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TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	2
GLOSSARY	3
History and background	4
Models and methodologies	4
Key actors	5
Coverage.....	5
Linkage to qualification frameworks.....	5
Feedback.....	5
Good practice, problems and issues	6
The role of ComProCom	6
Specific industries and professions	6
Internet Sources.....	6

GLOSSARY

ISCED:	International Standard Classification of Education
ECVET:	European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training
EKEPIS:	National Accreditation Centre for Continuing Vocational Training
EOPPEP:	National Organisation for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance
EQF:	European Qualifications Framework
ISCO:	International Standard Classification of Occupations
NQF:	National Qualifications Framework
O.P.:	Occupational Profile

History and background

The Austrian VET system is highly influenced by the German, with its long tradition and orientation towards the concept of Beruf.

In Austria, short descriptions of an occupation a list of tasks/skills and knowledge areas called Berufsbild (image of the occupation) or (competence field) are sometimes seen as occupational standards. They correspond to educational standards, because their purpose is not systematically to describe an occupation, but to describe the tasks, knowledge areas and skills which will be covered by the education and training, providing a form of 'training plan'.

To ensure that the theoretical (school-based) and the practical (work-based) part of training correspond, occupations are divided into activity fields (Lernfelder), to which learning objectives for the school-based training are ascribed. A checklist is used to ensure that skills and knowledge acquired in the workplace are also treated in class.

Models and methodologies

An aspect of competency notion is contextualisation.

In the UK system of 'National Vocational Qualifications' (NVQ), for instance, the assessment of competencies is totally geared to practical use. The Austrian debate addresses this issue under the heading of "*practical relevance*", which in turn is an important issue in vocational training. The opening of the educational system and the creation or strengthening of links to the "outside world" are important motives in the general debate on key competencies. Employers and employees alike call for and support these links to the world of business, employment and society, though in different ways and with different priorities. There are manifold approaches and initiatives to enhance this contextualisation, their impact, however, e.g. how they tie in with classroom teaching, has hardly been studied at all.

In the 1990s, the competency notion was systematically studied by the Federation of Austrian Industry (*Industriellenvereinigung*) *Subject-matter competence, methodological competence and social competence* are the key terms used in this context. Subject-matter competence or basic subject-matter training ("being able to do something", "disposing of practicable know-how and skills") is clearly rated as a crucial requirement for "employability"; however, it should neither lead to "over-specialisation" nor to "detached abstraction".

Methodological competence is a crucial requirement for practically implementing and further developing subject-matter competence. Flexibility, self-directed learning, independent problem-solving and accountability are stressed as key elements of methodological competence. Social competence covers an openness toward the world and environmental awareness, as well as team spirit (including traditional work ethics) and communication skills. A position paper of the *Industriellenvereinigung* narrows down the task of school, interacting with further education as an element of on-the-job and life-long learning and further education, to the achievement of “fundamental educational objectives

Key actors

In Austria, social partners play a major role in defining standards. Employers and employees participate equally in the process of definition and renewal of qualifications and the ‘consensus principle’ guarantees that their positions will be taken into account. They develop the qualification structure, the assessment standards and the standards applying to workplace training in cooperation with the federal institute for vocational training (Österreichisches Institut für Berufsbildungsforschung - ÖIBF), which coordinates the project and carries out research projects to support their work.

Coverage

The Austrian Employment Service provides a Bildungsinformationssystem, a database with 19.000 occupations and 23.000 occupational skills, so any thinkable occupation is included.

Linkage to qualification frameworks

Austria possesses no occupational standards. Other coordination mechanisms are used to ensure a strong link between qualifications and the labour market. The involvement of the economy in training provision or participation by social partners in developing educational standards may be such coordinating mechanisms, fulfilling the same function performed elsewhere by occupational standards.

Feedback

At this time there is no user feedback available.

Good practice, problems and issues

At this point there weren't any examples of particularly good practice any particular problems of competence standards identified.

The role of ComProCom

ComProCom project coincides with considerations about changes in the methodology for the selection, development and accreditation of O.P.'s.

Specific industries and professions

Austria has a Berufsbild for Business administration which is called "Betriebswirt". A Betriebswirt is supposed to be educated in the areas financing, accounting, marketing, human resources, organization, production and business law. A detailed description of the Berufsbild is at the Internet Sources.

The designation Betriebswirt is gained either through University (or Fachhochschule)-studies or through vocational training. At Universities that graduate studies in business administration are concluded with the academic degree (Bachelor/Master/Doctor of Business Administration). Compared to higher education, the vocational training programs are more designed practice-oriented designed.

Internet Sources

-Database of Austrian Berufsbilder (job descriptions to nearly 1,800 occupations which shows activities , employment prospects and training opportunities) of the Austrian Employment Service

<http://www.beruflexikon.at/berufsliste?lexikonauswahl&alle>

-Description of the Berufsbild "Betriebswirt" of the Austrian Employment Service

<http://www.ams.at/bis/bis/StammberufDetail.php?noteid=872>

-The Berufsinformationssystem (occupations information system) of the Austrian Employment Service

<http://www.ams.at/bis/bis/index.php>