

Press release: 13 178-206/23

More than 60% of the population have basic digital skills

Digital skills strongly depend on education and age

Vienna, 2023-10-12 – Six out of ten people in Austria have at least basic digital skills. Austria thus surpasses the EU average and ranks among the top 10. A recent analysis by Statistics Austria within the framework of the digital competence offensive for Austria of the Ministry of Finance shows that digital skills are strongly related to education and age, while gender and degree of urbanisation play a subordinate role.

„The use of digital technologies is one of the modern key skills. In Austria, more than 60% of the population has basic digital skills. But digital skills vary greatly depending on education and age. While 79% of 16- to 24-year-olds have basic digital skills, only 35% of 65- to 74-year-olds do. Among university graduates, the proportion of those with digital skills is particularly high at 86%,“ explains Tobias Thomas, Director General of Statistics Austria.

Austria among top 10 in EU comparison

In a European comparison Austria ranks ninth in terms of basic digital skills (see figure). 63% of the population have at least basic digital skills. The EU-27 average of 54% is a few percentage points lower. Finland, Netherlands, Ireland, Denmark and Sweden are in the lead. Furthermore, despite its good position within Europe, Austria has not yet achieved the goal of the EU’s digital decade, according to which at least 80% of the European population should have basic skills by 2030.

Digital skills depend crucially on education and age

The socio-demographic analysis of the data on basic digital skills also shows a strong educational and age influence (see table). The higher a person's formal education and the younger they are, the more likely they are to have digital skills. For example, 79% of 16- to 24-year-olds have basic digital skills, compared to only 35% of 65- to 74-year-olds. Nevertheless, education has the greatest effect. 86% of people with a university degree have at least basic digital skills, while only 40% of people with only compulsory schooling (i.e. primary and lower secondary education) do.

Digital skills also differ by employment status. Employed people (71%) have significantly higher digital skills than people outside the labor force (39%), such as pensioners and homemakers. Urbanisation shows a different picture. Residents of cities (71%), smaller towns and suburbs (61%) and rural areas (59%) do not differ greatly when it comes to digital skills. Gender also shows only few differences. With the exception of the oldest age group of 65- to 74-year-olds, in which men (47%) have higher digital skills than women (24%), digital skills do not differ significantly by gender (men: 66%, women: 61%).

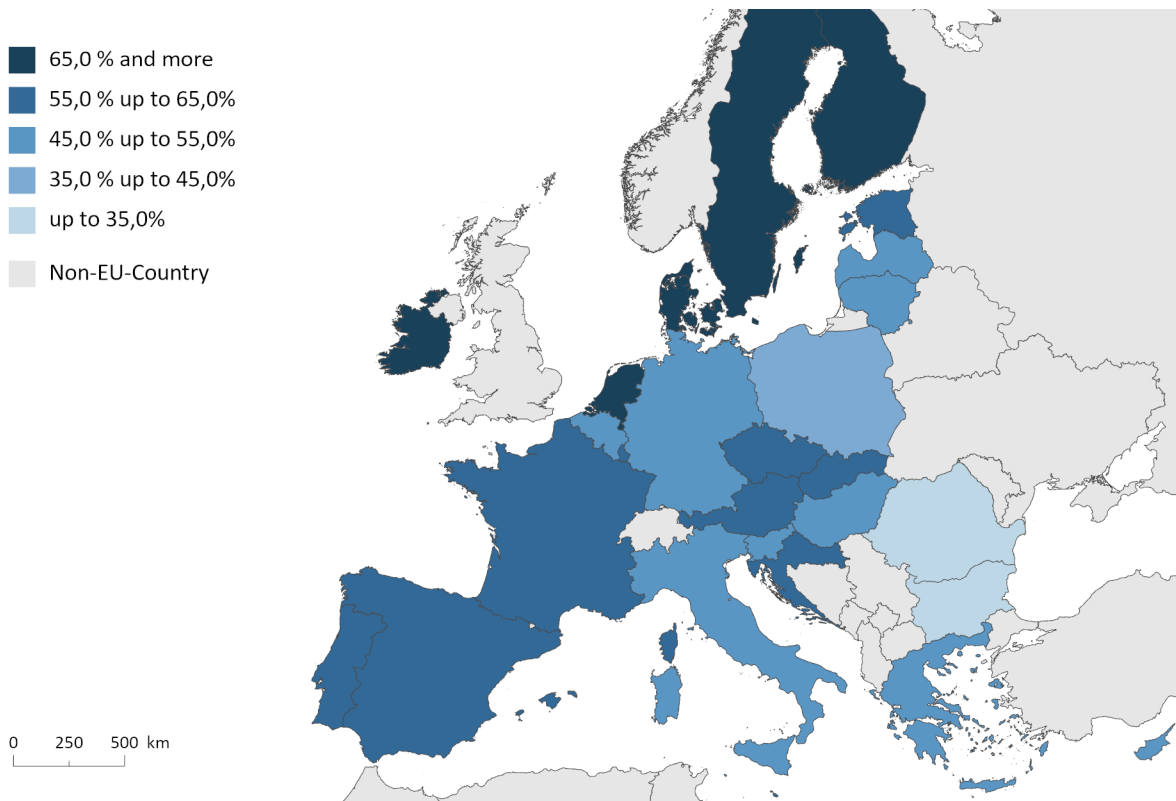
More detailed information and the analysis report “Digital skills in Austria and the European Union” are available on our [website](#).

People having at least basic digital skills in Austria 2021 in %

Characteristic	At least basic digital skills (%)
Total	63
Gender	
Male	66
Female	61
Age	
16–24	79
25–34	73
35–44	70
45–54	68
55–64	53
65–74	35
Education	
Primary/lower secondary education (Pflichtschule)	40
Apprenticeship (Lehre)	53
Upper secondary education (Matura)	81
Tertiary education (University)	86
Employment status	
Employed	71
Unemployed	65
Outside the labor force	39
Students at schools and universities	82
Degree of urbanisation	
Cities	71
Smaller towns and suburbs	61
Rural areas	59

S: STATISTICS AUSTRIA, Survey on the use of ICT in households and by individuals 2021.

At least basic digital skills in EU comparison 2021 in %



S: Eurostat, European survey on the use of ICT in households and by individuals 2021.

Information on methodology, definitions:

The Digital Skills Indicator (DSI) is published every two years by the European Statistical Office (Eurostat). The data provide information on the digital skills of EU citizens and were last collected in 2021. In total, the DSI consists of 33 internet and software activities (single indicators) and five sub-indicators, which are assigned to the areas of the Digital Competence Framework for Citizens (DigComp). These are “information and data literacy”, “communication and collaboration”, “digital content creation”, “safety” and “problem solving”. It is assumed that people who report having performed specific digital activities also have the corresponding digital skills (proxy concept).

The data are derived from extrapolated results of the European survey on the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) in households and by individuals 2021. The legal basis is Regulation (EU) 2019/1700, which requires Austria and other EU member states to provide data, and a Delegated Regulation ((EU) 2020/1432), which includes all indicators to be collected. The survey was conducted by Statistics Austria using a uniform questionnaire, standardized definitions as well as methodology. The analysis report on the DSI was prepared by Statistics Austria on behalf of the Federal Ministry of Finance.

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

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Media owner, producer and publisher:

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