



Series of Publications of the Institute for Economic Promotion No. 340

LEARNING FOR YOUR FUTURE

Educational and career choice for people
with a migration background

Career guidance counsellors of the
WIFIs and Economic Chambers

Masthead

Owner and Publisher:

for Economic Promotion of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber
(WIFI Österreich)

Team Bildungsmanagement, Mag. Albert Gebauer
A-1045 Vienna, Wiedner Hauptstraße 63

© 2009, all rights reserved

Edition: 1/2009

Authors: guidance counsellors of the Institutes for Economic Promotion and Economic Chambers as well as staff members of ibw (Institute for Research on Qualifications and Training of the Austrian Economy)

Image/Photo: Fotolia, www.fotolia.com

Print: Samson Druck Gesellschaft m. b. H., www.samsondruck.at

This work including all its parts is protected by copyright. No exploitation thereof shall be permitted without consent of the Institute for Economic Promotion of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber. This shall apply in particular to photocopies, reproduction, translation, microfilming and storage and processing in electronic systems.

Any personal terms put down in the following in their male form only shall refer to women and men equally. In the application to specific individuals, the respective gender-specific form shall apply.

Express note is made of the fact that no liability is assumed for the information given, despite careful editing. Any liability of WIFI Österreich shall be excluded.

PREFACE

The selection of an appropriate occupation and an appropriate education and training path represents a major challenge for young people. They often lack the right overview of possibilities and options, frequently young people are not aware of their own interests, expectations and abilities.

For the Austrian business sphere, well trained and motivated skilled workers are an especially important pillar for success in international competition. Therefore, the best possible use of existing inclinations and talents through a suitable selection of the right career and training track is also of increasing significance from the viewpoint of Austrian companies.

The better we are able to identify, promote and accommodate the young people's interests and talents, the more likely we will succeed in overcoming the apparent contradiction that many people do not find proper qualification and employment options despite the high demand for well-qualified skilled workers.

You and your parents may come from a country where the vocational training system is structured differently, and therefore many aspects of our system are alien to you. Perhaps you are also just learning our language, and you find the information about Austrian vocational training and our work environment hard to understand. The important task of choosing a career and training path is therefore an additional challenge to you.

My very personal and urgent appeal to you is: Accept this challenge. Take the opportunities offered by the Austrian education and training system, learn the German language, which can open many doors for you, strengthen the business location Austria jointly with us, in this way securing your personal future.

I wish you all the best for your career and training decision and a successful start to your professional life.



Dr. Christoph Leitl
President of the
Austrian Federal Economic Chamber



INTRODUCTION

To be a migrant can mean the following: that you or your parents were not born in Austria; that you do not have Austrian citizenship; or that German is not your mother tongue. More than one of these points may also apply to you.

In your everyday life this may mean that you are becoming part of a society and culture that is in some respect different and works differently than what you were previously used to, including the fact that you have to find your way through an education and training system as well as a working environment that will possibly differ greatly from what you have previously known.

With this publication **“Learning for your future”** we would like to help you take another step forward in finding your career and training path in your new homeland and using the varied possibilities and opportunities in vocational training. The Austrian labour market offers a very wide range of different qualifications and jobs. In Austria, training is provided in some 260 apprenticeships, and you can learn many other jobs by attending school-based education or an institution of higher learning.

“Career choice” means that you decide on an appropriate occupation and an appropriate education and training path. And this implies, first and foremost, that you need to know a lot about yourself. It is only in this way that you can also choose occupations and training tracks that suit you.

You should be able to find clear answers to the following questions yourself:

- Where are my own inclinations and interests: What do I like doing?
- What do I expect from my future job?
- Where are my strengths and abilities: What am I good at?

With **“Learning for your future”** we would like to help you find answers to these questions.

But not only that: Here you will also find information about how the Austrian education and training system is structured, what training paths and occupations exist in this country, and how you will find access to the labour market in general.

Many addresses and tips for useful websites will help you find additional sources of information and will lead you to counselling institutions that will gladly assist you as you start your education, training or job.

**The team of authors wish you much success in selecting
your training path and career!**

INDEX

THE WAY TO THE LABOUR MARKET - WORKING IN AUSTRIA.....	5
Language as a door-opener	10
The importance of completing training and obtaining qualifications.....	11
CAREER CHOICE - SETTING THE COURSE FOR YOUR LIFE PATH	13
My roadmap for my career	15
What occupations are there?	18
Finding the right track - school or apprenticeship?.....	20
Career choice means: inform yourself!.....	21
Days of practical work experience (Berufspraktische Tage).....	21
Tests - a help in decision-making	22
BIC.at - the career guidance tool BerufsInformationsComputer	23
The agony of choice - who will help?	24
THE AUSTRIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM - A WIDE RANGE OF OPPORTUNITIES	25
An overview of the Austrian education system	26
Schools after year 8	27
Education after the upper secondary school-leaving exam	30
Second-chance education	34
Recognition of foreign certificates and vocational qualifications in Austria	36
APPRENTICESHIP - VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATION FOR THE FUTURE.....	37
Dual training	38
Why learn an apprenticeship?	39
What apprenticeship occupations are there?	39
Double apprenticeships.....	41
How to find an apprenticeship post	42
Apprenticeship and Matura - Berufsreifeprüfung.....	43
Successful career with the apprenticeship diploma	44
APPLYING FOR A JOB MEANS: PROMOTING YOURSELF	45
The cover sheet	47
Application documents.....	47
The CV	49
Application via e-mail and online application.....	51
The job interview	52
Rejection	53
Selection tests	54
Overview of applications	54

SELF-EMPLOYMENT - I WILL BE MY OWN BOSS!	55
What it means to “be self-employed”	56
Types of self-employment.....	58
Knowing where - The right location.....	61
Alone or in a team - The appropriate legal form	62
Turnover does not equal profit - Cost planning	62
Own capital and borrowed capital - Financing.....	63
With good planning you are half-way to success	64
ADDRESSES & LINKS.....	65



THE WAY TO THE LABOUR MARKET - WORKING IN AUSTRIA

Those who want to work in Austria need to meet the legal prerequisites. Therefore you should find out in detail what permits you need to be lawfully entitled to work in Austria. The relevant legal basis for these issues is the Law governing the employment of foreign workers (**Ausländerbeschäftigungsgesetz, AuslBG**).



Here you will find a rough overview to help you identify your own personal situation. Nevertheless many details need to be additionally considered in individual cases. For more information please contact the offices of the **Public Employment Service Austria (Arbeitsmarktservice, AMS)** in your province (addresses on the internet at: www.ams.at) or your **district administration authority** (district authority or **Bezirkshauptmannschaft**, municipal authority or **Magistrat**). **At the end of this chapter you will find details related to counselling offices in your province where assistance is provided!**

Mainly decisive is the country you come from, that is: your citizenship:

You are: an Austrian, citizen of another EU/EEA state (“old” EU/EEA states)* or Swiss

YES

You enjoy the freedom of establishment and have free access to the **labour market**. You can work anywhere in Austria **without any additional work permit and residence permit**.

NO

You are: a citizen of a “new” EU state; these are: Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Romania and Bulgaria

YES

You will require a **work permit** ⇒ **continue with item A)**

NO

You are: a third-party national (these are all other citizens) with the **exception of Turkey**

YES

You will require a **residence permit** and a **work permit**
⇒ **continue with items A) & B)**

NO

You are: a citizen of Turkey

YES

Special regulations apply in your case due to an agreement between the EU and Turkey → **continue with item C)**

* “old” EU/EEA states: Belgium, Denmark, Germany, France, Greece, United Kingdom, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Finland, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Malta, Austria, Norway, Sweden and Cyprus.

A) POSSIBILITIES TO OBTAIN A WORK PERMIT

1. Restricted employment permit (“Beschäftigungsbewilligung”)	
Info	The restricted employment permit applies to employees for one year , extension possible ... applies to apprentices for the duration of their apprenticeship period and for the minimum employment period as laid down by law or regulated by collective agreements ... is only valid for one specific job
Precondition	⇒ you have a residence title (see further below) and fulfil the conditions of the integration agreement , which means you have to prove attendance of an integration class in German
Application procedure	... must be applied for by your employer from the Public Employment Service Austria (AMS)

or

2. Work permit (“Arbeitserlaubnis”)	
Info	The work permit... ... is valid for two years , extension possible ... is valid for one federal province
Precondition	⇒ you have been lawfully employed in Austria for twelve months over the past 14 months
Application procedure	... you are obliged to apply for it yourself from the Public Employment Service Austria (AMS)

or

3. Certificate of exemption (“Befreiungsschein”)	
Info	The certificate of exemption valid for the whole of Austria ... is valid for five years
Precondition	⇒ you have been lawfully employed in Austria for at least 5 years over the past 8 years ⇒ you have completed the final full year of schooling (9th grade) before termination of compulsory schooling in Austria, have a settlement permit and at least one of your parents has been employed in the federal territory for at least 3 years over the past 5 years
Application procedure	... you are obliged to apply for it yourself from the Public Employment Service Austria (AMS)

B) POSSIBILITIES TO OBTAIN RESIDENCE TITLES

1. Settlement permit (“Niederlassungsbewilligung”)	
Info	entitles you to settle for a limited period of time in Austria: in case of first settlement, this title will be valid for one year
Precondition	⇒ proof of secured earnings, secured accommodation, evidence of health insurance
Application procedure	applications are submitted via the district administration authority in your district

or

2. Residence title for family members	
Info	will be issued for a limited duration
Precondition	⇒ you are a citizen of a so-called “third country” and at the same time the spouse or a minor, unmarried child of a national of Austria, another EU/EEA country or Switzerland who lives permanently in Austria
Application procedure	applications are submitted via the district administration authority in your district

or

3. Permanent residence EC (“Daueraufenthalt-EG”) (proof of residence or “Niederlassungsnachweis”)	
Info	entitles you to stay in Austria for an unlimited duration and take up employment in the whole of Austria (replaces “Niederlassungsbewilligung” and “Befreiungsschein”)
Precondition	⇒ you can apply for the “permanent residence EC” if you have had your residence in Austria for an uninterrupted period of the last five years
Application procedure	applications are submitted via the district administration authority in your district



For a **temporary stay** in Austria (for a maximum of 6 months) there is the option of a **residence permit (“Aufenthaltsbewilligung”)**. It is needed e.g. by schoolchildren and students who are staying in Austria temporarily for education and training purposes, for work placement or holiday work.

C) SPECIAL REGULATIONS FOR TURKISH CITIZENS

Under certain conditions, Turkish citizens will be granted access to the labour market more easily:



You will be issued a **restricted employment permit** (**Beschäftigungsbewilligung** see above):

- ⇒ if the same employer continues to employ you following a one-year period of legal employment or
- ⇒ if you have had a legal residence title in Austria of at least three years as a member of a Turkish family with joint place of residence or
- ⇒ if you are the child of a Turkish mother or father who has been employed lawfully in Austria for at least three years

You will be issued a **certificate of exemption** (**Befreiungsschein** see above):

- ⇒ if you have been employed lawfully in Austria for four years
- ⇒ or if you have had a legal residence title in Austria of five years as a member of a Turkish family with joint place of residence

For Turkish children who want to take up **vocational training**, the AMS will issue a **restricted employment permit** (the so-called “**Beschäftigungsbewilligung für türkische Staatsangehörige**”) as soon as they have found an apprenticeship post. The prerequisite is that one parent is or was lawfully employed in Austria.



Also in these cases you should always examine whether you are not already entitled to be issued a “**Daueraufenthalt - EG**” (see above) due to many years of residence in Austria.



The Integration Agreement

If you have established your residence in Austria after the 1st January 1998 and need a residence permit, you are required to attend an integration class in German or furnish proof of having attended a course in the past.

This Integration Agreement aims at the acquisition of basic knowledge of German, in order to ensure that graduates can take part in social, economic and cultural life in Austria.

LANGUAGE AS A DOOR-OPENER

Command of German in Austria

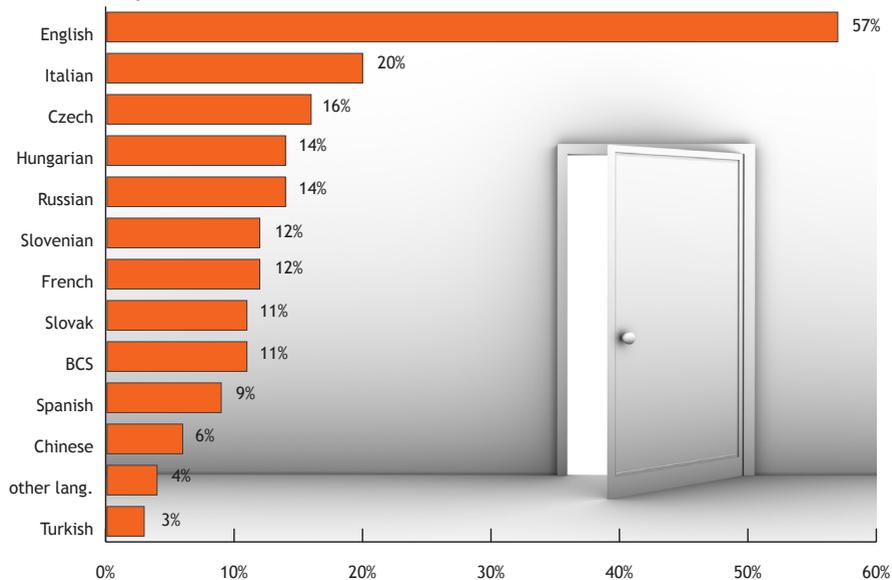
If you want to complete a training course or work in Austria, you need to be able to speak German as well as write in German. Only by constant practice is it possible to properly learn a language. Therefore you should also attempt to practise the language in your leisure time with your friends and family.

In addition you can improve your command of German by attending a German course. Language courses for beginners and advanced courses are offered by the WIFI as well as many other training institutions.

Foreign language skills in Austria

Command of foreign languages is becoming increasingly important in our globalised world of work. If you speak German as well as your mother tongue, this may be a major advantage for you. You will then maybe also find it easier to learn other languages. Those who speak several languages will often have excellent career options on the labour market.

The illustration shows you what languages are particularly important from the viewpoint of Austrian companies:



Abbreviations: BCS = Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian; other lang. = other languages

Source: ibw company survey (n=2,017 surveyed companies), 2006

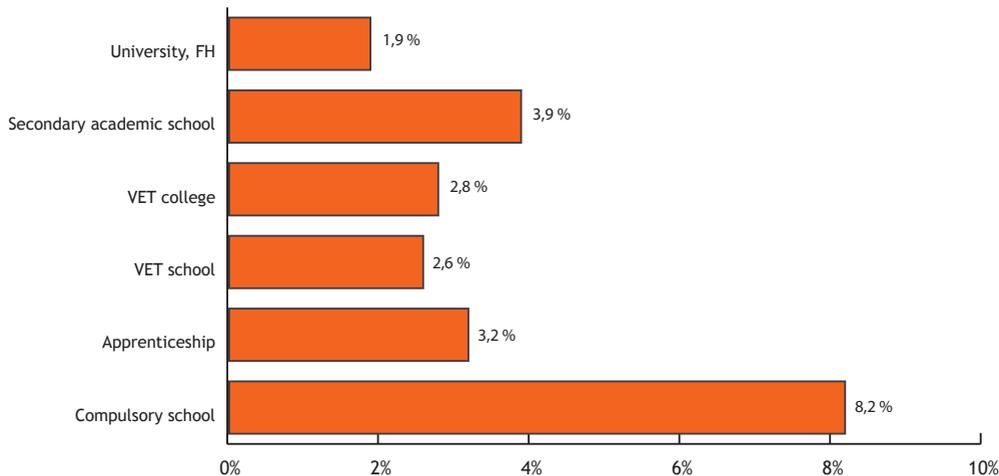
THE IMPORTANCE OF COMPLETING TRAINING AND OBTAINING QUALIFICATIONS

In Austria it is very important that you have completed the training for the job in which you work and have a vocational qualification. You will only get a good job with a comprehensive training background (apprenticeship, school or higher education programme). Your later advancement and career opportunities will also depend on it. The prerequisite for your success in the world of work is therefore that you acquire a corresponding qualification; by no means should you drop out prematurely.



If you have already obtained a vocational qualification or started or completed a training programme in your country of origin, please find out precise details of whether this qualification will be recognised in Austria and if so, on what conditions. Read more about this in the chapter “The Austrian education system”.

The illustration shows the unemployment rate by formal educational attainment for 2008:



Abbreviations: FH = Fachhochschule (university of applied sciences)

Source: Statistics Austria



Counselling services for migrants related to the labour market - selection:

Vienna	Beratungszentrum für Migranten und Migrantinnen (Counselling Centre for Migrants) ⇒ www.migrant.at
Lower Austria	Horizont - Beratungsstelle für Migrantinnen und Migranten (Horizon Counseling Centre for Migrants) ⇒ www.horizont-noe.at
Upper Austria	Zentrum für MigrantInnen Oberösterreich (MIGRARE - Upper Austrian Centre for Migrants) ⇒ www.migrare.at
Salzburg	Verein zur Beratung und Betreuung von Ausländern in Salzburg (VEBBAS - Association for Counselling and Assistance for Foreigners in Salzburg) ⇒ www.vebbas.at
Tyrol	Zentrum für MigrantInnen in Tirol (ZEMIT - Centre for Migrants in Tyrol) ⇒ www.zemit.at
Vorarlberg	okay. zusammen leben (okay. living together) ⇒ www.okay-line.at
Carinthia	Ausländerberatungsstelle Klagenfurt (Klagenfurt Foreigners' Counselling Centre) ⇒ www.ausländerberatung.or.at
Styria	Zentrum zur sozialmedizinischen, rechtlichen und kulturellen Betreuung von Ausländern und Ausländerinnen in Österreich (ZEBRA - Centre for Sociomedical, Legal and Cultural Assistance for Foreigners in Austria) ⇒ www.zebra.or.at



CAREER CHOICE - SETTING THE COURSE FOR YOUR LIFE PATH

Do you already have a very concrete idea of what occupation you would like to learn and exercise? Or do you share the fate of many others who are facing their career choice: although you know what is important to you in your career, you do not have any concrete career aspiration.

My occupation should ...



In addition to your own expectations, your career choice will be **influenced by a series of other factors**, such as:

- What does my family expect me to do?
- What do my friends say about my career choice?
- Do I meet the prerequisites for the training I'd like to do?
- Are there any suitable training options nearby?

With your decision for a specific training path or school-based education you will lay a major foundation for your life path and professional future. Therefore you should take your time before making any choice, gather as much information as possible, and repeatedly think about your own interests, expectations and skills.



The career choice is not a decision you should take overnight.

Expectations

People often have too high expectations of jobs. It happens only very rarely that you will find a workplace in which you only do what interests you and that you enjoy doing. Every job will also comprise tasks and activities that you will enjoy less.

If, however, you manage to choose a career where you can use your own abilities and skills and where, on top of that, you also have some fun, then you are on the right track.

MY ROADMAP FOR MY CAREER

INTERESTS

Where are my interests, inclinations, aspirations and dreams in my leisure time and at school?

JOB EXPECTATIONS

What motivates me? What activities, materials, contacts, places of work am I interested in?

STRENGTHS

Where are my abilities, talents, skills and personality features mainly focused? What am I good at?

DISCOVERING THE RIGHT CAREER

I'm getting to know the details of different jobs.

PRELIMINARY GOAL

I have a preliminary career goal.

FIND ALTERNATIVES

I'm considering other dream jobs.

CONSIDER CONSEQUENCES

I'm taking advantages and disadvantages into account.

DECISION

I am choosing a job or a school-based education or training path.

IMPLEMENTATION

I am looking for an apprenticeship post or enrolling for an upper secondary school.



1

Step 1 ⇒ I'm thinking about my interests and inclinations.

- What do I particularly like doing in my leisure time (handicraft, reading, working on the computer, cooking, meeting friends, sports, etc.)?
- Do I have one specific hobby that I would like to pursue in my later professional life?
- What are my favourite subjects at school?

2

Step 2 ⇒ I'm becoming clear about my occupational expectations.

- What do I expect from my future job?
- Which activities would I like to do?
- What materials would I like to work with?
- Would I like to work together with other people, support customers, take care of patients, or rather work on my own?
- At what workplaces, at what places of employment would I feel at home?

3

Step 3 ⇒ I'm trying to find out my own strengths and talents.

- Where are my own particular strengths and abilities?
- What am I good at?
- What have I been successful at to date?
- What activities haven't I enjoyed doing?

4

Step 4 ⇒ I'm discovering the world of work.

I am gathering as much information as possible about my dream job or the upper secondary school I want to attend.

I'm attempting to get a clear idea of my dream jobs or the school I plan to attend.

This means you have to obtain different pieces of information:

- gather job descriptions: at the career guidance centre, from magazines, the internet (e.g. www.bic.at)
- obtain information about timetables and training specialisations from schools
- visit schools and companies on "open-house days"
- watch career guidance films to get a better picture of occupations
- learn about different jobs at the companies directly, such as by completing one or several shadowing apprenticeships/work experience placements (⇒ **Days of practical work experience**)
- ask lots and lots of questions

5

Step 5 ⇒ I'm setting myself a career goal.

Any preliminary career goal you have will enhance your motivation to work hard and also render good achievements at school.

6

Step 6 ⇒ I'm finding at least two other jobs that interest me.

Sometimes there are not enough training places or vacancies. There are often also more people registering for upper secondary schools than there are vacant places. Therefore it is important that you always have two or three alternatives to the dreams jobs or qualifications. Your first alternatives can be occupations that require similar qualifications and cover similar activity areas.

Many jobs - though they have different names - have fairly similar contents. There are many apprenticeship occupations that are related (that means: similar) to other apprenticeships. They can be found in the **list of apprenticeship occupations of the Federal Economic Chamber** or at www.bic.at.

7

Step 7 ⇒ I'm weighing the pros and cons and considering the consequences.

You will often also have to carry out activities that you less enjoy doing.

A suitable upper secondary school or apprenticeship post for the job of your dreams will not always be available in your immediate vicinity. How far would you go away from home to have a good training place?

Consider carefully what disadvantages the job or the training of your dreams would entail and whether you are prepared to accept these drawbacks.

8

Step 8 ⇒ I'm making a decision.

Only after all these considerations will you be able to make a well-founded career decision. Career decisions take much time, and you will probably learn much about yourself and the world of work while making these decisions.

9

Step 9 ⇒ I'm implementing my decision, looking for an apprenticeship post or registering for an upper secondary school.

The next challenge is the application for an apprenticeship post or enrolment for a school. Take care that you do not miss any important deadlines:

- **School enrolment** is made in the week following the mid-term break.
- **Search for a training place at a company:** Companies are starting to recruit apprentices at an increasingly early point in time. If you want to start apprenticeship training in September, you should begin your search as early as the autumn of the previous year.

At www.bic.at **click on the flag for English ⇒ Career Choice** and you will find additional hints that will help you think about your career and education decision. This offer is available in **several other languages as well!**

WHAT OCCUPATIONS ARE THERE?

The world of work is diversified, and training paths vary greatly:



⇒ Apprenticeships

In Austria, training is provided in some **260 apprenticeships** in many fields (construction, office, trade, technology, chemistry, etc.). To be trained in an apprenticeship means that you will mainly learn **directly in a company**, as well as attend school (the so-called part-time vocational school).

Read more about it in **Chapter 4: Apprenticeship - vocational training with a future.**



⇒ Jobs requiring school-based qualifications

In Austria there are a large number of **VET schools and colleges** (providing vocational education and training programmes). School-based education enables students to learn many occupations in the fields of office, trade, finances, tourism, technology, social affairs and health, etc. There are also comparable

school-based programmes for many apprenticeship occupations. For a series of jobs (such as general nurse, elderly care nurse, nursery school teacher, etc), the common path is to attend a VET school or college

Read more about it in **Chapter 3: The Austrian education system.**



⇒ **Jobs requiring qualifications from higher education**

For a wide range of jobs that can be learned by attending school-based education or an apprenticeship, candidates are able to acquire more in-depth knowledge by studying at a university or “Fachhochschule”. In addition, higher learning frequently also offers better opportunities of advancement.

There are also many jobs that require academic studies: e. g. physician (as well as many other health professions), architect, teacher, lawyer (and other legal professions), or tax consultant.

Read more about it in **Chapter 3: The Austrian education system**.



⇒ **Jobs requiring company-based training or short programmes**

Some jobs can be learned neither in an apprenticeship nor at school or university. These occupations are trained by companies or public institutions themselves. In those cases you will acquire the necessary knowledge and skills directly at the workplace or in courses held at training centres. Most companies or institutions will expect you to have completed another training programme beforehand.

Typical examples include: policeman/woman, professional fire fighter, pilot, flight attendant, engine driver, paramedic, radio and TV announcer, etc.

Other occupations are learned by attending shorter programmes or courses at adult education centres, such as WIFI or bfi.



⇒ **Semiskilled and unskilled jobs**

Semiskilled and unskilled jobs are trained at companies within a relatively short period directly at the workplace. They normally do not require any specific previous education and are frequently limited to the simple operation of machines and devices and the support of skilled workers.

Please bear in mind: particularly in times of economic crisis, semiskilled and unskilled workers are affected more strongly by unemployment than skilled workers and often have less earning potential.

Examples: (unskilled) construction worker, machine operator, storekeeper, unskilled cleaning personnel, etc.

FINDING THE RIGHT TRACK - SCHOOL OR APPRENTICESHIP?

Apprenticeship, school, university study - the agony of choice. In the Austrian education system, many ways will lead to the same goal, and for every type of person there is a suitable offer.

Apprenticeship means that you complete the main part of training directly in the company and spend only little time at school. In case of a **school-based education** you will spend (almost) the entire time at school.



Important for the choice “school or apprenticeship” are mainly your interests, abilities and your personality.

Often however completely different factors play a more important part:

- the family tradition
- role models in the family or the circle of friends
- the education and training offer in the immediate vicinity of the place of residence and
- the general image of various training programmes

Try to block out these factors and think about the following questions:



Do I prefer learning in the course of my daily professional work and do I want to use my abilities directly in practice? Then I will probably feel more at ease in an apprenticeship.



If I prefer acquiring my knowledge and skills more theoretically, thinking much about gathered experiences and using them in practice only later, then school-based education is more suited for me.



For some 15-year-olds it will still be too early to commit themselves clearly to one training path. Both for parents and for the youths themselves it is important to accept this fact. Let changes in your career choice or educational decision happen, even if this may mean that the training period takes two to three years longer.

CAREER CHOICE MEANS: INFORM YOURSELF!

Get an overview of the world of work and the occupational landscape. Which occupations are there and what's behind the occupational titles? Many names of occupations say little about what must really be done in individual jobs.

Some of the questions you should ask yourself:

- ☑ What activities are typical for your desired occupation? What tasks will I have?
- ☑ What materials will I work with? How frequent and intense are contacts with other people (colleagues, customers)?
- ☑ What physical or health requirements are there?
- ☑ What does the workplace look like? What are the requirements at the workplace? How tiring and stressful is the job?
- ☑ What special workplace conditions are there? Noise, dust, outdoor work, much time seated or standing, lifting of heavy weights?
- ☑ How are working hours regulated? Does the job involve weekend or night work?
- ☑ How mobile do I have to be? Where are places of employment?
- ☑ How much can I earn?
- ☑ What occupational alternatives do I have? What education and training paths lead to the individual occupations?
- ☑ What specialisation and development opportunities does the job offer?
- ☑ and much more!



DAYS OF PRACTICAL WORK EXPERIENCE (BERUFSPRAKTISCHE TAGE)

Days of practical work experience (Berufspraktische Tage) will enable you to get insights into everyday work routine and help you examine your career aspiration.

Days of practical work experience represent a major part of career guidance at school level. By watching, asking questions and trying their skills in simple, harmless activities, young people have the possibility to make themselves familiar with the respective occupation and everyday work routine at the company, thus comparing their personal ideas with the work reality on site.

Days of practical work experience are in most cases organised via the school (as a school event). But individual career guidance can also be organised on a one-on-one basis outside teaching hours.

More information about how days of practical work experience (taster apprenticeships) are organised, about what pupils are entitled to do and what not, and which regulations need to be observed - all this can be found at ⇒ www.bic.at ⇒ Thema



Addresses of companies and training companies for taster apprenticeships can be obtained e.g. from the apprenticeship office or career guidance and educational counselling office in your province.

N.B.: Days of practical work experience do not just aim to facilitate your decision for an apprenticeship. Pupils who want to attend an upper secondary school also have the possibility to learn more about different occupations and the world of work.

TESTS - A HELP IN DECISION-MAKING

By doing tests, many people want to know precisely what they are good at, what they are suited for, and what occupation is the only right one. This is wishful thinking that will not come true in this way. Also the best test procedures cannot replace a personal decision.

However tests can be a help in decision-making for a **suitable initial and continuing training** and the resulting **career choice** to identify personal strengths and support the career decision with fitting proposals of counsellors.



Tests should always be made in combination with a counselling talk and conducted by qualified expert staff.

Theoretical, practical tests	Diagnostic tests - analyses of potential
<p>such as mathematics, physics, German, general education, job introduction schemes, craftsman skills, technical understanding</p> 	<p>The analysis of potential provides help in career guidance and reveals the test person's strengths and weaknesses.</p> <p>The analysis of potential measures both abilities (potential skills, such as memory, ability to concentrate, ability to work under stress, spatial sense, social skills) and inclinations, interests, personality and performance.</p> <p>In an evaluation talk held with psychologists, development options are discussed to be able to make an appropriate personal decision on training, continuing training or career.</p>

BIC.AT - THE CAREER GUIDANCE TOOL BERUFSINFORMATIONSCOMPUTER



The career guidance tool (BerufsInformationsComputer, BIC.at) of the Austrian Economic Chambers provides a comprehensive information option. At www.bic.at you will find detailed information about more than **1,500 occupations**. In addition, BIC.at with its tips on career choice, tips on the job application process and the interest profile provides a first help on career choice. A comprehensive collection of links leads to other information options and job markets.

At BIC.at the interest profile, tips on career choice and tips on the job application process are also available in the languages English, Croatian, Serbian and Turkish.

THE AGONY OF CHOICE - WHO WILL HELP?

Now you have heard quite a lot about career choice and the educational decision. But certainly many questions will still be open. The counsellors at career guidance centres and educational counselling institutions will gladly help you. There is also a series of counselling institutions that have specialised in providing counselling services to people with a migration background. Accept this help, whether alone or jointly with your parents.

 Educational counselling and career guidance institutions of the Austrian Economic Chambers and Institutes for Economic Promotion (WIFIs):		
Information.Job.Career - educational counselling service of WIFI Burgenland	Robert Graf-Platz 1 7000 Eisenstadt	T: 05 90 907 - 5111 E: waltraud.paulsich@wkbgl.d.at W: www.bgl.d.wifi.at
BIWI - Careers Guidance Centre of the Vienna Economy)	Währinger Gürtel 97 1180 Wien	T: (01) 514 50 - 6518 E: mailbox@biwi.at W: www.biwi.at
Educational counselling for career & enterprises of WIFI Vienna	Währinger Gürtel 97 1180 Wien	T: (01) 476 77 - 5361 E: bildungsberatung@wifwien.at W: www.wifwien.at/bildungsberatung
WIFI Lower Austria Career Guidance Centres	Rödlgasse 1 3100 St. Pölten	T: (02742) 890 - 2702 E: biz@noe.wifi.at W: www.wifi-biz.at
Career guidance of the Economic Chamber Upper Austria	Wiener Straße 150 4021 Linz	T: 05 90 909 - 4052 E: karriere@wko.at W: wko.at/ooe/karriere
WIFI Styria	Körblergasse 111 - 113 8010 Graz	T: (0316) 601 - 492 E: david.schuetze@wifi.wkstmk.at W: www.stmk.wifi.at
Vocational training of the Economic Chamber Carinthia	Koschutastraße 3 9020 Klagenfurt	T: 05 90 904 - 850 E: lehrlingsstelle@wkk.or.at W: wko.at/ktn/lehrlingsstelle
AHA! - Educational Counselling of the Economic Chamber Salzburg	Julius-Raab-Platz 4 5027 Salzburg	T: (0662) 8888 - 276 E: aha@wks.at W: www.aha-bildungsberatung.at
Career guidance centre of the Economic Chamber Tyrol	Egger-Lienz-Straße 116 6020 Innsbruck	T: 05 90 90 5 - 7253 E: biz@wktiro.at W: www.biz-tiro.at
Educational consulting of WIFI Tyrol	Egger-Lienz-Straße 116 6020 Innsbruck	T: 05 90 90 5 - 7291 E: sabine.kofler@wktiro.at W: www.tiro.wifi.at/bildungsberatung
BIFO - Counselling for Education and Career Vorarlberg	Bahnhofstraße 24 6850 Dornbirn	T: (05572) 317 17 - 0 E: bifo@bifo.at W: www.bifo.at
Institute for Economic Promotion of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber (general information)	Wiedner Hauptstraße 63 1045 Wien	T: 05 90 900 - 3105 E: margit.havlik@wko.at W: www.wifi.at/bildungsberatung



THE AUSTRIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM - A WIDE RANGE OF OPPORTUNITIES

The education systems of different countries have differing structures. Their principles are often the same, but again and again major differences can be found.

One thing they all have in common is compulsory schooling of between eight and ten years. In Austria, compulsory schooling lasts for nine years. It usually starts at the age of 6 and finishes at 15.

Pre-primary education can be started with the child's 3rd birthday. By the autumn of 2010 all children are required to complete one year at nursery school before school entry.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE AUSTRIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM

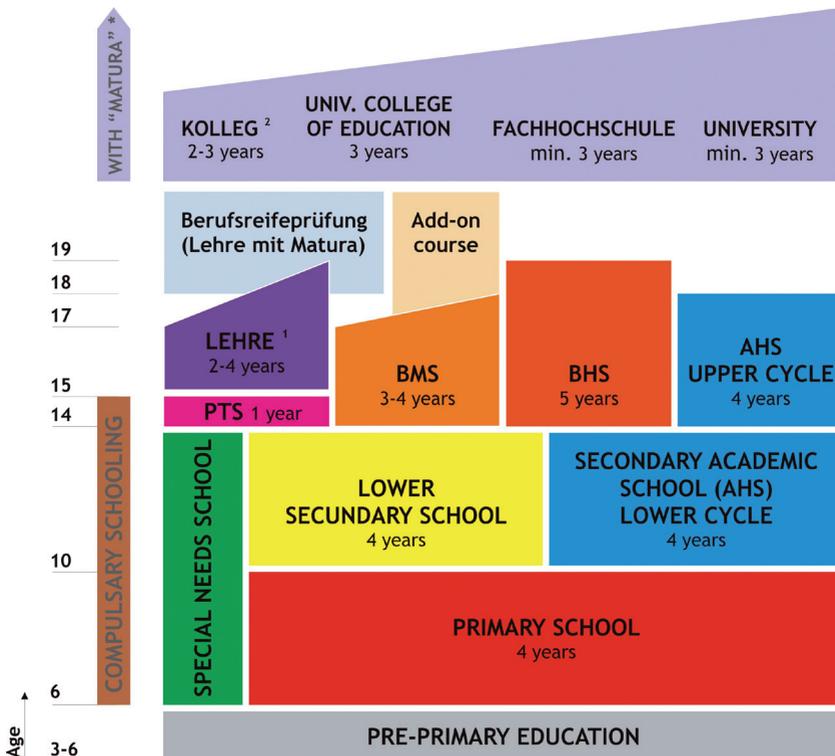
- ☑ Primary school: lasts four years, mostly between the ages 6 and 10
- ☑ Lower secondary school: lasts four years, mostly between the ages 10 and 14

or
The lower cycle of secondary academic school: lasts four years, mostly between the ages 10 and 14

- ☑ Special school (lasts eight or nine years)

As the **ninth year of schooling** you can choose between:

- ⇒ Prevocational school
- ⇒ the first grade of a VET school or college
- ⇒ fifth grade of secondary academic school



* or Berufsreifeprüfung or Studienberechtigungsprüfung³

¹ Lehre = Apprenticeship training; ² Kolleg = Postsecondary VET course;

³ Matura (=Reifeprüfung) is the upper secondary school leaving examination; Berufsreifeprüfung is similar to Matura; Studienberechtigungsprüfung = Higher education entrance examination

After the 8th year of schooling you have to change school to complete the final year of compulsory schooling. Therefore the question arises what your future school education or vocational training will look like.



You should by all means **achieve a positive compulsory school qualification!** Do not content yourself with a negative end-of-school report, and by no means drop out of school only because you have already completed compulsory schooling (e.g. because you had to repeat a grade or more). Even if, in your current situation, a positive completion of year 9 does not seem that important, it will certainly have major impact on your future working life and your future training options.

SCHOOLS AFTER YEAR 8

The choice of the appropriate school requires good reflection and timely preparation. This also means visiting the schools in question. Almost all schools organise “**open-house days**” or also “**days of practical work experience**”. There you and your parents will have the opportunity to learn about the details of the offered education and training paths and the school atmosphere. Take advantage of this opportunity and gather information about admission criteria, curricula and later work options.

PREVOCATIONAL SCHOOL (PTS, Polytechnische Schule)	
Info	<p>PTS is mainly intended for students who want to be trained in an apprenticeship after completing compulsory schooling.</p> <p>As one option to complete the ninth year of schooling it offers a special focus in career guidance. Students are prepared for working life by being provided more in-depth general education and career guidance and by learning the basic skills for jobs (in different specialist areas).</p> <p>In the specialist areas (different options), which correspond to the main professions of the economy, basic abilities, skills and knowledge are imparted, and students are enabled to acquire the general fundamentals about the world of work.</p>
Precondition	⇒ completion of the 8th year of schooling (not necessarily positive)
Duration	1 year
Final qualification	<p>Certificate</p> <p>With completion of PTS the 9th year of compulsory schooling is completed.</p>

Other reasons why attendance of PTS is recommended:

- You are attending a VET school or college and realise that you do not meet requirements. ⇒ You can also switch to PTS during the ongoing school year, mostly before Christmas.
- You will not achieve a positive qualification at any other school? ⇒ You are entitled to attend PTS as your voluntary 10th school year and attempt to acquire a positive qualification there.
- You want to attend a VET school or college but have to take an entrance examination there. ⇒ Your PTS qualification will usually entitle you to entry without taking the entrance exam!

VET SCHOOL (BMS, Berufsbildende mittlere Schule)	
Info	<p>VET schools impart general education as well as vocational training comparable to apprenticeship training. They are an easier and shorter school type than VET colleges.</p> <p>Should you not attend a school that is completed with the upper secondary school-leaving certificate, but nevertheless prefer school attendance to apprenticeship training, you will find practice-oriented vocational training at VET school.</p>
Precondition	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ positive completion of the eighth school grade▪ admission exam for youths from the third ability group of lower secondary school
Duration	3 to 4 years (depending on the school type)
Final qualification	<p>Final examination</p> <p>The BMS qualification replaces or shortens the apprenticeship period in related apprenticeship occupations, but does not replace the apprenticeship-leave exam.</p>
Overview of the most important forms:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Crafts, technical and arts schools▪ Schools of business administration▪ Schools of management and service industries▪ Schools of fashion and clothing▪ Schools of hotel and catering industries, and of tourism▪ Schools of social occupations▪ Schools of agriculture
Link	www.abc.berufsbildendeschulen.at



Some VET schools also offer one- and two-year courses. They serve to prepare students for the world of work. Often they are attended as the 9th school year (instead of pre-vocational school) as a preparation for an apprenticeship or a training programme that can only be started at a later date (e.g. nursing occupations after the age of 17).

ADD-ON COURSES

Add-on courses lead graduates of VET schools to the respective VET college's certificate of secondary education and VET diploma. Add-on courses last for 3 years (or 6 semesters). In some cases, additional criteria need to be met before admission.

VET COLLEGE (BHS, Berufsbildende höhere Schule)	
Info	<p>VET colleges provide general education as well as advanced vocational training. Graduates of VET colleges acquire a vocational qualification and the upper secondary school-leaving certificate at the same time.</p> <p>Following positive completion you can therefore enter the world of work immediately or, for example, enrol for higher study programmes.</p>
Precondition	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ positive completion of the eighth school grade▪ admission exam for youths from the second ability group of lower secondary school unless they have at least the mark “good” in the main subjects, and for all students from the third ability group▪ aptitude tests for all applicants for artistic specialisations (such as graphic design) and in pedagogical & social schools (such as nursery teacher training)
Duration	5 years
Final qualification	<p>Certificate of secondary education (Reifeprüfung certificate and VET diploma)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ entitles to attendance of universities, Fachhochschulen, postsecondary VET courses, etc.▪ The VET college qualification replaces or shortens the apprenticeship period in related apprenticeship occupations, but does not replace the apprenticeship-leave exam.
Overview of the most important forms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Colleges of engineering and crafts▪ Colleges of agriculture and forestry▪ Colleges of business administration▪ Colleges of fashion and clothing▪ Colleges of tourism▪ Colleges of management and service industries▪ Nursery teacher training colleges▪ Colleges of social pedagogy <p>In these school types there exist many area specialisations and training focuses. Relevant information can be obtained, for example, on “open-house days” and at the individual schools' websites.</p>
Link	www.abc.berufsbildendeschulen.at

SECONDARY ACADEMIC SCHOOL (AHS, Allgemein bildende höhere Schule)

Info	The upper cycle of secondary academic school mainly provides in-depth general education; it is completed with the upper secondary school-leaving certificate. Your decision about the professional direction you want to take can still develop until you have the upper secondary school-leaving certificate. Please note that secondary academic school does not impart any particular vocational skills. This means that you have to enrol for the vocational training you want to complete after passing the upper secondary school-leaving examination.
Entrance requirement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ positive completion of the eighth school grade▪ coming from lower secondary school: entrance exams must be taken depending on previous school success
Duration	4 years (some special forms 5 years)
Final qualification	Upper secondary school-leaving certificate (Reifeprüfung) Entitles graduates e.g. to attend postsecondary VET courses, Fachhochschulen and universities.
Overview of the most important forms	<p>Continuing from the lower cycle of secondary academic school there are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Gymnasium (focus on foreign languages)▪ Realgymnasium (focus on sciences)▪ Wirtschaftskundliches Realgymnasium (focus on economic sciences). <p>Youths who have attended lower secondary school can take the upper secondary school-leaving examination at Oberstufenrealgymnasium.</p> <p>Every secondary academic school is entitled to set its individual focuses. Some schools have specialised in informatics, others in foreign languages, the fine arts or sports education.</p>

EDUCATION AFTER THE UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOL-LEAVING EXAM



The upper secondary school-leaving certificate (Reifeprüfung) acquired at secondary academic school will mean you have a very **good general education**, but **not a vocational** qualification. In most cases it will therefore be necessary to enrol for another education and training path after acquiring the certificate at secondary academic school. Similarly many graduates of VET college take up a specialisation course after the final certificate.

APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING AFTER THE UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOL-LEAVING EXAM

Holders of the upper secondary school-leaving certificate are also entitled to complete training at a company, in other words an apprenticeship. With the training company's consent, the training period can be reduced by one year. An apprenticeship can be interesting for those holders of the upper secondary school-leaving certificate who want to be trained in practice after many years of theoretical learning.

POSTSECONDARY VET COURSES (Kollegs)	
Info	Postsecondary VET courses mainly enable holders of the upper secondary school-leaving certificate from secondary academic school to complete a specialist vocational training course within a relatively short time. Learning takes place in school-form instruction. Postsecondary VET courses are offered for almost all specialisations of the vocational training system.
Precondition	Reifeprüfung (Matura), Berufsreifeprüfung (i.e. certificate providing university access for skilled workers) or Studienberechtigungsprüfung (higher-education entrance certificate)
Duration	2 years, or 3 years on a part-time basis for people in employment
Final qualification	Diploma examination The qualification obtained is equivalent to the five-year VET college.
Link	www.abc.berufsbildendeschulen.at

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF EDUCATION (Pädagogische Hochschule)	
Info	University colleges of education offer advanced (tertiary) courses of study in the field of pedagogy (for teaching careers).
Precondition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reifeprüfung (Matura), Berufsreifeprüfung (i.e. certificate providing university access for skilled workers) or Studienberechtigungsprüfung (higher-education entrance certificate) ▪ in most cases aptitude procedures and entrance interviews
Duration	3 years (6 semesters)
Final qualification	Bachelor Teaching diploma in the respective subject field
Overview of the most important courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Compulsory school teacher (primary school, lower secondary school, special school) ▪ Teachers of religious education for compulsory school level ▪ Teaching diploma for part-time vocational schools ▪ Teaching diplomas for various specialist areas at VET schools and colleges: fashion and design, information and communication, nutrition, and technical and trade/craft-specific subjects

UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES (Fachhochschule)

Info	<p>Study courses at Fachhochschule are of limited duration, mostly lasting between six and ten semesters, offer practice-oriented training (one semester of practical training), have a school organisation (compulsory attendance) and extended access options (either the upper secondary school-leaving certificate or a vocational qualification plus entrance exams).</p> <p>Thus graduates of an apprenticeship or VET school can also obtain a tertiary qualification and degree at Fachhochschule.</p>
Precondition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reifeprüfung (Matura), Berufsreifeprüfung (i.e. certificate providing university access for skilled workers) or Studienberechtigungsprüfung (higher-education entrance certificate) ▪ in most cases entrance procedures (tests and entrance interviews)
Duration and qualification	<p>Bachelor degree course: 6 semesters ⇒ degree: Bachelor</p> <p>Master degree course: 2-4 semesters ⇒ degree: Master</p> <p> Holders of a Master degree are entitled to enrol for a doctorate course at university.</p>
Overview of the most important courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ technical courses (incl. biotechnology, electronic engineering, informatics, environmental engineering, etc.) ▪ business-oriented and commercial courses ▪ courses for healthcare professions ▪ courses for social occupations
Link	www.fhr.ac.at



The number of **study places** in Fachhochschule programmes is **limited**, it is therefore necessary to apply for a study place and complete an entrance procedure (test, entrance interview).

UNIVERSITY COURSE

Info	<p>University courses mainly provide theoretical and scientific education and are not always oriented to teaching a specific profession. It is therefore particularly important to inform yourself in detail about study contents and the professional options for graduates before enrolling for a university programme.</p> <p>Students are relatively free to organise their courses as they choose, with the particular form of each course also depending on individual students. Therefore perseverance, diligence, motivation, the right study choice and sensible time management represent major factors for study success.</p>
Precondition	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Reifeprüfung (Matura), Berufsreifeprüfung (i.e. certificate providing university access for skilled workers) or Studienberechtigungsprüfung (higher-education entrance certificate)▪ in individual courses, entrance exams must be taken due to study place restrictions (e.g. medicine)
Dauer und Abschluss	<p>Minimum study duration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Bachelor degree course: 6-8 semesters ⇒ degree: Bachelor▪ Master degree course: 2-4 semesters ⇒ degree: Master▪ Doctorate course: 4-6 semesters ⇒ degree: PhD▪ in some fields there are still diploma courses: 8-11 semesters ⇒ degree: “Magister”/ “Magistra” or “Diplomingenieur”/ “Diplomingenieurin” <p>The actual duration is frequently much longer.</p>
Link	www.wegweiser.ac.at

SHORT-CYCLE PROGRAMMES AND OTHER SHORT COURSES

Holders of the upper secondary school-leaving certificate have a wide range of other education and training options open to them. A large number of institutions, such as the Institutes for Economic Promotion of the Economic Chambers (WIFIs), offer short-cycle programmes in many different fields, but also universities offer not only regular studies but also various (mostly shorter) programmes.



Education and training paths are subject to constant change: course formats are changed, some are abolished, others are created, access requirements change.

Updated information about the individual education and training paths can be found at the given websites or can be obtained from the **educational counselling and career guidance institutions of the Economic Chambers**.

SECOND-CHANCE EDUCATION

People who dropped out from school or vocational training, for any reason whatsoever, always have the possibility to acquire their intended qualifications later in life.

Apprenticeship diploma (exceptional admission to the apprenticeship-leave examination)

Those who did not complete an apprenticeship training are also entitled to take the apprenticeship-leave examination in exceptional cases:

- ☑ if they are 18 years of age and have acquired the knowledge and skills required for the corresponding apprenticeship occupation in another way; or
- ☑ if they have completed at least half of the period stipulated for the respective apprenticeship, but have no other possibility of entering into an apprenticeship contract for the remaining apprenticeship period.

More details can be obtained from the **apprenticeship offices of the Economic Chambers**.

Berufsreifeprüfung

As well as the upper secondary school-leaving examination taken at secondary academic school or VET college in Austria, Berufsreifeprüfung is the third option for taking a full upper secondary school-leaving exam. It entitles holders to attend postsecondary VET courses, Fachhochschule programmes, institutions of higher learning, universities, etc.

The main access paths to Berufsreifeprüfung:

- successful completion of apprenticeship according to the Vocational Training Act (Berufsausbildungsgesetz) (⇒ see also the “**Apprenticeship and Matura**” scheme in the next chapter),
- or the skilled workers’ examination according to the Vocational Training Act for Agriculture and Forestry (land- und forstwirtschaftliches Berufsausbildungsgesetz),
- or successful completion of a VET school of at least three years’ duration, of a school for general healthcare and nursing, or a specialist paramedical course of at least 30 months’ duration.



Berufsreifeprüfung comprises **four partial exams**: German, mathematics, English and one specialist area. Exams can be prepared for however the individual students want. The specialist area exam is taken in line with vocational training or the professional activity.

The specialist area exam does not have to be taken by graduates of a master craftsman exam, part-time industrial master college, or specialist WIFI course.

Higher education entrance examination (Studienberechtigungsprüfung)

The Studienberechtigungsprüfung is a restricted study qualification for studies at universities, institutions of higher learning, Fachhochschulen and postsecondary VET courses. It is only valid for an individual or a closely related course of studies, which means it is not a qualification that provides general access to higher education.

Entrance requirements:

- **Minimum age:** graduates of an apprenticeship or a VET school or another path (initial plus continuing education and training: total 4 years) are entitled to take the Studienberechtigungsprüfung exam already at the age of 20, otherwise the required minimum age is 22.
- **Study-related previous qualification:** previous knowledge and skills acquired through job-specific programmes or non-occupational paths for the intended study; as a rule it is proven by taking a maximum of two additional exams.
- **Other:** Austrian citizenship and equality of opportunities in terms of study legislation for university studies; this condition is waived in case of postsecondary VET courses.



www.erwachsenenbildung.at

Lower secondary school (Hauptschule) qualification

You also have the option to take the lower secondary school qualification as an “external” exam (meaning that school attendance is not required) at a lower secondary school. In Austria each administrative district has one school where the external exams are held.

The Public Employment Service Austria (Arbeitsmarktservice or AMS) regularly offers the possibility to obtain the lower secondary school qualification on a course basis at various further training institutes.



RECOGNITION OF FOREIGN CERTIFICATES AND VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS IN AUSTRIA

If you have already started or completed a training programme in your country of origin, you can apply for recognition or nostrification of your previous qualifications or certificates. This will entitle you to continue your education/training, take up studies or exercise your profession in Austria.

NOSTRIFICATION	
Info	<p>By comparing successfully passed exams and attended programmes on the basis of Austrian curricula it is possible to treat a foreign certificate as the equivalent of an Austrian certificate. In this way, you will obtain for your foreign certificate all the rights that are connected with the related Austrian certificate, including e.g. admission to higher studies.</p> <p>If you cannot sufficiently prove completion of individual subjects (or areas of specialisation), corresponding additional exams (called “nostrification exams”) are required.</p> <p>In some cases it is necessary to have the certificate verified (acknowledged) by the competent school authority in the country of issuance.</p>
Public authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Federal Ministry for Education, the Arts and Culture
Link	www.bmukk.gv.at



Equivalence on the basis of agreements: Individual agreements have been concluded with many states on the mutual recognition - that is equivalence - of **upper secondary school-leaving certificates**. No additional recognition is necessary.

EQUIVALENCE	
Info	<p>Also foreign vocational qualifications, such as apprenticeship diplomas or the master craftsperson exam, can be recognised in Austria. These cases are termed “Gleichhaltung” in German (that is: establishment of equivalence).</p>
Public authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Federal Ministry of Economy, Family and Youth
Link	www.bmwfj.gv.at



APPRENTICESHIP - VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATION FOR THE FUTURE

Apprenticeship training is a practice-oriented vocational training and the major form of acquiring a vocational qualification in Austria. It represents a key part of the education system. An average of 40% of school leavers each year opt for an apprenticeship. Currently there are some 260 apprenticeship occupations in Austria.

The precondition for taking up an apprenticeship is fulfilment of general compulsory schooling (completion of nine school years). The training duration (apprenticeship period) is 2 to 4 years. Most training paths last 3 years.

DUAL TRAINING

Apprenticeship training is also termed **dual training**, because it takes place at two places of learning. The **training company**, on the one hand, provides practical training and the **part-time vocational school**, on the other, imparts supplementary, in-depth education.

Apprenticeship training = the dual training system

Company-based training

- special occupational skills and abilities
- special occupational knowledge



Education at part-time vocational school

- provision of basic subject-related knowledge
- supplementing company-based training
- supplementing general education

COMPANY

- learning the latest state-of-the-art techniques by doing
- exercising a qualified activity immediately after apprenticeship training
- learning while doing productive work
- learning jointly with others

PART-TIME VOCATIONAL SCHOOL

- promoting and supplementing company-based training by specialist job-specific instruction
- providing in-depth general education (German, mathematics, etc.)
- subject-oriented foreign language instruction (English)



Part-time vocational school is either attended throughout the year (once or twice a week) or in course-form (for eight to twelve weeks in one block). The remainder of the time the apprentice will learn and work at the company.

Part-time vocational schools for apprenticeships with many apprentices (such as office assistant or baker) have been set up in every province. For apprenticeships with a small number of apprentices there are also only few vocational schools across Austria (sometimes just one). Most of them offer **boarding school facilities** for vocational school students from other regions.

WHY LEARN AN APPRENTICESHIP?

- An apprenticeship diploma offers you good advancement and professional development options.
- You already earn your own money during training.
- You can immediately put your acquired knowledge into practice.
- You obtain a full vocational training.
- You can acquire the upper secondary school-leaving certificate at the same time (Berufsreifeprüfung: “Apprenticeship and Matura” scheme).



Think carefully about the reasons why you want to complete an apprenticeship or whether you'd prefer attending a VET school or a secondary academic school! For this purpose, please read the chapters “Career choice” and “The Austrian education system”!

WHAT APPRENTICESHIP OCCUPATIONS ARE THERE?

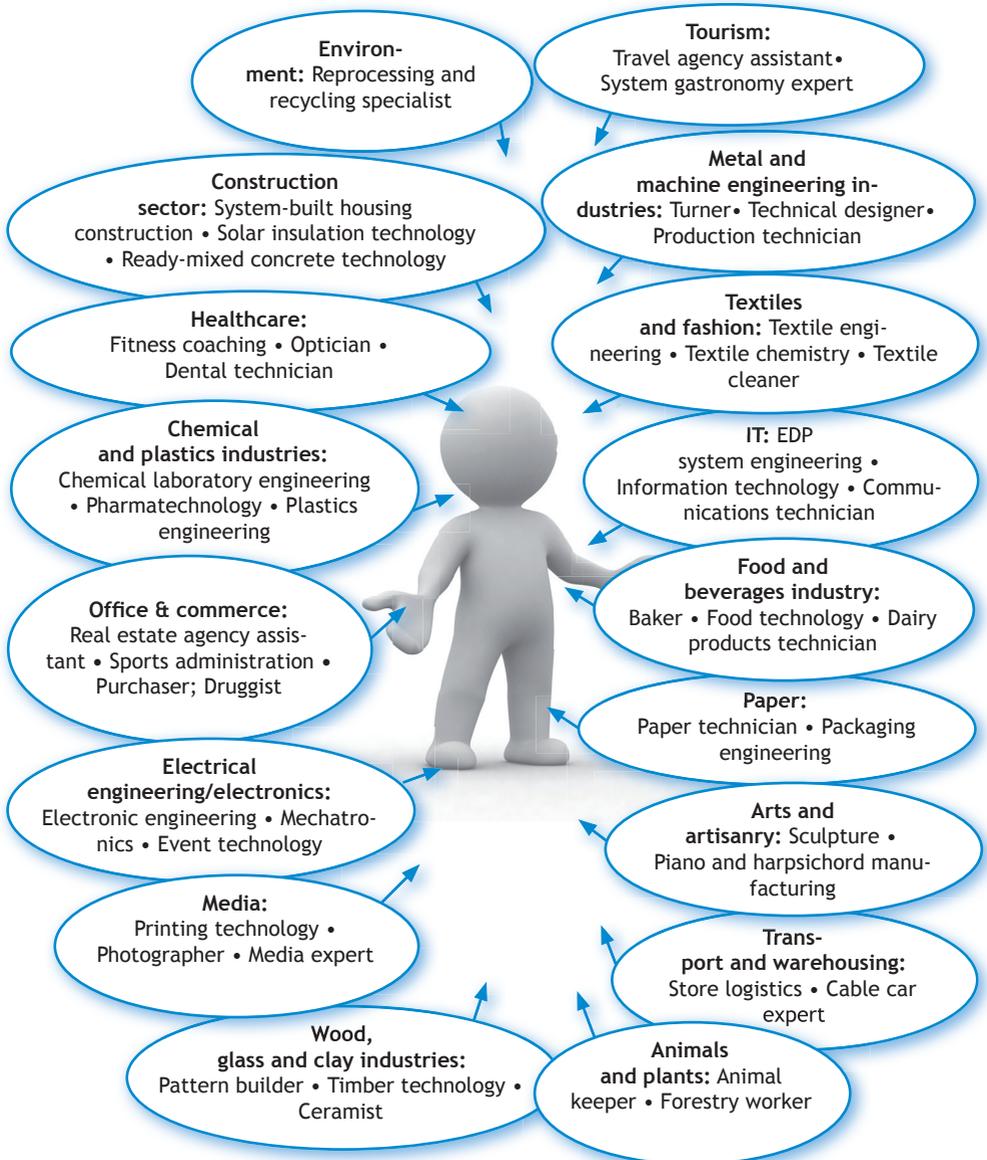
Currently there are some 260 apprenticeship occupations in Austria. More than 70% of young women complete their training in only ten occupations, among young men this percentage is around 44%. But these are also the occupations in which the majority of apprenticeship places are available:

The Top 10 apprenticeship occupations

Young women				Young men			
	Apprenticeship	Apprentices	in%		Apprenticeship	Apprentices	in%
1.	Retail trade services total	10,730	24.0%	1.	Motor vehicle engineering	6,536	7.5%
2.	Office assistant	5,585	12.5%	2.	Electrical installations engineering	4,859	5.6%
3.	Hairdresser and wigmaker (stylist)	5,388	12.0%	3.	Machine engineering technology	4,628	5.3%
4.	Restaurant specialist	2,219	5.0%	4.	Retail trade services total	4,440	5.1%
5.	Cook	1,830	4.1%	5.	Cook	3,753	4.3%
6.	Gastronomy expert	1,657	3.7%	6.	Joinery	3,562	4.1%
7.	Hotel and restaurant trade commercial assistant	1,320	2.9%	7.	Bricklayer	3,138	3.6%
8.	Pharmaceutical trade assistance	1,039	2.3%	8.	Metal industry specialising in metal treatment engineering	2,963	3.4%
9.	Administrative assistant	899	2.0%	9.	Plumbing and air-conditioning technician specialising in gas and water fitting / heating fitting	2,353	2.7%
10.	Florist	828	1.8%	10.	Painter	2,021	2.3%
Total TOP 10		31,495	70.3%	Total TOP 10		38,253	43.9%
Young women total		44,784		Young men total		87,096	

Source: Austrian Federal Economic Chamber (WKÖ), Apprenticeship Statistics 2008

Here are some more examples of apprenticeships:



Not all of these apprenticeships are trained in all provinces. This depends on the business locations' respective regional requirements.

DOUBLE APPRENTICESHIPS

A special opportunity for working life is the possibility to learn two apprenticeships at the same time (so-called “double apprenticeships”). For this purpose, the training company needs to be equipped and managed in a way that training in both occupations is possible. In addition, the two occupations are not allowed to be too closely related. A double apprenticeship lasts for a **maximum of 4 years**. Attendance of part-time vocational school is regulated differently in case of double apprenticeships. In principle, however, school needs to be attended in one of the two occupations in each apprenticeship year.

Examples of common double apprenticeships:

- Baker & Cake and pastry baker
- Roofer & Tinsmith
- Vehicle body manufacturing & Motor vehicle engineering

Information about the different apprenticeships, apprenticeship periods, advancement and professional development options, career opportunities, etc. can be obtained from the career guidance centres of the Economic Chambers (see the **chapter on Career Choice**), the offices of Public Employment Service Austria in the various provinces, the apprenticeship offices in your province, and on the internet at www.bic.at or www.frag-jimmy.at

 Apprenticeship offices in Austria	
Apprenticeship offices of the Economic Chambers	
Economic Chamber Burgenland	wko.at/bgld/lehrlinge
Economic Chamber Carinthia	wko.at/ktn/lehrlingsstelle
Economic Chamber Lower Austria	wko.at/noe/bildung
Economic Chamber Upper Austria	www.lehrvertrag.at
Economic Chamber Salzburg	wko.at/sbg/lehrlingsstelle
Economic Chamber Styria	wko.at/stmk/lehrlingsstelle
Economic Chamber Tyrol	www.tirol-lehrling.at
Economic Chamber Vorarlberg	wko.at/vlbg/ba
Economic Chamber Vienna	wko.at/wien/lehrling
Apprenticeship body and specialist training office for agriculture and forestry	
Overview page for Austria	www.lehrlingsstelle.at

It goes without saying that direct entry to the world of work is also possible after compulsory schooling without vocational training qualifications. But please bear in mind that direct entry can bring about some disadvantages compared to attendance of training programmes:



- e.g. there are only few advancement opportunities
- most often, unskilled jobs cause considerable physical strain and are not interesting in the long run
- low wages
- in case of unskilled or semiskilled jobs, the risk of being made redundant is considerably increased as compared to occupations requiring qualified or specialist training

HOW TO FIND AN APPRENTICESHIP POST

▪ Use the internet as your source of information:

- ☑ **List of training companies:** all companies that train apprentices can be found at:
<http://lehrbetriebsuebersicht.wko.at>
Although this list does not include any vacancies, it does comprise all companies that provided training last year. Here you will



find an excellent overview of how many options are in principle available.

- ☑ **Online apprenticeship exchange:** All vacant apprenticeship places that are registered with the Economic Chamber or Public Employment Service Austria can be found at:
wko.at/lehrstellen and www.ams.at/lehrstellen
- ☑ **Other websites with apprenticeship and job offers:** on the internet many apprenticeship and job exchanges are accessible. An overview can be found for example at
www.bic.at → Service → Adressen & Links

- **Submit your enquiries to companies directly:** Even if no vacancies are advertised by a company, you can still call them and ask. This will show you have the maturity to make your own decisions and therefore that you are suited for vocational training.
- **Read newspaper advertisements:** daily, regional papers and city magazines often publish advertisements offering vacant apprenticeship posts.

- **Contact the Public Employment Service Austria (Arbeitsmarktservice, AMS):** From AMS you can obtain a list of vacant apprenticeship posts. But also remember that many entrepreneurs do not cover their staff requirements by contacting AMS. Merely 30%-40% of apprenticeship posts are placed by AMS.
- **Speak with your family, acquaintances, friends:** Very often it is possible to find a vacancy by word of mouth.
- **Use the days/weeks of practical work experience:** This is certainly the best option to secure yourself a vacant apprenticeship post. A survey has shown that more than 70% of entrepreneurs select their future apprentices in the course of “work experience placements” (also known as “taster apprenticeships”).

APPRENTICESHIP AND MATURA - BERUFSREIFEPRÜFUNG

Apprenticeship and Matura (also termed Apprenticeship with Matura or Berufsmatura) is a genuine alternative to purely school-based education. You will earn your own money early and secure yourself many professional development options. It also means that, depending on your apprenticeship period, you will pay contributions to pension and social security insurance for three to four years, which will have long-term positive effects.

Berufsreifeprüfung is treated as equivalent to upper secondary school-leaving certificate (Reifeprüfung = Matura) obtained at VET colleges and secondary academic schools. Apart from **career and advancement opportunities**, the Berufsreifeprüfung ensures you meet preconditions for **enrolling** for university or Fachhochschule.

Due to their well-founded training in an apprenticeship, graduates of Berufsreifeprüfung know how to combine practical experience with theoretical knowledge.

In the “Apprenticeship and Matura” scheme, preparation for Berufsreifeprüfung is made during the apprenticeship period. Preparatory courses are free of charge for apprentices. Also three of four exam sections can already be taken during the apprenticeship period. This way will demand high **willingness to learn** and **perseverance** from you.



More details can be found in the chapter “The Austrian education system” and at www.bmukk.gv.at/berufsmatura.



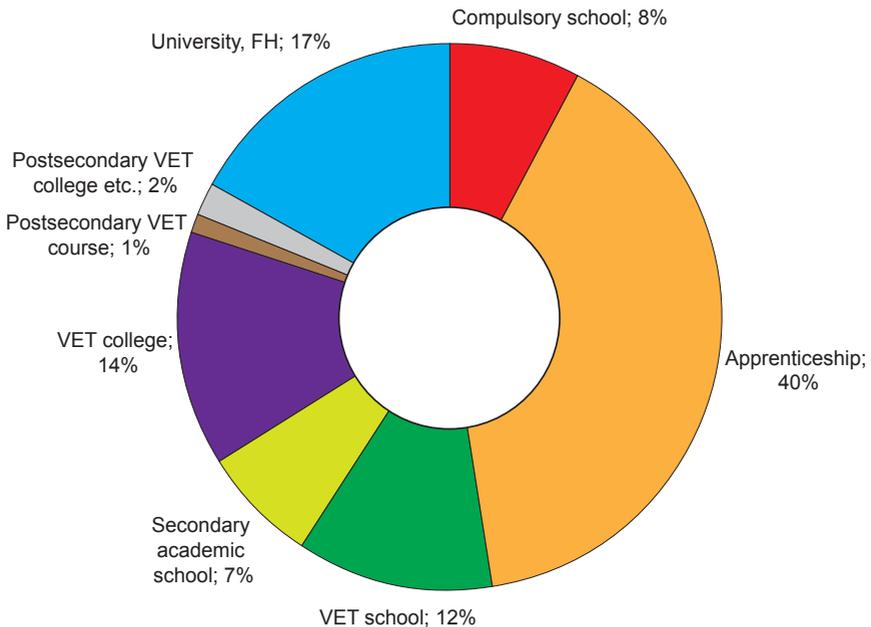
SUCCESSFUL CAREER WITH THE APPRENTICESHIP DIPLOMA

After you have completed your apprenticeship, many options of continuing training are open to you, offering you advancement and development opportunities, such as:

- additional apprenticeship-leave exam in a related apprenticeship
- exam for **industrial master**
- **master craftsperson examination**
- self-employment (see chapter “Self-employment - I will be my own boss”)
- **Studienberechtigungsprüfung** or **Berufsreifepprüfung** (“Apprenticeship and Matura”) to take up a study course at university or Fachhochschule

Some **40% of all executives in the Austrian economy (entrepreneurs and CEOs)** have completed an apprenticeship.

Bildungsabschlüsse der „Leitenden in der Wirtschaft“



Educational structure of executives (CEOs, heads of small companies, etc.) in the economy, 2007, in % (N=282,500)
Source: Statistics Austria, 2001 census, 2007 labour force survey, microcensus results
Calculations: ibw



APPLYING FOR A JOB MEANS: PROMOTING YOURSELF

- You know what interests you and what you're good at.
- You are informed about occupations and have already made a choice for one or several.
- So now it is time to apply for a job properly - but how? Because whether you get the job will largely depend on how you present yourself in your application.
- Show who you are and what you can do - you will be more successful if you prepare yourself thoroughly.

Job applications mostly go through several stages.



You will repeatedly encounter the following questions:

- Why did you opt for this job?
- Why are you applying in this company of all companies?
- What interests and abilities do you already have for your dream job?

The earlier you think about appropriate answers to these questions, the better you will be able to present yourself at companies.

⇒ And this will increase your opportunities for a workplace or training place!!



Should you want to apply for an apprenticeship post, don't wait too long! Training usually starts in September, but many companies fill their apprenticeship places as early as the January / February before that. Therefore you should already start looking for an apprenticeship post and apply for it in the autumn of your last school year.

Your application

It goes without saying that much importance is attached to **spelling** and **neatness**. Letters of application shouldn't have any dog-ears. Applications should be written **on a computer** using a simple font (e.g. Arial) and written on **white paper** (unless hand-written documents are explicitly requested).

By all means inform yourself in detail about the company, e.g. on the internet.

Your application documents will usually include:

- ☑ one **cover sheet** with a photo
- ☑ the actual **letter of application** (also termed: letter of motivation)
- ☑ a **personal data sheet or CV in the form of a table** (see example)
- ☑ photocopies of the last **two school reports**
- ☑ **certificates confirming completion of work placements**
- ☑ **certificates** proving placements abroad, EDP and foreign language courses and other activities

Naturally you can only enclose certificates for courses and work placements that you have actually participated in.

Beispielstraße 18	Ayshe Öztürk	5400 Hallein
<h1>BEWERBUNG</h1> 		
Tel.: 0664/123 45 67	Ayshe.Öztürk@gmx.at	

THE COVER SHEET

Although it is not (yet) absolutely necessary to enclose a cover sheet with your letter, it does look professional and therefore makes a good impression in every job application.

It consists of your photo and address including phone number and e-mail address.



Please use professional photos made by a photographer rather than snapshots from your holidays.

APPLICATION DOCUMENTS

The main task of application documents is to convince readers that you meet all specified requirements without appearing pushy or even dishonest. Here you can, for example, write about your work placements and personal interests.

The aim of application documents is to persuade personnel managers to want to get to know you in person.

ELEMENTS OF THE LETTER OF APPLICATION & SAMPLE

Full name, Address, Phone number, E-mail address if applicable	→	Ayshe Öztürk Beispielstraße 18 5400 Hallein Tel. 0664/123 45 67
Name of company, Company address and name of contact person	→	Sparkasse XY Frau Bettina Fröhlich Abteilungsleiterin Sparkassenstraße 20 5020 Salzburg
Place and date	→	Salzburg, 28. Jänner 2010
Subject: What it is about	→	Bankkauffrau in Ihrer Bank
Salutation	→	Sehr geehrte Frau Fröhlich,
Reason for application Why am I applying for this particular post? If applicable, refer to job ad, telephone conversation, etc. Show your interest!	→	die Arbeit in einer Bank hat mich schon immer interessiert und die Schnupperwoche, die ich vor kurzem absolvieren konnte, hat mein Interesse noch bestätigt. Deshalb bewerbe ich mich um eine Lehrstelle in der Sparkasse XY.
Why am I particularly suited for the post? What qualifies me for the requirements of the vacancy? (Refer to work placements, personal interests, etc.)	→	In der polytechnischen Schule habe ich den kaufmännischen Fachbereich belegt. Ich verfüge deshalb über Vorbildung in Rechnungswesen und Textverarbeitung. Das sind auch jene Fächer, die mich am meisten interessiert haben. Im Fachpraktikum habe ich in der Übungsfirma „Bank“ mitgearbeitet. Dabei konnte ich sowohl im Team als auch in Einzelarbeit verschiedenste Aufgaben erledigen, die auch in einer Bank anfallen.
Concluding sentence: What do I expect? How to continue?	→	Dass ich die notwendige Gewissenhaftigkeit mitbringe, um nach meiner Ausbildung Bankkunden kompetent zu beraten, davon würde ich Sie gerne persönlich überzeugen. Ich freue mich deshalb auf eine Einladung zu einem Vorstellungsgespräch.
Complimentary close and signature	→	Mit freundlichen Grüßen <i>Ayshe Öztürk</i> Ayshe Öztürk
Specify enclosures: Curriculum vitae, Certificates, etc.	→	1 Lebenslauf 2 Zeugnisse

THE CV

Your CV also needs to be written on a computer in the **form of a table** (see sample). Give detailed descriptions of **any professional experience** (days of practical work experience, “taster apprenticeships” or work placements) and qualifications which are particularly relevant for the advertised job (e.g. knowledge of foreign languages and periods spent abroad) and also other activities such as (holiday) jobs and hobbies. Your previous education/training and professional activities will be a decisive factor for future employers when it comes to choosing whether they want to employ you. If possible these should contain **no gaps**.



Information on parents and brothers and sisters are commonly found in applications for a training position. These often show that the applicant has someone in his/her family with relevant experience for the apprenticeship in question. Parents are also important points of contact for the training companies.

In later CVs this information will then not be included!

CV: Essential contents and sample

Lebenslauf	
Name and date of birth, Marital status	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>Zur Person</p> <p>Ayshe Öztürk geboren am 18. März 1995</p> </div> <div style="width: 45%; text-align: right;">  </div> </div>
If a COVER SHEET is used, no photo or address will be included here.	<p>Adresse</p> <p>Bahnhofstraße 18 5400 Hallein Tel: 0664/123 45 67</p>
Name and profession of parents and siblings (in letters of application for a training post)	<p>Eltern</p> <p>Memeth Öztürk, Versicherungsangestellter Yasminka Öztürk, Verkäuferin</p> <p>Geschwister</p> <p>Memeth Öztürk, Schüler</p>
School education	<p>Schulbildung</p> <p>derzeit Polytechnische Schule Hallein 2005 - 2009 Hauptschule Hallein 2001 - 2005 Volksschule Hallein</p>
Professional experience and periods of work placement	<p>Praktika</p> <p>Schnupperwoche bei der Salzburger Sparkasse</p>
Knowledge and skills of relevance for the post, e.g. foreign languages	<p>Besondere Kenntnisse</p> <p>Kenntnisse in Microsoft Word und Excel Internet: Funktionsweise, Informationssuche Türkisch</p>
Hobbies and other activities	<p>Freizeitinteressen</p> <p>Tennispielen, Lesen, mit dem Computer arbeiten</p>
City, Date and personal signature	<p>Hallein, 28. Jänner 2010</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Ayshe Öztürk</i></p>

The Europass CV

One form of CV that is becoming increasingly important is the so-called Europass CV. For more information about the European CV and the Europass Training initiative, go to <http://www.europass.at>.

Written job applications - checklist

- ☑ For your letter and personal data sheet use white, unruled paper in DIN-A4 format and leave a margin of some 2.5 centimetres on the right and left.
- ☑ The passport photo should be in colour. Do not use a picture from an automatic photo machine, it should be taken by a photographer! To be on the safe side, write your name on the back of the photo in case the photo becomes separated from your CV or application dossier.
- ☑ If you print a digital photo directly on the CV or application dossier, the same applies: this must also be completely professional.
- ☑ N.B.: **Never send your CV and application documents as a copy**, make sure you write new ones for each application. Send references only as copies!!
- ☑ Check that the date and personal information in the letter and CV match.
- ☑ Before you send your application documents, **check them once more for spelling mistakes**.
- ☑ Do not forget to write your name and address on the envelope.
- ☑ Make sure there is sufficient postage (stamps). If you are not sure, take the envelope to the post office.



APPLICATION VIA E-MAIL AND ONLINE APPLICATION

With e-mail applications you also have to obey **several rules**:

- ☑ Basically the same rules apply for an e-mail application as for a written one.
- ☑ It is important that applications are sent by e-mail only when it is expressly mentioned that this can be done in the job advertisement.
- ☑ Your **e-mail address** must contain your own name and not any **jokey names**, e.g. Ayshe_Öztürk@gmx.at but not something like coolchick@gmx.at.
- ☑ The reason for sending your e-mail should be written in the **subject line of the mail program**. In the subject refer to your application, e.g. Application for position as bank clerk etc. Make sure you do not leave the subject line empty.
- ☑ In the subject do not use words like “Attention” or “Important” and do not use **special characters** (e.g. →, “...”, !, &, +, * etc.). If you do, your e-mail may be considered as spam.
- ☑ You must also use a **polite form of address** in an e-mail application: e.g. “Dear Ms Fröhlich”. In the e-mail you should also introduce yourself briefly and write which job you are applying for.
- ☑ Application documents, CV, certificates/references are attached to the e-mail in pdf format.
- ☑ Do not send **too many attachments** though. It often takes too long for the recipient to open them all. Offer to send other documents by post if these are required.



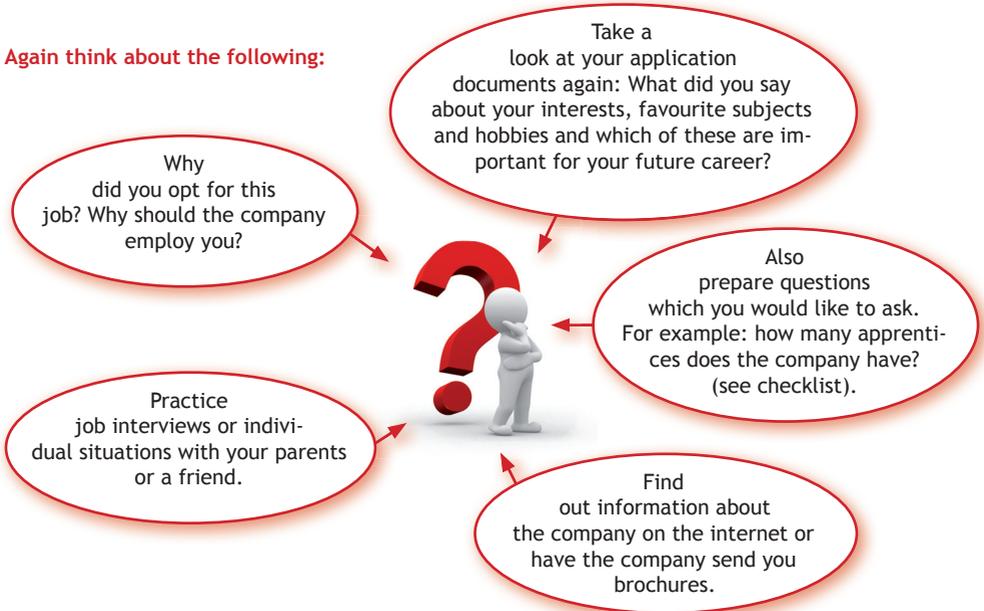
You can also **apply online** on the websites of a lot of companies. These online applications are often ready-made tables which you have to fill in. Make sure you then take your full application dossier with you to the job interview.

THE JOB INTERVIEW

Once you have come this far you will have the opportunity to present all the skills and talents you have for your future job and the training company.

Prepare yourself thoroughly for the interview. Only in this way will you succeed in presenting yourself convincingly to the employer!

Again think about the following:



Possible questions at the job interview:

1. Questions which are often asked by companies:

- Why do you want to start here of all companies? How did you find out about our company?
- What do you know about our company?
- Why should we employ you ahead of the other applicants?
- What do you do in your free time?
- What interests you in this job?
- Do you prefer working alone or in a team?
- What were your favourite subjects at school?
- What are your strengths? What are your weaknesses?

2. Questions which you can ask to show interest in the work:

- What department will I belong to?
- Who will be my most immediate point of contact?
- What will my working hours be?
- Are there required work clothing or clothing regulations?
- When would I start?

There are also several rules for the job interview:

- ☑ Confirm the time of your interview with the human resources department: either by phone or in a short letter/e-mail.
- ☑ Look before to check where the company is located (in which street), and how you get there. Try **at all costs to be on time**, ideally you should arrive ten minutes before your appointment. Nothing is worse than going into an interview exhausted.
- ☑ Nice, clean clothes are important. But they should also be comfortable and be suitable for you and the occasion. Whether you wear a suit or clean jeans and a shirt or blouse depends entirely on which job you are applying for.
- ☑ Sit upright and look in a friendly way into your interviewer's eyes. Show your interviewer that you are listening, for example by nodding.
- ☑ Let your interviewer finish speaking. Then try to explain things as objectively as possible without being inhibited. To always answer just with a short yes or no is no better than talking endlessly.
- ☑ If there is something you do not understand, simply ask: this shows that you are interested.



REJECTION

What should you do if you are turned down for a job? Do not give up! Think about what the reason may be for the rejection so you know what you can do better the next time.

Have the confidence to call companies and ask why you were rejected.

You may have been rejected because...



SELECTION TESTS

Selection tests are being used more and more by companies when taking on apprentices and employees. Sometimes these tests are done directly in the companies, but often they are outsourced to human resources consultancies or career guidance counsellors. There is a very wide choice of possible tests, ranging from short aptitude tests to selection processes lasting for several days (e.g. assessment centres).

OVERVIEW OF APPLICATIONS

Usually you will send your application documents to several companies at the same time. It is therefore important that you maintain an overview of each of your individual applications. A checklist can help you here.

This is what such a checklist may look like:

Company Point of contact Telephone number	Date of application	Date of 1 st enquiry	Date of 2 nd enquiry	Date of acceptance/ rejection



You will find more information on the application process for example at
www.bic.at ⇒ Career choice ⇒ Tips for your Application
www.ams.at ⇒ Berufsinfo & Weiterbildung



SELF-EMPLOYMENT - I WILL BE MY OWN BOSS!

Some facts: In Austria, some 90% of the workforce are in an employment relationship, this means they work as salary or wage earners or as civil servants. Only around 10% are **self-employed**, meaning they run their own business.

Also among immigrants, some 10% are self-employed entrepreneurs. More than one third come from the “old” EU countries (and also Iceland, Norway, Switzerland and Liechtenstein), another 18% from the “new” EU states, and 14% from the former Yugoslavia. The remainder is relatively evenly distributed over all other larger regions of origin. Within the individual groups of immigrants, shares of self-employed vary greatly. Among immigrants from the Middle East and the “old” EU states, e.g., it is roughly 14%, from Turkey 3.1%, and from former Yugoslavia 2.5%. (Source: 2001 census, calculations Economic Promotion Institute (WIFO)).

WHAT IT MEANS TO “BE SELF-EMPLOYED”



Those who are self-employed make business for their own account and at their own risk, they are therefore responsible for their business success themselves, also bearing the risk of failure. This goes for craftspersons and publicans as well as for doctors and lawyers.

The path to self-employment is not a leisurely stroll, however. Many questions need to be answered, many challenges need to be overcome, and there is no guarantee of economic success.

Advantages and disadvantages

Entrepreneurs give up all safety nets of a regular workplace (regular salary, holiday allowance and Christmas bonus, paid holidays and sick leave, etc.). Instead, self-employed people are their own boss, are themselves responsible for their business success and the money they make goes into their own pockets.

Being self-employed therefore offers the opportunity of **implementing one's own ideas**, it entails much **freedom of action**, **flexible working hours** and more independence than an employment relationship. The main drawback of self-employment is the so-called **entrepreneurial risk** - the use of one's own money in the company and the connected risks.

The business idea

Opening the fourth pizza stand in the same block of houses or the third mobile phone shop in the same street will usually not be very good plans for business start-ups. If you want to be self-employed, you need a “business idea”. This means you have to think carefully where you plan to produce or sell what product or provide what kind of service.



You should consider the following questions:



- Why should customers buy from me of all people?
- How do my services differ from existing offers?
- How large is the market and how has it developed?
- How much money do I need for implementing my business idea?
- What laws do I have to know and observe?

Business succession and franchising

You will have a slightly easier start if you can take over business from another person. The risks are known and costs lower than if you found a business from scrap.

Franchisees are also self-employed. They take over a ready-made business concept, benefit from a known brand, a well-proven concept and support by the franchiser. The drawback is, however, that franchisees have considerably less freedom to shape the business themselves and have to pay for the franchiser's know-how.

Am I the entrepreneurial type? Major prerequisites:

Paths to self-employment differ widely. Some 50% of self-employed have an apprenticeship diploma, 15% the upper secondary school-leaving certificate, 14% a VET school certificate, 12% have completed compulsory schooling, and around 9% are university graduates. The majority of self-employed were in an employment relationship before founding their own business.



The key prerequisites for success are:



Find out if you are the entrepreneurial type: ⇒
www.gruenderservice.at/unternehmertest.

TYPES OF SELF-EMPLOYMENT

In principle, three types of self-employed people can be distinguished in Austria:

- ⇒ **Sectors of the industrial economy**
(commerce; crafts and trade; tourism; transport; information and consulting; industry; bank and insurance)
- ⇒ **Liberal professions**
(doctors, lawyers, tax consultants, architects, pharmacists, healthcare professions, artistic professions, etc.)
- ⇒ **Agriculture and forestry**

Sectors of the industrial economy

These professions are regulated by the Trade, Commerce and Industry Regulation Act (Gewerbeordnung). A trade licence is required to exercise an activity in a sector of the industrial economy. This licence can be obtained from the trade authority (district authority, municipal authority). Whether you require any special training or qualification (a so-called certificate of competence) will depend on your planned activity.

Before registering the trade, get support and tailored consultancy from the Economic Chamber's business start-up service (www.gruenderservice.at). This service will provide you all the information you need, which will save you money when registering the trade.



The **business start-up service** provides information (e.g. in the form of brochures), **personal consultancy** and service (e.g. **workshops for new entrepreneurs**) related to all **issues of business creation** (trade licence, legal form, social security, grants, financing, business plan, etc.). You will also save some charges and fees if you use the consultancy of the business start-up service before founding your own business.

Independent of your type of trade you need to meet the following prerequisites

= **General requirements:**

- Austrian or another EU/EEA citizenship or a residence permit permitting employment (see the first chapter "The Way to the Labour Market"),
- residence in Austria,
- be of legal age (over 18 years),
- no grounds for disqualification** (e.g. rejection of bankruptcy proceedings owing to the lack of assets or conviction by court of law),
- and in specific cases you will need an operating licence.



According to the Trade, Commerce and Industry Regulation Act (Gewerbeordnung) there are the following types of trades:

Unregulated trades:	Regulated trades and crafts:
<p>For unregulated trades, no certificate of competence is required, approx. 93% of all activities in a sector of the industrial economy come under this heading;</p> <p>e.g. commerce, market seller, petrol stations, data processing, advertising.</p>	<p>For regulated trades, a certificate of competence is required, approx. 6% of all activities in a sector of the industrial economy come under this heading;</p> <p>e.g. restaurants, joinery, insurance broker, beautician, business consulting, bakery, motor vehicle engineering.</p>
Officially regulated trades:	Partial trades:
<p>These are regulated trades that require a reliability test, certificate of competence and authorisation by the trade authority;</p> <p>e.g. master builder, electrical engineering, gas and sanitary technology, financial consulting, carpentry.</p>	<p>Only a simplified certificate of competence is required;</p> <p>e.g. tailor shops specialised in alterations, bicycle technology, automotive glazing, assembly of modular furniture.</p>

If you meet the **general requirements** for the trade licence but do not (yet) have the necessary certificate of competence, you have e.g. the following options:

- take the qualifying exam or master craftsman exam
- found a corporation
- employ a managing director in line with trade, commerce and industry legislation (connected with costs!)
- apply for an individual certificate (in case you can furnish proof of relevant professional experience or attended courses)

Liberal professions

Self-employed activities **not regulated** by the Trade, Commerce and Industry Regulation Act are called “**liberal professions**”. In this case, **personal service provision** is in the foreground, in most cases there is special mutual trust with customers or clients.

Liberal professions are governed by **specific provisions and representations of interest** (chambers and professional associations). In many cases, but not always, liberal professions require higher-level vocational education (university or Fachhochschule) - sometimes in connection with an admission examination (e.g. lawyers exam, tax consultants exam).

Important liberal professions are:

- doctor
- veterinary surgeon
- pharmacist
- lawyer
- notary public
- chartered accountants and tax consultants
- architect and civil engineer
- patent attorney
- physiotherapist
- psychologist
- psychotherapist
- occupational therapist
- speech therapist
- midwives
- writer and journalist
- musician, artist



Information about self-employment in these professions can be obtained from the competent representations of interest (Medical Chamber, Bar Association, Association of Psychologists, etc.).

Agriculture and forestry

In Austria **everyone is entitled to run an agricultural business**. Although it is not necessary to complete agricultural training, a relevant qualification will ensure better chances of success.

Companies exceeding a specified size will automatically be a member of the Chamber of Agriculture. For smaller companies there exists the option of voluntary membership. When **buying a business** an **authorisation** will be required. The purchaser needs to **furnish proof of a specialist qualification in agriculture**. Also for some grants, agricultural training will be needed.



More details can be obtained from the Chambers of Agriculture ⇒ www.agrar-net.at.

KNOWING WHERE - THE RIGHT LOCATION

The business location is important for business success. Noteworthy factors are: accessibility, available staff, distance to suppliers and customers, costs for land and rent, distance to competitors, etc.



In many cases, an **operating licence** from the authorities (district authority, municipal authority) will be required. Business installations will not need any operating licence only if they cannot cause any detrimental effects (e.g. in case of mere office premises).

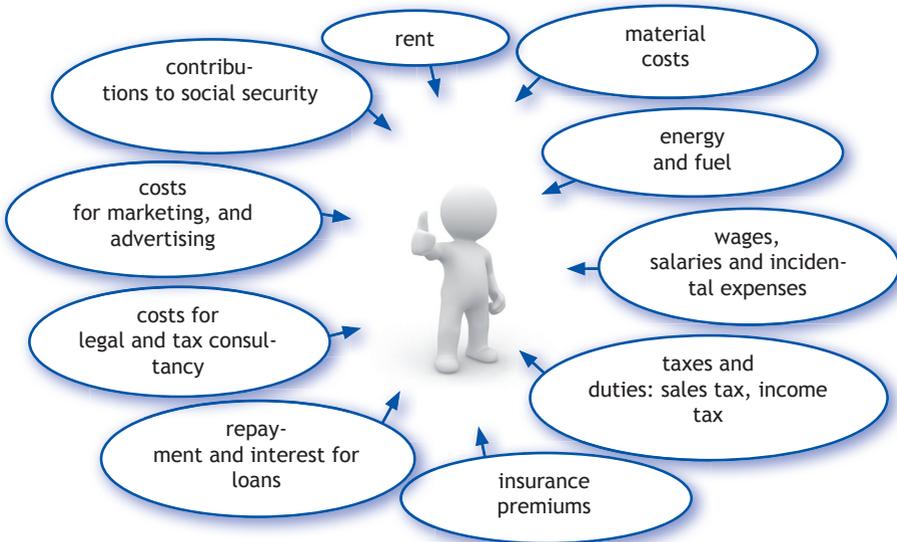
ALONE OR IN A TEAM - THE APPROPRIATE LEGAL FORM

As a company founder you have to consider your company's legal form. The question you have to ask yourself is whether you want to work alone or in a team (foundation of a corporation). There are many options - ranging from a one-person company (sole proprietorship) and partnerships (e.g. general partnership) to capital entities (e.g. limited liability company). The Economic Chamber's business start-up service will help you in your decision-making.



TURNOVER DOES NOT EQUAL PROFIT - COST PLANNING

As an entrepreneur you will be happy about earnings achieved by selling your products and services. But watch out! Self-employed entrepreneurs also have to pay different costs. The most important of these are:



Plan your earnings and costs carefully and always remember that your turnover (your revenue) is not automatically your profits!

OWN CAPITAL AND BORROWED CAPITAL - FINANCING

One important pillar for a successful development of your company is **sufficient financing**. This requires that you know and plan your **capital requirements** exactly. What expenses do you expect (see above)? When can you expect your first earnings? How high do your reserves need to be?



In your capital requirements you should include some **10% reserves**. Your expenditure might be higher or your earnings lower than you expect. It is also possible that earnings accrue later than expected.

- ☑ You should raise about **30% of your capital requirements out of your own pocket (own capital)**, e.g. from savings or securities. Maybe you can raise additional own capital if a partner participates in your business idea.
- ☑ For the **remaining capital requirements** there are various possibilities of **third-party financing (borrowed capital)**, e.g. bank loans, supplier credit, leasing of machines, parts of facilities, or vehicles. Your possible investors will of course want to know precisely where they are investing their money. Therefore prepare the documents for your discussion with your bank's account manager or other investors particularly thoroughly (**business plan**, see below).
- ☑ In addition, you should by all means inform yourself about possible grants for business creation (business start-up programmes, support for young entrepreneurs, etc.)!



The Economic Chamber's business start-up service (www.gruenderservice.at) will inform you about all issues related to financing. Other important links regarding this topic can be found at the end of this chapter.

WITH GOOD PLANNING YOU ARE HALF-WAY TO SUCCESS

Before becoming self-employed you have to consider many different aspects. It is therefore important to draw up a corporate concept - also termed business plan. The corporate concept covers the original underlying idea and further steps. The benefits of a business plan are:

- ☑ Its written form forces you to detailed reflection and careful consideration.
- ☑ The corporate concept is a plan that serves as good means of orientation.
- ☑ A corporate concept will make it easier to negotiate with suppliers.
- ☑ A corporate concept is the basic requirement for loans and grants.



For your corporate concept we suggest you use the business module “Plan4You Easy” at ⇒ www.gruenderservice.at/businessplan.



The following institutions and internet services will help you in your business start-up phase

Business start-up service of the Economic Chambers consultancy, workshops, First-Start-Shop, guides, info material, offices in all provinces	www.gruenderservice.at
WIFI Institute for Economic Promotion training for entrepreneurs, checklist for entrepreneurs, preparation for the master craftsperson, qualifying and entrepreneurial exams institutes in all provinces	www.wifi.at
Successor pool exchange of the business start-up service	www.nachfolgeboerse.at
Franchise pool of the Economic Chamber	www.franchiseboerse.at
Database on support programmes of the Economic Chamber	wko.at/foerderungen
Grants and support for business founders and business successors	www.gruendungsbonus.at www.nachfolgebonus.at
Network for young entrepreneurs	www.jungewirtschaft.at
Network for female entrepreneurs	wko.at/unternehmerin
Social Insurance Institution for Trade, Commerce and Industry	www.sva.or.at



ADDRESSES & LINKS

USEFUL PAGES ON THE INTERNET

- ☑ BIC career guidance tool: information about more than 1,500 occupations, an interest profile, tips on career choice, and much more information (part of which in several languages):
www.bic.at

- ☑ AMS career guidance information:
www.beruflexikon.at (AMS database of occupations)
www.yourchoiceinfo.at (Information about vocational and continuing training)
www.ams.at/qualifikationsbarometer (AMS information about the development of the labour market and qualifications)

- ☑ Everything you need to know about school: information and addresses, school psychological counselling, info brochures, etc.
www.schule.at
www.schulpsychologie.at
www.berufsbildendeschulen.at

- ☑ Information about the programmes offered by universities of applied sciences (“Fachhochschulen”)
www.fhr.ac.at
www.fachhochschulen.at

- ☑ Online guides on study courses and information about universities
www.studienwahl.at
www.wegweiser.ac.at

- ☑ Info portals for education and training, continuing training and adult learning
www.eduvista.com (meta search engine for continuing training)
www.erwachsenenbildung.at
www.ams.at/weiterbildung (AMS continuing training database)

- ☑ Information about schools by the Education Ministry
www.bmukk.gv.at

- ☑ Information about universities and Fachhochschulen by the Science Ministry
www.bmwf.gv.at

- ☑ Information about apprenticeship posts by the Austrian Economic Chambers
wko.at/lehrstellen (Vacant apprenticeship posts in cooperation with AMS)
lehrbetriebsuebersicht.wko.at (Training companies in Austria (no!! information about vacant apprenticeship posts))

- ☑ Federal Ministry of Economy, Family and Youth: all training regulations concerning apprenticeship occupations
www.bmwfj.gv.at ⇒ Service ⇒ Lehrlingsservice

- ☑ Work placements abroad for apprentices
www.ifa.or.at



COUNSELLING SERVICES FOR MIGRANTS - SELECTION:

- ☑ **Vienna:** Beratungszentrum für Migranten und Migrantinnen (Counselling Centre for Migrants) ⇒ www.migrant.at
- ☑ **Lower Austria:** Horizont - Beratungsstelle für Migrantinnen und Migranten (Horizon - Counselling Centre for Migrants) ⇒ www.horizont-noe.at
- ☑ **Upper Austria:** Zentrum für MigrantInnen Oberösterreich (MIGRARE - Upper Austrian Centre for Migrants) ⇒ www.migrare.at
- ☑ **Salzburg:** Verein zur Beratung und Betreuung von Ausländern in Salzburg (VEBBAS - Association for Counselling and Assistance for Foreigners in Salzburg) ⇒ www.vebbas.at
- ☑ **Tyrol:** Zentrum für MigrantInnen in Tirol (ZEMIT - Centre for Migrants in Tyrol) ⇒ www.zemit.at
- ☑ **Vorarlberg:** Okay. zusammen leben (okay. living together) ⇒ www.okay-line.at
- ☑ **Carinthia:** Ausländerberatungsstelle Klagenfurt (Klagenfurt Foreigners' Counselling Centre) ⇒ www.ausländerberatung.or.at
- ☑ **Styria:** Zentrum zur sozialmedizinischen, rechtlichen und kulturellen Betreuung von Ausländern und Ausländerinnen in Österreich (ZEBRA - Centre for Sociomedical, Legal and Cultural Assistance for Foreigners in Austria) ⇒ www.zebra.or.at



EDUCATIONAL COUNSELLING AND CAREER GUIDANCE INSTITUTIONS OF THE AUSTRIAN ECONOMIC CHAMBERS AND INSTITUTES FOR ECONOMIC PROMOTION (WIFIS):

Information.Job.Career - educational counselling service of WIFI Burgenland	Robert Graf-Platz 1 7000 Eisenstadt	T: 05 90 907 - 5111 E: waltraud.paulsich@wkbgl.d.at W: www.bgl.d.wifi.at
BIWI - Careers Guidance Centre of the Vienna Economy)	Währinger Gürtel 97 1180 Wien	T: (01) 514 50 - 6518 E: mailbox@biwi.at W: www.biwi.at
Educational counselling for career & enterprises of WIFI Vienna	Währinger Gürtel 97 1180 Wien	T: (01) 476 77 - 5361 E: bildungsberatung@wifwien.at W: www.wifwien.at/bildungsberatung
WIFI Lower Austria Career Guidance Centres	Rödlgasse 1 3100 St. Pölten	T: (02742) 890 - 2702 E: biz@noe.wifi.at W: www.wifi-biz.at
Career guidance of the Economic Chamber Upper Austria	Wiener Straße 150 4021 Linz	T: 05 90 909 - 4052 E: karriere@wkooe.at W: wko.at/ooe/karriere
WIFI Styria	Körblergasse 111 - 113 8010 Graz	T: (0316) 601 - 492 E: david.schuetze@wifi.wkstmk.at W: www.stmk.wifi.at
Vocational training of the Economic Chamber Carinthia	Koschutastraße 3 9020 Klagenfurt	T: 05 90 904 - 850 E: lehrlingsstelle@wkk.or.at W: wko.at/ktn/lehrlingsstelle
AHA! - Educational Counselling of the Economic Chamber Salzburg	Julius-Raab-Platz 4 5027 Salzburg	T: (0662) 8888 - 276 E: aha@wks.at W: www.aha-bildungsberatung.at
Career guidance centre of the Economic Chamber Tyrol	Egger-Lienz-Straße 116 6020 Innsbruck	T: 05 90 90 5 - 7253 E: biz@wktiro.at W: www.biz-tiro.at
Educational consulting of WIFI Tyrol	Egger-Lienz-Straße 116 6020 Innsbruck	T: 05 90 90 5 - 7291 E: sabine.kofler@wktiro.at W: www.tiro.wifi.at/bildungsberatung
BIFO - Counselling for Education and Career Vorarlberg	Bahnhofstraße 24 6850 Dornbirn	T: (05572) 317 17 - 0 E: bifoinfo@bifo.at W: www.bifo.at
Institute for Economic Promotion of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber (general information)	Wiedner Hauptstraße 63 1045 Wien	T. 05 90 900 - 3105 E. margit.havlik@wko.at W. www.wifi.at/bildungsberatung

