

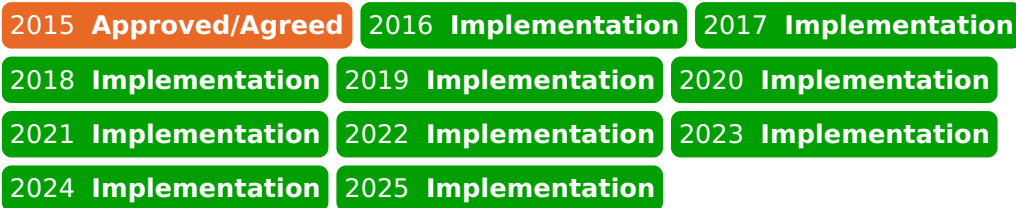
Promoting the apprenticeship scheme granting access to higher education

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

REGULATION/LEGISLATION

 AUSTRIA

Timeline



ID number 27979

Background

The scheme was introduced in 2008 by the Federal Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture. It enables apprentices to take part in preparatory courses for the so-called *Berufsreifeprüfung*, the exam giving access to higher education for those VET graduates enrolled in programmes that did not automatically lead to it. Previous amendments to the law had already provided for an extension of the apprenticeship period in such cases. The first funding period of the new model, introduced in 2008, ended in 2012 and the next funding period ended in 2015.

Objectives

Promoting the apprenticeship scheme granting access to higher education aims to:

- (a) increase the share of apprentices opting for the apprenticeship scheme giving access to higher education (*Lehre mit Matura*), from under 10% in 2014 to 15% by 2020;
- (b) allow training companies to receive subsidies for the extension period.

Description

The 2015 amendment reduced red tape by allowing the apprentice and the training company to agree to extend the training period for the duration of the exam preparation without having to ask the consent of the regional apprenticeship advisory board.

Education providers who offer the *Berufsreifeprüfung* receive funding which is determined periodically. At the end of the respective funding period, an evaluation usually takes place. In 2015, the new funding period started until 2018, accompanied by the measure to extend the duration of training.

While the responsibility for the scheme in general lies within the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Digital and Economic Affairs (BMDW) is responsible for all regulations under the

Vocational Training Act that affect the company-based part of apprenticeship training. The BMDW is also responsible for the amendment to the Vocational Training Act that allows for an extension of the apprenticeship period to attend and complete the *Berufsreifeprüfung*.

2015 Approved/Agreed

2016 Implementation

2017 Implementation

2018 Implementation

2019 Implementation

In 2019, education institutions can apply for funding to provide preparatory courses until 2025. The Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research (BMBWF) provides a maximum grant of EUR 6 000 per participant for subsidised preparatory courses for the *Berufsreifeprüfung*. Interested apprentices need to apply through an education consultant and prepare a letter of motivation. These measures should reduce the dropout from the support programme.

2020 Implementation

According to the latest available participant figures from autumn 2020, around 9 400 people took part in the programme between November 2019 and May 2020, which means that about 5% of all apprentices participated in the *Lehre mit Matura* model.

Overall, around 9 900 people successfully completed the *Lehre mit Matura* model in total between May 2012 and May 2020. According to information from the Ministry of Education, around 36% of participants have not successfully completed the programme since it began in 2008.

As stated under 'Objectives', the target is that 15% of all apprentices participate in the *Lehre with Matura* model, which could not be reached so far.

2021 Implementation

According to the latest available participant figures from autumn 2021, around 10 500 people participated in the programme between November 2020 and May 2021, which means that about 6% of all apprentices participated in the *Lehre mit Matura* model. Overall, around 10 900 people successfully completed the *Lehre mit Matura* model since the beginning of the programme.

2022 Implementation

In 2022, the programme is operational and runs as a regular practice; no updates or changes were made. According to the latest available participant figures from autumn 2022, around 10 500 people participated in the programme between November 2021 and May 2022, which means that currently about 6% of all apprentices participate in the *Lehre mit Matura* model.

Overall, around 11 900 people successfully completed the *Lehre mit Matura* model until May 2022.

2023 Implementation

Between November 2022 and April 2023, approximately 10 750 individuals participated in the 'Apprenticeship with Matura' project, accounting for around 6% of all apprentices opting for this training model as of May 2023.

Since 2011, the year of the first graduates, the 'Apprenticeship with Matura' programme has seen a total of 13 025 graduates as of May 2023. Although not all participants successfully complete the programme, the number of graduates has been

steadily increasing. Unfortunately, current data on dropout rates is unavailable, with the most recent figures dating back to 2020. According to the Ministry of Education, around 36% of participants had quit the programme by that year.

2024 Implementation

In 2024, the programme remains fully operational and continues as a standard practice.

Between May 2024 and October 2024, 11 733 individuals participated in the 'Apprenticeship with Matura' project.

2025 Implementation

No changes were made to the programme in 2025, and it continues to operate as a regular practice. The total number of graduates from this model rose to 15 100 by May 2025. Official statistics on participants for 2025 are not yet available at this time.

Bodies responsible

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

Target group

Learners

Learners in upper secondary, including apprentices

Thematic categories

Modernising VET offer and delivery

Reinforcing work-based learning, including apprenticeships

Supporting lifelong learning culture and increasing participation

Permeability between IVET and CVET and general and vocational pathways, academic and professional higher education

European priorities in VET

VET Recommendation

Flexibility and progression opportunities at the core of VET

VET as an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training and skills

Subsystem

IVET

Further reading

[The 2015 amendment to the Vocational Training Act \(Berufsausbildungsgesetz -BAG\)](#)

[Information on the new funding period](#)

“ … ” Cite as

Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2026). Promoting the apprenticeship scheme granting access to higher education: 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/27979>