

Transversal competences in apprenticeship

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

REGULATION/LEGISLATION

 AUSTRIA

Timeline

2019 Design 2020 Design 2021 Design 2022 Completed

ID number 29903

Background

The importance of cross-professional (transversal) competences in vocational (initial) training is steadily increasing. This applies to digital skills as well as other areas of expertise such as greening and sustainability, methodological skills, communication skills as well as intercultural, social and personal skills. Therefore, such transversal skills should be anchored in all apprenticeship training regulations in the future.

Objectives

The aim of this measure is to bring the acquisition of competences in the area of apprenticeship training as close as possible to the qualification requirements of the companies. Therefore, as part of a development process, in which the social partner institutions are closely involved, transversal competences should be anchored in all training regulations for apprenticeships and imparted in a modular manner, depending on requirements, in the form of a step model.

Description

In 2019, the Federal Ministry of Digital and Economic Affairs (BMDW) commissioned a project to screen the job profiles of all apprenticeship training regulations (project title: Job profile screening to create a list of priorities). The aim of the project was to determine which:

- (a) training regulations have a particularly urgent need for adaptation;
- (b) training regulations had not been adapted for at least 10 years;
- (c) of the training programmes have a critical minimum number of apprentices.

Further, the project examined the extent to which these training regulations met the requirements of companies in terms of digital and other transversal skills.

The results of this study were:

- (a) ranking into three groups of the apprenticeship training regulations examined according to urgency: urgent need for action, existing but no urgent need for action, no need for action;

(b) rough concept for a three-stage model for training transversal skills.

This concept takes into account the following groups of transversal skills:

- (a) digital skills;
- (b) sustainability and greening;
- (c) methodological skills;
- (d) communicative skills;
- (e) social skills;
- (f) personal skills;
- (g) work-related skills.

These transversal skills are to be taught using the following three-stage model:

- (a) the basic transversal competences module, which is to be anchored in all training regulations, provides basic transversal competences that are equally important for all professions;
- (b) in the next stage, the transversal competences for related professional fields are deepened – with different foci;
- (c) finally, special modules for individual occupational groups can be defined for individual transversal competences groups. These are to be incorporated into the training regulations for the individual occupations during the second half of the training period.

The rough concept presented in the study is to be developed, refined and operationalised with the social partner institutions.

2019 Design

In 2019, the first concept for the integration of transversal competences in training regulations was developed.

2020 Design

In 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, no further important development took place.

2021 Design

In 2021, a project was launched with the aim of developing a concept for anchoring transversal competences more effectively in apprenticeship training. The development is being led by two research institutions with the involvement of the social partners and the ministries.

2022 Completed

In 2022, as part of the research project, a basic document on transversal competencies in practical vocational training was developed in coordination with the social partners, which is to be used as a starting document for the formulation of transversal job profile positions in all future adaptations of existing apprenticeship training regulations and the development of new training regulations. In this way, transversal competencies are to be successively anchored in all training regulations.

The theme of transversal competences in apprenticeship training is also reflected in various measures of the National Implementation Plan (NIP) developed in 2022.

Bodies responsible

- Federal Ministry of Digital and Economic Affairs (BMDW) (until 2022)
- Federal Ministry of Labour and Economy (BMAW) (until 2025)
- Federal Ministry of Economy, Energy and Tourism (BMWET)

Target group

Learners

Learners in upper secondary, including apprentices

Entities providing VET

VET providers (all kinds)

Thematic categories

Modernising VET offer and delivery

Modernising VET standards, curricula, programmes and training courses

Acquiring key competences

Integrating green transition and sustainability in VET curricula and programmes

Reinforcing work-based learning, including apprenticeships

European priorities in VET

VET Recommendation

VET agile in adapting to labour market challenges

Osnabrück Declaration

Sustainability - a green link in VET

Subsystem

IVET

Further reading

[Transversal competences in dual training. Final report 2022 \[Transversale Kompetenzen in der dualen Ausbildung. Abschliessender Bericht 2022\].](#)

Related policy developments

2025 Implementation

Increasing attractiveness of apprenticeship training

In January 2020, the Austrian parliament passed an amendment to the Vocational Training Act (BAG), jointly developed by the Federal Ministry for Digital and Economic Affairs and the social partners.

 AUSTRIA

Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

“ … ” **Cite as**

Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2026). Transversal competences in apprenticeship: 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/29903>