercise. In this case, the compulsory exercises for a modern foreign language continue to be introduced from the third year.

The teaching of a modern foreign language (English, French, Italian, Croatian, Slovenian, Hungarian, Czech or Slovak) starts in the 3rd year as a compulsory practical exercise (no assessment of achievement). However, in most schools English is taught. Compulsory subjects and compulsory practical exercises are taught to mixed-ability groups. Optional exercises may be chosen on a voluntary basis.

Teachers are free to decide on the teaching methods and materials they use. However, the form and contents of the latter must comply with the curriculum for the particular year and be suited to children of that age. Both head teachers and school inspectors are entitled to issue directives to teachers on this matter.

### 3A.3 Assessment/certification/ guidance

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#### General provisions

As far as assessment procedures, marking, the repetition of years and reports are concerned, a distinction has to be made between general provisions, applying to all schools, and specific regulations that refer to certain types of schools only.

As a general rule, performance assessment should be evenly spread over the school year.

Performance is determined by:

- assessing the active participation of pupils in class work;
- oral assessment;
- written assessment (class assignments, tests, dictations);
- practical assessment;
- graphic assessment (e.g. in subjects like descriptive geometry).

Teachers are responsible for all assessments; they generally assess individual skills and capabilities in individual subjects. Marks range from 1 to 5.

Compulsory and optional subjects are both graded. School reports are a summary of pupils' achievements. Schools issue reports (at the end of the first semester), annual reports (at the end of the year) and certificates (after successful completion of a particular type of school).

The annual report considers pupils' achievement during the entire year, but particular weight is given to the most recent assessment. Pupils are graded as follows: very good (1), good (2), satisfactory (3), sufficient (4), and insufficient (5).

As a general rule, pupils are entitled to enter the next year if they have been assessed in all compulsory subjects and never rated "insufficient", although the law in fact provides for the possibility of teachers allowing pupils to progress to the next year with one "insufficient" rating. This, however, is the exception. Pupils who are rated "insufficient" in no more than two subjects must usually sit a repeat test at the beginning of the following school year. If they fail or if they have more than two "insufficient" ratings, they have to repeat the year.

#### Specific provisions for primary schools

In primary schools, achievement is determined by assessing pupil's participation in class work, and in the 4th year by school tests (written assessment). There is no oral assessment.

Teachers establish with parents (in a class or school context) whether a description of achievement will accompany the marks in the first and second years.

Primary schools issue term reports and annual reports.

The first two years of primary education are one cycle. The first-years are entitled to enter the

second year regardless of their assessment in the annual report. Pupils who are not entitled to pass to the next year may repeat the year they have failed. In contrast to secondary schooling, there is no repeat examination.

Children whose mother tongue is not German receive remedial teaching, mainly in the German language, either separately or as part of classroom teaching. There are:

- remedial language lessons to improve German-language skills,
- remedial teachers who concentrate particularly on children with poor German-language skills, etc.

In addition, teachers can decide that supplementary teaching of a general nature should be given to any pupils needing remedial teaching in German or mathematics.

In the course of the fourth year, either towards the end of the first term or at the beginning of the second term of the school year, parents or guardians are informed about the further educational possibilities for their child on the basis of his/her interests and past achievements.

### 3A.4 Teachers

Teachers for the pre-primary year and primary school and teachers in special schools are trained at non-university level Teacher Training Colleges (*Pädagogische Akademien*).

Candidates for teacher training colleges must have passed their matriculation examination, or must have passed a special entrance examination (*Studienberechtigungsprüfung*) or vocational matriculation examination (*Berufsreifeprüfung*).

The training course lasts at least six semesters (three years) and is completed by a teaching qualification examination.

Prospective primary school teachers acquire the whole range of skills necessary for teaching all subjects in primary and pre-primary education.

Primary school teachers are provincial employees (i.e. civil servants) under either a private-law or a public-law contract (tenured service). Part-time employment is possible in some cases.

The law comprising the rights and duties of teachers is very vague on the subject of compulsory in-service training and primarily refers to personal initiative; participation is not compulsory. In-service training activities can be

attended either during the holidays or during the school year.

### 3A.5 Statistics

Primary schools (including pre-primary schools)	
Pupils	387,488
Teachers *)	32,625
Schools	3,371
Pupil/teacher ratio	11.9
Pupil/class ratio	19.7

\*) In all tables teachers are counted by heads, both full-time and part-time.

Pre-primary education at primary schools	
Pupils	8,879
Pre-primary classes and groups	773

Source: Federal Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs in cooperation with the Austrian Central Statistical Office (ed.), *Austrian School Statistics 97/98*, Vienna 1998.

### 3B Secondary education: lower level

The first division into separately organised school types occurs at the lower level of secondary education, that is:

- General secondary school (*Hauptschule*);
- Academic secondary school - lower level; (*allgemeinbildende höhere Schule, AHS-Unterstufe*);
- Upper level of primary school (*Volksschuloberstufe*). Numerically speaking, this type still remains relatively insignificant.

About 30% of all primary school leavers in Austria attend academic secondary school, while about 70% go to general secondary school. The number going into the upper level of primary school is negligible.

Pupils must have successfully completed the fourth year of primary school to be admitted to general secondary school. In order to be admitted to an academic secondary school, they must have been rated "very good" or "good" in German, reading and mathematics. Pupils who do not meet these standards have to pass an

admission test.

### 3B.1 General secondary school (*Hauptschule*)

General secondary school covers years 5 to 8 (10- to 14-year-olds), and provides general education in coeducational classes. In doing so, the principles of social integration are to be taken into account.

The *Hauptschule* prepares pupils for employment and for the transition to intermediate and upper secondary schools. The size of general secondary schools varies for regional and demographic reasons. They are often accommodated in the same building as – or one adjacent to – a primary school. They are maintained by a municipality or municipal association.

General secondary classes are organised as follows:

- Pupils are allocated to one of three ability groups in German, mathematics and the modern foreign language after an observation period (of at least two weeks). The educational requirements and aims in the top ability group correspond to those of the academic secondary school. Within one ability group pupils generally have approximately the same level of ability; however, internal differentiation is possible.
- In all other subjects there is mixed ability teaching within established classes.
- Individual schools can establish special deadlines by which time pupils must have been transferred to the next higher or next lower ability group, but this is not required.
- Compulsory preparatory/remedial teaching is provided to pupils upgraded to a higher group or those facing downgrading.
- Pupils with good results in a general secondary school may transfer directly to an academic secondary school.

### Curriculum and assessment/certification/guidance

The approved number of hours per subject at general secondary schools provides a framework for the schools' autonomous decisions. The established numbers apply where no such resolutions have been made.

#### Discretionary school timetable

Compulsory subjects	Years and weekly lessons				Total
	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	
Religious instruction	2	2	2	2	8
German					15-21
Modern foreign language					12-18
History and social studies					5-10
Geography and economics					7-12
Mathematics					14-20
Geometry					2-6
Biology and environmental education					7-12
Physics and chemistry					7-12
Music					6-11
Drawing, writing					7-12
Elementary technical work (technology) 1)					7-12
Textile work 1)					7-12
Nutrition and home economics					2-6
Physical education					12-18

1. alternative compulsory subject

Vocational guidance is also provided as a compulsory practical exercise lasting one to four hours.

## Non-discretionary school timetable

Compulsory subjects	Years and weekly lessons				Total
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	
Religious instruction	2	2	2	2	8
German	5	4	4	4	17
Modern foreign language	4	4	3	3	14
History and social studies	-	2	2	2	6
Geography and economics	2	2	2	2	8
Mathematics	4	4	4	4	16
Geometry	-	-	1	1.5	2.5
Biology and environmental education	2	2	2	2	8
Physics and chemistry	-	2	2	4	8
Music	2	2	2	1	7
Drawing, writing	2	2	2	2	8
Elementary technical work ('technology' 1)	2	2	1.5	2	7.5
Textile work 1)	2	2	1.5	2	7.5
Nutrition and home economics	-	-	1.5	1.5	3
Physical education	4	4	3	3	14

<sup>1)</sup> alternative compulsory subject

Vocational guidance is also provided as a compulsory practical exercise.

There are also optional subjects and practical exercises. Nutrition and home economics and the alternative compulsory subjects "technology" and "textile work" must be taught in coeducational groups, if chosen by both girls and boys. In principle, general secondary schools teach English as a modern foreign language; some offer French or Italian.

Teachers are free to decide on the teaching methods and materials they use. However, the form and contents of the latter must comply with the curriculum for the particular year and be suited to children of that age. Both head teachers and school inspectors are entitled to issue directives to teachers on this matter.

The general rules for assessment procedures, marking and reports are the same as described under "General Provisions" in the section on Assessment under *Volksschule*.

Pupils are generally allowed to move up to the next year if they have been assessed in all compulsory subjects and have not received a mark of "insufficient" in their annual report. Special distinctions have to be made in the marking system, however.

Pupils who have successfully completed general

secondary school may be admitted to a pre-vocational school (see 4A) or intermediate or upper secondary vocational school, (see 4C), or to an academic secondary school. At the end of the general secondary school, pupils receive a school-leaving certificate (*Hauptschulabschlusszeugnis*).

Pupils who have passed the required courses can move on to an academic or vocational secondary school without an admissions test. Pupils who have completed their compulsory education at the end of general secondary school may seek employment or take up apprenticeship training (see section 5).

## Teachers

General secondary and pre-vocational school teachers, such as primary and special school teachers, follow post-matriculation training at Teacher Training Colleges.

The training course lasts at least six semesters (three years) and ends with a teaching qualification examination.

Teachers for general secondary and pre-vocational schools are qualified in two subjects (subject teacher system). They teach their subjects in various classes and, provided that it is one of the ability group subjects, in various ability groups. In general secondary school, teachers often teach their subjects to the same class for all four years, although changes may be necessary for various reasons (e.g. maternity leave). From a pedagogical point of view, continuity is recommended.

As regards employment and in-service training, the situation is the same as described in 3A.4.

## Statistics

General secondary schools	
Pupils	261,587
Teachers	33,841
Schools	1,182
Pupil/teacher ratio	7.7
Pupil/class ratio	23.1

Source: Federal Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs in cooperation with the Austrian Central Statistical Office (ed.), *Austrian School Statistics 97/98*, Vienna 1998.

### 3B.2 Academic secondary school - lower level (*Allgemeinbildende höhere Schule, AHS - Unterstufe*)

Academic secondary school comprises four years at the lower level (10- to 14-year-olds) and four years at the upper level (14- to 18-year-olds).

This chapter on the lower level of secondary education deals with the lower level of academic secondary school (AHS - *Unterstufe*).

The lower level of the two-level AHS is organised in coeducational classes according to age, and provides a comprehensive and in-depth general education. It has a dual function, since it both prepares pupils for the corresponding AHS upper level and also enables them to transfer to vocational schools.

The size of each AHS varies for regional and demographic reasons. The number of schools now makes it possible for children and young people from outlying areas to attend an AHS, as agreements with transport providers have achieved acceptable travel times. Pupils can also attend boarding schools.

The first two years of the lower level are uniformly organised, run according to a common curriculum and serve as a period of observation and orientation. The curriculum corresponds to that of general secondary schools. A modern foreign language is taught from the first year onwards.

In the third year a division into three types takes place:

- *Gymnasium* (including Latin);
- *Realgymnasium* (with geometry and an emphasis on mathematics and handicrafts); and
- *Wirtschaftskundliches Realgymnasium* (with an emphasis on chemistry and handicrafts).

There is no ability grouping.

#### Curriculum

The approved number of hours per subject at the lower level of academic secondary school are as follows (the differences in years three and four between the *Gymnasium* and the other two types are marked in brackets, first for the *Realgymnasium*, then for the *Wirtschaftskundliches Realgymnasium*): It is also possible for schools to deviate from the

timetable autonomously in the context of prescribed guidelines and to set priorities in terms of a profile suitable to the particular location.

Compulsory subjects	Years and weekly lessons			
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
Religious instruction	2	2	2	2
German	5	4	4	4
Modern foreign language	4	4	3	3
Latin	-	-	4(-.)	5(-.)
History and social studies	-	2	2	2
Geography and economics	2	2	2	2
Mathematics	4	4	3(4.3)	3(4.3)
Geometry	-	-	-(1.)	-(2.)
Biology and environmental education	2	2	2	2
Chemistry	-	-	-(2.)	2
Physics	-	2	2	2
Music	2	2	2	-(1.2)
Arts	2	2	2	2
Handicraft	2	2	-	-
Technology/Textile Work*)	-	-	-(2.2)	-(2.4)
Physical education	4	4	4	3
Total weekly lessons	29	32	32	32

\*) alternative compulsory subject

There are also optional subjects and practical exercises.

Teachers are free to decide on the teaching methods and materials they use. However, the form and contents of the latter must comply with the curriculum for the particular year and be suited to children of that age. Both head teachers and school inspectors are entitled to issue directives to teachers on this matter.

#### Assessment/certification/guidance

The general rules for assessment procedures, marking and reports are the same as described under "General Provisions" in section 3 Compulsory Education.

Pupils are generally allowed to move up to the next year, if assessed in all compulsory subjects and not rated "insufficient" in the annual report. Pupils with an "insufficient" rating in one or two compulsory subjects may sit a repeat examination at the beginning of the next school year and, provided they pass, may move on to the next year. (In some cases, referred to in the relevant law, it is possible to advance to the next year with one "insufficient" rating). Pupils not entitled to move up to the next year may repeat the year they failed.

## Teachers

Teachers at academic secondary schools are trained at universities or fine arts universities. Courses for qualifying as a teacher are defined as diploma studies. They last nine semesters (four-and-a-half years). Students must pass two diploma examinations and submit a diploma paper in order to graduate with an academic degree (*Magister*). Studies include academic training in two subjects, pedagogical training in the last five semesters, and a *Schulpraktikum* comprising a four-week introductory phase and eight weeks of teaching practice.

The *Magister* diploma does not automatically entitle candidates to a permanent teaching post. Prior to being permanently employed, graduates have to successfully complete both a year of teaching in a school and additional courses (*Unterrichtspraktikum*).

Teachers at academic secondary schools are federal employees, under either a private-law

contract or a public-law contract (tenured service). Part-time employment is possible, but not usual.

As regards in-service teacher training, the situation is the same as described in 3A.4.

## Statistics

Lower and upper level of academic secondary school	
Pupils	184,007
Teachers	19,648
Schools	319
Pupil/teacher ratio	9.4
Pupil/class ratio	24.9

Source: Federal Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs in cooperation with the Austrian Central Statistical Office (ed.), *Austrian School Statistics 97/98*, Vienna 1998.

## 4. POST COMPULSORY SECONDARY EDUCATION

At upper secondary level the differentiation in the school system becomes more marked due to the more clearly discernible interests and talents of pupils, as well as the requirements of society for different forms of vocational qualifications.

Besides academic secondary schools, years 9 to 13 (14- to 19-year-olds) are also provided in secondary technical and vocational schools.

The upper level of secondary education therefore comprises the following school types:

- pre-vocational school;
- upper level of academic secondary school (years 9 to 12);
- vocational school (years 10 to 13 maximum) - parallel to in-company vocational training ("dual system") (see Section 5);
- intermediate technical and vocational schools (years 9 to 12 maximum);
- higher technical and vocational schools (years 9 to 13);
- Kindergarten Teacher Training College (years 9 to 13);

- Training College for Non-Teaching Supervisory Staff (years 9 to 13).

Thirty-nine percent of general secondary school graduates chose a pre-vocational school or "teacher training".

Approximately 6% of general secondary school graduates and 61% of lower level AHS graduates move up to the upper level of AHS.

Fifty-two percent of general secondary school graduates and 33% of lower level AHS graduates subsequently attend an intermediate or upper secondary vocational school.

Upper level academic secondary schools lead to a matriculation examination, upper level technical and vocational schools, and the training colleges lead to the matriculation examination and diploma certificate, which entitles the holder to university studies.

The principles of the organisation of school time are the same as in compulsory education (see 3).

Classes are coeducational and generally made up of pupils of the same age group. There is usually no ability grouping in the upper level of

secondary education with the exception of pre-vocational or part-time compulsory vocational schools.

## 4A Pre-vocational school (*Polytechnische Schule* - PTS)

Approximately 20 percent of young people in Austria decide to attend a pre-vocational school in the last year of compulsory education. The pre-vocational school is used primarily as a ninth school year by the 14- to 15-year-old age group wishing to learn an occupation immediately upon completion of compulsory schooling. On the basis of pupils' interests, inclinations, talents and abilities, the pre-vocational school provides them with the highest possible qualifications for the transition to vocational training in the dual system or further studies.

By providing a wide selection of practically oriented teaching and learning methods distinctly directed towards applications in the compulsory general education subjects and fields, the PTS promotes the acquisition of abilities, skills and knowledge and encourages the individual's talents and motivation to learn.

Pupils receive targeted guidance and preparation for the vocational training that follows through on-site visits and practical training days in training workshops, vocational schools and firms.

Pupils receive basic vocational training organised by vocational field (compulsory elective fields) corresponding to the major branches of business.

Each pupil must elect a vocational field from the ones offered by the school. The compulsory subject areas of German, English and mathematics are taught in courses that reflect the pupils' differing abilities and interests. All pupils in pre-vocational school must learn to use computers for practical everyday and vocational purposes.

## Statistics

Pre-vocational school	
Pupils	19,501
Teachers	1,848 *)
Schools	336
Pupil/teacher ratio	figure not available
Pupil/class ratio	22.2

\*) Teachers in independent pre-vocational schools

Source: Federal Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs in cooperation with the Austrian Central Statistical Office (ed.), *Austrian School Statistics 97/98*, Vienna 1998.

## 4B Academic secondary school - upper level (*Allgemeinbildende höhere Schule*, AHS - *Oberstufe*)

It is the task of the upper level of AHS to give pupils a comprehensive and in-depth general education and to prepare them for university studies.

### 4B.1 Organisation

The upper level comprises four years (9 to 12) for 14- to 18-year-olds, and builds on the four years (5 to 8) of the lower level. General information on the academic secondary school is in section 3B.2.

The upper level comprises the same three types as years 3 and 4 at the lower level: *Gymnasium*, *Realgymnasium* and *Wirtschaftskundliches Realgymnasium*, but they are characterised as follows:

- *Gymnasium*: in addition to Latin, pupils from the 5th year onwards learn either a second modern foreign language or Greek;
- *Realgymnasium*: more mathematics from the 5th year onwards, as well as Latin or a second modern foreign language; also geometry or more biology and environmental education, chemistry and physics;
- *Wirtschaftskundliches Realgymnasium*:

from the 5th year onwards, a second modern foreign language or Latin; also home economics and nutrition, more geography and economics, biology and environmental education, psychology and philosophy.

In addition to the eight-year type of upper-level type of academic school, there is the *Oberstufenrealgymnasium*, which is a separate type of upper level academic school (years 9 - 12; entered on completion of eight years of general education). Pupils learn a second modern foreign language or Latin from the 5th year onwards. They may choose between three orientations: musical instrument playing, design and crafts, or more biology and environmental science, chemistry and physics. This type of school has made the upper level of secondary education accessible to pupils from regions where other upper secondary schools do not exist (in particular for general secondary school leavers).

## 4B.2 Curriculum

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The common curriculum covers most of the compulsory subjects in the curriculum for the lower level.

In all three types, as well as in the *Oberstufenrealgymnasium*, elective compulsory subjects amounting to 8 weekly lessons (*Gymnasium*, *Oberstufenrealgymnasium*), 10 weekly lessons (*Realgymnasium*) and 12 weekly lessons (*Wirtschaftskundliches Realgymnasium*) must be chosen in years 6 to 8. Computer science is taught as a compulsory subject (two weekly lessons) in the fifth year of all types.

## 4B.3 Assessment/certification/guidance

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The general rules for assessment procedures, marking and reports are described under "General Provisions" in 3A.3.

Academic secondary school ends with a matriculation examination (*Matura*). Students who have passed this examination and obtained the matriculation examination certificate (*Reifeprüfungszeugnis*) are called "*Maturanten*" (upper secondary school leavers). The matriculation examination certificate provides access to university studies. All candidates who have completed the last year successfully are

entitled to sit the matriculation examination at the main examination date. It is also possible to do so with just one "insufficient" rating.

As of the school year 1992/93, the matriculation examination was reformed. The new leaving examination at academic secondary schools now comprises two equivalent *Matura* options:

- seven examinations (some written, some oral) in at least four different subject areas; or
- the submission of a paper on a specialised field of study (*Fachbereichsarbeit*), instead of one of the written examinations, which must be finished during the first semester of the 8th year.

## 4B.4 Teachers

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See 3B.2

## 4C Vocational schools (*Berufsbildende Schulen*)

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### Intermediate secondary technical and vocational schools (*Berufsbildende mittlere Schulen*) (BMS)

Intermediate secondary technical and vocational schools provide not only a thorough general education but also practical vocational training for specific occupations. They are full-time schools (except for the colleges for working adults).

To attend an intermediate secondary vocational school lasting at least three years, applicants must have successfully completed the eighth school year (with the exception of applicants in the third achievement group in general secondary school, who must sit an admissions examination in the corresponding compulsory subject areas). Successful graduates of the ninth year in a pre-vocational school do not require the admissions examination to attend an intermediate secondary vocational school.

Depending on the sector they cover, these schools have courses lasting from one to four years. Courses focus on practical training in school workshops, laboratories, kitchens and

practice enterprises. Pupils must take part in compulsory practical training in companies or enterprises during their summer holidays.

The conditions for moving to the next year are laid down by law.

After completion of this type of school, pupils may take the matriculation and diploma examination by attending supplementary bridging courses. It is also possible to earn a general higher education entrance qualification by taking the vocational matriculation examination.

Pupils successfully completing at least three years at an intermediate secondary technical or vocational school have access to the regulated trades after fulfilling the general requirements.

Intermediate secondary technical and vocational schools cover the following major sectors:

- agriculture and forestry;
- industry and trade (combination of training in commerce and tourism);
- commercial (intermediate commercial schools);
- vocational schools in the industrial, technical, arts and crafts sectors (in the fields of technology, textiles, tourism and arts and crafts)
- schools for social work;
- schools for the nursing professions (governed by the Nursing Act);
- schools for the medico-technical professions (governed by the Nursing Act).

### **Upper secondary technical and vocational schools (*Berufsbildende höhere Schulen* - BHS)**

The requirements for admission to an upper secondary technical and vocational school are the successful conclusion of the eighth year. AHS pupils must be able to present a favourable certificate. General secondary school pupils who have received a mark lower than "good" in a differentiated compulsory subject area (German, mathematics, modern foreign language) in the second achievement group, or who were in the third achievement group, must sit an admissions examination in the particular subject area.

Intermediate or upper secondary technical institutes with an artistic orientation also require a positive result on an aptitude examination as a further precondition for admission.

Upper secondary technical and vocational schools provide general and vocational education (double qualification), and lead both

to the exercise of an occupation and to university (matriculation and diploma examination). Education is full-time and lasts five years.

The curriculum is divided into three equal parts: general education, vocational theory and vocational practice.

Pupils at upper secondary technical and vocational schools must take part in compulsory practical training in business and industry during the summer.

Pupils successfully completing upper secondary technical and vocational schools are entitled to practise their own trade after two years of professional experience. They may also have access to the regulated trades.

After these three years of professional experience in their field, those who have completed upper secondary technical colleges and upper secondary schools of agriculture and forestry may be called "*Ingenieur*".

The most important upper secondary technical and vocational schools are:

- upper secondary technical school (branches: mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, electronic engineering, electronic data processing and organisation, civil engineering and construction, chemistry, textile engineering, business engineering, information and communication technologies, etc.);
- upper secondary college for fashion and garment technology;
- upper secondary college for tourism;
- upper secondary college for commerce (*Handelsakademie*);
- upper secondary college for industry and trade;
- upper secondary college for agriculture and forestry (branches: agriculture, horticulture, viticulture, fruit farming, forestry, dairy farming, etc.).

There are some 50% more pupils at intermediate or upper secondary technical and vocational schools than in the upper level of academic secondary schools.

### **Teachers**

Teachers at intermediate or upper secondary technical and vocational schools are subject area specialists. The nature of training courses and admission requirements depend on the subjects to be taught.

The training of teachers of general subjects in

intermediate and higher technical and vocational schools is the same as that of academic secondary school teachers (see Section 3).

Teachers of theoretical subjects in higher vocational schools must have professional experience in the relevant area in addition to university training.

Special training is provided for teachers of practical subjects and teachers of theoretical subjects in intermediate vocational secondary schools (e.g. in vocational teacher training schools and teacher training schools).

All teachers are public employees. As regards in-service training, see Section 3.

## 4D Training colleges for non-teaching supervisory staff, Kindergarten teacher

### Training colleges

The Training College for Non-Teaching Supervisory Staff trains supervisory staff (*Erzieher/in, Sozialpädagoge/-pädagogin*) for day care centres and boarding establishments for children and adolescents, as well as for youth work outside school.

Admission is conditional upon the successful completion of the 8th year and passing an aptitude test. The courses at this college last five years and end with a diploma examination and a professional qualification, entitling the student to study at a university or academy.

A Kindergarten Teacher Training College trains kindergarten teachers (*Kindergärtnerin*) or (with an additional examination) kindergarten teachers and nursery trainers (*Kindergärtnerin* and *Hortlerzieherin*). The admission criteria and the prescribed duration of studies for the Kindergarten Teacher Training College are identical to those for training colleges for non-

teaching supervisory staff. Courses again end with a matriculation examination and a professional qualification, entitling the student to enrol in university studies. Two-year colleges are provided for upper secondary school leavers in which the matriculation examination can be replaced by a vocational matriculation examination or an examination entitling the student to enrol in university studies. The colleges are described in section 6A.

The curriculum for both colleges comprises general education, such as German, a modern foreign language, history, geography, mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, music and physical education, and also job-oriented subjects. The theoretical part takes place at the colleges, while the practical part is in normal nursery schools, or in day care centres or boarding establishments respectively. Students practise under the supervision of specially trained nursery school teachers, or non-teaching supervisory staff.

## Statistics

Upper level of academic secondary schools and intermediate and higher technical and vocational colleges

	academic secondary schools - upper level*	Intermediate Technical + vocational Colleges	higher Technical + vocational Colleges
Pupils	81,607	52,850	113,417
Teachers	not available	not available	Not available
Schools	313	467	273
Pupil/ teacher ratio	not available	not available	not available
Pupil/class ratio	22.8	23.2	25.0

\*) only the upper level (including *Oberstufenrealgymnasien*).

Source: Federal Ministry of Education and the Arts (ed.), in cooperation with the Austrian

Central Statistical Office, *Austrian School Statistics 97/98*, Vienna 1998.

## 5. INITIAL VOCATIONAL TRAINING

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### 5.1 Organisation of the dual system

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In addition to training at intermediate and upper secondary technical and vocational schools (see section 4C) a considerable amount of initial vocational training is provided by apprenticeship training schemes ("dual system").

Apprenticeship training has always been characterised by the dual system of training in business and industry, combined with a theoretical course at a compulsory vocational school. Whilst apprenticeship is based on an apprenticeship contract under labour law, apprentices are still considered to be in compulsory education because they must enrol in a part-time vocational school.

Forty percent of all young people aged 15 to 18 are prepared for their future occupation within the dual apprenticeship training scheme.

More than 60,000 enterprises and companies take part in the apprenticeship training scheme, especially small and medium-sized enterprises in the fields of commerce and trade, crafts and tourism, which train approximately 80% of all apprentices. Industrial enterprises and their state-of-the-art training workshops also make a significant contribution to the training of young people.

At present, a total of 220 occupations and trades are covered by the apprenticeship scheme. The most popular ones with female apprentices are sales, hairdressing, clerical work, waitress/cook; male apprentices prefer such occupations as car mechanic, carpenter, and electrician, bricklayer and machine operator.

### 5.2 Part-time compulsory vocational school (*Berufsschule*)

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Part-time vocational schools are compulsory schools that must be attended by all apprentices part-time or in blocks of time. Compulsory vocational schooling begins when the pupil enters into an apprenticeship or training

relationship and lasts until it is completed, i.e. until the successful completion of a final apprenticeship examination. Apprenticeship training and thus part-time compulsory schooling lasts at least two years, but no longer than four years; most apprenticeships last three years.

The matriculation and diploma examination can be taken in preparatory and extension courses in connection with the final examination. It is also possible to earn a matriculation certificate for general higher education by taking the vocational matriculation examination. Higher level qualifications area also offered by schools for foremen and skilled workers (*Werkmeisterschulen, Meisterschulen*) and examinations to become a *Meister* (master craftsman) or demonstrate skills (*Befähigungsnachweisprüfungen*), which give access to the trades.

Compulsory part-time vocational schools provide basic and specialised education. Their general aim is to promote and complement the apprenticeship training provided in business and industry and to provide general education. A number of specialised theoretical and practical compulsory subjects are taught in two ability groups.

In order to be admitted to apprenticeship training, young people must have completed nine years of compulsory education; apprentices are therefore at least 15 years of age. Apprentices attend compulsory vocational school at least one nine-hour day each week during the school year, or in blocks ("course design") covering at least eight to ten weeks of each school year.

### 5.3 Financing

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The "dual" in the dual system also describes the financing. The firm finances the practical training part in the firm and public funds finance the vocational school.

The *Länder* bear the costs of equipping vocational schools (machines, equipment and teaching materials). The Federation and each *Land* bear half of the personnel costs. Austrian industry is responsible for financing the in-company portion of the apprenticeship training

on a firm by firm basis . A study carried out at the beginning of the 1990s revealed that industry spent approximately ATS 6 billion for apprenticeship training. Most of the expenditure arose from payment of the wages that apprentices receive for their work from the employer. The amount of apprentices' wages is the subject of collective contract negotiations.

The State provides additional financial assistance to disadvantaged groups. Amounts are paid to training firms to cover the cost of wages (apprenticeship compensation) for particularly disadvantaged individuals from the perspective of the market.

As the number of apprenticeship positions available has diminished in recent years, firms have been offered financial incentives from public resources to create additional positions.

## 5.4 Curriculum

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The curriculum for general education in all part-time vocational schools comprises politics, German and communication, an occupation-related foreign language, economics and correspondence, and accounting.

The theoretical and practical subjects differ depending on the chosen apprenticeship.

## 5.5 Assessment/qualifications/guidance

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The general regulations for assessment procedures, marking and reports are the same as described under "General Provisions" in 3A.3.

Apprenticeship training ends with an end-of-apprenticeship examination before a board of examiners made up of among others the legally established interest groups (social partners). In addition, fully-trained apprentices are awarded a leaving certificate by the part-time compulsory vocational school (*Abschlußzeugnis der Berufsschule*).

## 5.6 Teachers/trainers

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Teachers of general education, business and management, word-processing, etc. must have the matriculation examination certificate and two years of professional experience.

Vocational school teachers teaching practical and theoretical subjects require a master craftsman's examination as a professional qualification or an equivalent certificate and several years of relevant professional experience.

## 5.7 Statistics

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Part-time compulsory vocational school	
Pupils	125,039
Teachers	4,478
Schools	203
Pupil/teacher ratio	27.9
Pupil/class ratio	23.5

Source: Federal Ministry of Education and the Arts in cooperation with the Austrian Central Statistical Office (ed.), *Austrian School Statistics 97/98*, Vienna 1998.

## 6. HIGHER EDUCATION

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### 6A Non-university education alternatives

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The area of non-university education alternatives continues to be expanded in Austria. Essentially, the following training alternatives are available at the present time.

- Teacher Training Colleges, Training Colleges for Religious Education Teachers, Technical and Vocational Teacher Training Colleges;
- Colleges for Social Workers;
- Paramedical Colleges;
- Specialised post-matriculation colleges for technical and commercial professions;
- Specialised post-matriculation courses in Kindergarten Teacher Training Colleges and training Colleges for Non-Teaching Supervisory Staff.

#### 6A.1 Admission requirements

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These post-secondary training courses target upper secondary school leavers (*Maturanten*). The special university entrance examination or vocational matriculation examination can also provide access.

#### 6A.2 Fees/financial support for students

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There are no tuition fees at training institutes for Austrian nationals, citizens of the European Union or European Economic Area, as well as some other groups. Students in Teacher Training Colleges, Training Colleges for Religious Education Teachers, Technical and Vocational Teacher Training Colleges, Colleges for Social Workers, Paramedical Colleges,

Specialised post-matriculation colleges for technical and commercial professions, Specialised post-matriculation courses in Kindergarten Teacher Training Colleges and training Colleges for Non-Teaching Supervisory Staff who demonstrate social need and academic success – in *Akademien* and not *Kollegs* -- can claim financial assistance.

#### 6A.3 Academic year

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The academic year lasts from September to the end of June and is divided into two semesters.

#### 6A.4 Courses

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Teacher Training Colleges train teachers for primary school, general secondary school, special schools and the pre-vocational schools. Separate teacher training colleges train religious education teachers.

Technical and Vocational Teacher Training Colleges (*Berufspädagogische Akademien*) train vocational school teachers, teachers of word-processing in all types of school and teachers for some fields of instruction in intermediate and upper secondary technical and vocational colleges.

Colleges for Social Workers train social workers; the course lasts six semesters.

Paramedical Colleges provide non-university training in the health professions in three-year courses divided into seven different branches. There are also *Akademien* for midwives.

Secondary school graduates can receive vocational training in the commercial, technical, crafts and tourism sectors in *Kollegs* (four semesters). The *Kollegs* give upper secondary technical and vocational college graduates an opportunity to acquire an additional vocational qualification. *Kollegs* attached to training colleges for kindergarten teachers and non-teaching supervisory staff provide vocational training in four to six semesters. *Kollegs* set

general education as a prerequisite and therefore focus on material specific to the profession.

### 6A.5 Assessment/qualifications

The same general rules apply as in the sector for schools for working people. (See Regular school system, special rules for teaching by the semester).

Training in *Akademien* and *Kollegs* leads to a diploma examination.

Graduates of post-secondary training courses have access to specific vocational qualifications.

### 6A.6 Teachers

The teaching staff in *Kollegs* and schools for working people possess the same qualifications profile as teachers in intermediate and upper technical and vocational colleges.

- Teachers in the humanities (teaching science, education science, school law, and the psychology and sociology of teaching) must hold a relevant university degree.
- Teachers in the field of vocational teaching or practical work must be able to demonstrate longstanding relevant experience.

### 6A.7 Statistics

	Students
Teacher training college	5,911
Training college for religious education teachers	694
Technical and vocational teacher training college	913
Colleges for social workers	1,333

Source: Federal Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs in cooperation with the Austrian Central Statistical Office (ed.), *Austrian School Statistics 97/98*, Vienna 1998.

## 6B Post-secondary special-subject colleges (*Fachhochschulen*)

On the basis of the law on *Fachhochschule* courses (FHStG) enacted in May 1993 by the Austrian Parliament, *Fachhochschulen* have been established in Austria as of the academic year 1994/95 as alternatives to existing university studies. They offer scientifically based, practice-oriented vocational training courses lasting a minimum of six semesters. Most courses last eight semesters, however, as they include practical vocational training. Admission is not restricted to persons with a matriculation examination certificate; *Fachhochschulen* also cater for persons with the required professional vocational skills. However, such applicants must acquire additional qualifications before they begin their studies. *Fachhochschule* courses lead to an academic degree. Graduates can pursue university doctoral studies in their profession.

In 1999/2000, there were approximately 60 *Fachhochschule* courses in Austria as a whole. They were offered primarily in the fields of technology, economics, telecommunications and the media. Many courses had an interdisciplinary character. There were also some in the field of administration and agriculture and forestry. Twenty courses were organised to be taken on an in-service basis.

Financing was provided by both the State and the private sector and was tied to particular positions. No fees are charged for courses at *Fachhochschulen*. In 1999/2000, the Federal Government funded approximately 10,000 study places in *Fachhochschule* courses.

## 6C Universities

Austria has 18 universities of which six are art colleges. They offer a total of 184 branches of study, many of which address specialised areas within a particular branch of study. As a result, there are 287 study options. As many branches of study are offered at several universities, a total of about 640 courses are offered.

## 6C.1 Admission requirements

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To be admitted to a normal course of study, students must have the matriculation examination certificate (*Reifeprüfung, Reife- und Diplomprüfung, Berufsreifeprüfung*). Students apply to a specific university for a course of study. They then have to enrol for the chosen course each semester. In some cases, they may be required to take supplementary examinations; students who do not meet some of the formal admission requirements for the chosen course of study have to take supplementary examinations either before matriculation (e.g. biology for the study of medicine) or during the first semester of the course. Art colleges require the matriculation examination only for some of their courses. Admission is subject to an entrance examination in which artistic talent is assessed. Candidates who have not passed the matriculation examination may sit a special university entrance examination, which provides access to university studies (or, in some cases, studies at an art college) in a limited range of subjects. Graduates of vocational training in the form of an apprenticeship can also meet university entrance requirements by taking a specially organised vocational matriculation examination. There are no limitations to access to particular courses in universities in Austria for Austrian nationals, citizens of the European Union or European Economic Area, as well as for members of certain other groups.

## 6C.2 Fees/financial support for students

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There are no tuition fees at universities for Austrian nationals, citizens of the European Union or European Economic Area, as well as some other groups. Needy students receive study grants.

## 6C.3 Academic year

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The academic year begins on 1 October and ends on 30 September of the following year and is made up of a winter semester, a summer semester and a period of time without classes. The academic year must include at least 30 weeks of classes.

## 6C.4 Courses

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University courses, which are primarily aimed at providing an academic education to young people in conjunction with career preparation, lead to an academic degree. A distinction is made between first degree studies, doctoral studies, additional and supplementary study courses (*Erweiterungs- und Aufbaustudien*). The structure of courses leading to a teaching qualification has already been described in 3B.2.

## 6C.5 Assessment/qualifications

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Students are assessed in oral or written examinations during their courses. Final examinations are usually held by a board of examiners. Diploma theses and doctoral dissertations are also considered for assessment. The different types of examination are generally defined by law. The laws and ordinances governing the different study courses prescribe how many examinations and which type (oral, written, single examination, board of examiners, etc.) have to be passed during the course of studies. The lecturer decides when, how often during the semester and by which of the prescribed methods students are assessed for individual courses.

Studies leading to a first degree (*Magister, Mag.; Diplomingenieur, Dipl.Ing.; or Dipl.Tierarzt*) are divided into one, two or three stages, each ending with a degree examination. Before the second degree examination students must submit a degree paper. Students who have obtained a first degree are admitted to doctoral studies in their specialised, or a related, field of study. Doctoral studies include a dissertation and an oral examination in several fields. The minimum length of all courses is defined by law. Most last from 8 to 12 semesters (four to six academic years). Doctoral studies take at least another four semesters. However, the actual length is generally longer. Only 6% of all students complete their studies within the prescribed minimum time.

## 6C.6 Teachers

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There is no initial training programme that is specifically designed for teachers in higher

education. They receive training by exercising a profession. Candidates for appointment as a university assistant (*Universitätsassistent* or *Vertragsassistent*) must have completed the course for a diploma at a university. No other training requirements are based in the organisational or service regulations. At the end of a service relationship for a limited period of four years, a *Universitätsassistent* can be taken on in a temporary service relationship. The prerequisite for employment is a doctorate in a relevant field and success as a researcher, teacher and administrator of tasks typical in the university environment. To attain a final permanent position, an *Universitätsassistent* must present a teaching qualification as university lecturer (*Universitätsdozent*) or proof of achievements in research, teaching or administration after at most a further six years.

For a nomination as university professor, applicants must hold a degree from a relevant

higher education course of study, acquire a teaching qualification as a university lecturer or an equivalent academic qualification in Austria or abroad and demonstrate teaching aptitude.

## 6C.7 Statistics

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Approximately 222,000 regular students were enrolled in universities and art colleges in 1998/1999. The student body included some 29,000 foreigners, representing 13% of all students. The teaching staff at universities and art colleges came to a total of approximately 17,500 people.

# 7. ADULT EDUCATION

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## 7A General adult education

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federal *Länder* with the exception of Vorarlberg and Vienna.

### 7A.1 Legislative framework

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#### Second-chance education (**Zweiter Bildungsweg**)

Adult education is not anchored in the Austrian Federal Constitution. The Federal Act on the Promotion of Adult Education and Public Libraries was passed in 1973. With this act, the state undertakes to support the associations and institutions of adult education. The act refers explicitly to the independence of the grant beneficiaries with respect to the organisation of programmes and curricula, teaching methods and the selection of staff. The recognised adult education institutions operating throughout Austria that have combined to form the Conference on Adult Education in Austria ("*Konferenz der Erwachsenenbildung Österreichs*" (KEBÖ)) receive priority status.

In addition to allocating subsidies, the act provides for the maintenance and management of State adult education institutions in the

One of the primary tasks of adult education is to make it possible to acquire education qualifications at a later stage in the context of second-chance education.

For this purpose, preparatory courses for the special university entrance examination, extra-mural matriculation examinations and the career advancement examination have been established.

- The special university entrance examination (*Studienberechtigungsprüfung*) provides limited access to higher education for a course of study that has been selected in advance.
- The extra-mural matriculation examination (*Externistenreifeprüfung*) and vocational matriculation examination (*Berufsberechtigungsprüfung*) offer a pathway to general university entrance

qualifications providing access to a university, institution of higher education, vocational institution of higher education, *Akademie* or *Kolleg*.

- The vocational matriculation examination (*Berufsreifeprüfung*) offers graduates of programmes in the dual system, graduates of middle schools, nursing schools and schools for medical and technical professional services new opportunities for further education.

Adult education establishments offer preparatory courses for these examinations. Some recognised institutions have also acquired the authority to set examinations. The School Education Act (*Schulunterrichtsgesetz*) of 1986 provides the legal basis for the extra-mural matriculation examination and vocational matriculation examination; the 1996 General Higher Education Act (*Allgemeine Hochschulstudiengesetz*) regulates the special university entrance examination.

## 7A.2 Administration

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The Federal Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs (BMUK) is responsible for carrying out and implementing the federal law. The Adult Education Group (*Gruppe für Erwachsenenbildung*) in the BMUK provides the administration. The federal centres for the promotion of adult education in the *Länder* and the Federal Institute for Adult Education (*Bundesinstitut für Erwachsenenbildung*) are subordinate to this group. It coordinates and organises cooperation between State centres and the adult education associations.

The Federal Ministry sets the criteria for the allocation of subsidies on the basis of the Promotion Act, defines key thematic areas that should receive additional support and implements structural measures (staff promotion). This is where education policy initiatives are initiated. Quality is assured by providing training and continuing training in the Federal Institute for Adult Education to the staff in adult education.

### Second-chance education

Education certificates are awarded at a later date in the context of the relevant School Education Acts (*Schulunterrichtsgesetze*) or the Higher Education Act (*Hochschulstudiengesetz*).

The BMUK initiates, coordinates and promotes innovative teaching and learning methods for this field. Acts and regulations drafted by the federal ministries are among other things also presented to the legal interest groups and social partners for an opinion. The education policy decision-making process must be regulated according to procedures agreed upon by a wide range of groups and depends on a high degree of consensus.

## 7A.3 Funding

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Adult education is funded out of public resources from the Federation, the *Länder* and municipalities and resources from providers of adult education institutions (chambers of commerce, chambers of labour, the Association of Trade Unions, industrial association, and churches). The individual bodies themselves determine the amount of their financial contributions. The Federal Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs subsidises adult education associations and institutions directly. It supports expenditure for personnel and materials as well as individual projects.

Federal law establishes the criteria governing contents (such as political, social and economic training; continuing vocational training; reintegration, continuation and extension of school education; training and further training of adult education trainers), the definition of grant beneficiaries, and the general conditions for financial support.

Both in the case of funding for personnel and materials and for individual projects, institutions receiving support and their promoters must always provide resources of their own. As no federal adult education exists, the structure of the organising bodies means that financing is in most cases provided through the private sector.

The organising bodies of adult education institutions are, with the exception of the *Länder* and municipalities, primarily interest groups, scientific and cultural associations and religious communities.

Continuing vocational training is financed by private businesses, public funds, the social partners and the participants themselves. Among other things, firms organise and finance continuing training courses outside the firm in the private sector. (This issue is not relevant to in-firm continuing training.)

## Second-chance education

Second-chance education is financed by support from the Federation, the resources of the organising authorities and by relatively high contributions from participants.

Second-chance education for working adults is provided free of charge in public schools.

## 7A.4 Organisation

The largest and most important adult education institutions are represented in the "Conference on Adult Education in Austria" (*Konferenz der Erwachsenenbildung Österreichs, KEBÖ*). They include, among others: the Vocational Training Institute (*Berufsförderungsinstitut*) (BFI) – the umbrella organisation for all vocational teaching and training measures provided by employee organisations (worker chambers, the Association of Trade Unions, trade unions). The goals of these measures range from vocational mobility through re-training and further training measures for employees in the form of general education courses.

The Institute of Economic Promotion (*Wirtschaftsförderungsinstitut*) (WIFI) – economic promotion institutes are parts of the chambers organised at federal level in Austria. They target such individuals as apprentices, trained skilled workers, managerial staff and entrepreneurs. Training programmes focus on branches of the trades and crafts, industry, commerce, tourism and leisure activities.

The Association of Austrian Adult Education Centres (*Verband Österreichischer Volkshochschulen*) (VÖV) – the umbrella organisation of the associations of *Volkshochschulen* at *Land* level is organised into groups. The courses offered range from general education and vocational training courses to language courses and to scientific lecture series and preparatory curricula for second-chance education.

The organisation of the training programmes in terms of time and place remain in large part rigid and conventional. Flexible and open courses are in most cases being tested in pilot projects. A few institutions such as the WIFI and particularly innovative *Volkshochschulen* have integrated for example telelearning into their regular programmes.

Prerequisites, methods and qualifications in adult education vary widely.

With respect to the role played by the social

partners in the field of adult education, continuing vocational training in particular is organised by business and social partners and their associations.

## Second-chance education

Vocational training institutes, *Volkshochschulen*, Institutes of Economic Promotion and further training institutes in the *Länder* offer preparatory courses for second-chance education.

## 7A.5 Statistics

The field of adult education in Austria includes numerous institutions and wide-ranging content.

Three well-known institutions have been selected as statistical examples for the year 1995/1996:

Institution	Vocational Training Institute (BFI)	Association of Austrian Adult Education Centres (VÖV)	Institutes of Economic Promotion of the Federal Economic Chamber
Number of full-time employees	1,044	772	510
Number of courses	8,797	51,432	18,311
Number of participants	89,263	1,401,308	250,565

## 7B Schools for working people

### 7B.1 Legislative framework

The State is responsible for the provision of adult education in schools (schools for working people) in the context of school legislation (*SchOG, SchUG, SchZG*).

Schools for working people are special versions of each particular school type and provide the same certificates and entitlements. They differ primarily in terms of course duration.

## 7B.2 Administration

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The Federal Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs is responsible for schools for working people as for all schools of the same type (educational objectives, curricula, examination authority). The school-leaving certificates have the same value and same validity as the qualifications awarded at day schools.

## 7B.3 Funding

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The same bodies provide the financing of these schools (the State, *Länder*, municipalities, chambers and private entities). In the current school year, approximately ATS 3 billion have been set aside for schools for working people in the federal budget.

## 7B.4 Organisation

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Like schools at upper secondary level, the corresponding schools for working people also offer a diverse range of courses.

General admission requirements include at least 18 years of age in the calendar year of matriculation, current or previous employment and successful completion of the eighth school year.

The following school types are offered:

- *Gymnasium* and *Realgymnasium* for working people (including special school types for soldiers with term contracts)
- *Aufbaugymnasium* and *Aufbaurealgymnasium*
- *Handelsschule* and *Handelsakademie* for working people
- *Kaufmännisches Kolleg* for working people
- *Werkmeisterschulen*
- Preparatory and advanced courses for working people
- Higher-level technical schools for working people
- *Kollegs* for working people in higher-level technical schools

- Hotel trade schools (*Hotel- und Gastgewerbefachkollegs*) for adults
- Tourism course for adults
- Specialised course for working people for work with the handicapped and the elderly
- Training Institute for Social Occupations (*Akademie für Sozialarbeit*) for working people.

The individual curricula establish which courses are offered. As the demands on participants in terms of time are very high, many schools provide distance learning, autonomous learning phases and modular training certificates.