The need for career guidance in Vocational Education and Training

An international perspective on the system of apprenticeship

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An international perspective on the system of apprenticeship

- The need for a dual education system
- The dual education system in Austria
- Career decisions of young adults
- Career guidance in VET
Possible structures of Vocational Education and Training (VET) systems

- Full time apprenticeship (Enterprise-based training)
- Dual education system
- Full time VET schools

= Key factor for low youth unemployment in Austria (Tritscher-Archan 2014)
How do students decide for one specific apprenticeship trade?

> 300 apprenticeship trades

~ 250 apprenticeship trades

198 apprenticeship trades

The need for a dual education system
Youth unemployment rate within the five OECD-members with largest share of dual education system

% of youth labor force, 2016, Countries of the Euro Area.
Youth unemployment rate within countries with more than 10 % of students in Secondary Level II in dual education

% of youth labor force, 2016, Countries of the Euro Area.
Choosing the right apprenticeship trade is of importance for both the **individual student** (who wants to receive a job matching his own interest profile) and **community** (which has to balance under- and excess demands for labor).
The dual education system in Austria
Excluding Special Needs/Integrative Education.
(Source: Euroguidance Austria, 2014)

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Part-time Vocational School and Apprenticeship
Initial overview

- Requirement: completion of nine years of compulsory schooling
- Duration: apprenticeship-specific (2-4 years)
- Part-time Vocational School:
  - 1-1,5 days in school (3,5-4 days in training company)
  - Compulsory: Who chooses an apprenticeship has to visit a corresponding Part-time Vocational School
  - 1/3 general education
    2/3 apprenticeship-specific content (practical training/workshops)
- Relatively new option: Apprenticeship with „Matura“ (entitles to university-access)
Dual vocational training
Two places of learning: school and training enterprise

Duration:
2-4 years

80 % enterprise-based training

20 % training at Part-time Voc. School

Most training takes place under practical working conditions.

- Enterprise-based training takes up dominant timeshare of apprenticeship period
- 1-1.5 days per week in Part-time Voc. School (mostly seasonally blocked)
- After apprenticeship period and final exam: skilled worker with widely accepted qualification

Enterprise-based Training

• Both apprentices and training enterprises undergo a selection process:
  – **Apprentices** need to apply at a training enterprise for a position within the desired apprenticeship trade
  – **Companies** need to apply to become a training enterprise (company size not relevant, but availability of qualified trainers)

• Apprenticeship contract
  – between apprentice and training enterprise
  – signed for a limited period of time

• Apprentices are fully integrated into the working process at the training enterprise
Education at Part-time Vocational School

• Part-time Vocational Schools specialize on certain apprenticeship trades (no free choice of school)

• Cooperation between schools and business sector:
  – Registration at Part-time Vocational School
  – Time schedule (weekly, blocked or seasonal classes)

• Teachers’ qualifications:
  – Subject-specific secondary education
  – > 3 years of business practice
  – Pedagogical education: University Colleges of Teacher Education

Career decisions of young adults
How do students decide for an specific apprenticeship trade?

- Trait and Factor-Approach (Parsons 1909)
- Theory of Occupational Choice (Ginzberg 1952)
- Life-Span-Life-Space Theory (Super 1953)
- Social Position Theory (Keller & Zavalloni 1964)
- Theory of Vocational Choice and Adjustment (Holland 1973)
- Theory of Circumscription and Compromise (Gottfredson 1981)
- Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura 1986)
- Social Cognitive Career Theory (Lent et al. 1994)
- ...

Endogenous factors: Interests, self-efficacy expectations, age, gender, ...
Exogenous factors: School, parents and peers, general job situation, ...
Career decision as **process**
rather than a single decision at a specific moment in time

**Concept of Vocational Life Stages**  
(Super et al. 1965)

**1. Growth Stage**  
(Birth–14 years)  
Development of self-concept, fantasy is important, at the end: reality testing

**2. Exploration Stage**  
(Age 15–24)  
Provisionally decision for a job, job is tried out in reality

**3. Establishment Stage**  
(Age 25–44)  
Establishment of one's own position, stabilization

**4. Maintenance Stage**  
(Age 45–64)  
Development within the chosen field of work

**5. Decline Stage**  
(Age 65+)  
Drawback from working life, retirement
Career decisions of young adults

Selected issues:
(1) Gender-stereotypic career choices
(2) Drop-Outs from apprenticeship
Top 3 apprenticeship trades among the 198 possible apprenticeship trades

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top 3 among female apprentices</th>
<th>Top 3 among male apprentices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Retail trade services 24,0 %</td>
<td>Metal technology 14,1 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office assistant 11,9 %</td>
<td>Electrical engineering 11,8 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hairdresser 9,9 %</td>
<td>Motor vehicle engineering 9,5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% among female apprentices</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>46,7%</td>
<td>35,7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Images: shutterstock.com, Stockfoto-ID: 164533187; 247122394; 221841379; 127857011
Wages in the Top 10 most commonly chosen apprenticeship trades

(1) Collective agreement for metal-, electro technology, motor vehicle engineering, technical designer specializing in installations- and building technology, mechatronics
(2) Restaurant specialist, hotel and catering assistant, gastronomy expert (with the last skilled trade not being stereotypic for one gender)
(3) Collective agreement for general retail trade
(4) According to general collective agreement for trade and commerce
(5) According to collective agreement for travel agencies


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Career decisions of young adults

Selected issues:
(1) Gender-stereotypic career choices
(2) Drop-Outs from apprenticeship
16.2% drop-outs from apprenticeship

Factors influencing the drop-out from apprenticeship (Dornmayr 2016):
• **Age** (higher age = higher risk of drop-out)
• **Gender** (underrepresented gender = higher risk of dropout)
• Branch/industry sector, nationality, ...

### Top 3 branches with highest gender imbalances

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Male-dominated branches:</th>
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<td>Healthcare/nursing</td>
<td>Construction/building technology</td>
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<td>Law/administration</td>
<td>Mechanical engineering/metal</td>
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### Share of drop-outs

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<th>Share of drop-outs (2008-2013)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Healthcare/nursing</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law/administration</td>
<td>19.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Body care/beauty</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
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Career guidance in vocational education and training
Selected approaches to career counselling
(Mosberger, Schneeweiß, Steiner 2012)

• Client-centered counselling
  – Aim: encouragement and clarification of self-concept
  – No diagnosis (= avoidance of counselor's responsibility)
  – Focus on relationship between client and counselor

• Development-related counselling (e.g. Super 1980)
  – Aim: determination of vocational life stage
  – Life stage (growth, exploration, ...) determines counselling process

• Trait-and-Factor-Counselling
  – Aim: matching of individuals with jobs (Parsons 1909)
Example: **Trait-and-Factor-Counselling** utilizing the RIASEC-Model (Holland 1973)

![RIASEC Model Diagram]

- **Realistic**
- **Investigative**
- **Conventional**
- **Artistic**
- **Enterprising**
- **Social**

**Interest profile** (expressed by 3-letter-code)

- **e.g.**
  - **RIC**
  - **ESC**

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Why career guidance:
• Large number of apprenticeship trades
• Challenges such as
  – overcoming gender stereotypes
  – reducing the number of drop-outs from apprenticeship

How can career guidance be structured on a...
• ... curricular level in school
  e.g. Subject Career guidance and life-skills, 2 lessons per week
    (Curriculum Polytechnical School 2014)
• ... extracurricular level
  e.g. Austrian Chamber of Commerce (WKO), Chamber of Labour (AK),
    Public Employment Service (AMS)
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An international perspective

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References


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