Country Report

10th International Symposium on Career Development and Public Policy, Auckland, New Zealand, November 2026

Country name

Austria

This country report has been prepared for discussion and information purposes in connection with the 10th International Symposium on Career Development and Public Policy. It draws on an online questionnaire on the Symposium themes, which national teams were invited to complete in advance.

ICCDPP: Navigating new horizons - Country perspectives survey

Introduction

Q1. Do you agree to participate in this survey?

Yes

Q2. I confirm that I am providing a response on behalf of my country.

Yes

Q3. I confirm that I am happy for the responses to this survey to be shared publicly.

Yes

Q4. Is your country going to participate in the 2026 ICCDPP symposium in New Zealand?

Yes

Q5. Who have you consulted with before completing this survey?

Dr. Peter Härtel, Austrian Association for Education and Economics

Dr. Gerhard Krötzl, long-term responsible for LLG in Austrian Federal Ministry of Education

Mag. Wolfgang Bliem, LLG Expert in IBW Austria – Research and Development in VET; Austrian Expert in CEDEFOP CareersNet

Mag. Eva Baloch-Kaloianov, Euroguidance Austria, substitute Austrian expert in CEDEFOP CareersNet

Mag. Lukas Slepetzki-Dobner, Austrian Economic Chamber, Department for Education and VET

Dr. Michaela Marterer, Austrian Association for Education and Economics, Facilitator of the Austrian National Lifelong Guidance Forum

About you

Q6. What is your name?

Dr. Ursula Fritz

Q7. What organisation do you work for?

Austrian Federal Ministry of Education

Q8. What is your job title?

Department Head

Q9. What is your email address?

ursula.fritz@bmb.gv.at

Q10. Are you happy for your contact details to be published on the ICCDPP website/ relevant documents as part of the publication of this data?

Yes

About your country

Q11. What is the name of your country?

Austria

Q12. Which groups can access career development services in your country?

	Accessible and free to everyone	Accessible and free to some groups	Accessible to those who can pay	Not accessible
Indigenous people				
Young people in schools	X			
Young people in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)	X			
Young people in university or higher education	X			
Young people not in education or work (e.g. NEETs)	X			
Adults in education	X			
Adults in work	X			
Adults not in education or work (e.g. unemployed workers and the economic inactive)	X			
Migrants	X			
People in the criminal justice system	X			
Employers/businesses	X			

Q13. Are there any other groups in your country, not listed in Question 12 above, that can access career development services?

Parents

Adults who are employed but want to change their occupational field or pursue new educational or professional pathways

* there exist no indigenous groups concerning to the international law in Austria But, there are recognized ethnic groups by constitution, who have the same rights and access, and some additional services

About your country

Q14. How far do you agree with the following statements?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
The career development policies, programmes and services in my country are meeting the career needs of the population.	X				
School leavers in my country are well prepared for successful transitions to work or further learning.		X			
There is a strong evidence base to support the provision of career development services in my country.			X		
AI is having a major impact on the education system in my country.		X			
AI is having a major impact on labour market in my country.		X			
AI is having a major impact on the provision of career development services in my country.			X		

Q15. Are indigenous groups involved in the design of career development services in your country?

Not relevant

About your country

Q16. Please provide a short summary of your country's career development system. [Up to 300 words]

Guidance System in Austria
OVERVIEW
There are two established guidance and counselling systems in Austria working in cooperation with each other: guidance and counselling provided by education and training institutions, and guidance services provided by the employment administration and other institutions in the field of careers guidance. The active role of the social partners (Economic Chamber, Chamber of Labour) in the provision of career guidance is a prominent feature of the Austrian guidance system.
POLICY
The key educational policy goals in this area are set out in the national Lifelong Guidance (LLG) Strategy, which establishes a general framework for the further development of educational counselling and careers guidance as an integral component of the former Austrian National Strategy for Lifelong Learning, which is now under new discussion and development. Lifelong guidance has a central role and was one of the five key strategic guidelines in the strategy, and an element in at least seven of the ten lifelong learning action lines within the strategy. Progress was monitored every year by the National Lifelong Guidance Forum, consisting of representatives of responsible Ministries (the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research and die Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health and Consumer Protection), the public employment service, adult education institutions and networks, research institutions, university colleges for teacher training and Euroguidance Austria. The following five key priorities of the national LLG Strategy are:
1. The implementation of basic competences in all curricula so that learners can make education and career decisions autonomously.
2. A focus on process orientation and monitoring to enable high-quality decision-making processes.
3. The professionalization of counsellors and trainers.
4. Quality assurance and evaluation.
5. The extension of access by creating offers for new target groups.

Q17. Please provide links to any key reports, articles or websites that provide insights into your country's career development policies and systems. [Up to 300 words]

https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/3098_en.pdf
https://euroguidance.eu/guidance-systems-and-practice/national-guidance-systems/guidance-system-in-austria
Cedefop (2025).Inventory of lifelong guidance systems and practices - Austria.CareersNet national records.
https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/country-reports/inventory-lifelong-guidance-systems-and-practices-austria-0
https://epale.ec.europa.eu/sq/node/313262
https://www.bmb.gv.at/Themen/schule/schulpraxis/ba/bo.html (in DE)
https://ibw.at/news/lehrlingsausbildung-im-ueberblick-2025,52.html (in DE)
https://www.bmb.gv.at/Themen/schule/schulpraxis/ba/bo.html (in DE)
https://erwachsenenbildung.at/ (in DE)
https://www.18plus.at/ (in DE)
https://www.ams.at/ (in DE and EN)

Q18. Do you have any other comments that you would like to make about the way in which your country organises its career development services? [Up to 300 words]

In Austria, the topic of Career Guidance and Career Development has gained importance since the OECD Project "Career Guidance Policies 2000 ff". The first LLG Strategy, which became effective in 2007, has brought about many concrete developments in schools, universities, adult education and inclusive education. It is now necessary to recognize new demands in society and the world of work and to take new initiatives. International exchange is important in this regard.

There have been some developments in recent years: Since 2024, "Educational, Career and Life Orientation" has been embedded as a cross-cutting theme in the curricula of primary schools, lower secondary schools and academic lower secondary schools (grades 1–8), and is thus integrated into all subjects.

Furthermore, the Education and Training Obligation up to the age of 18 in Austria is a law which stipulates that all young people, after completing compulsory schooling (9th grade), must attend an upper secondary school, begin an apprenticeship or participate in a qualifying measure until their 18th birthday.

A specific feature of the Austrian Education System is the situation at the transition points at 8th, 9th, 10th grade, referred to by the OECD as the "Anomaly of the Austrian System".

The Polytechnic School at the 9th grade plays an important role at this transition point. It is specific to Austria and difficult to explain in just a few words. The Polytechnic School follows the 8th grade and comprises one school year. It is intended to prepare students for their future lives, in particular for their working lives, by appropriately expanding and deepening their general education, preparing them for career choices through vocational orientation, and providing them with basic vocational training.

An important feature in the Austrian Education System is also, that young people have to make several decisions in a very early age – after 4 years Primary School between the two tracks "Middle School" or Gymnasium, at the age of 14 between many various offers of Upper Secondary fulltime schools – academic or vocational, and at the age of 15 (or later) for dual apprentice training.

This is a high responsibility for good guidance services at all these transition points. A very positive element of the Austrian way is the good and intensive cooperation between the school system, social partners, companies, other providers of guidance with special regional or individual focus.

Productivity and the inclusive economy

Q19. To what extent do policies for education, training, and employment in your country reflect the following statements?

	Strongly	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly

Q19. To what extent do policies for education, training, and employment in your country reflect the following statements?

	agree	agree nor disagree	disagree
Career development services contribute to economic growth.	X		
Career development services contribute to workforce productivity.		X	
Career development services deliver a positive return on investment on public spending.		X	
Career development services support entrepreneurialism.	X		
Career development services help to address employers' skills and labour needs.	X		
Career development services can be accessed by small and medium sized businesses (SMEs).		X	
Career development services improve levels of job satisfaction.		X	
Career development services contribute to decent work (jobs with access to training, a living wage and other benefits).		X	
Career development services support equality of access to learning and work opportunities.		X	
Career development services contribute to the green transition.		X	

Productivity and the inclusive economy

Q20. Provide further information about the way in which policies and practices for career development services in your country support productivity. [Up to 300 words]

In Austria, three policy and practice areas support productivity in career development services: targeted qualification, better coordination with the labour market and greater permeability between training and work. To this end, the Austrian Productivity Board (Produktivitätsrat) particularly emphasizes the expansion of AMS support for apprenticeship training, regionally and subject-specific qualification measures and the integration of education and labour market instruments across age groups.
Central guidelines
• Skilled labour strategy: Education and labour market policy are to be integrated, coordinated and, if necessary, expanded in order to strengthen labour supply and qualifications.
• Promoting apprenticeship training: Access to apprenticeships is to be facilitated, the attractiveness of apprenticeships increased and the number of apprenticeship positions expanded
• Active labour market policy: Qualification measures should be adapted to regional and professional needs, not just to short-term placement.
• Focus on innovation and technology: Career and qualification offers are intended to support the acquisition of skills for new technologies, digitalization and productivity progress.
Best practices
• Proximity to the labour market: Programs are more productive if they are closely coordinated with employers and the AMS.
• Target group-specific approach: Programs that actively reach people with compulsory schooling or qualification gaps are particularly effective.

Q20. Provide further information about the way in which policies and practices for career development services in your country support productivity. [Up to 300 words]

• Further training instead of just placement: Higher productivity is more likely to occur when adequate skills are built up that can be used in the long term.
• Increasing permeability: Transitions from apprenticeship to higher qualifications and between educational pathways improve the adaptability of the labour market.
What is special
For effective career development services in Austria, skills gaps are to be closed and directly tailored to the needs of companies, industries and regions. The productivity report sees this as a lever for productively coping with structural change, the shortage of skilled workers and technological change.

Q21. Provide further information about the way in which policies and practices for career development services in your country support an inclusive economy. [Up to 300 words]

In Austria, inclusive funding guidelines, barrier-free career orientation and transitions close to the labour market support an inclusive economy. The federal funding guideline "Inclusive Work" is particularly important because it is intended to promote people with high support needs the transition to the primary labour market, real employment contracts, full social security and a living wage.
Guidelines
• The "Inclusive Work" guideline promotes projects for people with disabilities with high or very high support needs and provides public funds for this until 2026.
• Central funding criteria are real employment contracts, full insurance and a living wage.
• Inclusive, integrative and innovative models, i.e. different paths from the protected structure to regular employment, are eligible for funding.
• In addition, inclusive and intercultural educational and career orientation as well as barrier-free access support participation in training and work
Practice
• Individual workplace adaptation improves employability and makes it easier to enter companies.
• Non-profit temporary employment and group models can structure the transition to the labour market.
• Close cooperation between the Ministry of Social Affairs, the federal states, providers and companies strengthens the implementation of inclusive career paths.
• Career development services are particularly effective when they combine counselling, qualification, support and follow-up support.
Contributing to the inclusive economy
These approaches promote an inclusive economy because they not only enable employment, but also ensure fair pay, social security and real opportunities for advancement. For Austria, it is therefore particularly important that career development services not only mediate, but also break down barriers and actively accompany the transition to regular, high-quality work.

Q22. Please provide links to any key reports, articles or websites that provide further insights into the relationship in your country between policies for career development, and policies for productivity and the inclusive economy. [Up to 300 words]

Information mostly in DE
• Federal Government / Council of Ministers Lecture: "For a productive, competitive and strong location for Austria"— Combines qualification, location policy and productivity.bmwkms.gv
• AMS Austria: Labour market data and labour market research — Useful for data on employment, qualifications and labour market development.ams
• WKO: Analysis Productivity — Sheds light on productivity gaps and key levers such as education, technology and innovation.WKO
• Federal Ministry of Education: "The Role of Education in the Austrian Economy" — Shows the role of education for growth and competitiveness.BMB
• Federal Chancellery: Federal Government launches qualification offensive — focus on further training, employment and economic dynamism.services.bundeskanzleramt.gv
• Productivity Council: Background paper PRO-FORWIT — Linking productivity, digitalisation, human capital and education policy.Productivity Council
• Zero Project Austria — Focus on inclusive employment and labour market integration of people with disabilities.austria.zeroproject
• DABEI Austria: People with Disabilities in the Labour Market — Good Introductory Page on Inclusion and Structural Barriers.dabei-austria

Enhancing skills and developing technical and vocational education and training (TVET)

Q23. To what extent do policies for education, training, and employment in your country reflect the following statements?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Career development services support people to develop skills	X				
Career development services support people to access training	X				
Career development services support the uptake of TVET pathways	X				
Career development services support lifelong learning		X			

Q24. What are the biggest challenges for participation in the technical and vocational education and training (TVET) system in your country? [Please tick all that apply.]

High rates of drop-out from TVET
Lack of ongoing career development support for learners studying TVET pathways
The influence of gender stereotyping on TVET choices

Enhancing skills and developing technical and vocational education and training (TVET)

Q25. At what age do young people generally move onto a TVET pathway if that is the path they take?

There are two main TVET pathways in Austria at the upper Secondary Level
Full-time school-based VET is offered in more than 200 different occupational pathways in technical, commercial and service fields, with programmes lasting 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5 years.
5year VET school starts at the age of 14 – 9th grade – and offers double qualification – occupational certificate and A-Level-diploma for full access to tertiary education.
Dual Apprenticeship in companies could start earliest at the age of 15 – 10th grade – most trainees are about 16.8 years when starting an apprenticeship (2025)
Fact is, that in Austria about 75 % of young people at the age 15 – 19 are in a TVET pathway, half and half in full-time VET school and in dual apprenticeship training in companies.
There is also the option, to choose a non-tertiary VET pathway after finishing a general academic A-level exam, with special conditions, as an apprentice in a company or in a post-secondary VET college, day-time or as an evening school (“short academic circle”), normally starting at the age of 18, 19, 20 years.

Q26. Does the age of pathway selection cause challenges for your TVET system?

Yes

Q27. Is there anything else that you would like to say about the age of pathway selection? [Up to 300 words]

In fact, age brings challenges, more for young people than for the system.
In Austria, many decisions have to be made early. In principle, there is permeability within the system, but in reality, the decision at the age of 10 for middle school or grammar school is already an essential

Q27. Is there anything else that you would like to say about the age of pathway selection? [Up to 300 words]

decision.
The interface at the age of 14 – 8th grade – is crucial. High school, or a vocational pathway? Professional: Full-time school or dual VET? That's very early. One challenge is that many young people choose school education paths in which they are not successful.
Austria does not have a significant problem with early drop-outs of the system or with NEETS. But there is the challenge with drop-outs within the system, and multiple changes, eg. failing in school or reduced motivation. There are no valid studies on this – but the thesis is that the drop-out rates in dual training are higher for people who start an apprenticeship later because they have already experienced multiple drop-outs and failing experience.
One positive development is the growing willingness of companies to accept young people with different educational backgrounds for VET apprenticeship training. The criteria for this are not always professional skills, it is increasingly about behaviour and motivation (Are the young people prepared in their mindset for this profession, for this company, do they know what the company, the profession is all about?).
To this end, there are many support services in cooperation between schools, companies, social partners, PES and other providers that make significant contributions to good transitions between school and training – work.

Q28. Provide further information on the ways in which policies for career development services in your country enhance policies for skills development, TVET, and lifelong learning. [Up to 300 words]

At the national level, the current government program contains clear goals for development and implementation of a new lifelong learning strategy.
This proposed strategy is closely related to TVET strategies for dealing with the need for skilled workers. A discrepancy between the unemployment of less qualified people and the growing need as well as the shortage of qualified specialists and skilled workers in many areas exists.
The new strategy will address this challenge, and career guidance will be an essential element of this strategy.
This applies both to people who are to come back into employment from unemployment and to employed people who need to gain further qualifications in order to remain and continue in the work process.
In addition, other initiatives are underway to better prepare young people in Upper Secondary for the changes in the world of work. The approach in Austria "IBOBB" – Information, Advice and Orientation for Education and Career" is in constant development and will be extended to all phases of the school education and further TVET pathways.

A major development is the growing willingness of companies to participate in concrete actions to bring together the world of work, school, young people and teachers. There are numerous examples of regional events, VET fairs, active presentations of companies, opportunities for young people to gain practical experience by internships in companies, also with the involvement of parents.
The possibility of VET internships in an European and international environment is increasingly accepted and is an important contribution to the motivating and personality-building development of young people.

Q29. Please provide links to any key reports, articles or websites that provide further insights about how career development services can enhance skills and support TVET. [Up to 300 words]

In Austria, the linking of career development services (IBOBB – Information, Advice and Orientation for Education and Career) and vocational education and training (TVET or VET) is being strengthened.VET).
Here are the most important reports, articles and platforms that offer deep insights (in both German and English):
1. ibw (Institute for Educational Research of the Economy)
The ibw is the central point of contact for research on the Austrian dual training system (apprenticeship) and TVET development.
• Research reports on vocational education and training:
• Language options: Many core reports and factsheets are available in English to make the Austrian TVET system internationally understandable.
• Website: ibw.at (English version ibw.at/en)
2. öibf (Austrian Institute for Vocational Education and Training Research)
• Important publications: The öibf has contributed to guidelines such as "Die Kompetenz+Beratung". A red-hot and highly relevant report for the Ministry of Education is the "Inventory of Educational, Career Orientation and Counselling Services" (by P. Schlögl, among others)

Q29. Please provide links to any key reports, articles or websites that provide further insights about how career development services can enhance skills and support TVET. [Up to 300 words]

• Website: oeibf.at
3. Euroguidance Österreich & Cedefop
Euroguidance is the European network for the support of educational and career guidance and is coordinated in Austria by the OeAD (Agency for Education and Internationalisation).
• National Context & CMS: Euroguidance Austria regularly publishes reports on how the concept of Career Management Skills (CMS) can be integrated into TVET structures
• International insight: You can also find country-specific reports in English via Euroguidance, which compare the Austrian system with other EU countries.
• Website: euroguidance.at
4. ÖFSE (Austrian Research Foundation for International Development)
If you are looking for the more global perspective on how the TVET model (including the Austrian/German-speaking) model contributes to sustainable development and skills improvement, the ÖFSE offers valuable English-language papers.
• Briefing Papers & Working Papers: Look for publications such as "Skills for decent work, life and sustainable development" or analyses on TVET in fragile contexts.
• Website: oefse.at

Ensuring disadvantaged and vulnerable groups can thrive

Q30. To what extent do policies for education, training, and employment in your country reflect the following statements?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Career development services help vulnerable and disadvantaged groups to thrive.	X				
Vulnerable and disadvantaged groups can access career development services.		X			
Career development services support vulnerable groups to access decent work.	X				
Career development services support vulnerable groups to access the education and training system.		X			
There is adequate funding for career development services targeting vulnerable and disadvantaged groups.		X			
Policies for social inclusion intersect with policies for education, training, and employment.		X			

Q31. Which disadvantaged and vulnerable groups does your government have policies to support and which are provided with bespoke or targeted career development services. [Tick all that apply]

	Government has policies to support	Provided with bespoke or targeted career development services
Indigenous people		
Women and girls	X	X

Q31. Which disadvantaged and vulnerable groups does your government have policies to support and which are provided with bespoke or targeted career development services. [Tick all that apply]

Men and boys	X	X
Ethnic minorities		
Religious minorities		
Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people		
People from low-socio-economic backgrounds	X	X
People with low skill levels	X	X
Migrants	X	X
People with disabilities	X	X
People with health and mental health challenges	X	X
Younger people	X	X
Older people	X	X
Other		

If Other, please specify:
Persons with low competence in German language

Ensuring disadvantaged and vulnerable groups can thrive

Q32. Can you provide any further information about the way in which policies for career development in your country support vulnerable and disadvantaged people? [Up to 300 words]

In Austria, opportunities for dual apprenticeship training are regulated by National law for vulnerable groups.
Integrative vocational training is regulated in Section 8b of the Vocational Training Act (BAG).
The paragraph is divided into two main forms of training:
• Section 8b (1) BAG: Regulates apprenticeship training with an extended apprenticeship period.
• Section 8b (2) BAG: Regulates vocational training that leads to a partial qualification .
(Formal designation: "Vocational training according to § 8b para. 1 or 2 BAG".)
Integrative vocational training (IBA) is a state funding instrument in Austria that enables young people with obstacles to placement to obtain a formal vocational qualification. It is aimed at people with special educational needs, school dropouts, people with disabilities or learning disabilities. The measure is being examined and financially supported by the Public Employment Service (AMS).
The two main models of the IBA
• Extended apprenticeship: The regular apprenticeship period is extended by one to a maximum of two years. The aim is the regular completion of the final apprenticeship examination (LAP).
• Partial qualification: Training content is reduced to a specific sub-area of an apprenticeship occupation. The duration of the training is one to three years.
• Individual professional profiles: the content and qualifications are individually coordinated with the person, the company, the social partners and the vocational school
Support and framework conditions
• Vocational training assistance: Socio-pedagogical companions support the apprentice and the company throughout the entire training period.
• Integrative companies: In addition to traditional companies, there are specialized integrative companies that offer protected training places in various professions.
• Switching options: It is possible to switch between extended apprenticeship, partial qualification and regular apprenticeship flexibly.
In School: the “Chancenbonus” supports school under special socio-economic conditions with financial contributions and support

Q33. Please provide links to any key reports, articles or websites that provide further insights into the way that your country's career development system supports vulnerable and disadvantaged people. [Up to 300 words]

In Austria, the system for educational and career guidance (lifelong guidance) is well developed. It links public institutions, social partners and non-profit organizations to help vulnerable young people (e.g. NEETs – young people who are not in employment, education or training) and disadvantaged adults (the long-term unemployed, people with disabilities or a migrant background).
1. Euroguidance & National Agency Lifelong Learning (English / German)
• Euroguidance Austria Portal: country reports explaining the Austrian guidance system to an international audience.
• Important report: Guidance in Action or the regular publications of the National Agency for Lifelong Learning (OeAD). These show how educationally disadvantaged groups can be reached through outreach counselling and free educational counselling.
• Webseite: euroguidance.at
2. Cedefop (European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training) (Englisch)
• Inventory of Lifelong Guidance Systems - Austria: This detailed report analyzes how career guidance is structured in Austria. A central focus is on social inclusion strategies to prevent early school leaving and to support marginalised groups (such as refugees or people without compulsory schooling) through programmes such as "Education to 18".
• Website: cedefop.europa.eu (search for "Lifelong guidance country profile Austria").
3. The Public Employment Service (AMS) & the "AMS Algorithm" Debate Document (German / English)
• Scientific article: "Algorithmic Profiling of Job Seekers in Austria: How Austerity Politics Are Made Effective" (Allhütter et al.). This much-cited Open Access report explains exactly how the unemployed are divided into groups and how the system tries to channel resources specifically to people with the greatest barriers and least market opportunities.
• Practical handbooks of the AMS (German): The AMS regularly publishes guidelines such as the Practical Handbook – Methods of General Career and Labour Market Orientation, 4. Educational Counselling Austria & Initiative for Adult Education (German)
• Platform for Educational Counselling Austria: The network offers free, neutral advice.
• Website: bildungsberatung-oesterreich.at (in DE)
• https://www.bmb.gv.at/Themen/schule/zrp/chancenbonus.html (in DE)


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Ngā Kaitohutohu Rapuara Aotearoa
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