

1978. Birth rates have declined since and fewer young people are entering apprenticeship training.

(20) The enterprise and the vocational school cooperate to give training.

(21) There are 220 to 225 apprenticeable occupations with average length of training being three years (minimum two, maximum four years).

(22) A contract is signed by the enterprise, the apprentice (and the apprentice's parents).

(23) Apprentices are paid a wage equal to one fifth of the salary of a skilled worker. This increases to two thirds of the salary of a skilled worker by the end of training. Training wages can be lower than the minimum wage. The majority of apprentices live at home.

(24) Apprentices receive travel allowances and spend one day a week in school and four days at work. For those who live in a rural area, two months are spent in school, nine months at work (one month holidays).

(25) To increase general education, labour unions want the schooling component increased to two days per week for the same amount of pay.

(26) The Chamber believes "learning by doing" and socialization skills acquired at work are important aspects which cannot be as well developed in schools as in the workplace.

(27) There is a minimum curriculum for enterprise-based training established by the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs. Enterprises are bound by the Vocational Training Act and ordinances setting out guidelines for training standards (as in Germany).

(28) Vocational school curriculum is established by the Federal Education Ministry. The social partners can comment on the content.

(29) These two curricula are standardized across Austria.

(30) At the end of the apprenticeship period, more than 90% of apprentices pass a practical and technical exam covering enterprise-based training and overseen by a board of representatives from the employers, the employees union and the Chamber. Teachers do not participate in the exam process.

(31) The theoretical part of the exam is only necessary if the apprentice has failed in part-time vocational school.

(32) There is no final examination for vocational school training.

(33) Unions argue that very small enterprises cannot afford to finance modern training. Training, they say, should be done by big enterprises with more resources and financed by a fund into which all firms must pay.

(34) Currently, schools are financed by the state. Enterprises pay for their own training.

(35) The Chamber believes that there is already too much centralization and that a central fund would increase this trend.

(36) Moreover, enterprises now train according to needs in the labour market. If there were a government-administered fund, training would be less in tune with market needs.

(37) Unemployment is unevenly distributed across Austria. Incentives to increase mobility have not worked. Grants are given to enterprises that look in disadvantaged regions. When the grants run out, the enterprises move from the disadvantaged region. The link between enterprises and their apprentices is such that young people are attracted to firms offering training and the possibility of a job. This is a kind of mobility incentive.

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(1) The administration of training is carried out by the Chambers of Commerce.

(2) The Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs oversees enterprise-based training; the Ministry of Education and the provinces oversee vocational and apprenticeship school training. The link between the two is very weak in terms of coordinating in-school components.

(3) Forty-five per cent of the 15- to 19-year-olds are absorbed into the apprenticeship system.

(4) After the age of 19, 45% of those with vocational training need to retrain to meet demands in the