

Extending in-company training at full-time VET schools

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

REGULATION/LEGISLATION

 AUSTRIA

Timeline

2019 Implementation 2020 Completed

ID number 29913

Background

VET schools, which have a technical and craft focus (providing courses of 3 to 4 years duration), are experiencing increasing pressure in Austria. They are in competition with apprenticeship training and with VET colleges (which run courses leading to both a vocational qualification and to a university entrance degree). Against the background of the trend towards higher qualification, the market value of their qualifications is losing importance. This is expressed, for example, in a substantial decline in the number of pupils. At the end of the training, only less than half of the graduates enter the labour market directly.

Objectives

- (a) supporting the transition to the labour market;
- (b) developing vocational skills and competence;
- (c) increasing the labour market relevance of the qualification;
- (d) enhancing the attractiveness of the technical VET school.

Description

To achieve these goals, in 2019 an extended work-integrated learning phase was introduced, through a curriculum reform (2016), in the final year of school-based VET in schools with a technical and craft focus. For this phase, instruction usually takes place directly in the company and lasts between 10 and 12 weeks. The learners are supposed to complete practical work tasks at NQF level 4. The new curriculum applies to all school-based programmes for intermediate VET with a technical, craft and arts focus with a few exceptions (especially technical schools for the visually handicapped and blind students).

Until now, before entering the final school year, learners had to prove that they had completed at least a 4-week work placement, which was usually completed during the summer holidays. While this regulation remains in place, the new regulation significantly expands this practical experience to 10 to 12 weeks (depending on the type of school) during their final year of learning.

2019 Implementation

In 2019, the extended work-integrated learning phase started at VET schools with a technical focus. An evaluation of the measure has also begun.

2020 Completed

In 2020, an evaluation of the first implementation phase took place of the first graduating class experienced this curricular innovation in the 2019/20 autumn semester. The aim of the accompanying evaluation was to collect systematically the first experiences of the concrete implementation of the work placement. For this purpose, two partially standardised online surveys were conducted among teachers (n=75) and learners in graduating classes (n=894). One of the results of the evaluation was that the practice phase was rated as a useful addition, but with room for improvement when it came to integrating it into the curriculum. Company practice, however, did facilitate the transition into the labour market. Since then the extended in-company training is offered on a regular basis.

Bodies responsible

- Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research (BMBWF) (until 2025)

Target group

Learners

Learners in upper secondary, including apprentices
Young people (15-29 years old)

Entities providing VET

Companies
VET providers (all kinds)

Thematic categories

Modernising VET offer and delivery

Modernising VET standards, curricula, programmes and training courses
Reinforcing work-based learning, including apprenticeships

Subsystem

IVET

Further reading

[Curriculum reform ordinance for secondary technical, commercial and crafts school 2016. \(Federal Law Gazette II No 240/2016\) \(in German only\)](#)

[Evaluation report 2020 on implementation of the compulsory subject practical work experience at secondary technical, commercial and crafts schools \(in German only\)](#)

“ ... ” Cite as

Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2026). Extending in-company training at full-time

VET schools: Austria. In Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2026). *Timeline of VET policies in Europe* (2025 update) [Online tool].

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/timeline-vet-policies-europe/search/29913>