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Continuing vocational training significantly declined in 2020

Just below 80 % of companies in Austria were active in continuing vocational training in the first Corona year – less than in 2015

Vienna, 2023-02-17 – Pandemic-related contact restrictions, reduced business activity and economic uncertainty caused corporate training activities in Austria to drop significantly in 2020. Austria nevertheless remained among the European leaders with a share of 79.3 % of enterprises active in continuing vocational training, as Statistics Austria reports.

79.3 % of enterprises with ten or more employees were active in continuing vocational training in 2020. Compared to 2015 (88.1 %), the decline of 9 percentage points in Austria is greater than the EU average (-3 percentage points).

Continuing vocational training courses were offered by 69.5 % of enterprises. This represents a decline of around 12 percentage points compared with 2015. Small enterprises (10 to 49 employees) in particular have significantly reduced the number of continuing vocational training courses they offer (2010: 68.8 %, 2015: 88.6 %, 2020: 65.6 %).

Participation rate in continuing education courses down significantly

Around one in three employees (34.9 %) took part in company continuing vocational training courses in 2020; the course participation rate was thus significantly lower than in 2015 (45.4 %) and approached the level of 2010 and 2005. In terms of company size, the participation rate fell most significantly among large enterprises (250 and more employees) – here there was a decline from 54.9 % (2015) to 40.9 % in 2020. With this result, however, large enterprises were still above the corresponding participation rates in small and medium-sized enterprises (27.9 % and 35.5 %, respectively).

Other forms of continuing vocational training, such as participation in meetings, conferences, on-the-job training, learning or quality circles, or self-directed learning/e-learning, were facilitated by around two-thirds of all enterprises in Austria (68.8 %) in 2020. In 2015, 79.5 % of all enterprises had still conducted at least one of these forms of continuing vocational training.

In particular, participation in meetings and conferences declined significantly in 2020: fewer than half of enterprises (41.5 %) sent their employees to these continuing vocational training events, compared with 65.4 % in 2015. With this high proportion, Austria's enterprises were frontrunners within the European Union at the time.

Increase in self-directed learning/e-learning

After many vocational training courses were not available on a face-to-face basis, around one third of Austrian enterprises (36.2 %) relied on self-directed learning/e-learning to train their employees. With an increase of 15 percentage points compared to 2015 (21.6 %), Austria ranks above the EU average which increased from 19.5 % to 29.1 % in the same period.

Detailed results and further information on continuing vocational training in enterprises can be found on our [website](#).

Information on methodology, definitions: The Continuing Vocational Training Survey (CVTS) is conducted every five years throughout the EU among enterprises with at least ten employees. Apprenticeship training is not included in continuing vocational training, but recorded separately as initial vocational training. In Austria, 5 006 enterprises were surveyed about training activities in 2020.

The first Europe-wide results were published by Eurostat in October 2022.

If you have any questions on this topic, please contact:

Eduard Stöger, phone: +43 1 711 28-8290, e-mail: eduard.stoeger@statistik.gv.at

Media owner, producer and publisher:

STATISTICS AUSTRIA | Federal Institution under Public Law | Guglgasse 13 | 1110 Vienna | www.statistik.at

Press: phone: +43 1 711 28-7777 | e-mail: presse@statistik.gv.at

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