

Skilled labour radar

POLICY DEVELOPMENT**PRACTICAL MEASURE/INITIATIVE** AUSTRIA

Timeline

**ID number 27977**

Background

The change in the demand for skilled workers, accompanied by a considerable shortage of skilled workers in some industries, is omnipresent in the public debate. At the same time, there is little reliable evidence of the concrete manifestation of this need and of regional and sectoral differences.

Objectives

The skilled labour radar aims to:

- (a) identify and forecast of labour market needs and shortages of skilled workers;
- (b) establish a continuous scientific observation and analysis of the demand for skilled workers.

Description

In 2018, the Austrian Economic Chamber published the Skilled labour radar, a research report prepared on its behalf presenting key indicators on unemployment, employment trends and the job market, as well as the results of a survey amongst 4 500 enterprises on the need for, and shortage of, skilled workers. The report assesses the demand for skilled labour, the reasons for it, and the effects of the shortage. It also provides forecasts of skilled labour demand and shortages.

As part of the Skilled labour radar, the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber also set up a website that provides various statistical evaluations on the topic of skilled labour demand and shortage. In particular, it provides an up-to-date overview of the number of job applicants (i.e. how many applicants there are for a vacancy) and thus the overall skilled labour situation on the basis of data from Statistics Austria. This data is available for the labour market as a whole as well as for individual occupations and can be displayed at the regional level of the federal provinces as well as the individual districts.

2018 Implementation

2019 Implementation

In 2019, the Skilled labour radar company survey was carried out for the second time. The objective of establishing a continuous scientific observation and analysis of the demand for skilled workers was thus achieved and a longitudinal view of the developments in the demand for skilled workers will be possible in the medium-term. This should also make it possible to measure the impact of measures to meet the demand for skilled workers in the medium-term.

More than 4 600 companies participated in the 2019 company survey.

2020 Implementation

In September 2020, the Skilled labour radar survey was conducted for the third time and around 4 400 companies participated. The results show that although the shortage of skilled workers in companies has decreased slightly compared to the previous year, a large proportion of Austrian companies continue to be affected in some way by the shortage of skilled workers despite the COVID-19 crisis. In almost all individual sectors and industries, more than half of the companies are affected by the shortage of skilled workers in a (rather or very) severe form. The shortage of skilled workers is experienced particularly intensively in construction, in the manufacture of wood products, in tourism, in the craft and technical sector and in medium-sized enterprises.

2021 Implementation

In May-June 2021, another survey of more than 4 200 companies was conducted as part of the Skilled labour radar. A central result of the evaluations is that, despite the COVID-19 crisis, the shortage of skilled workers was at a new all-time high. Extrapolated to the whole of Austria, an estimated skilled labour shortage of 221 000 persons can be assumed at this time, 44 000 more than at the same time in the previous year.

84% of the companies surveyed stated that they are currently affected by a shortage of skilled workers. As in the previous year, the shortage is experienced particularly strongly in the areas of construction, the manufacture of wood products, tourism and the craft and technical sector. Companies have the greatest difficulty in finding employees with apprenticeship qualifications.

2022 Implementation

In March-April 2022, another survey of around 4 000 companies was conducted as part of the Skilled labour radar. As the results show the shortage of skilled workers was still growing and again reached a new all-time high with around 272 000 persons (extrapolated to all WKO member companies), a total of around 51 000 (+23%) more than in May/June 2021.

87% of the companies surveyed stated that they are very strongly or at least somewhat strongly affected by the shortage of skilled workers. At the level of qualifications, the greatest recruitment difficulties are with apprenticeship graduates.

2023 Implementation

In the 2023 edition of the Skilled labour radar, 5 124 companies were surveyed in April and May. The results reveal that, despite a slight decline since 2022, the lack of labour and skilled workers in Austria in April 2023 is on a very high level with around 210 000 vacancies (extrapolated to all WKO member companies).

82% of the companies surveyed stated that they are currently affected by a shortage of labour and skilled workers. The shortage is particularly severe in tourism, food production, manufacturing of electrical and electronic equipment, transportation and traffic, as well as the artisanal and technical sector as a whole. Regarding the level of

qualifications, the greatest and most frequent difficulties still relate to apprenticeship graduates.

2024 Implementation

In 2024, the survey conducted as part of the Skilled labour radar continued to show a high shortage of skilled labour with 193 000 vacancies (extrapolated to all WKO member companies), albeit down from its peak in 2022.

As was the case in 2023, 82% of the 2 793 companies questioned stated to be affected by the shortage. The areas impacted most are personal services, food production, health and social work, catering/hotel industry, construction, and motor trade. The recruitment of apprenticeship graduates still represents the greatest and most frequent difficulty, pertaining to the level of qualifications.

Bodies responsible

- Austrian Federal Economic Chamber (WKO)

Target group

Learners

Adult learners

Entities providing VET

Companies
VET providers (all kinds)

Other stakeholders

Social partners (employer organisations and trade unions)

Other

Public Employment Service

Thematic categories

Governance of VET and lifelong learning

Engaging VET stakeholders and strengthening partnerships in VET
Establishing and developing skills intelligence systems

Subsystem

IVET CVET

Further reading

[Skilled labour radar](#)

[ReferNet Austria: new Skilled labour radar underlines VET importance](#)

[Key indicators of demand for/lack of skilled labour in Austria in 2019 - ibw-research brief No 104 \(in English\)](#)

[Demand for/lack of skilled labour in Austria in 2020 - ibw-research brief No 108 \(in English\)](#)

Related policy developments

2024 Implementation

Apprenticeships for adults leading to NQF level 5

Under the title Apprenticeship NEW for adults, the Federal Economic Chamber has taken the initiative within its education campaign (*Bildungsoffensive*) to develop a programme for people with a higher education entrance qualification that leads to a dual VET qualification at NQF/EQF level



Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2024 Implementation

We educate the economy plan: promoting innovative and excellence in VET

The We educate the economy plan was approved in 2018 by the Austrian Economic Chamber and focusses on developing projects in five fields:



Type of development

Strategy/Action
plan

Subsystem

IVET CVET

“ ... ” Cite as

Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2025). Skilled labour radar: Austria. In Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2025). *Timeline of VET policies in Europe* (2024 update) [Online tool].

