

**DIRECTORATE FOR EDUCATION  
EDUCATION POLICY COMMITTEE**

**Group of National Experts on the Recognition of Non-formal and Informal Learning**

**COUNTRY BACKGROUND REPORT FOR AUSTRIA  
RECOGNITION OF NON-FORMAL AND INFORMAL LEARNING**

*This document is the Country Background Report produced by Austria in the context of the EDPC activity on Recognition of Non-Formal and Informal Learning. It is one in a series of 23 Country Background Reports prepared by the countries participating in this activity. Each Background Report is published under the responsibility of the country that has prepared it and the views expressed in this document remain those of the country author(s) and not necessarily those of the OECD or its Member countries.*

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## RECOGNITION OF NON-FORMAL AND INFORMAL LEARNING

### List of RNFIL Country Background Reports

A series of 23 Country Background Reports were prepared by the countries participating in the EDPC activity on *Recognition of Non-Formal and Informal Learning*. The series of reports is being made available on OLIS under the code EDU/EDPC/RNFIL(2008)1. The list of codes for individual country reports is detailed as follows:

- EDU/EDPC/RNFIL(2008)1/PART1 – Country Background Report – Australia
- EDU/EDPC/RNFIL(2008)1/PART2 – Country Background Report – Belgium (Flemish Community)
- EDU/EDPC/RNFIL(2008)1/PART3 – Country Background Report – Canada
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- EDU/EDPC/RNFIL(2008)1/PART9 – Country Background Report – Korea
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- EDU/EDPC/RNFIL(2008)1/PART21 – Country Background Report – Greece
- EDU/EDPC/RNFIL(2008)1/PART22 – Country Background Report – Iceland
- EDU/EDPC/RNFIL(2008)1/PART23 – Country Background Report – Malta

For the participating countries that decided to organise a review visit – either in the context of the Thematic Review (TR) strand of the activity or the Comparative Policy Analysis (CPA) one – an additional document is or will be made available analysing the country situation regarding recognition of non-formal and informal learning as a follow up to the visit (see EDU/EDPC/RNFIL(2008)2). The different Country Background Reports and Country Notes will be provided in separate instalments in order to guarantee flexibility (for a given country the PART number will be the same).

The final International Synthesis Report which will be prepared by the Secretariat will draw on both the Country Background Reports and the Country Notes.

***New OECD Activity on Recognition of  
Non-Formal and Informal Learning  
(RNFIL)***

*Draft Country Background Report Austria*

**FIRST DRAFT**

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## Guideline for writing the Country Background Report

“27. In the Country Background Report, the authors are expected to follow the numbering (e.g. 2.1.a), 2.1.b), 2.1.c), etc.) for each response – not making paragraphs by mixing all these questions -, such clear-cut distinct responses will help facilitate the Secretariat’s work. Some questions are inter-related, overlap over cross-cutting themes and, are designed to complement the data to be collected in Annex. Therefore, it may seem repetitive at times. In this case, the authors are not expected to repeat the response but to make reference to the number of questions where the response was already given (e.g. ‘As was discussed in 2.1.a, the issue is related to ...; ‘As shown in Table W1, .....’, etc.)”

See: OECD: Guidelines for Country participation (30 November 2006), p. 9

# 1. Contextual factors

## 1.1 Demographic change

1.1.a) How have the profiles (age, ethnicity, sex, socio-economic backgrounds) of learners changed/diversified for overall post-secondary education institutions (higher education, further education and vocational education and training, professional training, etc.)? Is there any evidence of admission and graduation rates?

### Profiles of learners in postsecondary education by sex and citizenship

1. The number and demographic structure of students at HE institutions have changed considerably over the past decades. Both the number of students has quadrupled since the early 1970s, the share of women has risen from 25 to 52 percent. The share of foreign students has increased from 9 to 13 percent since the mid-1990s. (See Table 1)

TABLE 1.

#### Education at universities and Fachhochschule programmes 1970/71 to 2005/06; degree programmes

Winter term	Students enrolled		Of which female		Of which foreign students		Beginners in degree programmes; Austrians	
	Total	Index 1970/71 = 100	Absolute figures	Index 1970/71 = 100	Total	Index 1970/71 = 100	Total	Percentage of all students
1970/71	53,152	100	13,269	100	8,573	100	8,109	15
1975/76	81,324	153	27,681	209	9,980	116	11,974	15
1980/81	115,616	218	45,848	346	11,758	137	15,816	14
1985/86	160,904	303	69,509	524	15,388	179	19,799	12
1990/91	193,479	364	85,429	644	18,492	216	20,285	10
1992/93	205,769	387	91,847	692	21,980	256	19,487	9
1993/94	210,639	396	94,988	716	23,911	279	19,983	9
1994/95 <sup>1)</sup>	216,820	408	99,413	749	25,175	294	20,426	9
1995/96 <sup>1)</sup>	222,095	418	103,381	779	26,441	308	21,413	10
1996/97 <sup>1)</sup>	224,101	422	105,212	793	27,249	318	20,358	9
1997/98 <sup>1)</sup>	224,935	423	107,403	809	27,908	326	19,554	9
1998/99 <sup>1)</sup>	228,936	431	110,902	836	29,184	340	21,144	9
1999/00 <sup>1)</sup>	237,272	446	117,050	882	30,696	358	23,438	10
2000/01 <sup>1)</sup>	239,691	451	120,375	907	31,087	363	25,276	11
2001/02 <sup>1)</sup>	197,143	371	100,340	756	27,770	324	23,289	12
2002/03 <sup>1)</sup>	203,635	383	104,587	788	30,354	354	25,809	13
2003/04 <sup>1)</sup>	213,151	401	110,389	832	33,707	393	27,425	13
2004/05 <sup>1)</sup>	219,157	412	114,096	860	34,484	402	27,582	13
2005/06 <sup>1)</sup>	229,180	431	119,841	903	39,342	459	28,145	12

<sup>1)</sup> State universities and Fachhochschule programmes (since 1994)

Source: Statistics Austria; own calculations

2. The changes in study participation also reflect in graduation figures. Currently more than 23,000 students a year complete a study programme at a state university or Fachhochschule (see Table 2) [translator's note: here and in the following, the German term is used rather than the recommended English translation 'universities of applied sciences']. The development of the Fachhochschule sector has contributed to the growth in student and graduate figures (Table 4).

TABLE 2.

**Number of graduates at universities and Fachhochschule programmes  
1970/71 to 2004/05**

Academic Year	Total		Of which female		Of which foreign		Austrian graduates	
	Number	Index 1970/71 = 100	Number	Percentage of all	Number	Percentage of all	Number	Percentage of all
1970/71	6,025	100	1,434	24	1,062	18	-	-
1975/76	6,442	107	1,790	28	873	14	-	-
1980/81	8,047	134	2,777	35	823	10	-	-
1985/86	9,316	155	3,639	39	904	10	7,828	84
1990/91	11,764	195	4,930	42	1,122	10	9,608	82
1992/93	12,506	208	5,332	43	1,184	9	10,148	81
1993/94	13,426	223	5,726	43	1,287	10	10,833	81
1994/95	13,800	229	5,994	43	1,345	10	11,055	80
1995/96	14,310	238	6,239	44	1,405	10	11,446	80
1996/97 <sup>1)</sup>	16,159	268	7,161	44	1,626	10	12,746	79
1997/98 <sup>1)</sup>	16,259	270	7,374	45	1,652	10	12,980	80
1998/99 <sup>1)</sup>	16,704	277	7,792	47	1,791	11	13,282	80
1999/00 <sup>1)</sup>	17,144	285	7,923	46	1,771	10	13,790	80
2000/01 <sup>1)</sup>	19,136	318	9,198	48	1,937	10	15,500	81
2001/02 <sup>1)</sup>	19,239	319	9,255	48	1,936	10	15,488	81
2002/03 <sup>1)</sup>	21,523	357	10,675	50	2,218	10	17,410	81
2003/04 <sup>1)</sup>	23,390	388	11,584	50	2,627	11	18,523	79
2004/05 <sup>1)</sup>	25,195	418	13,085	52	2,834	11	-	-

<sup>1)</sup> State universities and Fachhochschule programmes (since 1994)

Source: Statistics Austria; own calculations

3. The demographic structure in Fachhochschule study programmes differs from universities: Their share of women students is 42 percent and thus significantly lower than at state universities (see Table 3). The share of students who do not have the Austrian citizenship is at 7.5 percent and hence clearly below the relevant proportion at scientific state universities.<sup>1</sup> An analysis of Fachhochschule graduations reveals the same picture (Table 4).

4. At private universities, the share of women among students is 51 percent and hence at a similarly high level as at state universities. The share of foreign students at private universities is 30 percent. The overall figure of students at these institutions was approximately 3,600 in the 2005/06 academic year (see Table 5)

<sup>1</sup> In recent years, influx of students from Germany, where the numerus clausus is applied, to the study of medicine has played a significant role.

TABLE 3.

**Students enrolled in Fachhochschule programmes**

Winter term	Austrian Students			Foreign students			All students		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
1994/95	674	525	149	19	11	8	693	536	157
1995/96	1,701	1,335	366	60	35	25	1,761	1,370	391
1996/97	3,648	2,750	898	108	68	40	3,756	2,818	938
1997/98	5,610	4,107	1,503	163	100	63	5,773	4,207	1,566
1998/99	7,641	5,513	2,128	228	154	74	7,869	5,667	2,202
1999/00	9,652	6,856	2,796	318	203	115	9,970	7,059	2,911
2000/01	11,333	7,870	3,463	410	261	149	11,743	8,131	3,612
2001/02	13,849	9,238	4,611	489	297	192	14,338	9,535	4,803
2002/03	16,840	10,653	6,187	569	364	205	17,409	11,017	6,392
2003/04	19,721	12,161	7,560	870	531	339	20,591	12,692	7,899
2004/05	22,145	13,270	8,875	1,249	737	512	23,394	14,007	9,387
2005/06	23,939	13,962	9,977	1,788	1,035	753	25,727	14,997	10,730
INDEX									
1999/00	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
2005/06	248	204	357	562	510	655	258	212	369

Source: Statistics Austria; own calculations

TABLE 4.

**Number of graduates at Fachhochschule programmes**

Academic year	Total	Number		Of which: foreign graduates		
		Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
1996/97	114	91	23			
1997/98	470	344	126	11	5	6
1998/99	894	697	197	24	14	10
1999/00	1,662	1,227	435	43	27	16
2000/01	1,981	1,419	562	49	35	14
2001/02	2,376	1,701	675	76	48	28
2002/03	2,658	1,819	839	70	46	24
2003/04	2,961	1,965	996	95	61	34
2004/05	4,217	2,588	1,629	132	78	54
INDEX						
1998/99	100	100	100	100	100	100
2004/05	472	371	827	550	557	540

Source: Statistics Austria; own calculations

TABLE 5.

**Students enrolled and number of graduates at private universities**

Feature	Number			Of which: foreign graduates		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Students enrolled 2005/06	3,608	1,784	1,824	1,073	513	560
Number of graduates 2004/05	357	220	137	106	56	50

Source: Statistics Austria

5. Traditionally, Austria has highly qualifying postsecondary institutions apart from universities and Fachhochschule programmes. The access requirement of postsecondary VET colleges (health and social occupations) as well as post-secondary colleges for the training of compulsory school teachers – similar to universities – is the upper secondary school-leaving exam and *Reifeprüfung* certificate. In a long-term comparison, student figures at these two non-university education institutions have risen, with the highest figures reached some years ago however. Both programmes are attended by a majority of women (of some 80 percent) (Table 6).

TABLE 6.

**Students at postsecondary colleges 1946/47 to 2005/06**

Year	Technical and vocational colleges <sup>1</sup>		Teacher training colleges	
	Number	Of which female	Number	Of which female
1946/47			115	104
1950/51			188	95
1960/61	258	63	309	274
1970/71	996	747	6,358	4,095
1980/81	2,398	1,808	8,820	6,846
1990/91	2,863	2,251	6,351	5,013
2000/01	4,121	3,451	13,206	10,387
2001/02	4,108	3,457	<b>13,664</b>	10,704
2002/03	3,818	3,233	13,640	<b>10,780</b>
2003/04 <sup>2)</sup>	<b>4,866</b>	<b>4,149</b>	12,984	10,160
2004/05 <sup>2)</sup>	4,551	3,880	13,568	10,725
2005/06 <sup>2)</sup>	4,342	3,627	13,073	10,333

<sup>1)</sup> As of 2003/04 including training institutions in the health care sector managed by private school providers.

<sup>2)</sup> Provisional data.

Source: Statistics Austria

6. The influx of students to universities rose considerably in particular in the period between 1970 and 1990 (Table 1). The number of Austrian students has increased since the mid-1990s mainly due to the creation of the Fachhochschule sector. The social origin of domestic study entrants has changed only slightly since the mid-1990s. **46 percent of new students at universities today have fathers with a formally higher school qualification; in 1994/95 this figure was 40 percent** (Table 7). This is connected with increasing formal education levels of the parent generation as well as with the introduction of Fachhochschule study programmes as an alternative to traditional long university-based studies and advancement-oriented education routes (Table 8).

TABLE 7.

**New Austrian entrants at universities by educational attainment of the students' father**

Winter term	Compulsory school	Apprenticeship training	Technical and vocational school etc.	Secondary academic school, higher technical and vocational college, post-secondary college	University	No information	Total
1989/90	10778	(1)	1144	2506	2314	1832	18574
1994/95	8056	(1)	2069	3377	4245	1503	19250
1995/96	2076	5492	2741	3723	4035	1746	19813
2004/05	2219	6392	1601	4765	4553	760	20290
2005/06	1717	6474	1800	4635	4763	1075	20464
<b>Row %</b>							
1989/90	58	(1)	6	13	12	10	100
1994/95	42	(1)	11	18	22	8	100
1995/96	10	28	14	19	20	9	100
2004/05	11	32	8	23	22	4	100
2005/06	8	32	9	23	23	5	100

(1) Included under 'compulsory school'

Source: Statistics Austria

TABLE 8.

**New Austrian entrants at Fachhochschule programmes by educational attainment of the students' father**

Winter term	Compulsory school	Apprenticeship training	Technical and vocational school etc.	Secondary academic school, higher technical and vocational college, post-secondary college	University	No information	Total
2004/05	764	2664	671	1449	863	545	6956
2005/06	852	2882	648	1532	986	455	7355
<b>Row %</b>							
2004/05	11	38	10	21	12	8	100
2005/06	12	39	9	21	13	6	100

(1) Included under 'compulsory school'

Source: Statistics Austria

7. Unfortunately there exists no long timeline about the students' socioeconomic status regarding their employment over their study periods. But 'placement students' have without any doubt been employed by companies for a long time. A relatively new evaluation by Statistics Austria refers to "employment before the take-up of studies rather than employment

during the study”<sup>2</sup>. Among Austrian study entrants at universities, 57 percent were not employed before taking up a study programme in 2005/06, this share among foreign new students was 52 percent; most frequently, students were employed in the private sector before enrolling in higher education (Table 9).

TABLE 9.

**Male and female new entrants at universities by socioeconomic status before enrolment in higher education; winter term 2005/06**

Winter term	Number			In %		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
<b>Austrians</b>						
Not employed	11695	5026	6669	57	57	57
Household	621	169	452	3	2	4
Self-employed, freelancer	1345	616	730	7	7	6
Salary earner	4895	1909	2986	24	22	26
Public employee	394	198	196	2	2	2
Wage earner	473	314	159	2	4	1
No information	1041	630	411	5	7	4
Total	20464	8862	11603	100	100	100
<b>Foreign students</b>						
Not employed	4383	1899	2484	52	52	52
Household	167	52	115	2	1	2
Self-employed, freelancer	646	288	358	8	8	7
Salary earner	1660	696	964	20	19	20
Public employee	236	119	117	3	3	2
Wage earner	180	98	82	2	3	2
No information	1158	478	680	14	13	14
Total	8430	3630	4800	100	100	100

Source: Statistics Austria

### Evidence of admission and graduation rates

8. Admission rates to tertiary education are calculated and published only for Austrian citizens by the Federal Ministry for Education, Science and Culture. For the year 2005, a rate of new entrants at universities or Fachhochschule programmes in relation to the average of the 18-to-21-year-old population amounted to **35 percent** compared to **28 percent** in 2001.<sup>3</sup> Thus the increase of access to university-level education has been quite considerable in the last years in Austria.

9. The empirically best information about graduation rates is provided by the age-group-specific breakdown of the resident population by formal education on the basis of the most recent census. Due to the large difference, a differentiation by citizenship is recommended. The highest graduation rate (ISCED 5B and 5A or 6) with **12.8 percent** is reached by **30-to-34-year-old Austrians**, people who do not have the Austrian citizenship reach the highest graduation rate of **12.5 percent only at the age of 35 to 39** (cf. Table 10a + b). This

<sup>2</sup> Statistics Austria: HE statistics 2004/05, Vienna, 2006, p. 146.

<sup>3</sup> BMBWK: Statistisches Taschenbuch 2006, Vienna, 2006 p. 13.

proves that Austria has been characterised not only by an influx of unqualified people but also by an inflow at the highest formal education level.

TABLE 10a.

**Age-group-specific formal education of the Austrian resident population  
by age groups, in 2001; in %**

Level / Age in years	Com- pulsory school	Appren- ticeship	VET school	Secon- dary aca- demic school	VET college	Post- secon- dary VET course and similar	Teacher training college	HE institu- tion	Total	
ISCED	2	3 B	3 B, 4B	3 A	4 A	5 B	5 B	5A, 6	%	Absolute
15 to 19	82.9	7.5	4.5	4.3	0.8	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	100.0	442,011
20 to 24	13.5	38.0	12.1	17.2	16.5	<b>0.8</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>1.1</b>	100.0	417,426
25 to 29	12.4	41.7	12.9	7.7	13.3	<b>1.1</b>	<b>2.8</b>	<b>8.1</b>	100.0	465,172
30 to 34	15.4	41.5	14.9	5.6	9.8	<b>1.1</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>9.3</b>	100.0	583,570
35 to 39	17.7	42.8	15.2	4.9	7.3	<b>0.8</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>8.5</b>	100.0	628,253
40 to 44	20.3	41.8	15.7	4.4	5.6	<b>0.6</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>8.1</b>	100.0	567,263
45 to 49	24.4	41.7	14.3	3.7	4.0	<b>0.4</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>7.4</b>	100.0	469,791
50 to 54	27.7	44.3	12.4	3.2	3.6	<b>0.4</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>5.9</b>	100.0	468,937
55 to 59	31.8	40.4	13.1	3.4	4.0	<b>0.5</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>5.8</b>	100.0	425,941
60 to 64	43.2	34.4	11.7	2.5	3.1	<b>0.3</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>4.2</b>	100.0	432,272
65 to 69	53.9	29.0	8.8	2.4	2.3	<b>0.3</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>3.0</b>	100.0	320,588
70 to 74	53.5	27.4	9.0	3.0	3.2	<b>0.3</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>3.3</b>	100.0	319,090
75 to 79	59.4	20.7	10.3	2.9	2.5	<b>0.3</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>3.6</b>	100.0	284,616
80 to 84	63.8	17.5	9.1	3.4	2.1	<b>0.3</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>3.5</b>	100.0	148,355
85 to 89	68.0	16.4	7.9	2.3	1.7	<b>0.2</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>3.2</b>	100.0	94,511
90 to 94	70.5	16.2	7.2	1.8	1.5	<b>0.1</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>2.5</b>	100.0	36,608
95 etc.	74.6	11.7	7.5	2.0	1.9	<b>0.1</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>2.0</b>	100.0	6,788
<b>Total</b>	<b>33.8</b>	<b>35.1</b>	<b>12.2</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>6.0</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>5.6</b>	100.0	6,111,192

Source: Statistics Austria, census; ISIS database query

TABLE 10b.

**Age-group-specific formal education of the foreign resident population  
by age groups, in 2001; in %**

Level / Age in years	Com- pulsory school	Appren- ticeship	VET school	Secon- dary aca- demic school	VET college	Post- secon- dary VET course and similar	Teacher training college	HE institu- tion	Total	
	2	3 B	3 B, 4B	3 A	4 A	5B	5B	5A, 6	%	Absolute
15 to 19	89.5	5.5	2.0	2.8	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	41,946
20 to 24	47.0	28.3	5.4	13.7	3.5	0.2	0.2	1.7	100.0	55,351
25 to 29	49.4	23.4	5.3	9.9	3.5	0.4	0.6	7.6	100.0	73,859
30 to 34	45.7	24.8	6.1	8.1	4.0	0.5	0.7	10.0	100.0	84,711
35 to 39	47.0	23.1	5.9	7.6	3.9	0.4	0.8	11.3	100.0	76,619
40 to 44	51.3	22.6	4.9	6.0	3.3	0.3	0.7	10.8	100.0	58,520
45 to 49	59.5	21.0	4.1	4.2	2.3	0.2	0.6	8.1	100.0	55,416
50 to 54	64.1	18.8	3.9	3.7	1.8	0.2	0.5	7.0	100.0	45,598
55 to 59	63.7	16.9	4.5	4.1	1.5	0.2	0.7	8.3	100.0	26,324
60 to 64	64.8	15.1	4.7	4.2	1.7	0.1	0.5	9.0	100.0	18,785
65 to 69	67.9	13.3	4.2	4.2	1.2	0.2	0.3	8.6	100.0	12,008
70 to 74	65.2	12.6	4.9	5.6	1.7	0.1	0.5	9.4	100.0	8,231
75 to 79	58.4	13.2	7.9	7.3	2.2	0.2	0.5	10.4	100.0	5,524
80 to 84	55.0	14.8	8.2	8.4	2.4	0.2	0.5	10.6	100.0	2,887
85 to 89	59.8	14.8	7.3	8.0	1.5	0.2	0.4	8.1	100.0	1,655
90 to 94	67.4	9.3	5.7	9.4	0.8	0.2	0.5	6.8	100.0	647
95 etc.	80.7	8.8	2.9	2.9	1.2	0.0	0.0	3.5	100.0	171
Total	55.6	20.9	5.0	7.0	2.9	0.3	0.6	7.8	100.0	568,252

Source: Statistics Austria, census; ISIS database query

*1.1.b) What are the demographic changes (ageing population and migration) on participation in different sectors of education and training?*

10. Whereas the number of new students at universities has undergone some changes, their age structure has not. Now as before, some 90 percent of entrants are below the age of 25. The share of this age group in new Fachhochschule students, by contrast, is as low as 71 percent. Table 11).

11. The number of foreign regular students who were admitted in Austria for the first time has increased considerably over the past two decades. **The share of new entrants in the university sector with a non-Austrian citizenship amounted to 29 percent in 2005/06** (Table 12). The share of new students in the Fachhochschule sector without an Austrian citizenship is clearly lower and came to 10.2 percent in the winter semester 2005/06 (Statistics Austria, Hochschulstatistik 2006, p. 208).

TABLE 11.

**Students admitted to HE institutions for the first time by age groups, 1984-2005;  
winter semesters**

Age groups	University		Fachhochschule
	1984/05	2005/06	2005/06
under 20	11,729	11,467	1,432
20 – 24	6,871	14,535	4,352
25 – 29	997	1,837	1,308
30 – 34	280	528	564
35 – 39	149	236	323
40 – 44	115	126	140
45 – 49	53	68	54
50 and older	133	97	16
	20,327	28,894	8,189
Share under-25	91.5	90.0	70.6
Share 25 or older	8.5	10.0	29.4

Source: Statistics Austria; Hochschulstatistik

TABLE 12.

**Students admitted to Austrian scientific universities for the first time by citizenship; 1984-2006,  
winter semesters**

Citizenship	1984/85	1994/95	2004/05	2005/06
Austria	18,362	19,250	20,290	20,464
Non-Austrian	1,965	3,992	6,202	8,430
<i>including:</i>				
Germany	834	915	1,436	3,540
Alto Adige (South Tyrol, Italy)	-	826	837	735
(Former) Yugoslavia *	37	210	563	574
Poland	29	86	282	301
France	20	183	282	258
Hungary	12	124	201	197
Slovakia	-	89	201	238
Czech Republic	-	45	165	195
Turkey	54	80	131	129
Total	21,166	25,632	26,492	28,894
<b>Share without Austrian citizenship</b>	<b>13.2</b>	<b>24.9</b>	<b>23.4</b>	<b>29.2</b>

\* comprises Serbia and Montenegro, Macedonia, Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia-Herzegovina

Source: Statistics Austria; Hochschulstatistik

12. Immigrants from non-EU countries not only show relatively low formal educational attainment levels (Table 18) but also lower participation levels in non-formal CVET at prime working age. For Turkish citizens living in Austria, for example, participation in education and training at prime working age was calculated at slightly more than 15 percent, whereas this share is 28 percent among Austrians (see Table 14).

13. Participation by adults in education and training decreases clearly over the age of 50, as is shown by the 2003 microcensus. Over the past 12 months, 28 percent of 45-to-49-year-olds but only 21 percent of the 50-to-54-year-olds took part in course-form CVET (Table 14). In the past, CVET participation by employees in employment declined sharply already after the 40<sup>th</sup> birthday, as is shown by older surveys: CVET participation fell in the second half of

the 1980s, for example, from 30.4 percent among 30-to-39-year-olds to 22.6 percent among 40-to-49-year-olds (Zeidler, 1990, p. 790).

14. Age-group-specific data regarding demographic development reveal that the number and share of people at late working age are growing in the long term (Statistics Austria 2006, p. 46). Thus, for example, the number of 55-to-64-year-olds in the residential population is to rise from below 949,000 to over 1.2 million in a comparison of 2005 and 2020 (Hanika 2006, p. 877) (see Table 13).

15. Whereas CVET participation of employed women in older surveys was significantly lower than the men's rate (e.g. 21.4 vs. 26.0 percent in the years 1985-1989) (cf. Zeidler, 1990, p. 790), the 2003 microcensus shows a different picture (see Table 14). In exclusively occupation-related courses, no sex-specific differences in participation in education and training can be noted. When adding courses the completion of which has both professional and private reasons, women have an edge over men (cf. Schneeberger 2005, p. 17). The women's backlog in the 'overview indicator' on the participation in education and training regarding a 12 month period is the exclusive result of the women's lower labour force participation rate (see Table 14).

TABLE 13.

**Residential population at late working age  
Comparison over time and projection (main variant)**

Year	Population total	55-64-year-olds		
		Absolute	In percent of total	Index
1961	7073,807	919,598	13.0	100
1971	7491,526	860,998	11.5	94
1981	7555,338	759,028	10.0	83
1991	7795,786	774,977	9.9	84
2001	8043,046	903,322	11.2	98
2005	8233,306	948,649	11.5	103
2010	8416,931	958,538	11.4	104
2015	8554,966	1058,744	12.4	115
2020	8667,985	1220,323	14.1	133
2025	8766,860	1292,066	14.7	141

Source: Statistics Austria

TABLE 14.

**Participation in education and training over the past 12 months, June 2003, in %**  
(Formal and non-formal education; residential population aged 25-64)

Classification feature	Total	Male	Female	Difference
<b>FORMAL EDUCATION</b>				
HE-related establishment	59.4	58.9	59.6	0.7
University, HE institution, Fachhochschule	51.0	47.4	55.6	8.2
AHS	45.0	47.1	43.1	-4.0
BHS	44.3	42.4	46.5	4.1
BMS	30.9	32.5	30.1	-2.4
Apprenticeship	22.7	23.5	21.5	-2.0
<b>Compulsory school</b>	<b>9.6</b>	<b>10.0</b>	<b>9.4</b>	<b>-0.6</b>
<b>AGE IN YEARS</b>				
25 – 29	41.7	42.5	41.0	-1.5
30 – 34	33.8	36.1	31.6	-4.5
35 – 39	31.1	32.5	29.7	-2.8
40 – 44	30.9	31.0	30.7	-0.3
45 – 49	27.7	28.4	27.0	-1.4
<b>50 – 54</b>	<b>21.3</b>	<b>21.9</b>	<b>20.7</b>	<b>-1.2</b>
55 – 59	16.2	16.7	15.8	-0.9
60 – 64	9.0	8.7	9.2	0.5
<b>CITIZENSHIP</b>				
Austria	27.9	29.0	26.9	-2.1
<b>Former Yugoslavia</b>	<b>12.2</b>	<b>12.1</b>	<b>12.2</b>	<b>0.1</b>
<b>Turkey</b>	<b>15.3</b>	<b>14.6</b>	<b>16.1</b>	<b>1.5</b>
Others	30.1	29.5	30.6	1.1
<b>EMPLOYMENT STATUS</b>				
Employed	31.8	30.9	32.9	2.0
Unemployed	24.8	18.6	31.8	13.2
<b>Housekeeping</b>	<b>14.9</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>14.9</b>	<b>-</b>
Maternity leave	17.7	-	17.8	-
Old-age pension	9.1	8.0	10.1	2.1
Total	27.2	28.1	26.3	-1.8

Source: Statistics Austria, microcensus June 2003 (N=4,454,100)

16. Among employed women, the participation rate in education and training was 33 percent in 2003. When comparing this figure with a share of participation in education and training of below 15 percent among housekeeping women, this reveals another *major target group* (see Table 14).

17. That women in Austria have caught up with men in general is also shown by the life-long learning structural indicator for 2005, which refers to the participation of 25-to-64-year-olds in education and training over the last four weeks before the survey: The labour force

survey identifies a percentage of 14.5 percent for women and 13.1 percent for Austrian men (Jouhette /Romans, 2005, p. 10).

18. Apart from apprenticeship training (the so-called ‘dual system’), Austria boasts a well-developed full-time school-based system of vocational training at the upper secondary level. Most of these school-based paths can be attended also as **VET schools and colleges for people under employment** (the so-called ‘**special forms for adults**’) or following completion of an apprenticeship, a VET school or the upper cycle of a secondary school teaching general education contents. Thanks to the introduction of Fachhochschule programmes (in 1994), the promotion of non-traditional forms of HE access, and the introduction of the *Berufsreifeprüfung* (or *BRP* for short) certificate for graduates of apprenticeship programmes or VET schools, student and graduate figures in the postsecondary school sector are no longer rising, however (see Tables 15 and 16). Nevertheless it must be stated that – according to most recently published relevant statistics – every year **almost 3,300 people obtain a qualification at a VET school or college for people under employment** (see Table 16).

TABLE 15.

**Students at selected Austrian VET schools and colleges  
for people under employment in a comparison over time**

Schools and colleges for people under employment	1995/96	1998/99	2002/03
Schools of engineering, arts and crafts (in the narrower sense)	5,018	3,335	2,888
<i>including:</i>			
<i>Bridge courses</i>	37	15	405
<i>Part-time industrial master colleges</i>	168	139	2,483
Secondary schools for occupations in the business sector	249	47	32
Schools of engineering, arts and crafts (in the wider sense)	4,727	4,363	4,912
Secondary colleges for occupations in the business sector	2,737	2,561	2,755
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,731</b>	<b>10,306</b>	<b>10,587</b>

Source: BMBWK, school statistics

TABLE 16.

**Successfully completed final exams at selected Austrian VET schools and colleges, Berufsreifeprüfung exams, Reifeprüfung exams and HE entrance exams in a time comparison**

Successfully completed final exams	1994	1997	2001
Forms of schools for engineering, arts and crafts for people under employment and programmes or courses for engineering, arts and crafts		682	422
Secondary business schools for people under employment			30
Hotel and restaurant trade programme for adults			11
Forms of colleges for engineering, arts and crafts (HTGL) for people under employment	2,143	2,102	1,908
Forms of colleges of business administration for people under employment	785	900	912
Secondary academic schools including <i>Realgymnasium</i> types and forms of <i>Realgymnasium</i> placing emphasis on economics and social studies for people under employment	280	430	353
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,208</b>	<b>4,114</b>	<b>3,636</b>
Berufsreifeprüfung			564
Higher Education Entrance Examination*	198	323	417
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,406</b>	<b>4,437</b>	<b>4,617</b>

\* Regular Austrian students admitted to scientific universities for the first time and students admitted to Fachhochschule programmes for the first time, in the winter semester (1997 and 2001)

Source: BMBWK, school statistics; Statistics Austria, Hochschulstatistik

*1.1.c) Is there any evidence of national policy on migration (e.g. the low-skilled or high skilled) with respect to demographic change?*

### **Migration and the immigrants' formal qualifications**

19. The demographic changes in Austria are characterised by increased immigration and declining birth rates of the autochthonous population. The Austrian residential population has risen in recent years due to a positive migration balance. Whereas the residential population was below 7.1 million in 1961, it had reached a level of 8.2 million by 2005 (see Table 17). Demographers are expecting more growth until 2055. By that year, the residential population is thought to total 8,961,091 people (Hanika 2006, p. 877).

20. For some decades, immigration has been considerable and is reflected by naturalisation figures and a share of fellow citizens in the residential population without the Austrian citizenship that has risen – in a comparison of censuses from 1981 and 2001 – from 3.9 percent to 8.8 percent (see Table 17). The migration balance (viz. international migration) increased between 1996 from about 3,900 to about 50,600 in 2004 and is currently below 49,200 in 2005 (Statistics Austria 2007). The number of annual naturalisations increased from 15,309 in 1995 to 42,174 in 2004 (Statistics Austria 2006, p. 87). In the same period, the number of live births fell in Austria from slightly less than 88,700 to about 78,200 (see Table 17).

21. The latest census reveals that 56 percent of the foreign residential population in Austria have no formal educational qualification, which percentage was 34 percent among Austrians (see Tables 10a and 10b). Whereas only 12 percent of Austrians between the ages of

25 and 29 were without any formal qualification, the corresponding share among the foreign residential population was 49 percent.

### **Some evidence of policy on migration**

22. “To take into account integration policy as a subject that touches on all policy areas.“ That is the principle of immigration policy in the current Government Programme of January 2007 (Government Programme for the XXIII. Legislation Period, p. 139). This means that the national policy on migration is found in various fields.

- In the Education and Science chapter, for example, the objective is specified as “integrating children of non-German mother tongue optimally into the school system” (p. 87)
- In the Economic Affairs and Labour chapter, the following immigration-related objectives are listed: “preparation of the Austrian labour market for the elimination of transition periods”, “selective immigration by key workers with needs appraisal” (p. 51).
- In the chapter on Internal Security and Integration, various measures can be found: from kindergarten to “supporting the acquisition of qualifications by adults” (p. 140) and manifold measures related to “language acquisition and attendance of settlement” (p. 140f); also, a “research focus on immigration” is planned to be established (p. 143).

23. One aspect of the national policy on migration in **adult education** can be found in the answers to the Commission questionnaire on the ‘Implementation of strategies for lifelong learning in Europe – Report on the implementation of the 2002 Council Decision’<sup>4</sup>:

“Education measures for immigrants have been carried out in the adult learning sector as follows:

- Basic courses (with focus on IT, as well as key skills such as self-directed learning);
- Language courses;
- Projects to professionalise teachers and trainers in that area.” (p. 24)

24. In the **VET school sector**, immigrants as well as other groups “with a high threat of being excluded” form a special target group for support. Related measures within the framework of ESF Objective 3 are assigned to two areas:

- “vocationally oriented remedial courses: prevention of drop-outs from VET schools and colleges by targeted remedial courses in the subjects concerned;
- team teaching and open learning at business schools and colleges of business administration for people under employment: mother tongue support classes for immigrants attending an evening school for people under employment.” (Implementation..., p. 24).

25. The *Federal Ministry of Economics and Labour*, for example, has organised a project for the ethnic group of Roma in Austria and the neighbouring transition countries with the

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<sup>4</sup> European Commission/Directorate General for Education and Culture: Implementation of strategies for lifelong learning in Europe. Report on the implementation of the 2002 Council Decision, Answers to the Commission questionnaire – Austria, December 2003, p. 24, in German at: [http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/III\\_report/III\\_at\\_de.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/III_report/III_at_de.pdf)

aim of combating unemployment. One part of the project has been the creation and operation of a multilingual Internet platform for labour market policy instruments and support schemes ([www.roma-net.at](http://www.roma-net.at)). In addition, representatives of the Roma are involved in the planning, design and implementation of training and employment projects at the local level. In general terms, one aim of the project consists in raising awareness for the particular disadvantages the Roma have to face in labour market policy respect (Implementation..., p. 25).

26. The **Public Employment Service Austria (PES)** has the task of implementing the political objectives set by the Government and the Social Partners. The Vocational Training Institute (BFI), for example, offers German courses for immigrants, with referrals conducted by the PES. The target group of these courses are immigrants and recognised refugees, EU citizens and young people with a labour-market relevant need to acquire a qualification or certificate in the German language. Course participants are awarded a certificate furnishing proof of their language skills or a certificate awarded within the framework of the Austrian Language Diploma (ÖSD).<sup>5</sup> For illiterate people with a mother tongue other than German who are registered as unemployed with the PES, the course **German with focus on literacy** is offered. Within the framework of course offers, not only language skills are taught but also data processing and basic Internet skills.<sup>6</sup>

27. Major integration-related measures have been developed within the framework of the European Equal programme, such as the project **qualification empowers**, which was conducted in Vienna between 2002 and 2005. The project, which was backed by many organisations, *aims to recognise previous job experiences and facilitate acquisition of formal IVET qualifications*.<sup>7</sup> Training expenses and a subsistence benefit for the period of the course were raised by different bodies. The project objective is to provide vocational qualifications and, at the same time, socio-cultural learning. In addition, innovative measures have been piloted (<http://www.bfi-wien.or.at/presse/archiv/2003/presse17.html>).

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<sup>5</sup> Cf.: [http://www.bfi-wien.or.at/infos/ams-berater/deutsch\\_fuer\\_migranten.html](http://www.bfi-wien.or.at/infos/ams-berater/deutsch_fuer_migranten.html)

<sup>6</sup> Cf.: [http://www.bfi-wien.or.at/ueberuns/abteilungen/AMV/amv1/amv1\\_deutsch.html](http://www.bfi-wien.or.at/ueberuns/abteilungen/AMV/amv1/amv1_deutsch.html)

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.migrant.at/qualifikationstaerkt.htm>

TABLE 17.

**Population shifts 1971- 2005 and projection\* until 2005**

Year of survey	Population total	Migration balance**	Live births	Foreign residential population
1961***	7,073,807		131,463	102,159
1971***	7,491,526		108,510	211,896
1981***	7,555,338	29,519	93,942	303,684
1991***	7,795,786	76,816	94,629	517,690
1992	7,840,709	71,480	95,302	587,433
1993	7,905,632	33,517	95,227	645,832
1994	7,936,118	3,012	92,415	669,453
1995	7,948,278	2,080	88,669	677,061
1996	7,959,016	3,880	88,809	681,709
1997	7,959,016	1,537	84,045	683,394
1998	7,976,789	8,451	81,233	686,481
1999	7,992,323	19,787	78,138	693,955
2000	8,110,566	17,272	78,268	701,768
2001	8,043,046	32,964	75,458	718,259
2002	8,083,797	33,507	78,399	743,255
2003	8,117,754	36,297	76,944	759,576
2004	8,174,733	50,582	78,968	776,147
2005	8,233,306	49,172	78,190	801,621
2006	8,284,006	34,729	76,953	814,065
2007	8,319,447	33,414	76,832	
2008	8,353,379	32,118	76,835	
2009	8,385,882	30,831	76,929	
2010	8,416,931	29,599	77,063	
2015	8,554,966	23,762	79,242	
2020	8,667,985	19,238	80,193	
2025	8,766,860	20,099	79,504	

\* main scenario \*\* immigration minus emigration (related to abroad, referring to Austrians and foreigners)

\*\*\* results on key date of census

Source: Statistics Austria, 2005, 2006

TABLE 18.

<b>Workforce* by formal education and citizenship in a comparison over time</b>								
Country of origin	Compul- sory school	Appren- ticeship	VET school	Secondary academic school	VET college and post- secondary VET courses	Teacher training college	HE insti- tution	total
<b>1981</b>								
Austria	1,262,332	1,189,754	396,808	119,765	122,425	28,179	126,579	3,245,842
EU country (without Austria)	6,585	5,777	2,835	2,682	833	118	3,258	22,088
Other foreign country	115,018	14,727	4,188	3,595	1,394	170	4,499	143,591
Total	1,383,935	1,210,258	403,831	126,042	124,652	28,467	134,336	3,411,521
<b>1991</b>								
Austria	901,997	1,435,425	464,036	140,975	198,219	63,260	179,666	3,383,578
EU country (without Austria)	7,855	9,517	4,597	4,756	1,800	590	6,710	35,825
Other foreign country	174,301	47,743	11,187	11,920	6,805	990	11,933	264,879
Total	1,084,153	1,492,685	479,820	157,651	206,824	64,840	198,309	3,684,282
<b>2001</b>								
Austria	676,397	1,478,330	484,895	153,199	300,045	95,934	270,420	3,459,220
EU country (without Austria)	14,891	13,772	5,348	6,599	2,576	854	15,471	59,511
Other foreign country	192,878	87,759	16,143	15,268	11,498	1,408	17,050	342,004
Total	884,166	1,579,861	506,386	175,066	314,119	98,196	302,941	3,860,735
<b>ROW PER CENT</b>								
<b>1981</b>								
Austria	39	37	12	4	4	1	4	100
EU country (without Austria)	30	26	13	12	4	1	15	100
Other foreign country	80	10	3	3	1	0	3	100
Total	41	35	12	4	4	1	4	100
<b>1991</b>								
Austria	27	42	14	4	6	2	5	100
EU country (without Austria)	22	27	13	13	5	2	19	100
Other foreign country	66	18	4	5	3	0	5	100
Total	29	41	13	4	6	2	5	100
<b>2001</b>								
Austria	20	43	14	4	9	3	8	100
EU country (without Austria)	25	23	9	11	4	1	26	100
Other foreign country	56	26	5	4	3	0	5	100
Total	23	41	13	5	8	3	8	100

\* according to the Life Subsistence Concept (LSC) excluding people holding marginal jobs

Source: Statistics Austria, censuses; ISIS database query; own calculations

1.1(d) Describe any change of higher education institutional admission policies starting to practise recognition of non-formal and informal learning due to the demographic change?

28. In Austria, non-traditional access paths to studies at HE institutions have been promoted for a long time. In this context, several options need to be mentioned: the university entrance qualification examination, *Berufsreifeprüfung* and admission to Fachhochschule programmes without prior passing of the upper secondary school-leaving exam (*Reifeprüfung*).

29. The university entrance qualification examination (*Studienberechtigungsprüfung* or SBP) was introduced in 1985: It allows those who have not taken the *Reifeprüfung* to acquire a **study programme oriented qualification** entitling them to study at an HE institution as a regular student and at teacher training colleges or postsecondary VET courses. It is a restricted study qualification for studies at universities, HE institutions, Fachhochschule programmes, teacher training colleges and postsecondary VET courses. The requirements for being admitted include the following: Candidates must have the Austrian citizenship and must be able to furnish proof of *previous knowledge acquired through job-specific programmes or non-occupational paths* that must have been successful to an extent clearly exceeding fulfilment of general compulsory schooling and be related to their desired study course. Normally, candidates must be over the age of 22. Applicants who have reached the age of 20 must be admitted if they have completed a training path of at least four years including an apprenticeship-leave examination.<sup>8</sup>

30. The *Berufsreifeprüfung* (BRP) is still a relatively new development: in force since 1997, it provides the qualifications connected with the *Reifeprüfung* obtained at an upper secondary school to graduates of an apprenticeship-leave examination (LAP), a skilled workers' exam, a secondary technical and vocational school of at least three years, a nursing school or a school for health care and nursing, or a specialist paramedical course of at least 30 months' duration and hence also enables them to acquire *general access to universities and Fachhochschule programmes*. One of the total of four partial exams taken within the framework of the BRP is a *written subject-specific project work on a topic related to the exam candidate's occupational field* (including subject-related areas) and a related oral exam with the aim of treating topics at a higher level.<sup>9</sup> The first partial exams can be taken as soon as candidates have reached the age of 17, final exams can be taken when they have reached the age of 19. On certain conditions, the written subject-specific project work can be waived. As against the BRP, the SBP does not aim at a general study qualification similar to the *Reifeprüfung*, but prepares in a targeted manner for the study programme selected by the applicant, therefore its validity is restricted to the specific programme concerned and similar programmes.

31. The *Fachhochschule* programmes were founded in 1994 and are entitled to provide admission to study applicants who have not taken the *Reifeprüfung* examination on certain conditions. In the winter semester 2005/06, a total of 535 students admitted to Fachhochschule programmes for the first time did not have a *Reifeprüfung* or SBP certificate. This is equivalent with a share of 6.5 percent of 8,189 entrants to this educational institution. Among foreign Fachhochschule study entrants however, whose figure totalled 834 in the winter semester 2005/06, the proportion of those without *Reifeprüfung* or SBP qualifications was as high as nearly 18 percent (Statistics Austria, Hochschulstatistik 2005/06, p. 215).

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<sup>8</sup> Higher Education Entrance Act, §1 (1) and §2 (1) and (2).

<sup>9</sup> Federal Berufsreifeprüfung Act, §1 (1), §3 (1) and §4 (1).

## 1.2 Internationalisation

1.2.a) Describe any national policy or current practices of recognition of non-formal and informal learning as part of integration strategies of migrant population (highly skilled, low skilled and refugees)?

32. The Federal Government's integration strategy, which is defined as a subject that touches on all policy areas, has already been described in section 1.1c. The *Equal project qualification empowers*<sup>10</sup> can be considered exemplary for *current practices of recognition of non-formal and informal learning as part of integration strategies of migrant population*. The project comprises **two subprojects** that focus on collecting and recording the immigrants' skills.

- The first one is implemented at *Integrationshaus Wien* with the title **Language and qualification portfolio** (period of development: 2002-2004). In particular, it takes into account the experience acquired through migration, rates them as "key skills" of relevance for the labour market, and can be conducted within the framework of a vocational guidance measure. On the basis of the portfolio, all the acquired abilities, knowledge and competences are to be collected and made accessible for the world of work. In addition, it aims to define occupational objectives and develop a plan for entry to the labour market. Following completion of that work, a collection of individual potential is created, where the process of portfolio-related work can be continued. In a first evaluation, this instrument has been assessed as extremely positive and efficient ("Qualifikation stärkt." Final report. Vienna, November 2005, p. 3/4).
- The second project conducted within the development partnership *qualification empowers*, which is of interest in this connection was termed **nosqua – recognition and qualification for immigrants** (project period 2002-2004), which was implemented by *abzwien*. This project pursued the objectives of making the immigrants' potential visible and their vocational qualifications accessible for the Austrian labour market. One key aspect in terms of contents was to make skills and competences visible and elaborate problem-solving strategies (<http://www.abzaustria.at/projekte/migrantinnen/nosqua.html>, 2.2.2007). In addition, the overall objective was to support the participants' capacity building in the fields of everyday tasks, education and occupation as well as in their preparation of applications for recognition of qualifications. Demand for this measure exceeded originally planned capacities by far, which underlines the need for such procedures. ("Qualifikation stärkt". Final report. Vienna, November 2005, p. 3/4).

33. Another example of relevant *current practices* is the **AMPEL** project. This is a subproject of the Vienna development partnership *InterCulturExpress*, which is part of the EU initiative Equal, and conducted by the *Counselling Centre for Immigrants*. Within the framework of this project, blocks of information are compiled that reveal paths towards recognition of qualifications and training background of immigrants. AMPEL aims to make a contribution towards identifying the immigrants' potential and hence prevent dequalification in the Austrian labour market.<sup>11</sup> The target group of the AMPEL project are experts, multipliers and counsellors active in the fields of integration, immigration and counselling in relevant institutions. The information blocks on offer have been designed by experts from science and prac-

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<sup>10</sup> This project is discussed in greater detail in another section of this report.

<sup>11</sup> Beratungszentrum für Migranten und Migrantinnen - InterCulturExpress, AMPEL information folder (in German), [http://www.interculturexpress.at/sites/Ampele\\_Folder.pdf](http://www.interculturexpress.at/sites/Ampele_Folder.pdf), 2.2.2007

tice as well as representatives of authorities. Information blocks published within the framework of AMPEL include in particular:

- ✓ Recognition of formal educational qualifications and certificates in Austria (i.e. ‘equivalence’ and the recognition process, the so-called *Nostrifikation*)
- ✓ Rules for EU citizens related to the recognition of vocational qualifications
- ✓ Certification procedure related to the recognition of formal educational qualifications and certificates
- ✓ Intergovernmental agreements related to the recognition of vocational and academic qualifications and certificates
- ✓ Financial grants for IVET and CVET
- ✓ Intercultural educational counselling and guidance
- ✓ Intercultural opening of adult learning institutions

Gainful employment and language skills (Beratungszentrum für Migranten und Migrantinnen - InterCulturExpress, AMPEL information folder (in German),

[http://www.interculturexpress.at/sites/Ampel\\_Folder.pdf](http://www.interculturexpress.at/sites/Ampel_Folder.pdf), 2.2.2007)

34. **Diversity@care:** The **diversity@care** project is implemented by various providers in Vienna and aims to facilitate access to the occupational field of mobile nursing and assistance to immigrants. These include, in particular, one-on-one counselling sessions and individual grants to immigrants based on professional skills and abilities as well as tailored skills training and regular training programmes that take into account the specific abilities and needs of the target group concerned.<sup>12</sup> Project partners include the following: Volkshilfe Vienna, Caritas Vienna, the Vienna Red Cross, the Vienna Employment Promotion Fund (WAFF), and Johannes Kepler University Linz. This Equal project is financed from funds of the ESF and the Federal Ministry of Economics and Labour.<sup>13</sup> Caritas Vienna participates in this Community project with its own counselling module ‘Paths towards nursing and care professions’, which focuses on identifying and recognising the personal skills and qualifications of interested immigrants.<sup>14</sup>

35. The **apprenticeship leave examination** is recognised among employers and employees alike as reliable proof of achievement of a specialist vocational and technical qualification. For this reason, support activities for immigrants are particularly oriented towards the objective of reaching an apprenticeship diploma. Depending on the educational background and age, various legal options are exploited in this context:

- In case of young immigrants who have started, but not completed a training programme in their home country, and who find an appropriate apprenticeship post or company in Austria, their previous knowledge and abilities will first of all be examined as well as at which level candidates should enter a specific programme.<sup>15</sup>
- In case of adult immigrants with relevant subject-specific knowledge and skills, there is the option to take advantage of a legal option that has existed for quite some time, viz.:

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<sup>12</sup> <http://www.diversitycare.at/1037...2.html>, 21.11.2006.

<sup>13</sup> , 21.11.2006.

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.diversitycare.at/1031...2.html>, 21.11.2006.

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.wequam.at/Default.aspx?tabid=103> and

[http://www.interculturexpress.at/sites/newsletter1\\_1\\_AnerkennungLehre.htm#arbeiten](http://www.interculturexpress.at/sites/newsletter1_1_AnerkennungLehre.htm#arbeiten), 2.2.2007.

**reducing the examination syllabus** when taking the apprenticeship-leave examination (LAP). In *exceptional* cases, candidates will be admitted to an apprenticeship-leave examination without completing an apprenticeship programme beforehand.<sup>16</sup>

1.2.b) Describe any national policies or higher education institutional approaches that are currently being taken to promote comparability/compatibility, visibility and portability of learning outcomes through non-formal and informal learning to promote cross-border mobility?

36. The website of the **Austrian Exchange Service ÖAD** ([www.oead.ac.at](http://www.oead.ac.at), 2.2.2007, partly available also in English) provides comprehensive information on international mobility at HE institutions. Austria co-signed the 1999 Bologna Declaration, which aims to establish a European area of higher education. At the Federal Ministry for Education, Science and Culture, the General Directorate for Scientific Research and International Affairs – Science Division acts as the national Bologna follow-up point of contact. The implementation of objectives is accompanied by a monitoring process, which publishes documents in regular periods (e.g. [archiv.bmbwk.gv.at/europa/bp/bericht\\_05.xml](http://archiv.bmbwk.gv.at/europa/bp/bericht_05.xml), in German, 2.2.2007). A special website provides the latest information about the Bologna process (see <http://archiv.bmbwk.gv.at/europa/bp/index.xml>, also in English, 2.2.2007)

37. Following an amendment to the 2002 University Studies Evidence Decree (*Universitäts-Studienevidenzverordnung*, Federal Legal Gazette II no. 288/2002), the Diploma Supplement was introduced as a compulsory element. It has been issued *ex officio* as of 2005. The Austrian two-tier study system (diploma – doctorate) was replaced by the three-tier study system (Bachelor – Master – Doctor); this step succeeded in enhancing international comparability (Amendment to the University Act 1999; Fachhochschule Studies Act 2002). By the year 2005, almost 29 percent of study programmes leading to a first study degree had been converted to the Bachelor and Master study system. This implies the “introduction of a credit transfer system within the meaning of ECTS, involving informal and non-formal learning as far as possible” (BMBWK, University Report, Vol. 1, 2005, p. 148).

38. According to statute, specialised bodies for recognition procedures are to be established to “contribute to the professionalisation of recognition processes... Mobility between universities both within Austria and within the EU and the EMS is to be supported by a generous recognition practice in related studies as demanded by law” (BMBWK, University Report, Vol. 1, 2005, p. 149). It is incumbent on ENIC NARIC AUSTRIA to make available the information required for recognition procedures ([archiv.bmbwk.gv.at/naric](http://archiv.bmbwk.gv.at/naric), 2.2.2007). For this purpose, the Ministry will establish bilateral contacts to other countries and formulate recommendations on recognition issues to be addressed to the respective HE institutions (BMBWK, University Report, Vol. 1, 2005, p. 158.). As of 2005/06, a total of 80 Austrian HE institutions are entitled to take part in the SOCRATES-ERASMUS programme due to the awarding of the ERASMUS University Charta (EUC) by the European Commission (BMBWK, University Report, Vol. 1, 2005, p. 159.).

39. People from abroad who want to study in Austria at a university or enrol in a Fachhochschule programme have the option to prepare themselves within the framework of the

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<sup>16</sup> Vocational Training Act (*Berufsausbildungsgesetz*), §23 ( 5), [www.bmwa.gv.at/NR/rdonlyres/ED27FB2C-3751-40BC-90E0-8552114C2D1B/14528/Berufsausbildungsgesetz03.pdf](http://www.bmwa.gv.at/NR/rdonlyres/ED27FB2C-3751-40BC-90E0-8552114C2D1B/14528/Berufsausbildungsgesetz03.pdf), 27.11.2006.

University Preparation Programme for the German exam and any supplementary exams they may need to take. Related courses are offered e.g. by the Vienna universities (see [www.vwu.at](http://www.vwu.at)) and Graz universities<sup>17</sup>. One element of recognition of previous knowledge is a placement test (in German), the result of which will lead to placement in A (beginners), AV (beginners with previous knowledge), and V (beginners with good previous knowledge). Also subject-specific supplementary exams are graded depending on previous knowledge (e.g. F = advanced, WF = very advanced). In Vienna, some 1,500 written and oral exams are held every year. There are about 800 students per semester, with courses comprising an average of 2-4 semesters, depending on the number of supplementary exams prescribed (Kernegger, 19.1. 2007). In the event that an applicant cannot furnish proof of sufficient German knowledge, “the university shall be entitled to grant admission to the individual on the condition that a relevant examination be taken within three semesters. ... During that time until the day the examination is taken, the individual shall be enrolled as an irregular student. ... He shall not be entitled to take any examinations at university but may listen to lectures, for example.”<sup>18</sup>

40. Due to pronounced interest, the Education Ministry has made available additional national funds for LEONARDO DA VINCI mobility projects. This has reflected in successful projects in the field of the development of teaching and learning offers but also of approaches related to crediting and recognising qualifications. Thus, for example, a Leonardo project conducted over several years (VQTS) led to the exemplary development of a *competence portfolio* in the machine construction sector and was awarded with the Helsinki Award 2006 upon completion.<sup>19</sup> Austrian research institutes have taken part in Europe-wide development projects to support mobility in VET (*ibw* in *ECVET-Reflector* und *ZSI* in *ECVET-Connection*). The exchange of young people and skilled workers is publicly funded by the *Association to Promote the International Exchange of Apprentices, Young Workers and Trainers of the Economy (IFA)* and regularly evaluated by accompanying research work.

41. To “improve permeability in the tertiary sector”, the Government Programme of the new grand coalition government promises – apart from “safeguarding credits in case of a change of study location within Austria” – to set up a “clearing office for disputes related to the recognition of foreign study programmes” as “implementation measures” (Government Programme for the XXIII. Legislation Period, p. 101).

### 1.3 New ICT

*1.3.a) Provide any evidence of modularisation of learning and the new recording system opened up by new information and communication technologies be fully used to promote credit transfer?*

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<sup>17</sup> See e.g. ÖH Uni Graz /AAI Graz: Studierende aus Studieren in Graz – Informationsbroschüre für ausländische Studierende, Graz in July 2004. [http://www.aai-graz.at/fileadmin/misc/aai/files/Broschuere\\_Studieren\\_in\\_Graz\\_Deutsch.pdf](http://www.aai-graz.at/fileadmin/misc/aai/files/Broschuere_Studieren_in_Graz_Deutsch.pdf), p. 23.

<sup>18</sup> See e.g. ÖH Uni Graz /AAI Graz: Studierende aus Studieren in Graz – Informationsbroschüre für ausländische Studierende, Graz in July 2004. [http://www.aai-graz.at/fileadmin/misc/aai/files/Broschuere\\_Studieren\\_in\\_Graz\\_Deutsch.pdf](http://www.aai-graz.at/fileadmin/misc/aai/files/Broschuere_Studieren_in_Graz_Deutsch.pdf), p. 23.

<sup>19</sup> More information is available here: <http://www.leonardodavinci.fi/index-eng.html>

42. Since 1997 there has been the possibility in Austria to acquire the European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL). In the beginning, the primary target group were employees, but in the meantime also other groups of the population take advantage of this training option, particularly schoolchildren, the elderly, and the self-employed. Since the introduction of the ECDL in Austria, more than 150,000 certificates have been awarded. At present there are about 320 ECDL testing centres for adults in Austria as well as 1,400 schools where children and young people can take the ECDL ([http://www.ecdl.at/themen/pa/060821\\_150000.html](http://www.ecdl.at/themen/pa/060821_150000.html), 2.2.2007).

Apart from this ECDL Core Certificate, regular ICT users have the option to acquire and furnish proof of abilities exceeding standard functions via an ECDL Advanced Certificate (<http://www.ecdl.at/advanced/>, 22.3.2007).

43. **Intel – modular ICT in-service training offer for teachers and administrators:** *Intel – Lehren für die Zukunft* was conducted in Austria between 2001 and 2003 and forms part of the international professional development programme for teachers with the title *Intel – Teach to the Future*, which promotes the use of new technologies and media in the classroom and aims to develop related skills. The project has been implemented with the support of companies (such as Microsoft). Teachers of all school types and school subjects have acquired the knowledge and skills required to design their instruction in a flexible and individual manner *in modular training units* within the framework of a 40-hour attendance programme. Training focused on the development of multimedia presentations and publications as well as their methodical integration in the classroom, use of Internet search engines and folders as well as preparation of information, creation of websites, and even planning and designing of entire teaching units. *The contents of every module have been conceived as offerings that can be adapted to the participants' experiential background and interests as well as the organisational framework conditions of the in-service measure.* By the end of the 2002/03 academic year, more than 6,000 teachers and administrators will have completed the programme.<sup>20</sup>

44. In the field of in-service teacher training (train the trainer), the **eLC-IT-Card** needs to be mentioned, the preparation for which is also in a modular form. The purpose of this certificate ('card') is to record the ICT skills acquired by school teaching staff by attending seminars and other forms of learning.<sup>21</sup> On the present version of the eLC-IT-Card, seven areas are foreseen – from operating system to e-learning. There are three IVET / CVET levels for the different IT areas:

- Standard: basic and standard knowledge about the IT area concerned
- Expert: CVET and additional qualifications in the IT area concerned (prerequisite: basic knowledge)
- Special: CVET and development of knowledge under specific or modern aspects.

Therefore the eLC-IT-Card comprises a total of 21 modules. To gain entry and obtain proof of relevant knowledge, there are two options: either completion of a seminar or furnishing of proof of knowledge by attendance of an alternative programme or relevant practice.

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<sup>20</sup> [http://archiv.bmbwk.gv.at/schulen/unterricht/it/IT-Angebote\\_Lehrerausbil4836.xml](http://archiv.bmbwk.gv.at/schulen/unterricht/it/IT-Angebote_Lehrerausbil4836.xml), <http://www.efit.at/eeducation/projekt.asp?Projektname=Intel>, 7.11.2006

<sup>21</sup> <http://elearning.bbs-rohrbach.at/Plenum06.pdf>, 5.2. 2007; e-learning-Initiativen im deutschsprachigen Raum – Plenumsbeiträge, p. 4ff.

45. The **Centre for Distance Studies** was set up at Linz University in 1991. The Centre for Distance Studies is a member in the umbrella organisation of the European Association of Distance Teaching Universities (EADTU) – in this context, *EuroStudyCenters* have been set up in Vienna and Linz – and cooperates with the Open University. Interested people have the possibility to enrol in a study programme of *FernUniversitaet in Hagen* and other European distance universities as well as the *Open University (UK)* via the *EuroStudyCenters*. “Within the framework of currently approx. 3,000 available individual courses, **courses and modules can be combined as desired**. People who have successfully completed courses within the framework of academic studies will be awarded relevant certificates. Academic studies can also be used as orientation studies to select future studies – on certain conditions, achievements can be credited to later studies. Academic studies also include the so-called bridge courses, which serve to repeat and deepen the knowledge acquired in the diploma studies. ... The main medium for studying at the Distance University is still written study material, supplemented by electronic media and support by mentors in study centres. **However, the use of the new information and communications technologies is gaining in importance within the framework of distance studies**. The number of courses that can be studied via the Internet is increasing steadily and the Bachelor in Information and Communications Technology marks the first time that a study programme has been created that can be studied entirely via the Internet. In its final version, also the Bachelor of Laws will be offered in a virtual form. These developments are part of the concept of the Virtual University, which is being tested and continually evaluated in real-life operation.” (<http://www.esc.ac.at/zf/unihagen.htm>, 5.2.2007; bold type not in the original)

46. Since 2000, the comprehensive national education programme *eFit-Austria* has implemented relevant measures to use state-of-the-art information and communications technologies, involving all education and training areas. All in all, EUR 52m have been invested in support activities, infrastructural measures, campaigns and the creation of a supra-regional education portal ([www.bildung.at](http://www.bildung.at)) (cf. also: Archan, Mayr, 2006, p. 17). Of the funds used, approx. 50 percent were allocated to VET schools and colleges where innovative IT school development projects are carried out. One relevant example focuses on increasing participation in the project ‘e-learning in notebook classes’.

47. Also adult learning establishments increasingly use e-learning instruments and methods: The Adult Education Centre (*Volkshochschule* or VHS for short) Meidling in Vienna, for example, offers blended learning within the framework of the *Berufsreifepriifung*. In this field, within the framework of the project eLOPA (e-Learning in Open Access Courses, <http://meidling.vhs.at/elopa/>, 22.3.2007), the e-learning offer was introduced in several stages and subsequently extended. The project is a cooperative venture of VHS Meidling and VHS Floridsdorf in Vienna and funded by the European Social Fund and the Federal Ministry for Education, Science and Culture (see <http://meidling.vhs.at/11467.html>, 2.2.2007).

1.3.b) *Provide a list of new qualifications that have been opened up by new information and communication technologies. Provide evidence, if any, that the certificates by the major industries carry more or equivalent currency in the labour market than academic qualifications.*

48. *Certificates by the major industries* in the ICT sector are important in CVET as well as in VET schools and colleges where IVET programmes for young people and – in the so-called special forms – VET programmes for adults are on offer. The Competence Centres for Information Technology association (CCIT, <http://www.ccit.at/>) is a new public management instrument of the Education Ministry. The association acts as a link between ICT certificate providers and schools. The tasks of CCIT are to supply teaching staff with material and information to be able to prepare interested people for relevant exams. The company certificates on offer include the following: CISCO-CCNA and CCNP, CISCO-IT-Essentials I and II, MICROSOFT-MCP, programming training programmes, MICROSOFT MMSI network certificate, LINUX–EOSC, ORACLE (SQL, Database), NOVELL–CAN and SAP–ADES.

49. Not only in full-time school-based VET but also in the dual IVET system (i.e.: apprenticeship training), the new ICT is being applied. Between 1997 and 2003, for example, the following relevant apprenticeship occupations were created: EDP technician; EDP system engineering; applied data processing; IT electronics; communications technician specialising in audio- and video-electronics; communications technician specialising in electronic data processing and telecommunications; communications technician specialising in communications electronics; media expert specialising in design; and media expert specialising in media technology.<sup>22</sup>

1.3.c) *Describe current national policies or practices of e-portfolio as a tool to record learning outcomes or ‘learning assets’? What have been achieved and what have been challenges?*

50. On the one hand, for some years now, initiatives to introduce portfolios and **e-portfolios** based on digital media have been developed in Austria and existing concepts have been studied. Already in the Austrian country report on the Commission Memorandum on lifelong learning, the increased use of e-portfolios met with positive response and was included as a separate item in the future strategy development (BMBWK, Länderbericht zum Memorandum über lebenslanges Lernen ... 2001, p. 27, 41). Today, a large number of developments in the field of adult learning takes advantage of the tool e-portfolio, with parts of portfolios drawn up on paper, but a switchover is already envisaged.

a) **e-Portfolio in the BRP:** pilot project (VHS Meidling, ESF Objective 3 project, since 2001).

b) **Informal learning in everyday life. The competence portfolio of the adult education associations,** Ring of Austrian Adult Education Associations, ESF Objective 3 project, 2003-2005, [www.kompetenz-portfolio.at](http://www.kompetenz-portfolio.at). The competence portfolio is a folder aiming to systematically document skills and competences acquired by volunteers in honorary offices. It covers the following aspects: a short portrait of honorary commitment; the personal competence profile; and an action plan for planned measures: such as new accents in the honorary office; CVET measures; job applications in the labour market, etc. At the core of portfolio preparation there is a competence talk with a certified portfolio facilitator of about two hours.

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<sup>22</sup> <http://www.berufsinfo.at/nlbj/html/frameset02.htm>, 7.11.2006.

The talk is evaluated jointly in several steps, then the portfolio is completed by the volunteer holding the honorary office. From a pedagogical perspective, portfolio preparation is a supported self-assessment activity. Following preparation of the portfolio, the individual has the option to prepare a competence certificate for job applications jointly with the portfolio facilitator. The competence certificate is a short version of the portfolio tailored to the respective goal of the application. At present, a **self-assessment portfolio for volunteer work on the Internet** is being elaborated within the framework of a Leonardo project (to be completed in early May 2006). It is planned to develop also an **e-Portfolio** for volunteer work.

c) The **Quali-Box** of BIFO Berufs- und Bildungsinformation Vorarlberg, which was launched in 1999. The Quali-Box is a written self-work tool used in educational and vocational guidance. It is about reflecting on existing qualifications and skills and identifying on that basis one's own education requirements. It is an instruction for a self-controlled learning process. See: <http://www.bifo.at/text/qualibox>, 5.2. 2007. It is also a tool supporting the collection of formal and non-formal skills and qualifications. Results can be imported directly to the individual portfolio. ESF Objective 3 – preliminary project on the Quali-Box as an online tool (2002): *could not be implemented for cost reasons*. In the course of implementation of the Equal project *Bildungspartnerschaft Vorarlberg* (2002-2005), a self-assessment instrument called *check.k – competences-strengths-benefits* was developed, which unfortunately had to be shut down for legal reasons.

d) **Educational and vocational guidance** programme of university character conducted at the Federal Institute for Adult Learning St. Wolfgang, ESF Objective 3 project, since 2002, [http://www.bifeb.at/veranstaltungen/Seminare/bildungsberatung\\_lgv7.html](http://www.bifeb.at/veranstaltungen/Seminare/bildungsberatung_lgv7.html). Application of a portfolio for training programmes for educational counsellors in the form of a collection of case reports, peer group work, excursion reports, documentation of learning activities, etc.

e) **e-Learning self-directed (eLSD)** programme of university character conducted at VHS Floridsdorf, Federal Institute for Adult Learning St. Wolfgang, ESF Objective 3 project, since 2003, [www.elsd.at](http://www.elsd.at). Within the framework of practice work, the learning platform called *Moodle* serves to document all the products related to participants. Some practice work has been drawn up as e-portfolios.

f) **Language portfolio at Adult Education Centres** conducted by the Association of Austrian Adult Education Centres, ESF Objective 3 project, since 2003, [www.vhs.or.at](http://www.vhs.or.at). It was found that there is some need to develop an Austria-wide standardised portfolio for the language section, which is the major educational sector of adult education centres in Austria. Building on the portfolio development steps in Vienna and Salzburg, the aim is now to develop a common language portfolio as a key quality assurance measure (first on paper, but then also as an e-portfolio).

g) **CVET Academy** of the Association of Austrian Adult Education Centres, ESF Objective 3 project, since 2003, [www.wba.or.at](http://www.wba.or.at). Within the framework of a qualification and recognition system for adult educators (recognition of existing formal qualifications and non-formally or informally acquired competences), a portfolio folder will be created as a filing system across the curriculum. An e-portfolio is in the planning stage.

h) **Language & Qualification Portfolio for Immigrants and Refugees**

Association Project Integrationshaus Vienna, EQUAL project 2005, <http://www.interface.or.at/sprachen.htm>.

The language and qualification portfolio has been developed as an instrument of vocational pedagogy in the Association Project Integrationshaus. It is oriented towards immigrants and refugees and attempts to exactly plan skills training and/or (re-)entry into the world of work, formulate concrete objectives for one's own professional future, open up additional linguistic areas for oneself, and achieve all that with professional support. In about 60 worksheets, the

competences of personality, language and interculturalism as well as formally and informally acquired specialist skills are collected and presented.

i) **Competence Portfolio for Students:** A relevant research project of the cooperation partners: University Graz, Fachhochschule of Business Graz (Campus 02), and the Ring of Austrian Adult Education Associations aims to develop an e-portfolio by October 2007 that will support students during their studies and in career planning as a competence portfolio. At the same time, e-portfolio facilitators are trained who will support students in the preparation of their portfolio.<sup>23</sup>

j) **Europass** at the Austrian Europass Centre (NEC), [www.europass.at](http://www.europass.at). The Europass Initiative aims to document the skills and qualifications, training periods and learning experiences acquired in Austria and abroad in a transparent manner.

k) **Competence Recognition Centre - KOMPAZ** of Adult Education Centre Linz, [www.kompetenzprofil.at](http://www.kompetenzprofil.at). Preparation of a personal competence profile. It aims to document, confirm and officially recognise abilities, competences and key skills from all areas of life and work.

l) The **Competence Balance** of the Tyrol Centre for the Future, [www.zukunftszentrum.at](http://www.zukunftszentrum.at): This project is about competence-oriented career counselling oriented towards the principle of resource activation. In addition, a competence workshop is offered to young people as a strength-oriented life and career guidance procedure.

m) **Family Competences - the key to more success on the job** by the Federal Ministry for Social Security and Generations, [www.familie-und-beruf.at](http://www.familie-und-beruf.at). This programme offers women and men with children the option to make themselves fit for re-entry into the world of work. Selected family counselling centres across Austria offer innovative coaching programmes to increase your labour market potential. In family work, competences are trained and learned that are of importance for the world of work.

n) **e-Portfolio in in-service teacher training** One part of the final examination held for the teacher training college programme e-Learning Didactics within the framework of in-service teacher training at the Federal In-service Teacher Training College in Vienna is a portfolio that must be designed as an e-portfolio and may comprise one or several electronic documents.<sup>24</sup>

51. Within the framework of the Austrian Computer Society, a working group involving all stakeholders has been set up with the title **e-portfolio Initiative Austria** headed by E. Bratengeyer from the Department for Interactive Media and Educational Technology at Danube University Krems ([erwin.bratengeyer@donau-uni.ac.at](mailto:erwin.bratengeyer@donau-uni.ac.at))<sup>25</sup>, which deals with the development and implementation of e-portfolios in order to support the vision: e-portfolios for all EU citizens by 2010<sup>26</sup>. Within the framework of this initiative, also an e-portfolio steering group has been established. Several projects are in the early stages of development, a folder is being prepared. In the field of adult learning, e-portfolios in connection with basic education,

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<sup>23</sup> Sindler, Alexandra: "Projekt ePortfolios", Universität Graz, Akademie für Neue Medien und Wissenstransfer, 2006, [www.ocg.at/elpa/files/elpa2\\_sindler.pdf](http://www.ocg.at/elpa/files/elpa2_sindler.pdf), 8.11.2006.

<sup>24</sup> Christian Schrack: "ePortfolio – eine Zukunftsoption für die europäische Bildung?", BMBWK, Abt. II/8, Vienna, April 2005, p. 8, [http://www.ocg.at/elpa/files/elpa2\\_schrack.pdf](http://www.ocg.at/elpa/files/elpa2_schrack.pdf), 5.2.2007.

<sup>25</sup> Bratengeyer, Erwin: "Die österreichische Initiative zur Einführung von ePortfolios", Salzburg, 24.5.2006, [www.virgil.at/downloads/bratengeyer.pdf](http://www.virgil.at/downloads/bratengeyer.pdf), 4.10.2006.

<sup>26</sup> <http://www.eife-l.org/activities/campaigns>, 22.1.2007

acquisition of educational qualifications by adults, and within the framework of the CVET Academy will be developed and implemented in line with ESF Objective 2.

52. The research society of the Salzburg provincial government *Salzburg Research* conducts **research and development** in the field of the information and communications technologies in the application areas: digital media, e-culture, e-tourism and edu-media (<http://www.salzburgresearch.at/company/index.php>, 2.2.2007). In this context, one of the content-related focuses is on investigating and developing relevant innovative educational and work technologies for school, university and in-company IVET and CVET including the e-portfolio approach. (<http://edumedia.salzburgresearch.at/>, 2.2.2007). In addition, Salzburg Research is one of the stakeholders in the e-portfolio Initiative Austria.

53. E-learning cluster also covers e-portfolios at schools. In 2005/06, the heads of schools formulated as one of their objectives the inclusion of e-portfolios in classroom work. As one example, **Oberstufenrealgymnasium Birkfeld** is mentioned here. This secondary academic school works successfully with the learning platform *Moodle* and installed Notebook Classrooms in the year 2000. For one year, also e-portfolios have been applied: They form one pedagogical focus in the current academic year 2006/07.<sup>27</sup> In addition, schoolchildren's e-portfolios for Austrian schools are generally under discussion. They will serve as a type of extended CV with samples from works and projects in the sense of a 'results portfolio' to support schoolchildren in later job applications. In addition, they aim to document the students' performance in the respective subjects and reveal their contribution e.g. in group work. In the sense of a 'process portfolio', it aims to define personal learning paths and can thus be applied in learning and project management.<sup>28</sup>

## 1.4 Economic developments and skills shortage / mismatch

*1.4.a) Describe any legal framework, policy, programmes, research that address the issue of recognition of skills, experience and knowledge within the framework of human capital with respect to the economic developments or labour force issues. Are there any specific policies at the regional level concerning such as 'Regional Development' and 'Learning Regions'?*

### Policy programmes

54. Due to the modest importance of RNFIL in Austria, researchers on education, training and the labour market have for many years underlined their potential significance as a means for increased participation in IVET and CVET, increased employment opportunities and improved social integration.<sup>29</sup> In the **Government Programme for the XXIII. Legislation Period** of January 2007, the chapter on education includes the following wording: "With a view to the increasing importance of lifelong learning, networking and permeability between IVET and CVET paths is to be enhanced further and **recognition of informally acquired compe-**

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<sup>27</sup> <http://www.e-lisa-academy.at/?PHPSESSIONID=&design=elisawp&url=community&cid=7849&modul=10&folder=70259> &, 22.3.2007

<sup>28</sup> Schrack, Christian: "SchülerInnen ePortfolio für Österreichs Schulen", in: "e-learning Initiativen im deutschsprachigen Raum. A. Plenumsbeiträge", <http://elearning.bbs-rohrbach.at/Plenum06.pdf>, 4.10.2006.

<sup>29</sup> See e.g. Bock-Schappelwein, Huemer, Pöschl, 2006, p. 27ff.

**tences is to be expanded.**” (Government Programme for the XXIII. Legislation Period, p. 85; bold type not in the original). In addition, key RNFIL principles can be found under the objectives and implementation measures of the Government Programme:

- The following measures aiming at a “higher qualification for low skilled young people and adults” are formulated in the Government Programme as implementation measures with RNFIL reference:
  - ✓ “Further expansion of grants for the **acquisition of educational qualifications by adults** in accordance with budgetary possibilities;
  - ✓ Improved cooperation between schools, adult learning institutions, and the PES;
  - ✓ Expansion of systems of **recognition of non-formally acquired knowledge and skills**” (Government Programme for the XXIII. Legislation Period, p. 96; bold type not in the original).
- With the objective of “improving educational guidance for adults”, the “use of state-of-the-art counselling tools (such as the **competence balance**, the qualification cheque)” are specified as implementation measures (Government Programme for the XXIII. Legislation Period, p. 96; bold type not in the original).
- With the objective of “improving documentation of **knowledge and skills acquired in adult age, hence increasing opportunities in the labour market**” a key prerequisite for RNFIL is formulated with an extended use as implementation measure: The “**introduction of a nation-wide education passport to document individual CVET measures**” (Government Programme for the XXIII. Legislation Period, p. 96; bold type not in the original).
- For overcoming the existing segmentation of higher qualifying education paths it is of great importance to pursue the programmatic objective of “improving permeability in the tertiary sector” through inter-institutional credit transfer, the implementation of which would imply far-reaching innovations: “**Crediting acquired knowledge** between VET colleges, Fachhochschule programmes, universities and in-service teacher training colleges” (Government Programme for the XXIII. Legislation Period, p. 101; bold type not in the original).
- Healthcare and nursing occupations: “Making IVET programmes more attractive by developing modular systems which facilitate permeability in the entire health and nursing sector and the opening up of additional fields of work for nursing assistants” (Government Programme for the XXIII. Legislation Period, p. 106).
- “Creation of incentive programmes particularly for elderly citizens to become active in the field of care and nursing” (Government Programme for the XXIII. Legislation Period, p. 106).

### ‘Regional Development’ and ‘Learning Regions’

55. The **Territorial Employment Pacts (TEPs)** are “contracted regional partnerships to better link employment policy with other policies in order to improve the employment situation on regional and local level” ([www.pakte.at](http://www.pakte.at), 9.11.2006). This form of cooperation aims to increase effectiveness and efficiency in the use of resources, and improve the quality of support given to certain target groups, secure and create jobs. Last but not least, the TEPs aim to obtain funding for the region and preserve the region as a place to live in a sustainable man-

ner.<sup>30</sup> The actors involved are the Public Employment Service Austria, provincial governments, the federal social welfare authorities, the social partners and other relevant stakeholders, who develop and implement joint programmes of employment promotion. Within the framework of the programme Objective 3 Austria, particularly costs for the pacts' operational structures are promoted and co-financed from funds of the European Social Fund (ESF) and the Federal Ministry of Economics and Labour. In the meantime, cooperation agreements within the framework of TEPs have been established in all nine Austrian provinces.

56. A successfully and also relevant initiative in terms of quantity within the framework of the TEPs is the **Composite Skills Training Model Triestingtal**, a project that was conducted from 1997 to 2004. Triestingtal valley is one of Austria's oldest industrial zones and showed the highest unemployment figures in the province of Lower Austria from the mid- to the late 1990s, which was due to the fundamental economic structural change at that time. All in all, 23 companies employing a staff of 2,500 – mainly from the metal and machine building industries – took part in that TEP, many of them were SMEs. One of the project objectives consisted in preventing the threat of job losses due to skills shortages by conducting skills training measures. A total of 2,860 people attended 477 skills training measures. Due to that success, all the participating companies were interested in continuing existing cooperation structures. For that purpose, the non-profit association *Innovationsverbund Triestingtal* was founded, which today counts 36 companies of the region as its members. Cooperation is not restricted to economic aspects but also encompasses social areas such as childcare (<http://www.pakte.at/projekte/679.html>, 9.11.2006).

Another example to be mentioned here is the TEP **Pact for Employment and Qualification in Upper Austria 2006**: It comprises a varied bundle of measures ranging from activities on behalf of young people seeking an apprenticeship post, non-profit employment projects, the Educational Account of the Provincial Government of Upper Austria, to labour foundations (see below) and childcare offers.<sup>31</sup>

57. Up to 2006, the province of Burgenland was a designated Objective 1 region. In the period from 1995 to 1999, the EU made available a total of nearly EUR 174m, the federal and provincial governments EUR 274m, and related investments by the business sphere amounted to EUR 610m. This means that combined more than EUR 1,000m were invested in over 3,500 projects. This includes **1,200 skills training and employment measures**, in which more than 13,000 persons participated ([www.burgenland.at/index.jsp](http://www.burgenland.at/index.jsp), 9.11.2006). The second Objective 1 period ran from 2000 to 2006: The EU made available a total of EUR 271m for that period.<sup>32</sup> In 2007, Burgenland will enter the phasing-out stage (2007-2013, [http://www.imburgenland.at/euservice/Images/OP-Bgld\\_Entwurf\\_EFRE\\_tcm13-167407.pdf](http://www.imburgenland.at/euservice/Images/OP-Bgld_Entwurf_EFRE_tcm13-167407.pdf), 22.3.2007).

58. **Labour foundations** are well-proven models to solve regional economic structural, labour market, and skills training problems in Austria, and are characterised by considerable participation and co-financing by local labour market actors and the enterprises concerned.<sup>33</sup> According to information provided by the Public Employment Service Austria (PES)

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<sup>30</sup> [www.pakte.at](http://www.pakte.at), 9.11.2006.

<sup>31</sup> <http://www.pakte.at/teps/232.html>, 13.11.2006.

<sup>32</sup> <http://www.burgenland.at/eu/ziel1programm/101>, 22.3.2007.

<sup>33</sup> Austrian Federal Ministry of Economics and Labour, Department II/11: Arbeitsmarktförderungen. Förderinstrumente und Beihilfen des Arbeitsmarktservices, Vienna, 14.2. 2002, p. 4.

11,840 people took part in courses within the framework of labour foundations (career guidance, skills training, outplacement, etc.) in 2005.<sup>34</sup> A successful example of such a labour foundation was **Implacement Foundation Upper Austria** – ‘Jobs made to measure’: For this purpose, the Public Employment Service Upper Austria makes available to companies an instrument for the skills training and recruitment of workers. The selection of participants and the development of education plans is effected in cooperation, the theoretical and practical training programmes last up to two years (e.g. also with apprenticeship-leave exams).<sup>35</sup>

59. The further expansion of regional education and educational guidance offers e.g. via the European Social Fund – Objective 3 is one cornerstone of the Austrian educational policy strategy. In this context, e.g., regional initiatives for educational guidance and orientation promoted by the Education Ministry in the individual provinces should be mentioned. One important regional initiative is e.g. the project **Educational Guidance Burgenland**, which was launched in 1999 in the course of an ADAPT project (<http://www.bildungsberatung-burgenland.at/beratung/default.htm>, 22.3.2007). Its aim was to “systematically collect primarily educational counselling and guidance related to CVET in Burgenland, initiate networking between actors in these fields and hence contribute to professionalisation” (Cendon / Holzer 2001, p. 61.). In addition, the provider-neutral advice centre in Eisenstadt was to be assisted and expanded.

60. The **Forum for Adult Education in Lower Austria** is an association of Lower Austrian adult learning institutions and the Association of Public Libraries and initiated a project to implement mobile regional educational guidance in early 2005.<sup>36</sup> This aimed to enable free-of-charge educational guidance by different providers and comprise business- and labour-market-oriented as well as awareness-raising and personality-developing educational offers. Target groups include the general public and particularly ‘unreached’ groups of the population such as career break returners, immigrants, older workers and people with learning difficulties and disabilities. Scientific support for the project is provided by the *Austrian Institute for Adult Learning (ÖIEB)*, which is drawing up an accompanying study, provides advice in issues related to concept development, and evaluates results.<sup>37</sup>

61. Also in the field of education and training measures, regional and local focuses are made in Austria. Adult learning institutions, supported by the IT offensive of the Education Ministry, increasingly offer IT training measures for socially or regionally disadvantaged people.<sup>38</sup> The **ICT training programmes Telesoft and IT-Basics** of the Public Employment Service Austria (PES) are conducted in all provinces in a form adjusted to regional requirements, in some provinces additionally related special-focus programmes have been created.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Arbeitsmarktservice Österreich (Public Employment Service Austria): Geschäftsbericht 2005, Vienna, June 2006, p. 25,

[http://www.ams.or.at/neu/001\\_GB\\_2005.pdf](http://www.ams.or.at/neu/001_GB_2005.pdf), 2.2.2007.

<sup>35</sup> BMWA-Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Labour: Annex to the National Action Plan, Table 3: AMS subsidisation cases 2001, Vienna, 10.2. 2003.

<sup>36</sup> <http://www.fen.at/weiterbildung.asp>, 9.11.2006.

<sup>37</sup> [http://www.oieb.at/download/OIEB-Begleitstudie\\_Bildungsberatung\\_NOe.pdf](http://www.oieb.at/download/OIEB-Begleitstudie_Bildungsberatung_NOe.pdf), 22.3.2007.

<sup>38</sup> BMBWK: Austrian country report on the Commission Memorandum on lifelong learning, Vienna, July 2001, p. 12ff.

<sup>39</sup> Republic of Austria, Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Labour: NAP Implementation Report 2001 – Austria, draft, Vienna, , 21.3.2001, p.6.

62. In some regional education centres (such as the education centres Salzkammergut and Saalfelden or the regional offices for adult education in Burgenland) **specific regional education options** have been created and make a valuable contribution to the elimination of regional disadvantages. The provision of key skills aims to enable participants to continue learning independently and hence give them access to further education or training paths and HE qualifications. The centres also offer facilities for educational guidance and counselling (BMBWK, July 2001, p. 34).

*1.4.b) Describe overall skills mismatch/shortage situation in your country. Do you have any economic policies that address the issue of skills shortage or skills mismatch? In what sectors/industries has the issue been most conspicuous?*

### ***Skills shortage and respective policies***

63. Public discussions about possible skilled labour shortages in Austria focused on the following issues in the past decade<sup>40</sup>:

- the ICT skills gap at the end of the 1990s
- lack of healthcare professionals and nursing staff
- labour shortages in tourism and employment of seasonal workers as a recurrent topic
- ‘skilled labour shortage’ in some regions

64. In late 2006, public discussions again turned to the ‘skilled workers gap’ (in relation to welders and electricians, for example) and its proposed remedy: the demand for immigrants.<sup>41</sup> The Government Programme by the new grand coalition of January 2007 provides for “granting employment permits in a flexible manner” to skilled workers from the new EU member states “in sectors with special need that cannot be covered by the available labour potential” (Government Programme for the XXIII. Legislation Period, p. 51).

65. In autumn 2006, two publications with proposals to strengthen employability met with great echo from the media:

- “Wachstum und Vollbeschäftigung” (*Growth and full employment*, December 2006)<sup>42</sup>, written by the social partners, and
- The WIFO White Paper “Mehr Beschäftigung durch Wachstum auf Basis von Innovation und Qualifikation” (*Increasing employment by growth on the basis of innovation and qualification*, October 2006).<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Cf.: Schlögl/Schneeberger, 2003, *Adult Learning in Austria*, p. 56f.

<sup>41</sup> Cf.: Beate Lammer: “Mehr Fachkräfte aus dem Ausland. Regierungspläne. VP-Minister Bartenstein will die Übergangsbestimmungen für die neuen EU-Länder lockern.“ In: *Die Presse* of 4 January 2007, p. 23; *Die Presse*: “Streit um Quoten für Facharbeiter. Die Wirtschaftskammer fordert die Aufhebung der Beschränkung, der ÖGB ist dagegen“. 8 January 2007, p. 17

<sup>42</sup> Wirtschaftskammer Österreich/Bundesarbeitskammer/Österreichischer Gewerkschaftsbund/Landwirtschaftskammer Österreich: “Wachstum und Vollbeschäftigung. Vorschläge der Sozialpartner“, Vienna, December 2006,

[http://www.sozialpartner.at/sozialpartner/paper\\_Wachstum\\_Beschaeftigung.pdf](http://www.sozialpartner.at/sozialpartner/paper_Wachstum_Beschaeftigung.pdf), 2.2.2007.

<sup>43</sup> Aiginger / Tichy / Walterskirchen, October 2006.

In the chapters on labour market & the world of work and on education, the Government Programme of January 2007 refers at length to the two before-mentioned publications (Government Programme for the XXIII. Legislation Period, p. 47). Major objectives and measures in relation to education are presented in item 1.4a, paragraph 56. In relation to CVET, the chapter on labour market & the world of work formulates two other measures that are very important in the context of the present study:

- “preparation of an LLL strategy paper” (cf. e.g. [http://www.erwachsenenbildung.at/magazin/07-0/meb-ausgabe07-0\\_06\\_lassnigg.pdf](http://www.erwachsenenbildung.at/magazin/07-0/meb-ausgabe07-0_06_lassnigg.pdf), [http://www.oeibf.at/\\_TCgi\\_Images/oeibf/20061213104531\\_LLL-Strategiepapier\\_Endfassung.pdf](http://www.oeibf.at/_TCgi_Images/oeibf/20061213104531_LLL-Strategiepapier_Endfassung.pdf), 22.3.2007)
- “regionalisation of CVET” (Government Programme for the XXIII. Legislation Period, p. 48).

*1.4.c) Provide any evidence of increasing or decreasing economic and social disparities in your country (e.g. poverty rate such as gini-co-efficiency) among certain groups (low skilled, immigrants, youth, older workers, etc.). Provide also, if any, relevant documents addressing policies issues (economic, social, labour market, etc.) that account for such trends.*

### **Figures concerning economic and social disparities**

66. The **Gini coefficient** is a measure of the inequality of distribution of social income (i.e.: the lower the coefficient, the lower inequality of distribution), In 2001, the Gini coefficient for Austria was 0.24, the EU-15 reached a coefficient of 0.29. By 2004, this country’s coefficient worsened only slightly (0.26), the EU-15 value was 0.30.<sup>44</sup> Austria is thus – according to the IHS (the Institute for Advanced Studies) – “one of the most successful countries in balancing income disparities via the tax transfer system in an EU comparison”.<sup>45</sup>

67. The **risk-of-poverty rate** in Austria was 12 percent in 2001, the EU average was 15 percent.<sup>46</sup> In 2003 this value was 13 percent and thus still below the average of the EU-15.<sup>47</sup> Nevertheless there are **groups of people more at risk of poverty**: Women, for example, have an increased risk-of-poverty rate compared to men (14 vs. 12 percent), older people over the age of 65 have a related value of nearly 16.5 percent and are hence more significantly above the average. In the federal capital of Vienna, the risk-of-poverty rate is slightly less than 15 percent, which is above average: The reason for this is mainly a higher share of social strata more at risk of poverty, as well as a double as high share in a national comparison of people with non-Austrian citizenship, and a higher share of unemployed and single women.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Institute for Advanced Studies – IHS: “Einkommensverteilung unter dem Einfluss der Globalisierung“, press information, Vienna, 16.6.2006, p. 3.

<sup>45</sup> Institute for Advanced Studies, 2006, loc. cit., p. 3.

<sup>46</sup> Federal Ministry for Social Security, Generations and Consumer Protection: “Bericht über die soziale Lage 2003-2004. Ressortaktivitäten und Analysen“, Vienna, 2004, p. 215.

<sup>47</sup> Guio, Anne-Catherine: “Income poverty and social exclusion in EU-25“, Eurostat, SiF – Theme: Population and social conditions, No. 13/2005.

<sup>48</sup> Federal Ministry for Social Security, Generations and Consumer Protection: “Bericht über die soziale Lage 2003-2004. Ressortaktivitäten und Analysen“, Vienna, 2004, p. 213.

68. Employment and unemployment rates show that immigrants have more difficulty in integrating into the labour market. Among people at working age with non-Austrian citizenship, the unemployment rate has increased from 6.5 to 11.6 percent since 1999 (see Table 19.) An additional significant aspect are increasing difficulties of young people when entering the labour market (see Table 19). The labour market situation of formally low qualified has been unfavourable for quite some time and has deteriorated further (see Table 20a).

TABLE 19.

**Employment and unemployment rates by citizenship and age,  
1999 –2005**

Feature	Employment rate <sup>(1)</sup> in %				Unemployment rate <sup>(2)</sup> in %			
	1999	2003	2004	2005	1999	2003	2004	2005
<b>Citizenship</b>								
Austrian	68.3	69.0	68.4	69.5	3.4	3.9	4.2	4.4
Non-Austrian	68.8	68.4	62.1	61.9	<b>6.5</b>	<b>7.7</b>	<b>11.6</b>	<b>11.6</b>
<b>Age</b>								
15 -24 years	53.8	51.1	51.9	53.1	<b>5.1</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>9.7</b>	<b>10.3</b>
25 -34 years	82.8	83.8	82.4	81.4	3.5	4.1	5.0	5.5
35 -44 years	84.8	86.8	85.1	85.3	2.9	3.3	4.1	4.0
45 -54 years	77.0	80.7	79.6	80.4	4.0	3.9	3.6	3.8
55 -64 years	29.6	30.3	28.8	31.8	4.9	5.3	3.8	3.6
Total (15-64 years)	68.4	68.9	67.8	68.6	3.7	4.3	4.9	5.2

<sup>(1)</sup> Share of employees in employment in the population at working age

<sup>(2)</sup> Unemployed among employees in employment according to the *labour force concept* (Eurostat definition)

Source: Statistics Austria

TABLE 20a.

**Employment and unemployment rates by formal education,  
1999 -2004**

Highest educational attainment	Employment rate <sup>(1)</sup> in %				Unemployment rate <sup>(2)</sup> in %			
	1999	2003	2004	2005	1999	2003	2004	2005
HE institution, Teacher training college	88.7	87.8	83.4	84.9	1.8	2.1	3.0	<b>3.1</b>
Upper secondary school or college	69.2	69.4	69.9	70.1	2.6	3.4	4.4	<b>4.6</b>
VET school	74.7	75.2	72.8	73.9	2.6	2.9	3.7	<b>3.7</b>
Apprenticeship	77.4	76.7	75.2	75.7	3.7	3.8	4.2	<b>4.3</b>
Compulsory school	48.9	48.5	46.0	47.2	5.9	8.2	9.5	<b>10.2</b>
Total (15-64 years)	68.4	68.9	67.8	68.6	3.7	4.3	4.9	<b>5.2</b>

<sup>(1)</sup> share of employees in employment in the 15-64-year-old population

<sup>(2)</sup> Unemployed among employees in employment according to the *labour force concept*

Source: Statistics Austria

TABLE 20b.

**Sex-specific employment and unemployment rates by formal education,  
1999 -2004**

Highest educational attainment	Employment rate <sup>(1)</sup> (15-64-year-olds)				Unemployment rate <sup>(2)</sup> in %			
	1999	2003	2004	2005	1999	2003	2004	2005
<b>Men</b>								
HE institution, Teacher training college	92.3	90.3	87.2	87.3	(1.9)	(2.0)	2.5	3.0
Upper secondary school or college	73.7	74.6	74.5	74.6	2.5	3.2	3.9	4.2
VET school	86.0	82.9	80.9	82.5	(2.2)	(2.5)	3.8	4.0
Apprenticeship	84.1	82.4	80.4	80.7	3.5	3.9	3.8	3.8
Compulsory school	58.7	56.1	54.4	55.2	6.3	9.2	9.4	10.6
Total	77.4	76.3	74.9	75.4	3.6	4.3	4.5	4.9
<b>Women</b>								
HE institution, Teacher training college	84.4	85.2	79.6	82.6	-	2.2	3.6	3.1
Upper secondary school or college	64.9	64.5	65.4	65.9	2.8	3.6	5.0	5.1
VET school	68.9	71.1	68.6	70.0	2.9	3.1	3.7	3.6
Apprenticeship	66.6	67.6	66.9	67.3	4.1	3.6	5.0	5.2
Compulsory school	42.5	43.4	39.8	41.3	5.6	7.3	9.6	9.8
Total	59.3	61.5	60.7	62.0	3.9	4.2	5.4	5.5

<sup>(1)</sup> Share of employees in employment in the population at working age

<sup>(2)</sup> Share of unemployed among employees in employment according to the *labour force concept* (Eurostat definition)

Source: Statistics Austria

### Documents addressing respective policy issues

69. Over one quarter of **immigrants** in Austria – irrespective of their citizenship – is at risk of poverty (Federal Ministry for Social Security, Generations and Consumer Protection 2004, p. 151). Within the framework of the National Action Plan, therefore, measures particularly oriented towards immigrants have increasingly been developed and implemented, which have also been mentioned in the evaluation of the Austrian Action Plan by the European Commission as good practice (Federal Ministry for Social Security, Generations and Consumer Protection 2004, 2004, p. 129).

70. Accommodation, food and medical care for asylum seekers are regulated by a treaty concluded between the federal state and the provincial governments dated 1.5.2004. This aims to ensure a **primary care system** is set up for asylum seekers. It also includes their integration into the statutory health insurance system (Federal Ministry for Social Security, Generations and Consumer Protection, 2004, p. 154). Within the framework of integration agreements, **certified German courses** are offered. In 2003 and 2004, a total of 3,500 participants in such a language acquisition measure succeeded in attaining the goal (level A1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) and thus in considerably improving their opportunities of labour market political and social integration (Federal Ministry for Social Security, Generations and Consumer Protection, June 2005, p. 31).

71. In December 2000, a set of objectives for the **fight against poverty and social exclusion** was endorsed by the Nice European Council, which objectives formed the basis of the 2001 National Action Plans on Social Inclusion. In 2002, the common objectives of Nice were reviewed by the Danish Presidency and minor amendments made. The **Austrian Action Plan** was drawn up under the auspices of the Federal Ministry for Social Security, Generations and Consumer Protection (Federal Ministry for Social Security, Generations and Consumer Protection: “Bericht über die soziale Lage 2003-2004. Ressortaktivitäten und Analysen“, Vienna, 2004, p. 128-129). In the implementation and upgrade report on the National Action Plan on Social Inclusion, the **priority in education, training and labour market policy** was specified as offering customised qualifications and skills training programmes for groups of people with poor training backgrounds. Also the elimination of still existing disparities of opportunity and income of women in employment are part of the national agenda for social inclusion (Federal Ministry for Social Security, Generations and Consumer Protection June 2005, p. 5).

1.4.d) Provide data, if any, which points to the recognition of non-formal and informal learning as a way of re-distributing human capital and solve the issue of skills mismatch and skills shortage and, therefore, a way to drive economic development.

72. The importance of the exceptional admission to the apprenticeship-leave exam (LAP) can be illustrated by the following data: In the year 2002 some 50,800 people took a LAP exam. About 7,100 examination attempts were exceptional admissions. In their majority (5,300 persons) these were adults aiming to acquire their **first apprenticeship certificate** (over 10 percent of all apprenticeship diplomas of that year) while the remainder wanted to obtain a so-called additional exam. If taking as the basis the exams passed successfully rather than examination attempts, this reveals an increasing share of positive results obtained in second-chance education (additional exam and first qualification): from 8.6 percent to 18.6 percent (see Table 21).

TABLE 21:

**Apprenticeship-leave exams passed successfully, by sections**

Year	Crafts and trade	Industry	Com-merce	Bank and insurance	Trans-port	Tourism, leisure industries:	Informa-tion and consult-ing	Non-chamber section *	Non-chamber §§ 29 and 30**	<b>Other ***</b>	Total
1990	21,626	6,592	9,274	174	1,021	5,008	-	1,392		<b>4,233</b>	49,320
1995	19,030	5,459	6,662	259	827	3,413	-	1,090		<b>6,604</b>	43,344
2000	18,720	3,977	5,917	247	665	3,605	-	1,888	213	<b>5,712</b>	40,944
2005	16,368	4,302	5,934	308	627	3,924	979	1,643	265	<b>7,839</b>	42,189

\*) Companies that are not members of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber (e.g. lawyers, municipal administrations, etc.)

\*\*\*) Periods completed in establishments pursuant to the Juvenile Court Act (*Jugendgerichtsgesetz*) and in homes for the care and upbringing of young persons at risk (*Fürsorgeerziehungsheimen*) pursuant to the Juvenile Welfare Act (*Jugendwohlfahrtsgesetz*) as well as in independent IVET establishments.

\*\*\*\*) Examinations in second-chance education; additional exams, exams pursuant to § 23(5)a, § 23(5)b, § 27(1) and § 29 Vocational Training Act

Source: Austrian Federal Economic Chamber, Apprenticeship Statistics; own calculations

1.4.e) *Provide data, if any, if there has been any study that points to a certain group that would benefit most from the recognition system for their skills (e.g. retirees, older workers, women, immigrants (highly-skilled or low-skilled), part-time workers, unemployed youth, etc.)?*

73. From the results of the 2001 census regarding formal education and citizenship by age groups it may be surmised that immigrants could profit most from new recognition procedures. See Tables 10a and 10b and 18. Among the labour force from non-EU countries, only 26 percent boast an apprenticeship diploma, whereas this share was 43 percent among Austrians (Table 18). The income-related and social advantages of an apprenticeship diploma over employees in employment who work in unskilled or semiskilled positions are empirically evident. Career advancement opportunities possibly brought about by an apprenticeship diploma are shown e.g. by the fact that according to the 2001 census nearly 41 percent of all people in the ISCO major occupational group ‘legislators, senior officials and managers’ have completed an apprenticeship.<sup>49</sup> The 2002 income structure survey (VESTE) identifies mean gross hourly earnings of EUR 8.9 for people who have not completed compulsory schooling, for compulsory school graduates this value is EUR 9.3, whereas people with an apprenticeship diploma have average gross hourly earnings of EUR 11.5, which is clearly above this value.<sup>50</sup>

1.4.f) *Provide data, if any, that discuss some issues linking between the recognition of non-formal and informal learning and the non-formal and informal economies.*

No data available on this topic!

1.4.g) *Please provide a list of occupations to which the recognition of non-formal and informal learning can be counted as a part of entrance (e.g. teachers, engineers, journalists, etc.). Of the list, which occupations are regulated professions, i.e. that requires a certain qualification (certificates, licences, etc.)?*

74. Following university graduation, many of the ‘regulated professions’ require members of these occupations to complete a defined period of organised practice (medical practitioners, lawyers, etc.). In addition there are some regulated professions that require a minimum period of professional practice as access requirement.

- Teachers at VET schools or colleges have to furnish proof of having completed a minimum duration of relevant specialist professional experience before being entitled to teach.
- Similar conditions apply to teachers at part-time vocational schools for apprentices who teach the subject ‘occupation-related practice’.
- The Civil Engineering Act regulates “an attestation of competence” as prerequisite for granting the permit to become active as an “architect” or “consulting engineer“ on a free-lance basis. The license is granted by the Federal Ministry of Economic and Labour.<sup>51</sup> Apart from completion of a university study of the engineering or natural sciences, a **“practical activity” of at least three years following graduation** and in a full-time form is required as prerequisite for taking the civil engineering exam.
- Another example from the world of technology is higher qualification of graduates of the apprenticeship occupation “aircraft technology”, which requires attainment of the cate-

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<sup>49</sup> Cf.: Statistics Austria: Volkszählung 2001 – Bildungsstand der Bevölkerung, Vienna, 2005, p. 145.

<sup>50</sup> Statistics Austria: Austrian Statistical Year Book 2006, Vienna, 2005, p. 236.

<sup>51</sup> Law on Civil Engineers (Ziviltechnikergesetz) as amended, Federal Legal Gazette 137/2005, § 6-8.

gory A licence and the category B1 licence of work experience. Graduates of the apprenticeship occupation “aircraft technology” are required to complete compulsory periods of practice in order to obtain the mentioned licenses from Austro Control GmbH. These provisions are worded pursuant to the Regulation (EC) No. 2042/2003.

- Another relevant example is the state exam for bookkeepers, which can be taken only by individuals who can furnish proof of at least 1.5 years of relevant professional activity in accounting.

75. In case of the so-called ‘regulated trades’<sup>52</sup> evidence of formal qualifications is required. In some trades, the admittance exam does not suffice. In order to ensure that access requirements are fully met, it is necessary to complete a specific VET programme **and/or period of professional practice**: This applies e.g. to the following trades<sup>53</sup> (legal source: § 18 GewO 1994):

- Master builder
- Real estate administrator
- Massage
- Security trades
- Engineering offices
- Financial consulting
- Master woodbuilder

## 1.5 Social developments

*1.5.a) What are the newly evolved ‘skills and competencies’ to live in the knowledge economy, which have been identified to date? Make a list of such skills and competencies.*

76. Following the ideas of educational researchers, the new **skills and competencies’ to live in the knowledge economy** have been worded in an influential manner and published by various institutions such as the OECD<sup>54</sup> or the European Commission. In Austria, particularly the concept of ‘new basic qualifications’ (IT skills, foreign languages, technological culture, entrepreneurship, social skills) of the EU Memorandum on lifelong learning have received much attention and have been the subject of many discussions.<sup>55</sup>

77. Subsequently in November 2005, the European Commission adopted a proposal for a Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on **key competences for lifelong learning**. In this context, the term ‘competence’ was used as it refers to a combina-

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<sup>52</sup> BMWA: LIST of regulated trades pursuant to § 94 of the 1994 Crafts, Trades and Industry Act; <http://www.bmwa.gv.at/NR/rdonlyres/2E6C938F-DCAA-42A6-AEFE-860E238A1551/0/ListederreglementierteGewerbe3152006.pdf>, 6.2. 2007.

<sup>53</sup> Crafts, Trades and Industry Act 1994; Federal Legal Gazette No. 194/1994 as last amended by Federal Legal Gazette I No. 111/2002.

<sup>54</sup> OECD: The Definition and Selection of Key Competences. Executive Summary, Paris, 2003.

<sup>55</sup> Cf.: BMBWK: Konsultationsprozess zum Memorandum über lebenslanges Lernen der Europäischen Kommission. Dokumentation der Expertentagung am 20. Juni 2001 (=Materialien zur Erwachsenenbildung, No. 7, 2001), Vienna, p. 20 ff.

tion of knowledge, skills and attitudes and hence includes basic skills but goes beyond them. The European Commission proposal lists a total of eight key competences necessary for living and working in a knowledge society:

- Communication in the mother tongue
- Communication in foreign languages
- Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology
- Digital competence
- Learning to learn
- Interpersonal, intercultural and social competences and civic competence
- Entrepreneurship and
- Cultural expression.<sup>56</sup>

According to the document, competence in the fundamental basic skills of language, literacy, numeracy and ICT is an essential foundation for learning, and learning to learn supports all learning activities independent of content. There are a number of themes that are applied throughout the Framework: critical thinking, creativity, initiative taking, problem solving, risk assessment, decision taking, and managing feelings constructively play a role in all eight key competences.

*1.5.b) Provide evidence, if any, that recognition of this type of learning has lead to the uptake of further learning or progression in profession?*

Confer information provided under item 73.

*1.5.c) Provide evidence, if any, of recognition of this type of learning contributes to democracy and citizenship?*

78. A good relevant example are the activities of the association **Living Active Citizenship**, which was established in the province of Lower Austria in approx. mid-2006. Within the framework of this pilot project, professionalised neighbourhood assistance on the basis of volunteer work is offered. The services rendered in this connection are documented by using a *voucher system*. Citizens of the municipality with need of support are entitled to receive voluntary assistance from other citizens, e.g. in the form of transport and messenger services, garden work or household activities. These voluntary helpers receive points on their *life account* for every task and are informed regularly about their current total score. The helpers themselves, on the other hand, can take advantage of their credit if they need help. This project of the **market town of Grafenwörth** is organised in cooperation with the Public Employment Service Austria, the Working Group of Lower Austrian Nursing Homes, and Mobile Services, and has in the meantime found *followers*: Similar projects have been launched in the municipalities of *Melk, St. Peter in der Au, Weiten* and *Yspertal*.<sup>57</sup>

79. The various forms of competence portfolio offered in Austria, in the sense of a coaching procedure, offer the opportunity to collect information about one's own skills and abilities, some of which even participants themselves were not aware of before. As a consequence,

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<sup>56</sup> European Council: Proposal for a Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on key competences for lifelong learning, Brussels, 11.11.2005, p. 15.

<sup>57</sup> [http://www.ots.at/presseaussendung.php?ch=politik&schluessel=OTS\\_20061024\\_OTSO199](http://www.ots.at/presseaussendung.php?ch=politik&schluessel=OTS_20061024_OTSO199), 3.12.2006.

this can not only lead to career reorientation but also, in a comprehensive meaning of the word, enhance **personal development** and hence the civil society. Thus e.g. an evaluation study on the competence centre, conducted by the Tyrol Centre for the Future, concludes that participants perceive an “improved self-confidence” as a result of the stocktaking process.<sup>58</sup>

## 1.6. Others.

1.6.a) *Provide other contextual factors or trends that you think are influential – directly or non-directly – that drive changes of institutional and technical arrangements and stakeholder behaviour concerning recognition of non-formal and informal learning which have not been addressed in Component 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, and 1.5.*

1.6.b) *Provide historical backgrounds concerning recognition of non-formal and informal learning in your country.*

80. *The recognition of non-formal and informal learning has been important in Austria mainly in the following fields:*

- Recognition of previous knowledge in the form of the exceptional admission to the apprenticeship-leave exam
- Granting of the *Ingenieur* title at schools of engineering (*HTL*) on the basis of professional experience of at least three years, which practice must include “specialist subject-oriented activities”
- HE access without completion of the school-based upper secondary certificate in the form of various special paths
- In recent years, retaking of exams within the framework of the lower secondary school-leaving certificate to obtain *Hauptschule* qualifications has become an important issue, not least due to immigration.

81. *Development of ‘alternative’ routes to HE institutions:*

- In September 1945, the State Office of Public Information, Education and Cultural Affairs adopted an ordinance regarding *Berufsreifeprüfung (BRP)* for the **acquisition of study qualifications** for scientific HE institutions. This had become an immediate necessity due to training periods of many people being interrupted due to the war. However, due to difficult admission requirements, the number of graduates was rather low until the late 1960s.
- In the mid-1970s, the BRP underwent reforms and, in a parallel development, the **university entrance qualification examination (SBP)** was implemented. In the mid-1980s then, the previous BRP was annulled to be re-introduced in 1997 in a revised form.<sup>59</sup> b) Since 1985, the **SBP in its current form** has been in force; it is regulated via the Higher Education Entrance Act [*Studienberechtigungsgesetz*] and the School Organisation Act [*Schulorganisationsgesetz*]: These stipulate that those who have not taken the *Reifeprüfung* are entitled to acquire a study-programme-oriented qualification entitling them to study at an HE institution as a regular student.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Triebel, Claas: “Evaluation der Kompetenzbilanz. Ergebnisbericht”, Zukunftszentrum Tirol, 2005, p. 32.

<sup>59</sup> Birke, Barbara/Hafner, Helmut/Henkel, Susanna-Maria/Wagner, Johanna: “Die künftige Entwicklung der Studienberechtigungsprüfung”, Institute for Industrial Sciences (IWI), Vienna, October 2001, p. 16 ff.

<sup>60</sup> Higher Education Entrance Act, §1 (1) and §2 (1) and (2).

- Still a relatively new development is the *Berufsreifeprüfung (BRP)* regulated via the **Federal Berufsreifeprüfung Act [Bundesgesetz über die Berufsreifeprüfung]**<sup>61</sup>: It has been in force since 1997 and entitles graduates of various IVET paths to acquire the upper secondary certificate (*Reifeprüfung*) and study qualifications.<sup>62</sup>
- The **Act on Fachhochschule Study Programmes [Fachhochschulstudiengesetz]** on the one hand provides for a possible shortening of the study period by “recognising proven knowledge in the sense of an occupation-oriented training programme of the respective course of studies”. This knowledge may be credited to individual subjects or parts of Fachhochschule programmes, with additional exams required on certain conditions.
- On the other hand, there is the option that people with a subject-specific qualification but without the *Reifeprüfung* take up a study at Fachhochschule. Also here, individual Fachhochschule providers have to provide for additional exams in certain cases.<sup>63</sup>
- Access to university programmes is regulated by the *2002 Universities Act [Universitätsgesetz]*. People who can furnish proof that they meet “all prerequisites stipulated by the curriculum of a university programme” are entitled to attend such a programme also without taking the *Reifeprüfung*.<sup>64</sup>

## 2. Description of institutional arrangements

### 2.1 Political and legal framework

*2.1.a) Describe, if any, clear political will or statements and policy responses in your country on lifelong learning which are explicitly linked to recognition of non-formal and informal learning.*

#### Political will or statements

82. Already in the Austrian **country report on the Commission Memorandum** on lifelong learning of 2001 it was stated that it is necessary to develop “coherent and practical measures” to facilitate lifelong learning (BMBWK, July 2001, p. 4.).

- Demands included “measures for improved permeability of the systems of schools, HE institutions and related establishments, CVET, and the business sphere to recognise learning achievements of all kinds” (BMBWK, July 2001, p. 27).
- This applies particularly to the “field of adult learning and CVET ... the development of a *portfolio* to certify any acquired formal and non-formal qualifications” (BMBWK, 2001, p. 27); as an innovative example, the European language portfolio was mentioned (see item 88) (BMBWK, 2001, p. 27).

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<sup>61</sup> BMBWK: Federal Berufsreifeprüfung Act, Federal Legal Gazette I No. 68/1997, as last amended by Federal Legal Gazette I No. 91/2005; see:

[http://archiv.bmbwk.gv.at/schulen/recht/gvo/Bundesgesetz\\_ueber\\_die\\_B6431.xml](http://archiv.bmbwk.gv.at/schulen/recht/gvo/Bundesgesetz_ueber_die_B6431.xml)

<sup>62</sup> Ordinance by the Federal Minister for Education and the Arts of 31 July 1979 regarding the external examination, Federal Legal Gazette 362/1979.

<sup>63</sup> Federal Act on Fachhochschule Programmes - Fachhochschul-Studiengesetz – Federal Legal Gazette No. 340/1993, as last amended by Federal Legal Gazette I No. 43/2006, §12 (2) 6 and 7, [http://archiv.bmbwk.gv.at/universitaeten/recht/gesetze/fhstg/Gesetz\\_Fachhochschul-Stu4169.xml#12,4.12.2006](http://archiv.bmbwk.gv.at/universitaeten/recht/gesetze/fhstg/Gesetz_Fachhochschul-Stu4169.xml#12,4.12.2006).

<sup>64</sup> Universities Act 2002, §70 (1), <http://www.unigesetz.at/html/frameset.html>, 4.12.2006.

- The country report also underlines measures to recognise learning outcomes in the context of **honorary activities by volunteers**: “In this context, also educational and CVET activities that are conducted by volunteers who are active in associations and non-governmental organizations on a honorary basis, which however frequently correspond to non-formal knowledge and experience acquisition, have to be taken into account more strongly. These skills should be considered more and serve to labour-market specific integration in the sense of enhancing employability.” BMBWK, July 2001, p. 27).
- A special target group of the country report are people who had disadvantages or problems regarding access to and acquisition of education and training (BMBWK: July 2001, p. 14). The comprehensive bundle of measures includes two that have a special reference to RNFIL:
  - ✓ Developing possibilities (free of charge) for adults to complete compulsory school qualifications, mainly in disadvantaged regions
  - ✓ Recognising previous knowledge, previous skills and passed exams and recognising skills and abilities acquired within the framework of voluntary work

83. An important further step towards a political strategy on lifelong learning which is explicitly linked to recognition of non-formal and informal learning was the “*Austrian Interim Report on the Progress achieved in the Implementation of the EU Work Programme*” from April 2005.<sup>65</sup> The report identifies *Priority Reforms for the Implementation of Lifelong Learning across the Systems in Austria* (Austrian Interim Report 2005, p. 12ff.), especially the *Recognition and Validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning*: “In the field of vocational education and training, the recognition and validation of non-formal and informal learning has a long-standing tradition and quantitative significance (...). More recent approaches include the admission to the universities of applied sciences without a school-leaving examination (...). In the *Universities of Applied Sciences Development and Financing Plan III for the Period 2005/06-2009/10*, which was submitted in 2004, the increased recognition of non-formal subject qualifications of employees is quoted as an objective.” (Austrian Interim Report, p. 13).

84. The **Government Programme of the grand coalition of January 2007** also includes several important programmatic statements with RNFIL reference. Confer information provided under item 53.

### Examples for policy responses

85. The **language portfolio** aims to offer – independent of the learners’ age – a transparent and Europe-wide valid summary of language-related and intercultural learning outcomes. Currently the pilot version of this portfolio, commissioned by the Education Ministry, is tested by about 1,000 schoolchildren at secondary academic schools and VET colleges. As an accompanying measure, an evaluation study is drawn up. The implementation process involves a large number of institutions from the education sector and the world of business.<sup>66</sup>

86. In cooperation with its partner organisations, the Ring of Austrian Adult Education Associations (RÖBW) developed and implemented a **competence portfolio for volunteers**

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<sup>65</sup> Federal Ministry for Education, Science and Culture: Education and Training 2010 - *Austrian Interim Report on the Progress achieved in the Implementation of the EU Work Programme*, Vienna, October 2005, [http://archiv.bmbwk.gv.at/medienpool/12627/abb2010\\_zwben.pdf](http://archiv.bmbwk.gv.at/medienpool/12627/abb2010_zwben.pdf).

<sup>66</sup> <http://www.sprachen.ac.at/>, 4.12.2006.

within the framework of three EU projects. In the development and implementation of this instrument, also other associations and enterprises active in this field were involved. By using this instrument, knowledge and skills acquired by volunteers can be assessed and documented, so they can be used later on for personal development and CVET planning, for job applications or personal re-orientation. The development of an equivalent portfolio on a digital basis (*e-portfolio*) is currently being discussed (Kellner 2006, p. 13f.).

*2.1.b) Do you have legal regulatory frameworks concerning recognition of non-formal and informal learning? Please state – yes, under development/discussion, or no. For those who answered ‘No’, describe possible reasons for the inexistence as well as possible future prospects. For those who answered ‘yes’ or ‘under development/discussion’, please answer to the following questions.*

87. For Austria it is not possible to give a clear answer using the above answer options. There exists no uniform *legal regulatory framework concerning recognition of non-formal and informal learning*. Therefore this point is repeatedly addressed in public discussions and political expressions of will as a major objective. Existing relevant legal mechanisms are “integrative sets of rules within existing acts and regulations to obtain education and training qualifications, access to trades, postsecondary and tertiary educational offers.”<sup>67</sup>

*2.1.c) Describe the aim(s) and principles stated in the framework?*

#### **Relevant examples of integrated aim(s) and principles**

88. For twenty years, courses aiming at retaking exams within the framework of the lower secondary school-leaving certificate to obtain **Hauptschule qualifications** for unemployed people and employees in employment have been subsidised by the Public Employment Service Austria. As a rule, these courses have a duration of 26 weeks or, for people in employment, two semesters (i.e. one year). These measures aim to increase the qualification level and labour market opportunities of participants. The courses are non-formal learning measures, the qualifications equal school qualifications under public law, which are legally equivalent to qualifications in the regular form.

89. Significant in quantitative respect and important for the skilled labour offer in the labour market is the **exceptional admission to the apprenticeship-leave exam (LAP)**. It is therefore a “general and comprehensive transformation mechanism of qualifications acquired non-formally and informally oriented towards admission to the apprenticeship-leave exam. Actual completion of the apprenticeship-leave exam is effected by the final validation of qualifications acquired non-formally and informally in a legally recognised certification form.”<sup>68</sup> The aim of this legal option consists primarily in enabling people who have no formal qualification but have acquired work experience and other previous knowledge to obtain a generally recognised formal qualification.

90. Important in quantitative respect is also the **granting of the Ingenieur title** for graduates of colleges of engineering (HTL) by the Federal Ministry of Economics and Labour. The minimum requirement is “completion of at least three years of relevant professional practice (...) that presupposes specialist knowledge in those subjects where the upper secondary

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<sup>67</sup> European Commission: “Implementation of strategies for lifelong learning in Europe. Report on the implementation of the 2002 Council Decision. Answers to the Commission questionnaire – Austria“, Brussels, December 2003, p. 32.

<sup>68</sup> European Commission: “Implementation of strategies for lifelong learning in Europe. Report on the implementation of the 2002 Council Decision. Answers to the Commission questionnaire – Austria“, Brussels, December 2003, p. 32.

school-leaving exam may be taken”.<sup>69</sup> This procedure aims to make transparent that HTL graduates boast a “specialist subject-related” qualification that by far exceeds school-based education.

91. A 2002 Amendment to the Crafts, Trades and Industry Act modularised the master craftsperson exam, which offers the possibility to **credit knowledge acquired** by school attendance and/or in **in-company practice to individual modules**. In addition, relevant apprenticeship-leave exams may replace sub-modules.<sup>70</sup>

92. For some decades work has been ongoing to develop procedures aiming not only at higher qualifications but also at increasing **social permeability** of HE access and the promotion of parity of esteem related to education and training.

a) The university entrance qualification examination (*Studienberechtigungsprüfung, SBP*) has been in force since 1985 in its current form. It enables people who have not taken the *Reifeprüfung* to acquire a study programme oriented qualification entitling them to study at an HE institution as a regular student. It is therefore a **restricted study qualification** for studies at universities, HE institutions, Fachhochschule programmes, teacher training colleges and postsecondary VET courses.

b) Still a relatively new development is the *Berufsreifeprüfung (BRP) regulated by the 1997 Federal Berufsreifeprüfung Act*. It entitles graduates of various VET pathways to acquire the qualifications connected with the upper secondary school-leaving certificate of a secondary academic school.

c) In **Fachhochschule programmes** it is possible, *on the one hand*, to shorten study periods by “recognising proven knowledge in the sense of an occupation-oriented training programme of the respective course of studies”. This knowledge may be credited to individual subjects or parts of Fachhochschule programmes, with additional exams required on certain conditions. *On the other hand*, there is the option that people with a “subject-specific qualification” but without the *Reifeprüfung* take up a study at Fachhochschule. Also here, individual Fachhochschule providers have to provide for additional exams in certain cases.<sup>71</sup>

d) Access to **university programmes** is regulated by the *2002 Universities Act*. People who can furnish proof that they meet “all prerequisites stipulated by the curriculum of a university programme” are entitled to attend such a programme also without taking the *Reifeprüfung* exams.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Federal Legal Gazette for the Republic of Austria: 120th Federal Act regulating the professional title of *Ingenieur (Ingenieurgesetz 2006)*, 24.7.2006, 1st section, §2.

<sup>70</sup> Wallner, Josef: “Aspekte der Zertifizierung erworbener beruflicher Qualifikation. Europäische Beispiele und Ansätze”, Institut für Bildungsforschung der Wirtschaft (ibw), Reihe Bildung & Wirtschaft No. 22, Vienna, November 2002, p. 47.

<sup>71</sup> Federal Act on Fachhochschule Programmes - Fachhochschul-Studiengesetz – Federal Legal Gazette No. 340/1993, as last amended by Federal Legal Gazette I No. 43/2006, §12 (2) 6 and 7, [http://archiv.bmbwk.gv.at/universitaeten/recht/gesetze/fhstg/Gesetz\\_Fachhochschul-Stu4169.xml#12](http://archiv.bmbwk.gv.at/universitaeten/recht/gesetze/fhstg/Gesetz_Fachhochschul-Stu4169.xml#12), 4.12.2006.

<sup>72</sup> Universities Act 2002, §70 (1), <http://www.unigesetz.at/html/frameset.html>, 4.12.2006.

93. A special case of RNFIL are regulations according to the **researchers' collective agreement of 2004**<sup>73</sup>, which aim to identify and promote qualification growth of highly qualified R&D staff. "As of 1 January 2004, a collective agreement for employees in non-university research, the so-called *Forschungs-KV*, was concluded between the Austrian Federation of Trade Unions (in cooperation of trade unions of private-sector employees, public service and chemical workers) and an employers' association. It includes innovative elements for Austria in connection with the recognition of acquired knowledge and skills independent of the form of education process on which their acquisition was based. The salary structure is oriented towards the quality of work and differentiates between development steps that can be obtained only through experience gathered over time and qualified development steps to be obtained only upon fulfilment of quality criteria (quality points)." (Schlögl, 2005, p. 5).

94. Also in the sector of highly qualified there is the **Austrian CVET Academy (wba)**, which is currently in the implementation stage and will be based considerably on the recognition of previous knowledge and work experience in the professionalisation of the adult learning staff. The kick-off event was held on 1 February 2007. The project is supported by a broad basis of education and training providers and the Education Ministry. For more detailed information cf. the case studies in Component 5.

*2.1.d) Describe the historical background that this issue has been taken up. What are the most important drivers of legislation? If there has been already reform of the legislation, describe the change and the pressure which made the change.*

95. Confer information provided under 2.1a.

*2.1.e) What areas of competencies do governments have or intend to have? Are there any specific areas that are to be regulated by law or by social partners for professional recognition?*

96. As mentioned above, the main state actors for recognition procedures of non-formally or informally acquired knowledge and skills are the Federal Ministry for Education, the Arts and Culture and the Federal Ministry of Economics and Labour. They elaborate legal framework conditions (in cooperation with the social partners).

97. As the majority of procedures in Austria lead to **formal educational qualifications** (apprenticeship diploma, upper secondary school-leaving certificate), most of the powers are vested in the Federal Government and hence in the mentioned ministries. In this connection, particularly the following legal provisions need to be mentioned:

- The *Vocational Training Act* and the *Crafts, Trades and Industry Act*, which are within the sphere of competence of the Federal Ministry of Economics and Labour and i.a. regulate the exceptional admission to the apprenticeship-leave exam and hence one of the major relevant recognition areas in Austria. The Economics Ministry is responsible for awarding the professional title (*Diplom*)*Ingenieur* (see also chapter 2.1c).
- Both the *Federal Berufsreifeprüfung Act*, the *Higher Education Entrance Act* and the *School Organisation Act* (which includes procedures related to the university entrance qualification examination) and the *Fachhochschule Studies Act* are within the sphere of competence of the Federal Ministry for Education, the Arts and Culture. Also the use of

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<sup>73</sup> Collective agreement for employees in non-university research ("Forschungs-KV") in the version of 1 June 2006.

new ICT methods at Austrian schools (such as the e-portfolios; see chapter 1.3c) and any legal issues possibly linked to that use are within the sphere of competence of the Education Ministry.

2.1.f) Describe, if any, **operational systems to put the legal framework into practice**. Who set up the system(s)?

98. From a legal perspective, retaking of exams within the framework of the lower secondary school-leaving certificate to obtain *Hauptschule* qualifications is an external exam (i.e. not requiring prior school attendance) held at some locations of lower secondary schools in the respective school district. Preparation takes place at different locations: at schools or adult learning institutions.<sup>74</sup> Relevant courses are subsidised by the Public Employment Service Austria.

99. Apart from the Economics Ministry, particularly the social partners (employer and employee representatives) must be mentioned as representatives in the *Federal Advisory Board on Apprenticeship* and *regional advisory boards on apprenticeship*.<sup>75</sup> Major actors at provincial level are the *apprenticeship offices of the regional economic chambers* in the provinces. Also the apprenticeship-leave examinations (LAPs) are organised by the Apprenticeship Offices.<sup>76</sup> In case of the **exceptional admission to the LAP**, admission is not granted, as usually, by the Apprenticeship Offices but via the administrative district authority, which is obliged to hear the economic chamber and chamber of labour in the respective province before issuing a possible positive decision (Wallner, 2002, p. 44).

100. Applications for the **conferment of the professional titles ‘(Diplom)Ingenieur’** can be submitted to the *Federal Ministry of Economics and Labour*; applications by graduates of colleges of agriculture and forestry have to be submitted to the *Federal Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management*. If conditions for conferment are met (see chapter 2.1c), the title will be granted and documented by the federal minister responsible in the respective case.<sup>77</sup>

101. The application for admission to the **Higher Education Entrance Examination (SBP)** must be directed to the university rector whose sphere of activities includes the selected (first) study programme.<sup>78</sup> If admission requirements have been met, the responsible official will be obliged to propose admission to the rector and subsequently propose the required exam subjects.<sup>79</sup> The rector will appoint the study qualification board, whose members are university employees and representatives of the social partners.<sup>80</sup> The board will cooperate

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<sup>74</sup> Ferdinand Lechner, Nicole Nemecek, Andreas Riesenfelder, Barbara Willsberger, Georg Michenthaler, Gina Brandenburg: Begleitende Bewertung der NAP-Maßnahmen für Jugendliche – Endfassung des Endberichts, L & R Sozialforschung, 2004, Vienna, p. 132.

<sup>75</sup> Federal Ministry of Economics and Labour “Apprenticeship. Vocational Education and Training in Austria. Modern Training With a Future”, 10<sup>th</sup> revised edition, Vienna, February 2006, p. 14.

<sup>76</sup> Federal Ministry of Economics and Labour, 2006, loc.cit., p. 14 ff.

<sup>77</sup> Federal Legal Gazette for the Republic of Austria: 120th Federal Act regulating the professional title of *Ingenieur (Ingenieurgesetz 2006)*, 24.7.2006, 1st section, §4 (1) and (6).

<sup>78</sup> Higher Education Entrance Act, §12 (1).

<sup>79</sup> Higher Education Entrance Act, §12 (2) and (3).

<sup>80</sup> Higher Education Entrance Act, §10 (1).

in the procedure to obtain the study qualification and also in the review procedure of programmes preparing for the SBP offered by adult learning establishments.<sup>81</sup> The SBP consists of specialist exams that are taken individually and include four compulsory and optional subjects. The study course selected will be decisive for the compulsory subjects to be taken by the exam candidate.<sup>82</sup>

102. The application for admission to the **Berufsreifeprüfung (BRP)** must be submitted with the secondary academic school or VET college before whose exam board the exam candidate intends to take the BRP exams. The BRP comprises four partial exams differentiated by content: *German* (a five-hour written exam); *Mathematics*: one four-hour written examination; *living foreign language* (in accordance with the exam candidate's choice, one five-hour written examination or an oral exam); *specialist area* (one five-hour written examination about a topic from the exam candidate's occupational field and a relevant oral exam with the objective of dealing with contents at a higher level). The exam subject 'specialist area' links to previous occupational knowledge and hence is a type of CVET. Partial exams can be taken jointly at one date or separately. They must be taken within three years.<sup>83</sup>

103. The example of the **competence balance** conducted by the Tyrol Centre for the Future serves to illustrate the procedure and formal and time sequence of such a balancing process at an adult learning institution. In all, four dates of two hours each are provided for:

- An introductory workshop, which informs about the general contents, objectives and benefits of the balance procedure, followed by
- the first personal coaching talk, in the course of which awareness is created of important experiences and abilities as well as the significance of different life situations.
- In the second coaching talk, personal skills and abilities are discussed with the coach.
- The competence balance is completed by a final talk, at the end of which concrete steps and objectives for the further professional and private future are formulated.<sup>84</sup>

2.1.g) *Provide information, if exists, any evaluation of how they work or how they have not worked.*

104. All the figures on the use of the formal recognition procedures in Austria, as illustrated above, point towards successful implementation. This applies to the acquisition of *Hauptschule* qualifications by adults, the completion of the apprenticeship-leave exam in second-chance education (see Table 21), the awarding of the *Ingenieur* title (currently about 3,000 a year), and the 'alternative' paths to HE institutions. The shares of study entrants at Fachhochschule programmes with 'alternative' access has increased since 1999 until today from 6.5 percent to 13.5 percent (see Table 22a). Also at universities, the current share of new students who do not have the traditional *Reifeprüfung* certificate is higher than in the late 1990s (see Table 22b).

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<sup>81</sup> Higher Education Entrance Act, §8 (1) and §5 (5).

<sup>82</sup> Higher Education Entrance Act, §3 (1).

<sup>83</sup> Federal Berufsreifeprüfung Act §6 (1) and (1a).

<sup>84</sup> <http://www.zukunftszentrum.at>, 5.12.2006.

TABLE 22a.

**Students admitted to Fachhochschule programmes for the first time, by previous education, in a comparison over time \***

Educational attainment	1999/00	2001/02	2003/04	2005/06
Secondary academic school	1,400	2,123	2,349	2,425
VET college	1,815	2,680	3,591	3,933
Sec. training college / teacher training college	7	48	85	82
Austrian postsecondary programme	-	-	2	48
Foreign Reifeprüfung	-	-	321	597
<b>Alternative access paths</b>				
Berufsreifeprüfung	-	-	274	389
Higher Education Entrance Examination	147	317	123	131
External Reifeprüfung			43	49
Apprenticeship	46	32	156	222
Part-time industrial master college	-	-	7	9
VET school	35	37	44	84
Other programme	2	2	128	220
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,518</b>	<b>5,323</b>	<b>7,123</b>	<b>8,189</b>
<b>'Alternative' access paths</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>388</b>	<b>775</b>	<b>1,104</b>
<b>In %</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>7.3</b>	<b>10.9</b>	<b>13.5</b>

\* winter semester

Source: Statistics Austria; Hochschulstatistik

TABLE 22b.

**Regular students admitted to scientific universities for the first time \* by previous education in a comparison over time**

Educational attainment	1999/00	2001/02	2003/04	2005/06
Secondary academic school	12,438	11,213	12,034	12,229
VET college	6,112	5,558	7,553	7,618
Sec. training college / teacher training college	522	362	476	479
Austrian postsecondary programme	10	12	18	39
Foreign Reifeprüfung	316	226	5,216	7,163
Foreign postsecondary programme	-	-	141	286
EU university entrance qualification	-	-	1	196
<b>Alternative access paths</b>				
Berufsreifeprüfung	100	274	473	607
Higher Education Entrance Examination	140	100	166	155
External Reifeprüfung	72	76	109	100
Without Reifeprüfung	-	9	23	16
No information provided	7	5	207	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>19,717</b>	<b>17,835</b>	<b>26,417</b>	<b>28,894</b>
<b>'Alternative' access paths</b>	<b>319</b>	<b>464</b>	<b>978</b>	<b>884</b>
<b>In %</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>2.6</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>3.1</b>

\* winter semester, 1999 and 2001 only Austrians

Source: Statistics Austria; Hochschulstatistik

2.1.h) Describe outreach activities or awareness-raising activities of the framework or the operational systems. How are the objectives of outreach/awareness-raising activities articulated? Which audience(s) do the activities mainly target?

105. In Austria there exists a range of different instruments of educational guidance, whether via individual institutions or organisations, IVET and CVET providers, or in a virtual form via Internet platforms.

106. A survey among BRP graduates has found that adult learning providers were the major source of information for about two thirds of interviewees. Another third informed themselves via friends, acquaintances and relatives. Relevant Internet based information also plays a major role for about 28 percent of respondents.<sup>85</sup>

107. A study on the *Higher Education Entrance Examination (Studienberechtigungsprüfung)* has found that adult education institutions and educational counsellors are the first point of contact to obtain relevant information.<sup>86</sup>

108. Information on educational offers including second-chance education are accessible via Internet platforms. These include [www.bildung.at](http://www.bildung.at), for example, which is an e-learning portal operated by the Education Ministry. At the address [www.erwachsenenbildung.at](http://www.erwachsenenbildung.at), comprehensive information about adult learning in Austria is available.

## 2.2 Governance and the role of government

2.2a) List all actors in governance and create a matrix of who (e.g. government, quasi-government, assessment centres, public educational institutions, private for-profit education providers, professional bodies, etc.) does what (provides academic/ professional recognition, overseas assessment, etc.) for non-formal and informal learning. If there are more than one body who are responsible for an action (e.g. recognition), list all actors involved and describe how is the coordination managed?<sup>87</sup> If there are more than one ministry of a government are involved, specify which ministries have competencies for what. How clear are the different roles by different actors communicated among themselves as well as to users?

109. Table 23 includes actors and their tasks with RNFIL reference.

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<sup>85</sup> Klimmer, Susanne/Achleitner, Dagmar/Schlögl, Peter/Neubauer, Barbara/Malzer, Marita: “Die Berufsreifeprüfung. Höherqualifizierung für den beruflichen Aufstieg oder für den Umstieg? Eine Status-quo-Erhebung”, Institute for Research on Qualifications and Training of the Austrian Economy (ibw) and Austrian Institute for Research on Vocational Training (öibf), Vienna, May 2006, p. 37.

<sup>86</sup> Birke, Barbara/Hafner, Helmut/Henkel, Susanna-Maria/Wagner, Johanna: “Die künftige Entwicklung der Studienberechtigungsprüfung”, Institute for Industrial Sciences (IWI), Vienna, October 2001, p. 114.

<sup>87</sup> See Component 4.1 for complementary data.

TABLE 23.

**Procedures, actors and tasks with RNFIL reference in Austria**

Procedure	Actor	Tasks
Acquisition of <i>Hauptschule</i> qualifications by adults	Lower secondary school of the school district	Exam organisation
	Adult learning institution	Organisation of bridge courses
	Public Employment Service Austria (AMS)	Financial assistance for participation
Apprenticeship-leave exam (LAP) in second-chance education	Federal Ministry for Education, the Arts and Culture (BMUKK)	Legal regulation of conditions
	Federal Ministry of Economics and Labour (BMWA)	Legal regulation by the Vocational Training Act ( <i>Berufsausbildungsgesetz</i> )
Awarding of the professional title <i>Ingenieur</i>	Administrative district authority	Decision on the exceptional admission to the LAP
	Apprenticeship office of the competent economic chamber	Implementation of exam
Higher Education Entrance Examination	BMWA	Legal regulation by the 2006 Federal Act regulating the professional title of <i>Ingenieur</i> ( <i>Ingenieurgesetz</i> )
	BMWA	Revision of submitted documents and awarding of the title
Berufsreifeprüfung	BMUKK	Legal regulation by the Higher Education Entrance Act ( <i>Studienberechtigungsgesetz</i> ) and School Organisation Act ( <i>Schulorganisationsgesetz</i> )
	Universities, adult education institutions	Providers of bridge courses
Admission to Fachhochschule degree programmes without taking the Reifeprüfung exam and shortening of study period	Universities	Implementation of exam
	BMUKK	Legal regulation by the Federal Berufsreifeprüfung Act ( <i>Bundesgesetz über die Berufsreifeprüfung</i> )
	Sec. academic schools, VET colleges, part-time vocational schools in the provinces, schools preparing for Reifeprüfung exams	Providers of bridge courses
University preparation programmes	Adult learning institutions	Providers of bridge courses; on certain conditions, partial exams may be taken there
	Public upper secondary schools and colleges	Decision about admission to BRP and implementation of exam
Company certificates	BMUKK	Legal regulation by the Fachhochschule Studies Act ( <i>Fachhochschul-Studiengesetz</i> )
	Fachhochschule institutions	Decision on admission to the study (taking additional exams if appropriate) and shortening of study period
Competence balances, portfolios, etc.	Universities	Provision of programmes and exam organisation
	BMUKK	Legal regulation
Company certificates	Companies	Testing of knowledge and issuing of certificates
	Adult learning institutions, associations	Implementation of courses
Competence balances, portfolios, etc.	Adult learning institutions	Provision of related procedures

Source: own presentation

2.2.b) Create the above same matrix for recognition of formal learning for comparative purposes.

110. Table 24 includes the major actors in connection with formal education in Austria and their tasks.

TABLE 24.

**Actors and their tasks for recognition of formal learning  
in Austria**

Type of formal qualification	Actors	Tasks
Lower secondary school ( <i>Hauptschule</i> ) qualification	Lower secondary school	Provision of school education for young people between the ages of 10 and 14, regular testing of competences, annual issuing of school reports and final certificate
Apprenticeship diploma	Federal Ministry of Economics and Labour (BMWA)	Legal regulation by the Vocational Training Act ( <i>Berufsausbildungsgesetz</i> )
	Apprenticeship office of the competent economic chamber	Decision about admission to the apprenticeship-leave exam
	Apprenticeship office of the competent economic chamber	Implementation of exam
Upper secondary school-leaving exam and certificate ( <i>Reifeprüfung</i> )	Federal Ministry for Education, the Arts and Culture (BMUKK)	Legal regulation by the School Organisation Act ( <i>Schulorganisationsgesetz</i> )
	Upper secondary school or college	Organisation of exams and awarding of certificates and diplomas
Academic graduations	BMUKK	Legal regulations
	Universities	Organisation of exams and awarding of graduations
	Fachhochschule institutions	Organisation of exams and awarding of graduations

Source: own presentation

2.2.c) Describe the competencies (direct and indirect role) of government in the practice. Which of the following three models would your country be classified with respect to governance: 1) a 'predominance-of-industry' model; 2) a 'predominance-of-public authorities' model'; and 3) a 'shared responsibility' model<sup>88</sup>. Explain why that model fits into your country context. If there is a trend to shift to another model, describe driving forces for such change. Describe the details. If none of which is suitable to your country, describe your own country model.

111. The Government's role in the development and implementation of procedures regarding the recognition of non-formally and informally acquired competences is found, first of all, directly in the sphere of federal legislation: As explained above, the legal framework conditions regarding these recognition procedures are adopted by the Federal Ministry for Education, the Arts and Culture and the Federal Ministry of Economics and Labour – frequently

<sup>88</sup> See UNESCO UIE Report (Draft) at: <http://www.unesco.org/education/ui/pdf/recognitiondraftsynthesis.pdf>, 22.3.2007.

advised by the social partners. In this context, an essential element for the identification of the spheres of competence is whether the focus is on attaining a *professional qualification* (apprenticeship diploma), the professional title of *Ingenieur*, or a *Reifeprüfung diploma* (upper secondary school-leaving qualification) and/or *access to tertiary education*: The former is within the sphere of competence of the Economics Ministry, whereas the latter is within the sphere of competence of the Education Ministry, with universities and Fachhochschule institutions being granted a certain degree of autonomy in the organisation of procedures.

112. **Model of shared responsibility in Austria:** Apart from the competencies within the sphere of ministries and hence politics, the social partners play a major role in the designing of legal, economic and social framework conditions in Austria. The term ‘social partners’ comprises four large associations of interest: the Trade Union Federation (ÖGB), the Federal Chamber of Labour (BAK), the Federal Economic Chamber (WKÖ), and the Chamber of Agriculture (LK). The social partners’ role becomes clear, in particular, in their presence in the apprenticeship-leave exam board as well as in the development, promotion and support of the Berufsreifeprüfung (BRP).

2.2d) *Describe, if any, inter-ministerial approaches to the issue? Describe also the policy objectives behind such approaches as well as positive results and challenges to date.*

113. The strategy paper “Austria’s Priorities in Education Policy”, which was published during the Austrian EU presidency (in German, English and French), explicitly underlines that lifelong learning is a concept that requires comprehensive institutional cooperation and responsibility: “This is the reason why in addition to the Ministry of Education, the Employment [translator’s note: in this document referred to as ‘Labour’ Ministry] and Economics Ministry, the Job Market Service [translator’s note: in this document referred to as ‘Public Employment Service Austria’] and adult education facilities, among other, are also participating in the implementation of the lifelong learning principle.”<sup>89</sup>

114. With the aim of implementing the Lisbon Strategy in the education sector, the national debate was launched in late 2002 in a kick-off event with the title “National Education and Training Policy in a European Learning Area: Education Policy Objectives of the European Union until 2010”. Consequently an inter-ministerial work programme for the implementation of the Lisbon process was developed: These activities are being coordinated by the Ministry for Education, but are carried out with the involvement, consultation and co-operation of all participating national ministries, social partners and representatives of the provinces.<sup>90</sup>

## 2.3 Resources

2.3a) *Who is/are the financing body(ies) for the recognition of non-formal and informal learning? What is the policy thinking behind such financing? What is the annual budget 2004/2005? (Please convert to Euro.) Provide data, if possible, on the breakdown of how the budget has been spent.*

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<sup>89</sup> Federal Ministry for Education, Science and Culture: „Austrian Presidency of the EU – Austria’s Priorities in Education Policy“, Vienna, 2005, p. 32.

<sup>90</sup> Federal Ministry for Education, Science and Culture: “Education and Training 2010. Austrian Interim Report on the Progress Achieved in the Implementation of the EU Work Programme”, Vienna, October 2005, p. 5.

115. As there exist no independent institutions for second-chance education in Austria, also no separate cost calculation is available. The institutional infrastructure and staff employed in recognition procedures is budgeted and financed via competent institutions (the apprenticeship offices of the economic chambers, schools, universities, teaching staff, etc.).

*2.3b) If the system has existed for some years, please provide the budget data since it existed. Has there been any increase/decrease of budget for recognition of non-formal and informal learning since a framework/system has been taken up? If so, describe any elements that have driven such change.*

116. Confer information provided under 2.3a.

*2.3c) Who pays for the assessment and recognition processes? If an individual is to pay, how much does it cost to him/her? Break down the costs by levels assessed or by types of subjects assessed, if relevant. Are there any cost-sharing arrangements between educational institutions and employers, between education institutions and government, etc.? Describe the costs arrangements.*

117. For the **exceptional admission to the apprenticeship-leave exam**, an exam fee of EUR 82 and an application fee of EUR 25 must be paid. The duration and work involved in the exam organisation vary between apprenticeship occupations, for which reason also costs vary. There are various options of subsidisation.<sup>91</sup> Actual costs will accrue if a course-form preparation is required. In the majority of cases these will be borne by the Public Employment Service Austria.

118. For the **Berufsreifeprüfung** (BRP), costs for preparation (courses) and exam fees must be distinguished between. Information provided by education and training providers and by many providers of funds however does not make this distinction at all or not consistently. On average it can be assumed that a maximum of EUR 200 of exam fees must be paid for all four exams. It is also difficult to identify who will bear these costs as there exist different subsidisation options. A topical study has calculated that average costs for the BRP in the winter semester 2005/06 are about EUR 3,082 at the national level. *This will include courses for all four exam subjects and exam fees.* When subtracting various provincial subsidies, average net costs of about EUR 1,768 will accrue (Klimmer et al., 2006, p. 25).

119. Exam fees accruing for the **Higher Education Entrance Exam** were about EUR 90 in 1996, whereas in 1999 they were about EUR 110 (Birke et al., 2001, p. 71). A very recent estimation of a provider of bridge courses counts with total costs of EUR 690 for preparing for the study of medicine, EUR 780 for the exam subject of psychology, and about EUR 930 for preparing for the study of social and economic sciences.<sup>92</sup> There exists a range of subsidies. In Vienna, for example, there is the possibility of partial course cost reimbursement via the Educational Account of the Vienna Employment Promotion Fund (WAFF).<sup>93</sup> The Vienna Chamber of Labour, e.g., grants an educational voucher for bridge courses with a total value of EUR 100, for parents on maternity leave it is worth EUR 150.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> Vocational Training Institute Styria (Berufsförderungsinstitut Steiermark): Info-Folder “Die zweite Chance”, [www.bfi-stmk.at](http://www.bfi-stmk.at), 12.12.2006.

<sup>92</sup> <http://www.vhs21.ac.at/2.bw/sbp/Startseite.htm>, 12.12.2006.

<sup>93</sup> <http://www.vhs21.ac.at/2.bw/sbp/Startseite.htm>, 12.12.2006.

<sup>94</sup> <http://www.vhs21.ac.at/2.bw/sbp/Startseite.htm>, 12.12.2006.

2.3d) *How many assessment centres and/or assessors exist to date, if any? Where are such assessment centres located? Please specify the areas/regions with characteristics of such areas/regions (e.g. the average income, the income disparity, etc.) How was the decision made where to locate such centres? How much does it cost to maintain such centres and/or assessors? How many training programmes exist: specify how many in a given year, if there are significant increases per year? How much does it cost to train such assessors? Break down by levels assessed, if relevant.*

120. Apprenticeship offices, schools, HE institutions or adult learning institutions as exam providers exist in all Austrian provinces.

121 Examples for the BRP: The study on the *Berufsreifeprüfung* (BRP) quoted above assumes that there are a total of 114 sites where bridge courses for the BRP were on offer in the winter semester 2005/06 in Austria (1999/00: 95 sites) (Klimmer et al., 2006, p. 15).

122 According to a relevant study, there were a total of 18 providers of bridge courses for the *Higher Education Entrance Exam* in Austria in February of 2001, with pronounced differences in regional distribution. In provinces with a good university infrastructure (such as Vienna and Linz) also the number of providers was larger.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Birke, Barbara/Hafner, Helmut/Henkel, Susanna-Maria/Wagner, Johanna: “Die künftige Entwicklung der Studienberechtigungsprüfung”, Institute for Industrial Sciences (IWI), Vienna, October 2001, p. 71.

### 3. Description of technical arrangements

#### 3.1 Qualifications, qualification systems, qualification framework

3.1.a) *What term does your country use for 'Recognition of non-formal and informal learning'? Please provide the original term in your own language as well as the literally translated term in English. Please describe if the term has certain connotations, implications, specific associations, etc.*

123. In relevant documents on this topic, educational researchers and policy-makers most often use the term "Anerkennung von non-formalem und informellem Lernen" (see sections 54, 85 and 86). This is the exact translation of 'Recognition of non-formal and informal learning' and has the same connotations, implications and associations as in English.

3.1.b) *Describe if recognising of non-formal and informal learning is linked to qualifications, qualification systems, or qualifications framework in your country. Provide data, if any, the impact of such linkages.*

124. The majority of the above-mentioned procedures that include elements of RNFIL relate to formal education and training qualifications – viz. formal qualifications. Exceptions are the professional title of *Ingenieur* for graduates of colleges of engineering and similar institutions as well as the *Higher Education Entrance Exam*, which is a subject-specific access qualification to the HE system. To date no national qualifications framework (NQF) has been developed in this country; its development in correspondence with the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) is currently being organised under the auspices of the Ministry for Education and with the involvement of all relevant stakeholders. The first relevant events and preparatory activities were conducted in 2006.<sup>96</sup>

3.1.c) *What kinds of qualifications (e.g. certificates, diplomas, degrees, licenses, etc.) are more linked to recognition of non-formal and informal learning? What are the difficulties or obstacles in linking recognition of non-formal and informal learning to qualification framework?*

125. In general it can be stated that recognition procedures effective in Austria that are most important in quantitative terms are currently the exceptional admission to the apprenticeship-leave exam (viz.: apprenticeship diploma), the awarding of the professional title of *Ingenieur* to graduates of colleges of engineering with professional practice, and *Berufsreifeprüfung* as well as other alternative routes to the HE sector.

3.1.d) *Describe if there are differences in such linkages depending on whether the qualifications are professional or academic recognition? Can the link to the qualification systems legitimacy of such recognition be a means for establishing 'legitimacy' both in working life and in the educational system ?*

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<sup>96</sup> Cf.: Jörg Markowitsch, Peter Schlögl, Arthur Schneeberger: Europäischer und nationaler Qualifikationsrahmen. Stellungnahmen zum Arbeitsdokument der Europäischen Kommission sowie erste Befunde für Österreich, Vienna, April 2006.

3.1.e) *If your country has a national qualification framework or is in the process of establishing one, has the development towards recognition of non-formal and informal learning been of the drivers for your country to establish one? Is the development of the qualification framework and its implementation in practice with the recognition of non-formal and informal learning in parallel?*

126. At present an NQF is in the development stage. In the Background Information on the European Qualifications Framework published by the Republic of Austria during its Council Presidency we find the wording that the “National Qualifications Framework [provides] an opportunity for Member States to further develop their national education and training systems. This allows to better meet requirements of the rapidly changing labour market and life-long learning by increasing vertical permeability of education systems and the possibility of recognition of non-formally and informally acquired knowledge.”<sup>97</sup>

3.1.f) *What are some potential threats of recognition of non-formal and informal learning to higher education institutions, employers, and individuals? How can resistance from the higher education sector be overcome to embed the recognition of non-formal and informal learning into the qualification framework?*

127. For a long time already there has existed a relatively strong institutional segmentation in the field of postsecondary education, by part-time forms of upper secondary schools and colleges for people in employment, universities and adult learning establishments. Also the Fachhochschule sector, which has been developing since 1994, forms an independent segment. Credit transfers between the mentioned postsecondary education and training institutions are rare and comparatively little pronounced. The result was that associations were founded with the objective of guiding graduates of colleges of engineering on a part-time basis and “time-economically” optimised to an academic graduation at a foreign HE institution; cf. e.g. TTZ Weiz<sup>98</sup>.

## 3.2 Credit accumulation and transfer

3.2.a) *Describe any formal credit arrangements for non-formal and informal learning, if they exist. What are general policies, objectives, and legislative, regulatory or sectoral agreement frameworks for such credit arrangements? How are the arrangements used - at similar levels, between different levels, or between different sectors. Provide data, if any, of actual users (number of users, at what level, which sector, transition path, etc.)*

128. In Austria there is currently no explicit credit transfer system but numerous procedures that are similar to these models. Most significant in quantitative terms include the following:

- Everyone dropping out from a VET school or college before attaining a qualification can be granted a reduction of their training period when taking up an apprenticeship.
- Everyone who has successfully completed an education or training path at the upper secondary level (secondary academic school, VET school or college, or an apprenticeship

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<sup>97</sup> BMBWK: Background Information on the European Qualifications Framework, 2006, p.3, [archiv.bmbwk.gv.at/medienpool/13186/pu\\_20060316\\_03.pdf](http://archiv.bmbwk.gv.at/medienpool/13186/pu_20060316_03.pdf), 7.2.2007.

<sup>98</sup> Cf.: [www.ttz-weiz.at](http://www.ttz-weiz.at), 2.2.2007.

completed with an apprenticeship diploma) may learn apprenticeship trades within a training period reduced by one year. In addition, subject-related previous qualifications entitle holders to more credits (of more than one year).<sup>99</sup>

- Everyone taking an apprenticeship-leave exam in apprenticeship trades related to the trade they have already completed entitles to credits for the training periods and learning contents already completed (the concept of so-called ‘related occupations’).
- Fachhochschule programmes may, on certain conditions, grant credits to students who have completed a VET college in line with the respective course. The type and extent of credits are regulated differently depending on Fachhochschule programme and completed area specialisation. At present, mainly the following forms of credits exist: waiving of compulsory subjects and/or reduction of the specified number of lessons in the respective subjects; waiving of exams or parts/syllabi of these exams; and waiving of one or two semesters (with entry in a respective higher semester possible).<sup>100</sup>

*3.2.b) Who is/are responsible for credit arrangements for non-formal and informal learning? Is it different from the arrangements for formal learning?*

129. Relevant actors vary depending on subject-specific/content-related and/or organisational sphere of these procedures:

- Regarding dual apprenticeship training, major decision-making bodies include the following: the Federal Ministry of Economics and Labour (BMWA) and, basing on the Vocational Training Act, the social partners in the Federal Advisory Board on Apprenticeship and regional advisory boards on apprenticeship.
- In the full-time school-based VET sector (i.e.: VET schools and colleges), responsibility lies with the Federal Ministry for Education, the Arts and Culture.
- VET programmes in the field of agriculture and forestry are mainly the responsibility of the Federal Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management and of the Chamber of Agriculture.
- VET programmes in the health care professions are within the sphere of competence of the Federal Ministry for Health and Women’s Issues; similarly to VET programmes in agriculture and forestry, various offices of the Ministry for Education are involved in this field as well.

*3.2.c) How is a credit counted? Number of hours of a course? Please specify how credits are counted on what base in your country.*

130. Austrian VET routes (apprenticeship, VET school or college) are defined via the number of training years and final exams to be completed. Upon successful completion of final exams, graduates are awarded the respective final reports and certificates and hence professional qualifications and diplomas. In accordance with these organisational regulations, also the credits described in Chapter 3.2a are counted, viz. on the basis of apprenticeship or school years and/or the completed vocational specialisation, however with some differences. There-

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<sup>99</sup> [http://www.ams.or.at/b\\_info/up2u/studium/ams/matura\\_1.htm](http://www.ams.or.at/b_info/up2u/studium/ams/matura_1.htm), 18.12.2006.

<sup>100</sup> [http://www.ams.or.at/b\\_info/up2u/studium/ams/matura\\_1.htm](http://www.ams.or.at/b_info/up2u/studium/ams/matura_1.htm), 18.12.2006.

fore, everyone who has successfully completed a VET path at the upper secondary level may have their apprenticeship training reduced in general by one year, whereas if such a programme has not been completed, credits may be granted individually depending on the duration of the training and achievements. Also the completed area specialisation at the respective VET school or college plays a role in the crediting and hence the extent by how much the apprenticeship period is reduced (cf. also Chapter 3.2a).

*3.2.d) What are the incentives or disincentives for participants to gain credit and providers to give credit?*

131. As already explained in Chapter 1.5b, successful completion of an IVET or VET path entails significant benefits in the labour market: higher activity rates, and simultaneous less risk of becoming unemployed, and higher income than employees who only have completed compulsory schooling. Crediting of completed periods of learning can make completion of an apprenticeship considerably easier.

*3.2.e) Describe, if any, how the recognition of non-formal and informal learning is integrated in your VET system through credit system: e.g. the dual system to integrate experiential learning.*

132. In this connection, again the exceptional admission to the apprenticeship-leave exam and, in case the conditions laid down in Chapter 3.2a are met, possible reductions of apprenticeship periods must be mentioned.

*3.2.f) Provide data, if any, how the recognition of non-formal and informal learning is integrated in your HED system through credit system: e.g. research on the growing number of take-up of internships, etc.*

133. RNFIL systems have to date not been common in the Austrian HE system, except maybe as far as access is concerned if credits are granted for previously acquired knowledge – mostly at VET colleges. A relevant new approach is pursued by the Austrian CVET Academy (wba), which is described in Component 5.

134. A possible shortening of the study period at a Fachhochschule institution is provided for by “recognising proven knowledge in the sense of an occupation-oriented training programme of the respective course of studies”. This knowledge may be credited to individual subjects or parts of Fachhochschule programmes, with additional exams required on certain conditions. On the other hand, there is the option that people with a subject-specific qualification but without the *Reifeprüfung* take up a study at Fachhochschule. Also here, individual Fachhochschule providers have to provide for additional exams in certain cases.<sup>101</sup>

135. The Berufsreifepfung (BRP) and the Higher Education Entrance Exam (SBP) are procedures building on concepts similar to RNFIL. The SBP facilitates restricted access to the HE sector via specialist-area recognition of knowledge acquired on the job or in a non-work-

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<sup>101</sup> Federal Act on Fachhochschule Programmes - Fachhochschul-Studiengesetz – Federal Legal Gazette No. 340/1993, as last amended by Federal Legal Gazette I No. 43/2006, §12 (2) 6 and 7, [http://archiv.bmbwk.gv.at/universitaeten/recht/gesetze/fhstg/Gesetz\\_Fachhochschul-Stu4169.xml#12](http://archiv.bmbwk.gv.at/universitaeten/recht/gesetze/fhstg/Gesetz_Fachhochschul-Stu4169.xml#12), 4.12.2006.

related environment. The BRP facilitates general access to HE institutions for graduates of VET programmes that is relatively time-economical. In both cases, exams must be taken before exam boards.

### 3.3 Assessment methods and procedures

3.3.a) *Describe the assessment arrangements. Who carries out assessments, and with what type of approaches? Who validates the results of the assessments? How long will the assessment procedures take? If methods or procedures vary depending on sectors, list the name of the sectors and the methods used for the recognition for the sector. What assessment procedures do participants go through to get their non-formal and informal learning recognised? Describe different stages.*

136. A major share of the procedures applied in Austria for recognising non-formally or informally acquired knowledge is part of the formal education system and/or aims at a formal education and training qualification. Relevant exams are also held at education and training institutions authorised by law.

137. The apprenticeship-leave exams (LAPs) must be taken before exam committees, which must be set up by the apprenticeship offices and are composed of professional experts. Every examination committee is made up of one chairperson and two assessors. The exam consists of a practical and a theoretical examination. In case of candidates who can prove successful completion of part-time vocational school for apprentices, the theoretical exam will be waived (Vocational Training Act, §§ 21,22). The candidate's performance is rated internally by the committee on the basis of an assessment scale ranging from 1 (Very good) to 5 (Not sufficient). The exam will then receive an overall assessment ranging from Excellent, Successful, and Pass to Fail. If applicants fail to pass the LAP, they may retake it. Upon completion of the LAP, it is incumbent on the apprenticeship office to issue an exam certificate to the examinee. This certificate must be signed at least by the chairperson of the examination committee and sealed by the apprenticeship office (Vocational Training Act, § 25 (4), (5), (6)).

138. No exam before a committee is foreseen for the *awarding of the Ingenieur title*. Rather, the applicant is obliged to furnish proof that he or she has completed a period of practical training that “presupposes specialist knowledge in those subjects where the upper secondary school-leaving exam may be taken” (2006 Regulation implementing the *Ingenieur Act*, §2 (1)). When applying for the awarding of the professional title *Diplom-HTL-Ingenieur* (following a minimum period of six years professional practice), the applicant is obliged to furnish proof of “detailed and comprehensive knowledge by submission of a written work on his specialist area” and take a “subject-related examination before experts” (*Ingenieur Act* 2006, §14 (3 and 4)). Similar provisions apply to the awarding of the title *Diplom-HLFL-Ingenieur*. The awarding of either of the two titles – viz. *Diplom-HTL-Ingenieur* or *Diplom-HLFL-Ingenieur* – was only possible until the end of 2006. This regulation has been deleted.

3.3.b) *Describe different types of assessment methods and procedures. Provide data on advantages and challenges for the different types of assessment (e.g. competence-based assessment, summative assessment, portfolio assessment, etc.) What are the principle drivers of costs of different types of assessments to different actors? Provide evidence, if any, of certain types of assessment may become beneficial or a barrier to participants (e.g. psychological, financial, etc.).*

139. For more information about procedural details of exam implementations (*BRP, SBP, Competence Balance Tyrol*) cf. sections 101-103.

In the following some problem areas emerging when completing the BRP have been listed on the basis of the 2006 survey: Slightly less than 14 percent of interviewed BRP graduates had to retake one or several partial exams, the highest failure rate could be identified in the partial exam subject Mathematics, followed by the partial exam subject German. All in all it can be stated that about 94 percent of respondents mentioned that they assessed the BRP as the right choice for attaining their professional *and* private goals. About the same percentage of interviewees stated that the work connected with completion of the BRP was worth it (Klimmer 2006, p. 52).

140. Possible disadvantages posed by the BRP as against the SBP are its duration and connected costs: The SBP can be completed within one year, whereas completion of the BRP as a rule will take two years. The costs for the SBP as a rule are also lower than related financial expenses for the BRP; however, subsidisation options partly make up for these differences.

141. From the perspective of experts, one drawback of the SBP is the statutory minimum age of 22. Although the law provides for an exemption clause, the related provision is relevant only for very few target groups. Furthermore, the SBP – as it prepares for one specific study programme only – has proven as a one-way if this programme for whatever reasons turns out to be the wrong choice. The BRP, on the other hand, offers not only free choice among tertiary programmes but also a recognised formal educational qualification (the upper secondary school-leaving certificate or *Matura*), which is of importance in a social context even if its holder does not pursue any HE study programme.

3.3.c) *Describe the current relationship between academic standards, professional standards, and occupational standards in your country. Who owns and controls such standards?*

142. Responsibilities for content, quality and standards of education and training programmes are spread among different authorities:

- In the apprenticeship training system, the individual occupational profiles are published in the form of ordinances of the Economics Ministry, with the social partners collaborating to a significant degree in the drawing up of VET programmes. The Ministry for Education is responsible for the school-based part of the dual system (curricula, etc.)
- Legal responsibility for the type and content of curricula of secondary academic schools and VET schools and colleges rests with the Ministry for Education and is regulated in the School Organisation Act.
- The State accreditation of Fachhochschule degree programmes and the awarding of the designation ‘Fachhochschule’ is regulated in the Fachhochschule Studies Act (*Fachhochschul-Studiengesetz, FHStG*) as amended. The competent authority for accreditation is the Fachhochschule Council, which is also responsible for ensuring education standards by monitoring the degree programmes, in particular final examinations (FHStG, 2<sup>nd</sup> section, §6).
- Universities were granted far-reaching autonomy and taken out of federal administration by the 2002 Universities Act (*Universitätsgesetz*). In the organisation of study curricula, in many cases also relevant subject-specific stakeholders play a role, including professional bodies for example.

3.3.d) *Has the issue been raised in your county of how the assessment practice should be balanced with the right of individuals to have their learning completely independent of assessment and recognition processes be retained? Describe the debate to date, if any.*

To date this issue has not been raised.

3.3.e) *How is the recognition of non-formal and informal learning quality-assured in your country? Who is responsible for the quality assurance process? How is the issue of quality assurance treated in the internationalisation context?*

143. Recognition of previous vocational knowledge and skills for the *exceptional admission to the apprenticeship-leave exam (LAP)* is regulated – similarly to the procedure for admission to the regular LAP – via the Vocational Training Act (*Berufsausbildungsgesetz*) and hence has a legally binding framework at the national level. In addition, the apprenticeship offices of the economic chambers are integrated into the quality assurance process as a major institutional authority.

144. Both the *Berufsreifeprüfung* and the *Higher Education Entrance Exam* are regulated by law (via the Federal *Berufsreifeprüfung Act [Bundesgesetz über die Berufsreifeprüfung]* on the one hand and the *Higher Education Entrance Act [Studienberechtigungsgesetz]* and the *School Organisation Act [Schulorganisationsgesetz]* on the other) and additionally contain elements of quality assurance (such as the regulation of the recognition of programmes serving as preparation for the BRP). The development of the pedagogical concepts applied, for example in the course of the BRP, is one of the explicit objectives of the competent authority: The aim is to increasingly use elements of self-study and the new media (Schlögl/Neubauer/Malzer 2006, p. 18).

145. Recognition of bridge courses preparing for the SBP at universities is conducted by the competent ministry in accordance with legal regulations for university programmes. Bridge courses organised by adult learning institutions are recognised as equivalent following a hearing by two specialist boards if relevant requirements as stipulated by the UniStG have been met. Adult learning institutions offering bridge courses are obliged to submit an annual report that has to provide information, among others, about the number of previous qualifications of programme participants and include the outcomes of evaluation procedures on the quality of teaching (Birke et. al. 2001, p. 100).

146. The competence balance of the Tyrol Centre for the Future has been evaluated scientifically by conducting a comprehensive evaluation study regarding its quality and outcomes. In particular, this study surveyed the participants' satisfaction, their expectations regarding the competence balance and whether they have been met, and the concrete individual consequences of participation. (See Component 5, Case Studies)

### **3.4. Others**

3.4.a) *Provide any other technical arrangements that you think are the most important characteristics that exist in your country, which have not been addressed in above Component 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3.*

## 4. Stakeholder behaviour

### 4.1 Characteristics of stakeholders

*4.1.a) Identify all possible stakeholders involved (with specific characteristics) and complete a list below concerning non-formal learning and informal learning in your country to complement the list for Component 2.2. The 2.2 list is to map out governance and the role of government while this list aims to map out the relationships between providers of non-formal learning or types of informal learning, recognisers of such learning, recognition to be received, regulatory of such recognition, and main users of such recognition. Please note, due to the difference of nature of non-formal and informal learning, that the grid for non-formal learning uses a provider of non-formal learning or an input-side as a starting base- first column – as non-formal learning seems to be more recognised after going through a non-formal learning programme. On the other hand, the grid for informal learning uses output/ skills as a starting point because it is not feasible to list all types of informal learning where there is no such supplier as the individual is the active entity to create such learning opportunities. Therefore, there is a separate grid for non-formal and informal learning. The annex also aims to examine characteristics of users for aggregation of data, but please provide micro-level data about users in this section.*

147. Most frequent providers of non-formal learning are non-profit adult learning institutions (30 percent), companies (26 percent), and – following far behind – upper secondary schools and colleges, as well as universities (9 percent), as is revealed by the results of the ad-hoc module on lifelong learning by Statistics Austria from the year 2003<sup>102</sup>. The objectives of the formal recognition of non-formal learning (in courses) range from the acquisition of *Hauptschule* qualifications to ‘alternative’ paths to the upper secondary school-leaving exam and HE entrance qualifications. In addition, there are many courses aiming at the acquisition of ICT company certificates or certificates of other organisations; also language courses are connected with specifications by certification providers. The exams are usually taken at the respective schools or certification bodies.

148. With regard to informal learning, mainly the exceptional admission to the apprenticeship-leave exam (LAP) and the awarding of the professional title of *Ingenieur* on the basis of specialist subject-oriented professional practice must be mentioned as major examples in quantitative respect. For the exceptional admission to the LAP, there are also course-form (non-formal) preparation forms.

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<sup>102</sup> Hammer, Gerald / Moser, Cornelia / Klapfer, Karin: Lifelong learning. Results of the Microcensus June 2003, Statistics Austria (ed.), Vienna, 2004, p. 146f.

TABLE 25.

**Non-formal learning (Characteristics of Stakeholders Grid)**

Provider of non-formal learning	Recogniser of such non-formal learning*	Types of recognition received (e.g. academic qualifications – degrees, diplomas, credits, awards, certificates, professional qualifications, etc.)	Regulator (e.g. quality assurance agency, professional body, government, etc.)	Main user(s) (Specify)
Non-profit adult learning course providers	Lower secondary school of the school district, Ministry of Education	Hauptschule certificate	Regional education boards	People without compulsory school qualifications, frequently immigrants
Non-profit adult learning centres: course providers	Non-profit adult learning centres	Certificates	Quality assurance by ISO 9000ff and other approaches	Employed persons and others
Associations in combination with schools, CCIT (Competence-Centres IT)	Companies	Company certificates, e.g. CISCO, ORACLE, etc.	Company-specific approaches of quality assurance	Students of upper secondary technical and vocational colleges and others
Non-profit adult learning centres	Companies	Company certificates, e.g. CISCO, ORACLE, etc.	Company-specific approaches of quality assurance	Employed persons and others
Non-profit adult learning course providers, schools	International educational organisation	Internationally known language certificates	Organisation-specific approaches of quality assurance	School children and students, employed people and others
Non-profit adult learning centres or schools	Ministry for Education	Reifeprüfung / HE entrance qualification (BRP) HE entrance qualification (SBP)	Regional education boards	Young people with VET qualification
Universities	University	Admission to university studies via qualifications of a university preparation programme	AQUA-Austrian Quality Agency	Immigrants

\*e.g. government, quasi-government, universities, companies, professional bodies, trade unions, etc.)

Source: own compilation

TABLE 26:

**Organisers of course-form adult education over the past 12 months  
by type of income\*, microcensus survey 2003, in %**

Providers of attended courses	Em- ployed	Unem- ployed	House- keeping	Mater- nity leave	Retired	Total	
Own company	22.8	3.9	2.5	7.3	0.8	18.1	
Manufacturer – supplier company	7.0	2.5	1.4	5.3	2.6	5.8	<b>26.1</b>
Parent-/holding company	2.8	-	0.2	5.3	-	2.2	
Private education and training providers	14.9	12.0	12.8	14.6	11.3	15.5	
Other providers	12.8	14.1	23.0	16.9	22.6	14.7	
Caritas, Red Cross	4.3	4.6	8.4	9.5	5.5	4.6	
Employers' associations, WIFI, etc.	11.9	12.1	6.4	5.2	3.8	10.3	
Adult education centres (VHS), public education and training providers	6.6	10.2	19.6	9.3	31.3	9.0	
Employees' associations, BFI, etc.	6.2	35.2	11.6	13.2	3.5	6.9	<b>30.3</b>
Laendliches Fortbildungsinstitut (LFI)	2.0	-	3.4	0.3	11.0	2.4	
Adult education association	1.4	1.9	1.8	3.2	3.1	1.5	
Volkswirtschaftliche Gesellschaft (VWG)	0.2	-	1.1	-	0.4	0.2	
Schools with public-law status	3.3	2.7	3.8	2.1	2.4	4.0	
University, HE institution	2.7	0.5	3.5	4.8	1.6	3.4	<b>8.8</b>
Fachhochschule	1.2	0.3	0.6	3.1	0.1	1.4	
Total	100.1	100.0	100.1	100.1	100.0	100.0	
Number of course participants in 1,000	1.095,1	49.4	57.3	17.1	96.5	1.436,5	

\* The category 'schoolchildren, students' was not included in the table as the focus was on adult education.

Source: Statistics Austria, microcensus June 2003

TABLE 27:

**Informal learning (Characteristics of Stakeholders Grid)**

Types of skills gained by informal learning*	Recogniser of informal learning	Types of Recognition received	Regulatory body	Main users (specify)
Apprenticeship-leave examination	Exam committee at the apprenticeship offices of the economic chambers	Apprenticeship diploma (publicly recognised)	Economics Ministry, Vocational Training Act	People without a VET qualification, incl. immigrants
Professional title <i>Ingenieur</i>	Economics Ministry	Title <i>Ingenieur</i>	Economics Ministry, National Council Federal Act <i>Ingenieurgesetz 2006</i>	Graduates of colleges of engineering, etc.
Family competences, key skills acquired by family work	Adult learning providers	Certificate following coaching procedure	Ministry for Education	Career break returners
Competence portfolio for volunteers, competences acquired via voluntary honorary work	Adult learning providers: Ring of Austrian Adult Education Associations	Competence portfolio	Education Ministry, Family Ministry	People active in voluntary or honorary work
ICT skills	Companies	Company certificates, e.g. CISCO, ORACLE, etc.	Education Ministry, Economics Ministry	Employed
Language skills	International educational organisation	Internationally known language certificates	Ministry for Education	Schoolchildren and students, employed people and others

Source: own compilation

## 4.2 Access

4.2.a) *What are the eligibilities to go through the recognition process? If it differs in different sectors/levels (e.g. HEd, VET, upper secondary, basic education, professional, etc.), describe different eligibilities for different levels/sectors.*

149. Courses aiming at acquiring *Hauptschule* qualifications are not linked to any educational requirements. Access problems are not formal, but rather participation fees for the bridge courses are perceived as a problem.<sup>103</sup> Exam fees and charges for the issuing of certificates are low and insignificant. One course provider mentioned that problems related to child-

<sup>103</sup> Acquisition of *Hauptschule* qualifications next to impossible, [http://www.ihs.ac.at/publications/lib/ots\\_00602006.pdf](http://www.ihs.ac.at/publications/lib/ots_00602006.pdf) (in German 16.2.07)

care during courses were indicated as a reason by candidates for being prevented from attendance.

150. The *exceptional admission to the apprenticeship-leave exam* is regulated in the Vocational Training Act. Completion of compulsory schooling is not a prerequisite for admission. There exist two main access routes:

- On the one hand, candidates must have reached 18 years of age and must be able to prove they have “acquired the knowledge and skills required in the apprenticeship trade concerned in another way, for example by means of a relevant practical or on-the-job training activity of appropriate length, by attending relevant courses, etc.” (Vocational Training Act, §23 ( 5a)).
- Alternatively, the exceptional admission to the apprenticeship-leave exam is also granted if the applicant can prove “completion of at least half of the apprenticeship period specified for the apprenticeship trade concerned, if appropriate by taking into account a substitute training period and he has no other way to conclude an apprenticeship contract for the time still open for the duration of apprenticeship specified for the apprenticeship trade” (Vocational Training Act, §23 ( 5b)).

151. The awarding of the title of *Ingenieur* to graduates of colleges of engineering is implemented by the Federal Ministry of Economics and Labour and regulated in the 2006 Federal Act regulating the professional title of *Ingenieur*. The prerequisite for conferring is the upper secondary school-leaving exam according to the curriculum of **Austrian colleges of engineering, arts and crafts or colleges of agriculture and forestry** and “at least three years of relevant professional practice (...), that presupposes **specialist knowledge** in those subjects where the upper secondary school-leaving exam may be taken” (2006 *Ingenieur Act*, §2; bold type not in the original). In addition, there are regulations for equivalent foreign diplomas and school-based education and training paths. The title can also be awarded to people who do not meet the above requirements “but furnish proof of equivalent subject-related and general knowledge as is taught at colleges of engineering, arts and crafts or colleges of agriculture and forestry up to the upper secondary school-leaving exam, (...) and at least six years of specialist practice related to the acquired knowledge that presuppose **specialist knowledge**” (2006 *Ingenieur Act*, §2; bold type not in the original).

152. The right to use the designation **Diplom-HTL-Ingenieur** must be granted by the Federal Minister of Economics and Labour upon application if the applicant has successfully completed the upper secondary school-leaving exam pursuant to the curriculum of an Austrian college of engineering, as well as at least six years of professional practice after this exam during which period he/she had to apply the technical knowledge that is significant for the specialist area concerned and which he/she had acquired at the college of engineering, as well as furnishes proof of detailed and comprehensive knowledge by *submitting a written work* and has successfully completed a *subject-related exam before experts*. (2006 *Ingenieur Act*, §14 (1)). In this connection it must be noted that the legal possibility to award the titles *Diplom-HTL-Ingenieur* and *Diplom-HLFL-Ingenieur* has expired as of 31.12.2006 (2006 *Ingenieur Act*, §20).

153. The right to use the designation **Diplom-HLFL-Ingenieur** must be granted by the Federal Minister for Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management upon application if the applicant has successfully completed the upper secondary school-leaving exam pursuant to the curriculum of an Austrian college of agriculture and forestry, as well as at least six years of professional practice after this exam during which period he/she had to ap-

ply the technical knowledge that is significant for the specialist area concerned and which he/she had acquired at the college of agriculture and forestry, as well as furnishes proof of detailed and comprehensive knowledge by **submitting a written work** and has successfully completed a **subject-related exam before experts**. (2006 *Ingenieur Act*, §14 (2)).

154. As formal admission criteria for the *Berufsreifeprüfung* exam, the following previously attained *vocational qualifications* are required: apprenticeship-leave exam (independent of the duration of the apprenticeship) or VET school (of at least three years) or nursing school or a specialist paramedical course (of at least 30 months) (Federal *Berufsreifeprüfung Act*, §1 (1)).

155. Access to the *Higher Education Entrance Exam* is less strictly regulated in terms of content. Related admission requirements provide that the applicant must be at least 22 years of age, in exceptional cases he/she may be as young as 20, which is the case if the applicant has successfully completed at least four years of training including an apprenticeship-leave exam, has the Austrian citizenship, has not attempted unsuccessfully to take the SBP, and can furnish proof of *previous knowledge acquired through job-specific programmes or non-occupational paths* that must have been successful to an extent clearly exceeding fulfilment of general compulsory schooling and be related to his/her desired first study course (*Higher Education Entrance Act* §2 (1) and (2)).

*4.2.b) How many educational institutions (in comparison with the total number of educational institutions) at different levels practise the recognition of non-formal and informal learning as an admission policy?*

156. The apprenticeship-leave exam (LAP) is in general held at the respective apprenticeship offices of the economic chambers set up in the provinces. The exceptional completion of the LAP is effected together with attempts by regular apprentices, there exist no special exams for them.

157. The *Higher Education Entrance Exam* can be conducted at schools or universities.<sup>104</sup>

158. The above quoted study on the *Berufsreifeprüfung* has found 114 sites where bridge courses for the BRP are offered in the 2005/06 academic year. (Schlögl / Neubauer / Malzer, May 2006, p. 15). The BRP itself is conducted at upper secondary schools (mostly at VET colleges), which are found in all regions.

*4.2.c) Describe the situation of access to information and communication. Is there one-stop information service centre or help-desk concerning questions which may arise about the recognition system? What medium has been used (leaflet, CD-ROM, website, etc)? If there is a website, please provide the figure of 'click ratio (how many clicks per month – please provide all the records available since the launch of the website.)'. Attach an example. What media channels have been used to publicise the existence of such medium (newspaper, journals, free journals, publicity on the metro, etc)? Specify the names of such media channels.*

159. Major info websites on Austrian adult learning and second-chance education offers are provided by the Ministry for Education at the site [www.erwachsenenbildung.at](http://www.erwachsenenbildung.at) (which in-

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<sup>104</sup> BMBWK, <http://archiv.bmbwk.gv.at/schulen/bw/zb/Studienberechtigungsprue2048.xml>.

cludes, among others, information about providers, legal background and second-chance education). Also very many visitors can be counted at the meta search engine [www.eduvista.com](http://www.eduvista.com), which is financed from ESF funds and independent of providers.

160. The Economics Ministry informs about apprenticeship training (apprenticeship trades, the apprenticeship leave exam, equivalence of qualifications, etc.) in its comprehensive service offer (at <http://www.bmwa.gv.at/BMWA/Service/Lehrlingsservice/default.htm>). Detailed information for potential applicants is provided about the awarding of the *Ingenieur* title by the Economics Ministry (including requirements in terms of school education and relevant occupations): <http://www.bmwa.gv.at/BMWA/Service/Ingenieurwesen/default.htm>.

161. The economic chambers have set up an extensive career information system, which also comprises second-chance education, for young people and adults with information requirements: <http://www.bic.at>.

162. The Public Employment Service Austria (PES) operates Career Information Centres (BIZ); currently there are 61 of them across Austria, according to the PES website (query date: 9.1.2007). These centres are service facilities in the field of occupational information, career guidance and vocational counselling available across the federal territory. They allow users to retrieve information about more than 2,700 occupations, related employment options and VET/CVET programmes. In 2002, a total of 460,000 (ca. 49 percent adults) looked for information at the BIZs (BMBWK: Memorandum LLL – Progress Report Austria, 2003, p. 31).

### 4.3 Participation

*4.3.a) How many people have actually taken up the process at different educational levels? Provide any evidence on the patterns of participants (gender, age, socio-economic groups, ethnicity, employment status, marital status, educational levels and their family educational levels)?*

163. The number of participants in programmes aiming at aiming at retaking exams within the framework of the lower secondary school-leaving certificate to obtain **Hauptschule qualifications** for unemployed people and employees in employment in relation to ‘subsidised courses’ has risen from 126 in 1998 to 1,100 in 2004.<sup>105</sup> Regarding their educational background, participants are disadvantaged people, frequently youth, including many with an immigration background. The Public Employment Service Austria has subsidised attainment of *Hauptschule* qualifications by adults for more than twenty years to improve employability.<sup>106</sup> Another source counts a total of 1,489 *Hauptschule* qualifications acquired by adults, 39 percent of which women, in the academic years 1998/99-2002/2003 on the basis of reports by district school inspectors. The participants’ success rate is between 55 and 60 percent. Authors estimate that of every school age group about 300 people or 6 percent of those who

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<sup>105</sup> BMBWK. Lebensbegleitendes Lernen in Österreich – EU-Ziel für 2010 wurde bereits erreicht, Vienna, 2 July 2004, p. 2.

<sup>106</sup> BMWA: Jugend und Arbeit in Österreich (Youth and Employment in Austria), Vienna, 2006, p. 26.

complete their nine years of compulsory schooling without any qualification acquire the *Hauptschule* qualification at a later point in their life.<sup>107</sup>

164. The number of successful exam attempts in the exceptional admission to the apprenticeship-leave exam (LAP) has risen in recent years. Currently about 7,800 graduations a year can be counted (see Table 21). According to preliminary data for 2006, the share of applicants among the total of exam candidates who have no Austrian citizenship amounts to 23 percent. The success rate among foreign examinees is 91 percent, among Austrians it is 84 percent.<sup>108</sup>

165. Data material on **Berufsreifeprüfung** reveals a steady increase of graduate figures since its introduction in 1997. In the last statistically documented age group, the graduate figure is as high as 2,144 (Klimmer 2006, p. 28). Half of the graduates are 30 years of age or younger, the share of women is always slightly above 50 percent (Klimmer/Schlögl 1999, Klimmer 2006). During the preparation period for the BRP, 70 percent were permanently fully employed, six percent with interruptions. Slightly above 14 percent of respondents indicated to have been partly employed during the preparation period for the BRP permanently or with interruptions, the share of non-employed totalled 7.2 percent.

166. The gender distribution in the **Higher Education Entrance Exam** reveals a share of women of 46 percent in the academic year 1995/96, rising to 55 percent in the academic year 1999/00 (Birke et. al. 2001, p. 51). The average age in the period of observation 1995-1999 was constantly at about 31 years (average age in the last partial exam). The formal educational attainment of both the graduate's father and mother was mostly at compulsory school level or VET school level (Birke et. al. 2001, p. 127). The rate of SBP graduates who did not take up a study was slightly above or below 20 percent in the academic years 1996, 1997 and 1998 (Birke et. al. 2001, p. 54). Taking into account the study rate, currently an estimated 340 graduates a year can be assumed (see Tables 22a and b).

167. According to information provided by the Economics Ministry, the following can be stated regarding the frequency of **awarding of the *Ingenieur* title** and the applicants' backgrounds: In 2006, a total of 3,514 people were awarded the right to use the professional title of *Ingenieur*. Unfortunately no statistical data about the applicants' age, citizenship and gender are available and therefore no exact information can be provided. On the basis of many years of experiences in this field, it can be assumed however that applicants as a rule are 25 years of age, nearly exclusively Austrian citizens and male. Building on data about titles granted since 1996, an average of about 96 applications or awards a year with the title **Diplom-HTL-Ingenieur** is calculated. The extent of these fluctuations is shown by the fact that in the current year 2006 the title was conferred about 50 times whereas by late 2006, i.e. with the termination of the 2<sup>nd</sup> section of the *Ingenieur* Act, about 300 new applications had been submitted. Graduates of colleges of agriculture and forestry are awarded the *Ingenieur* title by the BMLFUW (Federal Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management): According to information provided by the competent body there, the *Ingenieur* title is awarded 300-400 times a year. Regarding conferment of the title *Dipl.-HLFL-Ing.* every year a few dozen applications are counted, in 2006 e.g. about 50. (As of the year 2007 it is no longer possible to submit any applications for conferment of the occupational title *Dipl.-HLFL-Ing.*) (In both cases, the number of applications that received a negative response is very low.)

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<sup>107</sup> Ferdinand Lechner, Nicole Nemecek, Andreas Riesenfelder, Barbara Willsberger, Georg Michenthaler, Gina Brandenburg: Begleitende Bewertung der NAP-Maßnahmen für Jugendliche – Endfassung des Endberichts, L & R Sozialforschung, 2004, Vienna, p. 133f.

<sup>108</sup> Special evaluation of the Statistics Department of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber

4.3.b) Provide details of any survey – national household survey, user survey, etc. – that explains any linkage of the **background of participants** and the uptake of the recognition process.

168. The number of people who want to acquire *Hauptschule* qualifications in second-chance education is increasing “when competition in the labour market and the apprenticeship post market is particularly fierce, above all in times of economic downturns”<sup>109</sup>.

169. Regarding people who take their apprenticeship-leave exam via exceptional admission it is known that in their majority these are people who do not have any formal IVET qualification yet, in many cases they are immigrants (see Table 10b). But there is also the variant that apprenticeship graduates aim at an ‘extension’ in the sense of an additional certificate. For more information about the BRP see Component 4.3a.

4.3.c) Provide evidence, if any, that the recognition of non-formal and informal learning worked as **an innovative pathway for disadvantaged groups** to get on the ‘learning leads to learning’ and ‘training leads to training’ track? Who constitutes the ‘disadvantaged group’ in your country?

170. An evaluation study on the NAP measures for young people comes to the following conclusion: “Also in the case of *Hauptschule* qualification courses it becomes evident (...) that compensation of social disadvantages due to origin and the support of young people in their personal development form the core elements of preparation for the search for an apprenticeship post and employment.”<sup>110</sup> No assessments or data have been published regarding the outcomes of these courses for adults.

171. In Austria, people whose highest formal educational attainment is completion of compulsory schooling (in Austria: nine years) are normally termed a ‘disadvantaged group’ in terms of education. Acquisition of the *Hauptschule* qualifications and the apprenticeship diploma as well as related subsidies are in general perceived as major measures to reduce disadvantages.<sup>111</sup> According to the last census (2001) 14 percent of Austrian young adults did not have any VET qualification, which share among people of the same age without the Austrian citizenship was 47 percent (see Table 10a und 10b).

172. The ‘alternative’ paths to the upper secondary school-leaving exam and the HE sector are primarily oriented towards graduates of an IVET programme (apprenticeship or VET school graduates). Almost 60 percent of BRP graduates take up another postsecondary training, with studies at HE institutions showing the largest share (ÖIBF/ibw, 2006, p. 50). More than 80 percent of SBP graduates take up a university study.

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<sup>109</sup> Ferdinand Lechner, Nicole Nemecek, Andreas Riesenfelder, Barbara Willsberger, Georg Michenthaler, Gina Brandenburg: Begleitende Bewertung der NAP-Maßnahmen für Jugendliche – Endfassung des Endberichts, L & R Sozialforschung, 2004, Vienna, p. 134.

<sup>110</sup> Ferdinand Lechner, Nicole Nemecek, Andreas Riesenfelder, Barbara Willsberger, Georg Michenthaler, Gina Brandenburg: Begleitende Bewertung der NAP-Maßnahmen für Jugendliche – Endfassung des Endberichts, L & R Sozialforschung, 2004, Vienna, p. 136.

<sup>111</sup> Ferdinand Lechner, Nicole Nemecek, Andreas Riesenfelder, Barbara Willsberger, Georg Michenthaler, Gina Brandenburg: Begleitende Bewertung der NAP-Maßnahmen für Jugendliche – Endfassung des Endberichts, L & R Sozialforschung, 2004, Vienna, p. 8 ff.

## 4.4 Incentives and disincentives

4.4.a) *Provide evidence of any, if not all, that the recognition of non-formal and informal learning functions as a transitional or multi-directional pathway in your country (e.g. a way to further studies, shorten study period, find a job, change a job, get a better salary, etc.) If it functions as a way to find a job from the unemployment status, is there any evidence that the length of unemployment influences the transition.*

173. As described above, the apprenticeship diploma – to name one example – as a rule brings about improvements regarding the activity rate, prevention of unemployment, and in income (cf. e.g. Tables 19, 20a and 20b). The ‘alternative’ paths to the upper secondary school-leaving exam and HE study qualification, as elaborated in more detail above (see item 181), lead to admission to a postsecondary or university-based study at a rate of about 60 and 80 percent respectively.

174. In the survey quoted above, one quarter of the questioned BRP graduates stated that they were able to take on a new sphere of tasks at their previous workplace with more responsibility after having completed the BRP (Klimmer 2006, p. 47).

175. About one quarter of questioned SBP graduates stated to have attained an improvement in their professional status by completing the SBP (whether higher income, a better position on the job, a larger sphere of responsibility, or a generally more interesting task) (Birke et. al. 2001, p. 144).

176. Apart from the possibilities of taking up a study at an HE institution via second-chance education (BRP, SBP), as described above in great detail, interested people have the option to enrol in Fachhochschule **degree programmes without the upper secondary school-leaving exam**. This access path is regulated in the Fachhochschule Studies Act (*Fachhochschul-Studiengesetz, FHStG*). Table 22b shows that the tendency regarding this Fachhochschule access path has increased over the period from 1999 until the last statistically documented year group 2005. The share of study entrants with a VET qualification but without the upper secondary school-leaving certificate has been rising since the late 1990s.

4.4.b) *Provide evidence, if any, of detailed case studies where the actual length of studies was shortened by their recognition of non-formal and informal learning (e.g. number of such cases, the maximum and minimum reduced length and, thus, the costs of the study, the most practised subject areas, etc.)*

No relevant data available.

4.4.c) *Provide data, if any, of the returns of investments for different stakeholders. Any evidence of better private returns of investment (e.g. earnings) afterwards? Any evidence of fiscal returns? Any evidence of recognition that this type of learning contributes to democracy and citizenship as social outcome of learning?*

177. Benefits for participants have already been discussed and proven above both for people who take the apprenticeship-leave exam in second-chance education and those who opt for the ‘alternative’ routes to the upper secondary school-leaving exam and the study entrance exam (such as permeability in the education system, lower risk of unemployment, improvement in their position on the job). Table 28 shows qualification-related income disparities in

the non-agricultural business sector.<sup>112</sup> Table 29 shows occupational retention (pursuant to ISCO) by formal attainment.

178. In Austria there prevails the conviction that “education is worth more than employability: Education must focus on developing the individual’s entire personality in a holistic sense. This holistic personal development covers fundamental knowledge, skills and abilities, the communication of values, and artistic and creative education.” (BMBWK July 2001, p. 10). Permeability is a central value of the national education strategy and aims to ensure that people are able, also at adult age, to take qualifications and attain access options to tertiary education.

179. The **competence balances and competence portfolios**, which are increasingly establishing themselves in the Austrian adult learning sector, mainly serve to make abilities and competences visible that so far have been hidden to the individual or which he or she has not been aware of. This aims to strengthen his or her self-confidence and support occupation-related and social participation. A majority of graduates in the Tyrol *competence balance* e.g. stated that the procedure has helped them to identify new objectives for their work and life (Triebel 2005, p. 33).

*4.4.d) Provide data, if any, of practices of **fiscal incentives for employers** (e.g. tax incentives).*

180. Company expenditure on education are subsidised in Austria via *tax incentives*. Since 2002 a legal regulation has been in force that the exempt amount of 20 percent for CVET expenses can be put forward for tax purposes not only for external but also for in-house training expenses (Schlögl/Schneeberger 2003, p. 25). This means that tax reductions are possible for company expenditure for employees who are intending to complete the apprenticeship-leave exam in second-chance education or a BRP.

*4.4.e) Has the government made an explicit statement about **promoting equity and social cohesion** by using the recognition of non-formal and informal learning? If so, what kinds of schemes exist?*

181. The vigour with which the ‘alternative’ paths to the upper secondary school-leaving exam and HE study qualification were created and supported was aiming to serve both the objective of equality of opportunity and of upgrading VET programmes. Both the competent ministries and the social partners pursued these objectives in the public with vigour and supported their implementation by related subsidies and legal regulations. Acquisition of *Hauptschule* qualifications by adults is mentioned in the Government Programme of the grand coalition of January 2007 in Chapter 9 “Internal Security, Integration”.<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>112</sup> Data from: Statistics Austria: Austrian Statistical Year Book 2006, Vienna, p. 236.

<sup>113</sup> “Unterstützung beim Nachholen von Ausbildungsabschlüssen (Hauptschulabschluss, Fachschulabschluss, Reifeprüfung etc.) für Zuwanderer” (Government Programme for the XIII. Legislation Period, p. 140).

TABLE 28.

**Gross hourly earnings in October 2002 by level of education  
in the enterprise sector (ÖNACE C-K)**

Feature	Highest educational attainment and ISCED level							total
	No compulsory school qual.	Completed compulsory schooling	Apprenticeship	VET school	Upper sec. school or college	Postsec. VET course, teacher training college, master craftsman	HE institution	
	Below 2	2	3 B	3B, 4B	3A, 4A	5B	5A, 6	
Number	5823	379005	778858	146377	206526	72742	77580	1666911
25%*	6.21	6.80	8.53	8.41	9.56	11.54	13.60	8.18
50%*	7.96	8.35	10.50	11.03	12.79	14.09	18.97	10.48
75%*	9.31	10.33	13.07	14.85	18.12	17.92	27.38	13.88
Mean	8.86	9.26	11.48	12.58	15.13	15.42	23.21	12.23

\* earn less than... EUR

Source: Statistics Austria: Income structure survey - VESTE 2002

TABLE 29.

**Education-specific occupational structure, 2001, in %**

Major occupational group (ISCO)	Highest educational attainment and ISCED level								total
	Compulsory school	Apprenticeship	VET school	Secondary academic school	VET college	VET school, postsec. VET course	Teacher training college	HE institution	
	2	3 B	3 B, 4B	3 A	4 A	5 B	5 B	5A, 6	
Senior *	3.7	8.2	7.3	11.0	14.7	14.6	4.4	14.8	8.1
Professionals (engineers, teachers, medical doctors, etc.)	0.4	0.2	1.1	7.0	5.9	8.3	69.6	63.5	7.8
Technicians and associate professionals	8.4	13.8	31.2	37.6	45.6	46.1	18.8	11.1	18.5
Clerks	11.2	11.7	24.3	16.5	18.2	17.4	1.9	3.9	13.1
Service workers, shop and market sales workers	16.1	15.8	16.0	12.0	5.6	6.5	1.9	2.4	13.5
Craft and related workers	13.3	24.5	4.4	2.7	2.8	2.3	0.2	0.7	14.0
Skilled agricultural and fishery workers	4.6	3.6	6.7	0.8	1.1	0.5	0.4	0.3	3.5
Plant and machine operators and assemblers	10.6	10.2	2.6	2.3	1.2	0.9	0.2	0.6	7.2
Elementary occupations	29.6	10.6	5.3	6.3	2.5	2.4	0.7	1.4	12.5
Armed forces	0.5	1.3	0.6	2.7	1.6	0.3	1.8	0.5	1.0
Seeking first job	1.6	0.1	0.4	1.1	0.8	0.6	0.2	0.8	0.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Absolute	921219	1612872	522297	193137	297587	27164	99844	312641	3986761

\* Legislators, senior officials and managers

Source: Statistics Austria, census; ISIS database query

4.4.f) Describe a situation in your country **if stigmatisation exists for the recognition of non-formal and informal learning** (as opposed to the formal recognition) in the academic word and/or in the labour market? If yes, have there been any attempts to change such effects and to increase up-take of such recognition? What strategies have been tested so far?

182. In Austria, a ‘certificate-oriented’ tradition predominates: For this reason, mainly formal qualifications are demanded in the labour market. These qualifications are generally accepted by employers and employees as the high quality of VET tracks can be guaranteed via legal regulations and a well developed and differentiated education system. A stigmatisation of existing second-chance education routes cannot be observed, but the pronounced orientation towards exam attempts is significant.

4.4.g) Describe any incentives or levers that promoted public-private partnership in the recognition practices in the labour market? What schemes or incentives exist to encourage SMEs to engage in the recognition arrangements?

183. Being compulsory members of the Economic Chamber, SMEs receive manifold support in IVET and CVET measures by the Institute for Economic Promotion of the Economic Chamber (WIFI) and the Chamber’s apprenticeship offices in the provinces. This support ranges from counselling to IVET / CVET offers including second-chance options (apprenticeship-leave exam, BRP, *Fachakademie* courses, etc.).

## 5. Case studies on benefits and barriers

### *Explanation of the OECD*

“A number of OECD activities (OECD 2003a, 2003b, 2004a, 2004b, 2005a, 2005b, 2005c) and existing work outside OECD (European Commission; ILO; ECOTEC; UNESCO Institute of Education; ASEM) all point to the importance of recognising non-formal and informal learning and facilitating credit accumulation and transfer. However, currently, the existing work provides the evidence of benefits in fragments. This section aims to collect data in a systemic way by case studies. The Secretariat has identified benefits from existing work and framed them into categories, being aware that some overlap in categories: i.e. economic, educational, social and personal. **Please provide some evidence with case studies if such benefits are identified in your country.** On the contrary, if tension or resistance exists as barriers to such benefits, please also describe such cases.” (OECD Guidelines RNFIL, p. 19f.)

### **Case study 1: “Tyrol Centre for the Future: Competence Balance and Competence Workshop”**

184. The *Tyrol Centre for the Future* is a training and research institute funded by the Tyrol Chamber of Labour (majority owner), the Tyrol Provincial Government and the City of Innsbruck. This institution takes the following measures:

- conduct research work and contract out research projects.
- design schemes and projects.
- conduct pilot projects and develop them to a stage they can be implemented.
- research into novel ideas and themes on a global basis.
- network people and institutions.
- carry out events.
- raise awareness.

(<http://www.zukunftszentrum.at/about/was>, 12.12.2006)

185. At the *Tyrol Centre for the Future* there is the possibility to complete a customised *competence balance* procedure: This coaching method is facilitated by personal coaches, lasts for about four weeks and is completed with the formulation of career objectives derived from the stocktaking procedure.<sup>114</sup> The *competence balance* has been applied at the Centre since September 2003. It was developed by a scientific team headed by the organisational and business psychologist Prof. Dr. Lutz von Rosenstiel. In all, four dates of two hours each are provided for:

- An introductory workshop, which informs about the general contents, objectives and benefits of the balance procedure, followed by
- the first personal coaching talk, in the course of which awareness is created of important experiences and abilities as well as the significance of different life situations.
- In the second coaching talk, personal skills and abilities are discussed with the coach.
- The competence balance is completed by a final talk, at the end of which concrete steps and objectives for the further professional and private future are formulated (<http://www.zukunftszentrum.at>, 5.12.2006). At the end of the process, participants receive a written competence balance record.

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<sup>114</sup> <http://www.zukunftszentrum.at/themen/kompetenzen/kompetenzenbilanz/der-weg-1>, 27.11.2006.

186. Everyone who wants to go through a competence balance procedure at the Tyrol Centre for the Future has to make a co-payment of EUR 190. For participants whose main residence is in the province of Tyrol the remainder of costs are borne by the Tyrol Chamber of Labour and the Tyrol Provincial Government (<http://www.zukunftszentrum.at/themen/kompetenzen/kompetenzenbilanz/iaa/seite>, 12.12.2006.)

187. Since very recently, the Centre for the Future has been offering the competence balance also as group coaching in which process the individual competences, objectives and steps of implementation are formulated in several workshops. A major part of this procedure is the exchange between participants and feedback in the group. The group size is between 10 and 12 participants. Also here, a qualified coach accompanies the process. Costs are EUR 150 (<http://www.ak-tirol.com/www-398-IP-10801-IPS-5.html>).

188. Since the introduction of the competence balance in late 2003, a total of 1,600 people have completed the process (key date: January 2007). According to *Bertram Wolf*, the head of the Centre, queries regarding this innovative procedure have come in from psychologists and experts in the USA, Germany, Bosnia and the companies VW and BMW (<http://tirol.orf.at/stories/64173/>).

189. A survey conducted within the framework of an evaluation study among 1,000 participants has revealed numerous positive effects of the competence balance: One effect is that participants in the competence balance process **manage problems and tasks significantly more proactively**. They act more confidently and react positively to changing circumstances. These positive results of participation are effective also in the longer term: Even half a year following completion of the competence balance, participants are clearly **better prepared to cope with stress** (<http://www.zukunftszentrum.at/themen/kompetenzen/kompetenzenbilanz/ergebnisse-unserer-fragebogenstudie>).

190. It has also come out that, as a result of improved self-confidence, job interviews are handled more competently because applicants are better able to present their own abilities and skills and, overall, they identify a larger number of alternative CVET options. Therefore, the evaluation has shown a **high degree of satisfaction** among participants (<http://www.ak-tirol.com/www-398-IP-10801-IPS-1.html>). The results of the evaluation study show

“that a coaching approach that follows the competence concept consistently and which focuses on systematically reappraising individual strengths makes potential usable to improve one’s own situation – on the job and in private life. The results reveal in a way that is truly impressing how a systematic coaching process consisting of three one-on-one sessions leads to participants designing their own living conditions in a productive and lasting manner. The extent to which the competence balance process triggers positive changes in self-image, responsible behaviour and stress management has to date not been reached by any other job-related or vocational counselling process worldwide. In addition, scientific findings suggest that these changes have positive effects on mental and physical health in the medium and long term.” (Thomas Lang-von Wins in: Triebel 2005, p. 4).

191. Apart from the competence balance, the Tyrol Centre for the Future also offers other methods aiming to make competences visible. One example is the **competence workshop** – a procedure targeted towards young people. It was developed in cooperation with PerformPartner GbR and Ludwig-Maximilians University of Munich. In terms of content it is a strength-oriented method aiming to promote the independence and responsibility of youth aged be-

tween 13 and 19. It comprises nine modules and a total of 16 sessions. Young people deal with their own interests, strengths, goals and career choice in a group process. The main element is the project work to be drawn up within the framework of the practical project, helping young people make experiences they can use for their career decision. The participating youth are assisted by people active in youth work who have completed the competence workshop training course for multipliers at the Tyrol Centre for the Future (<http://www.zukunftszentrum.at/angebote/junge/kompetenzwerkstatt>, 12.12.2006).

192. By now, several hundred young people have completed the competence workshop. Also here an accompanying scientific evaluation study has been drawn up. According to the study, the measure meets with positive response among the youth and can be considered efficient in terms of the intended objectives: “In particular it must be underlined that the young people see the benefit of the competence workshop in the independent development of their own strengths and the vocational guidance process promoted in an interaction with this reflection and the realisation of the project.”<sup>115</sup>

193. Another coaching procedure offered by the Tyrol Centre for the Future has the English name *Kick Off* and is seen as support for potential entrepreneurs. Also this procedure has been developed in cooperation with Munich University and is a type of competence balance module focussing especially on entrepreneurial skills. In terms of content, it consists of an introductory workshop, three coaching talks and a final talk, in which concrete steps and objectives for the entrepreneurial future are formulated. Again assistance is provided by a coach who has been specifically trained for this procedure.

194. Special *training programmes related to the recognition of competences* offered at the Tyrol Centre for the Future include: competence workshop training course for multipliers; competence workshop training offers for teachers of lower secondary school; and a CVET course whose graduates are awarded the title ‘competence-oriented counsellor’.<sup>116</sup>

195. Relevant information about the sociodemographic structure of participants can be made on the basis of a participant survey conducted within the framework of an **evaluation study** on the competence balance of the Tyrol Centre for the Future. The average age of participants was about 36, with a very large range overall: The youngest participant is 19, the oldest 65. The share of women is 68 percent, which can be rated as extremely high. About 43 percent of interviewed participants stated to be single, 31 percent were married (Triebel 2005, p. 20). One third of questioned participants had a university or Fachhochschule degree, 22 percent an upper secondary school-leaving exam and *Reifeprüfung* certificate, 13 percent each were graduates of a college of engineering or apprenticeship, six percent had a master craftsperson certificate, seven percent had graduated from pre-vocational school. Of the total of 1,063 people who took part in the process since the introduction of the competence balance until the time of evaluation, slightly less than 67 percent were employed, four percent self-employed, slightly more than three percent identified themselves as career-break returners, and 17.5 percent were unemployed at the time of participation (Triebel 2005, p. 22). Since the launch of the competence balance in August 2003, approximately 1,600 people took part (key

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<sup>115</sup> [http://www.zukunftszentrum.at/angebote/junge/kompetenzwerkstatt/wie\\_wirkt\\_die\\_kompetenzwerkstatt](http://www.zukunftszentrum.at/angebote/junge/kompetenzwerkstatt/wie_wirkt_die_kompetenzwerkstatt) (12.12.2006).

<sup>116</sup> <http://www.zukunftszentrum.at/angebote/ausbildungen/ausbildungen>, (30.1.2007).

date: February 2007) (Triebel 2005, p. 6). For more information about the competence balance see Triebel 2005, p. 24

### Component 5.1. Economic benefits

*5.1.a) Shortening the formal education process and thus reducing direct costs of learning and opportunity costs for individuals.*

**No**

*5.1.b) Increasing the visibility of non-formal and informal learning outcomes and thus enhancing potential benefits for future economic gains.*

**Yes**

*5.1.c) Improving the allocation of human capital within organisations by matching the appropriate demands and supplies of skills and competencies.*

*5.1.d) Reducing skills shortages or skills mismatch by allowing more mobility within the labour market (occupational mobility).*

**Yes**

*5.1.e) Ensuring labour force to support economic growth by the active use of the potential labour population (older workers, women, immigrants, unemployed youth, etc.).*

**Yes**

*5.1.f) Ensuring labour force to support economic growth by improving productivity of the current labour force.*

**Yes**

### Component 5.2. Educational benefits

*5.2.a) Reshaping the established concept of education from ‘terminal education’ to ‘lifelong learning’.*

**Yes**

*5.2.b) Providing flexible personalised learning pathways.*

**Yes**

*5.2.c) Raising educational attainments levels by increasing the completion rates of secondary education qualifications.*

*5.2.d) Increasing the tertiary participation rates of non-traditional learners.*

*5.2.e) Improving the teacher work force through more flexible entrance to teaching occupation.*

**Yes, in the case of training programmes for teachers.**

### Component 5.3. Social benefits

5.3.a) *Building social institutions to arrange smoother transition from education to work and from work back to education; increasing socio-cultural equity and social cohesion by providing pathways for formally excluded disadvantaged groups to be included.*

**Yes**

5.3.b) *Leading to the better societal values (e.g. promotion of democracy, intercultural understanding, better health, lower criminal rates, etc).*

**Yes**

5.3.c) *Enhancing flexibility to allow more mobility within the education and training sector (e.g. between VET and HE and from FE to HE, etc).*

**Yes**

5.4.d) *Building a stepping stone for prisoners to be re-integrated into a society.*

#### **Component 5.4. Personal benefits**

5.4.a) *Empowering individuals to have more control over where and when they learn.*

**Yes**

5.4.b) *Developing the aspirations of those who have ‘dropped out’ to resume learning and to complete a qualification.*

5.4.c) *Reducing the stigma of qualifications associated with non-formal and informal learning.*

#### **Component 5.5. Others**

5.5.a) *Describe any cases where you identify other benefits or barriers to such benefits.*

### **Case study 2: Equal Project “qualification empowers”**

196. The regional project *qualification empowers*, which ran between 2002 and 2005, is a Vienna-based development partnership of the EU Community Initiative Equal, which aimed to enhance the occupational opportunities and advancement options of *adult immigrants*. In terms of content it was coordinated by the Vienna Integration Fund. Sub-areas of the project dealt with **visualising the immigrants’ skills and abilities; educational guidance and support in the recognition and acquisition of formal educational qualifications**; promoting basic qualifications; and intercultural opening of vocational adult learning. The development partnership was financed from funds of the European Social Fund (ESF) and the Federal Ministry of Economics and Labour. Apart from the Vienna Integration Funds, involved institutions included the Vienna Chamber of Labour, the Counselling Centre for Immigrants, the VET Centre of the Vocational Training Institute Vienna (BFI), and the Vienna Economic Chamber.<sup>117</sup> Within the framework of this project, the following offerings were developed and implemented:

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<sup>117</sup> <http://www.migrant.at/homepage-2006/publikationen/qualifikationstaerkt/qualifikationstaerkt.htm>, 22.3.2007.

- recommendations for the intercultural opening of adult learning establishments
- siqua – programme to develop intercultural capacity building
- wequam – counselling on CVET and skills training for immigrants
- language and qualification portfolio for immigrants and refugees
- nosqua – recognition and qualification for women
- femqua – educational offer for women affected by violence
- online specialist terminology glossary

197. At the VET Centre (BAZ) of BFI Vienna, adults have the possibility to acquire the apprenticeship diploma in a metal, electric or IT occupation within 13-17 months. Training expenses and a subsistence benefit for the period of the programme are borne by the Public Employment Service Austria. With its participation in *qualification empowers*, the BFI responds to the fact that about two thirds of course participants are immigrants. In the course of project participation, it is intended to set up the position of ‘immigration officials’ at the BAZ. This position will aim to provide customised support to course participants during the programme. In cooperation with the Counselling Centre for Immigrants and the Association of Autonomous Austrian Women’s Shelters, the BAZ will develop CVET programmes to promote the training and administrative staff’s intercultural competences and will subsequently set up specifically trained points of contact for immigrants (<http://www.bfi-wien.or.at/presse/archiv/2003/presse17.html>).

198. In order to be able to better guarantee training success, course participants will be supported in a follow-up project in case they have difficulties learning the German specialist language by means of customised support. For this purpose, trainers and course participants will jointly develop an online glossary in the programme, which will include all the terms that are difficult for participants. This online glossary will include definitions by trainers, with the option for course participants to add comments in their mother tongue and make them accessible to their colleagues.

### **Component 5.1. Economic benefits**

5.1.a) Shortening the formal education process and thus reducing direct costs of learning and opportunity costs for individuals.

**No**

*5.1.b) Increasing the visibility of non-formal and informal learning outcomes and thus enhancing potential benefits for future economic gains.*

**Yes**

*5.1.c) Improving the allocation of human capital within organisations by matching the appropriate demands and supplies of skills and competencies.*

**Yes**

*5.1.d) Reducing skills shortages or skills mismatch by allowing more mobility within the labour market (occupational mobility).*

**Yes**

*5.1.e) Ensuring labour force to support economic growth by the active use of the potential labour population (older workers, women, immigrants, unemployed youth, etc.).*

**Yes**

5.1.f) *Ensuring labour force to support economic growth by improving productivity of the current labour force.*

**Yes**

### **Component 5.2. Educational benefits**

5.2.a) *Reshaping the established concept of education from ‘terminal education’ to ‘lifelong learning’.*

**Yes**

5.2.b) *Providing flexible personalised learning pathways.*

**Yes**

5.2.c) *Raising educational attainments levels by increasing the completion rates of secondary education qualifications.*

**Yes**

5.2.d) *Increasing the tertiary participation rates of non-traditional learners.*

5.2.e) *Improving the teacher work force through more flexible entrance to teaching occupation.*

### **Component 5.3. Social benefits**

5.3.a) *Building social institutions to arrange smoother transition from education to work and from work back to education; increasing socio-cultural equity and social cohesion by providing pathways for formally excluded disadvantaged groups to be included.*

**Yes**

5.3.b) *Leading to the better societal values (e.g. promotion of democracy, intercultural understanding, better health, lower criminal rates, etc).*

**Yes**

5.3.c) *Enhancing flexibility to allow more mobility within the education and training sector (e.g. between VET and HE and from FE to HE, etc).*

5.4.d) *Building a stepping stone for prisoners to be re-integrated into a society.*

### **Component 5.4. Personal benefits**

5.4.a) *Empowering individuals to have more control over where and when they learn.*

**Yes**

5.4.b) *Developing the aspirations of those who have ‘dropped out’ to resume learning and to complete a qualification.*

**Yes**

5.4.c) *Reducing the stigma of qualifications associated with non-formal and informal learning.*

### **Component 5.5. Others**

5.5.a) *Describe any cases where you identify other benefits or barriers to such benefits.*

#### **Case study 3: *The competence profile KOMPAZ***

199. The Adult Education Centre Linz offers the *competence profile KOMPAZ*: At the newly created competence recognition centre it is possible to document and officially recognise abilities, competences and key skills from all areas of life and work. The programme structure is as follows: Following an information evening (presentation of the concept and structure), a total of four workshops consisting of five units each are held with one or two trainers:

Step 1: Stocktaking

Step 2: Appraisal of potential and competence balance

Step 3: Personal profile and target concept

Step 4: Presentation, implementation training and final reflection.

The competence balance provides for about 20 hours of individual work and is completed with a certificate.<sup>118</sup>

200. Between the year 2000 and 2003, the Adult Education Centre VHS Linz developed instruments to analyse and recognise competence within the framework of an EU-funded project with the title *From Competence to Qualification* jointly with partner institutions in Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Finland and Hungary. For this purpose, mainly longstanding relevant experiences made in Switzerland were used. The trainers active for the Adult Education Centre had completed a training programme of the Society CH-Q (Swiss Qualification Programme on Career) and work by using its standards. This method is applied by many companies in Switzerland as an HRD tool, therefore the Centres KOMPAZ offers are directed towards companies.

201. Costs in connection with KOMPAZ amount to EUR 320 for the series of workshops and EUR 400 for the assessment centre, with financial support granted however. The so-called 'performance card' of the Chamber of Labour will reduce the price by ten percent. The Chamber's educational bonus totals EUR 100, and half of the remaining sum can be reimbursed via the educational account of the province of Upper Austria ([http://www.linz.at/Aktuell/2004/aktuell\\_30588.asp?category](http://www.linz.at/Aktuell/2004/aktuell_30588.asp?category), 22.1.2007).

### **Component 5.1. Economic benefits**

5.1.a) *Shortening the formal education process and thus reducing direct costs of learning and opportunity costs for individuals.*

**No**

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<sup>118</sup> <http://www.kompetenzprofil.at/kompax.htm>, 27.11.2006.

5.1.b) *Increasing the visibility of non-formal and informal learning outcomes and thus enhancing potential benefits for future economic gains.*

**Yes**

5.1.c) *Improving the allocation of human capital within organisations by matching the appropriate demands and supplies of skills and competencies.*

**Yes**

5.1.d) *Reducing skills shortages or skills mismatch by allowing more mobility within the labour market (occupational mobility).*

**Yes**

5.1.e) *Ensuring labour force to support economic growth by the active use of the potential labour population (older workers, women, immigrants, unemployed youth, etc.).*

**Yes**

5.1.f) *Ensuring labour force to support economic growth by improving productivity of the current labour force.*

**Yes**

### **Component 5.2. Educational benefits**

5.2.a) *Reshaping the established concept of education from ‘terminal education’ to ‘lifelong learning’.*

**Yes**

5.2.b) *Providing flexible personalised learning pathways.*

**Yes**

5.2.c) *Raising educational attainments levels by increasing the completion rates of secondary education qualifications.*

5.2.d) *Increasing the tertiary participation rates of non-traditional learners.*

5.2.e) *Improving the teacher work force through more flexible entrance to teaching occupation.*

### **Component 5.3. Social benefits**

5.3.a) *Building social institutions to arrange smoother transition from education to work and from work back to education; increasing socio-cultural equity and social cohesion by providing pathways for formally excluded disadvantaged groups to be included.*

**Yes**

5.3.b) *Leading to the better societal values (e.g. promotion of democracy, intercultural understanding, better health, lower criminal rates, etc).*

**Yes**

5.3.c) *Enhancing flexibility to allow more mobility within the education and training sector (e.g. between VET and HE and from FE to HE, etc.).*

5.4.d) *Building a stepping stone for prisoners to be re-integrated into a society.*

#### **Component 5.4. Personal benefits**

5.4.a) *Empowering individuals to have more control over where and when they learn.*

**Yes**

5.4.b) *Developing the aspirations of those who have ‘dropped out’ to resume learning and to complete a qualification.*

**Yes**

5.4.c) *Reducing the stigma of qualifications associated with non-formal and informal learning.*

#### **Component 5.5. Others**

5.5.a) Describe any cases where you identify other benefits or barriers to such benefits.

#### **Case study 3: “Family Competences – the key to more success on the job”**

202. The project *Family Competences – the key to more success on the job* was developed by Family Alliance (a merger of politics, business, employment, media and science) and offers career-break returners the possibility to complete a novel coaching programme at family counselling centres across Austria. The key concept in the programme is a certificate that proves the participants’ key competences they acquired through family work and hence makes them usable for re-entry to the labour market.<sup>119</sup> The project is implemented under the auspices of the Federal Ministry for Social Security and Generations.

The formal structure first of all provides for a preliminary informative talk, in order to discuss concrete re-entry plans, present the programme and talk about the further procedure. For deepening their knowledge about the subject, participants receive an introductory manual with case studies, checklists and self-tests.

This is followed by an interim interview, in which the participant’s reflections about the theme of family competences so far are appraised and an assessment of their aptitudes is made.

In a third programme point, the participants go through a test procedure to collect and measure key competences. This procedure is a potential analysis programme recognised by the business sphere, which is applied successfully in HRD, assessment of potential, and recruiting.

On the basis of the evaluated results, a written expert opinion about the participant’s strengths and development potential is issued and handed over to him or her. In a two-hour counselling

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<sup>119</sup> <http://www.bmsg.gv.at/cms/site/liste.html?channel=CH0181>, 21.11.2006.

talk, the results and findings are discussed and, if appropriate, further measures recommended. The participant is awarded a certificate, which can be used in job applications as proof of competences.<sup>120</sup>

### **Component 5.1. Economic benefits**

5.1.a) Shortening the formal education process and thus reducing direct costs of learning and opportunity costs for individuals.

**No**

*5.1.b) Increasing the visibility of non-formal and informal learning outcomes and thus enhancing potential benefits for future economic gains.*

**Yes**

*5.1.c) Improving the allocation of human capital within organisations by matching the appropriate demands and supplies of skills and competencies.*

**Yes**

*5.1.d) Reducing skills shortages or skills mismatch by allowing more mobility within the labour market (occupational mobility).*

**Yes**

*5.1.e) Ensuring labour force to support economic growth by the active use of the potential labour population (older workers, women, immigrants, unemployed youth, etc.).*

**Yes**

*5.1.f) Ensuring labour force to support economic growth by improving productivity of the current labour force.*

**Yes**

### **Component 5.2. Educational benefits**

*5.2.a) Reshaping the established concept of education from ‘terminal education’ to ‘lifelong learning’.*

**Yes**

*5.2.b) Providing flexible personalised learning pathways.*

**Yes**

*5.2.c) Raising educational attainments levels by increasing the completion rates of secondary education qualifications.*

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<sup>120</sup> Federal Ministry for Social Security and Generations: “Familienkompetenzen. Schlüssel für mehr Erfolg im Beruf“, [www.bmsk.gv.at/cms/site/attachments/7/0/2/CH0124/CMS1060092843886/familienkompetenzen.pdf](http://www.bmsk.gv.at/cms/site/attachments/7/0/2/CH0124/CMS1060092843886/familienkompetenzen.pdf), 22.3.2007.

5.2.d) *Increasing the tertiary participation rates of non-traditional learners.*

5.2.e) *Improving the teacher work force through more flexible entrance to teaching occupation.*

### **Component 5.3. Social benefits**

5.3.a) *Building social institutions to arrange smoother transition from education to work and from work back to education; increasing socio-cultural equity and social cohesion by providing pathways for formally excluded disadvantaged groups to be included.*

**Yes**

5.3.b) *Leading to the better societal values (e.g. promotion of democracy, intercultural understanding, better health, lower criminal rates, etc).*

**Yes**

5.3.c) *Enhancing flexibility to allow more mobility within the education and training sector (e.g. between VET and HE and from FE to HE, etc).*

5.4.d) *Building a stepping stone for prisoners to be re-integrated into a society.*

### **Component 5.4. Personal benefits**

5.4.a) *Empowering individuals to have more control over where and when they learn.*

**Yes**

5.4.b) *Developing the aspirations of those who have 'dropped out' to resume learning and to complete a qualification.*

**Yes**

5.4.c) *Reducing the stigma of qualifications associated with non-formal and informal learning.*

### **Component 5.5. Others**

5.5.a) *Describe any cases where you identify other benefits or barriers to such benefits.*

#### **Case study 5: CVET Academy Austria (wba) <http://www.wba.or.at/>**

203. wba is an institution that is currently in the development stage.<sup>121</sup> The kick-off event was held in Vienna on 1 February 2007. The Federal Institute for Adult Learning in St. Wolfgang (BIfEB) takes on the role of operator for the future CVET Academy. Within a cooperative system, in which the BIfEB and adult learning work jointly on professionalising adult learning, the development partners will participate in the CVET Academy in a responsible

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<sup>121</sup> Source: Anneliese Heilinger: Eine Vision wird wahr - Weiterbildungsakademie Österreich, Vienna, January 2007.

way and with a supra-institutional orientation. The website will cover all ‘accredited’ education offers and serve as guidance for adult educators.

204. The CVET Academy aims to examine and recognise the adult educators’ competences according to defined standards; a two-tier qualification structure with a certificate and diploma will be set up. It aims to facilitate permeability between the adult learning sector and university-based education and CVET. The CVET Academy recognises education offers without being an education provider itself. It aims to make a lasting contribution towards the professionalisation and quality development of Austrian adult learning. The developed framework curriculum orients itself towards a competence profile elaborated for adult educators: This is the same for everyone in the basic section, whereas in the advanced section the curriculum makes special demands on four different target groups within the group of adult educators: teachers, education and training managers, counsellors/guidance officers; and librarians.

205. In the add-on section (wba certificate II ‘Qualified Adult Educator’), adult educators obtain qualifications by deciding for an area specialisation. They have a choice between ‘teaching / group management / training’, ‘education management’, ‘counselling’ and ‘library and information management’ and are able to acquire and subsequently prove their competences in a condensed form. This is supplemented by other requirements, including proof of their subject-related competence and their reflective skills, by carrying out a practice-related and theory-guided written work. Seven competences – partly the same as those in the first section, but in a deepened form, partly new ones – are required from adult educators in the diploma section. The add-on section again provides for work and learning performance to the amount of 30 ECTS. This section is rounded off by the written work and an oral exam. It is completed with a diploma. Access to university paths for wba’s qualified adult educators is facilitated via a cooperative venture with Krems University.

206. It is possible that wba candidates have earlier qualification steps recognised; at some places, with proof of a specific qualification, also competences they have acquired non-formally will be recognised. At the beginning and before the issuing of certificates, the submitted qualifications will be examined, rejected or recognised. Different evidence procedures regarding acquisition of required competences are in line with adult-oriented learning. Equivalent as well as completed projects, own publications, a qualified certificate of competence, assessments or competence portfolios will be recognised in selected areas as qualifications. At some points it will also be possible to submit evidence kept in writing (papers) for competences they cannot prove in the form of certificates and course attendance forms. The CVET Academy (wba) can be attended only in a part-time form accompanied by practical experience. In fields of relevance for adult learning, practice must be proven to a certain degree. An e-portfolio aims to document all competence certificates.

207. For the adult learning sector, the wba’s benefits can be seen in the fact that awareness of the occupational profiles is raised, the profiles are developed further, and the quality and professions themselves are enhanced. With the CVET Academy, the Ministry for Education is creating a lasting instrument and system of quality development and assurance which not only justifies the use of resources but also ensures that it is as efficient as possible.

### **Component 5.1. Economic benefits**

5.1.a) Shortening the formal education process and thus reducing direct costs of learning and opportunity costs for individuals.

**Yes**

5.1.b) Increasing the visibility of non-formal and informal learning outcomes and thus enhancing potential benefits for future economic gains.

**Yes**

5.1.c) Improving the allocation of human capital within organisations by matching the appropriate demands and supplies of skills and competencies.

**Yes**

5.1.d) Reducing skills shortages or skills mismatch by allowing more mobility within the labour market (occupational mobility).

5.1.e) Ensuring labour force to support economic growth by the active use of the potential labour population (older workers, women, immigrants, unemployed youth, etc.).

5.1.f) Ensuring labour force to support economic growth by improving productivity of the current labour force.

**Yes**

### **Component 5.2. Educational benefits**

5.2.a) Reshaping the established concept of education from ‘terminal education’ to ‘lifelong learning’.

**Yes**

5.2.b) Providing flexible personalised learning pathways.

**Yes**

5.2.c) Raising educational attainments levels by increasing the completion rates of secondary education qualifications.

**Yes**

5.2.d) Increasing the tertiary participation rates of non-traditional learners.

**Yes**

5.2.e) Improving the teacher work force through more flexible entrance to teaching occupation.

**Yes**

### **Component 5.3. Social benefits**

5.3.a) Building social institutions to arrange smoother transition from education to work and from work back to education; increasing socio-cultural equity and social cohesion by providing pathways for formally excluded disadvantaged groups to be included.

5.3.b) Leading to the better societal values (e.g. promotion of democracy, intercultural understanding, better health, lower criminal rates, etc).

5.3.c) Enhancing flexibility to allow more mobility within the education and training sector (e.g. between VET and HE and from FE to HE, etc).

**Yes**

5.4.d) Building a stepping stone for prisoners to be re-integrated into a society.

**Component 5.4. Personal benefits**

5.4.a) Empowering individuals to have more control over where and when they learn.

**Yes**

5.4.b) Developing the aspirations of those who have ‘dropped out’ to resume learning and to complete a qualification.

5.4.c) Reducing the stigma of qualifications associated with non-formal and informal learning.

**Component 5.5. Others**

5.5.a) Describe any cases where you identify other benefits or barriers to such benefits.

**6. Conclusion**

6.a) *Which national goals, if any, in your country, are ‘the recognition of non-formal and informal learning’ most closely associated with? Are these goals associated with lifelong learning agenda or something else? If something else, specify.*

208. The majority of relevant measures can be linked with the objective of promoting second-chance education by course-form offers (non-formal learning). Depending on the type of offers, the focus is more on enhancing employability (acquisition of *Hauptschule* qualifications or the apprenticeship diploma by adults) or promoting permeability or equality of opportunity (BRP, SBP, etc.). Conferment of the *Ingenieur* title signals work experience and the holder’s professional status.

TABLE 30.

**Annual formal education and training qualifications in paths with RNFIL reference, rounded and partly estimated figures, 2005**

Qualification path	Number
Awarding of the title <i>Ingenieur</i> (BMW A)	3,500
Awarding of the title <i>Ingenieur</i> (BMLFUW)	400
Awarding of the title <i>Diplom-HTL-Ingenieur</i>	100
BRP - Berufsreifeprüfung	2,100
SBP - Studienberechtigungsprüfung	340
Fachhochschule access without the upper secondary school-leaving certificate	315
Apprenticeship-leave exam in second-chance education (passed)	7,800
<i>Hauptschule</i> qualification in second-chance education	300

Source: own compilation

6.b) *What strategies (short-term, mid-term and long-term) are needed to operationalise the 'recognition of all types of learning outcomes – including formal, non-formal and informal learning' in your country? What are the most challenging tasks for policy-makers in the due course?*

209. The awareness of the importance of a comprehensive strategy to operationalise the 'recognition of all types of learning outcomes – including formal, non-formal and informal learning' is present among educational researchers and educational policy-makers alike. Currently work is ongoing to develop a National Qualifications Framework (NQF) under the auspices of the Ministry for Education and involving all relevant institutions. This might open up new possibilities in the direction of credits and permeability.

6.c) *Address important policy issues for your countries which have not been addressed in any of the previous Components.*

6.d) *Please describe how much the 'Lifelong Learning for All' strategies are implemented at post-compulsory education level in your country?*

6.e) *Please list some 'factors' which you think as unforeseeable and yet necessary conditions to realise the 'Open Learning Society' scenario, which gives value to formal, non-formal and informal learning.*

210. The Austrian education system is characterised by a relatively pronounced institutional segmentation of the various qualification routes. This applies to upper secondary level and the postsecondary segment as well. A more marked orientation towards learning outcomes and an overall orientation towards an NQF should improve the framework conditions for 'Lifelong Learning for All' and for implementing an 'Open Learning Society'. For these reasons, the RNFIL is truly important for the discussion and development of an Austrian qualifications strategy.

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