

Overview

Key features of the Education System

According to the [Austrian Federal Constitutional Law Article 14 - as amended](#) (Bundesverfassungs-Gesetz, B-VG, Art. 14) democracy, humanity, solidarity, peace and justice, openness and tolerance towards everyone regardless of race, social status and financial background are fundamental principles of education in Austria.

Key features related to governance

Concerning [kindergartens](#) and [crèches](#) the [provinces](#) (Bundesländer) are responsible for legislation and implementation and maintained to high degree by [municipalities](#) (Gemeinden). However, there is also a large **private sector**.

Concerning **schools** responsibilities for legislation and its implementation are divided between the [federation](#) (Bund) and the provinces (Bundesländer) where it is executed by the parliaments of the provinces (Landtage) and the [offices of the provincial governments](#) (Ämter der Landesregierungen). In specific matters enumerated in the [Constitution](#), the federation sets the framework, while detailed legislation is implemented by the parliaments of the provinces. The federation has overwhelming responsibility for the education system, including virtually all areas of school organisation, the organisation of school instruction, private schools as well as the remuneration and retirement law governing education staff.

Legislation and execution of all matters pertaining to [universities](#) and [higher education](#) is a [federal](#) responsibility. The freedom of scholarship and teaching, and the freedom of art, are guaranteed in constitutional legislation.

Key features related to organisation and structures

Since 2010 [obligatory kindergarten attendance](#) was introduced for 5 year olds (i.e. children one year before school entry).

An important aspect of the Austrian school system is the strong **diversification of programmes at all levels** of education. Austria has put in place a **strong vocational education sector**.

Traditional **early streaming** (at ages 10 and 14) has been subject of on-going educational reforms but remains a fact.

General compulsory schooling lasts until the age of 15 in Austria. Since the 2016/17 school year all youths who have not yet reached the **age of 18** will be required to **engage in education or training** after completing general compulsory schooling. They should as far as possible complete some form of education or training that goes beyond the compulsory school-leaving qualification.

In View of "output orientation" **quality assurance and development** was driven forward by a series of measures:

- National educational standards
- Standardised, competence-oriented matriculation (and diploma) examinations (**general**) (**vocational**) (**Reifeprüfung/Reife- und Diplomprüfung**)
- National Report on Education
- Based on the **Act on Quality Assurance in Higher Education** the **Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria** (AQ Austria) was set up.

The **2017 Education Reform Act** (Bildungsreformgesetz 2017) establishes a new governance model for education system and an **evidence-based quality assurance**:

- Definition of a comprehensive framework on school quality
- Regular collection of data on all aspects of school quality
- Availability of these data for all levels of the school administration
- Production of annual school reports
- New system of school inspection and school evaluation

Stages of the Education System

In September 2010 obligatory **kindergarten** attendance was introduced for 5 year olds.

School education is **compulsory** for nine years and starts at the age of 6.

Primary school is the general compulsory school for pupils aged 6-10 (years 1 to 4).

The **lower secondary level** (years 5 to 8) comprises:

- [Compulsory secondary school](#) (Mittelschule)
- Lower level of [academic secondary school](#) (Allgemein bildende Höhere Schule).

The **upper secondary level** (years 9 to 13) comprises a

- general education branch and a
- vocational branch.

Higher education is provided by

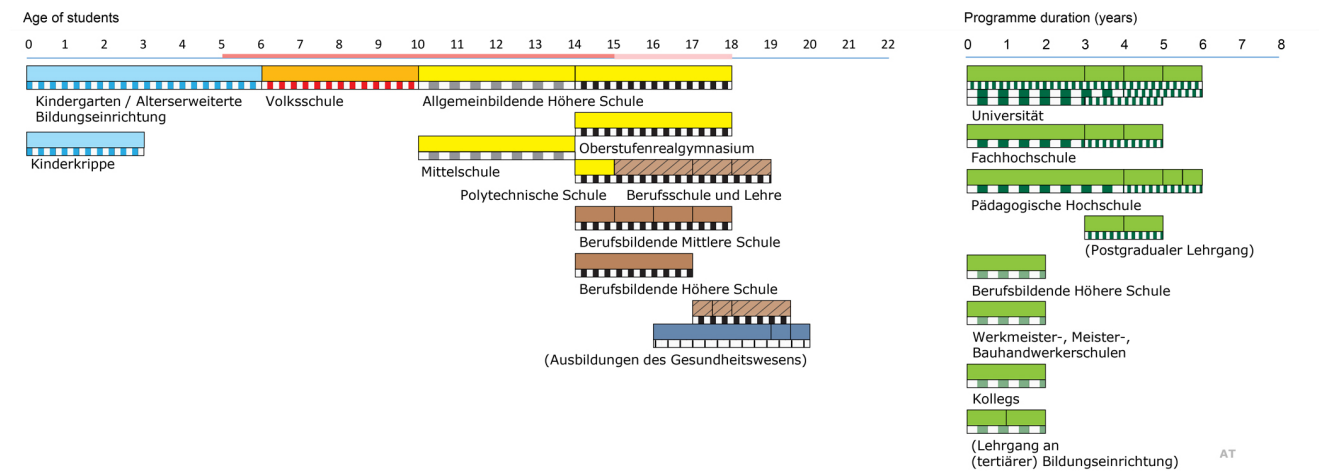
- Public Universities (the biggest sector),
- [Private Higher Education Institutions](#) (HEIs),
- [Universities of Applied Sciences](#) (Fachhochschulen),
- [University Colleges of Teacher Education](#) (Pädagogische Hochschulen)

Adult learning programmes may lead to legally regulated qualifications (also called formal qualifications). They include second-chance programmes, for example: These are programmes that aim at the acquisition of qualifications by adults in the formal education sector (e.g.

- the [compulsory schooling qualification](#) (Pflichtschulabschluss),
- the [apprenticeship-leave certificate](#) (Lehrabschlussprüfung),
- the [final certificate from schools for people in employment](#) (Berufsreifeprüfung)

Schematic Structure of the National Education System

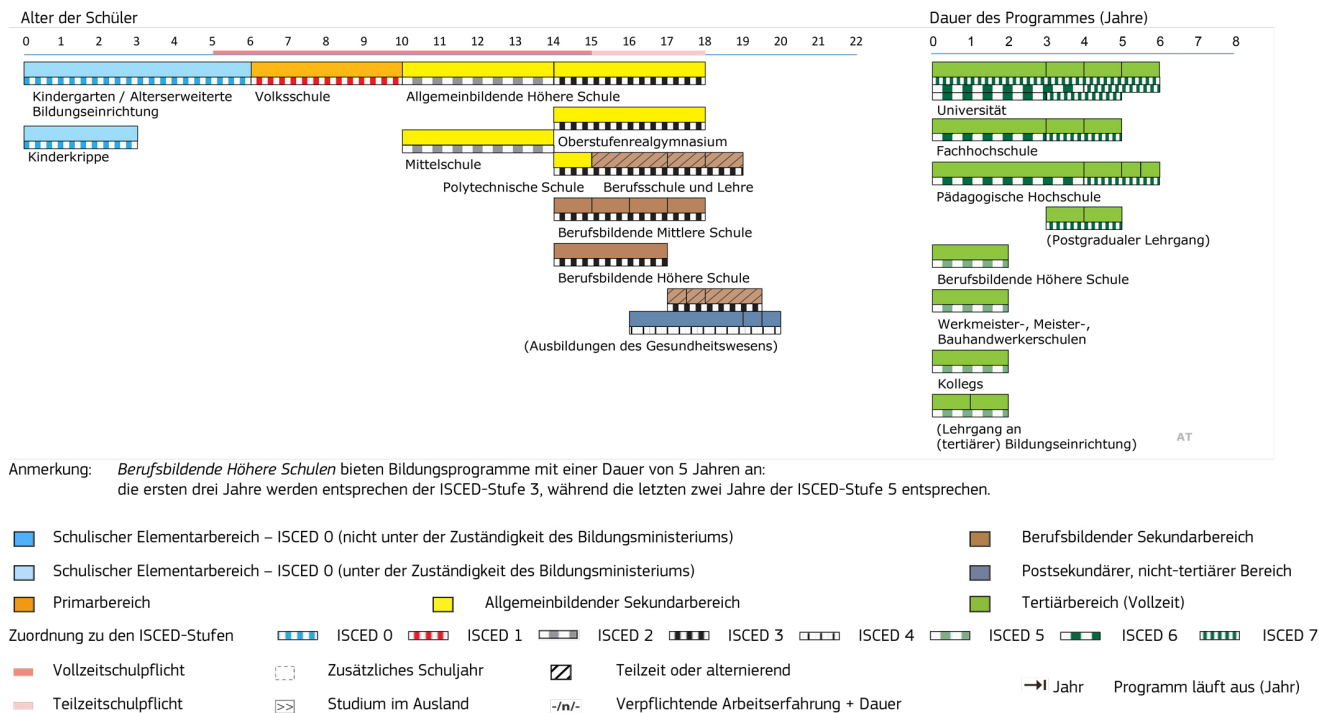
Austria – 2022/2023



Source: Eurydice.

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Österreich – 2022/2023



Quelle: Eurydice

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Useful links

Further information may also be found on the following websites:

- [The Austrian Education System](#)
- [VET Schools and Colleges in Austria](#)
- [Higher Education in Austria](#)

- [Education and Training Monitor 2022 – Austria; download and languages](#)
- [Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research \[Bundesministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft und Forschung \(BMBWF\)\]](#)
- [Statistics Austria](#)
- [OECD Country Profile Austria \(2017\)](#)
- [Promoting Education Decision Makers' Use of Evidence in Austria](#)

Common European Reference Tools Provided by the Eurydice Network

- [National Student Fee and Support Systems](#)
- [Organisation of the Academic Year in Higher Education](#)
- [Organisation of School Time in Europe](#) (Primary and general secondary education)
- [Recommended Annual Instruction Time in Full-Time Compulsory Education in Europe](#) (Presented by grades/stages for full time compulsory education as well as by subject and country.)
- [Teachers and School Heads Salaries and Allowances in Europe](#) (Salaries and allowances of teachers and school heads at pre-primary, primary, lower secondary and upper secondary education levels.)

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