STATISTICS AUSTRIA
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Life expectancy rises, particularly among university graduates

Gender differences in life expectancy continue to narrow

Vienna, 2026-09-14 – Also in 2024, there were significant differences in life expectancy in Austria depending on the level of education attained, as analyses by Statistics Austria show. For example, the remaining life expectancy of 35-year-old men with a university degree was around 7 years higher than that of men whose highest educational attainment is compulsory school. This difference was less pronounced among women of the same age.

“Generally, the life expectancy at certain ages increases with a higher level of education. Between 2023 and 2024, this education-specific difference has further widened. Life expectancy at the age of 35 and at the age of 65 has risen more sharply among university graduates than in the other educational groups. However, education is not the only factor influencing life expectancy; other factors, such as income and working conditions, also play a significant role in this regard,” says Manuela Lenk, Director General Statistics of Statistics Austria.

For women whose highest level of education is a university degree, life expectancy has increased between 2023 and 2024. In contrast, there was hardly a change for women with other educational qualifications. Also for men, the highest remaining life expectancy increases were observed for the group with a university degree.

Differences based on educational attainment are more pronounced among men

The higher the level of formal education, the higher the remaining life expectancy at the ages of 35 and 65. Female university graduates aged 35 could expect to live to the age of 87.75. In contrast, the expected life expectancy for women of the same age with a compulsory school education as their highest educational attainment was 4.42 years lower. Compared with the average for the female population aged 35 (84.94 years), the life expectancy of female university graduates was 2.80 years higher.

Among men, this difference was much more pronounced: The difference between 35-year-old men with a compulsory school education and men of the same age with a university degree was almost 7 years. 35-year-old men with an university degree could expect to live 4.22 years longer than the average man (80.82 years), men with only compulsory school education 2.75 years shorter.

Significant increase in life expectancy among women with a university degree

For women aged 35, life expectancy in 2024 has risen slightly compared with 2023 by 0.14 years, meaning that this population group could expect to live to an average age of 84.94 years (see table 1). The observed increase among women with university degree compared with those without one is striking. Since 2023, the female life expectancy at the age of 35 with a university degree has risen by 0.59 years, while it remained virtually unchanged for women of the same age with a compulsory school education as their highest educational degree. For women in the other educational groups, the increase of 0.12 years was slightly lower than the average of all women.

A similar picture emerged for 65-year-old women: the life expectancy of women with a university degree rose significantly from 2023 to 2024, more so than that of women with other educational qualifications (see table 2).

The life expectancy at the age of 35 of women whose highest educational attainment is compulsory school still remained lower than the level seen before the COVID-19 pandemic. The same applied to all 65-year-old women without Matura qualification (thus, women with compulsory school, apprenticeship or intermediate vocational school as highest education). Since 2019, the increases in life expectancy at the ages 35 and 65 for women were therefore largely attributable to the rise in life expectancy among women with Matura or university degrees.

Life expectancy is rising across all educational groups for men

Between 2023 and 2024, life expectancy rose more sharply for men than for women. For 35-year-old men, it increased by 0.43 years. For 65-year-old men, the increase was 0.37 years, meaning that men in this age group would, on average, live to the age of 83.76 years. As with women, the increase was greatest among men with a university degree: for 35-year-olds the life expectancy rose by 0.66 years, and for 65-year-olds by 0.61 years. For men without Matura, the increase in life expectancy at both observed ages was slightly below the average for all educational groups.

In contrast to women, men's life expectancy was already noticeably higher than it was before the COVID-19 pandemic (+0.30 years for 35-year-old men). However, there were also educational groups among men where the increase was comparatively smaller. For example, the life expectancy at the age of 35 for men with a Matura qualification was only 0.07 years higher than the 2019 figure. For compulsory school graduates and men with an apprenticeship and intermediate vocational school, the increase of 0.14 and 0.18 years, respectively, was also below the overall rise in life expectancy for 35-year-old men.

Table 1: Further life expectancy at the age of 35 by highest level of educational attainment and sex, 2019 to 2024

Highest level of educational attainment	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Men	**45.52**	**44.84**	**44.73**	**44.92**	**45.39**	**45.82**
Compulsory school	42.93	41.96	41.65	42.10	42.65	43.07
Apprenticeship and intermediate vocational school	45.27	44.58	44.55	44.60	45.09	45.45
Higher school with "Matura" exam (A level)	47.34	46.86	46.57	46.86	46.90	47.40
University and equivalent study programme	49.32	48.91	49.21	49.00	49.38	50.04
Women	**49.79**	**49.34**	**49.31**	**49.40**	**49.80**	**49.94**
Compulsory school	48.42	47.82	47.71	47.79	48.33	48.32
Apprenticeship and intermediate vocational school	50.26	49.88	49.81	49.89	50.16	50.28
Higher school with "Matura" exam (A level)	51.20	50.80	50.69	50.87	51.28	51.40
University and equivalent study programme	52.07	51.88	51.87	52.39	52.16	52.75

S: STATISTICS AUSTRIA, Demographic indicators.

Table 2: Further life expectancy at the age of 65 by highest level of educational attainment and sex, 2019 to 2024

Highest level of educational attainment	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Men	**18.51**	**17.87**	**17.92**	**17.99**	**18.39**	**18.76**
Compulsory school	17.07	16.23	16.10	16.34	16.87	17.15
Apprenticeship and intermediate vocational school	18.40	17.75	17.87	17.89	18.27	18.58
Higher school with "Matura" exam (A level)	19.77	19.40	19.44	19.43	19.43	19.89
University and equivalent study programme	21.04	20.62	20.95	20.68	21.01	21.62
Women	**21.65**	**21.17**	**21.18**	**21.21**	**21.57**	**21.71**
Compulsory school	20.94	20.34	20.45	20.36	20.82	20.88
Apprenticeship and intermediate vocational school	22.09	21.68	21.63	21.68	21.91	22.07
Higher school with "Matura" exam (A level)	22.78	22.39	22.33	22.48	22.98	22.94
University and equivalent study programme	23.30	23.12	23.10	23.63	23.34	23.96

S: STATISTICS AUSTRIA, Demographic indicators.

For detailed results and further information please refer to our website, section "Detailed results".

Information on methodology:

The demographic indicators broken down by highest level of education attained and employment status refer to the second-last available reporting year. The key figures are calculated based on register data. Data on life expectancy and fertility are available from 2015 onwards, while data on marriages and divorces are available from 2018 onwards. This analysis is based on a combination of data on births, deaths, marriages and divorces, as well as reasons for and dissolutions of registered partnerships, with information from the education register and register-based employment histories. It should be noted that the present analyses are period-based. This means that they do not consider whether a person obtains further educational qualifications later in their life.

Educational attainment is just one of several **socio-economic factors** that influence life expectancy. The results published here show a correlation between education and life expectancy; however, no direct causal link can be inferred from this. Other factors that also influence life expectancy include, for example, income and working conditions.

What means life expectancy at a given age?

Life expectancy at a given age indicates the average number of years that people who have reached a certain age are expected to live, assuming that the mortality rates of the reference year remain unchanged for the remainder of their lives. When people refer to (average) life expectancy in general, they are usually referring to life expectancy at birth.

Note on the time series: Due to an improvement in the calculation method (age-specific mortality rates up to the age of 100, grouped mortality rates from the age of 101 and above), previous years have also been recalculated using the improved method. This results in minor changes to the figures published in recent years.

Who is Statistics Austria?

Statistics Austria is the central organisation for official data and statistics on society, the economy, the state and the environment in Austria. As a national statistical institute, it is committed to the statutory principles of independence, impartiality and objectivity. Statistics Austria is headed by Manuela Lenk, Director General Statistics, and Franz Haslauer, Director General Finance.

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