

**DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION IN AUSTRIA**

2000

2003

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The UNESCO is particularly concerned with education within a global context. The 44 Austrian UNESCO schools show in an exemplary way the mutual benefits which are to be gained from intercultural dialogue and exchange of experience. On this occasion I would like to express my sincerest gratitude to all teachers and pupils involved for the determination and enthusiasm they have shown in the past.

In the last few years the international exchange of experience on questions of quality assurance in education has tremendously gained in importance. However, any well-founded international comparison requires some knowledge about the respective education systems. This requirement is taken account of by the publication "Development of Education", which provides an overview of the Austrian education system and is published for the second time in English and German.

The numerous successful developments in Austria's education system are an excellent basis for the coming future-oriented measures in the field of quality assurance.

In 1995 a fundamental school reform was started. It provided for autonomy of schools, giving them the possibility to develop their own characteristic school profiles and to establish areas of emphasis. In 1999 a new curriculum was introduced for the lower level of academic secondary school and general secondary school, which consists of core and extension areas. On the basis of this curriculum, a new curriculum for the upper level was developed as well, which will come into force as of the school year 2004/2005. Another important step in this process of enhancing quality at school is the change from measuring input to measuring output. In this context, work is under way for establishing the educational standards for the fourth grade of primary school, general secondary school and academic secondary school.

Austria's secondary technical and vocational schools/colleges have become internationally renowned models thanks to the high quality of education and training offered at these schools; thus, they hold a top position internationally with regard to the number of firms offering pupils the possi-

bility of vocational practice. Of the total number of 4,000 such firms worldwide about 1,200 are based in Austria.

Also the computer driving licence (ECDL) has developed into a best-practice model, since Austrian pupils have passed a total of 320,000 individual modules since the year 2000. Thanks to the initiative "eFit Austria" schools are optimally equipped with PCs, as is shown e.g. by the Austrian secondary technological schools where one PC is available for every four pupils.

The Universities Act 2002 is the basis of the largest university reform ever undertaken in Austria, constituting a milestone in the further development of Austrian universities. On the basis of this university reform Austrian universities are becoming scientific institutions which, by combining decision-taking and responsibility, will be better equipped to meet the international requirements of the future.

The quality of our education is the key to the future. The road to the "knowledge society", on which Europe and indeed the whole world are travelling, is characterised by rapid structural changes in economic, societal and cultural respects. It is the task of schools and universities to create the necessary foundations which will enable us to successfully handle these changes affecting all areas of life and work.

The initiative "Ensuring Success for the Future" („klasse: Zukunft“) as well as the Education Plan 2010 are important cornerstones for ensuring continuing quality increase in the Austrian education system. I would welcome all readers of this brochure to take an active part in these future-oriented developments and let us share in their experiences, competencies and enthusiasm.



Elisabeth Gehrler  
Federal Minister of Education, Science and Culture

<b>1.</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES AND ADMINISTRATION</b>	
1.1	Background . . . . .	9
1.2	Basis of the school system: legislation . . . . .	10
1.3	Distribution of responsibilities in the administration of the education and training system . . . . .	10
1.4	Inspection/supervision/guidance . . . . .	14
1.5	Financing . . . . .	15
1.6	Advisory and consultative bodies . . . . .	16
1.7	Private schools . . . . .	17
<b>2.</b>	<b>PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION</b>	
2.1	Organization . . . . .	18
2.2	Curriculum/assessment . . . . .	19
2.3	Teachers . . . . .	19
2.4	Statistics . . . . .	19
<b>3.</b>	<b>COMPULSORY EDUCATION</b>	
3.1	Primary education ( <i>Volksschule</i> ) . . . . .	20
3.1.1	Organization . . . . .	21
3.1.2	Curriculum . . . . .	21
3.1.3	Assessment/certification/guidance . . . . .	23
3.1.4	Teachers . . . . .	24
3.1.5	Statistics . . . . .	25
3.2	Secondary education: lower level . . . . .	25
3.2.1	General secondary school ( <i>Hauptschule</i> ) . . . . .	25
3.2.2	Academic secondary school – lower level ( <i>Allgemein bildende höhere Schule, AHS-Unterstufe</i> ) . . . . .	30
<b>4.</b>	<b>POST COMPULSORY SECONDARY EDUCATION</b>	
4.1	Pre-vocational school ( <i>Polytechnische Schule</i> ) . . . . .	35
4.2	Academic secondary school – upper level ( <i>Allgemein bildende höhere Schule, AHS-Oberstufe</i> ) . . . . .	35
4.3	Full-time vocational schools/colleges ( <i>Berufsbildende mittlere und höhere Schulen</i> ) . . . . .	37
4.4	Training colleges for non-teaching supervisory staff, Training colleges for Kindergarten teachers . . . . .	40
4.5	Statistics . . . . .	41
<b>5.</b>	<b>INITIAL VOCATIONAL TRAINING</b>	
5.1	Organization of the dual system . . . . .	42
5.2	Part-time compulsory vocational school ( <i>Berufsschule</i> ) . . . . .	42
5.3	Financing . . . . .	43

5.4	Curriculum . . . . .	44
5.5	Assessment/qualifications/guidance . . . . .	44
5.6	Teachers/trainers . . . . .	44
5.7	Statistics . . . . .	44

**6. HIGHER EDUCATION**

6.1	Non-university education alternatives . . . . .	45
6.1.1	Admission requirements . . . . .	45
6.1.2	Fees/financial support for students . . . . .	45
6.1.3	Academic year . . . . .	45
6.1.4	Courses . . . . .	46
6.1.5	Assessment/qualifications . . . . .	46
6.1.6	Teaching staff . . . . .	46
6.1.7	Statistics . . . . .	47
6.2	Universities and Universities of applied sciences ( <i>Fachhochschulen</i> ) . . . . .	47
6.3	Universities . . . . .	47
6.3.1	Admission requirements . . . . .	47
6.3.2	Fees/financial support for students . . . . .	48
6.3.3	Academic year . . . . .	49
6.3.4	Courses . . . . .	49
6.3.5	Assessment/qualifications . . . . .	49
6.3.6	Teaching staff . . . . .	51
6.4	Universities of applied sciences ( <i>Fachhochschulen</i> ) . . . . .	51
6.4.1	Admission requirements . . . . .	52
6.4.2	Fees/financial support for students . . . . .	52
6.4.3	The academic year . . . . .	52
6.4.4	Courses . . . . .	52
6.4.5	Assessment/qualifications . . . . .	53
6.4.6	Teaching staff . . . . .	53
6.5	Statistics . . . . .	53

**7. ADULT EDUCATION**

7.1	Legal framework . . . . .	55
7.2	Organizational framework . . . . .	55
7.3	Funding . . . . .	56
7.4	Teaching staff . . . . .	57
7.5	Organization . . . . .	58
7.5.1	Continuing training institutes . . . . .	58
7.5.2	Entrance requirements . . . . .	62
7.5.3	Objectives . . . . .	62
7.5.4	Organization in terms of time and space . . . . .	62
7.5.5	Curriculum . . . . .	63
7.5.6	Quality assurance . . . . .	63
7.6	Training information and counselling . . . . .	64
7.7	Taking into account prior knowledge, accreditation . . . . .	64
7.8	Statistics . . . . .	64

**B DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION 2000–2003**

**8. LEGAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL MEASURES**

8.1	Legislation . . . . .	67
8.2	School partnership . . . . .	69
8.3	Socio-economic measures . . . . .	71

**9. THE NEW CURRICULA FOR HAUPTSCHULE (GENERAL SECONDARY SCHOOL) AND LOWER LEVEL OF ALLGEMEIN BILDENDE HÖHERE SCHULE . . . . .**

**10. EDUCATIONAL PRINCIPLES**

10.1	Political education and human rights education . . . . .	76
10.2	Plurilingualism and intercultural education . . . . .	80
10.3	Education towards gender equality . . . . .	83
10.4	Health promotion and sexual education . . . . .	90
10.5	Movement and sports . . . . .	93
10.6	Environmental education . . . . .	97
10.7	Traffic education . . . . .	100
10.8	Vocational guidance . . . . .	102

**11. MEDIA AND NEW TECHNOLOGIES**

11.1	Media pedagogy . . . . .	107
11.2	Library service for schools . . . . .	108
11.3	KulturKontakt / ÖKS-Austrian Culture Service . . . . .	109
11.4	ICT development . . . . .	113

**12. TEACHER TRAINING . . . . .**

**13. SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY – EDUCATIONAL COUNSELLING . . . . .**

**14. QUALITY DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH . . . . .**

**15. UNIVERSITIES AND FACHHOCHSCHULEN (UNIVERSITIES OF APPLIED SCIENCES)**

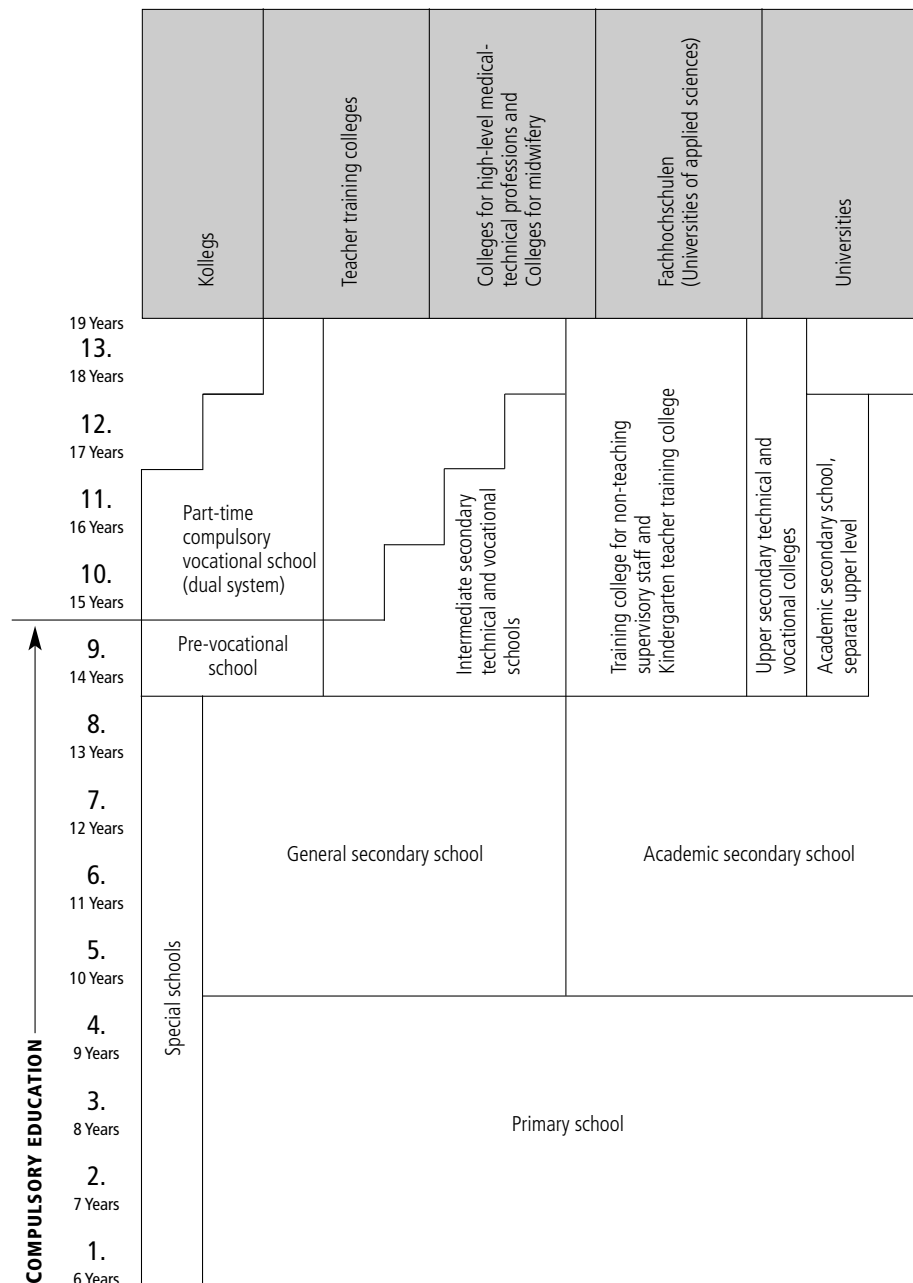
15.1	Universities . . . . .	128
15.2	<i>Fachhochschulen</i> (Universities of applied sciences) . . . . .	136
15.3	International mobility and cooperation in higher education . . . . .	138
15.4	Student counselling and promotion . . . . .	139
15.5	Libraries and archives . . . . .	140

**16. ADULT EDUCATION AND PUBLIC LIBRARIES**

16.1	Adult education . . . . .	141
16.2	Public libraries . . . . .	142

**17. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

17.1 Pupil exchange, school twinnings, pupils' competitions. . . . . 144  
 17.2 Bilateral cooperation . . . . . 146  
 17.3 Cooperation with eastern and southeastern Europe . . . . . 149  
 17.4 Austria's participation in the EU education programme SOCRATES . . . . . 152  
 17.5 Austria's participation in the EU education programme  
 LEONARDO DA VINCI. . . . . 155  
 17.6 Cooperation with the Council of Europe. . . . . 158  
 17.7 Cooperation with OECD. . . . . 161  
 17.8 Cooperation in UNESCO. . . . . 163  
 17.9 Educational information . . . . . 168



# ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

1.

## 1. RESPONSIBILITIES AND ADMINISTRATION

### 1.1 Background

Austria is a federal State with a total area of 83,858 square kilometres, consisting of nine provinces (*Länder*). When the 2001 census was taken, Austria's population was 8,032,926 of which 1,550,123 lived in Vienna, the capital. 67% of the population lived in urban areas.

A monarchy up until 1918, Austria is now a parliamentary democracy with a Constitution, established in the period between 1920 and 1929, based on republican, democratic, federal and legal principles, as well as the principle of the separation of powers.

The Federal President is the supreme representative of the State, elected directly by the people for a six-year term. The National and Federal Chambers are the legislative bodies of the Republic, the National Chamber (*Nationalrat*) being the most important. The members of the Federal Chamber (*Bundesrat*) are appointed by the parliaments of the nine *Länder*.

The Federal Government is formed by the Federal Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor and Federal Ministers. The Land parliaments serve as the legislative bodies at *Länder* level. The provincial administration is headed by state provincial government offices (*Ämter der Landesregierungen*).

The municipalities enjoy a constitutionally guaranteed right to self-administration, although they are subject to the administrative control of the Land. They have an elected municipal council led by the mayor, who is elected either by the municipal council or, depending on the legislation of the Land, by popular vote.

In Austria there is an organizational and institutional division between Church and State.

Religion is taught at schools; dispensation from instruction is possible. The predominant religion is Roman Catholicism.

The official language is German. The legal system guarantees the rights of local ethnic groups (Slovenians, Croats, Hungarians, Czechs, Slovaks, Roma and Sinti). This guarantee also covers their education.

In 2002, the gross domestic product of Austria was shared among the different employment sectors as follows: primary sector 2.2%, secondary sector 30.6%, tertiary sector 67.2%. The level of unemployment was 4.0% (2002).

## 1.2 Basis of the school system: legislation

According to the School Organization Act of 25 July 1962 'it shall be the task of the Austrian school to foster the development of the talents and potential abilities of young persons in accordance with ethical, religious and social values and the appreciation of that which is true, good and beautiful, by giving them an education corresponding to their respective courses of studies. It shall give young people the knowledge and skills required for their future lives and occupations and train them to acquire knowledge on their own initiative'.

The Austrian legal system guarantees general access to public schools without distinction of birth, gender, race, status, class, language or religion. Private sector schools, in contrast, may select pupils according to these criteria, although such selection is rarely applied.

## 1.3 Distribution of responsibilities in the administration of the education and training system

In Austria, education has always been a most sensitive area, heavily disputed among political decision-makers. This explains the casuistic distribution of responsibilities between different bodies and entities. The existing legal framework therefore renders attempts at amending education laws very difficult.

The Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture (*Bundesministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft und Kultur*) has overall responsibility for primary and secondary education, including general education and vocational schools. The work experience part of initial vocational training is the responsibility of the Federal Ministry of Labour and Economic Affairs.

In 2000 a reorganization at the central level combined the responsibilities for schools and universities by setting up the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture.

As is the case with government administration in general, responsibilities for legislation and implementation in school education are divided between the Federation and the Länder. This division is made as follows:

- The Federation has exclusive responsibility for legislation and implementation with regard to the entire field of general upper secondary educa-

tion, intermediate and upper secondary technical and vocational education and training for kindergarten teaching staff and non-teaching supervisory staff, and with regard to the conditions of service and staff representation rights of teachers at these schools/colleges.

- The Federation is responsible for legislation, and the individual *Länder* are responsible for implementation with regard to the conditions of service and staff representation rights of teachers at public sector schools of compulsory education.
- The Federation is responsible for basic legislation, and the *Länder* are responsible for issuing and implementing laws with regard to the organizational structure of federal education authorities in the *Länder* and the external organization of public sector schools of compulsory education. External organization includes the development, construction, maintenance and approval of schools, but also the establishment of pupil numbers per class and teaching periods. All basic legislation has a framework character and is expressed through implementing laws promulgated by the *Landtage*, the legislative bodies at *Länder* level.
- The *Länder* are responsible for legislation and implementation as, for example, with regard to nursery schools (Kindergarten).

### School authorities at federal level

Separate federal bodies have been established wherever the Federation is responsible for implementation. These are:

- District School Boards at the level of political 'districts';
- Provincial School Boards at the level of the *Länder*; and
- the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture for the entire territory.

The District and Provincial School Boards are the federal school authorities in the *Länder*. The Austrian system of administration is characterised by a two-tier hierarchy. Provincial School Boards have designated jurisdiction in matters referred to a District School Board, while the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture (BMBWK) deals with cases referred to Provincial School Boards in the first instance.

### Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture (BMBWK)

In general, the Federal Government introduces draft laws, known as government bills, in the National Council. The draft produced by the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture will first have been submitted to a number of relevant authorities (Collegiate Councils in the District and Provincial School Boards, provincial governments, various interest groups, the churches, etc.) for an expert opinion.

Basic laws enacted by the Federation will normally prescribe a deadline by which the Länder must issue pertinent implementing laws (six months to one year). Implementing laws are passed by the *Landtag*. More detailed provisions are contained in the individual constitutions of the *Länder*.

The Federal Minister of Education, Science and Culture promulgates curricula on the basis of the School Organization Act. The spadework for curricular development is entrusted to working groups of teachers set up to cover most subjects. All curricula provide for areas of school autonomy, which schools can but are not required to use. As part of the school book scheme, pupils are provided with the material they need for class free of charge in return for a small individual contribution (mainly textbooks but also therapeutic learning aids and learning aids selected by the pupils themselves).

Within the framework of a booklist approved by the Ministry, teaching aids are selected by Teachers' Conferences (for the upper level of secondary education) or by school forums (all other schools) with the cooperation of representatives of parents and pupils. Although textbooks not featured on the list can be selected, they will not be made available free of charge.

### Provincial School Boards

Provincial School Boards are directed by the Provincial Governor (as chairman of the Provincial School Board); for all practical purposes he/she is assisted in the fulfilment of his/her duties by an Executive Chairman. The central body within a Provincial School Board is the Collegiate Council, made up of voting members (including teachers and also pupils' parents) and members with consultative status (representatives of legally recognised churches, religious communities and interest groups, school inspectors). Voting members are represented on the Collegiate Council in accordance with the balance of power held by the political parties in the provincial parliament.

It is one of the major tasks of the provincial school board's Collegiate Council to submit three proposals for the appointment of teachers and head teachers at intermediate and upper secondary schools and colleges. The Federal Minister selects one of three candidates suggested as head teacher, who

will then be appointed by the Federal President. Collegiate Councils also issue general directives on existing laws and ordinances (e.g. curricula) and submit expert opinions on draft laws and regulations.

### District School Boards

District School Boards are headed by the District Governor. The Collegiate Councils at district level are structured and set up on the same basis as those at provincial level.

The Collegiate Council at district level issues general directives and submits expert opinions on draft laws and regulations, for example with regard to curricula.

### Offices of the Provincial Government

The implementation of matters falling under the responsibility of the individual Länder is carried out by executive authorities at provincial level – the so-called Offices of the Provincial Government (*Amt der Landesregierung*).

Their most important task is the maintenance of public sector schools of general compulsory education and the appointment of teachers and head teachers at these schools. However, the District and Provincial School Boards have to be consulted on all such matters.

### School autonomy

Since the school year 1993/94, the 14<sup>th</sup> amendment to the School Organization Act has empowered the respective school partnership body (School Committee comprising teachers', pupils' and parents' representatives or School Forum in compulsory schools in which only teachers' and parents' representatives are involved) to issue its own curricular regulations autonomously by a two-thirds vote. This means that main focal points may be chosen within a given framework and schools can develop their own profile.

Provisions governing school autonomy at pre-vocational schools enable a flexible response to the vocational interests of pupils and the respective demands of the particular region.

Intermediate and upper secondary technical and vocational schools/colleges offer pupils the possibility of choosing between different study courses. Within certain limits, schools/colleges can also determine the pupil numbers required for creating new classes and dividing existing ones.

A 1995 provision on the organization of school time gives schools the possibility of declaring five school-free days per school year for important school or public events. By virtue of having time available to allocate as they

see fit, schools are given the opportunity to organise their internal in-service training programme in a more flexible way.

The legal basis was established for extending the financial autonomy of schools in 1996. Under certain provisions laid down by law, schools can rent out school rooms or parts of school property (e.g. their gymnasium or sports grounds) to third parties and choose how the income they receive is allocated, as long as it is used for school purposes. The same applies to external funding received from sponsoring or commercial activities at school. Moreover since 1998, so-called quasi-legal bodies can be established at Federation schools, which have the power to conclude legal business as determined by law.

All Austrian schools can, in a limited way, control the funds allocated to them by the school authorities. For intermediate and upper secondary technical and vocational schools/colleges this can serve the procurement of computers and technical equipment (financial autonomy). This makes occupation-oriented, project-based forms of education (e.g. 'training firms') easier to implement.

#### 1.4 Inspection/supervision/guidance

Austria's education system is characterised by a long tradition of school inspection. Federal school authorities in the *Länder* are responsible for primary and secondary education (District School Boards, Provincial School Boards). At *Länder* level, school inspection is carried out by provincial school inspectors who are responsible for a specific school type. At compulsory school level, provincial school inspectors are assisted by district school inspectors, and in intermediate and upper secondary education by subject inspectors.

There are a few schools (e.g. the upper secondary colleges in the fields of agriculture and forestry, one intermediate secondary school in the field of forestry, a number of upper secondary technical and vocational colleges in Vienna, etc.) which come directly under the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture.

#### 1.5 Financing

Schools of compulsory education (primary schools, general secondary schools, special schools, pre-vocational schools and part-time compulsory vocational schools) are maintained by the *Länder*, municipalities or municipal associations.

While most of the schools in general compulsory education are maintained by municipalities or municipal associations, part-time compulsory vocational schools are maintained by the *Länder*.

Maintaining and operating a school includes the establishment, maintenance and repair of the school buildings, payment of overheads, purchase of equipment and teaching aids, provisions for the school doctor, and the employment of the necessary auxiliary staff (caretakers, maintenance staff, etc.). The employment of teachers at compulsory schools is exclusively the responsibility of the *Länder*. Teachers in public sector schools of compulsory education are employed by the *Länder*, which pay the cost of their salaries. However, the *Länder* are fully compensated for this cost by the Federation in the process of fiscal adjustment. (The sole exception being teachers at part-time compulsory vocational schools, where this refund is granted only up to 50%.)

Public sector schools of compulsory education are not allowed to charge tuition fees. Transport to and from school using public transport facilities is free. Textbooks are provided to pupils free of charge, and they are entitled to keep them. In recent years, a contribution of 10% from the pupils has been introduced both for transport to and from school and for textbooks.

Intermediate and upper secondary schools/colleges are established and maintained by the Federation, which bears the full cost, including teachers' salaries. Teachers do not enter into an employment contract with the school in this case either, but with the Federation. With respect to the absence of tuition fees, free transport and textbooks the situation is the same as in compulsory education.

Austrian schools have relatively few funds of their own to administer. Reforms are under way to increase their financial autonomy.

All Universities (with few exceptions) were established by the State and are predominately financed out of the state budget.

On 1 January 2004, universities obtained full legal status and therefore are responsible for their own budget, most of which is provided by the State.

## 1.6 Advisory and consultative bodies

The following advisory bodies have been set up and attached to the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, mainly to advise the Federal Minister:

**School Reform Commission (*Schulreformkommission*)** is composed of members delegated by the political parties represented in the National Council, the Provincial School Boards, and interest groups, as well as university professors of education.

**Centre for Educational Development (*Zentrum für Schulentwicklung*)** consists of different departments. Each department specialises in a particular area. Department I is concerned among other things with the supervision of school experimentation projects; Department II concentrates on evaluation and educational research; and Department III concentrates on basic principles and concepts for modern language teaching.

**Parents' Advisory Board (*Elternbeirat*)** comprises representatives of the main associations of parents and related organizations. It usually meets several times in the course of a school year under the chairmanship of the Federal Minister for Education, Science and Culture or an official appointed by him.

**Federal Pupils' Advisory Board (*Bundesschülervertretung*)** brings together pupils' representatives and representatives of youth organizations. It usually meets four times in the course of a school year under the chairmanship of the Federal Minister for Education, Science and Culture or an official appointed by him.

### Educational and careers guidance

Approximately 2,500 school guidance counsellors and educational consultants provide counselling services at all Austrian schools (with the exception of primary schools). Full-time teachers are partially released from their normal activities to provide counselling. Guidance counsellors receive on-going training on the basis of a common curriculum.

Their work focuses on providing:

- information on the educational options offered at their particular school;
- information on educational options offered by the education system as a whole;

- individual guidance on decisions about training and career choices as well as on difficulties and concerns to do with school.

Pupils and guidance counsellors also work together closely with the institutions of the Labour Exchange. These counsellors are also available for presentations at parents' evenings and one-to-one counselling during consultation hours.

## 1.7 Private schools

The Austrian Constitution lays down the right to establish private schools. Most private schools are run by the churches or special interest groups (chambers). There are two basic types of private schools: those that teach the official curriculum and those that have their own curriculum.

The amount of support given to private schools depends in large part on who runs them. Those run by an officially recognised church can claim to have their teaching staff paid by the State. These teachers remain federal employees (at intermediate and upper secondary schools/colleges) or provincial employees (in compulsory education). Private schools that are not run by an officially recognised church cannot claim to have their teaching staff paid by the State. On the basis of a private contract, these schools may be treated in the same way as those run by an officially recognised church.

All private schools may apply to the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture for a subsidy for extraordinary expenses on the basis of a private contract, for example, for building costs.

## 2. PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION

Nursery school (*Kindergarten*) is the traditional form of pre-primary education for children aged three to six in Austria. However, it does not form part of the education system. Nursery school is optional and children attend at their parents' initiative.

Ninety percent of all five-year-old children in Austria currently attend nursery schools (in 1960/61 the corresponding figure was only 23.5%). There are striking regional differences in the degree of nursery school provision.

### 2.1 Organization

Anyone wishing to open a nursery school has to comply with a number of conditions to ensure that the educational mandate of the nursery school is observed. There are public kindergartens (established and maintained by the Federation, the *Länder* or the municipalities) and private kindergartens. Some of the private kindergartens are administered by educators and parents as autonomous groups. The majority of kindergartens have been set up by the municipalities (almost 75%).

Staff and operational costs are generally borne by the administering body. The contributions made by the *Länder* to the cost of the establishment and operation of a kindergarten vary considerably; this is true for private kindergartens in particular.

Private kindergartens that are run by associations, churches or religious orders receive grants towards meeting the cost of staff and overheads on certain conditions, either on a discretionary basis, or according to a fixed percentage rate in accordance with the applicable Nursery School Act. Private kindergartens run by other bodies than the above-mentioned generally do not receive any financial support.

Some kindergartens do not charge any fees at all, while many municipalities charge a kindergarten attendance fee according to a graded scheme adjusted to net family income. Private kindergartens similarly charge varying amounts.

Kindergartens are either full day or half day. Half-day kindergartens are open from at least 7 A.M. to 12 A.M., with the possibility of lunch. Full-day kindergartens are open from 7 A.M. to 7 P.M. and include lunch. Parents may pick up their children whenever they want. Many kindergartens are open throughout the year.

### 2.2 Curriculum

Nursery education focuses on developing the child's personality as a whole and is not primarily concerned with preparing children for school.

To achieve this objective, kindergartens are run in small, generally coeducational, groups (either age groups or so called 'family groups' – 3-, 4- and 5-year-olds mixed together) taking individual styles and approaches into account and systematically providing different games and materials. First and foremost, a child at nursery school should have the chance of gaining experiences through appropriate play activities without the pressure of time or achievement.

### 2.3 Teachers

Kindergarten teachers are either trained in special schools at upper secondary level or in special training colleges at post-secondary level. The latter provide a two-year teacher training course that is also open to individuals who may not have passed a school-leaving examination but have worked in related occupational fields. The latter have to pass a special entrance examination or a matriculation examination for working people. These colleges constitute a major reform in the kindergarten sector.

### 2.4 Statistics

#### Children aged three to five in public kindergartens (2002/2003)

Children	209,584
Staff	25,638
Kindergartens	4,657

## 3. COMPULSORY EDUCATION

### 3.1 Primary education (*Volksschule*)

The objective of *Volksschule* (*Grundschule* or primary school) is to provide a common basic education for all pupils. In this context, the social integration of handicapped children is to be taken into account.

Primary school should provide children with a basic, balanced education for their social, emotional, intellectual and physical development.

The lower level (*Grundstufe I*) includes years 1 and 2 and also the pre-primary level, if necessary. The upper level (*Grundstufe II*) consists of years 3 and 4. The pre-primary year (pre-school class), years 1 and 2 in the lower level can be offered separately or as a combined unit, covering all lower level years.

The pre-primary year is designed to foster the development of children of compulsory school age who are not yet mature enough to attend primary school proper. Unlike nursery school, the pre-primary year is part of the school system.

Compulsory schooling begins on 1 September following the child's sixth birthday.

All children of compulsory school age who are ready to attend school are accepted into the first year. It is up to the head teacher to decide whether the child will be able to follow the teaching in the first year without being subjected to excessive physical or mental demands or whether it would be more appropriate for the child to attend a pre-primary year. In keeping with the child's abilities or needs, he or she can take up to three years to master the learning skills taught at the lower level of primary school.

Children who only turn six between 1 September and 31 December of the current school year and who would not be over-challenged by the demands of the first year of school can be accepted early into the first year at the request of the parents or guardians. This early attendance of the first year is calculated as part of the duration of compulsory education. If it turns out that the child is out of his/her depth after being accepted early into the first school year, the early acceptance is revoked. In this case, the parents or guardians may register the child for the pre-primary year. Such changes may be made up to the end of the current calendar year.

Since the 1999/2000 school year, to find a better match for the pupil's learning needs, it has been possible to transfer children in the lower level of primary school to the next highest or next lowest year even during the school year.

At primary school, a child may skip one school year. Year 1 may not be skipped. Pupils may only be accepted into the level one above the next level if the overall length of primary school education is no less than three years. If after the child has been accepted into the next-but-one year, it emerges that the child is being overchallenged, a decision may be taken before the end of the calendar year, with the approval of the parents or guardians, to move the child back down.

Since the 1998/99 school year, the primary school curriculum has stipulated that from Year 1, learning a modern language (English, French, Italian, Croatian, Slovakian, Slovenian, Czech or Hungarian) is compulsory (i.e. no grades are given) and that from the school year 2003/04 all primary schools must include this in their teaching plan from Year 1.

#### 3.1.1 Organization

Classes are coeducational. The maximum number of pupils per class is 30 (20 for a pre-primary class), and each primary school year corresponds to one class. If the number of pupils in each year is too small, several years may be combined in one class. Teachers are class teachers and spend the four years with the same class of children.

The pre-primary year can be run as a separate class or integrated into the lower level of primary school (first or second year plus any pre-primary year).

#### 3.1.2 Curriculum

The timetable for the pre-primary year comprises compulsory practical exercises in the following subjects, totalling 20 weekly lessons:

- religious instruction
- local history, geography, biology
- road safety
- language and oral expression, preparation for reading and writing
- early mathematics
- singing and music-making
- exercises in rhythm
- drawing
- crafts
- physical education
- playing.

From the 2003/04 school year, the timetable for primary school (years 1 to 4) will leave the school with options for deciding the number of hours taught per week.

The total number of hours for years 1 to 4 is 90.

Compulsory subjects	years and number of weekly lessons <sup>1</sup>			
	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>
Religious instruction	2	2	2	2
Local history, geography, biology	3	3	3	3
German, reading, writing	7	7	7	7
Mathematics	4	4	4	4
Music	1	1	1	1
Drawing	1	1	1	1
Technical and textiles	1	1	2	2
Physical education	3	3	2	2
Compulsory practical exercises				
Modern foreign language	x <sup>2</sup>	x <sup>2</sup>	1	1
Road safety	x <sup>3</sup>	x <sup>3</sup>	x <sup>3</sup>	x <sup>3</sup>
Total number of weekly lessons <sup>1</sup>	20–23	20–23	22–25	22–25

1 By allowing schools to make their own decisions on curricula within the given framework, the number of hours allotted to compulsory subjects (with the exception of compulsory 'Religious Instruction') and the compulsory practical exercise 'Modern Language' may be increased or decreased by one hour per week each, making a total of two hours per week, for each year group. Subjects taught to a year may not be dropped entirely.

2 Thirty-two hours a year which are to be taken into account from the total number of weekly hours set aside for the subjects in question. This will not alter the total number of hours per week.

3 Ten annual lessons which are to be taken into account from the total number of weekly hours set aside for the subjects in question. This will not alter the total number of hours per week.

If need be, one hour a week of remedial classes in languages and mathematics will be offered.

Children whose mother tongue is not German are integrated into the class and may receive remedial help in German, the language used in the classroom, or attend lessons in their mother tongue.

Compulsory subjects and compulsory practical exercises are taught to mixed-ability groups. Optional exercises may be chosen on a voluntary basis (singing in the choir, music and movement, physical education, drama, music-making, drawing, modern languages, special classes designed to boost pupils' interest and abilities, lessons in their mother tongue).

Teachers decide on the teaching methods and materials they use. However, the form and contents of the latter must comply with the curriculum for the particular year and be suited to children of that age.

### 3.1.3 Assessment/certification/guidance

#### General provisions

As far as assessment procedures, marking, the repetition of years and reports are concerned, a distinction has to be made between general provisions, applying to all schools, and specific regulations that refer to certain types of schools only.

As a general rule, performance assessment should be evenly spread over the school year. Performance is determined by:

- assessing the active participation of pupils in class work;
- oral assessment;
- written assessment (class assignments, tests, dictations);
- practical assessment;
- graphic assessment (e.g. in subjects like descriptive geometry).

Teachers are responsible for all assessments; they generally assess individual skills and capabilities in individual subjects. Marks range from 1 to 5.

Compulsory and optional subjects are both graded. School reports are a summary of pupils' achievements. Schools issue reports (at the end of the first semester), annual reports (at the end of the year) and certificates (after successful completion of a particular type of school).

The annual report considers pupils' achievement during the entire year, but particular weight is given to the most recent assessment. Pupils are graded as follows: very good (1), good (2), satisfactory (3), sufficient (4), and insufficient (5).

As a general rule, pupils are entitled to enter the next year if they have been assessed in all compulsory subjects and never rated 'insufficient', although the law in fact provides for the possibility of teachers allowing pupils to progress to the next year with one 'insufficient' rating. Pupils whose performance is deemed 'insufficient' in no more than two compulsory subjects may also sit a test in these subjects at the beginning of the following school year (resit). If they fail, they have to repeat the year in question.

#### Specific provisions for primary schools

In the pre-primary class, no marks are given. The report simply contains a record of the child's participation.

The first two years of primary education constitute a single one cycle. This means that all first years are entitled to enter the second year regardless of their assessment in the annual report.

Primary school pupils are also entitled to proceed to the next level regardless of their grade in the compulsory subjects of Music, Drawing, Technical and Textiles, and Physical Education.

Oral exams are not permitted at primary school. In year 4, pupils complete between four and six pieces of work in German and Mathematics.

Teachers establish with parents (in a class or school forum) whether a description of achievement will accompany the marks in the first and second years.

Pupils who are not entitled to pass to the next year may repeat the year they have failed. Examinations at primary school cannot be resat.

During year 4, either towards the end of the first semester or at the beginning of the second, parents or guardians must be informed about the further educational possibilities for their child on the basis of that child's interests and past achievements.

### 3.1.4 Teachers

Teachers for the pre-primary year and primary school and teachers in special schools are trained at tertiary level teacher training colleges (*Pädagogische Akademien*).

Candidates for teacher training colleges must have passed their matriculation examination, or must have passed a special entrance examination (*Studienberechtigungsprüfung*) or vocational matriculation examination (*Berufsreifeprüfung*).

The training course lasts at least six semesters (three years) and is completed by a teaching qualification examination.

Prospective primary school teachers generally acquire the whole range of skills necessary for teaching subjects in primary school (except Religious Instruction) and pre-primary education.

Primary school teachers are provincial employees (i.e. civil servants) under either a private-law or a public-law contract (tenured service). Part-time employment is possible.

Teachers receive continuing training either through autonomous study or by attending training establishments. However, only 15 hours of such training per year are compulsory. In-service training activities can be attended either during the holidays, in the teacher's free time or during working hours.

### 3.1.5 Statistics (2002/2003)

Schools	3,351
Pupils	381,140
Teachers*	33,590
Pupil/teacher ratio	11.3
Pupil/class ratio	20.0

\* The figures given for teachers are taken from 'headcounts' (as in all other tables).

### 3.2 Secondary education: lower level

The first division into separately organised school types occurs at the lower level of secondary education, that is:

- General secondary school (*Hauptschule*);
- Academic secondary school – lower level; (*allgemein bildende höhere Schule, AHS-Unterstufe*);
- Upper level of primary school (*Volksschuloberstufe*). Numerically speaking, this type is relatively insignificant.

About 30% of all primary school leavers in Austria attend academic secondary school, while about 70% go to general secondary school. The number going into the upper level of primary school is negligible.

Pupils must have successfully completed the fourth year of primary school to be admitted to general secondary school. In order to be admitted to an academic secondary school, they must have been rated 'very good' or 'good' in German, reading and mathematics. Pupils who do not meet these standards have to pass an admission test.

#### 3.2.1 General secondary school (*Hauptschule*)

General secondary school covers years 5 to 8 (10- to 14-year-olds), and provides general education in coeducational classes. In doing so, the principles of social integration are to be taken into account.

The *Hauptschule* prepares pupils for employment and for the transition to intermediate and upper secondary schools. The size of general secondary schools varies for regional and demographic reasons. They are often accommodated in the same building as – or one adjacent to – a primary school. They are maintained by a municipality or municipal association.

General secondary classes are organised as follows:

- Pupils are allocated to one of three ability groups in German, mathematics and the modern foreign language after an observation period (of at least two weeks). The educational requirements and aims in the top ability group correspond to those of the academic secondary school. Within one ability group pupils generally have approximately the same level of ability; however, internal differentiation is possible.
- In all other subjects there is mixed ability teaching within established classes.
- Individual schools can establish special deadlines by which time pupils must have been transferred to the next higher or next lower ability group, but this is not required.
- Compulsory preparatory/remedial teaching is provided to pupils upgraded to a higher group or those facing downgrading.
- Pupils with good results in a general secondary school may transfer directly to an academic secondary school.

### Curriculum and assessment/certification/guidance

The approved number of hours per subject at general secondary schools provides a framework for the schools' autonomous decisions. The established numbers apply where no such resolutions have been made.

### Discretionary school timetable

Compulsory subjects	years and weekly lessons
Religious instruction	8 (2 per grade)
German	15–21
Modern foreign language	12–18
History and social studies	5–10
Geography and economics	7–12
Mathematics	14–20
Geometry	2–6
Biology and environmental education	7–12
Chemistry	1.5–4
Physics	5–10
Music	6–11
Drawing	7–12
Elementary technical work ('technology') or Textile work <sup>1)</sup>	7–12
Nutrition and home economics	2–6
Physical education	12–18
Vocational guidance <sup>2)</sup>	1–4
Other compulsory practical exercises	0–4
<b>Total weekly lessons (grade 1–4)</b>	<b>120</b>

1) alternative compulsory subject

2) compulsory practical exercise

Schools are allowed some autonomy in making decisions on the curricula and may teach one hour less than the minimum number of weekly lessons in no more than five compulsory subjects if the following conditions are met:

- Suitable measures are in place to ensure that all cited core areas in individual subjects are covered; and
- a decent concept is in place for creating a profile that will foster pupils' interests, aptitude and motivation to learn.
- The compulsory subjects of 'Mathematics' and 'Geometry' may be combined, provided that at least 15 hours of these subjects are taught each week.

## Non-discretionary school timetable

Compulsory subjects	years and weekly lessons			
	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>
Religious instruction	2	2	2	2
German	5	4	4	4
Modern foreign language	4	4	3	3
History and social studies	—	2	2	2
Geography and economics	2	1	2	2
Mathematics	4	4	4	4
Geometry	—	—	—	2
Biology and environmental education	2	2	1	2
Chemistry	—	—	—	2
Physics	-	1	2	2
Music	2	2	1	1
Drawing	2	2	2	1
Elementary technical work ('technology') or Textile work*	2	1	2	2
Nutrition and home economics	—	1.5	1.5	—
Physical education	4	3	3	3
	29	29.5	29.5	32

\* alternative compulsory subject

The number of total weekly lessons (grades 1–4) is 120.

Vocational guidance is provided as a compulsory practical exercise.

There are also optional subjects and practical exercises. Nutrition and home economics and the alternative compulsory subjects 'technology' and 'textile work' must be taught in coeducational groups, if chosen by both girls and boys. In principle, general secondary schools teach English as a modern foreign language; some offer French or Italian.

Teachers are free to decide on the teaching methods and materials they use. However, the form and contents of the latter must comply with the curriculum for the particular year and be suited to children of that age. Both head teachers and school inspectors are entitled to issue directives to teachers on this matter.

The general rules for assessment procedures, marking and reports are the same as described under 'General Provisions' in the section on Assessment under *Volksschule*.

Pupils are generally allowed to move up to the next year if they have been assessed in all compulsory subjects and have not received a mark of 'insufficient' in their annual report. Special distinctions have to be made in the marking system, however.

Pupils who have successfully completed general secondary school may be admitted to a pre-vocational school (see 4.1) or intermediate or upper secondary vocational school, (see 4.3), or to an academic secondary school. At the end of the general secondary school, pupils receive a school-leaving certificate (*Hauptschulabschlusszeugnis*).

Pupils who have passed the required courses can move on to an academic or vocational secondary school without an admissions test. Pupils who have completed their compulsory education at the end of general secondary school may seek employment or take up apprenticeship training (see Section 5).

### Teachers

General secondary and pre-vocational school teachers, such as primary and special school teachers, follow tertiary level training at Teacher Training Colleges.

The training course lasts at least six semesters (three years) and ends with a teaching diploma examination.

Teachers for general secondary and pre-vocational schools are qualified in at least two subjects (subject teacher system). They teach their subjects in various classes and, provided that it is one of the ability group subjects, in various ability groups. In general secondary school, teachers often teach their subjects to the same class for all four years, although changes may be necessary for various reasons (e.g. maternity leave). From a pedagogical point of view, continuity is recommended.

As regards employment and in-service training, the situation is the same as described in 3.1.4.

### Statistics (2002/2003)

#### General secondary schools

Schools	1,172
Pupils	268,058
Teachers	33,562
Pupil/teacher ratio	8.0
Pupil/class ratio	23.1

### 3.2.2 Academic secondary school – lower level (Allgemein bildende höhere Schule, AHS-Unterstufe)

Academic secondary school comprises four years at the lower level (10- to 14-year-olds) and four years at the upper level (14- to 18-year-olds).

This chapter on the lower level of secondary education deals with the lower level of academic secondary school (*AHS-Unterstufe*).

The lower level of the two-level AHS is organised in coeducational classes according to age, and provides a comprehensive and in-depth general education. It has a dual function, since it both prepares pupils for the corresponding AHS upper level and also enables them to transfer to vocational schools.

The size of each AHS varies for regional and demographic reasons. The number of schools now makes it possible for children and young people from outlying areas to attend an AHS, as agreements with transport providers have achieved acceptable travel times. Pupils can also attend boarding schools.

The first two years of the lower level are uniformly organised, run according to a common curriculum and serve as a period of observation and orientation. The curriculum corresponds to that of general secondary schools. A modern foreign language is taught from the first year onwards.

In the third year a division into three types takes place:

- *Gymnasium* (including Latin);
- *Realgymnasium* (with geometry and an emphasis on mathematics and handicrafts); and
- *Wirtschaftskundliches Realgymnasium* (with an emphasis on chemistry and handicrafts).

There is no ability grouping.

#### Curriculum

The approved number of hours per subject at the lower level of academic secondary school are as follows (the differences in years three and four between the *Gymnasium* and the other two types are marked in brackets, first for the *Realgymnasium*, then for the *Wirtschaftskundliches Realgymnasium*).

It is also possible for schools to deviate from the timetable autonomously in the context of prescribed guidelines and to set priorities in terms of a profile suitable to the particular location.

#### Non-discretionary school timetable

Compulsory subjects	years and weekly lessons			
	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>
Religious instruction	2	2	2	2
German	4	4	4	4
Modern foreign language	4	4	4 (3,3)	3
Latin	—	—	4 (—,—)	3 (—,—)
History and social studies	—	2	2	2
Geography and economics	2	1	2	2
Mathematics	4	4	3 (4,3)	3 (4,3)
Geometry	—	—	—	— (2,—)
Biology and environmental education	2	2	1 (2,1)	2
Chemistry	—	—	— (—,2)	2
Physics	—	1	2	2
Music	2	2	2	1
Arts	2	2	2	2
Handicraft	2	2	2	2
Technology/Textile Work*	2	2	— (2,2)	— (2,3)
Physical education	4	4	3	3
<b>Total weekly lessons</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31(30,31)</b>	<b>31(32,31)</b>

\* alternative compulsory subject

Vocational guidance is provided as a compulsory practical exercise.

There are also optional subjects and practical exercises. Teachers are free to decide on the teaching methods and materials they use. However, the form and contents of the latter must comply with the curriculum for the particular year and be suited to children of that age. Both head teachers and school inspectors are entitled to issue directives to teachers on this matter.

## Discretionary school timetable

### Academic secondary school – lower level (4 grades)

	Gymnasium	Realgymnasium	Wirtschafts- kundliches Realgymnasium
Compulsory subjects	Autonomy	Autonomy	Autonomy
Religious instruction	8	8	8
German	15–21	15–21	15–21
Modern foreign language	12–18	12–18	12–18
Latin	7–11	—	—
History and social studies	5–10	5–10	5–10
Geography and economics	7–12	7–12	7–12
Mathematics	13–18	14–20	13–18
Geometry	—	2–5	—
Biology and environmental education	7–12	7–12	7–12
Chemistry	2–4	2–4	3–6
Physics	5–9	5–9	5–9
Music	6–11	6–11	7–12
Arts	7–12	7–12	7–12
Technology/Textile Work <sup>1)</sup>	3–6	6–12	7–14
Physical education	13–19	13–19	13–19
Vocational guidance <sup>2)</sup>	1–4	1–4	1–4
Total weekly lessons	120	120	120

1) alternative compulsory subject

2) compulsory practical exercise

### Assessment/certification/guidance

The general rules for assessment procedures, marking and reports are the same as described under ‘General Provisions’ in section 3 ‘Compulsory Education’.

Pupils are generally allowed to move up to the next year, if assessed in all compulsory subjects and not rated ‘insufficient’ in the annual report. Pupils with an ‘insufficient’ rating in one or two compulsory subjects may sit a repeat examination at the beginning of the next school year and, provided they pass, may move on to the next year. (In some cases, referred to in the relevant law, it is possible to advance to the next year with one ‘insufficient’ rating). Pupils not entitled to move up to the next year may repeat the year they failed.

## Teachers

Teachers at academic secondary schools are trained at universities or fine arts universities. Courses for qualifying as a teacher are defined as diploma studies. They last nine semesters (four-and-a-half years). Students must pass two diploma examinations and submit a diploma paper in order to graduate with an academic degree (*Magister*). Studies include academic training in two subjects, pedagogical training in the last five semesters, and a *Schulpraktikum* comprising a four-week introductory phase and eight weeks of teaching practice.

The *Magister* diploma does not automatically entitle candidates to a permanent teaching post. Prior to being permanently employed, graduates have to successfully complete both a year of teaching in a school and additional courses (*Unterrichtspraktikum*).

Teachers at academic secondary schools are federal employees, under either a private-law contract or a public-law contract (tenured service). Part-time employment is possible.

As regards in-service teacher training, the situation is the same as described in 3.1.4.

### Statistics (2002/2003)

#### Lower and upper level of academic secondary school

Schools	327
Pupils	189,753
Teachers	19,690
Pupil/teacher ratio	9.6
Pupil/class ratio	24.3

## 4. POST COMPULSORY SECONDARY EDUCATION

At upper secondary level the differentiation in the school system becomes more marked due to the more clearly discernible interests and talents of pupils, as well as the requirements of society for different forms of vocational qualifications.

Besides academic secondary schools, years 9 to 13 (14- to 19-year-olds) are also provided in secondary technical and vocational schools.

The upper level of secondary education therefore comprises the following school types:

- pre-vocational school;
- upper level of academic secondary school (years 9 to 12);
- part-time compulsory vocational school (years 10 to 13 maximum) – parallel to in-company vocational training ('dual system') (see Section 5);
- intermediate secondary technical and vocational schools (years 9 to 12 maximum);
- upper secondary technical and vocational colleges (years 9 to 13);
- kindergarten teacher training college (years 9 to 13);
- training college for non-teaching supervisory staff (years 9 to 13).

Around 41% of general secondary school graduates chose a pre-vocational school or apprenticeship and part-time vocational school.

Approximately 6% of general secondary school graduates and 57% of lower level AHS graduates move up to the upper level of AHS.

53% of general secondary school graduates and 42% of lower level AHS graduates subsequently attend an intermediate or upper secondary vocational school.

Upper level academic secondary schools lead to a matriculation examination, upper level technical and vocational schools, and the training colleges lead to the matriculation examination and diploma certificate, which entitles the holder to university studies.

Classes are coeducational and generally made up of pupils of the same age group. There is usually no ability grouping in the upper level of secondary education with the exception of pre-vocational or part-time compulsory vocational schools.

### 4.1 Pre-vocational school (*Polytechnische Schule*)

Approximately 20 percent of young people in Austria decide to attend a pre-vocational school in the last year of compulsory education. The pre-vocational school is used primarily as a ninth school year by the 14- to 15-year-old age group wishing to learn an occupation immediately upon completion of compulsory schooling. On the basis of pupils' interests, inclinations, talents and abilities, the pre-vocational school provides them with the highest possible qualifications for the transition to vocational training in the dual system or further studies.

By providing a wide selection of practically oriented teaching and learning methods distinctly directed towards applications in the compulsory general education subjects and fields, the PTS promotes the acquisition of abilities, skills and knowledge and encourages the individual's talents and motivation to learn.

Pupils receive targeted guidance and preparation for the vocational training that follows through on-site visits and practical training days in training workshops, vocational schools and firms.

Pupils receive basic vocational training organised by vocational field (compulsory elective fields) corresponding to the major branches of business.

Each pupil must elect a vocational field from the ones offered by the school. The compulsory subject areas of German, English and mathematics are taught in courses that reflect the pupils' differing abilities and interests. All pupils in pre-vocational school must learn to use computers for practical everyday and vocational purposes.

#### Statistics (2002/2003)

##### Pre-vocational school

Schools	290
Pupils	20,626
Teachers	2,011
Pupil/teacher ratio	10.3
Pupil/class ratio	22.8

### 4.2 Academic secondary school – upper level (*Allgemein bildende höhere Schule, AHS-Oberstufe*)

It is the task of the upper level of AHS to give pupils a comprehensive and in-depth general education and to prepare them for university studies.

## Organization

The upper level comprises four years (9 to 12) for 14- to 18-year-olds, and builds on the four years (5 to 8) of the lower level. General information on the academic secondary school is in Section 3.2.2.

The upper level comprises the same three types as years 3 and 4 at the lower level: *Gymnasium*, *Realgymnasium* and *Wirtschaftskundliches Realgymnasium*, but they are characterised as follows:

- *Gymnasium*: in addition to Latin, pupils from the 5<sup>th</sup> year onwards learn either a second modern foreign language or Greek;
- *Realgymnasium*: more mathematics from the 5<sup>th</sup> year onwards, as well as Latin or a second modern foreign language; also geometry or more biology and environmental education, chemistry and physics;
- *Wirtschaftskundliches Realgymnasium*: from the 5<sup>th</sup> year onwards, a second modern foreign language or Latin; also home economics and nutrition, more geography and economics, biology and environmental education, psychology and philosophy.

In addition to the eight-year type of upper-level type of academic secondary school, there is the *Oberstufenrealgymnasium*, which is a separate type of upper level academic school (years 9–12; entered on completion of eight years of general education). Pupils learn a second modern foreign language or Latin from the 5<sup>th</sup> year onwards. They may choose between three orientations: musical instrument playing, design and crafts, or more biology and environmental science, chemistry and physics. This type of school has made the upper level of secondary education accessible to pupils from regions where other upper secondary schools do not exist (in particular for general secondary school leavers).

## Curriculum

The common curriculum covers most of the compulsory subjects in the curriculum for the lower level.

In all three types, as well as in the *Oberstufenrealgymnasium*, elective compulsory subjects amounting to 6 weekly lessons (*Gymnasium*, *Oberstufenrealgymnasium*), 8 weekly lessons (*Realgymnasium*) and 10 weekly lessons (*Wirtschaftskundliches Realgymnasium*) must be chosen in years 6 to 8. Computer science is taught as a compulsory subject (two weekly lessons) in the fifth year of all types.

## Assessment/certification/guidance

The general rules for assessment procedures, marking and reports are described under 'General Provisions' in 3.1.3.

Academic secondary school ends with a matriculation examination (*Matura*). Students who have passed this examination and obtained the matriculation examination certificate (*Reifeprüfungszeugnis*) are called '*Maturanten*' (upper secondary school leavers). The matriculation examination certificate provides access to university studies. All candidates who have completed the last year successfully are entitled to sit the matriculation examination at the main examination date. It is also possible to do so with just one 'insufficient' rating.

As of the school year 1992/93, the matriculation examination was reformed. The new leaving examination at academic secondary schools now comprises two equivalent *Matura* options:

- seven examinations (some written, some oral) in at least four different subject areas;  
or
- the submission of a paper on a specialised field of study (*Fachbereichsarbeit*), instead of one of the written examinations, which must be finished during the first semester of the 8th year.

### 4.3. Full-time vocational schools/colleges (Berufsbildende mittlere und höhere Schulen)

#### Intermediate secondary technical and vocational schools (Berufsbildende mittlere Schulen – BMS)

Intermediate secondary technical and vocational schools provide not only a thorough general education but also practical vocational training for specific occupations. Intermediate secondary vocational schools are full-time schools (except for the colleges for working adults).

To attend an intermediate secondary vocational school lasting at least three years, applicants must have successfully completed the eighth school year (with the exception of applicants in the third achievement group in general secondary school, who must sit an admissions examination in the corresponding compulsory subject areas). Successful graduates of the ninth year in a pre-vocational school do not require the admission examination to attend an intermediate secondary technical and vocational school.

Depending on the sector they cover, these schools have courses lasting from one to four years. If an intermediate secondary vocational school is unable to accept all applicants, the school may itself set stricter requirements with a view to ordering candidates. This is usually done on the basis of the pupils' performance in school reports from year 8. Courses focus on practical training in school workshops, laboratories, kitchens and practice enterprises. Pupils must take part in compulsory practical training in companies or enterprises during their summer holidays.

The conditions for moving to the next year are laid down by law.

After completing at least three years at a vocational intermediate secondary school, pupils may gain a general higher education entrance qualification by taking the vocational matriculation examination, which comprises four sections: mathematics, German, modern languages and an in-depth examination on the vocational training selected at the vocational intermediate secondary school. The vocational matriculation examination is for external students; no school attendance is required. Pupils successfully completing at least three years at an intermediate secondary technical or vocational school have access to the regulated trades after fulfilling the general requirements. Intermediate secondary technical and vocational schools cover the following major sectors:

- agriculture and forestry;
- industry and trade (combination of training in commerce and tourism);
- commercial (intermediate commercial schools);
- vocational schools in the industrial, technical, arts and crafts sectors (in the fields of technology, textiles, tourism and arts and crafts)
- schools for social work;
- schools for the nursing professions (governed by the Nursing Act);
- schools for the medico-technical professions (governed by the Nursing Act).

#### **Upper secondary technical and vocational colleges (Berufsbildende höhere Schulen – BHS)**

The requirements for admission to an upper secondary technical and vocational college are the successful conclusion of the eighth year. AHS pupils must be able to present a favourable certificate. General secondary school pupils who have received a mark lower than 'good' in a differentiated compulsory subject area (German, mathematics, modern foreign language) in the second achievement group, or who were in the third achievement group, must sit an admissions examination in the particular subject area.

If an upper secondary technical and vocational college is unable to accept all applicants, it may set its own stricter requirements with a view to ordering candidates. This is usually done on the basis of the pupils' performance in school reports from year 8.

Intermediate or upper secondary technical schools or colleges with an artistic orientation also require a positive result on an aptitude examination as a further precondition for admission.

Upper secondary technical and vocational colleges provide general and vocational education (double qualification), and lead both to the exercise of an occupation and to general university requirements (matriculation and diploma examination). Education is full-time and lasts five years.

According to European Council Directive 95/43/EC from 20 July 1995, education at upper secondary technical and vocational colleges and special forms of these schools is equivalent to education leading to a diploma and therefore postsecondary education in other EU Member States.

The curriculum is divided into three equal parts: general education, vocational theory and vocational practice.

Students on most courses at upper secondary technical and vocational colleges have to take part in compulsory practical training in business and industry during the summer.

A work placement is recommended for courses with no compulsory practical training. Schools will provide support in finding a suitable placement (trainee) post.

Pupils successfully completing upper secondary technical and vocational colleges are entitled to practise their own trade after two years of professional experience. They may also have access to the regulated trades.

After these three years of professional experience in their field, those who have completed upper secondary technical colleges and upper secondary colleges of agriculture and forestry may be called 'Ingenieur'.

The most important upper secondary technical and vocational colleges are:

- upper secondary technical college (branches: mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, electronic engineering, electronic data processing and organization, civil engineering and construction, chemistry, textile engineering, business engineering, information and communication technologies, etc.);
- upper secondary college for fashion and garment technology;
- upper secondary college for tourism;

- upper secondary college for commerce (Handelsakademie);
- upper secondary college for industry and trade;
- upper secondary college for agriculture and forestry (branches: agriculture, horticulture, viticulture, fruit farming, forestry, dairy farming, etc.).

Today, around 26% of 16 year olds attend this type of school, whereas some 20% attend an academic secondary school and 40% are in the dual system.

### Teachers

Teachers at intermediate or upper secondary technical and vocational schools /colleges are subject area specialists. The nature of training courses and admission requirements depend on the subjects to be taught.

The training of teachers of general subjects in intermediate and upper secondary technical and vocational schools/colleges is the same as that of academic secondary school teachers (see Section 3).

Teachers of theoretical subjects in upper secondary technical and vocational colleges have to have professional experience in the relevant area in addition to university training.

Special training is provided for teachers of practical subjects and teachers of theoretical subjects in intermediate technical and vocational secondary schools (e.g. in vocational teacher colleges and in vocational in-service teacher training colleges). All teachers are public employees. As regards in-service training, see Section 3.1.4

### 4.4 Training colleges for non-teaching supervisory staff, Training colleges for Kindergarten teachers

The Training college for non-teaching supervisory staff trains supervisory staff (Erzieher/in, Sozialpädagoge/-pädagogin) for day care centres and boarding establishments for children and adolescents, as well as for youth work outside school.

Admission is conditional upon the successful completion of the 8th year and passing an aptitude test. The courses at this college last five years and end with a matriculation and diploma examination, entitling the student to enrol in university studies.

Kindergarten teacher training college train kindergarten teachers (Kindergärtner/in) or (with an additional examination) kindergarten teachers

and nursery trainers (Kindergärtner/in and Horterzieher/in). The admission criteria and the prescribed duration of studies for the Kindergarten teacher training college are identical to those for training colleges for non-teaching supervisory staff. Courses again end with a matriculation and diploma examination, entitling the student to enrol in university studies.

Two-year Kollegs are provided for upper secondary school leavers in which the matriculation examination can be replaced by a matriculation examination for working people or an entrance examination. The Kollegs are described in Section 6.1. The curriculum for both colleges comprises general education, such as German, a modern foreign language, history, geography, mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, music and physical education, and also job-oriented subjects. The theoretical part takes place at the colleges, while the practical part is in normal nursery schools, or in day care centres or boarding establishments respectively. Students practise under the supervision of specially trained nursery school teachers, or non-teaching supervisory staff.

### 4.5 Statistics

#### Academic secondary school and intermediate and upper secondary technical and vocational schools and colleges (2002/2003)

	Academic secondary school – upper level	Oberstufen-realgymnasium*	Intermediate secondary technical and vocational schools	Upper secondary technical and vocational colleges
Schools	256	89	439	295
Classes	2.453	975	2.206	5.204
Pupils	51.751	21.218	50.567	128.173
Pupils/class ratio	21,1	21,8	22,9	24,6

\* Academic secondary school – separate upper level

## 5. INITIAL VOCATIONAL TRAINING

### 5.1 Organization of the dual system

In addition to training at intermediate and upper secondary technical and vocational schools/colleges (see Section 4.3) a considerable amount of initial vocational training is provided by apprenticeship training schemes ('dual system').

Apprenticeship training has always been characterised by the dual system of training in business and industry, combined with a theoretical course at a part-time compulsory vocational school. Whilst apprenticeship is based on an apprenticeship contract under labour law, apprentices are still considered to be in compulsory education because they must enrol in a part-time vocational school.

Approximately 40% of all young people aged 15 to 19 are prepared for their future occupation within the dual apprenticeship training scheme.

Around 40,000 enterprises and companies take part in the apprenticeship training scheme, in particular small and medium-sized enterprises in the fields of commerce and crafts, trade, and tourism and leisure; they train approximately 80% of all apprentices. Industrial enterprises and firms not affiliated to a chamber also make a significant contribution to the training of young people.

At present, around 250 occupations and trades are covered by the apprenticeship scheme. The most popular with female apprentices are sales, hairdressing and wig-making (stylist), clerical work, cook/hospitality work; male apprentices prefer such occupations as car mechanic, electrician, carpenter, sales assistant and bricklayer.

### 5.2 Part-time compulsory vocational school (*Berufsschule*)

Part-time compulsory vocational schools are compulsory schools that must be attended by all apprentices part-time or in blocks of time. Part-time compulsory vocational schooling begins when the pupil enters into an apprenticeship or training relationship and lasts until it is completed, i.e. until the successful completion of a final apprenticeship examination. Apprenticeship training and thus part-time compulsory vocational schooling can last two, two-and-a-half, three, three-and-a-half or four years. Most apprenticeships last three years.

The matriculation and diploma examination can be taken in preparatory and extension courses in connection with the final examination. Since 1997, it has also been possible to sit a vocational matriculation examination specially

designed for newly qualified apprentices after taking the final examination, leading to a matriculation certificate for general higher education. Higher level qualifications are also offered by schools for foremen and skilled workers (*Werkmeisterschulen*, *Meisterschulen*) and examinations sat to become a *Meister* (master craftsman) or demonstrate skills (*Befähigungsnachweisprüfungen*) which give access to the exercising of their trades.

Compulsory part-time vocational schools provide basic and specialised education. Their general aim is to promote and complement the apprenticeship training provided in business and industry and to broaden general education. Two specialised theoretical subjects and one practical compulsory subject may be taught in two streams.

In order to be admitted to apprenticeship training, young people must have completed nine years of compulsory education; apprentices are therefore at least 15 years of age. Apprentices attend compulsory vocational school at least one nine-hour day each week throughout the year, or in 'modules' covering at least eight to ten weeks of each school year.

A 'seasonal' vocational school is also available with concentrated lessons during a specific point in the year.

### 5.3 Financing

The 'dual' in the dual system also describes the financing. The firm finances the practical training part in the firm and public funds finance the vocational school.

The respective provincial school boards bear the costs of equipping vocational schools (machines, equipment and teaching materials). The Federation and each Land bear half of the personnel costs. Austrian industry guarantees that individual companies will finance the in-company portion of the apprenticeship training. A study carried out at the beginning of the 1990s revealed that industry spent approximately 430 million euros for apprenticeship training. Most of the expenditure arose from payment of the wages that apprentices receive for their work from the employer. The amount of apprentices' wages is set by collective contract negotiations.

The State provides additional financial assistance to disadvantaged groups. Amounts are paid to training firms to cover the cost of wages (apprenticeship compensation) for particularly disadvantaged young people.

As the number of apprenticeship positions available has diminished in recent years, firms have been offered financial incentives from public resources to create additional positions.

## 5.4 Curriculum

The curriculum in all part-time compulsory vocational schools includes general subjects such as Politics, German and Communication, an occupation-related foreign language and other business studies subjects. The theoretical and practical subjects specific to individual apprenticeships form the remainder of the subjects to be studied at vocational schools. In addition, elective subjects such as German and modern languages are offered. An elective subject related to the apprenticeship may also be created for specific apprenticeships. Physical education is offered as an optional exercise in basic curricula. Furthermore, special classes may also be offered to pupils wanting to join a higher ability group and pupils who risk being excluded from a higher ability group.

## 5.5 Assessment/qualifications/guidance

The general regulations for assessment procedures, marking and reports are the same as described under 'General Provisions' in 3.1.3.

Apprenticeship training ends with an end-of-apprenticeship examination before a board of examiners which, in addition to the chairperson, is made up of legally established stakeholders (social partners). Pupils are awarded a leaving certificate after successful completion of the vocational school course (*Ab-schlusszeugnis*) and as a result are exempt from the theoretical part of the end-of-apprenticeship examination.

## 5.6 Teachers/trainers

Teachers of general education, business studies and theoretical subjects have to have the matriculation examination certificate and two years of professional experience. Teachers teaching practical subjects require a master craftsman's examination as a professional qualification or an equivalent certificate and six years of relevant professional experience.

## 5.7 Statistics

### 2001/2002

Part-time compulsory vocational schools	176
Pupils	130,597
Teachers	4,664
Pupil/teacher ratio	28.0
Pupil/class ratio	23.1

# 6. HIGHER EDUCATION

## 6.1 Non-university education alternatives

The area of non-university education alternatives continues to be expanded in Austria. Essentially, the following training alternatives are available at the present time.

- Teacher training colleges, training colleges for religious education teachers, technical and vocational teacher training colleges;
- Colleges for high-level medical-technical professions and colleges for midwifery;
- Kollegs (specialised post-matriculation courses for technical and commercial professions);
- Kollegs (specialised post-matriculation courses in kindergarten teacher training colleges and training colleges for non-teaching supervisory staff).

### 6.1.1 Admission requirements

These training courses target upper secondary school leavers (Maturanten/innen) although an entrance examination or matriculation examination for working people and (at technical and vocational teacher training colleges) recognised vocational training and experience can also provide access.

### 6.1.2 Fees/financial support for students

There are no tuition fees at training institutes for Austrian nationals, citizens of the European Union or the European Economic Area, as well as some other groups. Students in teacher training colleges, training colleges for religious education teachers, technical and vocational teacher training colleges, colleges for high-level medical-technical professions and colleges for midwifery who demonstrate social need and academic success can claim financial assistance.

### 6.1.3 Academic year

The academic year lasts from September to the end of June and is divided into two semesters.

### 6.1.4 Courses

Teacher Training Colleges train teachers for primary and general secondary schools, special schools and the pre-vocational school. Separate teacher training colleges train religious education teachers.

Technical and vocational teacher training colleges (*Berufspädagogische Akademien*) train vocational school teachers, teachers for data-processing in all types of school and teachers for some fields of instruction in intermediate and upper secondary technical and vocational schools/colleges.

Colleges for high-level medical-technical professions provide non-university training in the health professions in three-year courses divided into seven different branches. There are also colleges for midwifery.

Secondary school graduates can receive vocational training in the commercial, technical, crafts and tourism sectors in Kollegs (four semesters). The Kollegs give upper secondary technical and vocational college graduates an opportunity to acquire an additional vocational qualification. Kollegs attached to training colleges for kindergarten teachers and non-teaching supervisory staff provide vocational training in four to six semesters. Kollegs set general education as a prerequisite and therefore focus on material specific to the profession.

### 6.1.5 Assessment/qualifications

The same general rules apply as in the sector for schools for working people.

Training at colleges is based on independent curricula and examination requirements. Training in colleges and Kollegs leads to a diploma examination.

Graduates of these tertiary training courses have access to specific vocational qualifications.

### 6.1.6 Teaching staff

The teaching staff at colleges, Kollegs and schools for working people possess the same qualifications profile as teachers in intermediate and upper secondary schools. In addition, teachers in the humanities (teaching science, education science, school law, and the psychology and sociology of teaching) must have a doctorate, whilst teachers in the field of vocational teaching or practical work must be able to demonstrate longstanding relevant experience.

### 6.1.7 Statistics

2002/2003

#### Teacher Training Colleges

Colleges	28
Students	13,640
Teachers	2,703

### 6.2 Universities and Universities of applied sciences (Fachhochschulen)

University-level, tertiary education is provided by the following institutions:

- Universities and art universities,
- Universities of applied sciences,
- the University of further education ('Danube University Krems'),
- private universities (after accreditation).

A number of educational institutions also offer university-style courses.

Specific names of individual universities and universities of applied sciences can be found at [www.portal.ac.at](http://www.portal.ac.at).

### 6.3 Universities

Austria has 22 universities of which six are art universities and three newly opened medical universities. In the whole of Austria a total of around 180 courses and, considering all locations, 460 study options are on offer.

In the 2003 winter semester, 65 special university courses (*Universitätslehrgänge*) were offered at the University of Further Education Krems, and approximately 250 such courses at all universities.

Seven private universities have been accredited since 1999.

#### 6.3.1 Admission requirements

To be admitted to a normal course of study, students must have the matriculation examination certificate (*Reifeprüfung*, *Reife- und Diplomprüfung*, *Berufsreifeprüfung*, *Studienberechtigungsprüfung* for the respective course). Students apply to a specific university for a course of study. They then have to enrol for the chosen course each semester. In some cases, they may be required to take supplementary examinations; students who do not meet some of the formal admission requirements for the chosen course of study have to

take supplementary examinations either before matriculation (e.g. biology for the study of medicine) or during the first semester of the course. Art universities require the matriculation examination only for some of their courses. Admission is subject to an entrance examination in which artistic talent is assessed. Candidates who have not passed the matriculation examination may sit a special university entrance examination, which provides access to university studies (or, in some cases, studies at an art university) in a limited range of subjects. Graduates of vocational training in the form of an apprenticeship can also meet university entrance requirements by taking a specially organised matriculation examination for working people. There are no limitations to access to particular courses in universities in Austria for Austrian nationals, citizens of the European Union or European Economic Area, as well as for members of certain other groups.

### 6.3.2 Fees/financial support for students

General fees for universities and universities of applied sciences are 363,36 Euros per semester for students from Austria and other EU and EEA countries and 726,72 Euros for foreign students from the rest of the world. There are comprehensive rules on exceptions and reimbursements for students from developing countries and from Central and Eastern European reforming countries or for students in mobility programmes. Support for students comes in the form of direct and indirect support measures, which are largely funded by public resources. Indirect benefits are not means tested and, from a financial point of view, are by far the main focus of government measures. Indirect support includes family benefits, inclusion in the parent's insurance or individual insurance, statutory accident insurance and tax advantages for children in education.

Direct support, guaranteed in accordance with Studies Promotion Act (*Studienförderungsgesetz*), depends on the social need and academic success of the students. The student's income and/or that of those obliged to pay maintenance is used to determine social need. In this context, there are also special support measures such as the study subsidy (to pay for the fees), travel allowance and assistance for foreign students amongst others.

In addition, particularly successful students receive performance-related grants and research grants.

### 6.3.3 Academic year

The academic year begins on 1 October and ends on 30 September of the following year and is made up of a winter semester, a summer semester and a period of time without classes. Detailed regulations can be consulted in the Senates of the individual universities.

### 6.3.4 Courses

University courses primarily aim at providing an academic education to young people in conjunction with a scholarly career preparation. The 1999 reform of the study regulations created the legal basis for changing the former two-level system with degree (diploma) and doctoral studies to a three-level system (bachelor, master, doctoral studies).

Human medicine, dentistry and teacher training courses may even now only be offered as degree courses with two levels. In the medium term all first-degree (diploma) studies are to be replaced by bachelor and master studies. (In the winter semester 2003, there were already 157 bachelor courses and 198 master courses.)

The university has almost full responsibility for study law under the Universities Act 2002. They need to decide on the courses they offer, respecting European directives where such EU legislation exists. The change from hours per semester to a points system using the European Credit Transfer System is opening up better possibilities for national and international mobility for students.

Teaching staff in universities and universities of applied sciences are free to decide on the form and content of their classes due to the constitutionally enshrined principle of freedom of science and its teaching. On the whole, the forms of teaching on offer have not changed in the last decade. In addition to lectures, there are seminars, proseminars, exercises, forms of practical training, excursions, tutorials run by postgraduates and so forth. Express permission has been given for distance learning units to be introduced into a course of studies. At art universities, the artistic development of individual students is nurtured via one-to-one lessons.

### 6.3.5 Assessment/qualifications

The individual responsible for running the class decides on whether participation in the class has been successful, with the exception of lectures. Both at universities and art universities, diploma examinations have to be sat for each

phase of study; bachelor and master examinations have to be taken for bachelor and master courses.

Under the Universities Act of 2002, the responsible collegial body should set the rules governing tests in the individual curricula. There are no longer any regulations specifying the method used or the purpose of examinations, or indeed the way in which they are to be administered. As such, universities have far greater freedom in deciding on the form of examinations.

In addition to the bachelor, degree (diploma) and master examinations, at least two pieces of class coursework (for the bachelor degree), a diploma paper (for the degree/diploma course) or a thesis (for the master degree) have to be submitted.

For a doctorate, the main demonstration of academic achievement is the candidate's dissertation, and the course ends with an oral examination.

Degree (diploma) studies comprise the requirements of both bachelor and master studies. If needed for a vocational qualification and meeting the requirements of the European Union's guidelines on the recognition of university diplomas, bachelor and degree (diploma) studies may overlap. The broadening and deepening scientific knowledge by writing a diploma paper is now part of the master course. In the medium term, degree (diploma) courses are to be replaced by bachelor and master courses.

Studies last from six to twelve semesters (three to six academic years). Doctoral studies take at least an additional four semesters. In practice, studies generally take longer than this: about 8% of university students and about 23% of students at art universities complete their studies in the legally envisaged time.

In principle, students do not automatically receive a professional qualification upon completing their studies. If a statutory, regulated professional qualification is needed for an academic career – with the exception of veterinary medicine – postgraduate training must be undertaken (e.g. doctor, university lecturer, judge, etc.). Under the Universities Act of 2002, degree programmes (i.e. degree (diploma) courses, bachelor, master and doctorate courses) offer preparatory training for careers in the sciences and the arts as well as for training to work in a professional capacity that requires knowledge of science and the arts.

### 6.3.6 Teachers

There is no initial training programme specifically designed for teachers in higher education; instead, they 'train' by exercising their profession, thereby attaining additional qualifications in teaching and research. Prospective teaching staff at scientific universities and art universities must have the necessary initial qualifications for the work they are going to do.

The university is under the obligation to provide continuing in-service vocational training for all university teachers. On the basis of an amendment to the 2001 act on government employees in universities, new university lecturers will no longer be employed as civil servants and new contracts have been introduced under the Civil Servant Act. With the coming into force of the Universities Act 2002 the civil servant contracts will be converted into employee contracts; new university staff will be employed on the basis of the Employee Act. A collective agreement for university staff is under negotiation between the universities' umbrella organisation and the trade union.

Scientific and art universities staff engaged in research, teaching and arts are under the obligation to participate, within the scope of their respective subjects, in fulfilling the tasks of the university. Upon application, the Rector's Office may award a teaching licence (*venia docendi*) for an entire scientific or art subject. This teaching licence neither signals the beginning of an employment contract, nor does it change an existing contract.

University professors are responsible, in their special subjects, for research or artistic development, as well as for teaching; they are obliged to take proper care of their students, promote future scientists, take part in organisational and administrative activities, as well as in evaluation. They work full or part-time on fixed-term or unlimited contracts with the university and have civil servant status. They are appointed by the rector following an appointment procedure. A teaching licence (*venia docendi*) is awarded after the employment contract has been signed.

### 6.4 Universities of applied sciences (*Fachhochschulen*)

Since the 1994/95 academic year, universities of applied sciences have provided an alternative to existing university studies in Austria based on the Federal law of 1993 on universities of applied sciences (FHStG). They offer university-level vocational training with a scientific basis and practical slant.

Funding is received both from the State and the private sector and depends on the number of places on offer. In the winter semester 2003/04, there were 20,591 students taking courses at universities of applied sciences.

### 6.4.1 Admission requirements

Access is not limited to people who have a higher education entrance qualification; universities of applied sciences are particularly open to also including people who have succeeded in obtaining vocational qualifications. Nevertheless, these applicants need to take additional training before beginning their studies.

Courses at universities of applied sciences welcome anyone that meets the registration requirements provided there are sufficient places on the course. Students are selected by means of entrance examinations.

### 6.4.2 Fees/financial support for students

Organisers of universities of applied sciences respectively study programmes at universities of applied sciences are entitled to charge students fees amounting to 363,36 euros per semester.

### 6.4.3 The academic year

In principle, the academic year is the same for all universities, though the details are decided by the individual universities of applied sciences.

### 6.4.4 Courses

For the academic year 2003/2004, 136 courses at universities of applied sciences (six of which as bachelor programmes) were on offer across Austria, mainly in the areas of technology and economics but also in the humanistic studies. Several courses cover more than one discipline, and there are also a small number of courses in administration, agriculture and forestry. Over a quarter of the courses offered are organised as in-service training. Extra courses were added in the academic year 2002/03, mainly focusing on social work and health.

The statutory minimum course duration for the completion of a course is a total of six semesters for the bachelor degree, including the work placement, following the introduction of the three level course in 2003; the corresponding master course takes two to four semesters. The degree (diploma) course, which may still be taken at universities of applied sciences, is limited to eight to 10 semesters and also ends with a work placement.

The time spent on studies is determined using ECTS points. Distance learning elements are also being introduced.

Courses at universities of applied sciences end with an academic degree. For Bakkalaurea/Bakkalaureus, Magistra/Magister or Diplom academic degrees, the area of work is added to the degree as well as the suffix (FH). Graduates may opt to follow a doctorate course at a university

### 6.4.5 Assessment/qualifications

There is no central administration for the examination system; each course has its own rules on exams. A course ends with a degree examination comprising a dissertation and cross-subject oral examination. For Bakkalaureat courses at universities of applied sciences the final examination comprises individual written assignments done as classwork and a cross-subject oral examination.

### 6.4.6 Teaching staff

Teaching is done and applied research and development work performed by academic teaching staff. When an application is made for the recognition of a course, at least four people must be responsible for developing the course, and two of these must be academics with a university lecturer or equivalent qualification. If recognition is granted, at least four of the people on the team responsible developing the course must teach it. These four people must include two academics who are university lecturers or have an equivalent qualification and two more who can provide evidence of having worked in a related field.

## 6.5 Statistics

### Regular first-year students, regular students total, graduates at universities, winter semester 2003, graduates academic year 2002/2003

	Regular first-year students	Regular students total	Graduates
Universities	26,292	185,435	17,486
Of whom foreigners	5,876	29,577	1,864
Art universities	896	7,954	806
Of whom foreigners	575	3,257	276
Total*	27,188	192,408	18,294
Of whom foreigners	6,451	32,708	2,133

Total\*: Students studying at more than one university or art university are only counted once.

## 7. ADULT EDUCATION

### First-year students and graduates at universities of applied sciences, winter semester 2003, graduates academic year 2002/2003

Subject area	First-year students	Students	Graduates
Technology	3,759	10,722	1,493
Economics	2,257	7,061	991
Tourism	310	969	93
Humanistic studies	797	1,839	81
Total	7,123	20,591	2,658

Source: Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture

### 7.1 Legal framework<sup>1)</sup>

Adult education in Austria is not governed by the State under the constitution, but is rather the responsibility of the *Länder* and municipalities. Each Land has its own way of fulfilling this responsibility (making resources available, organization, etc.). Due to the constitutional situation mentioned above, the national Adult Education Promotion Act (EB-FG) is, so to speak, a voluntary commitment on the part of the national government which does not affect the right of the *Länder* to take decisions. Under the EB-FG, financial support must be provided, but the law does not specify the level of support. Financial resources are available in almost all Länder to support individuals taking part in adult education, and these are provided in the form of subsidies for course fees. By contrast, the responsibility for adult education with regard to schools and universities (for example schools for working people, university courses and *Fachhochschulen* for working people) clearly lies with the Ministry of Education and is subject to the statutory regulations applying to this area. There are special forms of both academic secondary schools (AHS) and intermediate and upper secondary technical and vocational schools/colleges (BMHS) catering for workers (SchOG, SchUG-B). The Universities Act 2002 gives universities considerable autonomy with regard to adult education. The legal basis for training related to labour market policy is provided by the Labour Market Service Act (*Arbeitsmarktservicegesetz*) and the Labour Market Promotion Act (*Arbeitsmarktförderungsgesetz*). The Labour Market Administration (*Arbeitsmarktverwaltung* – AMV) is set up as public service provider.

### 7.2 Organizational framework

The national government's responsibilities for adult education are split between a number of ministries. General adult education, schools for working people, and adult education at universities or *Fachhochschulen* are the responsibility of the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture (BMBWK), provided that these areas do not fall within a domain of university autonomy. General adult education is mainly dealt with in the BMBWK by a department in Section V (teacher and educator training, general teaching opportunities, adult education, training advice), which organizes and coordi-

nates funding and cooperation with associations and institutions working in adult education. The *Bundesinstitut für Erwachsenenbildung St. Wolfgang* answers to the BMBWK and deals with the training and continuing training of adult educators and librarians. Responsibility for in-company training and continuing training and labour-market-related training from the Labour Market Service (*Arbeitsmarktservice Österreich – AMS*) lies with the Ministry of Economics and Labour (BMWA). The Federal Ministry for Public Health, Generations and Consumer Protection (*Bundesministerium für soziale Sicherheit, Generationen und Konsumentenschutz – BMSG*) is responsible for older and disabled people, the Ministry of Health and Women (*Bundesministerium für Gesundheit und Frauen – BMGF*) for training and continuing training for healthcare professionals, and the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management (*Bundesministerium für Land- und Forstwirtschaft, Umwelt und Wasserwirtschaft – BMLFUW*) for agriculture and forestry. The Federal Ministry of Finance (*Bundesministerium für Finanzen – BMF*) is responsible for matters to do with taxation.

*Länder* and municipalities meet their responsibilities for adult education in a number of different ways, ranging from making resources available to adult education establishments or their umbrella organizations, to departments in the provincial administrations, some of which also deal with other training issues (e.g. vocational college courses). In general, in addition to public bodies belonging to the State, *Länder* and municipalities, interest groups and religious denominations also show a firm commitment to adult education, actively helping to shape the landscape of adult education via their educational establishments or (umbrella) organizations. Accordingly, representatives of interest groups are actively involved in AMS administration at the national, Land and regional levels. As the competent institution, the AMS itself does not provide training, it merely finances it. The Labour Market Service (AMS) is structured in national, Land and regional organizations. The social partners are also involved in developing political measures concerning adult education, have connections with adult education establishments (see Section 7.5.1) and offer subject-related support for training (training vouchers, grants, etc.).

### 7.3 Funding

Public expenditure on general adult education and vocational training for adults is considerable and rising. There was a nominal increase in spending by the national government and *Länder* between 1995 and 1999, from around

214 million euros to over 281 million euros, with more than 50% of spending allocated to schools for working people. The direct continuing training costs incurred by commercial companies, totalling an estimated 520 million euros, can serve as a comparison. In addition to the public expenditure mentioned, in recent years there have also been ‘standardisation costs’ for *Fachhochschule*-courses for working people (around 37 million euros in 2003/04). Tax breaks in the form of rebates and options for offsetting items against tax also increasingly have to be added to public expenditure on adult education. Whilst traditional subsidies are being cut – to emphasize means testing – new forms of funding, such as project funding and individual support from the national government, *Länder* and municipalities are being increased.

The *Werkmeisterschule* (foreman school) is unusual in terms of adult schooling<sup>2</sup>. As with all continuing vocational training, the main source of funding for these schools run by non-profit organizations are school fees. Course costs can be paid for by the individual, company, AMS or public body, depending on the type and purpose of training. Individuals pay the majority of course costs not only in general adult education but also in adult vocational training, where they cover roughly 40% of the fees. Estimates from the 1990s put spending by the general public at almost 800 million euros. The AMS pays for much of adult vocational training and spends more than 350 million euros per year (2001) on training measures. AMS resources come from mandatory contributions defined by law, which are used by the AMS in accordance with the political targets set.

### 7.4 Teaching staff

In Austria, teachers working in adult education tend to have had different preparatory training, depending on the type of provider for which they work. For adult education in public schools and universities, general entrance requirements for the teaching profession apply. In both non-profit and commercial adult education, experts from companies or professionals may also work as teachers, and permanent staff are mainly concerned with the establishments’ administration. The programmes of all major adult education providers, the Federal Institute for Adult Education (*Bundesinstitut für Erwachsenenbildung*) and also individual universities and other institutions feature teacher training courses for trainers and associate lecturers.

## 7.5 Organization

There are two forms of adult education with different aims: the first form involves activities designed to provide a written record of progress in the form of a legally recognised certificate, while the second involves activities geared towards gaining general or specialist knowledge without a final examination leading to a certificate.

The certificate-oriented type is provided in training courses with a syllabus which corresponds to initial education. These are mainly offered by public-sector schools for working people or on preparatory courses for exams taken by external students. In 1997, the matriculation examination for working people (*Berufsaufnahmeprüfung* – BRP) was introduced as another option. Amongst other things, fee-paying preparation courses for the BRP are offered by non-profit adult education institutions (which are sometimes also authorized to hold examinations in individual subjects). University courses are a special case, and the resulting qualifications have no equivalent in the initial education system. International certificates are a relatively recent development created by companies and professional associations and have been particularly popular in IT and computing.

However, the vast majority of courses and places on offer still involve general adult education and forms of vocational training for adults which do not lead to a certificate.

### 7.5.1 Continuing training institutes

General adult education and adult vocational training are offered by different institutions in Austria: the main providers are non-profit institutions and special forms of public schools. However, universities and *Fachhochschulen* are also playing an increasingly important role in adult education, due to the rising level of formal education amongst the general public (For details on this, see below).

In addition, commercial training providers – which are many in number and comprise a wide variety of (mainly small) providers – have recently captured a large share of the market in adult education, especially where in-company continuing training is concerned. Furthermore, there are specialist continuing training institutes for teachers (teacher training and in-service teacher training colleges<sup>3)</sup>) and other professional groups (civil servants, professionals, etc.).

### Non-profit-making providers

Non-profit-making providers in Austria have traditionally had an important place in general and external continuing vocational training in Austria. Their development and structure reflect the country's politics, religion and associations. The larger providers mentioned below have joined together in the Conference on Adult Education in Austria (*Konferenz der Erwachsenenbildungsanbieter Österreichs* – KEBÖ).

Adult education centres (*Volkshochschulen*) are the most traditional institution in Austrian adult education and are more than 100 years old. The Association of Austrian Adult Education Centres (*Verband Österreichischer Volkshochschulen* – VÖV) with its Educational Work and Research Unit (*Pädagogische Arbeits- und Forschungsstelle* – PAF) is the umbrella association representing nine groups at Land level organized into associations with different support structures. All in all there are 293 adult education centres in Austria.

The Catholic Adult Education Forum (*Forum Katholischer Erwachsenenbildung*) comprises more than 60 institutions with various aims: Catholic education, residential centres (*Bildungshäuser*), distance learning courses, specialist educational establishments (e.g. *Katholische Sozialakademie*). Whilst the approximately 1,500 local education authorities target specific regional needs, the emphasis in residential centres is placed on intensive and longer-term courses.

The *Bildungshäuser* are non-school youth and adult education institutions. 17 *Bildungshäuser* belong to the umbrella organization known as the Association of Austrian Residential Centres (*Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Bildungshäuser Österreich*). The purpose of the association is to link the organization of *Bildungshäuser* and represent them to the outside world. Each *Bildungshaus* – whether supported by the national government, church, Länder or rural interest groups – bears its own responsibility for designing its programme.

The Federation of Adult Education Associations (*Ring Österreichischer Bildungswerke*) acts as a platform for two subassociations, the Association for Austrian Popular Education (*Verband Österreichischer Volksbildungswerke* – VÖVBW) and the *Arbeitsgemeinschaft Evangelischer Bildungswerke* (AEBW). It promotes cooperation between the subassociations, coordinates exchanges of ideas and experiences and represents joint education policy interests.

The Austrian Vocational Training Institute (*Berufsförderungsinstitut Österreich* – BFI) acts as the adult vocational training institute for Chambers of Manual and Non-Manual Workers (*Kammern für Arbeiter und Angestellte*)

and the Confederation of Austrian Trade Unions (*Österreichischer Gewerkschaftsbund*) alongside the BFI Land associations. The BFI provides a considerable proportion of labour market integration training on behalf of the AMS. The umbrella association coordinates and looks after BFI Land associations and maintains (inter)national contacts with government and non-profit adult education institutions.

The Association of Austrian Trade Union Education and Training Programmes (*Verband Österreichischer Gewerkschaftlicher Bildung – VÖGB*) acts as the institution for Chambers of Labour (*Arbeiterkammern*) and trade unions. The VÖGB's residential centres are responsible for providing training and continuing training for officials, employees and members of workers' organizations.

Economic Promotion Institutes (*Wirtschaftsförderungsinstitute der Wirtschaftskammer Österreich – WIFI*) are service centres run by Chambers of Commerce and can be found in all *Länder*. WIFI is the biggest provider of continuing vocational training in Austria. Training activities are designed for target groups at all levels in companies. At national level, WIFI coordinates tasks with institutions in the *Länder*.

The umbrella organization called the Austrian Economics Society (*Volkswirtschaftliche Gesellschaft Österreich – VG-Ö*) and the associated economics societies in the *Länder* are the educational institutions concerned with economics. Here, the preferred target group comprises management staff and employees working in the fields of economics and administration, as well as teachers.

The Institute for Further Education in Rural Areas (*Ländliches Fortbildungsinstitut – LFI*) is a rural adult education institution that is active throughout Austria. The LFI's main area of work is adult vocational training in agriculture and forestry and also rural home economics. Training is provided to help people overcome the economic and cultural changes underway in rural areas.

Austria's public libraries (*Öffentliche Büchereien Österreichs*) are, in a broader sense, also fundamental institutes for adult education, for they have works on science, art, literature, politics and also relaxation and leisure; they also offer AV media (CD-ROMs, CDs, videos and cassettes), games and magazines. The *Büchereiverband Österreichs* is the umbrella organization for public libraries in Austria and represents their interests.

### Schools for working people<sup>4)</sup>

All school exams taken in upper and lower secondary and also apprenticeship schemes may be taken or completed in adult education. The exams are mainly taken in upper secondary technical and vocational colleges (*Berufsbildende höhere Schulen – BHS*) for working people (almost 1,300 certificates per year). These special types of school cover exactly the same specialist areas as day schools, including technical subjects, trade, sales and other domains. The intermediate secondary technical and vocational schools (*Berufsbildende mittlere Schulen – BMS*) for working people have more participants and graduates studying technical subjects and trade (*Werkmeisterschulen* [foreman schools], *Bauhandwerkerschulen* [schools for builders] and *Meisterschulen* [schools for master craftsman]) than studying sales-related subjects. Academic secondary schools for working people account for some 400 passes per year. Kollegs for working people are also available.

Vocational schools/colleges for social occupations (e.g. caring for the elderly) and schools for healthcare and nursing schools with related special training (in line with the Austrian law on nursing [*Gesundheits- und Krankenpflegegesetz*]) are open to adults or may be offered, sometimes in special forms, to adults.

### Universities and Fachhochschulen (Universities of applied sciences)

Universities offer both postgraduate studies for graduates and also university courses for a wider variety of people. The introduction of the Universities Act of 2002 gave Austrian universities considerable autonomy, including with respect to the continuing training options placed on offer there. The Danube University Krems (*Donau-Universität Krems*) only offers continuing training/university courses. It is currently responsible for providing more than a third of further education at university. The *Zentrum für Fernstudien* (Distance Learning Centre) was set up in 1991 at the University of Linz and has its own study centres in Vienna, Linz, Bregenz and Steyr. The distance learning centre cooperates with the *Fernuniversität Hagen* and is a member of the umbrella association known as the European Association of Distance Teaching Universities (EADTU; cooperation with the Open University also takes place in this context).

The sector of universities of applied sciences established in 1994 is also becoming increasingly important in adult education. Around 23% of the students in a year are over 25 years old (compared with 8% at universities), and around a quarter of students at universities of applied sciences are working people (WS 2003: 5,236).

Private universities also exist alongside public universities in accordance with the Accreditation Act (1999). Some offer postgraduate courses. Non-university educational establishments – e.g. non-profit adult education institutions – could offer university-level courses based on specific criteria up to 2003. These courses will terminate in 2010.

### 7.5.2 Entrance requirements

The entrance requirements for adult education are largely determined by the sector, and more specifically by the qualification to be gained. There are no formal entrance requirements for non-profit adult education when a student is taking specialist continuing training to update his/her skills. In cases where specialist requirements are needed, advice and assessments will be offered before the course starts to ensure that it can run as smoothly as possible. Entrance requirements for the public school and university sector depend on the type of course or evening school involved. *Kollegs* require a matriculation examination, whereas upper secondary schools/colleges for working people only require a positive school leaving certificate of the 4<sup>th</sup> grade of lower secondary education.

### 7.5.3 Objectives

In adult education, general education and vocational training have different objectives, though they often overlap. However, adult education almost invariably focuses on training citizens for tasks they perform in their private and social life as well at work. Adult vocational training includes short and long courses and full vocational training for adults is not rare. The training measures funded by the AMS mainly aim for relatively quick re-integration into working life.

### 7.5.4 Organization in terms of time and space

Adult education in Austria has traditionally taken place in the evening or in blocks at weekends. People very rarely stop working to attend a course. Another special feature of the Austrian adult education culture is that all certificates which can be taken in upper secondary and as part of apprenticeship schemes can also be acquired in adult education at night school or by attending courses. Training courses on offer for working people are generally designed to be part-time. In terms of coverage, Austria is also characterized

by the large variety of providers and the wide selection of courses on offer, including regionally.

### 7.5.5 Curriculum

Most training provided by non-profit or commercial adult education institutions use curricula designed by the institute in question or geared towards international standards (e.g. foreign languages or IT). Company-specific IT certificates are also offered, for example by the Economic Promotion Institute, Vocational Training Institute (*Berufsförderungsinstitut*) or adult education centres in specific areas. Schools for working people have the same curricula as standard schools attended by young people aged 14 to around 20. This curriculum also covers issues to do with lifelong learning. Individual subjects in the matriculation examination for working people are also geared towards the curricula for the respective types of school.

### 7.5.6 Quality assurance

Quality assurance has also been a major issue in adult education in Austria for a number of years, and various approaches have been taken to ensure that it takes place. These range from using general international quality assurance standards and specific criteria and processes for the *Länder* and individual providers, to evaluating courses using participant questionnaires and instructions on self-assessment for trainers and training providers. Many training providers have already undergone quality assurance tests stemming from ISO Standards or the EFQM (European Foundation for Quality Management). Other associations have developed their own quality assurance measures (e.g. the manual for quality development at Austria's adult education centres). In Oberösterreich, a large *Land*, a special quality stamp has been developed which also leads to the partial reimbursement of course fees by the regional government. As such, quality assurance in adult education in Austria has focused on ensuring high-quality input by training providers. Evaluation of the output of adult education is currently being championed primarily by AMS programmes, but may be developed more in other areas in the future. On the whole, due to the growing number of providers and participants, greater emphasis will have to be placed on evaluating the results of courses in the future. There is widespread interest in developing a sustained national strategy for quality assurance in adult education, not least with a view to protecting consumers in the training market.

## 7.6 Training information and counselling

A numbers of institutions in Austria offer and issue training advice for adults, though integrated centres very often provide information for both young people and adults. Training information and advice for adults is offered by public institutions, the social partners or related adult education institutions and the Labour Market Service (AMS) as well as by the individual Länder. The BMBWK has developed a number of IT-based systems and in particular the meta search engine [www.eduvista.com](http://www.eduvista.com) – designed to offer anyone interested in training the opportunity to search for competent providers by region and by topic – with a view to improving training information and advice. The 'Bildungsberater im Netz' (training advisors on the Internet' ([www.bib-infonet.at](http://www.bib-infonet.at))) platform initiated by the BMBWK should enable networking and cooperation. In addition to its job placement work, the AMS supports individual initiatives made by job seekers and companies by offering advice on a wide variety of topics and information services connected to training measures and financial support. AMS advisers receive internal training and continuing training. AMS Austria provides a continuing training database on its website [www.ams.or.at](http://www.ams.or.at) with comprehensive information on continuing training institutes and their continuing training activities.

## 7.7 Taking into account prior knowledge, accreditation

The testing and recognition of knowledge acquired by adults has traditionally focused on examinations taken by so-called external students for secondary school certificates or apprenticeships. A major new area has now opened up with the spread of international certificates (e.g. IT/computing, foreign languages, welding technology). Furthermore, the issue of transparency and the recognition of qualifications has now become a central theme in educational policy as a result of European integration and the mobility it brings. The recognition of previously acquired knowledge is best dealt with by the final examination (*Lehrabschlussprüfung*)<sup>5</sup>, matriculation examination for working people (BRP) and admission examination for a special course (SBP).

## 7.8 Statistics

A survey from 2002 (Life-Style Studie) showed that around 40% of over-15s living in Austria have actively taken part in continuing training either in course form or in some other way during the last 12 months (50% are working people). The higher level of formal education is resulting in growing interest in,

access to and participation in adult education. 20- to 29-year-olds are the best-represented group in adult education, though among the over-49s has waned. The most popular subjects were found to be computing, job-related subjects, health and languages. In comparison to around a decade ago, participation in adult education has clearly risen.

- <sup>1</sup> An overview of the role of the State and the *Länder* in education in general is given in Section 1.3. As such, in what follows only the major differences found in adult education are described.
- <sup>2</sup> See Section 5.2
- <sup>3</sup> See Section 3.1.4
- <sup>4</sup> See Section 4.3 and 5.
- <sup>5</sup> Exceptional admittance to a final examination for candidates who have not completed a course is increasing (already more than 5,300 in 2002). Preparatory courses are mainly funded by the AMS and run by the BFI, WIFI or individual companies.

# DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION 2000 – 2003

## 8. LEGAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL MEASURES

### 8.1 Legislation

#### **Educational Documentation Act (*Bildungsdokumentationsgesetz*)**

The Educational Documentation Act, Federal Legal Gazette No. 12/2002, provides the required legal basis for collecting person-related data of pupils and students. In compliance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 2000, which guarantees everybody the fundamental right to data protection, the act stipulates which data may be collected and processed at schools and universities and for which purpose, to whom such data may be forwarded, and which measures should be taken to guarantee data security and data protection as well as to prevent abuse.

Pupils' and students' personal data collected on the basis of this act include, for instance, name, social security number, gender, nationality as well as various other information on past school career or previous studies, the latter being regulated by decree.

These data, which have to be collected on a regular basis, may be forwarded to two bodies only, first, the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, which has to compile a comprehensive documentation on all pupils and students, and secondly "Statistics Austria", the federal central office of statistics. The latter is required by law to compile, each year, a federal statistical survey on education, as well as to prepare and keep a register on the educational status of all Austrian residents.

The Federal Educational Documentation Act also lays down certain quality requirements concerning these surveys and statistics. Thus, federal statistics on education must contain information on pupil and student flows between, as well as within, education facilities or programmes. All this is to yield information for better planning and controlling the education system.

The respective names connected with the data collected at schools or universities are not passed on to either the Ministry or Statistics Austria. Pupils' and students' social security numbers must be encrypted by the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture so that they cannot be retrieved any

more. Storing social security numbers in the comprehensive surveys is not permitted. Statistics Austria is subject to similar encrypting provisions.

In addition to the comprehensive surveys on pupils and students, the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture also prepares a survey on expenditure for education facilities, which includes data on personnel expenditure.

### **Early warning system concerning decreasing pupil performance**

An amendment to the School Instruction Act, Federal Legal Gazette I, No. 78/2001, provides for a special information system which is to enable pupils, as well as their parents, to react in time to an impending failing grade in the annual certificate. If, at a certain time, a pupil will have to be failed on the basis of his or her past performance (active participation in class work, written and oral tests, etc.), the pupil, or one of his or her parents/guardian has to be invited to a counselling meeting with the respective teacher; the purpose of this meeting is to find out the reasons for the deficit in performance, to determine where the performance deficits are, and to develop a concrete strategy for remedying such deficits. In this counselling meeting also school doctors or school psychologists may take part. However, if the school should fail to notify the pupil's parents/guardian about an impending failing grade, or should fail to invite them to the legally required counselling meeting, the pupil does not have the right to require a passing grade because of such failure. It is true, however, that the class head teacher, or the teacher of the respective subject in which the pupil is endangered, would have neglected his or her duties, an omission to which the school principal, possibly even the school inspection authority, would have to react.

### **Integrative vocational education and training – pilot projects**

Disadvantaged persons with communication handicaps, who are either unable, or find it extremely difficult, to succeed in the labour market, are to benefit from a system of integrative vocational education and training. On the basis of amendments to the Vocational Education Act and the Compulsory Schooling Act such persons have two possibilities: they may either complete an apprenticeship which has been extended by two years, or at least acquire certain part qualifications for which there is a demand on the labour market. Such part qualifications may either be acquired in an enterprise training apprentices (the preferable alternative) or in a special facility.

Such vocational education and training is accompanied by continuous assistance. It is to facilitate the integration of disadvantaged person into

working life, a measure which is of decisive importance for the education system.

## **8.2 School partnership**

The most important task of the School Partnership Unit at the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture is to provide information to parents/guardians, pupils and teachers with a view to supporting their work in the school partnership boards. This is done by the publication of information material, the organisation of meetings of the Parents' Advisory Board, meetings of the pupils' representatives of the *Bundes- and Zentrallehranstalten* (upper secondary technical schools under the direct control of the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture), the provision of education specialists speaking in school partnership board meetings, as well as by giving parents and pupils the possibility to take part in specific work groups and conferences both in Austria and abroad.

"Consultation meetings" of the Parents' Advisory Board with representatives of the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, which take place at regular intervals, are particularly popular. In these meetings, in which the number of participants is kept small, discussion centers on a limited number of topical items, such as promotion of reading skills, early warning system, notebook classes, addiction prevention, education for sustainable development, as well as the implementation of targets contained in the Government Programme, etc.

The participation of the school partners in education was discussed in numerous international conferences and seminars, in which representatives of the School Partnership Unit of the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture were involved as organizers, speakers or participants:

- Expert meeting "School Boards", Brno, December 2000
- Council of Europe seminar "How to Develop a School for Democratic Citizenship", September 2001
- Conference of experts "Participation, Social Cohesion and Citizenship", Brussels, November 2001
- Five-part further-training seminar for school partners "Partnership at School", Jihlava, Czech Republic, 10/2001 to 10/2002
- Project "East-West Dialogue" of the European Parents Association (EPA) on strengthening school partnership (start 04/2002 in Vienna, concluding conference 02/2003 in Sofia/Bulgaria)

- Day of in-service teacher training “Austrian School Partnership Model”, Brno, February 2003
- GRUNDTVIG Action 2 Project “CIPCO” (Centre for International Parent Co-operation), 04/2002 – 02/2003
- 3<sup>rd</sup> International Parents’ Conference, Szezecin/Poland, May 2003
- Council of Europe seminar “Shaping the future: the voice of young people in local citizenship activities”, Bradford/UK, October 2003.

In 2001/2002 the Federal Pupils’ Advisory Board organised six internal meetings, two joint meetings with representatives of the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, as well as two all-Austrian events:

Pupils’ Parliament, Vienna, April 2002, with approximately 130 participants discussing in several workshops subjects such as school democracy, equal opportunities and quality control

Future Visions, Tulln, June 2003: Approximately 40 participants developed suggestions on a reform of the upper level of secondary education (Secondary Stage II).

Since then pupils’ parliaments have been regularly organised in several provinces, with representatives of the provincial school boards and the provincial governments participating.

In 2002/03 a project developed by the Federal Pupils’ Advisory Board was carried out in cooperation with the federal pupils’ representative of the school years 1991/92 and 1992/93, Ronny Hollenstein (ic2 consulting GmbH), viz. the production of the movie “Pupils Have a Say”. Video copies have been made available to all schools of Secondary Stage II.

The international representative of the Federal Pupils’ Advisory Board of the school year 2003/04 took part in the youth forum of the UNESCO General Conference. The subjects included education for sustainable development (in particular water management), youth and AIDS, UNESCO and youth.

The suggestions of the “Future Commission” established by the Federal Minister of Education, Science and Culture in 2003 were discussed in detail with the Federal Pupils’ Advisory Board of the year 2003/04 and the Parents’ Advisory Board.

The School Partnership Unit also takes part in the preparation of a National Action Plan for ensuring children’s rights, entitled “Young rights Action

Plan – YAP”, which was initiated in June 2003 by the Federal Ministry of Social Security and Generations.

### 8.3 Socio-economic measures

During the period under review the following measures under the Study Grants Act have served to remove social barriers in education: School allowances, boarding allowances, travel expense allowances, specific school allowances for working pupils preparing for the matriculation examination (*Matura*), as well as extraordinary allowances from the Hardship Fund.

Within the scope of the School Textbook Programme schools may choose from among 3,452 textbooks (172 of which with Internet supplement), 3,020 items in the annex to the textbook list, and 672 items of therapeutic material. Since 1999 schools have had the possibility to use up to 15% of their budgets for teaching material of their own choice (printed, audiovisual, electronic material, learning games), such material being selected by the school partners. More than 95% of the books ordered already incorporate the new spelling rules.

In 2003, the Commissions for the Approbation of School Textbooks gave a total of 649 expert opinions; individual experts reviewed 458 items for inclusion in the annexes to the textbook lists.

The school textbook programme, the programme free travel for pupils, both of which are subject to a deductible, as well as the pupils’ accident insurance with the General Accident Insurance Company, are financed by the Family Load Equalization Fund.

Each year more than 30,000 pupils take part in the programmes “Young Austrians Visit the Federal Capital” and “Young Europeans Visit Vienna”.

## **9. THE NEW CURRICULA FOR HAUPTSCHULE (GENERAL SECONDARY SCHOOL) AND LOWER LEVEL OF ALLGEMEIN BILDENDE HÖHERE SCHULE (ACADEMIC SECONDARY SCHOOL)**

Curricula are developed by groups of experts consisting of teachers, in-service teacher training staff, school inspectors, representatives of universities and of the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture.

As in the case of all other provisions of school law, any draft curricula must be submitted to the provincial governments, provincial school boards, social partners, parents' associations, or other public institutions for their respective opinions (decision-finding process). Curricula come into force by decree of the Federal Minister of Education, Science and Culture.

The new curricula came into force as of September 1, 2000, starting with the respective first forms; since the school year 2003/2004 they have been the basis for instruction in all forms of general secondary school and of the lower level of academic secondary school in Austria. The curricula were updated in order to meet modern teaching requirements, and this update resulted in a great number of changes.

### **Points of emphasis and innovations in the curriculum '99**

An important aspect underlying the philosophy of this curriculum is that it is no longer primarily via input that teaching is planned and carried out. The target of instruction – and therefore the task of teachers – is not only to confront pupils with educational content, but to make sure that pupils actually master this content, i.e. the emphasis is on output. This function of the curriculum is supported by the development of educational standards in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade (for the subjects German, mathematics, and modern foreign language/English). In the school year 2003/2004 several pilot schools (academic secondary school and general secondary school) in the whole of Austria are testing the first drafts of such standards.

The curriculum is based on a modern, more comprehensive definition of education. In addition to developing pupils' subject competence, which will doubtlessly continue to be one of the teachers' foremost tasks, great importance is attached to promoting pupils' self and social competence. Pupils are

to acquire a balanced measure of subject competence, self competence and social competence. The promotion of dynamic abilities is to prepare them for situations which cannot be mastered by acquired knowledge and experience only, but which require the ability to find on-the-spot solutions.

The curriculum also lists a number of tasks of education which cannot clearly be allocated to a particular subject, but can only be handled on a trans-disciplinary basis. The targets of general education are defined in terms of five areas of education, which is to further trans- and interdisciplinary cooperation. On the basis of the principle of networking, all subjects are to contribute to these five areas by manifold forms of instruction.

The requirement of a pupil-oriented approach can be found throughout the entire curriculum. Thus it expressly stipulates that teaching shall build on pupils' previous knowledge, experiences and imaginative world, or that pupils shall be actively included in planning and organising, checking and analyzing their work processes and results.

Individualisation and differentiation are considered important targets. School has the task of developing pupils' individual achievement potentials in the best possible way, it has to carefully consider their interests, needs and talents. These tasks are continuously underlined in the curriculum.

### **Core and extension areas**

In the compulsory subjects and compulsory exercises the curriculum distinguishes between a core area and an extension area. The core area contains those targets which must be attained in all Austrian schools. The extension area is determined by the specific situation of each school and is the individual school's own responsibility.

Two thirds of the number of lessons per week must be devoted to core area teaching. In addition to this requirement concerning time, the core area is also defined as to content. The General Education Target, the General Didactic Principles, as well as the education and instruction tasks and didactic principles of the individual compulsory subjects and compulsory exercises, apply both to core and extension areas. In order to guarantee a high degree of comparability and permeability the section on "Subject Matter" defines the compulsory core area. However, the curriculum defines these core targets only briefly and in an abstract way, so that it is left to the individual teacher how he or she wants to attain these targets or how much time he or she wants to devote to individual aspects.

The extension area is determined by the specific situation of each school and can be planned by the respective teacher(s) either alone or in a team if transdisciplinary work is involved, possibly also on the basis of the school's autonomous curricular decisions. In decisions concerning the extension area the following aspects should particularly be taken into consideration: regional and local conditions; pupils' needs, interests and talents; progress made by the class (required in-depth instruction, additional practice, etc.); focal points chosen by teachers; material and personnel resources; autonomous curricular provisions.

Core and extension areas constitute a network both with regard to content and to organisation. Certain forms of learning, phases of instruction, school events, etc. cannot a priori be allocated to one or the other area, but this allocation has to be determined by the learning targets. Performance determination and performance assessment relate to both areas.

The regulations on school-autonomous curricular provisions enable schools to decree, to a certain extent, their own curricular provisions autonomously. The decreeing of such autonomous curricular provisions is the responsibility of the school forum, or the school community committee, respectively. They can be decreed for all or selected classes or grades. The school can decide autonomously on changes in compulsory subjects (changing the number of lessons, introducing additional subjects) or optional subjects, voluntary exercises and remedial instruction.

If such autonomous curricular provisions result in a reduction in the number of lessons of a compulsory subject or a compulsory exercise, the number of lessons available for the extension area will be reduced accordingly.

The new curriculum provides for a consistent integration of new technologies in day-to-day teaching. All subject curricula offer teachers and pupils the possibility of making use of the new technologies for preparing, networking and presenting new content.

### **Other innovations**

The new curriculum stipulates that reports and performance determination shall be based on a preliminary overall concept formulated by teachers for their respective subjects and requires them to inform pupils and parents/guardians about these concepts in a suitable way.

For the first time an Austrian curriculum refers to quality development and quality assurance as important tasks of school development. The new curriculum expressly recommends applying methods of self-evaluation for quality control purposes.

The curriculum also deals with the interfaces marking the transition from primary school to general secondary school/academic secondary school as well as to other schools leading to higher forms of education. Instruction has to take into account the forms of teaching and learning most commonly used in primary school and has to prepare pupils for subsequent forms of work.

The texts of the curricula for general secondary school and academic secondary school are largely identical. They only differ with regard to the task of the respective school type, performance assessment, remedial instruction, as well as in some details of timetables.

### **Making the most of the new curriculum – developing a common understanding for “good practice” in instruction**

The curriculum texts were made available to schools in a new way. The current versions of curriculum drafts had always been available to all interested persons and bodies – first as hard copies in paper form, later on via the Internet. This time, after the new curriculum had been promulgated, each Austrian school received a floppy disk with the complete text of the decree.

The Internet platform project [www.gemeinsamlernen.at](http://www.gemeinsamlernen.at) supplements the contents of the new curriculum by concrete practical examples, thus making its intentions readily applicable to everyday instruction at Austrian schools.

The contributions on this website represent entirely different approaches to teaching, some of which may be controversial. However, this is in line with an open form of school development, which considers first and foremost the individual pupil and his or her individual requirements.

## 10. EDUCATIONAL PRINCIPLES

### 10.1 Political education and human rights education

In 2001 the subject "History and Social Studies" was changed to "History and Political Education" for the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> forms of Austrian academic secondary schools (*allgemein bildende höhere Schulen – AHS*), with the result that, by law, political education became a compulsory subject. Before the new curriculum (Federal Legal Gazette II No. 232 of 18 June 2002) came into force and officially approved textbooks became available, the teachers concerned had the possibility of contacting a hotline established at the Service Centre for Political Education. As a further supporting measure a comprehensive brochure on the subject was developed in cooperation with the programme "Newspaper at School". As a result of the change of the subject "History and Social Studies/Political Education" at academic secondary schools the curriculum for studies at Austrian universities was also updated.

All teachers at Austrian schools can avail themselves of an extensive range of information and teaching material on all aspects of political and human rights education, which is provided by the Department for Political Education and the service centres established by this department.

Department for Political Education:

[www.bmbwk.gv.at/politische-bildung](http://www.bmbwk.gv.at/politische-bildung)

Service Centre for Political Education: [www.politische-bildung.at](http://www.politische-bildung.at)

Service Centre for Human Rights Education: [www.humanrights.at](http://www.humanrights.at)

On their respective websites the service centres offer the latest information on available materials and activities. Information leaflets and newsletters concerning specific focus areas are prepared several times a year. The information needs on the part of teachers are taken care of by including subjects of current interest.

In addition to providing schools, free of charge, with numerous publications on contemporary history, the series "Information on Political Education" was continued with the following emphasis subjects:

No. 17: Reflections on the Austrian Political System – Between Modernism and Conservatism, 2000

Special volume: Belonging Together?

Hostility towards Foreigners, Migration, Integration, 2001

No. 18: Regionalism – Federalism – Supranationalism, 2001

No. 19: EU25 – The Extension of the European Union, 2003

No. 20: Memory and Present Day – Historians Commissions, Politics and Society, 2003

No. 21: From Elections to Elections, 2004

The material offered is complemented by the publication of audiovisual media: In cooperation with the Austrian Radio (*Radio Österreich 1*), the programme "Listening Library – Radio Programmes for Use in Teaching" was started at the beginning of the school year 2000/2001. It offers selected radio programmes on tape or CD for instruction in various aspects of political education ([www.hoerbibliothek.politische-bildung.at](http://www.hoerbibliothek.politische-bildung.at)).

On the occasion of the European Year of People with Disabilities 2003 one issue of the series "Teaching Human Rights" was concerned with the aspect of human rights and people with handicaps.

An interesting feature of the European Year of Education through Sport 2004 was treated in the newsletter "The Role of Sports in Society and Politics" (information sheet of the Service Centre for Political Education).

In connection with the use of language often considered unacceptable because of negative historical connotations there has been a growing demand for scientific information on, and (linguistic/historical) explanation of, certain terms or phrases, which have to be put into a historical and political context. For this purpose the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture developed a brochure entitled "Power and Language", which deals with this important aspect of language use and shows the problems that may arise if certain linguistic images, terms, names and clichés are used inadvertently, i.e. without thinking of their negative historical background. The brochure contains examples and suggestions as to how such words or phrases with negative connotations may be avoided by a more sensitive use of language.

"Media-War-Language. The War in Afghanistan after 9/11 in the Tabloid Media" (2002) deals with the war in Afghanistan as it was described in the tabloids after 9 September 2001. The publication contains a didactic part with examples for use in instruction, tasks for pupils, information on sources, as well as guidelines for the development of a code of conduct for media.

All material developed by the Department Political Education was presented to the interested public (open house) at the headquarters of the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research (Minoritenplatz) on the

occasion of 26 October 2003, the Austrian National Holiday. In addition, information on the national holiday and the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Moscow Declaration was presented as Subject of the Week on the website [www.schule.at](http://www.schule.at), thus providing information on this subject to the whole of Austria.

“Subjects of the Week” regularly offer comprehensive background information on socio-political issues and current events. The subjects chosen may be of national or global importance.

The programme “Speakers Exchange on Contemporary History”, which is to supplement the teaching of contemporary history and offers the possibility of inviting victims of the Nazi regime to school discussions, was continued during the period under review. Complementing this programme, an annual seminar has been organised since 2002 within the scope of the Council of Europe’s in-service teacher training programme, which may be attended by participants from other countries as well:

In 2002 (April 28 to 30) the meeting of the Speakers Exchange on Contemporary History was organised as the first Austrian seminar in the Council of Europe’s in-service teacher training programme “Education for Democratic Citizenship”, the subject being “From National-Socialist Eastern Policies to European Integration”. Participants included survivors of the NS period, Austrian teachers and scholars and, for the first time, teachers from various Council of Europe countries.

In 2003 the meeting of the Speakers Exchange on Contemporary History was again organised as an Austrian seminar in the Council of Europe’s in-service teacher training programme “Education for Democratic Citizenship”; it took place in Vienna from April 27 to 29, 2003, and was entitled “1945 to 1955. From the End of Nazi Rule to the State Treaty”.

In addition to the distribution of information material on contemporary history, in-service training and information activities on the subject included the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Contemporary History Days for teachers (Klagenfurt in 2001 and Salzburg in 2003).

The project “National Socialism and Holocaust: Past and Present” is targeted at teachers and pupils at Austrian schools, trying to intensify and structure the discussion of issues in connection with National Socialism and the Holocaust. Not only is information given on the subject, but this information is to be applied to present-day events. This all-Austrian project aims at conveying the issues involved in a sustainable way, using the most recent metho-

dical and didactic principles. It consists of four modules, viz. the “central seminar”, seminars at Yad Vashem (Israel), decentralised networks, and the communication platform [www.erinnern.at](http://www.erinnern.at).

From April 27 to May 15, 2003, the first “Action Days on Political Education” took place. Owing to the great success and the widespread interest, these Action Days on Political Education were again organised in 2004. Schools and other educational institutions from all over Austria are invited to make use of a varied pedagogical offer on political education and to take part with their own projects. These Action Days are an Austrian contribution to the Council of Europe Programme “Education for Democratic Citizenship” and a preparation for the European “Year of Citizenship through Education 2005”. In 2004 the Action Days on Political Education took place between 18 April and 9 May ([www.aktionstage.politische-bildung.at](http://www.aktionstage.politische-bildung.at)). The recommendation of the Council of Europe on democratic education was translated into German and made available to all schools.

Towards the end of the “UN Decade for Human Rights Education” (1995–2004), to be exact between November 20 and December 10, 2004, the measures taken in this decade will be critically evaluated, with new impulses being given to human rights education.

In 2003 all government bodies entrusted with children’s and youth issues, as well as non-governmental organisations working for and with children, and finally children and young people themselves, were invited to take part in “YAP – Young Rights Action Plan: National Action Plan for the Rights of Children and Young People”. For the purpose of informing schools about the Convention on the Rights of the Child, all primary schools were provided with the postcard booklet “Children Have Rights” and all schools of the secondary stage with the brochure “The Rights of Children and Young People – Convention on the Rights of the Child”. Children and young people are also urged to take part in the development of a National Action Plan concerning the rights of children and young people ([www.yap.at](http://www.yap.at)).

The “Quiz Political Education”, which takes place annually in the whole of Austria, has been conducted as EuropaQuiz since 2004 ([www.europaquiz.at](http://www.europaquiz.at)). Numerous European teams participated in the final competition, which took place in Graz (European Capital of Culture in 2003). Pupils from the 8<sup>th</sup> grade upwards again proved their interest in, and knowledge of, political, economic and societal subjects.

## 10.2 Plurilingualism and intercultural education

- **General measures – curricula**

### **Remedial measures in German for pupils whose primary language is not German**

As of the school year 1992/93 all pilot projects envisaging remedial measures in German for pupils whose primary language is not German were taken over into the mainstream school system at general compulsory schools, the respective curricula being amended accordingly.

Special remedial instruction in German may be offered parallel to standard instruction (the respective pupils form a separate group), integrated into the general schedule (team teaching), or, if it is not otherwise possible, as a separate class in addition to standard class hours (afternoon instruction).

The number of such remedial lessons must not exceed twelve per week for extraordinary pupils, five for regular pupils at primary and special schools, and six for regular pupils at general secondary schools and pre-vocational schools.

At academic secondary schools remedial instruction in German may be offered autonomously by the respective school. For general secondary schools and for the lower level of academic secondary school the new curriculum for Secondary Stage I (in force since the school year 2000/2001) provides for “special didactic principles if German is the pupil’s secondary language”.

### **Teaching in the mother tongue**

Teaching in the pupil’s mother tongue also became part of the mainstream system in the school year 1992/93, when the necessary curriculum, which is the same for all languages, was decreed. It is offered as a voluntary exercise or elective subject covering two to six lessons per week in a number of languages, the greatest share being accounted for by Bosnian/ Croatian/Serbian and Turkish. Instruction may be additive (in the afternoon), parallel, or integrative (team teaching by the class or special-subject teacher together with the respective mother-tongue teacher).

In the school year 2003/2004 337 teachers in the whole of Austria are engaged in teaching children in their respective mother tongues. The following languages are offered: Albanian, Arabic, Bulgarian, Chinese, Farsi, Hungarian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanes, Rumanian, Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian, Slovak, Spanish and Turkish.

The new curriculum for Secondary Stage I for the first time includes a spe-

cial section which is concerned with instruction in the mother tongue for pupils in the lower level of academic secondary school, the curriculum being the same as that for general secondary school.

In addition to this, the list of foreign languages in the new curriculum was extended by the migrants’ languages Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian (general secondary school and lower level of academic secondary school), and Turkish (general secondary school)

### **Educational principle “Intercultural Learning”**

At the beginning of the 1990s the educational principle “intercultural learning” was introduced at general compulsory schools and academic secondary schools.

### **School counselling centres for foreigners/migrants**

For the purpose of meeting the specific requirements of pupils with migration backgrounds as well as those of their teachers, school counselling centres for foreigners/migrants were established in all federal provinces. Each year the Intercultural Learning Unit invites the staff of these centres to take part in a work meeting.

- **Activities of the Intercultural Learning Unit (2000–2004, examples)**

### **Study “Mastering Two Languages in the Migration Stage” (1999–2003)**

This study, which covers a period of four years, aimed at tracing the linguistic development of monolingual and bilingual pupils at six schools in Vienna from the time they entered school until the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> grade. All children were subjected to psycholinguistic tests (adjusted to their respective ages) and interviews to determine their competency in the instructional language German; migrants’ children with Turkish or Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian mother tongue were additionally tested for their competency in the respective primary language. The results of these tests were supplemented by information on the pupils’ sociocultural backgrounds. The final report on the whole four-year period was recently completed and is to be published in a suitable form.

**Study “Intercultural Learning in Practice – A Case Study at Schools in Vienna and Lower Austria” (school year 1999/2000)**

The purpose of this study was to examine the practical application in the classroom of the educational principle “Intercultural Learning”, which has been a feature of general education since the beginning of the 1990s; in addition, the results of this scientific study were to be used for possible recommendations to educational policy makers. Work in this connection centered on regularly observing and participating in instruction in a total of 18 forms of the 8<sup>th</sup> grade (general secondary school and lower level of academic secondary school), supplemented by questionnaires, structured interviews and informal talks with pupils, parents and teachers.

The final report entitled “Intercultural Learning between Institutional Framework, School Practice and Societal Communication Principle” was published by Studienverlag as volume 18 of the series “Educational Research”.

**Information events for teachers instructing children in their mother tongues (2001)**

On the occasion of the coming into force of the new curriculum for Secondary Stage I the Intercultural Learning Unit invited teachers instructing children in their mother tongues to attend an all-Austrian information event, which took place in June 2001. Since not all interested teachers were able to take part in the first meeting, the event was repeated in November 2001. The results of the two meetings were documented in the publication “We Should Always Be Two Steps Ahead”.

**Preparation of material for teaching children in their mother tongue (Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian)**

A collection of materials on learning the alphabet is in the completion stage.

A bilingual dictionary for primary school children, which is compiled on a scientific basis, is being prepared.

**“Let’s Take the First Step Together” (2002)**

This is a handbook for principals and teachers at primary schools, which is to facilitate the integration of children who are just starting school and speak a foreign language. It contains a lot of legal and practical information, a short linguistic part, suggestions for communication games in the classroom, as well as additional literature on the subject. This publication was enthusiastically welcomed by the target group and is still extremely popular.

**Database: Collection of school projects on intercultural learning**

Starting out from well tested and successful projects and instruction modules on the promotion of intercultural learning a database is being prepared to document the schools’ manifold activities in this field as well as to encourage other schools to use some of this material. More than 100 schools of all types from the whole of Austria furnished descriptions of their respective projects or instruction modules.

**Information activities**

**Series “Information Sheets of the Intercultural Learning Unit”**

These publications are updated each year. They are available free of charge as hard copies from the Intercultural Learning Unit (*Referat für interkulturelles Lernen*) or via the homepage of the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture. The popularity of this service is increasing from year to year. Upon repeated requests vol. 3 of the information sheets (“Mastering Languages in the Migration Stage”) was translated into Albanian, Serbocroatian and Turkish in 2000.

**“Educational Careers in Austria”**

The current edition of the folder “Educational Careers in Austria” of the School Psychology – Educational Counselling Unit was translated into Albanian, Polish, Serbocroatian and Turkish in 2002.

**10.3 Education towards gender equality**

For several years the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture has been trying to pay greater attention to the subject of equality between genders. Owing to the one-sided educational preferences of girls and boys steps have been taken on various levels to counteract these tendencies and make the existing educational options attractive for both genders. In this connection efforts are also made to promote “conscious co-education” at school, to make teachers aware of gender-specific socialization processes as well as of the routine behaviour patterns of girls and boys at school, and to reflect on their own expectations from, and attitudes towards, the two genders. School is to offer to girls and boys, men and women, equal chances to develop their abilities, interests and perspectives for their future lives.

The action plans of the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, which have been in existence since 1997, are to be understood as a comprehensive effort on the part of the entire Ministry to implement gender

equality. The "Action Plan 2000", which was initiated in 1997 (99 measures for promoting equality between men and women at school and in adult education), was concluded by a three-day event in November entitled "MÄD – The Mobile Girls' Event 2000) on the subjects vocational orientation, EDP, new media, girls in non-typical occupations and self-confidence. The Action Plan 2000 was followed by the "Action Plan 2003" – Gender Mainstreaming and Promotion of Women at School and in Adult Education (2001 to 2003). The "Action Plan 2003" will be continued till 2006 with the main emphasis on gender mainstreaming and gender-sensitive education. (These action plans were prepared on the basis of a catalogue of measures worked out by the action platform established after the 4<sup>th</sup> World Women's Conference 1995 in Beijing.) Particularly important points of emphasis in this connection are activities and projects on the subjects "vocational orientation for girls" and "girls in non-traditional training courses/occupations". In spite of clearly recognizable improvements in girls' educational levels and formal school-leaving qualifications, the number of girls in technological schools has risen only insignificantly. Women tend to be grossly underrepresented in the craft trades as well as in occupations requiring technological training or oriented towards the natural sciences. In view of this fact, the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture has made increasing efforts to provide regular information on this subject, to make the people concerned more aware of this problem, and to support various associations and school projects which offer relevant advice and counselling on the subject "vocational orientation for girls".

For the purpose of widening the range of occupational choices for girls and raising the share of women in technological training courses/occupations the project "FIT – Females Into Technology" was started ten years ago. From 2001 to 2006 it is financed by domestic funds and funds provided by the European Social Fund (ESF). The programme envisages information and immersion days at six locations, viz. at the Universities of Klagenfurt, Linz, Salzburg and Innsbruck, as well as at the Universities of Technology in Graz and Vienna. The target group is female pupils aged 16 to 19 at upper secondary schools. The programme includes information on technological studies, visits to technological training facilities, practical laboratory work, workshops on "vocational orientation and career planning", as well as discussions with experts in the respective fields. By establishing contacts with successful women in technological occupations new identification targets are to be created, and the readiness on the part of girls to pursue a technological study is to be increased.

In addition to this, the programme "MiT – Girls/Women into Technology" has been conducted since 1998 at upper secondary technical colleges, the number of participating schools having increased to more than 20 since then. The programme intends to create a greater awareness (on the part of teachers, parents, pupils and the administrative authorities in the field of education), which is to remove prejudices and role clichés. By encouraging girls and presenting successful women in technological occupations, the share of girls in technological careers, which is rising only very slowly (at the moment amounting to 9.6 per cent at upper secondary technical colleges), is to be progressively increased. This target is to be achieved by various concrete measures at technical schools/colleges for girls, such as information campaigns, immersion courses, courses in rhetoric and presentation techniques, etc., but also by analysing and assessing the behaviour of boys and men. This programme has already been evaluated; in addition, five all-Austrian in-service training events for teachers at technical schools have been organised.

For female pupils aged 13 to 15 (general secondary schools and pre-vocational schools) a new project entitled "READY" was started in autumn 2001. Workshops on vocational orientation and career planning are conducted by female experts from counselling centres for girls and are integrated in vocational orientation at school; at present they are tested at 16 schools in four federal provinces. "READY" aims at improving the labour market chances of girls/young women, at widening perspectives also in the direction of non-traditional occupations, at counselling, orientation and support in vocational choice and career planning, as well as at critically evaluating role clichés and strengthening self-confidence. In addition to working with their pupils, the respective teachers are trained in separate workshops in which they receive suggestions for classroom teaching. Until 2006 the project will be financed by the European Social Fund and the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture.

The project "MUT – Girls and Technology" also targets girls in the 13 to 15-year age range. It primarily aims at improving the labour-market chances for girls/young women, at widening the vocational perspectives of girls/young women in the direction of occupations which will be of future importance (technology, new media), and, on a long-term basis, at raising the percentage of women in non-traditional occupations. Another important concern is strengthening the self-confidence of girls. The project provides training courses, workshops and counselling activities for girls. Events for teachers, intensive cooperation between provincial officers responsible for women's issues, officers of the Labour Market Service, and company representatives are in-

tended to intensify the effects of the project. The experience gained is to encourage the development of innovative models on technology motivation and, in addition, is to result in a transfer of knowhow to in-service teacher training and classroom instruction. Owing to the complexity of this project and the great number of different activities “MUT” benefits not only the target group of female pupils but a wider section of the public.

The respective measures are carried out in selected regions (particularly agricultural ones) of 7 federal provinces (Tyrol, Vorarlberg, Carinthia, Salzburg, Styria, Upper Austria, Lower Austria). “MUT” is being conducted in the years 2002–2004 and is financed by the European Social Fund and the Council for Research and Technological Development.

In connection with the action plans, various networks have been created: For the purpose of implementing the action plans more effectively a network was established at the provincial school boards and in-service teacher training colleges (*Pädagogische Institute*). Another network in connection with the action plans and the educational principle “Education towards Establishing Equality between Women and Men” exists at teacher training colleges (*Pädagogische Akademien*), technical and vocational teacher training colleges (*Berufspädagogische Akademien*) and training colleges for religious education teachers (*Religionspädagogische Akademien*).

The activities in connection with the action plans were complemented by several in-service and further training events for teachers, internet seminars for teachers, and by various activities specifically geared to the requirements of women in the field of adult education.

With regard to curricula, a long-time demand was finally met: For the first time the principle of “conscious co-education” was incorporated in a curriculum, viz. that of general secondary schools (*Hauptschulen*) and academic secondary schools (*allgemein bildende höhere Schulen*), starting as of the school year 2000/2001 and beginning with the first forms. The aim is to support girls and boys in planning their occupations and lives in general without being influenced by traditional role clichés.

The Didactic Principles of this new curriculum state among other things: “Co-education is not limited to the simultaneous instruction of female and male pupils. Rather, the target must be to consciously come to terms with gender-specific prejudices. It is essential to select such teaching content as will appeal equally to girls and boys, to create a (learning) climate of mutual respect, and to adjust correspondingly teachers’ expectations from, and behaviour patterns towards, girls and boys.”

This means that schools are now called upon to actively promote equal

opportunities for girls and boys and to develop their own school programmes and school profiles in this field.

The Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture also supports school projects in the field of co-education, such as the project “Working as Partners in the Institution School” (PAIS), the second part of which was carried out at a general secondary school in Vienna in the school year 2000/2001. 12 female and 9 male pupils attended the PAIS class; in the seventh grade they were instructed partly in small gender-homogeneous groups, partly in small gender-heterogeneous groups, and partly co-educatively as the full class unit. The temporary separation met with general approval; both girls and boys developed a greater awareness concerning gender-specific inequalities or power structures, particularly with regard to the proportion of paid work in relation to unpaid work. The girls that took part in PAIS stated that their fellow pupils were socially more competent than other pupils from parallel classes, that their range of action choices was wider and the behaviour patterns from which they were able to choose were more varied; in discussions, boys developed a greater degree of solidarity, they were able to establish relationships with other children. The boys emphasized the good relations between girls and boys in the PAIS class and had a positive attitude towards the female pupils in the class. The PAIS team succeeded in making gender relations a subject of instruction, as it were, and therefore an explicit and distinct part of school life.

The results of the project were published by the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture as part of the series “School Quality and Gender-sensitive Learning Culture – Project Reports on the Assessment and Further Development of Co-education”.

In connection with the rising interest in questions of gender-sensitive co-education and the development of new forms of co-education, the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture published, in 2002, a new brochure for teachers entitled “STRONG! But How?” This brochure contains material and suggestions on how to deal with male adolescents, the main emphasis being on the prevention of violence.

As a result of the ratification of the Amsterdam Treaty the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture has attached greater importance to the subject “gender mainstreaming”, which is reflected in the various action plans. Gender mainstreaming requires a gender-sensitive attitude on all political levels, in all plans, decisions and measures. (Article 2 of the EC Treaty: Promoting the equality between men and women is one of the tasks facing the European Community. Article 3 of the EC Treaty: In all the other activities the

Community shall aim to eliminate inequalities and to promote equality between men and women). On the basis of a decision taken by the Council of Ministers in July 2000, an inter-ministerial working group was established on the national level to ensure the practical implementation of gender mainstreaming; at the same time all other federal ministries were asked to set up a gender mainstreaming working group within their respective units. In the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture this working group, which consists of representatives of all departments, already started its activities: its task is to inform, to promote greater awareness, and to advise and support the respective decision-taking individuals and units in implementing the top-down strategy of gender mainstreaming, so that, in the longer term, the aspect of "gender" will be given due consideration in all of the Ministry's activities.

In this connection several pilot projects are being conducted at the moment, two of which concern the field of education: One is entitled "Gender Mainstreaming and School Development" and is concerned with gender-sensitive conditions and behaviour on the class level. Six schools in four federal provinces are participating in this project.

On the basis of its results the follow-up project "Gender Mainstreaming – Cluster Schools" was started in November 2003; it provides, on the one hand, for supporting measures geared to the individual school, on the other hand it encourages inter-school networking: Five cluster schools constituting a representative cross-section of Austrian school types are developing concrete strategies and measures which are to guarantee the successful implementation of the concept of gender mainstreaming in the whole school system.

In order to reach this aim, overall targets and features were defined on five levels:

- Instruction level: Systematic and all-encompassing implementation of gender-adjusted and gender-sensitive instruction for all school pupils.
- Personal level: All persons involved in school life are responsible for the implementation of gender mainstreaming in everyday school life.
- Organisational and team level. Gender mainstreaming is a natural and noticeable part of school culture.
- Cluster level: In a joint effort schools develop and test clear-cut and verifiable criteria:  
"Which factors make a school a gender mainstreaming school?"
- System level: The gender mainstreaming cluster schools are good-prac-

tice models for implementation and help transfer gender mainstreaming to the entire school area.

The other pilot project, "Gender Mainstreaming at *Akademien*", relates to the field of teacher training (teacher training colleges, technical and vocational teacher training colleges, and training colleges for religious education teachers). Its targets include the incorporation of gender mainstreaming in curricula, courses and research projects, a balanced gender ratio in advisory or decision-taking bodies, as well as information and a greater degree of awareness on the subject.

For the purpose of achieving these targets and raising the level of awareness concerning gender mainstreaming, various seminars were organised for gender officials at in-service teacher training colleges (*Pädagogische Institute*) and teacher training colleges (*Pädagogische Akademien*) as well as for teaching staff at upper secondary technical and vocational colleges (*höhere technische Lehranstalten*). In addition, a separate information and counselling package on gender mainstreaming was developed for staff members at in-service teacher training colleges. In 2002/2003 most of these colleges made extensive use of these facilities.

The Curriculum Decree of 25 May 2001 (Federal Legal Gazette No. 194/2001) made the educational principle "Education towards an Equal Treatment of Women and Men" part of the curriculum of part-time compulsory vocational school (*Berufsschule*). As an accompanying and supporting measure a group of experts developed a number of sample lessons, which are already available to schools. (This educational principle was introduced in 1995 and has been integrated in the curricula of part-time compulsory vocational schools and most technical and vocational schools/colleges.)

In addition, a brochure for primary schools was published in 2001: "Educational Principle: Education towards an Equal Treatment of Women and Men". Information and Advice on Implementing this Principle in Primary School. The brochure deals with subjects such as gender-specific socialisation, gender-sensitive pedagogy, school textbook analyses, children's books, sexuality, vocational orientation, parents' work as well as suggestions for various subjects of instruction. A brochure with the same title intended for instruction from the 5<sup>th</sup> grade upwards was updated and appeared in 2003. These brochures are to help raise teachers' awareness so that they can counteract gender-specific barriers impeding both girls and boys.

## 10.4 Health promotion and sexual education

### European Network "Health-Promoting Schools"

The Austrian network "Health-Promoting Schools" has been the responsibility of the Federal Ministries of Education and Health since 1993. This European project was established as a joint effort of the European Union, the Council of Europe and the World Health Organization and has been supported by these organizations ever since.

The benefit of the project consists in bringing about a positive change in pupils' health consciousness, health behaviour and in school climate. International studies show that, on a long-term basis, positive effects are to be expected on pupils' performance at school.

Based on these evaluation results the Austrian project team decided on the measures for the period 2002 to 2005:

Extension of network schools: Depending on the existing facilities and interests schools have various possibilities of participating actively in the network. [www.gesunde-schule.at](http://www.gesunde-schule.at)

Health promotion and school development/school programme as in-depth points of emphasis: Health promotion and school development are closely connected with each other. The best results, however, can only be achieved by making the health teams part of general school development activities.

Establishment of three more regional supporting structures in the federal provinces: Supporting structures already exist in Carinthia, Tyrol and Vienna.

Close cooperation between German-speaking countries in the European Network "Health-Promoting Schools": [www.gesunde-schulen.info](http://www.gesunde-schulen.info) or [www.enhps.info](http://www.enhps.info)

### Homepage [www.schule.at/gesundheit](http://www.schule.at/gesundheit)

This community, which is coordinated by Dr. Beatrix Haller and Dr. Lilly Damm, provides relevant information and material on the subjects health and school as well as school doctors.

### Service centre for health education

This service centre is a joint initiative of the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, the Federal Ministry of Health and Women, as well as of the Austrian Youth Red Cross. It operates all over Austria, providing information on such matters as current initiatives concerning health promotion at schools, as well as on other areas of emphasis; in addition, it gives advice on

all questions connected with educational work in the field of health promotion. Compilations and lists of available materials, media, organisations, experts and speakers are to support teachers in the planning and practical implementation of projects in this field. [www.give.or.at](http://www.give.or.at)

### Fund for the Promotion of Health Education and Sustainable Development

For more than 10 years the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, in cooperation with the Fund for Environmental and Health Education, has been promoting the development of environment and health-conducive project instruction.

Against the background of the "Austrian Strategy for Sustainable Development" and the "Decade of Education for Sustainable Development" proclaimed by the United Nations also the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Environment and Water Management provides funds for instruction projects. By means of this joint fund for promoting and financing educational initiatives concerning the environment and health it has become possible to support relevant innovative ideas for school and extra-mural projects, [www.umweltbildung.at/bildungsforderungsfonds](http://www.umweltbildung.at/bildungsforderungsfonds)

### Competition "Be Smart – Don't Start"

This European competition was first carried out in Austria in the school year 1998/99 by the Austrian Cancer Aid Centre in cooperation with the then Federal Ministry of Education and Culture. The continuously rising number of participants is proof of the importance of this competition.

The campaign aims at convincing young people at an early stage of the benefits of non-smoking. For this reason, school classes from the 5<sup>th</sup> grade are invited to participate in this programme.

In order to support and intensify the impact of this campaign the Austrian Cancer Aid Centre, in cooperation with the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, has developed detailed didactic materials. In addition to this, in the course of the competition, classes are given specific tasks which have to be solved.

Intending participants may register via the competition's homepage [www.besmart.at](http://www.besmart.at).

### Dialogue "Preventing Addiction at School"

In 2001 the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture started the all-Austrian dialogue on preventing addiction at school, the subject being "Section 13, Drugs Act". This dialogue was continued in April 2004 by the expert

meeting on “Quality in Preventing Addiction at School”, organised in cooperation with the Working Group on Addiction Prevention. In this expert meeting bridges were built between theoretical and practical work. Participants presented current research activities, discussed relevant issues with experts, and presented model projects developed in the federal provinces as well as ideas for practical classroom work.

### **Smoke-free School**

The project “Smoke-free School” is carried out in cooperation with the Federal Ministry of Health and Women and the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for the Sociology of Health and Medicine.

In the last 15 years cigarette smoking on the part of young people has been the form of drug consumption with the highest rates of increase, both in Europe and in Austria. Therefore it is necessary to reconsider and reformulate educational policies concerning tobacco consumption.

The basis of the project is the study “The Role of National Policies in Controlling the Smoking Habits of Young People and the Influence of School and Parents” of January 2001.

The first step is the development of a guideline on “The Smoke-free School”, which is to encourage schools to develop, on the basis of a democratic and socially acceptable process, rules against smoking. Consideration is to be given to the requirements and needs of individuals as well as to the specific conditions and possibilities of each school, so that undesirable side effects will be avoided. The guideline will contain both scientific information and arguments on the subject of smoking as well as suggestions for process organisation and process management. When carrying out the project, schools will be supported by the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for the Sociology of Health and Medicine.

### **Sexual education today from the viewpoints of girls and boys**

Work is under way for supplementing the existing material on this subject by new teaching aids on sexual education, which will consider gender-specific aspects and include suggestions for practical classroom work.

An annex will contain a list of teaching aids on sexual education and an overview of what different organisations have to offer on the subject.

### **Homepage Johnson & Johnson**

The successful school package of the Johnson & Johnson GynoHygieneForum is now available online. The school programme offers teachers and doctors up-to-date and free material on sexual education. It is geared specifically to the requirements of young people between the ages of 11 and 15.

***[www.aufklaerungsunterricht.at](http://www.aufklaerungsunterricht.at)***

### **AIDS Help Centre Vienna – Competition 2004**

A media competition organised by the Austrian Aids Help Centres was carried out in cooperation with the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, the Ministry of Health and Women, as well as the Fund Healthy Austria. The Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture supports the Red Ribbon Award 2004 organised by the Austrian Aids Help Centres. All young people up to the age of 20 are invited to provide media contributions on the subject “Sexually Healthy Young People” with particular emphasis on HIV/AIDS and sexually contagious diseases. Contributions will receive the Red Ribbon Award 2004, the winning contributions being published in a newspaper. For further information on the project ***[klingler@aids.at](mailto:klingler@aids.at)*** should be contacted.

### **Project “LOVE-TALKS”**

The project “LOVE-TALKS” of the Austrian Institute for Family Research is targeted at parents, pupils and teachers who want to talk about the subject of sexuality and current issues in this field, take an active part in co-determining sexual education at school, and want to be acquainted with new ideas and methods concerning sexual education. A trained moderator is in charge of the group for a total of five working meetings, and a project is jointly planned.

## **10.5 Movement and sports**

The importance of movement for the development of young people in physical, cognitive, emotional and social respects is taken account of by the compulsory subject “physical education” (movement and sports) in all school categories (with the exception of part-time compulsory vocational schools under the dual system) as well as by a supplementary offer (voluntary exercises, elective subject, school events with a sports focus).

Basically we are on our way to a future-oriented system of movement education, which will differ from today’s in a number of ways: it will be based on the principle of harmonious living, reconciling man’s movement with the

demands of nature and the environment. It will re-discover the regional element and offer local movement culture as an alternative to international sports. In addition to this, it will put a greater premium on the value of experiencing movement than on specific results, i.e. the person engaging in sports activities will look to the inside and to the body, which means that health and well-being will be preferred to other effects of sports activities. In the movement education of the future the development of the entire person will become increasingly important, and education at school will concentrate on developing a person's entire movement culture.

The targets of a movement culture which considers the requirements of the individual can be attained by sports, games, as well as creative, health-oriented and adventure-oriented movement. By such activities pupils are to develop a greater awareness that movement is a necessity and an enrichment of a person's life-style.

As of the school year 2000/2001 a new curriculum came into force for general secondary schools (*Hauptschulen*) and academic secondary schools (*allgemein bildende höhere Schulen*). It consists, just as the previous one, of a General Part, which applies to all grades of the above-mentioned schools, and a number of special curricula for the individual subjects, which came into force on a staggered basis, from the school year 2000/2001 for the 5<sup>th</sup> grades until the school year 2003/2004 for the 9<sup>th</sup> grades. This new curriculum gives schools greater autonomy in decision-taking. It enables them to plan, decide and evaluate independently, having particular regard to their own local requirements, which guarantees maximum school quality (both with respect to organisation and teaching).

In order to make the specific bits of knowledge acquired by pupils in the various special subjects part of a meaningful and comprehensive network of general knowledge, the curriculum defines five areas of education, which serve as a basis for interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary cooperation as well as for an integration of the special-subject contributions into the overall education process at school. Naturally, this duty to engage in interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary cooperation also applies to the subject "movement and sports" (physical education), just as all other special subjects are called upon to contribute to the subject "movement and sports".

The new curriculum '99 distinguishes between core time (two-thirds of instruction time) and expansion time (one-third of instruction time). For core time specific obligatory targets are enumerated, which schools have to attain. Expansion time may be used for in-depth, expanded or transdisciplinary training and can be independently planned by each school. This means that teach-

ers have to plan instruction extremely carefully. The autonomy provisions give schools the possibility to go beyond the limits of the special subject "movement and sports" and devote additional time to movement, perhaps even introducing a separate subject on health education.

Thus, the decision on whether compulsory or optional physical activities should be provided to a greater or lesser extent lies with the school partnership bodies, viz. the school forum or school community committee, respectively, i.e. with the representatives of pupils, teachers and parents/guardians.

The Austrian school system offers talented pupils and those showing outstanding sports achievements three possibilities: first, they can get an all-round sports training at sports general secondary schools (*Sporthauptschulen*) and sports academic secondary schools (*Sportgymnasien*); secondly, they can get optimum training in ski racing at ski general secondary schools (*Skihauptschulen*), ski intermediate commercial schools (*Skihandelsschulen*) and ski academic secondary schools (*Skigymnasien*); or, third, they can complete a course of education next to their careers as top athletes at intermediate commercial schools (*Handelsschulen*) for athletes or separate upper-level academic schools (*Oberstufenrealgymnasien*) for athletes.

As regards the initial and in-service training of teachers, measures were taken to coordinate the various programmes, to provide, as cost-effectively as possible, lecturers for the Austrian in-service teacher training colleges (*Pädagogische Institute*), and to organise training events for teachers which do not interfere with their regular teaching activities, all of which has led to further improvements. The central in-service teacher training events organised by the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture are mainly intended for teachers who act as "multipliers" at in-service teacher training colleges and familiarise other teachers with current developments in workshop-like events. In addition, various media, such as brochures, posters, videos, CD-ROMs etc. have been prepared which are to improve in-service training measures in the individual special subjects.

Quality assurance has been a central concern and will continue to influence programmes. In this connection various models have been studied for further integrating (mentally and physically) handicapped children also in the subject physical education.

Each year more than 270,000 pupils receive in-depth training in a wide range of summer and winter sports activities within the scope of school sports weeks. For this purpose initial and in-service teacher training is keeping up with current developments in sports; safety provisions determining the quality of sports instruction in school events have been recommended to schools

for autonomous adoption. Pupils should not limit their physical activities to school, but should engage in out-of-school sports activities as well, both alone and together with others.

While pupils whose motor abilities are only insufficiently developed or even undeveloped receive intensive promotion, special attention is also given to pupils with particular talents in sports.

There are a number of different approaches to health promotion. The project "Moving School" includes a programme called "Healthy & Fit", which aims at counteracting posture deficiencies caused by excessively long and physically wrong sitting. Teaching material on daily movement exercises in elementary school classes was prepared and made available to schools. In cooperation with the Austrian Federal Sports Organisation (*Österreichische Bundes-Sportorganisation*), sports associations and primary schools are brought into contact with each other so that synergy effects (experts, materials) can be achieved.

In the programme "Clever & Fit" school doctors and physical education teachers are increasingly cooperating in order to recognise deficits in time (screenings for sports motor abilities and muscle functions) and to offer remedies for compensating such deficits (by means of voluntary exercises).

It is particularly by such programmes as "Together & Active" that sports associations are also made part of the overall concept ("lifelong movement").

Each year approximately 2,200 physical education instructors, teachers, trainers and certified (diploma) trainers finish their training courses at federal institutes of physical education (*Bundesanstalten für Leibeserziehung*) in Graz, Innsbruck, Linz and Vienna ("The Sports Academy" – training for out-of-school sports). These training courses make use of the latest findings in sports science. In this way graduates have the guarantee of meeting the current demands and requirements of modern sports life. In cooperation with the relevant sports associations, the federal institutes of physical education (*Bundesanstalten für Leibeserziehung*) offer training courses in a total of 50 different types of sports; these courses constitute an essential part of sports promotion and Austrian sports life. Special emphasis has also been put on developing a sports management training course in cooperation with the Austrian Federal Sports Organisation.

## 10.6 Environmental education

From 2001 to 2004 the work of the information and coordination centre "FORUM Environmental Education" set up by the Education and Environment Ministries concentrated on the following areas:

- Establishment of the network "Ecologisation of Schools – Education in Sustainable Development",
- network project "Environmental Education in Initial Teacher Training",
- coordination work in the development of the criteria for the "Environment Seal for Schools and Educational Institutions",
- ecologisation of initial and in-service vocational education and training with the main emphasis on part-time compulsory vocational schools and the training of kindergarten teachers,
- education in sustainable development including biodiversity and climate protection,
- Local Agenda 21,
- national and nature parks.

In addition to organising seminars on special subjects and providing didactic material, the centre is running an Internet website with a database, which serves as an Austrian portal for environmental education.

The OECD/CERI project "Environment and School Initiatives"/ENSI initiated by the Austrian school authorities in 1985 has been continued since 1995 as an independent network of about 12 participating countries. Until the end of 2004 it is part of the OECD/CERI programme focus "Schooling for tomorrow".

From 1998 to 2002 Austria was in charge of the international secretariat for this network. Together with four other countries Austria participated in the ENSI projects and in the related international conferences: "Learnsapes" (sustainable layout and use of school premises, conference 2001 in Austria), "Innovations in Teacher Education through Environmental Education" (conferences 2000 in Lucerne/Switzerland and 2003 in Szeged/Hungary), "Quality Criteria for ECO-Schools".

Particular importance was attached to the development of the EU COMENIUS III network project "School Development through Environmental Education" SEED in cooperation with the ENSI member countries. From 2002 to 2005 Austria has been, and will be, coordinating this network together with 25 partners from 15 countries ([www.seed-eu.net](http://www.seed-eu.net)). Within the scope of this EU SEED network project the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education, Science

and Culture organised two COMENIUS I contact seminars on the establishment of school twinning projects (2002 and 2003), as well as an in-service training week as part of the EU's ARION programme (2003).

In March 2004 Austria took over the presidency in the international ENSI network. Its domestic activities concerning "Environment and School Initiatives" particularly focussed on initial teacher training in environmental education and the sustainable ecologisation of schools. Other points of emphasis included the organisation of regional seminars on environmentally oriented project instruction, the continuing expansion of local/regional counselling and in-service training activities in cooperation with FORUM Environmental Education, as well as the publication of the brochure "We Are in the Midst of the School Programme! How Do We Go about It? – Handbook for the Development of Ecological School Programmes".

The focus programme "Ecologisation of Schools – Education in Sustainable Development ÖKOLOG" ([www.oekolog.at](http://www.oekolog.at)) was continued and expanded. It aims at the sustainable development of schools in ecological, economic and social respects. ÖKOLOG is an ambitious programme with high demands on schools. It

- meets, in its methodical structure and recommendations to schools, the requirements of qualitative school development ([www.qis.at](http://www.qis.at)) and supports concrete on-site measures in this respect. Thus ecological sustainability is also an acknowledged quality criterion of schools;

- provides an approach for testing a "middle management" at schools by setting up teams responsible for the implementation of the above targets;

- constitutes an important prerequisite for the "Environment Seal for Schools and Educational Institutions" ([www.umweltzeichen.at](http://www.umweltzeichen.at)), supporting schools which want to acquire and keep the seal. Therefore ÖKOLOG is also recommended by the Federal Ministry responsible for environmental matters;

- supports schools intending to participate in a Local Agenda 21 process (recommendation of the Environmental Education Centre Styria and of the Styrian Provincial Government);

- meets the criteria of the OECD/CERI network "Environment and School Initiatives" ENSI, thus serving as a basis for the COMENIUS III network project "School Development through Environmental Education" SEED, which is coordinated by Austria (2003 to 2005, [www.seed-eu.net](http://www.seed-eu.net)).

Since the school year 2000/2001 considerable efforts have been made to develop the ÖKOLOG school network. Of particular importance in this connection was the meeting "Let's Netz" in Salzburg in October 2001, which aimed at strengthening joint supporting measures for the network, in which currently about 100 schools of all school types are taking part.

For the purpose of aiding schools and of furthering the regional acceptance of the project, a regional supporting system has been operated since 1999 in cooperation with the provincial school boards, the in-service teacher training colleges (*Pädagogische Institute*), the Austrian OECD/CERI Project "Environment and School Initiatives", as well as the environment authorities of the various provincial governments, viz. the ÖKOLOG Federal Provinces Conference, which plays an active role in the development and planning of the programme.

Further activities include the website [www.oekolog.at](http://www.oekolog.at) with a special focus subject every three months, the publication of a network paper, an ÖKOLOG methods handbook, as well as a materials file.

During the seven years of its existence the ÖKOLOG programme has been evaluated a number of times (1999, 2003) and has been the subject of diploma papers (1999), doctoral theses (2002) and studies (2000).

From July 2000 to August 2001 the module course "Drama Pedagogy as a Means of Supporting Ecological Targets" took place in Graz. It dealt, on the one hand, with teaching methods in the field of drama pedagogy, on the other with subjects of the programme "Ecologisation of Schools", as well as other social and societal issues.

The course qualified teachers to develop and carry out drama projects at their own schools, as well as to act as multipliers concerning "Ecologisation and Drama" in in-service teacher training activities, providing both teaching content and methods to their fellow teachers.

As one of the results of the course a handbook, unique in the German-speaking countries, entitled "Drama Pedagogy and Ecologisation in Teaching" was published, which documents the work done in the course and serves as a handbook for drama projects.

Upon the request of the Education and Environment Ministries, and coordinated by the Association for Consumer Information and the FORUM Environmental Education, the criteria for the award of the "Environment Seal for Schools and Educational Institutions" were developed, which came into force as of January 1, 2003.

For the purpose of testing this environment seal, a pilot stage, of which the FORUM Environmental Education was in charge, was scheduled in the school year 2002/2003. As of the end of that school year 16 of the 25 schools taking part in the pilot stage fulfilled the environment seal criteria. The successful schools were awarded the environment seal by the two responsible federal ministers in a ceremony in October 2003.

## 10.7 Traffic education

The work group "Traffic Law and School", which was established on the initiative of the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, introduced numerous measures concerning pupils' safety in road traffic. Points of emphasis were safety concerns in connection with the transport of pupils, "children as pedestrians and cyclists", as well as the use of trendy sports equipment in road traffic.

The campaign "Be Visible" is extremely popular and well-known far beyond the limits of the school. It promotes the wearing of reflective materials so that children will be better visible particularly in the colder season. Motorists can see children at night or in conditions of poor visibility from 150 to 200 metres (= 137 to 183 yd.). So far more than 350,000 pupils in the 1<sup>st</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> grades have acquired the low-priced adhesive strips, which are often difficult to find in regular shops. The package with the reflective materials is regularly updated and adjusted to the changing tastes of young people.

The successful helmet campaign for cyclists in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades is being continued in cooperation with the Austrian Youth Red Cross. This campaign has been going on since 1993 and has significantly contributed to the growing willingness of young people to wear helmets when cycling.

Campaign "Old Helps Young": It is particularly the group of pupils starting school that is at risk in road traffic. This risk is largely reduced by parents taking their children to school by car or by personally accompanying them on their way to school, either on foot or by using a public means of transport. If children are taken to school by car, this frequently results in chaotic traffic conditions round the school, as well as to other children walking to school being seriously endangered.

For this reason, the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture started the all-Austrian campaign "Old Helps Young" at the beginning of the school year 2002/2003.

Pupils from the 7<sup>th</sup> grade upwards accompany 1<sup>st</sup> grade pupils, for at least two months, on their way to school. These "attendants" have to establish a

special relationship of trust both with the smaller children and with their parents. They are carefully selected and appropriately trained by police and teaching staff.

The campaign "Zebra Crossing" is carried out in some Austrian federal provinces. Pupils in the 3<sup>rd</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> grades, together with their teachers and police officers, observe the behaviour of motorists at pedestrian crossings. All drivers behaving properly and with due care receive a sticker from the children which says "You Stopped For Me – Thanks!" Motorists, however, who disregard the crossing and their duty to stop only receive an information sheet with the most important safety provisions concerning children as stipulated by the Austrian traffic regulations. In addition to this, they are informed about their reckless behaviour by the children themselves. The campaign aims at making drivers aware of their misbehaviour, bringing them face to face with their potential victims. On the other hand, children are to recognize that motorists do not always observe rules and regulations and are likely to misbehave at any time.

The teaching aid "Let's Join Forces – Social Learning in Traffic Education" is to promote social competencies in traffic education in Secondary Stage I. In addition, it suggests a number of possibilities for discussing issues of traffic education on an interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary basis.

### Project "intelligent – AUTO.mobile":

#### A mobility project for 16 to 18-year-old pupils

In the sense of a practically oriented environmental education, which includes daily routine activities, young people on the point of entering the "motorization age" (11<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grades) are to be accustomed, first of all at school, to a type of mobility which is determined by concerns for road safety and environmental protection. For this purpose, school, driving school and parents must closely cooperate with each other (networking).

Young people who want to acquire a driving licence are subsequently offered a new kind of driver training. On the basis of studies at the former Institute for Traffic Paedagogy at the University of Technology, Berlin, young people are taught a way of driving and handling a car which takes into account the requirements both of road safety and environmental protection. Another important point of emphasis is concerned with young people's social competencies in interacting with other road users.

After the termination of the trial stage, the project is to be introduced in the school system.

In autumn 2004 the project folder "Let's Play It Safe!" will be made avail-

able to primary schools for the first time. A wide range of suggestions, which have been successfully tested in actual practice, are to motivate teachers to introduce instruction projects in the important field of traffic education.

Children's accident statistics have shown that the school entry stage is an extremely critical phase for the child, since it is naturally accompanied by a change in mobility. For this reason, the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture has developed, within the scope of the project "Reliable Primary School – Safety Campaign", a folder which is to help parents or guardians in their efforts to educate their children in matters of road safety. This is to supplement the respective work done at school.

The folder "School is Knocking at the Door" contains suggestions on how correct road behaviour can be practised with children in very simple ways, e.g. crossing a road at various points.

In addition, all children receive a School Child ID, which serves for identification purposes in emergency situations.

Work with parents was enhanced and improved by the "Moderators' Handbook for Parents' Meetings on Traffic Education". This handbook serves as a tool for carrying out parents' meetings on the subject of traffic education for pupils from the pre-primary stage to the 5<sup>th</sup> grade. New points of emphasis were created by increasingly involving parents in the tasks of traffic education.

## 10.8 Vocational guidance

### **Vocational guidance at general secondary school (*Hauptschule*) and lower level of academic secondary school (*allgemein bildende höhere Schule/Unterstufe*)**

Since the school year 1998/99 vocational guidance has been a compulsory exercise in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> forms of general secondary school and academic secondary school. The curriculum – the respective changes came into force on 1 September 1998 – gives schools several organisational possibilities in this respect:

The compulsory exercise "vocational guidance" may be conducted as a separate subject (within the scope of the school's autonomous curricular powers), or it may be integrated in the compulsory-subjects. In addition, also the time devoted to this exercise may vary, no matter which option is chosen.

How do schools handle this? How much do pupils notice of this? How much gets through to the parents? What creates positive effects? In order to

get answers to these questions the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture had an all-Austrian survey conducted at general and academic secondary schools in May 2001 in order to determine in which form, and on the basis of which overall conditions, the legal requirement of vocational guidance at schools is fulfilled and which effects the different organisational approaches taken by schools have.

### **Which organisational possibilities for offering "vocational guidance" are most commonly used?**

At 98% of academic secondary schools and 56% of general secondary schools "vocational guidance" is offered in an integrative way, i.e. it is taught in all suitable subjects, as well as in connection with projects, days of vocational practice, etc.

At 20% of general secondary schools "vocational guidance" is a separate subject with at least 1 lesson per week over the entire school year.

At 10% of general secondary schools "vocational guidance" is a separate subject with at least 1 lesson per week in block form for one semester.

At 14% of general secondary schools "vocational guidance" is a separate subject with 0.5 lessons per week plus vocational guidance in the various subjects, in connection with projects and days of vocational practice.

For other selected results taken from the final report (July 2002) the website [www.gemeinsamlernen.at/index2.asp](http://www.gemeinsamlernen.at/index2.asp) (contributions arranged on the basis of subjects/vocational guidance) may be consulted.

### **OECD study**

In 2002/2003 Austria took part in the "OECD Review of Policies for Career Information, Guidance and Counselling Services", in which the structures and targets of institutions providing information, counselling, monitoring and promotion with regard to education and career decisions were compared. The study was put on a broad basis: All measures or facilities supporting people taking, or preparing for, education and career decisions were included, irrespective of the target group (both adolescents and adults), and irrespective of method used (information – counselling – monitoring, promotion).

The results and conclusions of this study are summarised in detail in the final OECD report (2004). The report compares the respective systems and targets of the participating countries, points to strengths and weaknesses and makes suggestions for future strategies, priorities and organisational forms. The final OECD country note on Austria, a summary of the global statements

concerning all countries, as well as concrete suggestions as contained in the country note on Austria, can be accessed via the website

[www.schulpsychologie.at/OECD/](http://www.schulpsychologie.at/OECD/)

### **Pilot project on vocational guidance at academic secondary schools**

In the school year 2000/2001 the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture started the pilot project "My Way – Counselling, Monitoring and Guidance at Academic Secondary Schools". Ten schools from seven federal provinces participated in this project for a period of three years. It aimed at strengthening and individualising educational career planning and vocational guidance, at the establishment of a counselling centre for school and personal problems, and at supporting teachers in handling the subject "vocational guidance" in the classroom.

A counselling centre – open, if possible, every day – was to demonstrate to the target groups (pupils, parents, teachers) the importance of the project's aims. The actual work was done by small teams (pupils' counsellors, vocational guidance teachers), who were responsible for establishing the centre, internal coordination and actual counselling work; in addition, they had to take part in the accompanying scientific activities (evaluation) carried out by the Evaluation and School Research Unit of the Centre for School Development at Graz. For these purposes the provincial school authorities provided the participating schools with funds earmarked for the three-year project.

The opportunity to receive intensive counselling at school was greatly appreciated not only by pupils, but also by their parents and teachers. During the project period the demand for school-related counselling rose continuously, and the importance attached to pupils' counselling and vocational guidance at school rose considerably. Any long-term expansion of counselling activities, however, can only be effected on the basis of a definitive budget.

A large part of pupils, parents and teachers who had actually made use of these counselling opportunities confirmed the success of the project. The evaluation of counselling activities by pupils was also extremely positive. It was only very rarely that teachers were of the opinion that counselling activities (absence of pupils) disrupted teaching in the classroom.

Further information concerning the project and its results is available from MinR Mag. Augustin Kern, Department Academic Secondary Schools, Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture (initiator and project manager).

There is also an evaluation report by Elisabeth Stanzel-Tischler: My Way – Counselling, Monitoring and Guidance at Academic Secondary Schools. Pilot

Project in the School Years 2000/01 to 2002/03. ZSE-Report No. 66, Graz 2003. This report may also be downloaded from the homepage of the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture:

[www.wapp.bmbwk.gov.at/publikationen\\_shop.asp](http://www.wapp.bmbwk.gov.at/publikationen_shop.asp)

### **Vocational guidance passport**

Efficient vocational guidance presupposes detailed information about targets and contents as well as transparency in practical implementation. As a consequence, a vocational guidance passport, which shows the respective activities in this field, was introduced at general secondary schools (*Hauptschulen*), where it is made available to each pupil through the school textbook programme. For further details consult the website

[www.gemeinsamlernen.at/backup/bo\\_pass/index.html](http://www.gemeinsamlernen.at/backup/bo_pass/index.html)

### **Quality assurance**

Upon the suggestion of the Federal Minister of Education, Science and Culture, and on the basis of a number of studies (commissioned by the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, Chamber of Labour, parents' associations), greater attention is to be paid to the attainment of the targets of the compulsory exercise "vocational guidance". Measures in this respect focus on

- quality indicators in implementing vocational guidance,
- coordination (particularly in the case of integrative implementation) – description of tasks
- reporting/feedback system, reporting to the all-Austrian Conference of Provincial School Inspectors.

The measures are to be made known to the provincial school boards (it is intended that school inspectors will also take an active role in quality assurance measures) by means of a recommendation of the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture; they are to become effective as of the school year 2003/2004.

The Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture has also asked the provincial school inspectors for academic secondary schools (*allgemeinbildende höhere Schulen*) to stress and guarantee the sustainability of vocational guidance by discussing this issue with vocational guidance teachers and informing them about the recommendation of the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture.

### **Job, Study and Further Education Fair (Messe für Beruf, Studium und Weiterbildung – BeSt<sup>3</sup>)**

This fair is organised annually by the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture in cooperation with the Austrian Labour Market Service and targets pupils, parents and teachers. In 2002 it was expanded by the additional focus of further training for adults. It informs these target groups about different study and job options, as well as possibilities for further education, after the matriculation examination (*Reifeprüfung*), or after finishing compulsory school, respectively.

### **Vocational guidance and information for girls/women**

For the purpose of extending the vocational choices of girls and women, the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture not only publishes information material such as the brochure "Girls Can Do More" (published by the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, Federal Ministry of Economics and Labour, Federal Ministry of Social Security and Generations, and the Labour Market Service), but it has also, for a number of years, initiated and supported concrete projects in this field. In this connection, mention should be made of the project "FIT – Women into Technology", "MUT – Girls into Technology", as well as the project "READY". For more detailed information compare Section 10.3. "Education towards gender equality".

## **11. MEDIA AND NEW TECHNOLOGIES**

### **11.1 Media pedagogy**

Media education, as a part of media pedagogy, has been an educational principle since 1973. At the end of 2001 the new Fundamental Decree on Media Education (latest update before that in 1994) was promulgated by the Federal Minister of Education, Science and Culture. The new decree aims at critically and analytically integrating into education both the traditional mass media and the new media, particularly the Internet.

A possible approach to the Internet determined by considerations of media pedagogy is Austria's participation, together with 6 other EU countries, in the EU project EDUCAUNET.

The journal MEDIA IMPULSES (Contributions to Media Pedagogy) appears regularly four times a year and is made available to all schools.

Under Sections 14 and 15 of the School Instruction Act, a considerable number of audiovisual teaching aids is examined each year by the Commission for the Approbation of Audiovisual Media. The registers of audiovisual media are being continued, and the media-purchasing institutions are regularly contacted and informed. Particularly remarkable is the growing number of applications to include new media, e.g. CD-ROMs, just like school textbooks, as teaching material in the school textbook lists or in the annex.

#### **Practical media education**

The project "Pupils' Radio 1476" initiated in 1998 provides important stimuli for a practice-oriented transdisciplinary form of instruction. By the end of 2000, 427 Austrian schools/colleges of all types showed their interest in radio projects, or already worked with their pupils at concrete productions.

In the video field, numerous "Pupil-Teacher Media Projects" are supported by the department each year. An international media competition for young people is the "Media Literacy Award", which was introduced two years ago and has enjoyed increasing popularity since then.

Mention should be made of the homepage [www.mediamanual.at](http://www.mediamanual.at), which serves as a platform for material on media pedagogy. It offers, in addition to selected articles from the journal MEDIA IMPULSES, contributions on the theoretical foundations of media pedagogy, interactive possibilities for constructing meaning by means of image, sound and speech, practical sug-

gestions for independent media development and creative media use, courses for further training in the field of media pedagogy, as well as material on film education.

## 11.2 Library service for schools

In Austria schools of any type may establish a school library, although they are not compelled to do so. The costs for equipment and for purchasing the required media are borne by the school-maintaining authority; the teachers who receive special training for their duties as school librarians are paid by the federal government. In order to guarantee a uniform approach and to develop models for cooperating with public and scientific libraries, the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture established the Library Service for Schools.

The Library Service for Schools provides information to schools, communities and parents on library establishment, furnishing and stocking, organisation, administration, costs, as well as the necessary in-service training for teachers.

Since 2004 the Library Service has been organised as a working association (Austrian Youth Book Club, Austrian Libraries Association and Buch.Zeit), which is based in Wels, Upper Austria, and is responsible for all (so far very successful) publications, materials, as well as the homepage. This office at Wels also provides all written and oral information.

School libraries in Austria are organised and administered according to the pattern of Austria's public libraries, i.e. they offer material for leisurely reading, but also, depending on the specific subjects taught at the respective school type, media for any interested reader. For several years school libraries have undergone a restructuring process, being reorganised to multi-media libraries since, in addition to the medium book, also electronic media should increasingly be available. The subject IT takes the form of a practical workshop in which pupils are taught how to handle the new media and use the school library for their personal research work.

The Austrian school libraries continue to expand their contacts to all other libraries. In this connection particular mention must be made of the internationally acclaimed project LIBRARIES-ONLINE of the Austrian Libraries Association: Since 1999 all public and school libraries have put their catalogues on

the Internet, thus making their media available to a larger public.

Together with other institutions the Austrian school libraries serve as centres for reading education and reading motivation.

The Library Service contributes to the Austrian literary magazine "1000 and 1 Books", which deals with German children's and youth literature, to the Reading Month April with Andersen Day, and intensively cooperates with the Austrian Youth Book Club.

For all information on school library development in Austria and contact addresses the website [www.schulbibliothek.at](http://www.schulbibliothek.at) should be consulted, which was awarded the COMENIUS Seal in 2003.

## 11.3 KulturKontakt / ÖKS-Austrian Culture Service

In the mid-1970s the then Austrian Federal Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs (now Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture) started a number of initiatives with a view to promoting cultural education and a greater awareness of cultural matters on the part of all Austrian schools and pupils. One of the measures for attaining this target was the establishment of the ÖKS. All school types, and subsequently all branches of society, were to be acquainted with the different forms and fields of culture; in this process artists were to be actively included as far as possible.

As an independent organisation the ÖKS became an important link between the various measures of cultural and educational policy, as well as an interface between the contemporary cultural scene and all Austrian schools. Cooperation with art institutions was expanded. In addition to cooperating with art agents, the ÖKS, in its educational work, made use of its long-standing relations with artists in order to ensure a modern approach to art by means of "artistic intervention".

As of the beginning of 2004 the non-profit associations ÖKS and the Office for Cultural Exchange (*Büro für Kulturvermittlung*) were merged with KulturKontakt, and a uniform organisational structure was created. This merger resulted in one of the largest Austrian competence centres for cultural education, cultural exchange, cultural dialogue and cooperation in the field of education. From 2004 top priorities of KulturKontakt Austria will include cultural contacts and cultural education, as well as cooperation in education and cultural dialogue with the countries of eastern and southeastern Europe.

Today, just as before, KulturKontakt Austria – now under the label ÖKS – defines culture in extremely open and comprehensive terms. It understands culture as an all-encompassing term, including both traditional and new, experimental and innovative forms of art.

KulturKontakt Austria/ÖKS tries to develop a new learning culture: It actively promotes interdisciplinarity, project-oriented work, and the continuous further development of the manifold methods available in cultural and artistic education. Pupils' active encounter with art and culture is considered an important element in shaping their personalities.

In this connection KulturKontakt Austria/ÖKS offers service and counselling activities by experts, ranging from information on specific fields of culture and art, meetings with artists and people engaged in cultural work, to concrete help in the financing and implementation of projects. KulturKontakt Austria/ÖKS also carries out pilot projects itself and supplies impulses for emphasis themes – especially in such cultural fields, regions and school types where activities in this respect have been rather slack – not only offering support but also actively participating in the projects.

Efforts at incorporating the work of artists in project-oriented, interdisciplinary forms of instruction, and at intensifying the cultural life at Austrian schools by means of a comprehensive, creative type of education, are increasingly gaining in importance. Today top priorities include furthering art and culture in daily school life, innovation and the readiness to accept different forms of cultural expression and development. Each year KulturKontakt Austria/ÖKS supports more than 3000 workshops at schools and a number of larger projects, some of which are listed below.

In the last few years KulturKontakt Austria/ÖKS has established a network of more than 120 cultural facilities in order to promote cooperation between schools and cultural institutions and to open up new ways of cultural exchange by means of direct contacts. The ÖKS CLUB Network offers to all persons and institutions involved in education and interested in art and culture the possibility of using, at reduced cost, the wide range of cultural facilities offered by the ÖKS CLUB Network's partners, and of acquainting themselves with the options particularly intended for schools (encountering art at school, workshops, guided tours for teachers, discussions, etc.). Partners include renowned promoters of events, concerts, various museums, theatres, commercial art galleries, as well as numerous regional cultural initiatives.

The following services offered by KulturKontakt Austria/ÖKS are particularly geared to the requirements of the target group schools/teachers.

- Encounters at school with artists from all fields of art at no cost (art personnel exchange)
- Development of ideas and models for tailor-made encounters at the interface art, culture and education
- Counselling for all teachers – no matter at which school and which subject they teach – in the preparation, the handling and financing of cultural projects at their schools (promotion of pupils' dynamic abilities when actively participating in project work, interdisciplinarity, trans-disciplinary project work, relevance to what is currently taught in the respective class, process-oriented work, reflexion and documentation)

KulturKontakt Austria/ÖKS tries to create incentives to make schools test methods of artistic and cultural education even where this may seem difficult, e.g. as part of projects in non-artistic subjects, in rural areas, etc. Currently another focus is on supporting new and experimental approaches in connection with organising encounters with artists and persons engaged in cultural work (art personnel exchange), process-oriented as well as transdisciplinary work.

Some larger KulturKontakt Austria/ÖKS projects:

#### **ARTWORKS – Artistic Services in the Third Sector**

The development partnership "ARTWORKS – Artistic Services in the Third Sector" consists of 12 partner organisations and is organised and financially supported under the European Community initiative EQUAL. From September 2002 to February 2005 EQUAL is taking purposive measures to improve the conditions facing artists in the Austrian labour market as well as their precarious working and income situation. Efforts in this respect focus on the development of new fields of work for artists and their services as part of the third sector (social economy).

#### **ABC Network**

ABC Network (Across the Borders Cooperation) – school network "Creative Central Europe" is an initiative started by the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture in February 2002. It is a long-term project and aims at developing future-oriented school cooperation models in the field of "creativity promotion and cultural education" between Austria and other countries of central Europe. In addition to Austria and Italy, participants include schools from the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia. Coordinated by KulturKontakt Austria/ÖKS they test various forms of project- and subject-ori-

ented instruction, particular consideration being given to the communicative possibilities of the new media. At present the network comprises 16 actively participating schools that cooperate in 4 work groups.

#### eLearning Pilot Project eLSA

eLearning in daily school life (lower level of secondary school) is a pilot project of the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture and part of the eLearning Cluster Austria. Between 2002 and 2005 a number of teachers at pilot schools study the learning platform Blackboard and whether it is possible to use it routinely in teaching. The aim is to make all pilot schools acquire eLearning experience in all subjects and pass on the experience made to new project schools. Each pilot school establishes a small network in its own province. In the school year 2004/05 the whole lower level of secondary school will be included, and the experiences gained will be made available to a wide range of persons and institutions.

#### ÖKS. Moment ! Music

ÖKS. Moment ! Music was started in the school year 2001/2002. Already the first stage showed the large artistic-creative potential in Austria's young people. Together with musicians and artists working in other fields pupils create extremely unconventional pieces of music, which are then performed in concerts. ÖKS. Moment ! Music shows that music can be "made", i.e. it cannot only be reproduced, but can be composed by young people in independent work.

#### U19 – Cybergeneration 2001

U19 is a category of the Prix Ars Electronica, which is organised by the Austrian Radio and Television/Upper Austria in cooperation with KulturKontakt Austria/ÖKS. Any young Austrian may participate. U19 has been organised as an extremely successful and internationally renowned competition since 1998. Anything that can be computer-generated may be submitted, including animations, hardware and software, computer games, websites, robotics applications, digital music, computer graphics.

#### The Useful and the Foreign

In 1989 the Office for Cultural Exchange initiated the project series "The Useful and the Foreign" as part of the Austrian dual system of apprentice training. In this project apprentices receive their special training, which is the "useful" element, while simultaneously being acquainted, with the help of cul-

tural exchange professionals, with the work and life of artists and other persons that are part of cultural life, which constitutes the "foreign" element. So far, 180 such projects have been conducted in the whole of Austria, participants including approximately 3,700 apprentices from 1,320 firms and 50 part-time compulsory vocational schools, as well as 140 cultural exchange professionals and artists.

## 11.4 ICT development

During the period under review the Austrian school system was characterised by numerous developments concerning the new information and communication technologies.

Austrian schools were not only increasingly equipped with high-quality computers, but they were also provided with Internet access and integrated in various networks.

ICT was also made part of the primary school curriculum. A separate ICT training programme for prospective teachers was introduced at Austrian universities. An increasing number of teachers already in service receive extensive training in IT skills, e.g. by getting the European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL).

Mention should also be made of the possibility of using the Internet for downloading additional material and exercises supplementing the textbooks featured in the School Textbook Programme.

The Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture presents Austria's ICT strategy on the website [www.eFit.at](http://www.eFit.at).

The optimum, sustainable and widespread use of modern information and communication technologies in education, science and culture is supported and promoted by the comprehensive initiative eFit Austria. eFit Austria offers a platform, which is continuously further developed, for numerous initiatives and projects on future-oriented subjects. EFit Austria, which gets its funds from the so-called "Computer Billion", encourages and supports projects in education, science and culture.

During the period under review the Austrian education portal [www.bildung.at](http://www.bildung.at) was set up, offering a modern learning, education and orientation system. It represents an all-Austrian education network and supports many eLearning communities. It is also an interdisciplinary portal for all important education websites and subportals (e.g. [www.schule.at](http://www.schule.at)).

The eLearning portal was started in the net as a test version in November 2001. On May 2, 2002, it was officially presented to the public by the Federal Minister of Education, Science and Culture within the scope of a press conference and an associated event.

The subportal **[www.schule.at](http://www.schule.at)** is also of great importance, since it offers, amongst other things, portals concerning the different subjects of instruction; these portals have been very popular with teachers.

Of the numerous pilot projects particularly two on eLearning, which are part of the eLearning Cluster Austria, should be mentioned. One of these projects is described below:

#### **eLearning Pilot Project eLSA – eLearning in Everyday School Life (Lower Level)**

eLSA was started at 4 pilot schools in the school year 2002/03. One academic secondary school from each of the federal provinces Tyrol, Upper Austria, Lower Austria and Vienna volunteered to face the manifold challenges of this project. Each of these schools, which operated in different environments, defined at least one class as eLSA core class.

During the first year teachers had to come to terms with the learning platform and with how to use it in daily teaching (development and testing of eLearning instruction sequences); about 50 percent of the teachers met these challenges with enthusiasm and produced some excellent results.

The overall target of the project until its termination in summer 2005 is to make each teacher study eLearning sequences for his subject. During the first project year the pupils concerned showed great motivation.

#### **eLSA in the school year 2003/04**

The number of participating schools doubled. By now each federal province has its own eLSA pilot school. In addition, there is a larger steering group now, which supports school organisation and school development processes in connection with the project.

The aim during this school year is that all first to third forms of the eLSA pilot schools acquire eLearning skills and experience in all subjects and pass on their experience to teachers and schools who are new to the project

#### **eLSA in the school year 2004/05**

All teachers (lower level) of the schools involved in the eLSA project are to acquire and exchange experience in all lower-level subjects and grades.

Further details:

**<http://community.schule.at/el-cluster>**

**<http://community.schule.at/?cid=2126>**

Other important pilot projects include the following:

#### **Virtual School Austria ([www.virtuelleschule.at](http://www.virtuelleschule.at))**

As a link between Austria and the European School Net (EUN) the Virtual School Austria was established on the national level (Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, Department III/4) in order to create a web platform for the purpose of presenting the Austrian educational offer in this field as well as an overview of current ICT projects. By close cooperation with the international and national representatives of the Virtual School Europe this platform developed into the Virtual School Austria.

The central aim of the platform Virtual School Austria, which is maintained and regularly updated by teachers of the various subjects and school types, is to provide a subject-oriented access to educational information. This online educational information is intended for teachers, pupils and anybody else interested in matters of education.

ViS.at is subdivided according to the following criteria:

- Subject-oriented access to educational information
- Information on individual subjects is provided and regularly updated by teachers of the respective subjects and school types
- The teachers responsible for the information guarantee the quality of such information with regard to content and didactic principles
- The websites of the individual departments are prepared by the departments themselves and are integrated on Austrian education servers (eduhi, Tibs)

#### **ViS initiatives**

ViS.at is responsible for the Austrian portals of the international education networks ENIS, BILNET, as well as for the thematic knowledge platforms, for which teachers and pupils, in cooperation with experts from various institutions, prepare multimedia learning material, examples for practical instruction etc., on certain focus subjects.

### European initiatives – EU cooperation projects

ViS.at offers current information on EU calls and possible cooperation partners and is increasingly acting as an exchange centre for transnational and transdisciplinary IT projects. Various European initiatives implementing European Commission programmes (e.g. eLearning programme), such as the Action Week Netdays Europe, also constituted important points of emphasis for ViS.at, the results of such events being evaluated and made accessible on a longer-term basis, i.e. beyond the respective event. In addition to this, a number of school project initiatives have been integrated in the respective ViS departments on account of their pedagogical-didactic aspects, their curricular relevance, or their intercultural dimensions. In this connection ViS.at provided organisational support for obtaining EU funds for ICT-relevant activities.

Also in the future ViS.at will not only present, but also stimulate and make possible, new projects for a meaningful IT use in education.

Projects concentrating on specific subjects, e.g. Castles and Palaces, Children's Projects in the Web, Dialogue and Education as an Opportunity – Global Learning, primarily aim at highlighting the transdisciplinary character of a subject under the aspect of the use of ICT in classroom and extramural education. However, ICT should not only be understood as a transport medium for "checked" e-content, but should also be used for the didactic preparation of such content.

The following contains a brief overview of the individual parts:

#### ENIS – Austria

[www.virtuelleschule.at/ENIS/enis.htm](http://www.virtuelleschule.at/ENIS/enis.htm)

Established in 2001

ENIS (European Network of Innovative Schools) is a network of European schools in which information technologies play an important part. In these schools infrastructure must have reached a certain level, and the school head, as well as the teachers, must be prepared to test and implement new didactic principles and methods. The main targets of this European network include the exchange of experience and information on the school level, as well as active participation in European IT projects in the pedagogical and didactic field.

#### Netdays

[www.netdays.at](http://www.netdays.at)

Established in 1997,

this all-European action week, which takes place each November, includes national activities which are to make young people aware of how the possibilities of the new technologies/Internet can be creatively used. Since 2001 Netdays Austria has featured a competition for the Young Creativity Award on the basis of the guidelines provided by European Netdays, such as "Dialogue between Cultures", or "Images". In 2003, Austria's neighbouring EU candidate countries were for the first time invited to participate in this competition.

#### ESchola

<http://eschola.eduhi.at>

Established in 2001 (until 2003)

These all-European action weeks on the subject "eLearning" took place between March and May 2001–2003. eSchola aimed at identifying, collecting, analyzing, documenting and disseminating innovative projects and teaching approaches, which demonstrate the meaningful use of new technologies in the classroom. Within the scope of eSchola Europe the competitions for the European eLearning Awards were organised.

Continuity: The Action Weeks eSchola were discontinued as of 2003; their results, however, continue to be available online.

#### BILNET Bilingual Schools in Central and Eastern Europe

[www.virtuelleschule.at/bilnet/](http://www.virtuelleschule.at/bilnet/)

Established in 2002

This homepage covers nine bilingual schools in the Slovak Republic, the Czech Republic and Hungary, which are supported by Austria, enabling them to maintain a joint Internet platform and to give teachers the possibility of circulating information via this platform.

#### Castles and Palaces

<http://burgen.virtuelleschule.at>

Established in 2000

Events: Workshops at schools, presentation at fairs and education events  
 Past results: Examples for classroom teaching, worksheets, online exercises, database on folk and fairy tales  
 Continuity: Expansion to include additional school types (special schools, adult education facilities, etc.)

### Education Online

[www.bildungonline.at](http://www.bildungonline.at)

Established in 2000

Education Online is an annual education fair which has taken place at Hall in Tirol since 2000. Within the scope of this fair schools present school projects that have been developed with the help of the new media and are used in teaching and learning. In addition, various enterprises and institutions have the possibility of presenting themselves. There are also numerous working meetings in connection with the Virtual School, as well as lectures by experts.

### European Spring – Spring Day in Europe

<http://futurum2004.eun.org>

Established in 2003

More than 5,000 schools from all over Europe took part in this event, which centered on discussions on the future of Europe. The website of the European Spring Day contains, amongst other things, about 1,500 teaching and learning resources on the subject as well as an overview of the respective national activities.

## 12. TEACHER TRAINING

In 1999 decisive changes were introduced for the approximately 12,000 students at colleges specialising in the training of teachers, i.e. teacher training colleges (*Pädagogische Akademien*), technical and vocational teacher training colleges (*Berufspädagogische Akademien*), and training colleges for religious education teachers (*Religionspädagogische Akademien*), as well as for all teachers attending courses at in-service teacher training colleges (*Pädagogische Institute*) and in-service training colleges for religious education teachers (*Religionspädagogische Institute*): The new Federal Act on Studies at Teacher Training Colleges and the Establishment of Institutions of Higher Learning for Occupations in Education of 25 June 1999 (*Akademien-Studiengesetz – AStG 1999*) clearly defines the overall framework for the future establishment of a university-like system of (initial and in-service) training for all teachers.

Within a period of eight years *Hochschulen für pädagogische Berufe* (institutions of higher learning for occupations in education) are to be established, which, in addition to developing programmes for the training of compulsory school teachers, will prepare students for educational options in other fields as well (e.g. adult education), the educational standards of these new institutions being comparable to those of universities. This means that, in future, these facilities will enjoy university status and will therefore have the right to award academic degrees; in addition, a close interaction between research and teaching will be guaranteed. Also, particular consideration will be given to the special situation of the different churches and religious denominations. Synergies with the existing university programmes for teacher training are to be used as far as possible.

The AStG 1999 also represented an important step towards the autonomy and individual responsibility of the more than 50 training colleges covered by the act:

Election of study commissions empowered to issue directives (study programmes instead of curricula!); establishment of federal steering conferences with coordinating functions for the various types of colleges; establishment of a central advisory board on matters of research, half of whose members must have a teaching qualification as understood by university law; introduction of “college students’ representatives” based on the existing students’ representation laws; cancellation of the detailed provisions concerning the in-

ternal organisation of the teacher training colleges in the School Organisation Act (the School Organisation Act only defines the external form of organisation!); empowering colleges to certify that foreign teaching diplomas are equivalent to Austrian ones.

In order to speed up the respective developments, the heads of the two government ministries concerned (at that time “education” and “science” were still separated) each nominated four members to be part of an evaluation and planning commission; of these eight members at least four had to have a university teaching or similar qualification and at least four had to be women.

As early as autumn 1999 the study commissions of the individual colleges started to reorganise their study programmes according to the AStG as diploma studies, with the result that, as of the year 2000, all graduates having completed the first training stage at one of these colleges are awarded the diploma degree “certified pedagogue” (*Diplompädagoge, Diplompädagogin*), abbreviated *Dipl.-Päd.*

Considering the entire system of the training of teachers as well as of non-teaching supervisory staff it is regrettable that the colleges for social workers (*Akademien für Sozialarbeit*), which are institutions where social workers are trained, are not covered by the new act, and that the training colleges for non-teaching supervisory staff (*Bildungsanstalten für Sozialpädagogik*) are not yet covered by the new act. In the coming years, however, new areas of cooperation may also open up in these fields.

At present, the following institutions are directly or indirectly (on the basis of private-school agreements) covered by the AStG:

- 14 teacher training colleges in all federal provinces
- 4 technical and vocational teacher training colleges in Vienna, Linz, Graz and Innsbruck
- 1 technical and vocational teacher training college in Vienna (for the initial and further training of teachers at schools of agriculture and forestry)
- 6 training colleges for teachers of Roman Catholic religion in Klagenfurt, Linz, Salzburg, Graz, Stams and Vienna
- 3 training colleges for religious education teachers for the Protestant, Islamic and Jewish denominations in Vienna
- 12 in-service teacher training colleges in all federal provinces
- 9 in-service training colleges for teachers of Roman Catholic religion in all federal provinces
- 1 Protestant in-service training college for religious education teachers in Vienna

### Exchange of teaching assistants under the SOCRATES programme and scholarships for in-service training of teachers

The Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture conducts exchange programmes for foreign language teaching assistants on the basis of bilateral agreements with Croatia, France, Great Britain, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland, the Republic of Ireland, Russia and the USA. Under these programmes Austrian students and teachers assist native staff at schools in the above-mentioned countries as “native speakers” in foreign-language instruction; conversely, Croatian, English, French, Italian, Russian and Spanish students are employed as foreign language teaching assistants at Austrian schools.

Since Austria became a member of the European Union in 1995, Austrian schools have had the additional possibility of employing foreign-language teaching assistants from all countries of the EU, Norway, Iceland and Turkey for at least three months or up to eight months under the SOCRATES programme. These teaching assistants receive EU scholarships, which means that no costs accrue to schools employing these prospective foreign-language teachers. The range of work of these EU assistants at Austrian schools is more comprehensive than that of assistants doing their work under bilateral exchange programmes, which gives schools an interesting chance to implement the “European dimension” in daily school life.

Similarly, prospective Austrian foreign language teachers may apply for scholarships as teaching assistants in various EU countries. Since August 1995 Austrian foreign-language teachers already in active service have had the possibility of applying for EU scholarships under the SOCRATES programme. These scholarships are intended to cover part of the travel and tuition expenses incurred in connection with attending an in-service training course abroad. Applications have to be directed to the national Austrian SOCRATES agency.

## 13. SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY – EDUCATIONAL COUNSELLING

The School Psychology – Educational Counselling Unit of the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture has two different categories of tasks:

### • Customer-oriented tasks

Psychological counselling, examinations and expert opinions (e.g. educational guidance, integration, promotion in special education, school maturity, learning problems, behaviour problems, personal difficulties and crises); in particular counselling of pupils, teachers and parents seeking advice in questions concerning educational psychology, expert opinions.

Psychological support, psychological care and psychological treatment (if necessary, psychotherapeutic methods). Target: Personality development, prevention, intervention, rehabilitation.

In these two areas there are almost 130,000 personal contacts each year with pupils, parents and teachers, as well as 30,000 psychological examinations and numerous other forms of intervention (provision of moderators or lecturers), in which 28,000 problems of pupils are dealt with. Additional tasks include the psychological care for, and coaching of, approximately 2,000 teachers per year – with no direct connection with any pupils' problems.

### Promotion of cooperation at school

In the years 2000 to 2002 work centered on questions concerning cooperation with schools in cases of dyslexia. As part of an information campaign suitable models were developed and curricula for the training of teachers specifically caring for dyslexic pupils were prepared.

[www.schulpsychologie.at/legasthenie](http://www.schulpsychologie.at/legasthenie)

In the years 2003 and 2004 similar emphasis was put on remedying deficiencies in arithmetic.

In addition, an initiative entitled "Forecasting Process" was started in 2002, which is to promote cooperation between parents and primary school teachers and to facilitate the decision on the pupil's educational careers after the 4<sup>th</sup> grade.

[www.schulpsychologie.at/hsoderahs](http://www.schulpsychologie.at/hsoderahs)

### Psychological research in school matters

In this field various studies were prepared, e.g. in connection with promotion possibilities for children with reading and spelling deficiencies.

In 2002 an all-Austrian information event was organised, in which important research projects carried out by the School Psychology – Educational Counselling Unit were presented. Brief descriptions of these projects can be found in the publication "Innovative Projects by the School Psychology – Educational Counselling Unit".

[www.schulpsychologie.at/projektberichte.htm](http://www.schulpsychologie.at/projektberichte.htm)

### Participation in the planning and coordination of initial, further and in-service training activities in the school system

During the period under review new models for the initial and in-service training of pupils' counsellors at schools were developed (separate study programme for counselling at *Akademien*). Some federal provinces started to implement these models in 2003.

In 2003 the School Psychology – Education Development Unit organised an "Educational Counselling Symposium", in which important questions concerning the cooperation with, and qualifications of, vocational orientation teachers and pupils' and educational counsellors were discussed and suggestions for improvements were made.

[www.schulpsychologie.at/Download/bibsymp/](http://www.schulpsychologie.at/Download/bibsymp/)

### Public relations

Particular emphasis was put on public relations and on passing on psychological knowhow to parents and teachers. Thus, numerous brochures were published in this field, the focus being on the one hand on learning aids (e.g. "Learning Effectively", "Magical Square for Correct Learning") and, on the other hand, on aiding in career decisions (e.g. "Handbook on the Forecasting Process", "Chances Check", "Educational Careers in Austria"). The website of the School Psychology – Educational Counselling Unit has been expanded to a central information platform.

[www.schulpsychologie.at](http://www.schulpsychologie.at)

- **Tasks concerning quality assurance**

**Internal further and in-service training, supervision, organisational development**

Several work meetings were held with the provincial officials responsible for school psychology – educational counselling, in which the existing criteria concerning quality assurance were further developed.

In 2000 an all-Austrian further training event for school psychologists took place, in which the subjects emergency psychology and supervision were discussed.

In 2002 an information event was organised on the research activities of the School Psychology – Educational Counselling Unit.

In 2003 an “Educational Counselling Symposium” was held in which pupils’ and educational counsellors from all school types took part.

In 2004 a broad discussion was initiated in all federal provinces on current questions of organisational development in the field of school psychology – educational development, the results of which will be the subject of an all-Austrian meeting in November 2004.

**Administration, internal information exchange**

After several years of preparatory work, a uniform reporting system for all school psychological counselling centres was introduced in 2003, which makes it easier to analyse the work done in the whole of Austria in the field of school psychology. In the federal provinces the existing documentation systems were adjusted accordingly.

**Pupils’ and educational counselling at schools**

For the purpose of supporting the School Psychology – Educational Counselling Unit, all secondary schools have specially trained teachers, viz. guidance counsellors and educational consultants, who should be the first contact persons for pupils who have educational problems or who are not sure about their future educational careers. Initial, further and in-service training, as well as the continuous information of these teachers about new developments in the counselling field, is primarily ensured by the School Psychology – Educational Counselling Unit. The activities of these guidance counsellors and educational consultants cover especially three areas:

- Information counselling (counselling by the provision of information)
- Problem counselling (counselling by problem analysis)
- System counselling (counselling by cooperation and coordination)

During the period under review new challenges have arisen in all three areas. In the field of information counselling the Internet has become the most important medium. This fact has been taken into account by the development of tools facilitating Internet research, as well as by training programmes on how to use online databases.

As regards problem counselling, points of emphasis varied, depending on regional requirements.

In the field of system counselling, particular emphasis was put on the development of cooperation models in order to be better able to cope with conflict situations at schools.

## 14. QUALITY DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

### Q.I.S. – Quality in schools

In the last few years the interest in the quality of education has considerably increased. However, different ideas and expectations are associated with the terms “quality development” and “quality assurance”. For this reason, in September 1996, the then Federal Minister of Education and Cultural Affairs initiated the project Q.I.S. It aims at developing a framework programme for systematic quality development at schools, as well as, in the longer term, a comprehensive quality-oriented model for school development and school administration. By means of this project the Austrian Ministry of Education, Science and Culture wants to stimulate and encourage schools to monitor, control and further develop their quality standards themselves. Since independent on-site quality control and development is a necessary prerequisite and starting point for a future-oriented school system of the highest standard, the school partners will have to concern themselves continuously, in joint and systematic discussions, with matters of quality; in future, this will have to become a fixed part of school culture. For this purpose the respective “Q.I.S. Package” as well as the online magazine “Quality Network” (QN) is available at the website [www.qis.at](http://www.qis.at), which has already become extremely popular – since 1999 approximately 25 million clicks and about 450,000 downloads have been counted.

### Using the results of international studies for quality-oriented school development

Austrian schools in the primary stage as well as secondary stages I and II participated in the international comparative study on achievement “Third International Mathematics and Science Study” of the IEA. This study aimed at determining levels of general and special knowledge in these fields. The results, which showed considerable variations, will be used as a starting point for improvements. The main emphasis will be, first, on the development of testing instruments adjusted to the TIMSS questions including national and international reference data for self-evaluation purposes at the individual schools, and secondly, on the development of methodic-didactic concepts for on-site implementation of the project as well as for monitoring and preventive measures in the initial and in-service training of teachers. The campaign IMST<sup>2</sup> (Innovations in Mathematics, Science and Technology Teaching), which was

started in 2000, is to bring about the necessary methodic-didactic changes in instruction first of all in Secondary Stage II. In the school year 2004/2005 this campaign is to be extended to Secondary Stage I.

Austria also takes part in the OECD/PISA Study (on 14 to 15-year-old pupils), which is carried out on a cyclical basis. Although the results of the year 2000 were, by and large, acceptable, detailed in-depth studies were conducted as a follow-up measure in order to discover, and react to, partial deficiencies.

Since 1996, as part of a centralised system monitoring, a representative share of the Austrian population has been asked to comment on important aspects of the educational offer and school development. Approximately one third of the questions are asked in such a way that longitudinal evaluations are possible.

### Educational research

The documentation “Educational Research in Austria” appears annually. The latest edition is “Educational Research in Austria 2002”. The three most recent editions of this documentation can be accessed via the website

<http://opac.bibvb.ac.at/2bflb>.

Another documentation, viz. on planned, current and concluded research projects of the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, contains the most important information on these projects, such as title, project description, targets and implementation, who commissioned the project, who carried it out, length of project, etc.

Within the scope of the “6<sup>th</sup> EU Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development” (“European Research Area”), the interests of social research in general, as well as of educational research in particular, are to be optimally promoted, possibly also in an interdisciplinary context.

A system monitoring plan, which was completed only recently and includes all levels of education, particularly points to the necessity of educational research. In this connection an educational research programme for the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture will be developed in the near future.

# 15. UNIVERSITIES AND FACHHOCHSCHULEN (UNIVERSITIES OF APPLIED SCIENCES)

## 15.1 Universities

### University reform

During the last few years the Austrian university sector has been subject to profound changes. The political pillars of university reform are enumerated in the Government Programme 2000 "A New Governance for Austria" as full legal capacity for universities, performance contracts, global budgets covering several years, modern customer-oriented service regulations for teaching staff, improved chances for young graduates (talent promotion), simplification of administrative processes, structural reform and higher efficiency for shortening the duration of studies, compulsory evaluation with follow-up measures for improving teaching and research, areas of emphasis chosen by universities.

By taking universities and art universities out of the federal administrative system, a new era in the relations between the federal government and universities began in 2004. The university acts in force up to that time (Federal Act on the Organisation of Universities 1993 for the scientific universities, and Federal Act on the Organisation of Art Universities for the art universities), as well as the 1997 University Study Act (concerning study regulations), constituted legislative measures preparing the system for this change. The above-mentioned acts, with the exception of their constitutional provisions, were replaced by the University Act of 2002, which also created a joint legal basis for scientific and art universities.

The 2002 University Act includes the following important regulations:

- New control and cooperation mechanisms between universities and the Federal Ministry (starting with the period 2007 to 2009 performance contracts will be concluded, with performance reports and knowledge scores being used as reporting and accounting tools),
- three-year global budgets and a formula-based budget component of 20%,
- concentration of decision-taking powers and responsibility concerning university organisation in three bodies (more powerful Rector's Office for all central operative duties; University Council for strategic tasks and

- supervisory functions; Senate with ultimate responsibility in scientific and art matters),
- regulation of qualified co-determination on the part of students and university staff,
- maintenance of the standards concerning equal treatment,
- establishment of separate Universities of Medicine.

The 2001 reform of staff service regulations, which preceded the university reform, as well as the respective new regulations contained in the 2002 University Act, prepared the way for a complete reorganisation of the universities' personnel structure, giving universities more independence and flexibility in personnel management. New staff is hired only on the basis of contractual agreements or, if there is a collective agreement between the universities' umbrella organisation and the trade union, as regular employees on the basis of labour law. Civil servants working at universities continue to be subject to the terms and provisions applicable to tenured government employees. The new rules will result in a marked increase of mobility among university staff, not only between universities and research institutions in Austria and abroad, but also between universities and the private sector of the economy.

Another important aspect of this change in the university sector is that the individual universities are called upon to develop their own distinct profiles. This means that large-scale projects will be checked on whether they are internationally competitive, universities will be supported in identifying their strengths and in mutually adjusting their educational offer (critical quantities), and development plans will have to be supplied before performance contracts are concluded. In the meantime several universities have already devoted a lot of energy to developing distinct profiles of their own. In order to support these efforts, the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, in cooperation with the Council for Research and Technological Development, pre-financed, in the years 2003 and 2004, a number of additional posts for university professors, the respective budget volume amounting to 21.8 million euros. In addition, in 2004/2005, the programme UniInfrastruktur provides funds amounting to 18 million euros for improving equipment and infrastructure at universities in order to make them more attractive for joint research activities with the non-university sector and increase their incomes.

The University Act of 2002 created the Scientific Council (*Wissenschaftsrat*) as an advisory organ for Parliament, the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, as well as for universities; this council has the task of

monitoring and analyzing the Austrian university and science system in the light of European and international trends, and of making suggestions for system improvements. In particular, it has to make recommendations on the basic orientation of performance contracts with universities, considering their respective development.

At the beginning of 2004 the Austrian Quality Assurance Agency (AQA) started its operations; this agency is a joint initiative of the University Rectors' Conference (*Rektorenkonferenz*), the Conference of *Fachhochschulen*, the Association of Private Universities, the Austrian Students' Union and the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture. Universities may turn to this agency if they are in need of organisational or coordinative support when evaluating their teaching or organisation. In addition, AQA counsels and supports higher education institutions in developing and implementing quality assurance measures and quality standards, it is responsible for the certification of quality management concepts for educational institutions, and helps universities to develop their own competences in the field of quality assurance and quality management.

Finally, the Austrian University Rectors' Conference was established on the basis of Austrian non-profit association law.

During the period under review the University for Further Education Krems was the object of an evaluation and reorientation study. On the basis of its results, a development plan was drawn up which, in 2004, led to an adjustment of the respective legal provisions to those of the 2002 University Act. Financing is provided under an agreement between the federal government and the province of Lower Austria, with income from students' fees also playing an important part.

### University expenditure and staff

Federal expenditure for the higher-education sector includes expenditure for personnel and materials for universities and art universities including university-relevant research promotion, funds for study programmes at universities of applied sciences (*Fachhochschulen*) depending on the number of study places provided, as well as other university-relevant expenditure (e.g. student support programmes). In 2003 federal expenditure for the higher-education sector amounted to almost 2.38 billion euros, the respective budget for 2004 being 2.42 billion. This is about 4 percent of the total federal expenditure or 1.1 percent of the Austrian gross domestic product. Compared to the other European and OECD countries Austria takes a good middle position.

In 2004 the 21 universities share an amount of more than 1.91 billion euros, which they receive as global budgets. Income from students' fees and other income goes to universities direct. The highest global budget is allotted to the University of Vienna, followed by the Medical University Vienna, Vienna University of Technology, University of Innsbruck and University of Graz. If university expenditure is related to student numbers, the art universities, on account of their specific personnel structure, have higher expenses per student than the scientific universities (with the exception of the Medical Universities).

The volume of third-party funds (contributed by outside sources) showed a further increase, and amounted to approximately 215 million euros in 2002. This source of funds is extremely important in medicine/veterinary medicine, electrical engineering/mechanical engineering and agriculture/forestry. Among the economic activities of universities various forms of sponsoring and financing university professors' posts by private foundations are increasingly gaining in importance.

In 2003 the number of full-time posts at universities and art universities was about 19,600, almost 2,100 of which were posts for university professors, 8,800 for university assistants including university teachers having a full teaching qualification, and almost 8,700 full-time posts for administrative and technical staff. Among university assistants (*Universitäts- und Vertragsassistenten/innen*) the share of women is about 27%, among university professors around 8%. At art universities the respective shares of women are somewhat higher (37% and 24%).

The space available at universities and art universities amounts to more than 1.4 million square metres. Capital expenditure per year is about 40 million euros, which is largely provided by the Federal Real Estate Company (*Bundesimmobiliengesellschaft*) which, owing to the new ownership status, is responsible for carrying out construction projects.

### Range of studies

The Austrian universities and art universities are teaching and research institutions at the same time. The regular range of studies of the 21 universities comprises bachelor degree, master degree, diploma degree and doctoral degree studies. Curricula are developed by Curricula Commissions appointed by the Senate. Studies may not be shorter than a certain minimum duration fixed by law, which is the same for all universities and is based on the European Credit Transfer System of ECTS credits; for bachelor programmes this

minimum length is six semesters (180 ECTS credits) and for master programmes, which build upon bachelor programmes, four semesters (at least 120 ECTS credits). In the majority of diploma programmes the duration of studies is 8 semesters, even though it may be 12 semesters or more. Doctoral programmes usually serve for training future scientists and are partly organised in a transdisciplinary way (e.g. study programmes in the natural sciences). Doctoral programmes for art university graduates are organised in cooperation with a scientific university. The University Act of 2002 envisages, in addition to the usual doctoral programmes (at least 120 ECTS credits), a separate “Doctor of Philosophy” (PhD), which requires at least 240 ECTS credits.

The University Senates decide on the development of study programmes and the concrete range of studies as determined by the universities’ teaching and research facilities. In future, however, the range of studies offered will be subject to performance contracts between the respective university and the federal government (first period 2007 to 2009). The law only prescribes the already existing groups of study programmes, viz. humanities, engineering, arts, secondary school teacher accreditation programmes, medicine, natural sciences, law, social and economic sciences, theology.

All in all, 180 fields of study are offered; if all university sites are taken into account, this means that approximately 460 study possibilities are available. The development of bachelor and master studies on the basis of the Bologna Declaration has considerably gained in impetus, with almost 160 bachelor programmes being offered in the winter semester 2003.

Austrian universities may offer either complete distance teaching programmes, or distance teaching modules as part of individual study programmes. In this connection the use of the new media is of the utmost importance. Since the winter semester 2001 the University of Linz has offered a complete multimedia-supported study programme in the field of law. The University of Linz also cooperates with the distance teaching university Hagen (Germany), the Open University (Great Britain), as well as with the European Association of Distance Teaching Universities (EADTU).

Apart from aptitude tests in some subjects and admission tests for art students, Austria provides open access to university education, i.e. all persons having successfully passed the matriculation examination (*Matura*) or having a similar university entrance qualification may start a university study of their choice. In addition to the regular admission requirement of matriculation examination (*Matura*), i.e. secondary school leaving examination, which bestows a general university entrance qualification, there are also alternative

forms of university admission, such as university entrance qualification examination (*Studienberechtigungsprüfung*), or matriculation examination for working people (*Berufsreifepfung*).

Students who are Austrian citizens or citizens of a EU or EEA country or of Switzerland have to pay for a university study an amount of 363.36 euros per semester in study fees; for all other students the respective amount is 726.72 euros. As a consequence of the introduction of study fees in the winter semester 2001 the universities were granted a so-called “university billion” (in former Austrian schillings) for financing infrastructural measures and improvements in teaching and study facilities. As of 2004 universities receive the study fees direct.

As a measure promoting graduates’ international mobility, students, upon notice of award of an academic degree, have the right to request a diploma supplement according to Article IX.3 of the Lisbon Recognition Convention. The completion of a university study gives graduates the possibility of entering a profession in which high qualifications are necessary; over and above that, a doctoral degree proves the qualification of the respective graduate as a scientist. In the international comparative study “Higher Education and Graduate Employment in Europe” the connection between university study and employment was examined from the point of view of graduates four years after they had terminated their studies. It turned out that, after four years, neither the careers nor the qualifications and competencies acquired by the Austrian graduates of the year 1994/95 were critically commented upon; nor was there any reason for drastic changes. At the time of being questioned, 45% of graduates worked in the private sector, 33% in the public sector, 11% in non-profit organisations, and 9% were self-employed or worked as freelancers. While the qualifications acquired in the respective special subjects, as well as the intellectual and academic qualifications, were more than sufficient for the professions chosen, slight deficits were observed in the social-interactive competencies.

In the winter semester 2003 almost 206,000 students studied at Austrian universities (13,500 of whom in special university programmes (Universitätslehrgänge), preparatory programmes and individual courses). The share of foreigners is 19%, that of women 53%. Approximately 23.300 persons attended bachelor programmes. More than 31,900 persons, or 7% more than in the winter semester before, started a first study, 2,890 started a doctoral degree programme. The share of women among new students is 57%. In the academic year 2002/2003 about 18,300 students, 52% of whom were women, finished a study programme. Students study for an average duration

of 13 semesters at scientific universities, 12 semesters at art universities; the completion rate in the whole university area is about 66%.

The consultation process concerning the “Memorandum on Lifelong Learning”, which took place in 2001, gave a decisive impetus to the new definition of the universities’ role in further education. The efforts of universities with regard to introducing and promoting special university programmes (*Universitätslehrgänge*), which particularly serve for further training purposes, have been stepped up considerably; the number of such courses has nearly tripled. About half of them are concluded by the award of an academic degree or other academic distinction.

### Research

The Council for Research and Technological Development has made extensive recommendations, as well as provided special funds, for university projects and research programmes affecting universities. Examples include the Genom Research Programme GEN-AU or the societal research programme “Democracy Development in the European Integration Process”. For the purpose of promoting future scientists, the scholarship programmes were expanded. The scientific achievements at universities, as documented in the working reports of the department heads and, in future, particularly in the universities’ performance reports (up to 2007 activity reports) and knowledge scores, show a clearly rising tendency.

The Fund for the Promotion of Scientific Research (FWF) is the central institution for promoting fundamental research. Approximately 90% of its funds (in 2003 about 77 million euros) are allocated to university research facilities and are used for the support of more than 1000 doctoral students and more than 600 postdocs. On the basis of scientific disciplines, in 2003 58% of the funds were allocated to the natural sciences, 15% to human medicine, 13% to the humanities, and about 7% each to the social sciences and engineering.

Participation of Austrian universities in the 5<sup>th</sup> EU Research Framework Programme (1998–2002) was slightly higher than in the 4<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme. On the basis of participation by organisation types, universities took second place after industry, but took first place with regard to repeat participation, which was more than 60%. Concerning the IHP Programme, which aims at enlarging the human resources potential in research and at improving the socio-economic knowledge basis, participation rates were generally well above the EU average. Young Austrian scientists were particularly successful,

e.g. with the Marie Curie Scholarships, or in the EU Contest for Young Scientists 2001.

### Women at universities

The University Act of 2002 provides for a gender-specific system of legal protection, instruments for the promotion of women and for removing structurally caused inequalities, as well as an organisational framework for the further development of facilities promoting research and learning activities in the field of gender studies. In order to remove disadvantages for women, not only legal provisions but also accompanying measures are needed, such as a process of increasing general awareness. Since 2001 the method of gender mainstreaming has been used, which takes into account the special characteristics, interests and values of the two genders in all political planning processes.

In addition, programmes were started which promote women, female staff and research activities on women’s issues. Mention should also be made of infrastructural measures in this field, such as the coordination centres for women’s research and women’s studies established at all university sites, or the information centres for child-care questions at three university sites. On the other hand, there are promotion programmes for young female scientists, such as the Hertha Firnberg Centres, the APART Programme of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, or the fellowships in the social sciences. The Council for Research and Technological Development recommended, for the years 2002–2003, the financing of the programme FFORTE – Women in Research and Technology” by an amount of 3.6 million euros and decided on continuing this programme in the years 2004–2006 by providing an amount of 5.5 million euros.

### Accreditation of private universities

So far, seven institutions have been accredited as private universities. The Accreditation Council acts as the instance in charge of quality control, examining the applications for accreditation in a process which is subject to administrative law. The applying institution is visited in order to check study programmes and research activities. On the basis of an expert opinion resulting from this check and the subsequent comments by the applying institution, the Accreditation Council will make an administrative ruling. Accreditation is generally limited to five years. In addition to this, the Accreditation Council has

monitoring and quality assurance functions concerning the accredited institutions, which have to submit annual working reports.

## 15.2 Fachhochschulen (Universities of applied sciences)

During the period under review the sector of *Fachhochschulen* was consolidated and considerably extended. In the winter semester 2003, 19 organisers offered 136 study programmes, 6 of which were bachelor programmes. In the meantime seven institutions carry the name *Fachhochschule*. The range of studies comprises the following areas: Information and communication technologies, engineering, media and design, social work and health, tourism, economic studies. Studies mainly focus on the fields of technology, commerce and tourism. The study programmes on social work and health were introduced only recently.

Since the academic year 1996/97 study programmes have also been offered for working people. These programmes which are job-accompanying, i.e. students attend courses in addition to their regular jobs, cater to the needs of working people: Courses take place in the evenings and at weekends; distance teaching elements are included; if a student already works in the respective field of study the otherwise compulsory term of job practice may be renounced. 28% of study programmes at *Fachhochschulen* are organised in this way. In addition, a number of programmes were introduced which cater to specific target groups, offering particularly upper secondary technical and vocational college graduates the possibility of acquiring higher qualifications.

Since an Amendment to the *Fachhochschule* Studies Act of 2002 it has been possible to offer bachelor and master programmes.

The "Development and Financing Plan II" lays down the essential quantitative criteria for the extension of the system in the period 2000 to 2005. So far the number of study places envisaged in this plan has been exceeded each year. Owing to the great demand, the programme "600+" was initiated for the academic year 2002/2003: In addition to 600 new study places financed by the federal government, it provides for another 600 places financed by the organisers (the respective funds coming from provinces, communities and other bodies). The Development and Financing Plan also provides the framework for the financing of the sector. The financing mechanism and the amount of federal funds provided for each study place has been unchanged since the introduction of *Fachhochschulen* in 1994/95. For a study place in a

technological programme the amount of federal funds is about 6,900 euros, in an economic one 5,800 euros, and for places in interdisciplinary studies 6,100 euros.

In the federal budget 2004 the amount of federal funds earmarked for the sector of *Fachhochschulen* is approximately 107 million euros. The federal provinces take a share in financing these institutions.

The programme "FHplus" for promoting application-related research and development was continued and considerably extended. In cooperation with the Conference of *Fachhochschulen*, which is the association of organisers, a project on personnel development was carried out; an important step was taken with the reorganisation of the system of financial data control as of the year 2002.

The *Fachhochschule* Council as the accrediting authority is the central organ in the *Fachhochschule* sector. It is responsible not only for the accrediting of *Fachhochschule* study programmes (ex ante quality assurance) but for any questions of quality assurance concerning the sector. Thus, any re-accrediting of a study programme requires a new application as well as the submission of an evaluation report (ex post quality assurance). The Council makes sure that all external evaluations, both of the institutions as such and of the individual study programmes, are made in such a way as to be comparable for the whole of Austria. In 2003 12 organisers were subjected to an evaluation of their institutions. As regards the evaluation of study programmes, the aim is to have related study programmes evaluated simultaneously and by one review team.

Study programmes at *Fachhochschulen* offer a kind of training that is both scientifically founded and practice-oriented. They are open to persons who qualify for university attendance (matriculation examination or university entrance qualification examination) or persons who have completed the dual system of vocational training. Beginner students pass through an admission process. Graduates conclude their studies with the academic degree Diplom-Ingenieur/in (FH), Magister/ra (FH) or Bakkalaureus/Bakkalaurea (FH), and are entitled to take up doctoral studies at a university.

Since 2001 the organisers of *Fachhochschule* study programmes, or the *Fachhochschulen* respectively, have been entitled to charge students fees amounting to 363.36 euros per semester.

In the winter semester 2003 about 20,600 persons studied at *Fachhochschulen*, the share of women being 38%. The number of new students was about 7,120, i.e. 12% more than in the winter semester before. The number of graduates in the academic year 2002/2003 was 2,660.

The number of persons employed at *Fachhochschulen* was 5,900 in the academic year 2002/2003, 1,040 of whom worked full-time, 4,860 part-time.

### 15.3 International mobility and cooperation in higher education

The establishment of a European Higher Education Area until 2010, as envisaged by the Bologna Declaration signed in 1999 by the Education Ministers of 29 countries, demonstrates the continuing trend towards internationalisation in the university sector. The Bologna follow-up contact centre in Austria is the department "Scientific Research; International Matters – Science" in the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture. The efforts at strengthening Austria's position in the university sector aim at interesting foreign universities in entering into cooperation agreements with Austrian universities or *Fachhochschulen*.

As regards academic recognition, the respective tasks were redistributed between federal government and universities. In order to be able to independently recognise external student achievements universities need, instead of detailed legal provisions, reliable information on the university systems of other countries, which is available from the National Academic Recognition Information Centre (NARIC). The new approach of bilateral contacts on government level consists in the joint preparation of recommendations to universities concerning academic recognition issues.

The scholarship programmes offered by universities and the scholarships granted to foreign students and graduates by the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture were considerably enlarged, and a number of Austria-related new scholarships were created. Positive developments characterised the summer colleges (bilateral language courses) and summer schools (scientific further training in special fields), which are organised particularly under cooperation agreements with countries of central or eastern Europe. As regards cooperation activities with southeastern Europe Austria is particularly active within the scope of the so-called Graz Process.

Austria took a leading position in the EU education programmes SOCRATES and LEONARDO DA VINCI with regard to the number of students/teachers making use of the available opportunities for increasing mobility. Also, Austrian universities and *Fachhochschulen* increasingly participated in the SOCRATES actions COMENIUS, GRUNDTVIG, MINERVA and LINGUA.

### 15.4 Student counselling and promotion

A number of different institutions and counselling facilities share in the task of informing and counselling students, or young people, on educational career decisions. The Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture is particularly responsible for counselling activities in the tertiary sector. At upper secondary schools educational counsellors and school counsellors inform pupils about educational career possibilities after finishing school. Universities schedule information days and weeks. As a cooperative effort between the Ministry, the Deans of Studies (*Studiendekane*), and the Austrian Students' Union study-accompanying tutorials for helping new students in the orientation stage are organised, which are attended by approximately 60% of new students.

Study information is furthermore provided by various series of publications, which were continued in the period under review, but also by new media such as CD-ROMs and the Internet. The "BeSt<sup>3</sup> – the Job, Study and Further Education Fair", which takes place three times per year, gives a survey of the complete counselling and education/training offer available after the matriculation examination (Matura). A special focus in counselling activities is the programme "FIT – Women into Technology". It provides personal and practical vocational orientation in order to enlarge the vocational possibilities for women and to increase the share of women in natural-science and technological studies.

In 2001, the students' ombudsman's unit in the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture extended its range of activities as part of a quality and performance offensive for universities. This unit has the task of counselling students, checking complaints, mediating in conflicts and initiating improvements.

The Austrian Students' Union is the legal institution representing the interests of all students at universities, private universities and colleges.

The financial support for students provided by the federal government was considerably extended by the introduction of "study contributions", which allow students receiving scholarships to finance the study fees. This had the result that the support rate, i.e. the share of students receiving study grants, rose from about 14% of all students in 2000 to 22% in 2001, which is an increase by approximately 10,000 grants. At present some 162 million euros are available for scholarships and other measures of financial support. The amount of funds available for scholarships for outstanding achievement has also increased. In addition, the limits on the earned income of students receiving study grants or graduation scholarships have been raised and are

handled with greater flexibility. The latter are co-financed, just like grants for child care, by funds provided by the European Social Fund.

For the purpose of supporting the interests of students with disabilities the networks of university officials in charge of handicapped students have been further extended, and initiatives have been started using the new media to support students with disabilities in their specific study situation.

In all over Austria student hostels provide accommodation for some 25,000 students, approximately 7,000 of whom live in new buildings erected during the past 10 years. In the last few years emphasis was also put on the remodelling of existing facilities and raising accommodation standards.

### 15.5 Libraries and archives

The number of objects in the Austrian National Library, which was founded in 1368, and its special collections is more than 6.4 million in 10 collections, more than 3.2 million of which are books. Other important scientific libraries include the university libraries with more than 20 million volumes, as well as the libraries of the art universities with more than 1.2 million volumes. In addition, there are municipal and provincial libraries, the libraries of the museums and other scientific institutions, of the teacher training colleges and the network of the People's Library. The Austrian National Archives house one of the most important European collections of historical national documents, ranking third only after the Vatican and the Archives Nationales in Paris.

## 16. ADULT EDUCATION AND PUBLIC LIBRARIES

### 16.1 Adult education

Adult education aims at imparting to adults qualifications which go far beyond compulsory school completion, enable them to continue studying independently and provide access to higher education. The Department for Adult Education of the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture coordinates and organises the necessary cooperation between the responsible government units and the various adult education associations, trying to strike a balance between their tasks and the other sectors of the education system. This is to result in the establishment of permanent structures and guarantee continuing educational work as well as qualitative improvements of the educational offer in adult education.

In the last few years the work of the Department for Adult Education centered particularly on the following aspects:

- Continuing efforts to improve the access to adult education by providing better and more intensive information and counselling based on new technologies, e.g. possibilities to search for specific adult education offers in the whole of Austria ([www.eduvista.com](http://www.eduvista.com)); further development of the network for educational counsellors into a quality network; establishment of three regional counselling centres (Burgenland, Salzburg, Styria).
- Development of a catalogue of criteria (Checklist Further Education) in order to help education counsellors and persons interested in further education to make informed decisions when selecting from among different options of general and vocational adult education (Internet and printed versions), as well as questions of quality assurance and evaluation.
- Measures within the scope of ESF Objective 3 to make up for any school completion missed in earlier life: opportunities to complete compulsory school (since 2000 there has been a continuous increase in the number of participants in general secondary school courses: 541 (2000), 1,230 (2001), 2,956 (2002), 3,205 (2003); extension of IT-supported measures preparing candidates for the matriculation examination for working people (*Berufsreifeprüfung*) (already more than 7,000 participants), for the university entrance examination (*Studienberechtigungsprüfung*) and the extra-mural matriculation examination (*Externistenreifeprüfung*).

- Promotion of education programmes for women, particularly in the field of new media and technologies. As part of the IT further-education offensive measures were introduced to facilitate the access to computers, Internet and learning software particularly for women in rural areas.
- Promotion and further development of modular education for self-study and distance learning and of the necessary study material, as well as of projects in the field of regional education work (“regional education centres”) in cooperation with the various adult education associations and the federal provinces; international cooperation in this field.
- Scheduling of annual Info-Days on Further Education in cooperation with the various adult education associations (originally a UNESCO initiative). This is an important measure for making people increasingly aware of the need for further education, which is reflected both in the rising number of activities and visitors, and in a strong media presence (TV, radio, print media).
- Continuing participation in EU programmes, projects and educational policy decisions in many areas, as well as in various EU working and expert groups. Thus Austria took a very active part in the consultation process in connection with the EU Memorandum on Lifelong Learning (e.g. publication of a country report and background report (2001) as well as of a progress report (2003). By taking part in education programmes, it was also possible to make available additional funds to the adult education sector.
- Participation in the OECD Thematic Review on Adult Learning as the basis for the strategic further development of adult education and further education (preparation of a background report and visit by OECD experts in 2003; the final OECD report will appear in 2004).

## 16.2 Public libraries

The educational opportunities offered by the department responsible for the qualification of public library staff have been massively expanded in the last few years. This offer included approximately 20 annual initial and in-service training weeks for full-time, part-time and honorary librarians, as well as a multitude of regional training courses and events on children’s and youth literature, software training courses, Internet courses, modules for obtaining the “European Computer Driving License”, etc. Also the “Brain Pool”, the in-service training programme offered by the Austrian National Library, was gladly accepted and intensively used by Austrian librarians.

At the end of 2001 the project “Readers’ Opinions – Young Readers Award” was started with more than 2,500 libraries participating. “Readers’ Opinions – Young Readers Award” was to serve as an incentive for more reading, at the same time promoting Austrian children’s and youth literature; ultimately it also contributed to a better image of libraries. By the end of May 2002, 137,954 readers had expressed their opinions by voting for their favourite books.

The all-Austrian project “Libraries ONLINE” ([www.bibliotheken.at](http://www.bibliotheken.at)), which is subsidised by the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture and is carried out by the Austrian Library Association, aims at including all public and school libraries, as well as supplementary and special-subject libraries, in one comprehensive network, so that all citizens are able to access all catalogues and information services via Internet and the participating institutions can make use of technical information and data services. At present, this online network, which is continuously growing, comprises approximately 300 libraries which can be accessed either on the basis of regional or media-specific criteria. “Libraries ONLINE” was presented by the responsible Directorate General of the European Commission as a best-practice model which should be introduced by other countries as well.

The database “Reviews Online” ([www.rezensionen.at](http://www.rezensionen.at)), which is maintained by the Austrian Libraries Foundation and is financially supported by the department, comprises thousands of reviews on German literature from various specialist magazines; for librarians it is an important instrument helping them select books and complete their stocks, while for the general public it serves for orientation; it provides a general overview and is an important component of cultural infrastructure, particularly in rural areas with only few bookshops.

## 17. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

### 17.1 Pupil exchange, school twinnings, pupils' competitions

In addition to initiating and intensifying school twinnings, promotion and funding was particularly targeted at class twinnings and pupil exchange programmes with the countries of central and eastern Europe, especially with the Czech Republic, the Slovak Republic, Hungary, Slovenia, Poland, Russia and Romania. In most cases these exchange programmes lasted from one day to one week. Each year some 130 to 160 such encounters take place in Austria. Since 2003 Austrian schools have been encouraged to establish school networks with the countries of eastern and southeastern Europe (non-EU candidate countries).

In addition, numerous young people participated in various bilateral exchange programmes with foreign partner schools (class exchange programmes, intensive language weeks, etc.) or in projects in connection with the EU programme SOCRATES.

In 2003, 7 Austrian pupils received scholarships for attending a United World College (2000: 10 pupils). The target of these international schools, of which there are ten worldwide, is the promotion of peace and mutual understanding by education. Pupils may spend the last two years of secondary stage II at one of these schools, terminating their studies with the International Baccalaureate. The respective scholarships were made available by the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture as well as by some provincial governments (Salzburg, Tyrol, Upper Austria).

Also in the field of vocational education and training numerous schools participated in joint competitions and projects with partner schools in the reform states; young people from neighbouring countries received part of their training at Austrian schools; pupils, apprentices and teachers increasingly used the possibilities of the EU education programmes LEONARDO DA VINCI and SOCRATES (stays lasting several weeks to months at schools and in enterprises of other member states, joint work with partners at transdisciplinary projects, etc.).

As regards individual pupil exchange programmes, the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture closely cooperates with a number of organisations offering various kinds of programmes. Pupils aged 15 to 18 are given the possibility of attending a school in a foreign country for a certain period of time (3 months, one semester, one year). If a pupil attends such a foreign-

language school abroad for a minimum of five months and no longer than one year, this will be considered equivalent to fulfilling the requirement of successful school attendance in Austria (no exams necessary).

As Austria's contribution to the UN Decade for Human Rights 1995–2004 and to 50 years of human rights the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture initiated the international school partnership project School Network Human Rights, which was carried out by the Intercultural Centre from 1999 to 2001. The international network of this pilot project was established in spring/summer 1999 and included 42 schools from all over the world (Austria, Argentina, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Brazil, Cameroon, Chile, Columbia, India, Ireland, Italy, Mexico, Palestine, Russia, Sweden, Uganda, Ukraine, Uruguay). Pupils were made to look at human rights issues from their own perspective and in relation to their surroundings. The experiences and results obtained from the various schools were analysed, exchanged within the framework of international project groups and compared to the Universal Declaration on Human Rights. In April 2000 the project received the "Worldaware Award for Global Education 2000" from the North-South-Centre of the Council of Europe.

Continuing and enlarging the experiences made in the project School Network Human Rights as well as in a seminar on North-South school partnerships, a school network on Global Citizenship has been developed since 2001. When this network was started Austrian and foreign schools cooperated with various institutions specializing in this subject. When the programme Education for Global Citizenship was introduced, participants had the possibility of exchanging their respective experiences on North-South school partnerships. As a result a handbook with best-practice examples on North-South school partnerships and on Education for Global Citizenship was developed for other interested schools (Education for Global Citizenship, Handbook for school-based projects, BMBWK 2003).

At the same time another, more extensive international school network on Global Citizenship was prepared, which was granted financial support by the European Union (Directorate General for Development). The project term is 3 years.

For this pilot project Education for Global Citizenship an international learning and development partnership of NGOs and schools in Cameroon, Chile, Italy, the Netherlands and Austria was established (additional participants from central and eastern Europe as associated partners, e.g. Romania). Under this project a model curriculum for Global Citizenship is being devel-

oped. This is to be implemented in, and made part of, the educational systems of the partner countries to the project.

The project's main activities include establishing an NGO network, developing and implementing a model curriculum on Education for Global Citizenship, supporting an international school network both with a view to contents and methods, preparing teaching aids on the subject, implementing the project's key concepts in the educational policies of the partner countries, as well as accompanying information and public relations work.

## 17.2 Bilateral cooperation

Bilateral policies are of decisive importance considering the increasingly closer international relations within the context of globalisation. They are a basis for developing constructive intergovernmental relations as well as for strengthening international networks and organisations. In this sense they synergetically support multilateral cooperation policies.

Cultural agreements and equivalence agreements, which are state treaties and therefore offer many possibilities for cooperation in education, science and culture, are an important, though not absolutely necessary, prerequisite for bilateral cooperation in education. The implementation programmes based on these agreements are renegotiated approximately every three years. They define cooperation in the fields of education and culture (e.g. exchange of experts; university lecturers, scholarship programmes, foreign-language assistants, Austrian Language Diploma German ([www.osd.at](http://www.osd.at)), in-service teacher training for German as a foreign language (DaF) ([www.kulturundsprache.at](http://www.kulturundsprache.at)); DaF practitioners at foreign universities, school twinnings, Austrian schools abroad, bilingual schools abroad, activities of the officers for education cooperation.

Cultural agreements were particularly welcomed by the EU candidate countries, also with a view to pre-accession strategies. Today they increasingly serve for exploring new future-oriented geopolitical regions for cooperation purposes.

The importance of bilateral activities also lies in the fact that the cooperation of two partner governments is highly intensive and therefore also has extremely concrete results, e.g. at project level.

These results may subsequently be used in regional and multilateral contexts.

Homepage: <http://bilaterales.bmbwk.gv.at>

## Basic bilateral work

Implementation programmes concerning cultural agreements are regularly renegotiated with the following countries: Croatia, Finland, Russian Federation, Luxemburg, Belgium, Portugal, Tunisia, Mexico, Slovak Republic, Hungary, France, Romania, Poland, Slovenia, Bulgaria and Italy. In addition, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed with Israel, and Austrian and Swiss Ministry officials held a couple of meetings. The renewal of the Memorandum of Understanding with the Ukraine is in the preparation stage.

Meetings in connection with the "Actions for Cooperation in Science and Education" between Austria and Hungary, Austria and the Slovak Republic, as well as Austria and the Czech Republic, take place at regular intervals.

For detailed information consult

[www.oead.ac.at/\\_projekte/aktionen/index.html](http://www.oead.ac.at/_projekte/aktionen/index.html)

Important decisions concerning international educational and cultural work are also taken on the occasion of bilateral ministerial visits, which are subsequently implemented on the expert level. Austria was visited by Ministers of Education, Science and Culture from China, Mongolia, Turkey, Ukraine, Iran, Albania, Japan, Azerbaijan, Croatia, Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg. Austria's Federal Minister of Education, Science and Culture, Mrs. Elisabeth Gehrler, in turn, visited amongst others China, Mongolia, Albania, Poland, Hungary, India, Jamaica and New York.

Another important aspect of bilateral cooperation concerns the commercial transfer of education, which is ensured by the Federal Institute for International Education and Technology Transfer (BIB – [www.bib.gv.at](http://www.bib.gv.at)), established in September 2001.

In cooperation with the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, BIB carries out projects in Central Asia, China, Southeast Asia and Mongolia. It also takes care of projects in Iran and Pakistan.

## Points of emphasis in 2000 – 2003

The Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture has entrusted the Centre for Austrian Studies Skövde/Sweden with the task of carrying out projects in the Scandinavian and Baltic region in cooperation with schools, educational and cultural institutions. In addition, Austrian visiting teachers inform pupils at Swedish schools about Austrian geography, history, culture, etc.

For detailed information consult [www.his.se/isp/ostr/](http://www.his.se/isp/ostr/)

During the period under review the importance of cooperation in economic policy between the EU and Asia also had effects on the bilateral level: Thus, a cultural agreement was concluded with China in 2002; the first implementation programme was signed in Beijing in December 2003; a Memorandum of Understanding concerning education, science and culture with Mongolia was signed in August 2003.

As a result of the political upheavals in the former Eastern bloc countries and in the former Yugoslavia new cultural agreements were signed with the Slovak Republic (2000) and Slovenia (2002), which replace the former agreements. Cultural agreements with Albania and Croatia are in the preparation stage.

Within the context of this focus, Memoranda of Understanding on the Equivalence of Diplomas and Degrees were signed with Azerbaijan (2004), France (2002) and the Slovak Republic (2002).

For more detailed information consult

**[www.bmbwk.gv.at/universitaeten/naric/serviceinternat/uebersicht.xml](http://www.bmbwk.gv.at/universitaeten/naric/serviceinternat/uebersicht.xml)**

Middle East: This region constitutes a particular focus in bilateral politics which the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture is very concerned about owing to its great historical responsibility towards Israel and its sensibility concerning the peace process in the region.

An in-service teacher training project on the subject "National Socialism and Holocaust. Past and Present" (**[www.erinnern.at](http://www.erinnern.at)**), which was developed by the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture and is carried out in cooperation with the Holocaust memorial Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, is highly regarded in Israel and has decisively contributed to a positive development of bilateral relations.

In addition, support is given to numerous local grassroots initiatives which promote the peaceful co-existence between the Jewish and Palestinian peoples.

In the areas under Palestinian Authority first steps were taken towards a cooperation in vocational education and training at school.

## 17.3 Cooperation with eastern and southeastern Europe

### Cooperation in school education

From 2000 to 2004 the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture set the following priorities concerning cooperation in education with central, east and southeast European countries:

#### Continuing close cooperation

Typical examples:

Regular regional meetings of officials of the Ministries of Education of the Czech Republic, Slovak Republic, Hungary, Slovenia and Austria since 1997; joint studies on decentralisation (2000) and educational finance (2001); signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on continuing regional cooperation between Austria and its neighbouring countries in central and eastern Europe within the framework of the European Union (2004); extension of the European education networks such as the "European School Development Project" (Hungary, Slovak Republic, Czech Republic, Netherlands, Austria); partnership projects on school development and management, environmental education, vocational education and training, history and civic education; cooperation with Slovenia within the framework of the Southeast European Education Cooperation Network.

#### Intensification of existing contacts with southeastern Europe and activities within the scope of the Stability Pact: Task Force Education and Youth/Extended Graz Process – ERISSE

Since 1999 Austria has been chairing the Task Force Education and Youth. During this period more than 40 projects have been implemented, each extending over several years, e.g. on the further development of education systems, development of higher education, vocational education and training, EDC, history and young people; as of the year 2001 particular attention was given to systematically supporting the individual education systems. The close cooperation with OECD concerning the thematic country studies of the region's education systems resulted in the establishment of a southeast European education initiative (ERISSE – Education Reform Initiative of Southeast Europe). The respective action plan is based on a Memorandum of Understanding, which was signed by the region's Ministers of Education in 2003/2004. This initiative, which extends over several years and for whose contents the OECD is responsible, supports the education reforms in southeastern Europe as part of the stabilisation and association process, and par-

ticularly concerns the targets for European general and vocational education systems as formulated in the EU working programme.

Information: [www.see-educoop.net](http://www.see-educoop.net)

During the period under review the non-profit association KulturKontakt Austria has also been intensifying its activities in southeastern Europe by means of several projects on education innovation; all of these projects cover several years.

### **Cooperation with the Institute for Education Innovation in St. Petersburg (Russian Federation)**

Since 1995 Austria has been a full member of the Centre for Education Innovation, which was established at the Herzen University St. Petersburg upon the initiative of Russia and the Netherlands. Other participants in this joint project include the British Council and Finland. Its aim is the systematic multiplication of the results of education projects in the northwest region of the Russian Federation and beyond (for example projects on 'arts and education' or on natural science teaching). At the end of 2000 the Centre was transformed into a Federal Institute, with multilateral cooperation until the end of 2004 being governed by a Protocol on Cooperation.

The Austrian activities in the Russian Federation are complemented by cooperation projects with the regional education authorities at Yaroslavl, as well as with the Open Society Institute and the EURASIA Fund.

### **Forms of cooperation**

#### **Activities of the non-profit association KulturKontakt**

The non-profit association KulturKontakt supports Austrian cooperation with the east and southeast European reforming countries concerning the reorganisation of their education systems, taking part in more than 200 education projects per year. A wide range of subjects is intended to promote understanding (history, language teaching and multilingualism), a civil society (political education, democracy and co-determination), economic development and the labour market (vocational education and training, lifelong learning) as well as system development (administrative reform and financing). In this connection, the tailor-made programmes include curriculum development, preparation of teaching material, further and in-service training programmes, initiatives for quality control and development, as well as education management.

Information: [www.kulturkontakt.or.at](http://www.kulturkontakt.or.at)

### **Austrian officers for education cooperation**

Upon the initiative and with the support of the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture and KulturKontakt Austria, eleven k-education project offices have been established at key education institutions of central, eastern and southeastern Europe since 1992. These offices are headed by Austrian officers for education cooperation.

At present there are 11 such k-education offices (Belgrade, Bratislava, Brno, Bucharest, Chisinau, Sarajevo, Skopje, Sofia, St. Petersburg, Tirana and Zagreb), which coordinate and implement school projects and are financed by Austrian and international sponsors. These officers for education cooperation, in addition to developing, carrying out and managing projects adjusted to the requirements of the respective partner countries, also act as mediators between different cultures and institutions. They offer counselling, information and other services and also engage in public relations work.

Information: <http://k-education.at>

### **Bilingual schools**

Austrian and local staff are in charge of teaching pupils at 6 bilingual schools in Hungary, the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic until they qualify for university admission. They contribute decisively to intercultural communication as well as to the higher qualifications of these secondary-school leavers. In addition to German as a foreign language, three more subjects, e.g. economic ones, are taught in the target language German. Other important elements of work at these schools include the organisation of school twinnings and projects for European networking (e.g. BILNET Europe).

Furthermore, 6 Austrian teachers work at schools in eastern and southeastern Europe (Belgrade, Odessa, Tirana, Saranda and Sofia). In addition to their teaching activities they also support pilot projects in which the respective schools are involved.

### **Coordination Centre for Education Cooperation Officers and Bilingual Schools in Vienna**

This Centre has been entrusted by the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture and KulturKontakt with the task of taking care of the Austrian officers for education cooperation and the teachers at bilingual schools and schools in southeastern Europe; its duties include service activities, further training, project development and monitoring.

Information: [www.kulturkontakt.or.at](http://www.kulturkontakt.or.at)

### Extended Graz Process – Task Force Education and Youth

In 1999, as part of the Stability Pact established upon German initiative, education was defined as a priority. Since then Austria has held the chair in the respective task force. The targets, principles and action plans developed at a conference of experts in Sofia (November 1999) constitute the working basis of the Extended Graz Process. A characteristic feature is the incorporation of various actors, such as national governments, experts, and private foundations. Austria, as initiator and lead country, is a member of all bodies of the Extended Graz Process and represents the task force in the meetings of working table I of the Stability Pact.

At present, the task force has approximately 40 members, among them various European and international institutions (Council of Europe, European Commission, OECD, UNESCO, UNICEF, World Bank, etc.), the EU chairing countries, furthermore Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Finland, FYROM, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Kosovo, Moldavia, Netherlands, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Switzerland, Turkey, U.S.A. and Austria.

Information: [www.see-educoop.net](http://www.see-educoop.net)

### 17.4 Austria's participation in the EU education programme SOCRATES

SOCRATES is the European Union's Action Programme for general education and aims at promoting cooperation between all institutions involved in formal education (e.g. schools and universities), non-formal education (e.g. adult education centres), as well as vocational education and training. The programme is targeted at pupils, students, teachers, schools, institutions of higher learning, NGOs, and administrative and management staff. The nations entitled to participate in the programme include the 15 EU states, the three EFTA states Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, ten associated states in central and eastern Europe, as well as Malta and Cyprus. SOCRATES was introduced on the basis of a decision of the European Council and the European Parliament for a period of 7 years (2000–2006).

SOCRATES is characterised by two guiding principles: the promotion of life-long learning and the development of a knowledge-based Europe. The acquisition of knowledge, competences and skills is to further the individual's abilities in taking part in public life as well as to increase his or her chances in the labour market.

The programme consists of the following eight actions:

#### SOCRATES Action 1 (COMENIUS – school education)

COMENIUS covers pre-primary, primary and secondary schools. This programme furthers school twinnings, initial and in-service teacher training, as well as information exchange by means of thematic networks.

#### SOCRATES Action 2 (ERASMUS – higher education)

ERASMUS is intended, amongst others, for students who intend to study in a European country for a certain time, which will be considered equivalent to a study in the student's country of origin. In addition to such mobility activities, university teachers can make use of exchange possibilities in order to get acquainted with the university system of another European country.

Furthermore, they have the possibility to organise intensive courses, prepare joint courses, as well as to exchange information and experience within the scope of subject-oriented networks.

#### SOCRATES Action 3 (GRUNDTVIG – adult education)

GRUNDTVIG covers the entire area of adult education. Thus, this programme addresses all adults who want to make use of, or offer, a second educational chance. Adult education institutions and organisations are given the possibility, for example, to develop new methods and training modules within the scope of cooperation projects, or establish first contacts with European institutions on the basis of smaller learning partnerships. Individual scholarships offer applicants the chance of taking part in further training programmes in a foreign country. Support may be granted for the dissemination and exchange of innovative methods and experience via various networks.

#### SOCRATES Action 4, LINGUA

LINGUA has a bridging function, because promoting the acquisition of language competencies is a central concern in SOCRATES. By developing and creating the necessary instruments, linguistic diversity and the acquisition of less common languages are to be promoted.

#### SOCRATES Action 5, MINERVA

MINERVA is to further develop transnational cooperation as regards open and distance learning (OUF) as well as information and communication technologies (ICT) in the field of education. Paedagogical considerations are to be applied to the multimedia field, thus guaranteeing access for all people.

### **SOCRATES Action 6, Observation and Innovation**

Observation and innovation in educational systems and policies, serves for improving the quality and transparency of educational systems. Financial support is granted for the exchange of information and experience, comparative analyses of European educational systems, as well as discussions on questions of common interest in the field of educational policy. This Action comprises EURYDICE, the information network on education in Europe, NARIC, the network of national academic recognition information centres, and ARION, the action of study visits for education specialists and decision makers.

### **SOCRATES Action 7, Joint Actions**

The joint actions serve for linking the three EU action programmes in the field of education: SOCRATES, YOUTH and LEONARDO DA VINCI.

### **SOCRATES Action 8, Accompanying Measures**

The accompanying measures support initiatives which promote the whole range of SOCRATES targets (e.g. dissemination activities).

### **SOCRATES Quality Seal**

In addition to advertising for the programme and taking care of applicants the Austrian Socrates agency is particularly concerned with a quality offensive.

It awards the SOCRATES Quality Seal to institutions carrying out qualitatively high-standing projects within the framework of SOCRATES Actions.

By awarding the Quality Seal the Austrian agency wants to honour particularly outstanding projects under the care of the agency. This campaign was started in 2002 in the field of school twinnings (COMENIUS 1 and LINGUA E 1995 to 1999). This year, in addition to school twinnings, also a project in the field of adult education (GRUNDTVIG 2) will receive an award.

The central requirement which a project has to fulfil in order to receive the award is qualitative excellence in carrying out the project. Concerning international school projects, this means excellent treatment of the chosen subject in regard to content and degree of cooperation with European partners. These aspects enjoy a high priority in the quality criteria applied.

### **Statistical data**

On the school level 1,498 projects as well as 7,295 mobilities have been supported since 2000.

On the higher-education level the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Action SOCRATES/ERASMUS was celebrated in 2002.

Since the beginning of the action in 1992, 25,000 students have had the possibility of studying in a foreign country. Between 2000 and 2004, 15,133 Austrian students completed part of their studies abroad.

Generally speaking, i.e. within the scope of all Socrates actions, 2,150 projects and 23,743 mobilities have received financial support amounting to 30,934,837 euros since 2000.

## **17.5 Austria's participation in the EU education programme LEONARDO DA VINCI**

Every year the European vocational training programme LEONARDO DA VINCI supports about 1,600 pupils, apprentices, young workers and employees, graduates and training staff from Austria who want to spend several weeks or months in a foreign country in order to gain practical vocational experience there.

Since 2000 Austrian institutions have successfully coordinated an impressive 32 development partnerships, i.e. pilot projects, language competency projects and transnational networks, within the scope of the LEONARDO DA VINCI programme.

Pilot projects are transnational development partnerships between education institutions, firms, government authorities, social partners and research institutions for promoting innovation and quality in vocational education and training, as well as for promoting the use of information and communication technologies in this field. Language projects serve for the development of teaching material and the popularization of less common languages. Transnational networks aim at coordinating expert know-how and exchanging best practice.

For the second programme phase of LEONARDO DA VINCI (2000 – 2006) the total budget for the whole of Europe amounts to 1,150 million euros for seven years (on an average 164 million euros per year). This is to be used for the innovative further development of the European dimension in vocational education while maintaining member states' ultimate responsibility for their education systems (Article 150 of the EU Treaty).

By taking part in the programme, interested institutions from 31 coun-

tries (EU, EFTA/EEA, associated countries in central and eastern Europe, Cyprus, Turkey) can make a practical contribution to the targets of European cooperation in vocational education.

### **2000 to 2004 Quality in mobility**

The first four years of the second programme phase were extremely successful for Austria. LEONARDO DA VINCI offered to approximately 5,400 persons the possibility of practice-oriented work abroad, which considerably increased their chances in the labour market, as well as their vocational mobility, owing to newly acquired knowledge both in their respective specialisations and in foreign languages.

Since the volume of funds applied for is twice as high as that of available EU funds, the great number of work-related stays abroad under LEONARDO DA VINCI (the number of participants is increasing each year) has only been possible through national co-financing, i.e. funds being made available both by the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture and the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.

Apprentices and pupils (approximately 46 percent of participants in mobility projects) taking part in a work-related stay lasting, on an average, four weeks gathered practical experience in one of 30 European countries.

About 34 percent of participants were students at universities and Fachhochschulen (universities of applied science) who gained practical experience abroad during an average stay of between 3 and 12 months.

In addition, graduates, young workers and employees took part in the LEONARDO DA VINCI programme for a work-related stay of at least nine weeks.

The target group of training staff, personnel managers, vocational counselling experts, educational and vocational counsellors, as well as people responsible for planning and organisation in vocational education and training accounted for approximately 8 percent of the total number of participants; this group stayed at vocational training institutions and firms for the purpose of an intensive exchange of experience for an average two weeks.

Since 2001 the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture has awarded an annual quality seal to successful Austrian LEONARDO DA VINCI mobility projects.

The international jury deciding on the respective project that is to receive the award consists of mobility experts from several European countries, as

well as members of the European Commission; it evaluates the projects in the categories innovation, new impulses, results and usefulness, project management as well as sustainability of project results.

The approximately 10 Austrian projects which have received the award each year since 2001 on account of their high quality demonstrate the value of mobility for the participants' vocational careers and document the advantages of this form of European cooperation both for educational institutions and business organisations.

### **Pilot projects, transnational networks and language competency projects**

Austria acted very successfully also in the field of pilot projects, transnational networks and language competency projects. In 2003 the EU Commission approved twelve future-oriented development projects, which were supported and coordinated by Austrian institutions and succeeded in the face of strong European competition. After having achieved an excellent position in this respect already in the years before (with an annual nine initiatives being granted financial support in the years 2000 to 2002), Austria again underlined its top position in Europe on account of the high quality of the projects submitted. In 2003, financial support amounting to a total of 4.2 million euros was granted to Austrian projects, which is an increase of about 45 percent as compared to 2002. Thus the Austrian share in the overall budget of the programme LEONARDO DA VINCI amounted to a notable 4.7 percent.

The projects coordinated by Austria actively contribute to the implementation of the target of more cooperation in vocational education and training on the European level and have regard to the points of emphasis as formulated by the "Copenhagen Declaration", viz. transparency, vocational information and counselling, recognition of competencies and qualifications acquired, as well as quality in vocational education and training.

The LEONARDO DA VINCI project database [www.leonardodavinci-projekte.org](http://www.leonardodavinci-projekte.org) gives an up-to-date overview of the mobility and pilot projects coordinated by Austrian institutions; thus, for example, a calendar of events informs about activities in connection with specific projects.

### **Initiative "Thematic monitoring and accompaniment" of projects**

The EU Commission, in cooperation with the National Agencies, is taking steps to ensure a more intensive use of the results of LEONARDO DA VINCI projects. The Austrian National Agency chairs one of five European working

groups, viz. the one on “integration in the labour market”, which is entrusted with documenting and networking LEONARDO DA VINCI projects, as well as with promoting cooperation with policy-makers on the national and regional levels.

#### **2004–2006:**

##### **Transparency and quality in vocational education and training**

The Commission has invited project applications for the years 2005–2006, which have regard to the points of emphasis as determined in the Copenhagen Declaration, i.e. projects are required to contribute to the transparency of qualifications as well as to the modernisation and mutual adjustment of vocational education systems.

Another focus in the third and final invitation of the second programme phase is the dissemination and practical application of innovative project results.

The results of the expert discussion on the quality aspects of mobility projects, which was initiated by the Austrian LEONARDO DA VINCI National Agency as part of the European seminar “Mobility – Shaping the Future of Training and Learning Abroad” (Vienna, October 2003), will be considered in the third invitation of the second programme phase of LEONARDO DA VINCI as well as in the programme draft for the next generation of European education programmes after 2006.

## **17.6 Cooperation with the Council of Europe**

From 2000 to 2003, cooperation with the Council of Europe in matters of education centered on education for democratic citizenship, language policies, teaching of history and intercultural learning.

Austria took part in the Council of Europe’s international education cooperation programmes, as well as in the following programmes of the Education Committee:

- “Education for Democratic Citizenship”
- “Learning and Teaching about the History of Europe in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century” and “The European Dimension in History Teaching”
- “Language Policies for a Multilingual and Multicultural Europe” and “Language Policies”
- “Educational Policies for Roma/Gypsies”
- “Holocaust Remembrance and Prevention of Crimes against Humanity”

### **Austrian focus “Education for Democratic Citizenship”:**

The action programme “Education for Democratic Citizenship”, which was initiated in October 1997 by the Council of Europe’s heads of state and government, aims at making young people and adults actively shape their day-to-day environment in political and cultural respects.

- 1999: Seminar “History and Identity, Conflict Transformation and the Management of Diversity”
- 2000: Conclusion of the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of the “Education for Democratic Citizenship” project
- 2001: Seminars: “Democracy in Schools”, “Global Education”
- 2002: Seminars: “Nova Utopia”, seminar with Nazi regime victims “From National-Socialist Eastern Policies to European Integration”
- 2003: Seminar with Nazi regime victims “From the End of Nazi Rule to the State Treaty”, Action Days on Political Education 2003 ([www.politische-bildung.at](http://www.politische-bildung.at))
- 2004: Seminar with Nazi regime victims “Genocide and Human Rights in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century”, Action Days on Political Education 2004.

As part of the Council of Europe’s programme “Learning and Teaching about the History of Europe in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century” the comparative study “Initial Teacher Training in 13 Council of Europe Member States”, which was carried out in cooperation with the University of Vienna (Department of Social and Economic History) from 1998 to 2001, was presented at the concluding conference of the history project in Bonn (March 2001); it was also presented in Austria in March 2004 at the beginning of the SOCRATES follow-up project.

2002 and 2003: Series of seminars on “History Teaching in a Global Perspective – Case Studies of African Countries”

As a contribution to the Council of Europe programme “Educational Policies for Roma/Gypsies” an expert seminar on “The History of Roma in the European Classroom” was conducted in 2003.

Within the scope of the programme “Holocaust Remembrance and Prevention of Crimes against Humanity” a seminar on holocaust remembrance education will take place in autumn 2004.

### Language policies in cooperation with the Council of Europe:

For decades Austria has participated intensively in the language work of the Council of Europe and successfully conducted the “European Year of Languages 2001” in cooperation with 18 partner organisations. By means of some 500 activities about 1.7 million people were reached. The most important cooperation partner was the Austrian Radio/Television.

For further information on the various follow-up activities, as well as on the European Days of Languages 2002 and 2003 in Austria, the website [www.sprachen.ac.at](http://www.sprachen.ac.at) should be consulted.

2003 – 2006: In cooperation with the Council of Europe’s European Centre for Modern Languages ([www.ecml.at](http://www.ecml.at)) and the Austrian UNESCO Commission Austria is carrying out a project on bilingual literacy and mother tongue proficiency “Linguistic Diversity and Literacy in a Global Perspective. A Comparative Look at Practice in Europe and Africa” (2003–2006).

Project partners include South Africa (Project for the Study of Alternative Education in South Africa PRAESA), Cameroon (AfricAvenir and National Association of Cameroon Language Committees NACALCO), the African Academy of Languages ([www.acalan.org](http://www.acalan.org)), the United Kingdom, Germany and France. As a starting event an international expert meeting on “Language Policies in a Global Perspective” took place in Vienna in October 2003.

In 2004 the “Austrian Language Competence Centre” was founded at Graz, which is to promote innovation in the field of languages. The Centre is also responsible for implementing the results of the cooperation activities with the European Centre for Modern Foreign Languages in Austria.

[www.sprachen.ac.at](http://www.sprachen.ac.at)

Being the seat of the European Centre for Modern Languages at Graz ([www.ecml.at](http://www.ecml.at)), Austria makes an important contribution to promoting a common European language work and language policy. The Centre was founded by 8 countries in April 1994 within the scope of a part agreement of the Council of Europe and has now 33 members.

In 2003 the 1<sup>st</sup> Medium Term Programme was concluded by an international conference on “Challenges and Opportunities in Language Education”, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Medium Term Programme “Languages for Social Cohesion” was started. The all-European effects are guaranteed by cooperation activities with the language department of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, with the European Commission, as well as numerous partner institutions.

### Europe at School

[www.europe-at-school.org](http://www.europe-at-school.org),  
[www.europa-macht-schule.at](http://www.europa-macht-schule.at)

The European Pupils’ Competition, in which young people from all over Austria have taken part since 1959, is a joint activity of the Council of Europe and the European Union, with 32 European countries participating. Each year approximately 700,000 to 800,000 young people from all over Europe take part. In Austria this international activity has been organised since 1959 as a project competition with about 4,000 young people of all school types and age groups participating.

- Subject in 1999/2000: “Speaking up, Enlivening Europe, Powering Europe up”
- Subject in 2000/2001: “Shaping Our Living Space Europe Ecologically, Socially and Culturally”
- Subject in 2001/2002: “Researching Together – History and Tales of Europe”
- Subject in 2002/2003: “Living Together – Dialogue of Cultures – Europe in the World”
- Subject in 2003/2004: “Culture and Sports”

Each year 60 to 80 European teachers are invited to participate in Austrian seminars in cooperation with the Council of Europe, and Austrian teachers apply for admission to in-service training programmes in the other member countries of the Council of Europe.

<http://culture.coe.int/teachertraining>

### 17.7 Cooperation with OECD

In 2003 the OECD Conference of Director-Generals took place in Dublin: It evaluated the developments towards a coherent system of “life-long learning” and discussed new points of emphasis in its future work. Three points were particularly stressed, viz. the relations and effects of education with regard to other areas of society (health, economy, social factors), the promotion of equal opportunities (educational success and social background), as well as the quality of teaching staff.

Within the scope of its participation in the “thematic country surveys” Austria, between 2000 and 2004, provided the OECD with detailed reports on “Guidance and Counselling Services”, “Adult Learning”, “Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers”, and “Early Childhood Education

and Care". The examiners' reports contain important recommendations for educational policy, which will be checked as to whether they are relevant and can be put into actual practice. Based on this and similar reports from other member states, the OECD compiled an analysis which indicated existing weaknesses and strengths of the individual educational systems.

In the field of "system monitoring" Austria participated in the further development of education indicators and in the annual publication of the international comparative studies "Educational Policy Analysis" and "Education at a Glance". In addition to the indicators based on statistical and financial statistical data, it is particularly achievement indicators (key competencies attained by pupils as well as by the adult population) that have recently been gaining in importance as instruments of quality monitoring in education.

In the same context Austria has been participating in PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment), testing, on a three-yearly basis, the achievement levels of 15-year-old pupils in the fields of mathematics, reading, science and problem solving knowledge and skills (beginning in 2000, provisionally planned until 2006).

In addition to this, the specific Austrian programme under PISA, viz. "PISA PLUS", will probably yield particularly informative additional results for Austria.

Detailed information under [www.pisa.oecd.org](http://www.pisa.oecd.org)

As part of the OECD/CERI regional seminars the new seminar series on "Learning in the Knowledge Society" was started in 2001. The first seminar was held in Esslingen (Germany) in 2001 and served to clarify certain fundamental questions (definition of terms, characteristics, societal developments, etc.). The results of the seminar were published by Studienverlag Innsbruck in summer 2002.

In 2003 the second seminar in this series took place in Vienna, the subject being "Learning in the Knowledge Society – Prerequisites and Framework Conditions". In this seminar discussions centered on a number of areas which are of special importance for life-long learning (preparation in the pre-primary stage, educational motivation, necessary competencies, system coherence, etc.).

The series will be concluded by a seminar on "Learning in the Knowledge Society – Promoting Equal Opportunities", which will take place at Lucerne in 2005.

Detailed information under [www.zse1.at/oecdceri](http://www.zse1.at/oecdceri)

## 17.8 Cooperation in UNESCO

### 2001

Within the context of the study "Institutional Approaches to Teacher Education in the Europe Region: Current Models and New Developments", for which the UNESCO European Centre for Higher Education (CEPES) was ultimately responsible and which aimed at harmonising teacher training in Europe, the Austrian UNESCO Commission organised an international planning event for national case studies in Vienna from 1 to 4 March.

[www.cepes.ro/hed/meetings/vienna/Default.htm](http://www.cepes.ro/hed/meetings/vienna/Default.htm)

Austria is implementing the main points and decisions of the 46<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Education ("Learning to Live Together", Geneva, 5 to 8 September) by paying greater attention to key qualifications in the education system. Additional measures include in-service teacher training programmes for "Learning to Live Together", more emphasis on other cultures in teaching materials and curricula, instruction for pupils with mother tongues other than German, general promotion of linguistic diversity, promotion of school twinnings and student exchange activities.

### 2002

As a follow-up to the World Conference against Racism in Durban, South Africa (31 August to 7 September, 2001) the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture ([www.bmbwk.gv.at](http://www.bmbwk.gv.at)) prepared a National Action Plan including numerous measures in the field of education in human rights and tolerance.

In this connection mention must be made of an international in-service teacher training programme within the context of "Global Education", which is carried out by the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture in cooperation with the Austrian UNESCO Commission, the Department for African Studies at the University of Vienna, the Agency for South-North Education Work (*Südwind-Agentur*), the in-service teacher training college (Pädagogisches Institut) Burgenland and the Austrian Study Centre for Peace and Conflict Resolution. The first of three modules took place from 26 to 29 November 2002 at Schlaining, Burgenland; this international teacher seminar focused on "History Teaching in a Global Perspective – Case Studies of African Countries" and addressed the image of Africa in the teaching of history, the analysis of colonial history, African historical research, as well as the Europe-

centered evaluation patterns of national African identity-finding processes. This series of seminars is being continued in 2003 and 2004.

## 2003

Cooperation activities between the Austrian UNESCO Commission and the EURED network (European Education as Peace Education), which were started in 2002, were continued with increased emphasis. They aim at establishing the two-year postgraduate in-service teacher training course on "Human Rights and Peace Education in Europe", which was developed by peace educators from eight European countries. From 23 to 26 January the Austrian UNESCO Commission hosted an international meeting with experts from various European countries (focus on eastern and southeastern Europe) as well as representatives of UNESCO and the Council of Europe, who identified possible cooperation partners for setting up this university course. The course will be under the patronage of UNESCO Paris and the Austrian UNESCO Commission and will be offered in several modules, in cooperation with the Austrian Study Centre for Peace and Conflict Resolution at Stadtschlaining ([www.aspr.ac.at](http://www.aspr.ac.at)), at various European universities; the first module will be held at Guernica/Spain in July 2004.

As Austrian contribution to the implementation of the Dakar action plan ("Education for All") and the United Nations Literacy Decade 2003–2012 the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture and the Austrian UNESCO Commission are carrying out the project "Linguistic diversity and literacy in a global perspective. A comparative look at practice (PRAXIS) in Europe and Africa" (2003–2006); this project is carried out in cooperation with South Africa (Project for the Study of Alternative Education in South Africa PRAESA), Cameroon (AfricAvenir and National Association of Cameroon Language Committees NACALCO), the African Academy of Languages ([www.acalan.org](http://www.acalan.org)) and the European Centre for Modern Languages in Graz ([www.ecml.at](http://www.ecml.at)).

The project was officially started by an international expert meeting on "Language Policies in a Global Perspective", which took place in Vienna on 1 October 2003.

It is to be understood as an Austrian contribution to UNESCO language policy with particular consideration being given to bilingual literacy and proficiency in the mother tongue (participating experts came from South Africa, Cameroon, Mali, Burkina Faso, Benin, France, Germany, United Kingdom).

On the occasion of the International Year of Freshwater 2003 the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture and the Austrian UNESCO Commission organised an international in-service teacher training seminar on the subject "Water for All – A Global Challenge" in cooperation with the Agency for South-North Education Work (*Südwind-Agentur*) and the BIOS National Park Centre; this seminar took place at Mallnitz from 21 to 24 October. In addition to this, numerous UNESCO schools ran water projects in the course of the year, which were presented on the occasion of a UNESCO school event in Vienna at the beginning of December and were documented in the spring edition of the school newsletter FORUM.

The second module of the teacher training seminar "History Teaching in a Global Perspective – Case Studies of African Countries", which is part of the Austrian follow-up of the World Conference against Racism in Durban (2001), took place at Schlaining, Burgenland, from 25 to 28 November. The third and final module on the subject "Fighting for the Abolition of Slavery" will take place in autumn 2004.

The Austrian UNESCO Commission and the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture took part in the preparatory work for the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS, Geneva, 10 to 12 December 2003), which discussed principles governing a fair development of the global information and knowledge society. A delegation of pupils from Linz documented the events as well as their impressions of this summit. The Geneva summit also marked the beginning of the project "Youth@WSIS Geneva 2003 – Tunis 2005", which is to give young people the chance to participate actively in discussions on the information society, as well as to reflect, until the world summit in Tunis in 2005, on how to bridge in the best possible way the digital divide between developing and industrial countries as regards possibilities of accessing and using modern information and communication technologies.

## UNESCO schools 2001–2004

Between 2001 and 2004 the network of Austrian UNESCO schools grew by another four schools, one of them being a primary school, to a total of 45 schools.

In 2002 two academic secondary schools, viz. the New BG/BRG Leoben and the BRG Knittelfeld, received the Peace Pillar Award, which was granted by UNESCO for the first time, for their activities in the field of peace promotion. In addition, from among the projects carried out by schools, particular mention should be made of "European identities" by the academic second-

ary school BRG 19 Krottenbachstraße. The one-week youth meeting, in which 150 representatives from 15 European countries took part, focused on the subjects of language diversity and world heritage.

The annual meetings of Austrian UNESCO schools were mainly concerned with mediation/peace education (2001) and world heritage (2002). Participants had the opportunity of exchanging personal opinions, participating in workshops and discussions with experts, and of developing concrete models for classroom instruction.

The 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Austrian UNESCO schools network (UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network) 1953–2003 was celebrated nationally and internationally by a number of events.

The anniversary edition of the newsletter “FORUM. Austrian UNESCO Schools” reviewed the development of the UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network in Austria and emphasised the contributions of those who had made this development possible. In addition, all schools had the opportunity of presenting their respective areas of emphasis. On 4 December a one-day festival event entitled “50 Years UNESCO Schools” took place at the Vienna Central Municipal Library, in which the Austrian UNESCO schools presented themselves and their projects to the public by means of an exhibition as well as by plenary presentations. The annual meeting of Austrian UNESCO schools on 5 December, in which, for the first time, also pupils took part, focused on inter-school projects and the networking of schools in Austria.

## 2004

In order to revive the international network of the Danube countries, a meeting of representatives of these countries took place from 22 to 24 February, which was jointly organized by the Austrian and German UNESCO Commissions; in this meeting the necessary structures for the revitalisation and continuation of the transnational UNESCO school project “Blue Danube River Project” were discussed.

### Cultural education 2001-2004

#### World Heritage Education and Arts Education

Ever since the first Austrian sites were included in the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1996 Austrian (UNESCO) schools have dealt with this subject in a number of ways. For example, four UNESCO schools in Graz took part in the Graz World Cultural Heritage Festival 2002 by a number of artistic and cultural activities, as well as by organising a UNESCO information stand. Within

the context of the World Cultural Heritage Festival GRAZ 2003 an international youth meeting (“Heritage and Future”) took place from 11 to 18 June. This meeting, under the patronage of the Austrian UNESCO Commission and organised by the UNESCO Workgroup Styria and the Office Graz 2003, was attended by delegations of pupils from 17 countries; all six Styrian UNESCO schools took an active part in this event.

In February 2003 the German version of the UNESCO world heritage teaching aid “World Heritage in Young Hands” was published under the patronage of the Austrian UNESCO Commission. This file contains concrete suggestions for pupils’ activities in this field and encourages teachers to deal with this subject in the classroom in an interdisciplinary way. It aims at arousing young people’s interest in mankind’s heritage and at increasing their willingness to treat their environment and the world’s cultural and natural treasures with respect and care. The Austrian UNESCO Commission regularly organises workshops on world heritage education, e.g. in the world heritage regions Hallstatt-Dachstein/Salzkammergut, Neusiedlersee, Salzburg, as well as Wachau.

In accordance with the new UNESCO focus on Arts Education, the Austrian UNESCO Commission started its first activities in this field in 2003. It supported the competition “Arts Education and New Media”, which was advertised all over Europe by the University of Arts at Linz and is associated with the UNESCO programme “DigiArts”. It also supported the series of events “The Status of Arts Education and Cultural Education in Austria” organised by the University of Applied Arts, Vienna.

### International Adult Learners’ Week 2001–2004

Since 1999 the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture has organised the “Info-Days on Further Education” in cooperation with various adult education associations, thereby participating in the respective UNESCO initiative. By this, Austria makes an important contribution to increasing people’s awareness of the need for further education, which is reflected both by the rising number of activities and visitors as well as an increased media presence (TV, radio, print media).

## 17.9 Educational information

### Educational research in Europe/PERINE

Since 2002 eight European nations (Austria, Denmark, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania and Switzerland) have been taking part in a project for the establishment of a portal on educational research in Europe, viz. PERINE – Pedagogical and Educational Research Information Network for Europe; this project is financially supported by the European Commission within the scope of the 5th Research Framework Programme.

The PERINE database ([www.perine.org](http://www.perine.org)) is to help educational researchers to retrieve information on research subjects, educational research facilities, as well as on various focal points in domestic and foreign research work. By this PERINE is to contribute to the creation of a European Research Area (ERA). The database includes information on the educational research facilities in the above-mentioned countries, as well as information on such research subjects as educational management, European citizenship, competencies and life-long learning with short descriptions of the websites. The PERINE database is accessible via Internet in 12 languages.

### EURYDICE – Information network on education

There is continuous cooperation with the European Union within the scope of the information network on education in Europe EURYDICE. Detailed information on the education systems of the EU and EFTA – EEA countries is contained in the EURYBASE database [www.eurydice.org/Eurybase/frameset\\_eurybase.html](http://www.eurydice.org/Eurybase/frameset_eurybase.html). Short descriptions can be found in “Structures of the Education and Initial Training Systems in the EU”, as well as in the various national summary sheets on education systems ([www.eurydice.org](http://www.eurydice.org)).

In the series “Key Topics in Education in Europe” three volumes have so far been published:

- “Financial support for students in higher education in Europe”,
- “Financing and Resources in Compulsory Education”, as well as a
- Study on the attractiveness of the teaching profession (general secondary stage I), which consists of four reports.
  1. Initial Training and Transition to Working Life of Teachers,
  2. Teacher Supply and Demand,
  3. Working Conditions and Pay, and
  4. Summary and Contextual Analysis.

The European Glossary on Education comprises four volumes:

1. Examinations, Qualifications and Titles,
2. Educational Institutions,
3. Teaching Staff,
4. Management, Monitoring and Support Staff.

In the series “Key Data on Education in Europe” five volumes have appeared so far, viz. in 1994, 1995, 1997, 1999/2000 and 2002.

In addition, there is a large number of comparative analyses on subjects of educational policy, such as “Lifelong Learning”, evaluation of general schools, structures in higher education.

Separate databases were established on such focus subjects as lessons in compulsory schooling and on teachers’ and school heads’ salaries in primary and secondary education.

[www.eurydice.org/temps/accueil\\_temps\\_d\\_enseignement.htm](http://www.eurydice.org/temps/accueil_temps_d_enseignement.htm)  
[www.eurydice.org/Salaires/accueil\\_salaire.htm](http://www.eurydice.org/Salaires/accueil_salaire.htm)

### ARION – Study visits for education specialists

Each year some 40 to 50 Austrians take part in the EU exchange programme ARION for education specialists, which offers them the possibility of one-week visits to EU and EFTA–EEA states in order to study subjects relevant to education. Each year Austria itself organises several such study visits for foreign education specialists.

[www.bmbwk.gv.at/schulen/europa/bildungsinfo.xml](http://www.bmbwk.gv.at/schulen/europa/bildungsinfo.xml)

### Vocational education and training

In the field of vocational education research there is intensive cooperation with CEDEFOP. Each year the CEDEFOP study visit programme for vocational education specialists, on the one hand, gives about 30 Austrian specialists the chance to study the vocational education and training systems in EU member states and EEA countries; on the other hand, foreign specialists come to Austria for study visits, informing themselves about various points of emphasis in the Austrian system of vocational education and training. For detailed information on the vocational education and training systems in the EU member states and in the EEA countries, as well as on various focal points in vocational education research, the website [www.trainingvillage.gr](http://www.trainingvillage.gr) should be consulted.

At the beginning of February 2003 the department for vocational education and training in the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture opened a new Internet portal under the motto "Marketing Qualifications Successfully" in cooperation with the Austrian Reference Centre for Vocational Qualifications.

This portal aims at making the transparency instruments prepared on the European level available to a larger public (retrievable under ***www.chance-europa.at***). It provides information that enables people to make better use of the opportunities afforded by the European education and labour markets. The term "transparency instruments" denotes all those initiatives, documents, forms and other "aids" which contribute to the dismantling of obstacles in the transfer and recognition of qualifications and competencies.

### **Educational terminology**

Various conferences served for further developing international educational terminology. The European Education Thesaurus (EET) covering eleven official languages of the European Union (***www.eurydice.org***) is used in the indexing of the PERINE database ***www.perine.org***, as well as the EURYBASE database ***www.eurydice.org/Eurybase/frameset\_eurybase.html***. For the purposes of EURYDICE – EURYBASE, work in this respect is being continued.