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Education increases opportunities on the labour market

Education in Figures 2021/22

Vienna, 2023-05-16 – The educational level of the Austrian population is rising continuously. As Statistics Austria’s current publication “Education in Figures 2021/22” shows, a higher level of education also opens up more opportunities on the labour market. The unemployment rate is significantly higher for people with no more than a compulsory school-leaving certificate, and they also enter the labor market less quickly than people with higher educational qualifications.

“The educational level of the Austrian population has risen considerably over the past 40 years: While the share of university and academy graduates has more than quadrupled since 1981, the share of the population with at most compulsory schooling has more than halved. This puts Austria in the European average. And education pays off: The higher the level of education, the greater the income and employment opportunities on the labour market. Moreover, the apprenticeship is an employment turbo: this is the fastest way to start a career, because many people continue their career in the company after completing their apprenticeship,” explains Tobias Thomas, Director General of Statistics Austria.

Since 1981, the share of people with a degree from a university, university college or equivalent study programme has increased from 4.5% to 19.1% in 2020 (see Table 1), while the share of people with at most compulsory school has fallen from 46.0% to 17.5% in the same period. Thus, in an international comparison, the share of the population with at most compulsory school is below the EU22 average, while that with a tertiary degree is almost at the EU22 average.

The higher the level of education, the better the chances on the labour market: the unemployment rate for people aged 15 to 74 with at most compulsory schooling is 11.7%, those with a school for intermediate vocational education or apprenticeship certificate 3.5%. For higher secondary school graduates, the unemployment rate is 4.6% and 3.3% for people with a university degree. The career entry also varies according to the level of education: It takes the shortest time for people with an apprenticeship qualification to start their first job within 32 days of graduation. After the college for higher vocational education it takes 119 days after graduation to enter the labour market. For persons who have completed only compulsory schooling, it takes the longest to get their first job at 234 days.

Detailed results and further information on education statistics can be found in the publication Education in Figures 2021/22, in the accompanying volume of tables and on our [website](#), results on continuing vocational education and training in enterprises in the report Continuing vocational Education and Training in Enterprises 2020 (PDF, 6 MB).

Information on methodology, definitions:

Unemployment rate (ILO concept): Share of unemployed according to ILO concept in all labour force (employed and unemployed), each in the age-range of 15 to 74 years.

EU22: For some international indicators, the EU22 average was calculated. This corresponds to the unweighted average of the 22 OECD countries, which are also part of the EU27: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the Czech Republic and Hungary.

Higher secondary school: There are basically two types of higher secondary schools in Austria: the academic secondary schools and the colleges for higher vocational education.

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