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Total number of pupils at the beginning of the school year 2021/22 slightly decreased

In the academic secondary schools lower level a new high is reached again

Vienna, 2022-12-14 – According to Statistics Austria, at the beginning of the school year 2021/22 there were about 3 300 or 0.3 % fewer pupils in Austrian schools than in the previous school year. The increase as a result of refugee migration from Ukraine from the second half of the school year 2021/22 is not yet taken into account here.

While the number of pupils in primary schools at the beginning of the 2021/22 school year remained more or less the same as in the previous year at +0.1 %, new secondary schools recorded a decline of 0.6 %. In contrast, the number of pupils enrolled in the lower level of academic secondary schools reached a new high of nearly 124 000. At upper secondary level, the numbers at the beginning of the school year were down slightly for most types of schools. Following the outbreak of the Ukraine crisis, attendance figures for all school types increased by a total of around 11 000 in the 2021/22 school year up to June 2022.

Increasing number of pupils in primary schools in recent years due to immigration

At the beginning of the 2021/22 school year, a total of 347 952 pupils attended Austria's primary schools (2020/21: 347 521, +0.1 %). Following sharp declines from the turn of the millennium onward, the numbers only began to rise noticeably again in 2016/17. The increase was largely due to the growing number of children with non-Austrian citizenship following increased migration from 2015 onward. After the outbreak of the Ukraine crisis, attendance figures again increased markedly during the 2021/22 school year. According to figures from the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research, an additional 4 700 children displaced from Ukraine were being taught in Austria's primary schools at the beginning of June 2022 (see info box).

Again a new high in the number of pupils in the academic secondary schools, lower level

In the 2021/22 school year the academic secondary schools, lower level again recorded an increase, with a total of 123 925 pupils reaching a new high. In a ten-year comparison, this represents an increase of 10.7 %. At new secondary schools, on the other hand, attendance figures continued to decline at the beginning of 2021/22. Compared to 2011/12, then still including the former general secondary schools, pupil numbers fell by 5.4 % to 205 831. As a result of refugee movements due to the Ukraine crisis, attendance at lower secondary schools also increased by around 4 900 during the 2021/22 school year.

Slight decline in the number of pupils in upper secondary education

In the academic secondary schools, upper level the 92 661 pupils represent an increase of 2.2 % in a ten-year comparison. In the area of colleges for higher vocational education (BHS), attendance figures at higher colleges for early childhood resp. social pedagogy increased more strongly in the same period (2021/22: 13 099, 2011/12: 11 056, +18.5 %). At 62 673, the number of pupils at higher crafts, technical and arts colleges remained roughly the same as in 2011/12 (-0.1 %). Attendance at higher colleges of business administration and higher colleges of management and the service industries has declined over the past ten years (-10.2 % and -8.7 % compared to 2011/12). A similar picture emerges for vocational schools for apprentices (-13.7 %) and schools for intermediate vocational education (-14.9 %) over the same period.

In the 2020/21 school year, the total number of pupils in academic secondary schools, upper level and BHS was still slightly higher than in 2021/22. In both school types, the higher attendance figures at that time were also a consequence of the measures taken in response to the Corona pandemic (see info box). Thus, in 2020/21, more young people remained in their chosen school type who, in earlier years, would have changed schooling or perhaps dropped out altogether due to a lack of advancement eligibility. By contrast, this effect was no longer evident in the 2021/22 school year.

For detailed results and further information please refer to [website](#).

School attendance in 2021/22 compared to 2020/21 and 2011/12

| Type of school | School Year | | | Change in % 2021/22 to ... | |
|--|-------------|-----------|-----------|-------------------------------|---------|
| | 2021/22 | 2020/21 | 2011/12 | 2020/21 | 2011/12 |
| Total for all types of schools | 1 139 066 | 1 142 342 | 1 153 912 | -0,3 | -1,3 |
| Primary schools | 347 952 | 347 521 | 328 121 | 0,1 | 6,0 |
| New secondary schools ¹ | 205 831 | 206 996 | 217 505 | -0,6 | -5,4 |
| Special (SEN) schools ² | 14 464 | 13 864 | 13 748 | 4,3 | 5,2 |
| Pre-vocational schools | 14 722 | 15 007 | 18 022 | -1,9 | -18,3 |
| Academic secondary schools, lower level | 123 925 | 122 600 | 111 972 | 1,1 | 10,7 |
| Academic secondary schools, upper level | 92 661 | 93 436 | 90 687 | -0,8 | 2,2 |
| Other general schools (statutes) ³ | 11 021 | 11 119 | 9 550 | -0,9 | 15,4 |
| Vocational schools for apprentices ⁴ | 115 832 | 116 759 | 134 282 | -0,8 | -13,7 |
| Schools for intermediate vocational education ⁴ | 41 538 | 42 679 | 48 807 | -2,7 | -14,9 |
| Other technical and vocational schools (statutes) | 8 554 | 8 529 | 7 591 | 0,3 | 12,7 |
| Colleges for higher vocational education | 143 424 | 144 074 | 148 274 | -0,5 | -3,3 |
| Higher crafts, technical and arts colleges | 62 673 | 62 819 | 62 746 | -0,2 | -0,1 |
| Higher colleges of business administration | 37 642 | 37 814 | 41 931 | -0,5 | -10,2 |
| Higher colleges of management and the service industries | 26 154 | 26 377 | 28 637 | -0,8 | -8,7 |
| Higher colleges of agriculture and forestry | 3 856 | 3 911 | 3 904 | -1,4 | -1,2 |
| Higher colleges for early childhood resp. social pedagogy | 13 099 | 13 153 | 11 056 | -0,4 | 18,5 |
| Federal sports academies | 2 315 | 2 276 | 3 768 | 1,7 | -38,6 |
| Schools and academies for the medical services | 16 827 | 17 482 | 21 585 | -3,7 | -22,0 |

Q: STATISTICS AUSTRIA, School Statistics. Data at the beginning of the school year as of October 1 or, if classes are organized during the year, on the second Monday after the start of the course.

1) New secondary schools at former general secondary school locations, excluding students of the pilot secondary school at academic secondary schools, lower level. – 2) Incl. Pupils who are taught in other schools according to the special school curriculum.. – 3) Schools with organizational statute incl. schools with foreign curriculum. – 4) In the case of agricultural and forestry technical and vocational schools, the required decree for the collection and publication of data for the school year 2021/22 is not available from the responsible Ministry of Agriculture at the time of publication. In the column for the school year 2021/22, therefore, the data from the school year 2020/21 are shown for these school types.

Information on the increase in the number of pupils due to the Ukraine crisis: According to the answer to the parliamentary question No. 10979/J-NR/2022 on 18.7.2022 by Federal Minister Ao. Univ.-Prof. Dr. Martin Polaschek as of 7 June 2022, a total of 10 883 children and adolescents displaced from Ukraine were being taught in Austrian schools, 4 666 of them in primary schools, 4 850 in lower secondary schools and 1 367 in upper secondary schools. According to estimates at the time, “in the medium term, between 37 500 and 50 000 children and young people from Ukraine are expected to attend Austrian schools.”

Information on the adjusted conditions of ascent according to Corona measures: At the end of the 2019/20 school year, for the first time, pupils with one “Not Sufficient” (after taking any repeat, supplementary, annual or semester exams) were automatically eligible to advance to the next grade. In addition, pupils with two or more “Not Sufficient” grades were eligible for advancement to the next grade by decision of the class or school conference.

If you have any questions on this topic, please contact:

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