

# Labour Market Policy Austria – Overview

Reporting year 2023



## **Publishing information**

### **Owner and publisher:**

Federal Ministry of Labour and Economy (BMAW)  
Stubenring 1, 1010 Vienna

**Published and produced in:** Vienna

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**Vienna, 2024**

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# 1 Introduction

This publication gives an overview of Austria's labour market policies, and is available in German and English.<sup>1</sup> Austrian labour market policy distinguishes between active and passive measures. Passive measures provide financial security to people without work, the best-known examples being unemployment benefit and unemployment assistance schemes. Active measures, for their part, support people to return to jobs and include training programmes, integration subsidies or social enterprises. The overarching goal of labour market policy is to combine full employment with the needs of business and industry. To this end, measures are taken to combat long-term unemployment, activate the unemployed, use active intervention to enhance skills and ensure equal opportunities, develop human resources and undertake efforts to boost transparency in the labour market.

Administrative implementation of labour market policy takes place at several levels:

- The legal framework is regulated in labour market law (Unemployment Insurance Act, Public Employment Service Act and Labour Market Policy Finance Act).
- Labour market policy targets for the Public Employment Service (Arbeitsmarktservice – German acronym AMS, but for ease of understanding the English acronym PES will be used below) are defined by the Federal Minister of Labour and Economy to be implemented by the PES. The best-known example is the granting of benefits to the unemployed.
- Other major players include the Social Affairs Ministry Service (SMS), which provides support in particular to young people and to people with disabilities at the interface to the labour market.

This publication starts by describing the relevant institutions and financial resources: Chapter 2 outlines the remit and organisation of the BMAW, Chapter 3 describes the PES and Chapter 4 other actors such as the SMS. Chapter 5 details the financial side of labour market policy: revenues, disbursements and expenditures. A description of the specific measures follows: passive and activating measures in Chapter 6, active measures in Chapter 7 and other measures in Chapter 8. Chapter 9 outlines the SMS measures, and Chapter 10

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<sup>1</sup> For the German version go to: [Publikationen und Studien des BMAW](#)

selected EU programmes. In addition to a description of the specific measures, year-on-year participant numbers and budget figures are also given, including comparisons with employment and GDP figures put the scale of the different programmes into better context. Finally, Chapter 11 gives an overview of labour market research and statistical sources.



# 2 Federal Ministry of Labour and Economy

Every country needs a well-functioning labour market to ensure that country's economic and social development. Austria's labour market policy is characterised by close cooperation between governmental and non-governmental institutions and stakeholders. From an international perspective, institutionalised cooperation between politics and social partners is a special feature of Austrian policy and has proven its viability in recent crises such as the Covid-19 pandemic.

## 2.1 Remit of the Federal Ministry of Labour and Economy (BMAW)

According to §59(2) of the Public Employment Service Act (Arbeitsmarktservicegesetz – AMSG), the Federal Minister of Labour and Economy is obliged to communicate labour market policy (LMP) objectives to the PES. The targets set by the Federal Minister of Labour and Economy on management and organisation of the PES, support measures, target-group-specific programmes, etc., usually apply for several years. However, there has been some need for revision due to the changed labour market situation. Recently, specific labour market policy targets have been published by the Federal Minister of Labour and Economy, their focus being on increased placement activities. As a key task of the Public Employment Service, placement is to support a dynamic and resilient labour market. In addition, the continued use of active labour market policy measures is to prevent unemployment, offer skills training and create incentives for employment. Programmes offered to important target groups are to be expanded as well. Finally, policies are to ensure the continuous development of the Public Employment Service enabling it to live up to the challenges posed by the labour market so that its activities meet with even greater success. These policy targets can also be viewed on the website of the BMAW.

Labour market policy is tasked with preventing and eliminating unemployment, and with bringing together labour supply and demand in the most comprehensive, economically viable and sustainable manner while ensuring that social and economic principles are upheld. The aims of labour market policy are:

- Reaching full employment,
- Retaining older employees in the labour market,
- Actively offering skills training and ensuring equal opportunities,
- Boosting transparency in the labour market,
- Developing human resources,
- Activating the unemployed, and
- Fighting long-term unemployment.

The BMAW condenses these general objectives into LMP objectives, which are then implemented by the PES.

## 2.2 Organisation / Organisation Chart

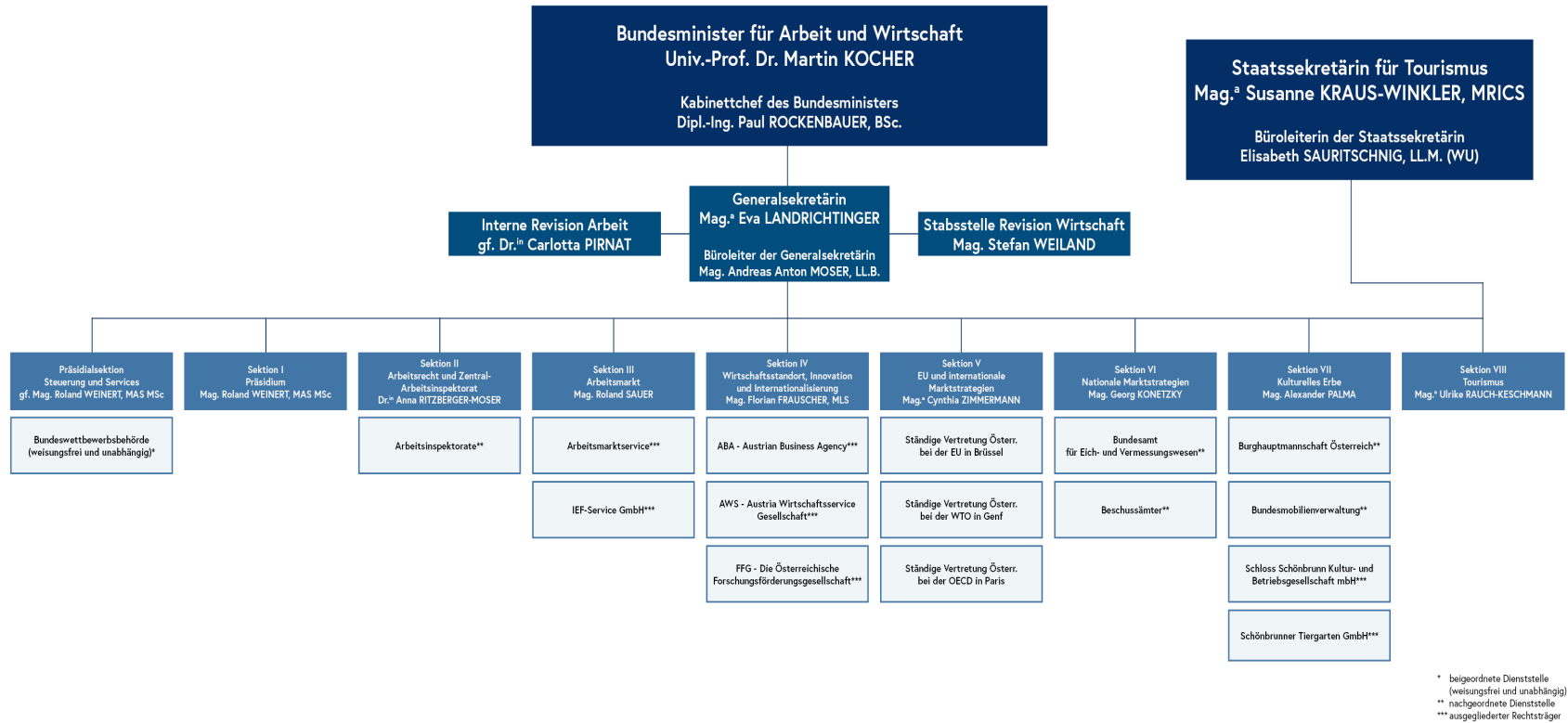
The Federal Ministry of Labour and Economy (BMAW) consists of a Management and Services Directorate-General for the Administration of Economic Affairs and another eight Directorates General:

- Directorate-General I – Administration of Labour Affairs
- Directorate-General II – Labour Law and Central Labour Inspectorate
- Directorate-General III – Labour Market
- Directorate-General IV – Economic Affairs, Innovation and International Policy
- Directorate-General V – European Union and International Market Strategies
- Directorate-General VI – National Market Strategies
- Directorate-General VII – Cultural Heritage
- Directorate-General VIII – Tourism

The Federal Minister of Labour and Economy is supported by a State Secretary for Tourism and a Secretary General. The central task of the Secretary General's Office is to coordinate all matters and topics concerning the entire portfolio of the ministry. Alongside the Secretary General's Office, there is Internal Audit – Labour and Internal Audit – Economic Affairs. For more details – see Figure 1: Organisation Chart of the Federal Ministry of Labour and Economy.

Figure 1: Organisation Chart of the Federal Ministry of Labour and Economy

 **Bundesministerium**  
Arbeit und Wirtschaft



Alongside the Ministry, there are various subordinate bodies such as the Labour Inspectorates as well as divested legal entities such as the PES and IEF-Service GmbH.

## 2.3 The BMAW's Role in Labour Market Policy

Labour market policy comprises all measures taken by public bodies, such as the Federal Government, the PES and even some measures taken by the Länder (federal states), with a view to controlling the labour market. A regulated labour market impacts positively on the welfare system and ensures fair economic competition.

Austrian labour market policy is subject to the concepts and requirements defined by the European Union, where Austria is represented by directly elected members of the European Parliament and by its Federal Chancellor and Ministers in the European Council and Council of the European Union.

Implementation of labour market policies is the responsibility of the PES, which is a public service provider and independent legal entity – see Chapter 3 on page 13.

The BMAW's Labour Market Directorate-General assists the Federal Minister in performing his obligations towards the PES, for instance by:

- defining general labour market policy objectives,
- approving resolutions adopted by the Administrative Board concerning financial matters,
- upholding rights of supervision and control, and continuous efficiency monitoring.

The Federal Minister of Labour and Economy is the supreme body at national level and authorised to issue directions and instructions. The Minister is entitled, as part of active labour market policy, to set general objectives, and to supervise and assess the PES's activities. He may also, in consultation with the Federal Minister of Finance (BMF), approve general financial matters. Decisions on the deployment of LMP tools and the resources necessary to achieve the predefined LMP objectives largely rest with the PES.

## 3 Public Employment Service (PES)

The Public Employment Service is a public-law body in existence since 1 July 1994, the day on which it was divested from direct federal administration (legal basis: AMSG, Federal Law Gazette no. 313/1994). The structural reform was carried out to narrow down the wide range of tasks and focus on the core LMP tasks, to add more flexibility to the deployment of resources, to create more efficiency by means of decentralised decision-making, and to ensure the social partners' involvement in decision-making and the implementation of labour market policies.

### 3.1 Functions and Legal Basis of the PES

The PES's general statutory responsibilities are laid down in §29 of the AMSG. Accordingly, the PES is required to ensure that businesses and industry are supplied with workers and that all individuals available to the Austrian labour market are employed in the best possible manner. This goal should be met within the full employment policy framework, which the Federal Government pursues with a view to preventing and eliminating unemployment while ensuring that social and economic principles are upheld. This also includes securing people's livelihood during periods of unemployment.

To this end, the Public Employment Service is charged with:

- implementing active labour market measures (counselling, placement and support) with the aim of regaining full employment and preventing unemployment,
- verifying claims for and paying wage-compensation benefits in the event of unemployment as part of passive labour market policy (particularly as defined in the ALVG), and
- regulatory tasks such as the admission of foreign (non-EU) nationals to the labour market (Act Governing the Employment of Foreign Nationals; Ausländerbeschäftigungsgesetz – AuslBG).

The PES supports jobseekers and employers in tackling the structural and technological change in the Austrian economy, specifically with its active LMP measures.

It helps to increase and adapt jobseekers' skills level to the economy's needs, and to make up for educational deficits. Finally, the PES makes an important contribution to tackling integration policy challenges.

## 3.2 Organisation

The organisation model of the PES revolves around the idea that an effective labour market policy requires a joint approach by worker, employer and government representatives and appropriate consideration of regional disparities and characteristics. Accordingly, the PES is a three-tiered organisation comprising federal, Länder and regional levels. The social partners' involvement in policy design is substantial and extends across all three levels.

The PES currently comprises one Federal Office, nine Länder offices, 98 regional offices and six branch offices.

## 3.3 Corporate Management

**Bodies with decision-making powers and powers of control:** the Administrative Board (tripartite: social partners and government representatives) at federal level, the Land Directorate (social partners and management, and – under certain conditions – a representative of the Land government) at Land level, and the Regional Advisory Board (social partners and management) at district level.

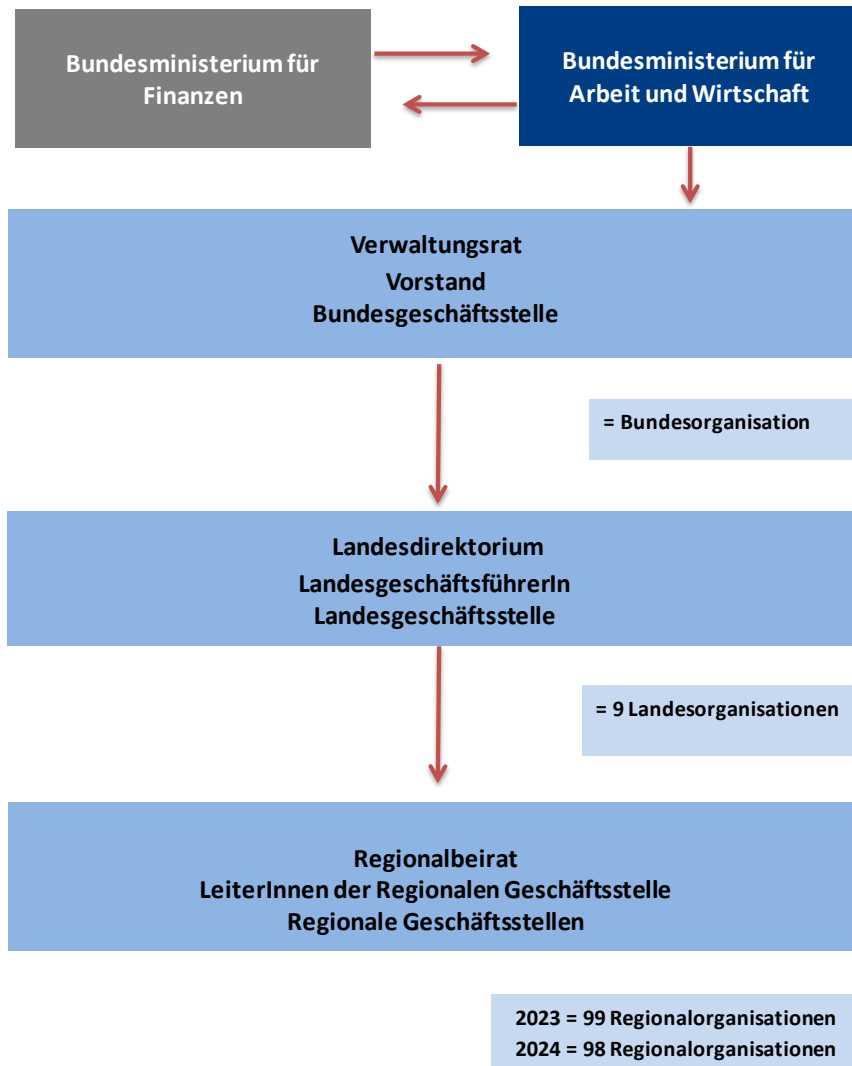
**Executive bodies:** the Board of Directors at federal level, the managers of the Länder offices and their deputies at Land level, and the managers of the regional offices at regional level.

The PES offices support the management in the implementation of labour market policy. The Länder offices and regional employment offices, which had existed before the 1994 reform, have been restructured accordingly at the Land and regional level, while a new Federal Office (Bundesgeschäftsstelle – BGS) has been established at federal level.

In addition, the PES is authorised to create special institutions for specific activities (such as for training its own staff or for covering specific priority areas at regional level).

### 3.4 Organisation Model of the Public Employment Service Austria

Figure 2: Organisation Chart of PES Austria



Source PES, 2024

### 3.5 Organisation at Federal Level

At federal level, the PES consists of the Administrative Board and the Board of Directors, the latter being supported by its own Federal Office (BGS). The BGS should ensure that a

uniform approach is applied throughout Austria to all fundamental matters. It is also responsible for all affairs that extend beyond Land level. In addition to managerial control and exercising its coordination and control functions, the federal organisation is responsible for creating the framework necessary for decentralised implementation of labour market policy.

The Administrative Board comprises a maximum of twelve members. They are appointed by:

- the two sides of industry (three members representing employers and three representing workers),
- the Federal Minister of Labour (three representatives, one of whom proposed by the Federal Minister of Finance) and the PES central works council (with one member entitled to vote solely on issues concerning staff matters and two other members optionally invited in an advisory capacity).

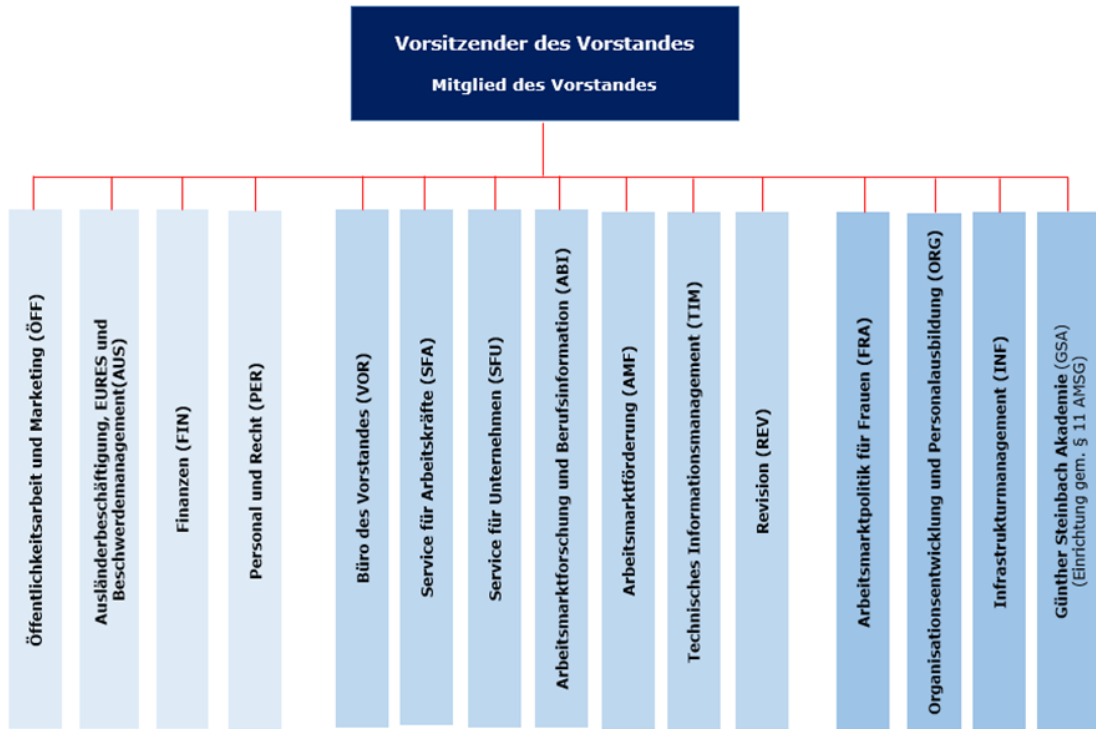
Members are appointed for a period of six years. The Administrative Board elects the Chairperson and two Deputies from among its members for a period of two years. These three functions are to be shared by the worker, employer and BMAW representatives.

As a rule, Administrative Board resolutions are adopted by simple majority; important issues require a two-thirds majority plus one vote. The Administrative Board has to appoint a monitoring committee and may set up committees to prepare complex issues.

The Board of Directors comprises two members and handles the PES's day-to-day operations on its own responsibility. The Chief Executive of the Board runs the Federal Office and represents the federal organisation in public and in international bodies and networks. Members of the Administrative Board may not serve on the Board of Directors at the same time.



Figure 3: PES Austria – Federal Office



Source: PES, 2024

### 3.6 Organisation at Länder Level

Each of the nine Länder has its own Land organisation composed of the Land Directorate, the manager of the Land office and their deputy. The Land organisation is responsible for all labour market policy matters at Land level, management and control, budget planning and allocation, as well as coordination and support of regional employment service organisations in the respective Land.

The Land Directorate consists of the manager of the Land office (who also chairs the Directorate), their deputy and two representatives each of worker and employer organisations, and – under certain conditions – a representative of the respective Land government. A representative of the Land government may be asked to attend in an advisory capacity if the Land in question covers at least 10% of the spending on PES-subsidised labour market policy projects and at least one third of the expenditure for company grants (in relation to the corresponding PES expenses in the whole Land). The Land Directorate defines the principles for implementing labour market policy in its Land.

The Directorate's remit includes:

- Defining the principles for implementing labour market policy in a Land (approval of priority objectives),
- Defining the financial outlines (i.e. the budget approved by the BMAW and BMF for PES staff and material expenses within the employment service's own scope of activity), and the use and allocation of funds,
- Supervising the management at Land and regional level,
- Deciding on the establishment of regional PES offices and the creation of special entities.

The manager of the Land office and their deputy are appointed by the Administrative Board for a period of six years. They are required to follow the decisions of the Land Directorate and the guidelines of the federal organisation. The Land organisations are supported in their work by the employees of the Land offices.

### **3.7 Organisation at Regional Level**

At regional level, the PES consists of the tripartite Regional Advisory Board and the manager of the regional office. The duties of the regional organisations include achieving the pre-defined LMP objectives and implementing labour market policy in the region.

The Regional Advisory Board consists of the manager of the regional office (chairperson) and four other members who are appointed by the Land Directorate for a period of six years on the recommendation of the representative bodies for employers and employees. The Advisory Board is responsible for ensuring regional implementation of the guidelines passed down by the federal and Land organisations and for defining the LMP principles for the regional offices.

Its remit includes:

- Submitting proposals to the Land organisation as to how labour market policy should be organised at regional level,
- Conducting hearings prior to appointing the manager of the regional office,
- Approving the regional work programme and the budget.

The manager of a regional office is appointed by the Land Directorate for an unlimited period of time. They conduct the employment service's business at regional level on their own responsibility and represent it in public, while taking into account the guidelines defined by the federal and Land organisations and the principles adopted by the Regional Advisory Board.

The regional offices are usually located in the district capitals and are responsible for all clients resident in the relevant administrative district.

Apart from various control, coordination and administrative tasks, each regional office has two major functions, namely the provision of:

- **Services for workers:** information, counselling, guidance, placement, benefit claims processing, initial and continuing training, services relating to the employment of foreign nationals (AusIBG).
- **Services for employers:** information, counselling and support in all matters relating to personnel and the labour market, placements and filling vacancies, Europe-wide recruitment and placement of personnel within EURES, development of the labour market, employment of foreign workers, early warning system.

The services for workers/jobseekers are offered depending on their individual circumstances and needs.

As of 1 January 2024, every regional office<sup>2</sup> features

- Initial Service (Erst-Service) featuring income support, assistance to walk-in clients and management of clients as well as general information about the labour market, including internet-based self-service facilities for job searches, general information about initial and further training, etc.
- Job Service to support clients with placement and assist them during job search processes, including clients in need of enhanced assistance, or programmes to increase employment. Depending on the circumstances prevailing in any given region, employment service staff is specially trained and deployed, or the know-how of external providers is bought, to cater to the needs of special groups of people for whom special

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<sup>2</sup> In 2024, regional offices are being reorganised. Reorganisation is to be completed by the end of June 2024. Various organisational forms will be in use until then.

knowledge is required, such as returners, young people, individuals with health issues, etc.

- This unit offers all services employers might need (advice, recruitment, programmes to increase employment, employment of foreign nationals). Depending on the region, special forms of assistance to employers are also available.

### **Vocational Information Centres (BIZ) of the employment service**

The work of Vocational Information Centres (BerufsInfoZentren – BIZ) focuses on preventing unemployment and strengthening the employability of workers. The services offered by the PES's 73 BIZ centres are manifold: young people and adults – regardless of whether they are still in training, already economically active or looking for a job – are advised in person, by telephone or online about their career options and training alternatives and professionally supported in their career choice process. In addition to the free use of PCs for online searches, all BIZ centres of the employment service provide a large selection of printed products and films about occupations, job opportunities, labour market trends as well as training and further training options.

The BIZ's work for young people revolves around the transition from initial training to the world of work. In cooperation with teachers, BIZs organise workshops to help pupils choose career and training pathways which suit their interests and personal talents.

BIZ services are provided objectively, free of charge and anonymously if desired, meeting high quality standards as confirmed by the successful recertification for the IBOBB quality label.

### **Use of external providers to help with specific problems**

For counselling and guidance services to groups of people with special problems, such as

- Clarify how to reconcile work and family life,
- Promote equality in the labour market in line with the equality objectives of labour market policy,
- Help young people overcome obstacles that make their integration into the training and labour more difficult,
- Provide advice to migrants regarding legal issues (e.g. aliens law),
- Help people with disabilities and health issues,

external entities, which are (co-)financed by the employment service, are called in to support the PES.

Initial and continuing training is offered by external educational institutions on behalf of the PES (usually by way of a public tender). Support for business start-ups and advice for companies concerning HR development or organisational issues has always been provided by specific institutions. The same applies to supporting the reintegration of the long-term unemployed by providing transition jobs.

### **3.8 Management and Control of PES Contents**

The PES is committed to modern public administration and has developed into a versatile and client-oriented service provider through its use of advanced processes and efficient management methods. Independent sources have found the PES to provide well developed, high-quality services. Both the European Network of Public Employment Services, in an international assessment, and the Austrian Quality Award have rated the Austrian PES as delivering excellent services. The PES is a stable and reliable, but also a flexible organisation that is able to adapt quickly to new challenges.

The PES's remit is described in the AMSG. The federal organisation issues norms (federal guidelines) to regulate the execution of the individual tasks at national level and within its own sphere of competence.

PES Austria lays down the medium-term strategies and the resources required (staff, budget) in a longer-term plan. This plan is based on the central dimensions of the quality assurance system implemented in 1999 in accordance with the EFQM (European Foundation for Quality Management) model. The principles of gender mainstreaming and non-discrimination are important criteria to promote equal opportunities in the quality assurance process.

The PES services are generally geared towards the needs of jobseekers and employers. The aim is to reduce unemployment and its duration, to spread the risk of being affected by unemployment by preventing unemployment from being centred on certain people and groups, to secure people's livelihood as stipulated by law (especially while they are out of work), and to assist employers in their search for suitable staff and in their efforts to help employees adapt to structural change.

The framework for Austria's PES is defined by the following policy and strategy programmes and objectives:

- The European Employment Guidelines,
- The Austrian Reform Programme (NRP) as part of the European semester,
- The longer-term plan of the PES as currently amended,
- The objectives defined by the Federal Minister of Labour and Economy for the PES's implementation of labour market policy,
- The plan for gender equality and the promotion of women as currently amended,
- The PES's labour market policy objectives (as proposed by the Board of Directors and adopted by the Administrative Board).

The PES's annual LMP objectives are negotiated among the social partners, the federal organisation and Länder organisations, and ultimately adopted by the Administrative Board.

The PES is managed using the Balanced Scorecard (BSC). The BSC is a tool to show the performance of the PES in relation to its strategy and wide-ranging tasks in the form of quantitative indicators.

The BSC covers:

- Achievement of LMP objectives,
- Key results of the services for workers and employers,
- Satisfaction of jobseekers and employers with the PES as revealed in surveys,
- Job satisfaction of PES staff, and
- Other key performance indicators such as those relating to the PES's call centres.

The indicators are weighted to take account of local situations and aggregated to an overall score, giving an overall performance for each PES office.

The BSC can thus be used to show the strengths and weaknesses as well as improvement potential of each regional office and Länder office in a clear manner.

The results of the process are also used for exchanging good practice. To ensure good BSC results, it is important for every office to keep the diverse requirements of the PES in mind:

placement speed, customer satisfaction, equal opportunities, profitability and business results must all be given equal weighting. All of these factors together make up the quality of the PES's services.

Since 2015 the PES has been part of a mandatory and ongoing benchlearning process together with all other employment services within the European Union (EU)/European Economic Area (EEA), under which it has already been assessed several times by an international team of assessors. The resulting recommendations and potential strengths are incorporated into both the longer-term plan and the quality programme.

### **3.9 Staff**

As at 31 Dec 2023, the PES had 6,523 employees (annual average of 5,827 full-time equivalents), women accounting for 66.3%. PES staff also included 73 apprentices, whereof 46 were female. The part-time ratio was roughly 35.0%, with 85.3% of part-timers being women. With 362 beneficiary disabled employees, the PES has exceeded the hiring quota under the Disability Employment Act (Behinderteneinstellungsgesetz – BEinstG) for years.

A special focus is on the advancement of women within the PES: as an employer, the PES pursues a consistent gender equality strategy for its employees. In 2023, the in-house equality policy proved successful: with a proportion of 55.5%, the target of 50% women in managerial positions was clearly exceeded. The PES is also successful in terms of equal pay, with only a 3.1% difference between men and women.

In addition to good training and ongoing further training, a wide range of seminars, coaching and supervision programmes support PES employees in maintaining and promoting their health. Confidential annual appraisal interviews define collaboration and work objectives. They create clarity and security in work situations, improve motivation and increase job satisfaction. Family friendliness is an integral part of the PES's personnel and corporate policy. On the occasion of the 'berufundfamilie' audit, the PES was once again awarded the label of family-friendly organisation.

### 3.10 Technical Resources

The technical resources of Austria's PES are geared towards three pillars: process optimisation, enhancement of self-service options and management information. The technical services and products should be for the benefit and satisfaction of its users. Successful implementation is measured against various criteria, such as availability, regular updating, practical use, and the efficiency and effectiveness of solutions. Areas receiving electronic support thus include client self-service options (e.g. via the internet), operational administration (e.g. online matching of applicants with job vacancies) by PES staff, as well as managerial systems available to PES managers through data warehousing.

Operational software applications support the PES's core functions, i.e. online placement, administration of grants and insurance benefits, internal training organisation, accounting and numerous internal support duties within the PES.

Management information is provided by a central data warehouse (DWH) system, with all PES staff having web-based access to the system via the PES intranet. Available data include labour market statistics, labour market policy control, grants and funding budget, insurance benefits or company data, and issues related to the employment of foreign nationals. The DWH system also features tools for monitoring labour market policy. Other tools are available to monitor active LMP programmes, careers and companies.

In line with the multi-channel strategy adopted by the PES, the tasks of information and communication, administration and job placement should be carried out electronically, as far as possible, and – on a selective and supportive basis – over the telephone, thereby also maximising the extent to which the measures tap into clients' self-help potential. By the same token, personal contacts should now be by appointment only, and need to be planned and designed around the defined support and counselling requirements. The ultimate aim is to improve the quality of the services and develop them further to meet clients' needs.

The ePES (eAMS) account is an important communication and processing channel and gives clients the opportunity to make full use of the various e-services. It is an unbureaucratic and fast means of submitting applications for unemployment benefit and grants or for dealing with administrative paperwork. Employers may use the account to publish vacancies, apply for financial support or process employment permits for foreign nationals. How much support is required is agreed between counsellor and client and included in the written action



plan. Registration and authentication are conducted via the relevant regional office or via the Federal Ministry of Finance's online service (FinanzOnline).

Alongside improved self-service options via the internet, the PES's contact centres also offer telephone services ('ServiceLines'). The PES is readily available through these ServiceLines and provides a broad range of services in compliance with Austria-wide minimum standards.

### 3.11 Early Warning System

In accordance with §45a of the Labour Market Promotion Act (Arbeitsmarktförderungsgesetz – AMFG), companies are obliged to notify the regional PES offices in good time of any planned large-scale reductions in staff (notification obligation). This enables the PES to consult with the management of the company, the works council and the competent representative bodies for employers and employees to discuss measures aimed at preventing the termination of employment contracts and/or layoffs. The PES may initiate appropriate schemes and subsidies to this end, e.g. in-company training, short-time working arrangements or short-time working that includes upskilling. Insolvencies must also be reported to the PES.

If negotiations fail to achieve the goal of saving jobs, efforts will be made to reintegrate the workers concerned into the labour market as quickly as possible by means of counselling, placement and measures to facilitate placement. Older workers are priority beneficiaries of such reintegration efforts.

The PES must be notified at least 30 days prior to the termination of employment contracts if the job losses affect at least

- five employees in companies with more than 20 and less than 100 employees, or
- 5% of the workforce in companies with 100 to 600 employees, or
- 30 employees in companies with more than 600 employees, or
- five employees over 50 (does not apply to seasonal businesses).

Job cuts that are carried out before they have been reported to the PES or before the period of notification of 30 days has expired have no legal effect unless the manager of a Land office approves them after consultation with the Land Directorate (if, for example, they are

justified on economic grounds or because notification of the PES would have been impossible or unreasonable within the stipulated period). For more information please refer to the [Early Warning System](#) section on the PES website (in German).

### 3.12 International Relations

At an international level, the PES cooperates with the World Association of Public Employment Services (WAPES) and various other international organisations (e.g. International Labour Organization – ILO, World Bank). The PES participates regularly in events, often in the capacity of a knowledge transfer organisation.

#### **Cooperation at European level involves several structures:**

The European Network of Public Employment Services (PES Network) has existed in its current form since 2014. The Network engages in EU-wide, evidence-based learning and the exchange of information ('benchlearning').

Additionally, there is a long tradition of cross-border cooperation with Austria's neighbouring countries.

- The Board of Directors meets once a year in an '8-country conference' of the German-speaking Public Employment Services, in which representatives of Austria, Germany, Switzerland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Belgium (German-speaking region), South Tyrol (Italy) and Liechtenstein all take part.
- An intensive, bilateral cooperation arrangement with Germany's Federal Employment Agency has also been in place since 2016, with the two institutions sharing information about asylum-seekers and convention refugees and about topics related to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- In addition, a more intensive cooperation arrangement with the Swiss labour market administration is now in place.

### 3.13 EURES – The European Jobs Network

The Austrian PES has been helping jobseekers to find jobs and employers to recruit from all over Europe within EURES, the largest network of Public Employment Services in Europe, since 1994.

EURES is coordinated by the relevant National Coordination Offices (NCOs), which are integrated into the Public Employment Services, the European Coordination Office (ECO), established within the European Commission, and the European Labour Authority (ELA).

The increasing mutual dependency of the labour markets in the EEA means that the Public Employment Services must also increase their cooperation, ensuring the free movement of all workers through voluntary mobility within the EU, under fair conditions and in accordance with Union law and national legislation and customs pursuant to Article 46(a) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU). To reach as many actors in the labour market as possible, Regulation (EU) 2016/589 introduced a broader membership of the EURES network in 2018. Any organisation, including private or third-sector employment services, which undertakes to fulfil all criteria and the full range of tasks set out in Regulation (EU) 2016/589 should be allowed to become a EURES Member. In justified, exceptional cases, institutions may also just become EURES Partners. In Austria, potential institutions can apply to the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber to become a EURES Member or Partner (Section 3a of the AMFG).

To promote workers' freedom of movement and transparency on the European labour market, all job vacancies publicly available through the Austrian PES<sup>3</sup>, the EURES Members and EURES Partners are posted on the EURES Job Mobility Portal, the largest jobs platform in Europe, for the purpose of job searching and automated matching.

The direct EURES services for clients and the EURES remit of supporting EU goals at the Austrian PES encompass:

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<sup>3</sup> Jobs brokered by the PES are not submitted to the EURES Portal if they specifically require an Austrian national, or if they relate to apprenticeships or traineeships unless the corporate client specifically asked for them to be submitted to the Portal. Also excluded are anonymised job offerings that are only listed with general company master data (AMS-BTR) or whose description does not include an ISCO classification.

- Data transfer of jobs published with the PES to the EURES Portal as well as transfer of placement-related data of jobseekers registered with the PES (with their consent) to the EURES Portal.
- Europe-wide recruitment for Austrian companies whose vacancies cannot be filled from the labour force registered with the PES (incoming).
- Preparation and provision of comprehensive information to jobseekers living in Austria and interested in finding work in the EEA (outgoing). Likewise, preparation and provision of comprehensive information to jobseekers from the EEA interested in finding work in Austria (incoming).
- Implementation of Regulation (EU) 2016/589, coordination, management and process optimisation of PES service providers and, where applicable, of EURES Members and EURES Partners, support and constructive cooperation for the ongoing improvement of EURES services with the National Coordination Offices of the other Member States, with the European Commission, with the European Labour Authority as well as with trade unions, social partners and other stakeholders.

# 4 Other Actors

Apart from the BMAW and the PES, numerous other actors also play a role in Austrian labour market policy. This Chapter provides more information about job placement by providers other than the PES and about the Social Affairs Ministry Service (SMS). The SMS measures are additionally presented in greater detail in Chapter **Fehler! Verweisquelle konnte nicht gefunden werden.** on page **Fehler! Textmarke nicht definiert..**

## 4.1 Job Placement Outside the PES

Job placement in Austria is subject to the Labour Market Promotion Act (Arbeitsmarktförderungsgesetz – AMFG) and is carried out by the PES as mandated by law. In addition to the PES, various other businesses and institutions may also provide placement services.

Private employment agencies are monitored by the competent trade authorities. If these private agencies breach legal provisions, administrative penalties will be imposed (report of breached administrative provisions, withdrawal of business licence).

Alongside the PES, the following businesses/institutions may broker jobs under the provisions of the AMFG:

- Statutory stakeholder groups and professional/trade associations with collective bargaining powers,
- Non-profit organisations,
- Holders of a business licence for the provision of placement services, and
- Management consultants provided they only render placement services for executives.

Private employment agencies charge employers fees but must always be free of charge for employees. They may only charge commissions for successful placement from jobseekers who are artists or athletes.

### **4.1.1 Job placement by non-profit organisations**

If a not-for-profit organisation intends to engage in job placement activity, it must notify the BMAW of its intention. Notification must include the charter of the organisation as well as information on the intended job placement services.

### **4.1.2 Job placement by commercial providers**

The provision of job placement services is a so-called 'free trade' under §151a of the Trade Act (Gewerbeordnung – GewO). Such services can be registered without providing proof of qualification. It suffices to meet the general conditions for exercising a trade.

Private employment agencies must comply with the principles and provisions defined in the AMFG (e.g. voluntary use of services, impartiality, reasonableness of job offer, no placement in a company affected by strike or lock-out) when providing their services.

## **4.2 Social Affairs Ministry Service – Supports Transition into Work**

The SMS is a subordinate agency of the Federal Ministry of Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection (BMSGPK).

The SMS with its nine Länder offices located in the capitals is the central contact point for people with disabilities, for young people in need of assistance as well as for their relatives, and for employers wanting to hire and/or employ people with disabilities or impairments.

The **remit and legal basis of the SMS** are described below.

### **4.2.1 Participation in working life**

The SMS's key responsibility lies in helping people with disabilities take part in working life. The SMS supports and promotes this group's participation together with its cooperation partners in the Länder (PES, Österreichische Gesundheitskasse (ÖGK) – Public Health Insurance, Pensionsversicherungsanstalt (PVA) - Pension Insurance Institution, Länder governments, private institutions).

The SMS may fund policy and support measures relating to participation in working life for people with disabilities and young people in need of assistance from their ninth grade at school, as well as for employers as set out under the provisions of the Disability Employment Act (BEinstG). Funds made available under the Employment Initiative for People with Disabilities are provided from federal budget appropriations, the Compensatory Levy Fund (Ausgleichstaxfonds – ATF) and the European Social Fund (ESF).

To direct activities in the regions, to implement the programmes and to achieve the LMP objectives for people with disabilities, the SMS is responsible for the following tasks at Land level:

- Taking the measures needed in each individual case to ensure participation in working life, together with the relevant partners (funding agencies, stakeholder groups, project sponsors, business and industry),
- Ensuring the rapid and simple processing of all administrative and funding procedures through administrative arrangements or other suitable measures,
- Using LMP analysis to achieve joint funding strategies and priorities that are consistent with the situation in the regional job market, the business structure, the employment situation of people with disabilities and existing LMP programmes.

In so doing, the SMS should make good use of the networking, cooperation and coordination structures already in place or establish such structures where required.

#### **4.2.2 Individual and project funding**

The SMS offers a wide range of interlinked individual and project funding that is targeted at both employees and employers – see also item 9 on page 152.

Grants and job-related allowances enable people with disabilities to work. They also ensure equality and competitiveness in the labour market.

Individual funding (see also item 9.1 on page 153) may be awarded in the following fields:

- Jobs and training (e.g. technical and other workplace support, as well as support to gain and secure jobs and traineeships),

- Wages (e.g. wage subsidies and subsidies to safeguard jobs, subsidies to promote inclusion, additional subsidies to promote inclusion: Inclusion Subsidy Plus and Inclusion Subsidy Plus for Women),
- Mobility (e.g. funding of orientation and mobility training, acquisition of an assistance dog, mobility grants, purchase as well as barrier-free adaptation and retrofitting of a car), and
- Self-employed business owners (e.g. support to ensure self-employment, bridging support for the self-employed).

Many support services for people with disabilities or assistance needs are offered in the form of SMS-financed projects.

The Employment Assistance Network (Netzwerk Berufliche Assistenz – NEBA) is one of the SMS's tools: it was introduced in 2012 and provides a number of support measures to people with disabilities and assistance needs as well as to other target groups to help them find and keep paid jobs in the regular labour market.

NEBA currently offers six job assistance services that are being implemented throughout Austria by more than 180 providers. With its NEBA services for young people and people with disabilities or assistance needs, the SMS has focused on the transition from school to training and work for many years now, since this is often a particularly difficult phase for these target groups – see also item 9.5 on page 176.

#### **The NEBA services:**

**Youth Coaching** is targeted at all Year Nine pupils, under 19-year-olds who are Not in Education or Training (NEET) as well as young people under the age of 25 if they have been identified as having special educational needs or disabilities, individual impairments or social disadvantages or as being at risk of failing to complete secondary levels I or II (early school leavers) – see also item 9.5.1 on page 177.

The **Fit for Training and prep module** programme is basically intended to prepare young people for training focusing on all young people who are in need of assistance and whose enrolment in, or successful attendance of, continuing vocational training courses is bound to fail because they do not have sufficient predefined basic skills. The Fit for Training programme trains individual capabilities in preparation for the next step towards vocational



training. With the prep module, an additional low-threshold tool has been established aimed at making young people with a greater need for maturing at their own pace familiar with a structured week – see also item 9.5.2 on page 179.

**Training Assistance** (Berufsausbildungsassistenz – BAS) supports apprentices with extended apprenticeship training programmes or programmes for the acquisition of partial skills. Assistance is provided in the form of helping to find an apprenticeship or to conclude an apprenticeship or training contract – see also item 9.5.3 on page 181.

**Job Assistance** is provided to help people find a job or apprenticeship, secure jobs and overcome crises – see also item 9.5.4 and 9.5.5 on page 184.

**Job Coaching** helps people in need of assistance to boost their strengths, with training tailored to their specific workplace – see also item 9.5.7 on page 187.

The **NEBA Business Service** aims to provide a nationwide, standardised and tailor-made counselling and service programme based on the needs of companies. It is a central point of contact for all companies in all matters concerning the topic of ‘work and disability’. It should motivate companies more strongly towards creating an inclusive working environment with due regard to the needs of people with disabilities and young people with assistance needs as well as towards recruiting members of this target group – see also item 9.5.6 on page 187.

**Other LMP projects and measures:**

- Skills development projects and fully accessible training with the aim of increasing the number of people with disabilities who take part in working life – see 9.2 on page 162;
- Personal assistance in the workplace – see item 9.5.8 on page 190.

## Education/Training till 18

Education/Training till 18 aims to guide young people towards qualifications that go beyond compulsory schooling and to help prevent them dropping out of education early. The SMS plays a key role in the implementation of this compulsory education/training scheme, particularly with its NEBA services of Youth Coaching, Fit for Training and prep module, as well as its coordination offices. The SMS fulfils core functions in terms of operational implementation and acts as an interface to the programmes of the Employment Assistance Network. The Youth Coaching, Fit for Training and prep module programmes are tailored to open up job prospects for young people and young adults with disabilities and/or assistance needs, and to ensure their long-term integration into the labour market.

Together with the mandated project sponsors and others, the SMS ensures cooperation between teachers, social environment, labour market actors and, where applicable, prospective employers.

For more information see item 7.2.14 on page 112.

## fit2work

The SMS has coordinated the fit2work programme since 2013; it provides information and counselling to individuals and employers to maintain employees' ability to work.

The **fit2work service for individuals** is voluntary, confidential and free of charge. The service comprises information, counselling and support for employees (and one-person businesses) whose job is at risk due to (mental) health problems, as well as for unemployed people who find it difficult to land a suitable job for health reasons.

The **fit2work service for employers** is a free counselling programme for companies, helping them, for example, to keep experienced employees in the company despite health issues.

For more information see item 8.4 on page 141.

### **4.2.3 Social inclusion**

As far as the social inclusion of people with disabilities is concerned, the SMS issues the Disability Identity Card (Behindertenpass) and is in charge of issuing parking permits pursuant to §29b of the Road Traffic Act (Straßenverkehrsordnung – StVO).

Grants from the assistance fund for people with disabilities (Unterstützungsfonds für Menschen mit Behinderungen – UFO), which are awarded to people who find themselves in a social emergency owing to an event connected to their disability, are another option to ensure social inclusion.

### **4.2.4 Disability equality**

The enforcement of the Federal Disability Equality Act (Bundes-Behindertengleichstellungsgesetz – BGStG) has been another important task of the SMS since 1 Jan 2006. This is an effective anti-discrimination tool for people with disabilities; they may turn to the SMS to initiate conciliation proceedings, which precede any court proceedings that might be instituted later. Ongoing initiatives to ensure implementation of disability equality law and existing knowledge have further strengthened the SMS's leadership in this field.

### **4.2.5 Social compensation and nursing care**

Social compensation (Sozialentschädigungsleistungen) has traditionally been one of the SMS's responsibilities.

If an individual suffers damage resulting from an official measure or an area for which the government has special responsibility, victims and their surviving relatives can apply for financial compensation. The social compensation scheme is intended for such cases, and therefore an important part of social-welfare benefits.

The SMS pays benefits to victims of war, prisoners of war, civilian internees, victims of political persecution, victims of a crime or maltreatment in children's homes, those who have suffered negative effects on their health following vaccinations and Thalidomide victims.

With regard to nursing care, the SMS provides financial support to people who care for their relatives, to 24-hour carers and to those taking care leave.

#### **4.2.6 Medical expert opinions**

In recent years, the SMS has also evolved into an important provider of assessments.

It drafts various expert opinions relating to, for example, entitlement to a higher family allowance or claiming tax allowances from the financial authorities on grounds of disability.

In so doing, the SMS relies on the assistance of experts in medicine, occupational science and occupational psychology who have the requisite expertise and use psycho-diagnostic methods to assess the performance and resources of people with disabilities for the purpose of ensuring their participation in working life.

#### **4.2.7 The SMS as a hub**

SMS employees not only provide counselling and support based on their own programmes, but also refer cases to other competent organisations. The open client reception area acts as a first stop shop intended to help overcome any fears members of the public might have about approaching the authorities.

# 5 Financing Structure of Austrian Labour Market Policy

This Chapter gives an overview of the revenue, which is mostly made up of contributions to unemployment insurance (UI), and expenditure, primarily incurred for passive, activating and active labour market policy. The regulations relating to UI contributions and the interaction between the Federal Government and the PES in relation to disbursements are also described below.

## 5.1 Revenue

The UI scheme is based on the insurance principle and primarily funded by contributions. Small amounts of revenue used to fund active labour market policies are derived from other sources, such as winter holiday compensation of the Construction Workers' Annual Leave and Severance Pay Fund (Bauarbeiter-Urlaubs- und Abfertigungskasse – BUAK), contributions for frontier workers or other non-routine funding (e.g., from the labour market reserve fund), their share in revenue only amounting to 3.2% of the total volume in 2023.

Table 1: Revenue for active labour market policy (€m)

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
<b>UI <sup>1)</sup></b>	5,615	5,847	6,098	6,343	6,635	6,919	7,156	7,020	7,590	8,067	8,698
<b>Contributions winter holiday compensation</b>	6	8	8	7	3	4	7	9	8	5	4
<b>Transfers under §16 AMPFG</b>	-	20	0	0	0	5	7	8	4	10	8
<b>Withdrawal from the PES's labour market reserve fund</b>	68	126	122	0	32	170	171	228	315	276	278
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,689</b>	<b>6,000</b>	<b>6,227</b>	<b>6,349</b>	<b>6,670</b>	<b>7,089</b>	<b>7,340</b>	<b>7,264</b>	<b>7,917</b>	<b>8,359</b>	<b>8,988</b>

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
<b>Contributions from Insolvency Contingency Fund (IEF)</b>	162	166	149	165	163	203	229	220	226	220	0

Source: BMF; annual accounts of LMP funds.

<sup>1)</sup> Including employer charges for termination of employment (till 31 Dec 2019) and revenue from frontier workers accounting.

Note: UI = unemployment insurance; AMPFG = Labour Market Policy Finance Act.

## 5.2 Unemployment Insurance Contributions (AIVG 1977)

In order to finance the Federal Government's labour market policy, an UI contribution is collected from all persons required to make contributions under the provisions of §§1-3 of the Unemployment Insurance Act (AIVG), and from their employers. This revenue represents the major source of income for the LMP budget. As set out in §2 of the Labour Market Policy Finance Act (Arbeitsmarktpolitik-Finanzierungsgesetz – AMPFG), the UI contributions in 2023 for apprentices are 2.4% and for all other insured 6% of the general contribution base under the 1955 General Social Insurance Act (ASVG), up to the maximum contribution base (2023: €5,850 / 2024: €6,060 gross per month) determined for pension insurance in accordance with §45 of the ASVG. As of 1 Jan 2024, UI contributions total 2.3% for apprentices and 5.9% for all other insured. By way of derogation, §2a of the AMPFG defines reduced UI contributions for employees. The UI contribution rate can be changed by ordinance by the Federal Minister of Labour and Economy in agreement with the Federal Minister of Finance and with the approval of the National Council's Main Committee (§3 of the AMPFG). Unemployment insurance contributions are shared equally between employees and employers.

UI contributions due from employees on low incomes are reduced in three stages (§2a of the AMPFG). If they earn up to €1,885 in 2023 (2024: €1,951), employees need not pay any contribution at all; if they earn more than €1,885 and up to €2,056 (2024: €1,951 and up to €2,128), their contribution amounts to 1% of the contribution base; with incomes over €2,056.01 and up to €2,228 (2024: €2,128 and up to €2,306.00), it is 2% of the contribution base. Employers are required to pay their 3% (2024: 2.95%) contribution in all cases.

It is enshrined in law that the obligation to pay UI contributions applies until employees reach retirement age; if employees are entitled to a corridor pension, this obligation ceases one year after they become entitled to it. Consequently, corridor pensioners only need to pay UI contributions until their 63<sup>rd</sup> birthday at the latest. If the minimum age for entitlement to corridor pensions is raised in future, the obligation to pay UI contributions will be extended accordingly.

Self-employed individuals are offered the opportunity to voluntarily join the UI scheme.

The AMPFG stipulates that contribution rates are to be raised if projected revenue from contributions is not expected to cover projected expenditure, with other sources of income needing to be taken into account, as well as PES borrowing options, labour market trends, and the average annual expenditure over the past two years. In contrast, contribution rates should be lowered if the PES's assets (labour market reserve) exceed the average annual revenue from UI contributions for the previous five years. Income from UI contributions is collected by the statutory health insurance institutions and transferred to the Federal Government to fund labour market policy. These institutions receive a fee for collecting UI contributions. The fee is transferred from the labour market policy budget to the Umbrella Association of Austrian Social Insurance Institutions (Dachverband der Sozialversicherungsträger), which subsequently distributes it among the relevant health insurance institutions.

### **5.3 Disbursements**

Labour market policy is funded from within the Federal Government's overall budget. However, whereas the overall budget is subject to the principle of overall coverage, i.e., all revenue must be used for all expenditure, labour market policy is financed from earmarked funds (§36 of the 2013 Federal Budget Act; Bundeshaushaltsgesetz – BHG), meaning that spending is subject to separate legal provisions in keeping with earmarked revenue as defined in the Labour Market Policy Finance Act (§1 AMPFG). Accordingly, any expenditure as specified in §1 of the AMPFG is financed from the specified revenues. This revenue and expenditure are balanced at the end of each year; profits are transferred to the PES, which is charged with performing LMP tasks, and allocated to a reserve (labour market reserve fund), while losses are, as a rule, offset by the Federal Government using non-earmarked funds (§1(4) of the AMPFG) or money borrowed by the PES to cover staff and material expenses (§48 in conjunction with §41(1) of the AMSG). PES spending is met in advance by the Federal Government, and PES revenue accrues to the Government (§7 of the AMPFG).

With regard to fiscal responsibility and the flows of funds between the Federal Government and the PES, and among the individual Länder offices of the PES, it is necessary to distinguish between the PES's own remit and any remit delegated to it in accordance with §41 and §42 of the AMSG. Under §42 of the AMSG, the Austrian PES is responsible for implementing labour market policy and the corresponding provisions of law (such as those of the AMSG, AIVG or the Special Support Act; Sonderunterstützungsgesetz – SUG).

Costs incurred by the PES in enforcing delegated laws, such as the payment of benefits under the AIVG (unemployment benefit, unemployment assistance, special unemployment assistance, etc.) together with social security contributions and the implementation of active labour market policies under the AMSG and AMFG, are part of its delegated remit (§42 of the AMSG) and thus payable from the federal budget. This means that the annual maximum amount of expenditure is set in the national budget estimate in the relevant Federal Finance Act (Bundesfinanzgesetz – BFG); liquidity is ensured by the Federal Minister of Finance based on monthly statements of the PES's and BMAW's spending requirements.

The PES's own remit (§41 of the AMSG) includes PES staff and material expenses necessary for enforcing the laws delegated to it. The requisite budget resources are determined by the national budget estimate of the relevant BFG and transferred to the PES in equal monthly instalments. The PES apportions and disburses these funds to its Länder organisations in accordance with the preliminary budgets approved by the Administrative Board. The level of expenditure within its own remit is ultimately limited by the BFG and the existing reserve. This spending is subject to the provisions of the Company Code (Unternehmensgesetzbuch – UGB), the preliminary budgets approved by the BMAW and BMF, and the PES's internal financial regulations. In addition to the control exercised by the BMAW and BMF, a chartered accountant also audits the annual accounts to confirm legal compliance. The operational framework for the PES's activity is a longer-term plan covering a period of at least three years, defining LMP priorities and PES performance. This plan balances the necessary capital expenditure, staff and material expenses against revenue trends.

## 5.4 Labour Market Policy Spending in Austria

The following table shows Austrian LMP spending since 2013 (in €m), broken down by active and passive labour market policies, and other spending.



Table 2: Austrian LMP spending (€m)

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
<b>Staff costs and overheads of Public employment service Austria (PES)</b>	440	449	458	492	521	507	531	597	630	662	662
<b>Fees <sup>4)</sup></b>	86	128	148	156	184	203	226	191	284	46	46
<b>Active labour market policy <sup>1)</sup></b>											
<b>PES</b>	1,039	1,124	1,112	1,236	1,327	1,369	1,194	6,653	5,219	2,259	1,328
<b>incl. skills training measures and allowances</b>	675	698	713	718	731	741	671	658	752	719	708
<b>incl. employment measures and allowances (incl. Short-time work)</b>	269	319	303	402	461	490	385	5,841	4,253	1,321	430
<b>incl. support measures and allowances</b>	94	107	96	116	135	138	138	155	215	219	189
<b>BMAW/Department III Labour Market (compulsory education/training, Training Guarantee, etc.)</b>	68	56	48	52	45	115	134	165	135	198	170
<b>Active LMP (PES and BMAW)</b>	1,107	1,180	1,160	1,287	1,372	1,485	1,328	6,819	5,354	2,457	1,497
<b>Apprenticeship subsidies under §19 BAG</b>	162	166	149	165	163	203	229	220	226	220	270
<b>Total active LMP including IEF</b>	<b>1,269</b>	<b>1,346</b>	<b>1,309</b>	<b>1,452</b>	<b>1,535</b>	<b>1,687</b>	<b>1,557</b>	<b>7,039</b>	<b>5,580</b>	<b>2,677</b>	<b>1,767</b>
<b>Activating labour market policy (LMP)</b>											
<b>Activating LMP</b>	1,031	1,120	1,102	1,182	1,283	1,370	1,440	1,485	1,703	1,724	1,846
<b>incl. activating LMP for skills training <sup>2)</sup></b>	827	906	833	830	842	827	822	889	1,156	1,189	1,316

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
<b>incl. part-time allowance<sup>3)</sup></b>	204	214	269	352	440	545	618	596	547	535	530
<b>Active, activating and passive LMP, expenditure total</b>											
<b>Total expenses active and activating LMP</b>	2,300	2,466	2,411	2,634	2,817	3,058	2,997	8,524	7,283	4,401	3,343
<b>Expenditure total for passive LMP<sup>5)</sup></b>	3,778	4,214	4,710	4,745	4,608	4,358	4,293	6,243	5,194	4,226	4,364
<b>Expenditure total</b>	<b>6,677</b>	<b>7,392</b>	<b>7,873</b>	<b>8,193</b>	<b>8,310</b>	<b>8,282</b>	<b>8,168</b>	<b>15,696</b>	<b>13,663</b>	<b>9,614</b>	<b>9,032</b>
<b>Share active and activating labour market policy in expenditure</b>											
<b>Total of active and activating LMP as % of total expenses</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>37%</b>

Sources: PES annual reports 2009 – 2022; BMAW, Division III/A/6.

<sup>1)</sup> Including short-time work compensation, activation grants, programmes for older workers, the long-term unemployed, persons qualifying for asylum and subsidiary protection, Action 20,000 for the long-term unemployed over 50, integration year and skilled workers' grant; detailed budget 20.01.02 and apprenticeship training promotion pursuant to §19c of the BAG.

<sup>2)</sup> Including social security contributions for subsistence allowance pursuant to §35 of the AMSG, skilled workers' grant and nursing grant.

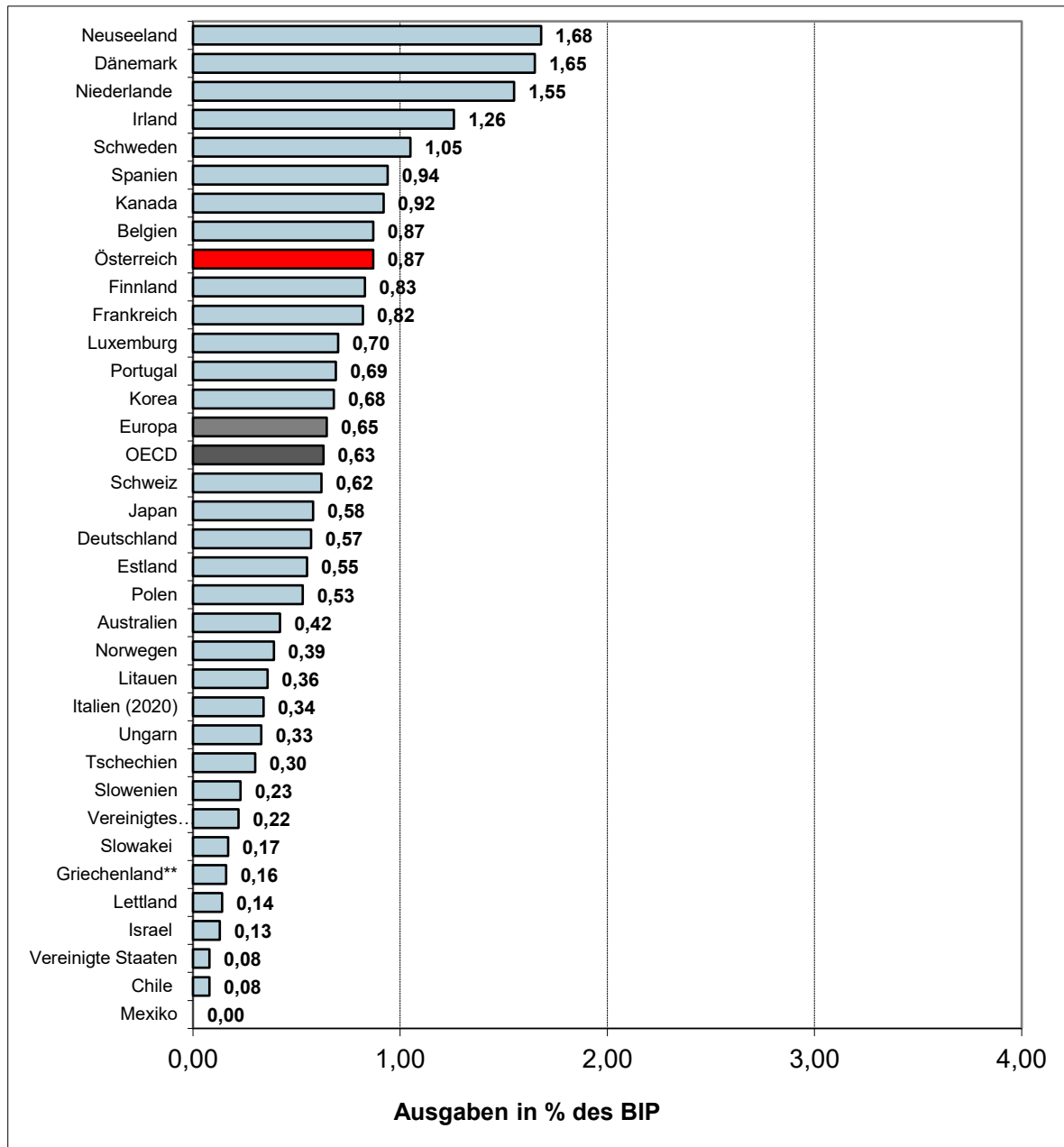
<sup>3)</sup> Including semi-retirement.

<sup>4)</sup> Contribution to BUA's bad weather compensation, collection fees, transfer to IEF pursuant to §14 of the AMPFG; transfer to social and continuing training fund.

<sup>5)</sup> Including: unemployment benefit, unemployment assistance, etc.; including bridging benefits, excluding activating UI funds.

## 5.5 Spending on Active and Activating LMP as a Proportion of GDP

Figure 4: Active and activating LMP spending in % of GDP in 2021



Sources: OECD Statistics (public expenditure and number of participants in LMP); retrieved on 3 Apr 2024;

\*\*Greece: only LMP categories 2-7 (active interventions)

# 6 Passive/Activating LMP Measures

This Chapter first describes passive labour market policy measures, followed by a description of activating measures. Passive measures include unemployment benefits, unemployment assistance and advances on pension benefits. They are financed from UI funds as well as funds earmarked for passive LMP. Activating measures include retraining benefits, part-time allowances for older workers, semi-retirement, further training allowances (training leave) and part-time training allowances. In terms of their contents, activating measures would be more closely related to active interventions.

## 6.1 Passive Measures

### 6.1.1 Unemployment benefit

**In a nutshell:** Unemployment benefit (Arbeitslosengeld) is granted by the PES when certain conditions are met. The aim is to secure people's livelihood, substituting part of the income lost as a result of unemployment while they are looking for work.

**Description:** Unemployment benefit (UB) is paid from the date of application (in cases of entitlement to dismissal compensation and/or compensation or pay for leave due, UB will be paid from the end of the related periods); persons who voluntarily leave their employment or who are dismissed through their own fault will receive their first payment from the PES four weeks after termination of employment at the earliest (this does not reduce their entitlement period). Unemployment benefit is composed of a basic amount, family supplements (where applicable) and, in the case of basic amounts below the compensatory supplement reference level for single persons, a supplementary amount. The social security contributions (contributions to health insurance and pension insurance as well as, where provided by law, to work accident insurance) are paid by the PES on behalf of the unemployed person.

**Target group:** Unemployed workers who are willing and able to work, who are available for work and who have been in UI-covered employment for the required length of time.

**Eligibility criteria:** Unemployed persons are eligible for unemployment benefit if they are at the disposal of the PES office, are able and willing to work, are entitled to the benefit due to having completed a minimum period of insurance, and if they have not exhausted their entitlement. Entitlement to the benefit applies in the following cases:

- First-time claimants must have been covered by unemployment insurance for at least 52 weeks during the last 24 months (reference period), repeat claimants need 28 weeks of insured employment within the last 12 months (reference period), and
- Young people (below the age of 25) require 26 weeks within 12 months (reference period).

Specific periods are taken into account (e.g., military service or civilian service (Zivildienst – non-military alternative) under certain conditions; employment abroad provided certain treaties or EU provisions apply, etc.); the above reference periods can be extended under certain conditions as defined by law (as a rule to up to five years).

**Amount:** The basic amount is 55% of daily net income, which has been calculated based on monthly contribution bases since 1 July 2020 (see the Austrian PES's German website relating to [unemployment benefit](#)). If the calculated basic amount is lower than the equalisation supplement reference rate (2024: €1,217.96; 2023: €1,110.26 per month), claimants are entitled to a supplement making up for the difference, whereby the total of the basic amount and supplement may not exceed 60% (for those eligible for family supplements 80%) of the daily net income.

An additional benefit of €2.49 (2024) or €2.27 (2023) per day is paid to cover the extra costs of participation in a follow-up training or retraining measure or in a labour market reintegration measure. If these training measures started between 1 Oct 2020 and 31 Dec 2023<sup>4</sup> and lasted for at least four months, a training bonus of €4 per day can be granted in addition to the daily unemployment benefit and supplement. No training bonus is due for training courses that began on or after 1 Jan 2024, which are subject to the following rules: if the measure lasts at least four months, three times the training supplement is due. If the measure lasts at least twelve months, five times the training supplement is payable provided that the total daily unemployment benefit of €46.67 (limit amount) is not exceeded.

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<sup>4</sup> The training bonus expired by 31 Dec 2023.

**Duration:** Unemployment benefit is usually paid for 20 weeks. The entitlement period may be extended to:

- 30 weeks for 156 weeks of employment,
- 39 weeks for 312 weeks of employment within the last 10 years if the unemployed person is at least 40 years old, and
- 52 weeks for 468 weeks of employment within the last 15 years if the unemployed person is at least 50 years old.
- This duration can be extended by the period during which claimants participate in a follow-up training, retraining or reintegration measure offered by the PES.
- The period of entitlement is extended by 156 weeks at most for participants in a labour foundation and by 209 weeks at most if training takes longer or the unemployed person is 50 or older.
- Another 78 weeks of entitlement are possible after completion of a vocational rehabilitation measure.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** BMAW, PES. Legal basis is Section 1, §§7-25 of the AIVG 1977.

**Financial resources:** Unemployment benefits are financed from unemployment insurance funds. Any shortfall is covered by the Federal Government.

Table 3: Unemployment benefit (annual average stock)

Year	Claimants total (m+w)	Claimants in % of employment	Men	Women	Expenditure in €	Expenditure as % of GDP
2013	140,687	3.49	82,752	57,935	2,098,385,689	0.65
2014	144,253	3.58	84,007	60,247	2,214,179,930	0.66
2015	151,138	3.72	86,966	64,172	2,351,223,985	0.68
2016	145,976	3.52	82,335	63,641	2,368,760,035	0.67
2017	138,015	3.30	77,070	60,944	2,305,422,936	0.62
2018	130,759	3.08	72,682	58,078	2,173,485,489	0.56
2019	128,413	3.00	71,595	56,818	2,158,297,961	0.54
2020	184,717	4.41	100,935	83,781	3,089,541,686	0.82

Year	Claimants total (m+w)	Claimants in % of employment	Men	Women	Expenditure in €	Expenditure as % of GDP
2021	118,073	2.79	65,762	52,312	2,239,955,176	0.55
2022	108,935	2.50	62,049	46,886	1,985,110,284	0.44
2023	122,972		70,952	52,020	2,355,249,998	0.49

Sources: PES-DWH: retrieved on 8 Apr 2024; Statistics Austria: GDP retrieved on 29 Feb 2024 (in €bn at current prices), EUROSTAT data retrieved on 24 Apr 2024 (employment total/resident population/LFS/15 to 64 years); expenditure: BMAW/Division III/A/6; BMAW's own calculations.

Note: LB = beneficiaries; LB and expenditure in euro only include passive payments to unemployment benefit claimants (one-off payments excluded, proportional social security contributions included).

## 6.1.2 Unemployment assistance

**In a nutshell:** Unemployment assistance (Notstandshilfe) is paid by the PES to secure unemployed people's livelihood after they cease to be entitled to unemployment benefit.

**Description:** Unemployment assistance (UA) is paid after entitlement to unemployment benefit has expired and combines the principles of insurance and welfare. The UA amount depends on the amount of unemployment benefit previously received, equating to between 92% and 95% of the related basic UB amount and 95% of the supplementary amount paid along with UB plus any family supplements, where applicable.

**Target group:** Unemployed people (particularly the long-term unemployed) who are willing and able to work as well as being available for work, and who have exhausted their entitlement to unemployment benefit and cannot provide for their essential needs.

**Eligibility criteria:** Beneficiaries of unemployment assistance are required – similarly to UB claimants – to be available for work, which means they must be able and willing to work and currently out of work; moreover, their entitlement to unemployment benefits must be exhausted and they must be unable to meet life's needs. Unemployment assistance will only be granted if claimed from the PES within five years of ceasing to be entitled to unemployment benefit or transition benefit.

**Amount:** If the basic amount of unemployment benefits exceeds the compensatory supplement reference level of € 1,217.96 per month in 2024 (2023: €1,110.26), unemployment assistance will total 92% of the most recent unemployment benefit payment. In all other cases unemployment assistance will total 95% of the basic amount of unemployment benefit plus 95% of any supplementary amount granted along with UB and family supplements.

**Duration:** Unemployment assistance is granted on application for a duration of 52 weeks, provided the requisite eligibility criteria are met.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** BMAW, PES. Legal basis is Section 3, §§33-38 of the AIVG 1977.

**Financial resources:** Unemployment assistance is financed from unemployment insurance funds. Any shortfall is covered by the Federal Government.

Table 4: Unemployment assistance (annual average stock)

Year	Claimants total (m+w)	Claimants in % of employment	Men	Women	Expenditure in €	Expenditure as % of GDP
2013	120,276	2.98	72,634	47,641	1,512,599,990	0.47
2014	140,778	3.49	85,458	55,320	1,735,996,071	0.52
2015	163,040	4.01	99,886	63,154	2,015,151,263	0.58
2016	167,075	4.03	101,527	65,548	2,145,150,503	0.61
2017	157,483	3.76	94,906	62,578	2,092,446,570	0.57
2018	143,602	3.39	84,004	59,599	1,979,075,300	0.51
2019	139,472	3.26	78,604	60,868	1,951,711,093	0.49
2020	177,444	4.20	99,285	78,159	2,545,009,134	0.67
2021	176,177	4.16	96,697	79,480	2,830,899,029	0.70
2022	124,292	2.85	69,910	54,382	1,913,363,591	0.43
2023	114,656		65,949	48,707	1,764,544,145	0.37

Sources: PES-DWH: retrieved on 8 Apr 2024; Statistics Austria: GDP retrieved on 29 Feb 2024 (in €bn at current prices), EUROSTAT data retrieved on 24 Apr 2024 (employment total/resident population/LFS/15 to 64 years); expenditure: BMAW/Division III/A/6; BMAW's own calculations.



Note: LB = beneficiaries; LB and expenditure in euro only include passive payments to unemployment benefit claimants (one-off payments excluded, proportional social security contributions included).

### 6.1.3 Pension advances

**In a nutshell:** Pension advances (Pensionsvorschuss) offer financial support to those who have applied for pension benefits (invalidity or occupational disability pension, old-age pension, transition benefits from statutory pension or accident insurance, special retirement benefits) and meet certain eligibility criteria till the pension insurance institution has processed and decided on the application.

**Description:** Pension advances are paid to claimants who apply for a benefit on grounds of reduced capacity or incapacity to work, for an old-age pension or for special retirement benefits (e.g., Heavy Night-Work Act; Nachtschwerarbeitsgesetz – NSchG), etc. Advances will only be paid if it has been established that claimants can expect their application for pension benefits to be granted. Upon application for an occupational disability pension, claimants are first entitled to unemployment benefit or unemployment assistance until receipt of a medical report on their health situation. If, based on this medical assessment, they are found to be incapable of work, they are entitled to pension advances until the pension insurer decides on their application for pension benefits. Once pension benefits are granted, the advances including the basic benefits (UB and UA) paid until receipt of the medical report will be reimbursed by the pension insurance institution. Otherwise, the pension advances will be classified as UB or UA received.

**Target group:** Employees who have applied for pension benefits due to the insured event of old age or reduced earning capacity.

**Eligibility criteria:** Persons applying for an occupational disability pension are eligible for pension advances if a medical report from the pension insurance institution confirms their incapacity to work and they have met the minimum insurance period required for the pension.

PES case workers will consider claimants' health situation during the ex-ante period of clarification. Pension advances related to applications for old-age pension or special retirement benefits (pursuant to the NSchG) will only be granted to persons who have been insured for the required time. Additionally, they must be able to produce confirmation from their pension insurance institution stating that their pension benefit entitlements cannot be assessed

within two months of the retirement date. If, however, the minimum insurance period requires clarification, claimants will receive unemployment benefit or unemployment assistance until pension benefits are awarded. In such cases they must meet the eligibility criteria for these benefits (including availability for the labour market and willingness to work).

**Amount:** Pension advances are paid at the rate of unemployment benefit or unemployment assistance.

**Duration:** The period of entitlement is the same as that applicable to unemployment benefit or unemployment assistance.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** BMAW, PES. Legal basis is §23 of the AIVG 1977.

**Financial resources:** Pension advances are financed from unemployment insurance funds. When pension benefits are awarded, the pension advance is refunded to the unemployment insurance from the back pension payments.

Table 5: Pension advances (annual average stock)

Year	Claimants total (m+w)	Claimants in % of employment	Men	Women	Expenditure in €	Expenditure as % of GDP
2013	10,261	0.255	6,468	3,792	-16,621,402	-0.0051
2014	2,710	0.067	1,814	896	1,402,076	0.0004
2015	1,646	0.040	1,113	533	38,260,466	0.0111
2016	1,678	0.041	1,110	569	56,887,049	0.0161
2017	1,245	0.030	830	415	51,874,973	0.0140
2018	1,223	0.029	809	415	56,358,613	0.0146
2019	1,063	0.025	730	333	59,034,707	0.0148
2020	808	0.019	566	242	55,938,521	0.0147
2021	719	0.017	527	192	55,305,872	0.0136
2022	717	0.016	511	206	53,390,964	0.0119
2023	763		546	217	65,739,114	0.0138

Sources: PES-DWH: retrieved on 8 Apr 2024; Statistics Austria: GDP retrieved on 29 Feb 2024 (in €bn at current prices), EUROSTAT data retrieved on 24 Apr 2024 (employment total/resident population/LFS/15 to 64 years); expenditure: BMAW/Division III/A/6; BMAW's own calculations.

Note: LB = beneficiaries

## 6.2 Activating Measures

### 6.2.1 Retraining allowance

**In a nutshell:** Retraining allowance (Umschulungsgeld) is granted by the PES to secure the livelihood of persons who are entitled to placement in their former occupation (Berufsschutz) and willing to participate in vocational rehabilitation measures.

**Description:** The PES pays a retraining allowance equal to the rate of unemployment benefit during the period of selecting and planning vocational rehabilitation. From the time of participation in the first measure of vocational rehabilitation, the rate is raised to 22% above the basic UB amount. Claimants must actively participate in the selection, planning and implementation of a vocational rehabilitation measure considered appropriate for them.

Claimants must apply to the competent PES within four weeks of the date of the pension insurer's official decision confirming their legal entitlement to these benefits. If claims are asserted more than four weeks after the date of the official decision, the retraining allowance is due no earlier than on the day the application for retraining allowance is filed.

**Target group:** Persons entitled to placement in their former occupation who have received an official decision from their pension insurer confirming their invalidity or incapacity to work as defined in the ASVG for at least six months, or that are likely to become invalid or incapacitated in the near future, and for whom vocational rehabilitation measures are appropriate and reasonable.

**Eligibility criteria:** Declaration by the competent pension insurance institution of legal entitlement to a vocational rehabilitation measure, with the vocational rehabilitation having to be expedient and reasonable. Active participation in the selection, planning and implementation of the vocational rehabilitation measure.

**Amount:** During the selection and planning of the vocational rehabilitation measure, the retraining allowance equals the amount of the last unemployment benefit received. During implementation of the vocational rehabilitation measure, the basic amount of unemployment benefit is increased by 22%. At any rate, a daily minimum amount of €47.33 will be paid in 2024 (2023: €43.17) during participation in a measure.

**Duration:** Retraining allowance is paid from the date on which the competent pension insurer issues an official decision confirming entitlement to the benefit until the last day of the month in which the final vocational rehabilitation measure has been completed. If the health of an individual receiving retraining allowance deteriorates such that the vocational rehabilitation measure cannot be continued, the retraining allowance may continue to be drawn until the pension insurer issues a new decision.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** BMAW, PES; legal basis is §39b of the AIVG 1977.

**Financial resources:** Retraining allowances are financed from unemployment insurance funds.

Table 6: Retraining allowance (annual average stock)

Year	Claimants total (m+w)	Claimants in % of employment	Men	Women	Expenditure in €	Expenditure as % of GDP
2014	14	0.0003	12	3	195,634	0.0001
2015	78	0.0019	63	16	1,507,359	0.0004
2016	137	0.0033	107	30	3,092,027	0.0009
2017	143	0.0034	112	32	3,323,174	0.0009
2018	125	0.0029	94	31	2,938,599	0.0008
2019	120	0.0028	92	28	2,961,841	0.0007
2020	109	0.0026	85	24	2,785,791	0.0007
2021	103	0.0024	78	25	2,573,146	0.0006
2022	106	0.0024	74	32	2,689,775	0.0006
2023	98	0.0022	66	32	2,470,561	0.0005

Sources: PES-DWH: retrieved on 8 Apr 2024; Statistics Austria: GDP retrieved on 29 Feb 2024 (in €bn at current prices), EUROSTAT data retrieved on 24 Apr 2024 (employment total/resident population/LFS/15 to 64 years); expenditure: BMAW/Division III/A/6; BMAW's own calculations.

Note: LB = beneficiaries

## 6.2.2 Part-time allowance for older workers

**In a nutshell:** The part-time allowance for older workers (Altersteilzeitgeld), which the PES subsidises, allows older workers to reduce their working time while safeguarding their jobs and keeping them in employment until retirement.

**Description:** An agreement on part-time work reached with their employers enables employees to gradually transition to retirement. Older workers who reduce their working time down to 40-60% are paid compensation amounting to at least 50% of their income loss. The loss is defined as the difference between the original salary (up to the ASVG maximum contribution base; 2024: €6,060 gross per month; 2023: €5,850) and the salary paid for the reduced working time. Moreover, social security contributions continue to be based on the contribution base applicable prior to the reduction of normal working hours. With the part-time allowance for older workers, the PES compensates employers for some of the additional costs, specifically 90% of the costs if working hours are reduced on a continuing basis and 50% if the reduced working hours are used up in one single period of leave. Agreements on one single period of leave require the recruitment of an unemployed worker or unemployed apprentice no later than at the beginning and for the whole remaining duration of leave. The proportion to be compensated for in block time arrangements is to drop from 50% to 10% from 2024 to 2028; no more allowance will be paid for such arrangements beginning in 2029.

If working hours are reduced on a continuing basis, older workers may work under this scheme until statutory retirement age (60 for women and 65 for men). Part-timers whose working time is less than 80% (but at least 60%) of normal working time may also use this scheme.

The same applies to employees who have reached the age of 62 and meet the requirements for corridor pensions. The PES reimburses employers 100% of the additional costs (gross wage costs for wage compensation up to the maximum contribution base [employer con-

tributions to health, pension and unemployment insurance for wage compensation, including IESG supplement]; additional social insurance contributions). Employees also have the option of seamlessly moving from reduced working hours to this type of part-time arrangement.

**Target group:** Men from the age of 60; women from the age of 55.

**Eligibility criteria:**

- Employees require proof of at least 15 years of UI-covered employment over the last 25 years.
- Agreement between employee and employer to reduce working hours to between 40% and 60% of normal working time.
- Agreement that the employer will pay the employee wage compensation amounting to half of the pay lost.
- Agreement that social security contributions will be based on the contribution base applicable prior to the reduction of working time, and that severance pay will be calculated based on working time prior to the beginning of the part-time scheme.
- Working time in the year prior to the beginning of the part-time scheme must not be more than 40% below the working hours as defined by law or collective agreement. For a 40-hour working week this would mean a minimum of 24 hours of work, and for 38.5 weekly working hours 23.1 hours per week.

**Amount:** Employers receive 90% (in case of corridor pension benefits: 100%) of the gross wage costs for wage compensation, and the related employer social security contributions are also reimbursed.

**Duration:** The part-time allowance for older workers who have chosen a single period of leave can be paid for up to five years or until these workers qualify for statutory pension benefits, provided the relevant criteria are met. It may be paid for a further year in the case of persons entitled to a corridor pension. The part-time allowance for those who have chosen to reduce their working hours on a continuing basis (for up to five years) may also be used up until these workers reach their statutory retirement age.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** BMAW; PES; legal basis is §27, §28 and §82 of the AIVG 1977.

**Financial resources:** The part-time allowance for older workers is financed from unemployment insurance funds.

Table 7: Part-time allowance for older workers (company) – annual average stock

Year	Claimants total (m+w)	Claimants in % of employment	Men	Women	Expenditure in €	Expenditure as % of GDP
2013	17,530	0.43	6,448	11,082	204,056,864	0.063
2014	18,214	0.45	7,048	11,166	213,952,047	0.064
2015	22,087	0.54	9,301	12,786	268,916,008	0.078
2016	27,712	0.67	11,837	15,875	349,212,132	0.099
2017	33,623	0.80	13,933	19,690	432,562,119	0.117
2018	40,535	0.96	16,407	24,128	530,767,841	0.014
2019	44,115	1.03	17,385	26,730	599,263,116	0.151
2020	41,524	0.98	14,469	27,055	578,188,893	0.154
2021	37,830	0.89	12,055	25,774	531,266,453	0.131
2022	36,038	0.83	11,969	24,069	519,136,218	0.116
2023	34,077	0.78	12,556	21,521	508,884,402	0.107

Sources: PES-DWH: retrieved on 8 Apr 2024; Statistics Austria: GDP retrieved on 29 Feb 2024 (in €bn at current prices), EUROSTAT data retrieved on 24 Apr 2024 (employment total/resident population/LFS/15 to 64 years); expenditure: BMAW/Division III/A/6; BMAW's own calculations.

Note: LB = beneficiaries

### 6.2.3 Further training allowance

**In a nutshell:** Employees may agree on a period of statutory training leave with their employer if they wish to retrain or upskill without terminating their employment contract. In this case the PES may grant a further training allowance (Weiterbildungsgeld) for the duration of the training or unpaid leave.

**Description:** Training leave may be agreed between employee and employer for the duration of between two months and one year within a four-year period. Workers under fixed-term contracts in seasonal businesses may also apply for training leave for between two months and one year within a four-year period. Another period of training leave may be agreed once the reference period of four years has elapsed (counted from the start of the first part of the previous leave). The PES may also grant a further training allowance for the time needed to study or prepare for exams, under certain conditions. Practical training under this leave scheme may not be provided by the employer granting such leave unless it cannot be provided by another company. If training leave is used to study at a university, those taking leave must provide proof of their achievements (8 ECTS credits or other suitable credentials, e.g. certificate confirming that they are expected to complete their diploma thesis successfully).

Since the introduction of part-time training leave, the further training allowance and part-time training allowance have been mutually creditable for up to one year within a four-year period. For this purpose, two months' part-time training allowance corresponds to one month's further training allowance.

**Target group:** Employees who wish to develop their skills and whose employers agree to them taking training or unpaid leave.

**Eligibility criteria:**

- Workers must have been in employment for at least six months and earning a wage above the marginal earnings threshold (three months in seasonal businesses). Training leave may be divided into several periods of leave, with each period lasting at least two months.
- Sufficient accrual of entitlements and proof of at least 20 weekly hours of participation in a training measure or similar amounts of time spent (such as those in university courses). If workers have caring responsibilities for children under seven and there is a lack of appropriate childcare options, they are required to spend at least 16 weekly hours in continuing education or training.
- In the case of unpaid leave, employers must additionally provide proof of having hired a replacement worker. This replacement worker must have been receiving either unemployment benefit or unemployment assistance prior to the appointment, and must now be paid above the marginal earnings threshold. Unpaid leave may be agreed for a period of six months to one year.



**Amount:** The further training allowance equals the rate of unemployment benefit, with a daily minimum of €14.53 (2023 and 2024).

**Duration:** Further training allowance is available to all employees, irrespective of their age, and paid for up to one year within a four-year period. If divided into several periods of leave, all periods must be used up within four years.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** BMAW; PES; legal basis is §26 of the AIVG 1977 as well as §11 and §12 of the Act Governing Adjustments to Employment Contracts Law (Arbeitsvertragsrechtsanpassungsgesetz – AVRAG).

**Financial resources:** Further training allowance is financed from unemployment insurance funds.

Table 8: Further training allowance (annual average stock)

Year	Claimants total (m+w)	Claimants in % of employment	Men	Women	Expenditure in €	Expenditure as % of GDP
2013	9,312	0.23	3,709	5,603	157,038,274	0.048
2014	8,611	0.21	3,604	5,007	149,945,674	0.045
2015	8,925	0.22	3,674	5,251	156,413,318	0.045
2016	9,065	0.22	3,628	5,437	165,288,565	0.047
2017	9,613	0.23	3,792	5,821	179,126,621	0.048
2018	10,035	0.24	3,839	6,196	190,503,456	0.049
2019	10,743	0.25	3,905	6,838	205,094,724	0.052
2020	12,579	0.30	4,023	8,556	250,439,340	0.067
2021	13,912	0.33	3,564	10,348	286,349,974	0.071
2022	17,668	0.41	3,824	13,844	366,520,352	0.082
2023	22,461	0.51	4,182	18,279	493,437,354	0.103

Sources: PES-DWH: retrieved on 8 Apr 2024; Statistics Austria: GDP retrieved on 29 Feb 2024 (in €bn at current prices), EUROSTAT data retrieved on 24 Apr 2024 (employment total/resident population/LFS/15 to 64 years); expenditure: BMAW/Division III/A/6; BMAW's own calculations.

Note: LB = beneficiaries

## 6.2.4 Part-time training allowance

**In a nutshell:** Part-time training leave is aimed at raising employees' willingness to develop their skills, with the PES making up for the associated loss in wage by granting a part-time training allowance (Bildungsteilzeitgeld).

**Description:** Further training during ongoing employment that is subject to insurance contributions must involve at least ten weekly hours of training. Working time must be reduced by a minimum of 25% and a maximum of 50% of normal working time. If part-time training leave is used to study at a university, those taking leave must provide proof of their achievements after one semester (4 ECTS credits). A once-only switch from training leave to part-time training leave is possible, unless the maximum reference period has been exhausted. The same applies to switching from part-time to full-time training leave. The conversion ratio for switching from full-time to part-time training leave is 1:2.

**Target group:** Employees who wish to develop their skills and whose employers have agreed to them taking training leave.

### Eligibility criteria:

- Written agreement between employee and employer defining the beginning and length of leave, as well as the distribution of working hours.
- In companies with a works council, the latter must be included in negotiations on part-time leave at the employee's request.
- Written statement by the employer on the number of employees in UI-covered employment working in the company on the first day of the month preceding the application for part-time leave. Additionally, a statement on the number of employees in UI-covered employment in the company with whom agreements on part-time training leave have been concluded, as well as the length of those agreed periods of leave.
- In companies with less than 50 employees and more than four employees on part-time training leave, and in companies with more than 50 employees and more than 8% of their workforce on such leave, additional employees are only eligible for part-time training allowance with the approval of the PES's Regional Advisory Board.

**Amount:** The part-time training allowance amounts to €1 (2023: €0.91) per day for every full working hour by which the normal weekly working time is reduced (e.g. a weekly reduction of ten hours equates to a daily claim of €10 in 2024; 2023: €9.10). Fractions of a working hour will not be reimbursed. Consequently, in calendar months with 30 days, workers who reduce their working hours by 50% of normal working time (from 40 to 20 hours) will be paid €600 in 2024 (2023: €546) a month in part-time training allowance, and workers who reduce their working hours by 25% (ten hours) will be paid €300 in 2024 (2023: €273).

**Duration:** Part-time training leave must be agreed for at least four months (and up to two years) and must be preceded by six months of uninterrupted employment. Part-time training leave may also be taken in blocks distributed over a reference period of four years that begins on the start date of the first block.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** BMAW; PES; legal basis is §26a of the AIVG 1977 as well as §11(3a) and §11a of the AVRAG.

**Financial resources:** The part-time training allowance is financed from unemployment insurance funds.

Table 9: Part-time training allowance (annual average stock)

Year	Claimants total (m+w)	Claimants in % of employment	Men	Women	Expenditure in €	Expenditure as % of GDP
2014	2,555	0.063	1,186	1,369	13,648,531	0.0041
2015	3,437	0.084	1,549	1,888	19,468,883	0.0057
2016	3,458	0.083	1,537	1,921	20,372,168	0.0058
2017	3,498	0.084	1,507	1,991	20,463,199	0.0055
2018	3,653	0.086	1,531	2,122	21,624,456	0.0056
2019	3,801	0.089	1,580	2,221	22,571,819	0.0057
2020	4,018	0.095	1,716	2,301	24,097,997	0.0064
2021	4,063	0.096	1,700	2,363	24,922,605	0.0061
2022	4,193	0.096	1,670	2,524	26,157,664	0.0058

Year	Claimants total (m+w)	Claimants in % of employment	Men	Women	Expenditure in €	Expenditure as % of GDP
<b>2023</b>	4,416	0.101	1,738	2,678	29,276,165	0.0061

Sources: PES-DWH: retrieved on 8 Apr 2024; Statistics Austria: GDP retrieved on 29 Feb 2024 (in €bn at current prices), EUROSTAT data retrieved on 24 Apr 2024 (employment total/resident population/LFS/15 to 64 years); expenditure: BMAW/Division III/A/6; BMAW's own calculations.

Note: LB = beneficiaries

# 7 Active LMP Measures

Active labour market policy measures comprise all those interventions that support the labour market and ensure it works well. The measures are contractually agreed between the PES and the individual concerned. Active measures may also be taken proactively before jobs are lost. They usually focus on certain target groups who are difficult to place for various reasons, and can be divided into employment, training and support measures.

## 7.1 Employment Measures

### 7.1.1 Integration subsidy

**In a nutshell:** The PES pays employers an integration subsidy (Eingliederungsbeihilfe – EB) if they employ an individual who has been unemployed for a long time or is at risk of remaining unemployed on a long-term basis.

**Description:** The integration subsidy is a wage subsidy paid to the employer. The aim is to reintegrate unemployed persons who are facing particular difficulties in the labour market (specifically the long-term unemployed). The subsidy should also help create additional jobs. Employers (except for the PES, the Federal Government, political parties and radical associations) can apply for and receive the subsidy.

**Target group:**

- Older unemployed (over 50),
- Long-term unemployed 25 years and up (registered with the PES for at least 12 months),
- Young long-term unemployed up to 25 (registered with the PES for at least 6 months),
- Persons who are at serious risk of long-term unemployment, e.g. returners, persons who have completed training but lack the requisite practical experience, persons with (mental) health issues.

**Eligibility criteria:** The subsidy is conditional on the establishment of a new employment contract that is subject to full insurance contributions. The new contract must be for at least 50% of the weekly hours stipulated by law or in collective agreements and meet all labour

and social law provisions. Wages must be appropriate, i.e. correspond to those defined in the applicable collective agreement. Another condition is a consultation between the PES and the employer, discussing the individual to be subsidised, and the level and duration of the subsidy.

**Amount:** The subsidy is for up to 66.7% of the assessment basis, which equates to the monthly gross pay (excluding special payments, overtime pay, etc.) plus a lump sum of 50% for non-wage labour costs. It may not exceed the maximum contribution base and is paid as a wage subsidy to the employer. During a probationary period of no more than three months, the subsidy may be for up to 100%.

**Duration:** The integration subsidy may be granted for the duration of the employment relationship, subject to a maximum of three years.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** Responsibility rests with the PES. The integration subsidy is regulated in §34 of the AMSG and the Federal PES Guideline on the integration subsidy (last amendment: BGS/AMS/0702/9999/2022, effective since 18 Nov 2023).

**Financial resources:** The subsidy is financed from unemployment insurance funds.

Table 10: Integration subsidy (number of persons)

Year	Persons (m+w)	Persons in % of employment	Men	Women	Expenditure in €	Expenditure as % of GDP
2013	43,543	1.080	21,562	21,981	92,378,384	0.029
2014	46,321	1.148	23,498	22,823	122,925,341	0.037
2015	36,766	0.904	19,256	17,510	115,505,525	0.034
2016	45,886	1.108	24,978	20,908	166,077,354	0.047
2017	58,870	1.407	31,497	27,373	216,755,742	0.059
2018	47,737	0.113	24,522	23,215	262,935,462	0.068
2019	41,937	0.980	20,718	21,219	198,122,291	0.050
2020	37,039	0.885	17,833	19,206	165, 184,739	0.043
2021	94,889	2.242	49,498	45,391	296,135,826	0.073

Year	Persons (m+w)	Persons in % of employment	Men	Women	Expenditure in €	Expenditure as % of GDP
2022	86,983	1.996	43,651	43,333	426,726,235	0.095
2023	42,721	0.972	20,257	22,464	202,516,732	0.042

Sources: PES-DWH, 2023 PES annual report cube for the year 2023; retrieved on 8 Apr 2024; Statistics Austria: GDP retrieved on 29 Feb 2024 (in €bn at current prices), EUROSTAT data retrieved on 24 Apr 2024 (employment total/resident population/LFS/15 to 64 years); expenditure: BMAW/Division III/A/6; BMAW's own calculations.

Note: Indicator number of persons = Number of persons subsidised on at least one day in a given year. Each individual is counted only once even if involved in several cases of subsidisation.

## 7.1.2 Wage top-up scheme

**In a nutshell:** The PES grants a wage top-up (Kombilohn – KOMB) for the employment of a person with poor job prospects. The wage top-up scheme was introduced to compensate for low wages.

**Description:** The wage top-up scheme is an incentive for unemployed persons to take up jobs with low pay (e.g. part-time employment because of caring responsibilities or health issues) as their wages will be topped up.

### Target group:

Unemployed people with specific conditions:

- People aged 50 years and over<sup>5</sup>,
- People who return to the labour market,
- People with health issues,
- People who are prepared to accept jobs further away,

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<sup>5</sup> They must be 50 years old and have been registered with the PES for more than 90 days; if registered for fewer than 90 days, they must have health issues or have been absent from the labour market for a long period of time.

- People who have exhausted the maximum period of entitlement to sickness benefits (52 to 78 weeks), i.e. they are no longer covered by the related insurance ('Ausgesteuerte'),
- People who have completed a vocational rehabilitation programme,
- People whose rehabilitation benefits have been withdrawn, and
- People with disabilities from the first day of support.

**Eligibility criteria:** Beneficiaries must agree with the PES on a counselling and assistance agreement. The PES can subsidise a fully insured employment relationship above the marginal employment threshold of at least 20 hours per week. Exception: employment relationships can only be subsidised from 30 weekly hours in cases where the unemployed are 50 years and over and have no health issues or where the beneficiaries accept jobs further away. Quasi-freelance jobs are not eligible. Wage top-ups require a minimum of ten weekly hours in cases where a lower number of weekly hours is recommended for reintegration in people's perspectives plan and in cases where people are no longer eligible for sickness benefits ('Ausgesteuerte').

**Amount:** Benefit rates are defined as the difference between unemployment benefit or assistance payments and the new net income from work including any family supplements as well as comparable benefits from the Bridge Benefit Act (Überbrückungshilfegesetz – ÜHG) plus a supplement<sup>6</sup> of

- 30% for employment relationships beginning on or after 1 June 2024 and involving less than 30 weekly hours,
- 55% for employment relationships beginning on or after 1 June 2024 and involving 30 weekly hours or more,

The maximum benefit is limited to €950 per month.

**Duration:** Wage top-ups are granted for the duration of the subsidised employment relationship, but for no more than one year (period of subsidisation). Certain groups of subsidised persons may receive wage top-ups for up to three years (if they are 59 years old or

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<sup>6</sup> The top-up rate depends on the date when subsidisation begins and applies to the entire period for which it is granted. For periods of subsidisation of up to three years, the top-up rate depends on each new date when subsidisation begins.



more at the time the subsidy is first granted, if they have completed vocational rehabilitation measures, if their rehabilitation benefits have been withdrawn, if their earning capacity is reduced by  $\geq 50\%$ ). Wage top-ups may continue to be awarded in cases where employers are changed several times or employment with the same employer is interrupted (the individual interruptions in between employment may not exceed 62 days).

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** Responsibility rests with the PES. The wage top-up is regulated in §34 and § 34a of the AMSG and the Federal PES Guideline on the new start bonus (last amendment: BGS/AMF/0702/9999/2024, effective since 1 June 2024).

**Financial resources:** The subsidy is financed from unemployment insurance funds.

Table 11: Wage top-up scheme (number of persons)

Year	Persons (m+w)	Persons in % of employment	Men	Women	Expenditure in €	Expenditure as % of GDP
2013	11,050	0.274	3,992	7,058	8,878,772	0.00027
2014	9,891	0.245	3,953	5,938	9,786,452	0.00294
2015	5,329	0.131	2,457	2,872	4,857,260	0.00141
2016	6,157	0.149	2,776	3,381	7,656,647	0.00217
2017	7,798	0.186	3,335	4,463	10,813,953	0.00293
2018	7,292	0.172	2,653	4,639	11,562,375	0.00300
2019	6,865	0.160	2,423	4,442	12,016,057	0.00301
2020	9,373	0.224	3,214	6,159	15,852,765	0.00416
2021	20,237	0.478	6,933	13,304	44,118,768	0.01089
2022	16,702	0.383	5,661	11,041	38,019,407	0.00850
2023	9,509	0.216	3,549	5,960	18,390,213	0.00385

Sources: PES-DWH, 2023 PES annual report cube for the year 2023; retrieved on 8 Apr 2024; Statistics Austria: GDP retrieved on 29 Feb 2024 (in €bn at current prices), EUROSTAT data retrieved on 24 Apr 2024 (employment total/resident population/LFS/15 to 64 years); expenditure: BMAW/Division III/A/6; BMAW's own calculations.

Note: Indicator number of persons = Number of persons subsidised on at least one day in a given year. Each individual is counted only once even if involved in several cases of subsidisation.

### 7.1.3 Subsidy to one-person businesses

**In a nutshell:** This subsidy to OPBs (Beihilfe für EPU) will be granted for a one-person business's first employee. The new employee must have been registered as unemployed or have just completed their training.

**Description:** One-person businesses may apply for the subsidy for their first fully insured employee. The subsidy is aimed at reducing job shortages by creating additional jobs. Employers can apply for and receive it (unless they operate as a civil law partnership – Gesellschaft nach bürgerlichem Recht).

**Target group:** Registered jobseekers who have just completed their training and have been registered with the PES for at least two weeks.

**Eligibility criteria:** OPBs must meet a few criteria for the subsidy. The managing director must be insured pursuant to the Commercial Social Insurance Act (Gewerbliches Sozialversicherungsgesetz – GSVG) and the new employee must be the business's first employment relationship (within the last five years). Only self-employed individuals are insured pursuant to the GSVG. The insurance must have been in place for more than three months prior to the subsidy start date. The employment contract must be for at least 50% of the weekly hours stipulated by law or collective agreements and last for more than two months.

**Amount:** Subsidy rates amount to 25% of gross wages (excluding special payments, employer social security contributions, overtime, supplements, etc.), but to no more than the ASVG maximum contribution base for full-time employment.

**Duration:** The subsidy is granted for the duration of the employment contract, but for no more than one year.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** Responsibility rests with the PES. This subsidy is regulated in §34 of the AMSG and the federal guideline on the subsidy for one-person businesses (last amendment: BGS/AMS/0702/9998/2023, effective since 18 Nov 2023).

**Financial resources:** The subsidy is financed from unemployment insurance funds.

Table 12: One-person businesses (number of persons)

Year	Persons (m+w)	Persons in % of employment	Men	Women	Expenditure in €	Expenditure as % of GDP
2013	1,280	0.032	676	604	2,869,809	0.00089
2014	1,241	0.031	666	575	2,771,141	0.00083
2015	1,074	0.026	573	501	2,472,620	0.00072
2016	1,036	0.025	600	436	2,417,311	0.00068
2017	1,053	0.025	633	420	2,722,593	0.00074
2018	895	0.021	515	380	2,077,461	0.00054
2019	887	0.021	512	375	2,315,487	0.00059
2020	900	0.022	518	382	2,384,972	0.00063
2021	933	0.022	517	416	2,474,485	0.00061
2022	956	0.022	528	428	2,709,665	0.00061
2023	832	0.019	447	385	2,653,537	0.00056

Sources: PES-DWH, 2023 PES annual report cube for the year 2023; retrieved on 8 Apr 2024; Statistics Austria: GDP retrieved on 29 Feb 2024 (in €bn at current prices), EUROSTAT data retrieved on 24 Apr 2024 (employment total/resident population/LFS/15 to 64 years); expenditure: BMAW/Division III/A/6; BMAW's own calculations.

Note: Indicator number of persons = Number of persons subsidised on at least one day in a given year. Each individual is counted only once even if involved in several cases of subsidisation.

### 7.1.4 Socio-economic enterprises

**In a nutshell:** Socio-economic enterprises (Sozialökonomische Beschäftigungsprojekte – SÖBs) are non-profit enterprises that combine economic aspects (own revenue) with LMP success criteria (qualification and placement). SÖBs receive financial support from the PES in the form of a partial reimbursement of the costs incurred for providing fixed-term jobs that also include training and socio-educational support.

**Description:** The aim is to integrate the long-term unemployed and other hard-to-place groups (often with limited productivity) into the labour market by creating near-market, fixed-term jobs (transition jobs).

The SÖB's economic objectives should be similar to those in a real-life working environment. SÖBs are run by non-profit institutions or public entities. They produce goods or sell services (such as wood processing, interior and exterior refurbishing, catering, scrap and junk recycling, textiles, metal, household services, pottery, as well as non-profit temporary work placement) on the market. Unlike non-profit employment projects, SÖBs need to generate enough revenue to cover at least 20% of their costs. Preparatory programmes may be put in place, e.g. work experience and get ready for work training, possibly including clearing, orientation, activation and training modules, as well as health promotion. These periods of preparation or get ready for work training may last for up to eight weeks. Apart from the provision of fixed-term transition jobs, participants are also offered targeted training, socio-educational support, and other initial and further training.

Training places for BBEN<sup>7</sup> clients may also be offered as part of the programme. The number of training places offered must be proportionate to the number of transition jobs and must not impede achievement of the economic objectives.

**Target group:** Unemployed people facing specific barriers to employment (long-term unemployment, age, disability, serious health issues, caring responsibilities, multiple social problems); hard-to-place groups of people (e.g. loss of social skills or lack of skills owing to persistent unemployment, homelessness, imprisonment, debt, drugs, etc.). BBEN clients are the target group for training measures.

**Eligibility criteria:** Transition jobs should be a meaningful additional opportunity for hard-to-place people with limited productivity.

**Amount:** The subsidy paid to the SÖB must not exceed the difference between total revenues and total actual costs. Participants in a preparatory measure receive a subsistence allowance and will be paid wages as defined in the collective agreement upon starting employment.

**Duration:** The subsidised transition job may be for up to one year. This period may be extended if the transitional character of the job is maintained. Older unemployed workers nearing retirement (in 3.5 years or less) and with no formal job prospects may remain with the SÖB until retirement under certain conditions. Workers in training (BBEN clients) may

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<sup>7</sup> BBEN = counselling and support services for people with multiple barriers to placement (see also item on counselling and support providers – BBES – on page 117).

continue with the training measure for up to six months (10 to 15 weekly hours), with this period also being extendable in exceptional cases.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** Responsibility rests with the PES. This scheme is regulated in §34 and §32(3) of the AMSG and the Federal PES Guideline on socio-economic enterprises (last amendment: BGS/AMF/0702/9948/2020, effective since 1 Dec 2020).

**Financial resources:** SÖBs are financed from the PES' budget for active measures. Co-financing by Länder or local governments is also possible.

Table 13: Socio-economic enterprises (number of persons)

Year	Persons (m+w)	Persons in % of employment	Men	Women	Expenditure in €	Expenditure as % of GDP
2013	32,797	0.814	18,460	14,337	115,127,396	0.0355
2014	35,316	0.875	20,393	14,923	128,028,912	0.0384
2015	20,072	0.493	11,116	8,956	116,451,512	0.0338
2016	21,726	0.524	12,160	9,566	163,517,675	0.0463
2017	24,030	0.574	13,422	10,608	164,980,451	0.0447
2018	21,911	0.517	10,972	10,939	153,025,749	0.0397
2019	19,653	0.459	10,131	9,522	130,212,695	0.0315
2020	16,300	0.389	8,505	7,795	128,460,059	0.0337
2021	21,236	0.502	11,267	9,970	159,649,660	0.0394
2022	23,467	0.539	12,354	11,113	175,562,813	0.0393
2023	21,904	0.498	11,748	10,156	146,118,312	0.0306

Sources: PES-DWH, cube for PES annual 2023: retrieved on 8 Apr 2024; Statistics Austria: GDP retrieved on 29 Feb 2024 (in €bn at current prices), EUROSTAT data retrieved on 24 Apr 2024 (employment total/resident population/LFS/15 to 64 years); expenditure: BMAW/Division III/A/6; BMAW's own calculations.

Note: Indicator number of persons = Number of persons subsidised on at least one day in a given year. Each individual is counted only once even if involved in several cases of subsidisation.

### 7.1.5 Non-profit employment projects

**In a nutshell:** Non-profit employment projects (Gemeinnützige Beschäftigungsprojekte – GBPs) are not-for-profit organisations that are not in competition with companies in the market. GBPs focus on hiring the long-term unemployed as well as other unemployed people with barriers to employment and few skills.

**Description:** GBPs produce goods or render services for the public benefit, such as maintaining parks and green spaces, mailing, cleaning, transport (moving house), scrap and junk recycling, wood and metal processing, household and home services, and non-profit temporary work placement of public interest and social value. The aim is to integrate hard-to-place problem groups with low productivity into the labour market by offering them work in a GBP. Such integration may be supported either by transition-type or by initiator-type subsidies. Transition-type programmes use subsidised, fixed-term employment to facilitate transition to formal-sector employment. Initiator programmes are intended to ensure that the subsidised person continues to work for the same employer when the programme ends.

Preparatory programmes (work experience/get ready for work training, possibly including clearing, orientation, activation and training modules, as well as health promotion) may also be completed, and socio-educational support and other initial and further training taken up.

**Target group:** Unemployed people facing specific barriers to employment: long-term unemployment, age, disability, serious health issues, caring responsibilities, social maladjustment; hard-to-place groups of people, e.g. loss of social skills or lack of skills owing to persistent unemployment, homelessness, imprisonment, debt, drugs, etc.

**Eligibility criteria:** Transition jobs in GBPs should be a meaningful additional, regional opportunity for hard-to-place people with limited productivity.

**Amount:** The PES subsidises these projects by paying 66.7% of wage costs. The staff costs for key workers are fully covered (without restriction) throughout the entire programme period (qualified managers and project managers, skilled trainers and supervisors or social workers). The same applies to material expenses and project preparation costs.

**Duration:** Participation is possible for up to one year. Older unemployed workers nearing retirement (in 3.5 years or less) and who have no job prospects may remain with the GBP until retirement.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** Responsibility rests with the PES. This scheme is regulated in §32(3), §34 and §34(5) of the AMMSG and the Federal PES Guideline on non-profit employment projects (last amendment: BGS/AMF/0702/9947/2020, effective since 1 Dec 2020).

**Financial resources:** This measure is financed from the PES' budget for active measures. Co-financing by Länder or local governments is also possible.

Table 14: Non-profit employment projects (number of persons)

Year	Persons (m+w)	Persons in % of employment	Men	Women	Expenditure in €	Expenditure as % of GDP
2013	6,121	0.152	3,230	2,891	37,215,762	0.0115
2014	6,399	0.159	3,350	3,049	41,428,861	0.0124
2015	7,128	0.175	3,696	3,432	50,192,338	0.0146
2016	6,695	0.162	3,296	3,399	49,905,536	0.0141
2017	6,465	0.154	2,869	3,596	54,895,942	0.0149
2018	5,256	0.124	2,224	3,032	51,562,709	0.0134
2019	4,823	0.113	1,981	2,842	36,810,641	0.0091
2020	4,086	0.098	1,716	2,370	37,685,959	0.0099
2021	4,692	0.111	2,019	2,673	45,452,311	0.0112
2022	4,669	0.107	2,030	2,639	49,093,921	0.0110
2023	4,489	0.102	2,043	2,447	46,900,061	0.0098

Sources: PES-DWH, 2020-2023: cube for PES annual 2023: retrieved on 8 Apr 2024; Statistics Austria: GDP retrieved on 29 Feb 2024 (in €bn at current prices), EUROSTAT data retrieved on 24 Apr 2024 (employment total/resident population/LFS/15 to 64 years); BMAW's own calculations.

Note: Indicator number of persons = Number of persons subsidised on at least one day in a given year. Each individual is counted only once even if involved in several cases of subsidisation.

### 7.1.6 Short-time work compensation/upskilling allowance for short-time work

**In a nutshell:** In the case of temporary, non-seasonal economic difficulties, the PES may grant employees of Austrian companies who need to reduce their normal working hours a short-time work (STW) compensation (Kurzarbeitsbeihilfe – KUA) or an upskilling allowance (Qualifizierungsbeihilfe) for STW.

**Description:** Short-time work compensation and upskilling allowance for short-time work are used to avoid unemployment and, consequently, to largely maintain the number of employees. Upskilling allowances are awarded to help workers on short-time work use the hours not worked for quality training (which meets labour market and employers' needs) and improve their chances for sustainable employment.

**Target group:** Employees subject to unemployment insurance who have an ongoing employment relationship or have worked for one fully paid month before the start of short-time work and are covered by the related social partners' agreement. However, members of the managing body may also be supported if they are subject to compulsory insurance under the General Social Insurance Act (Allgemeines Sozialversicherungsgesetz – ASVG)<sup>8</sup>

#### Eligibility criteria:

- Companies must be faced with temporary economic difficulties as a result of an obviously transient lack of orders. They must be able to provide a plausible explanation, substantiated by figures, for the underlying economic difficulties.
- The regional PES office must be notified in due time (exception: natural disasters).
- Consultation with the PES is compulsory; such consultation must also address the possible use of lost hours for upskilling measures. A company's works council must be involved in this process.
- An in-depth labour market review must be carried out with reference to job vacancies in the region if only individual employees (up to ten) are included in STW or if STW is extended to more than three months. Unless the STW period exceeds three months (maximum), this review is waived.

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<sup>8</sup> Apprentices are excluded from this subsidy .



- The social partners must conclude an agreement on STW, irrespective of whether the company in question has a works council or not.<sup>9</sup>
- The **working hours lost during the period of short-time work may not be less than 10% and not more than 90%** of the normal working time defined by law or collective agreements or – in the case of part-time employees – of the normal working hours agreed.
- Upskilling allowances for STW require detailed specifications of the training concept (basic features of the STW training concept).
- In the event of natural disasters which only affect some individual companies, the above social partner agreement may be waived. In this case, STW arrangements are based on company-level agreements.

**Amount:** Short-time work compensation is calculated based on the pro rata expenses the unemployment insurance scheme would incur for unemployment benefits plus contributions to health insurance and pension insurance in the event of unemployment. As from the fourth month, STW compensation is raised by the higher expenses resulting from the special basis for social insurance contributions.

The upskilling allowance for STW is calculated based on the pro rata expenses the unemployment insurance scheme would incur for unemployment benefits plus contributions to health insurance, pension insurance and work accident insurance in the event of unemployment. As from the first month, the allowance is raised by the higher expenses resulting from the special basis for social insurance contributions. 15% are added for the upskilling allowance.

**Duration:** The short-time work compensation and the upskilling allowance for STW are limited to six months when first granted. Once these benefits are exhausted, they may be extended for another six months if adverse conditions persist. The maximum duration is 24 months; in special circumstances, it may be extended beyond this period.

Documents on short-time work compensation can be viewed at the following PES link: [Unterlagen zu Kurzarbeit](#).

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<sup>9</sup> This must include the following: a definition of the material and personnel scope of the agreement, a time-limit for the STW period, its duration not exceeding six months at a time, payment of compensation during STW and/or payment of compensation during upskilling measures; details on the conditions of STW and/or the organisation of upskilling measures; maintenance of the number of employees during STW or during upskilling while on STW and for any period to be agreed beyond this (retention period).

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** The responsible organisation is the PES. STW compensation is regulated in §37b of the AMMSG and in the Federal PES Guideline on STW compensation/upskilling allowance (KAB), currently BGS/AMF/0702/9984/2023, in force since 1 Oct 2023. The rules for training, further and advanced training during working hours lost due to STW are laid down in the Federal PES Guideline on training cost allowance for workers on short-time work (SfK), BGS/AMF/0702/9978/2023, in force as of 27 May 2024.

**Financial resources:** The budget is drawn from variable LMP funds.

Table 15: Short-time work compensation (number of persons on short hours)

Year	Persons (m+w)	Persons in % of employment	Men	Women	Expenditure in €	Expenditure as % of GDP
2013	4,175	0.10	2,768	1,407	7,845,621	0.0024
2014	3,756	0.09	3,393	363	7,483,967	0.0022
2015	4,399	0.11	3,986	421	4,851,730	0.0014
2016	2,411	0.06	2,067	346	4,622,219	0.0013
2017	2,980	0.07	2,718	262	6,078,452	0.0016
2018	1,772	0.04	1,667	105	3,478,592	0.0009
2019	1,226	0.03	1,061	165	2,220,446	0.0006
2020	1,248,304	29.8	703,251	547,328	5,489,223,585	1.4406
2021	553,415	13.8	258,021	297,316	3,704,418,039	0.9141
2022	173,999	3.99	79,846	94,169	625,733,105	0.1399
2023	1,628	0.04	1,278	350	10,261,156	0.0022

Sources: DWH cube for PES annual report; 2009-2017: retrieved on 3 Feb 2019; 2018: retrieved on 5 Feb 2020; 2019: retrieved on 9 Apr 2021; 2022 annual report cube for the year 2022; 2023 annual report cube for the year 2023; Statistics Austria: GDP retrieved on 29 Feb 2024 (in €bn at current prices), EUROSTAT data retrieved on 24 Apr 2014 (employment total/resident population/LFS/15 to 64 years); BMAW's own calculations.

Note: Indicator number of persons = Number of persons subsidised on at least one day in a given year. Each individual is counted only once even if involved in several cases of subsidisation.

### 7.1.7 Solidarity bonus model

**In a nutshell:** Under the solidarity bonus scheme (Solidaritätsprämienmodell – SOL), the PES grants an allowance for a company's staff costs if one or more of its employees reduce their normal working hours and a replacement worker who has previously been unemployed is employed for the working time thus gained.

**Description:** The allowance is granted if one or more workers reduce their normal working hours by up to 50% and a new replacement worker is recruited who was previously claiming unemployment benefit or assistance. Marginal part-time employment relationships are not eligible for funding. Under this scheme, the replacement workers must not have been employed by the applicant company within the past two years. Apprentices switching from a supra-company to a company-based apprenticeship also qualify as replacement workers. The solidarity bonus model should help achieve unemployed workers' (re-)integration into the labour market as well as securing jobs.

**Target group:** Employed workers who are prepared to reduce their working time and unemployed workers who become employed through this reduction in working time.

**Eligibility criteria:** The reduction of normal working hours must be set forth in a collective agreement or a company-level agreement. Additionally, an agreement must be concluded between employer and employee on the reduction of their working hours and their new gross wage. The employer must pay social security contributions based on the contribution base applicable prior to the reduction of normal working hours. The working time gained through the reduction of normal working hours must be fully covered by the replacement worker(s). Applications for the allowance must be submitted to the PES prior to employment of the replacement worker.

**Amount:** The PES pays 100% of the 'extra pay' component of gross wages including non-wage labour costs to employees who reduced their working time. If working time is lowered to 50%, for example, gross wages drop to only 75%. The 25% difference and non-wage labour costs are paid by the PES.

**Duration:** The allowance may be granted for up to two years. This period may be extended to three years if the recruited replacement worker is long-term unemployed, over 45 or disabled.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** Responsibility rests with the PES. This allowance is regulated in §37a of the AMMSG (specific provisions for allowances related to the solidarity bonus model) and the Federal PES Guideline on the solidarity bonus model (last amendment: BGS/AMF/0722/9990/2018).

**Financial resources:** The subsidy is financed from unemployment insurance funds.

Table 16: Solidarity bonus model (number of persons)

Year	Persons (m+w)	Persons in % of employment	Men	Women	Expenditure in €	Expenditure as % of GDP
2013	702	0.01742	668	34	1,221,639	0.00038
2014	1,267	0.03141	1,210	57	2,260,182	0.00068
2015	1,038	0.02552	990	48	4,251,833	0.00123
2016	1,277	0.03082	1,210	67	3,695,615	0.00105
2017	1,090	0.02604	1,038	52	2,347,529	0.00064
2018	1,258	0.02966	1,202	56	3,518,164	0.00091
2019	1,127	0.02633	1,083	44	3,244,275	0.00082
2020	576	0.01376	547	29	2,141,374	0.00056
2021	654	0.01545	626	28	2,068,073	0.00051
2022	430	0.00987	416	14	2,047,036	0.00046
2023	740	0.01684	713	27	2 035 210	0.00043

Sources: PES-DWH, 2023 annual report cube for the year 2023; retrieved on 8 Apr 2024; Statistics Austria: GDP retrieved on 29 Feb 2024 (in €bn at current prices), EUROSTAT data retrieved on 17 Apr 2023 (employment total/resident population/LFS/15 to 64 years); BMAW's own calculations.

Note: Indicator number of persons = Number of persons subsidised on at least one day in a given year. Each individual is counted only once even if involved in several cases of subsidisation. The difference between the number of people and expenditure in a given year is due to the payment modalities of the scheme, i.e. payments continue in the subsequent year.

## 7.2 Training Measures

### 7.2.1 Labour Foundations

**In a nutshell:** Labour foundations (Arbeitsstiftung – AST) are usually set up when a large group of people is to be affected by staff reductions within one or more companies or is needed for recruitment within a region. Labour foundations are used to retrain or upskill participants.

**Description:** Labour foundations aim at developing the skills of unemployed people in situations where a large number of people are laid off or a large number are needed. As a rule, the affected companies, regional labour market actors and territorial authorities are involved. Labour foundations are usually established as part of a social plan. They support possible structural changes within a region. Labour foundations offer a broad range of counselling and skills development opportunities for participating workers.

**Types of labour foundations:** Several types of labour foundations exist, the most important are outplacement and implacement foundations. There are also permanent and long-term foundations, to help deal with long-term structural changes, for example. A labour foundation covers a combination of measures such as case management, initial and continuing training, internships, etc.

- **Outplacement foundations:** Outplacement foundations are launched at the initiative of one or more companies planning to lay off a large number of their staff. They are usually established as part of an agreement with the social partners, laid down in a social plan. The following types are available:
  - Company foundation: set up by one or more affiliated companies laying off staff;
  - Insolvency foundation: set up by a territorial authority (or another suitable legal entity) where the company is unable to do so by itself due to insolvency or other serious reasons;
  - Regional foundation: set up in the event of several companies in a region making massive job cuts;
  - Sectoral foundation: set up by the statutory employer organisation to cushion the effects of economic difficulties in a specific sector.
- **Implacement foundations:** Implacement foundations are launched in the event of current manpower shortages that cannot be filled in one or more companies. Participants receive specific training to meet companies' requirements.

- **Care foundation:** Labour foundations are also a key component of the PES's nursing care/health care priority training strategy. A quarter (25%) of all persons supported by the PES in this field in 2022 participated in a care placement foundation. With the exception of Burgenland and Lower Austria, care foundations have been established in all Länder (since autumn 2021 also in Carinthia) enabling unemployed persons to receive training in the field of nursing and/or social care.
- **Environmental foundation:** Since April 2022, initial and further training in green jobs of low-skilled workers and/or persons with apprenticeship qualifications that are no longer marketable has been supported within an environmental foundation. Within a maximum period of 24 months, participants are to complete initial and further training courses and extraordinary apprenticeships in compliance with the environmental goals agreed upon in the 2020-2024 government programme, a special concern being the support of women. Consequently, the environmental foundation aims to achieve a female participation rate of 40%. The funds set aside for initial and further training of 1,000 participants total roughly €17.5m (including the proportion of costs incurred by the BMAW for case management, by the PES for skills training, and the compulsory contributions by the participating companies). In addition, the PES provides income support to participants during skills training measures. The environmental foundation accepts entries from April 2022 to 31 Mar 2025 and runs till the end of 2030 (with the option of extending these periods by two years each).
- **Target group foundations:** They are launched to train specific LMP target groups (young jobseekers in particular). Both placement and outplacement foundations can be used for this purpose.

**Establishment:** The establishment of a labour foundation is usually negotiated by the actors involved: companies, social partners, PES, Federal Government, etc. The foundation plan includes information about measures, target groups, duration, funding and the foundation provider.

**Measures and implementation:** The foundation provider is responsible for running the foundation and looking after its participants. A career guidance phase is often offered, including a one-week work experience period. The participants receive individual action plans comprising initial and continuing training, possibly including an internship. The 'active job search' module supports participants in finding employment.

**Target group:** Unemployed people whose jobs have been cut due to restructuring policies or economic difficulties, with a special focus on older and young jobseekers.

**Eligibility criteria:** People are only eligible for participation in outplacement foundations if they cannot be placed in other jobs or their placement is unlikely without further training, with due consideration of the rules relating to the reasonableness of job offers. Participants must have accrued entitlements to unemployment benefits.

For implacement foundations, unemployed persons (specifically unemployment benefit or assistance claimants, unemployed people not receiving benefits) need to meet the following criteria to be eligible: no other recruiting company is looking to fill a vacancy that can only be filled with the unemployed person in question, and skills enhancement and the job promised make the unemployed person's permanent integration into the labour market likely. Future employers, foundation providers and foundation participants need to prepare and agree on a joint training plan, which covers the actual training measures and duration of the internship. The plan must be approved by the PES.

Working hours must correspond to those previously worked (outplacement) or to those planned for the future (implacement), but amount to at least 50% of the normal working time defined in collective agreements. Persons over 50 may instead be offered intensive support (individual coaching, reduction of weekly hours, extended duration of the training, etc.). Workers with reduced earning capacity (50% and more) may also lower the required number of weekly hours.

**Amount:** Participants receive unemployment benefit (UB for foundation programmes) from the PES. If the unemployment benefit is low, a subsistence allowance will also be paid out. Moreover, participants receive at least €60 per month to cover training-related additional expenses. Apart from paying the unemployment benefit, the PES may also subsidise the measures on offer. The level of funding depends on the type of foundation and has been laid down in the relevant guideline. With insolvency foundations, up to 60% of the costs eligible for funding may be paid; with other foundations, up to 35%.

**Duration:** Participation in a foundation is possible for up to three years; people over 50 may take part for up to four years.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** BMAW, PES, social partners, companies, potential funding agencies, etc. Regulated in §34 and §35 (DLU subsistence allowance; or DLU

subsistence allowance to ensure minimum income from benefits claimed) of the AMSG; Ordinance of the Federal Minister of Finance on a general framework for awarding subsidies from federal funds; §18(6)-(9) (recognition of labour foundation measures) in conjunction with §18(5) (legal consequence of extended receipt of unemployment benefit) and §12(5) (continuing receipt of unemployment assistance) of the ALVG 1977; federal guideline on recognition, funding and implementation of labour foundation measures (AST) – last amendment: BGS/AMF/0722/9933/2022, effective since 1 Jan 2023.

**Financial resources:** Funding depends on the type of foundation, but is mostly provided by the companies, the PES and sometimes other actors too. Funding is negotiated with the foundation plan. The PES finances payment of unemployment benefit via unemployment insurance (UB for foundation programmes from activated passive funds) and the provider-related costs of the programme through its active LMP budget (mixed funding model).

Table 17: Labour foundations – foundation-related unemployment benefit/training – (annual average stock)

Year	Claimants total (m+w)	Claimants in % of employment	Men	Women	Expenditure in €	Expenditure as % of GDP
2013	4,950	0.123	2,169	2,780	80,877,451	0.025
2014	5,578	0.138	2,272	3,305	93,589,836	0.028
2015	5,138	0.126	2,240	2,898	91,058,265	0.026
2016	4,990	0.120	2,168	2,822	91,198,101	0.026
2017	4,523	0.108	1,934	2,589	85,875,073	0.023
2018	3,796	0.090	1,523	2,273	73,476,533	0.019
2019	3,505	0.082	1,329	2,176	69,198,108	0.017
2020	3,497	0.084	1,453	2,044	69,376,654	0.018
2021	4,279	0.101	1,914	2,365	87,753,883	0.022
2022	4,088	0.094	1,721	2,367	85,253,227	0.019
2023	3,908	0.089	1,521	2,387	79,235,009	0.017



Sources: PES-DWH: retrieved on 8 Apr 2024; Statistics Austria: GDP retrieved on 29 Feb 2024 (in €bn at current prices), EUROSTAT data retrieved on 24 Apr 2024 (employment total/resident population/LFS/15 to 64 years); expenditure: BMAW/Division III/A/6; BMAW's own calculations.

Note: Expenditure in euro comprises unemployment benefit for the foundation programme including social security contributions but excluding expenditure incurred by the labour foundation. LB = beneficiaries; GDP = gross domestic product.

## 7.2.2 Training measures and allowances

**In a nutshell:** The PES offers a variety of training measures, for which it uses the services of external educational institutions. Additionally, various training allowances are available to fund these measures. These include work experience and get ready for work training (see below), a course cost allowance and allowance for course-related costs (see item 7.2.3 on page 84), job-related skills training – AQUA (see item 7.2.4 on page 87) and the subsistence allowance providing financial security to participants (see item 7.2.10 on page 102).

**Description:** The PES commissions external educational institutions to provide the requisite training courses. These courses comprise guidance (career guidance, work preparation), basic skills development, initial and continuing training, active job search and social training and are described in brief below. Additionally, various other training allowances are also available, for example work experience and get ready for work training (see below), job-related skills training – AQUA (see item 7.2.4 on page 87), the course cost allowance and allowance for course-related costs (see item 7.2.3 on page 84) and the subsistence allowance providing financial security to participants (see item 7.2.10 on page 102).

*Guidance:* Career guidance and work preparation support people in determining their career prospects and creating the conditions for their employment or training. It comprises dealing with previous experiences, expanding vocational opportunities, working in companies for brief periods as interns, learning about different occupations in sheltered workshops, etc. Additionally, German-language courses, job application training and courses to make up for missed education are also possible.

*Basic skills development:* It is intended to convey some general basic skills that are needed to enter the labour market or to start initial or continuing training. Basic skills development programmes include German-language courses, literacy courses, courses to complete compulsory education and basic computer courses.

*Initial and continuing training:* Initial training measures impart vocational knowledge and skills and end with an officially recognised school leaving certificate or professional qualification (e.g. completed apprenticeship). An example for this type of measure would be the intensive training to qualify as skilled workers (see item 7.2.4 on page 87). The continuing training measures include basic vocational skills (e.g. a serving course) or additional qualifications (e.g. a CAD course).

*Active job search:* This is a measure to support unemployed people in searching for a new job, for example by helping them prepare application letters or CVs, by coaching them for job interviews or analysing job advertisements.

*Social skills training:* These measures are intended to work on social issues to alleviate the consequences of long-term unemployment or of (mental) health issues. Unemployed people are encouraged to make realistic self-assessments and to develop appropriate work attitudes (perseverance, punctuality).

*Work experience and get ready for work training:* Work experience means an internship in a company with which an employment relationship is to be established to find out whether the candidate is suited for the job in terms of their skills and personality. Get ready for work training mostly serves to acquire practical experience after a completed training and does not necessarily entail subsequent employment. With these two measures, target groups and eligibility criteria are stricter than for the others mentioned above. Their minimum duration is one week with at least 16 weekly hours and may last for up to twelve weeks, or according to relevant training regulations.

**Target group:** The training measures are aimed at a broad range of people and are used depending on individual needs. Each of the measures therefore has different target groups.

**Amount:** Transfer payments to service providers (educational institution); 100% of the costs incurred are covered. For the amount granted to training participants see subsistence allowance under item 7.2.10 on page 102.

Persons who enter the measure on or after 1 Jan 2024 will receive a training supplement, its amount depending on the duration of the measure and on whether there is any entitlement to benefits before the start of the measure. Unless there is such entitlement to UI benefits directly before the start of the measure, a basic training supplement (€2.49 per day or roughly €75 per month / 2024) is due regardless of the duration of the measure. If

participants are entitled to UI benefits directly before the start of the measure, a basic training supplement is awarded for measures lasting less than 120 days. This amount is tripled (approx. €224 per month) for participants entitled to UI benefits directly before the start of a training course lasting more than 120 days and quintupled (approx. €374 per month) for such participants in training courses lasting 365 days or longer. In the case of five-fold training supplements, however, the daily benefits due may not exceed the limit amount of €51.20; if they do, the five-fold training supplement is due on a pro rata basis or not at all, with the triple training supplement being applied in these cases. Persons who entered the measure before 1 Jan 2024 and who meet the criteria will continue to receive training bonuses until the end of the measure.

**Duration:** Dependent on the agreed period of funding.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** Public Employment Service (PES); these measures are regulated in §32(3) in conjunction with §33(1) of the AMVG 1994, or §32(3) in conjunction with §34(2) for training centres; §20(7) (training supplement) and §79(176) of the AVVG (training bonus only for cases about to expire) and in the PES guidelines: Board guideline on contracting training measures (BM 1) – BGS/AMF/0722/9960/2020; federal guideline on compensating staff and material expenses of education providers (BM 2) – BGS/AMF/0722/9975/2023; federal guideline on subsidies for initial and continuing training (BEMO) – BGS/AMF/0702/9997/2024, effective since 1 Apr 2024.

**Financial resources:** The subsidy is financed from unemployment insurance funds.

Table 18: Training measures (number of persons)

Year	Persons (m+w)	Persons in % of employment	Men	Women	Expenditure in €	Expenditure as % of GDP
2013	218,507	5.42	111,248	107,264	443,500,327	0.137
2014	220,110	5.46	113,292	106,823	448,869,793	0.135
2015	193,530	4.76	96,752	96,784	509,006,383	0.148
2016	194,271	4.69	99,188	95,088	510,266,066	0.144
2017	196,408	4.69	99,894	96,520	500,476,688	0.136

Year	Persons (m+w)	Persons in % of employment	Men	Women	Expenditure in €	Expenditure as % of GDP
2018	182,318	4.30	89,802	92,523	499,882,997	0.130
2019	160,983	3.76	76,003	84,990	452,393,866	0.112
2020	144,991	3.46	67,582	77,417	453,095,811	0.119
2021	181,247	4.28	84,732	96,533	523,445,669	0.129
2022	171,599	3.94	82,026	89,586	482,393,238	0.108
2023	170,589	3.88	84,478	86,129	458,427,077	0.096

Sources: PES-DWH, 2023 annual report cube for the year 2023; retrieved on 8 Apr 2024; Statistics Austria: GDP retrieved on 29 Feb 2024 (in €bn at current prices), EUROSTAT data retrieved on 24 Apr 2024 (employment total/resident population/LFS/15 to 64 years); BMAW's own calculations.

Note: Indicator number of persons = Number of persons subsidised on at least one day in a given year. Each individual is counted only once even if involved in several cases of subsidisation.

### 7.2.3 Course and course-related costs

**In a nutshell:** The course cost allowance (Kurskosten – KK) is aimed at covering the cost of courses and training in the independent education market. The courses must provide qualifications that are in demand on the labour market. The allowance for course-related costs (Kursnebenkosten – KNK) covers costs incurred through participation in these courses and related to distance or duration, such as travelling costs, board and lodging.

**Description:** The course cost allowance is aimed at funding the cost of courses and training in the independent education market. The allowance is agreed between the PES and the applicant during regular counselling and support or after verification by the PES that the course provides skills that are in demand on the labour market. Financial support can be granted for course costs, attendance fees, learning materials, examination fees, special clothes, co-payments for schoolbooks, as well as fees for sign language interpretation.

The allowance for course-related costs is for costs incurred through participation in these courses and related to distance or duration. It covers travelling costs, co-payments for free bus passes, as well as costs for board and lodging. Similar to the course cost allowance, this

allowance also needs to be agreed between the PES and the applicant during regular counselling and support and requires verification by the PES that the course provides skills that are in demand on the labour market.

**Target group:** Persons participating in suitable LMP measures such as initial and continuing training, career guidance, work experience or get ready for work training, active job search measures or labour foundations.

**Eligibility criteria:** The PES must have counselled the applicant beforehand and/or assessed whether this LMP measure actually makes sense. The applicant's gross income must not exceed €2,700 a month. The standard value of farmers' agricultural/forest property must not exceed €20,000. The allowance for course-related costs does not include cover for commuting between home and training place. Board and lodging or use of the applicant's own car is only subsidised on meeting additional criteria such as distance, availability of public transport or commuting time.

**Amount:** Unemployed people receive 100% of the cost. Employed people or beneficiaries of further training or part-time training allowance whose monthly income exceeds €2,700 are not supported; people with income below that threshold receive graduated support and those with less than €1,350 receive 100%. Beneficiaries of further training or part-time training allowance do not receive support for any measures costing more than €3,000.

Fees for sign language interpreters will only be refunded for up to €33 (plus applicable VAT) for half an hour.

The cap on course-related costs is €450 a month or €15 per day, the cap for accommodation €1,350. Persons with physical limitations may be awarded an allowance for course-related costs of up to €1,350 also without accommodation costs.

**Duration:** The allowances are granted for the whole duration of a measure (e.g. bookkeeping course) or for an associated package of measures (e.g. bookkeeping courses I and II are considered to be one single measure). If workers on short time receive an allowance, the measures must start while claimants are still on short time.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** Public Employment Service (PES); §34 of the AMMSG 1994; §20(6) of the AUVG 1977 (flat-rate refund for course-related costs); Federal PES

Guideline on initial and continuing training (BEMO) – BGS/AMF/0702/9997/2024 (BEMO), effective since 1 Apr 2024.

**Financial resources:** The allowance is financed from unemployment insurance funds.

Table 19: Course costs (number of persons)

Year	Persons (m+w)	Persons in % of employment	Men	Women	Expenditure in €	Expenditure as % of GDP
2013	55,069	1.37	27,334	27,735	58,774,101	0.0181
2014	44,182	1.10	22,575	21,608	48,271,779	0.0145
2015	23,024	0.57	11,146	11,879	23,334,145	0.0068
2016	25,491	0.62	12,044	13,447	26,306,917	0.0074
2017	27,213	0.65	12,649	14,565	29,121,404	0.0079
2018	19,962	0.47	8,188	11,774	23,263,043	0.0060
2019	16,689	0.39	6,943	9,746	16,538,203	0.0042
2020	14,300	0.34	6,070	8,230	15,053,886	0.0040
2021	14,262	0.34	6,050	8,212	35,824,828	0.0088
2022	26,155	0.62	11,125	15,031	29,755,887	0.0067
2023	18,799	0.43	8,004	10,795	28,159,073	0.0059

Sources: PES-DWH, 2023 annual report cube for the year 2023; retrieved on 8 Apr 2024; Statistics Austria: GDP retrieved on 29 Feb 2024 (in €bn at current prices), EUROSTAT data retrieved on 24 Apr 2024 (employment total/resident population/LFS/15 to 64 years); BMAW's own calculations.

Note: Indicator number of persons = Number of persons subsidised on at least one day in a given year. Each individual is counted only once even if involved in several cases of subsidisation.

Table 20: Course-related costs (number of persons)

Year	Persons (m+w)	Persons in % of employment	Men	Women	Expenditure in €	Expenditure as % of GDP
2013	140,111	3.48	67,052	73,064	19,205,680	0.0059
2014	118,299	2.93	56,485	61,815	18,468,780	0.0055
2015	105,597	2.60	51,331	54,271	17,872,025	0.0052
2016	112,151	2.71	56,673	55,483	20,723,370	0.0059
2017	114,399	2.73	57,912	56,488	24,298,751	0.0066
2018	104,298	2.46	50,835	53,466	24,007,220	0.0062
2019	94,644	2.21	43,967	50,683	21,002,074	0.0053
2020	82,224	1.96	37,176	45,050	19,112,407	0.0050
2021	103,166	2.44	47,330	55,847	21,824,593	0.0054
2022	100,061	2.30	47,248	52,820	22,247,130	0.0050
2023	103,987	2.37	50,798	53,202	23,627,183	0.0050

Sources: PES-DWH, 2023 annual report cube for the year 2023; retrieved on 8 Apr 2024; Statistics Austria: GDP retrieved on 29 Feb 2024 (in €bn at current prices), EUROSTAT data retrieved on 24 Apr 2024 (employment total/resident population/LFS/15 to 64 years); BMAW's own calculations.

Note: Indicator number of persons = Number of persons subsidised on at least one day in a given year. Each individual is counted only once even if involved in several cases of subsidisation.

## 7.2.4 Job-related skills training

**In a nutshell:** Job-related skills training (Arbeitsplatznahe Qualifizierung – AQUA) allows to obtain certified qualifications. The practical aspects are trained at companies to ensure their job-relatedness, theoretical knowledge is conveyed in external educational institutions.

**Description:** The PES grants a subsistence allowance and may pay for participants' course costs and travelling expenses during their job-related training. AQUA participants are covered by health, work accident and pension insurance through the PES. Jobseekers can complete their apprenticeship training, for example, and then go on immediately to use their

skills at a company. Participants gain practical experience directly at the workplace and theoretical knowledge in complementary courses.

**Target group:** Primary target group are jobseekers who are suited for a specific vacancy but lack certain qualifications in order to be able to accept the job. The PES may also find companies that do not require new staff but are willing to train AQUA participants for other recruiting companies.

**Eligibility criteria:** Subsidisation is conditional on a counselling meeting with the PES, and the PES must have approved an individual training plan. A written AQUA agreement between the AQUA participant and the AQUA company must be concluded. The theoretical training completed with an external training provider needs to provide marketable skills. AQUA ends with an officially recognised qualification or certification by the external institution, with the actual training having to take place predominantly in Austria. The eligibility criteria may differ between regions.

**Amount:** The subsistence allowance depends on individual benefit entitlement based on unemployment insurance contributions (unemployment benefit or assistance). If these entitlements are below the 'minimum standard' as determined by the PES for the whole of Austria, a subsistence allowance will be granted. If they are higher, unemployment benefit or assistance will continue to be paid out. The minimum standard for 2024 amounts to €12.85 (2023: €12.42) daily for young people up to 18 and people in preparatory measures; €20.88 (2023: €20.17) daily for adults participating in measures of at least 16 but less than 25 weekly hours; €29.69 (2023: €28.69) daily for adults participating in measures of 25 and more weekly hours.

As of 1 Jan 2024, a so-called training supplement (Schulungszuschlag) is added to the UI benefits awarded to participants. For measures lasting up to four months, €2.49 is paid out daily (around €75 per month) in addition to continued UI benefit receipt – this amount (the basic training supplement) is also paid to persons without UI entitlements who instead receive subsistence allowance (Beihilfe zur Deckung des Lebensunterhalts – DLU), regardless of the duration of training. For programmes lasting between five and twelve months, unemployment benefit/unemployment assistance increases by €7.47 a day or roughly €224 a month (triple training supplement). If the training programme lasts longer than twelve months, another €12.45 are added daily, i.e. roughly €374 a month (five times the basic training supplement). Participants in labour foundations will receive obligatory company-financed grants instead of training supplements.



If the total daily amount of unemployment benefit/unemployment assistance plus training supplement exceeds €51.20, only the triple training supplement of around €224 a month will be paid – this also applies to measures lasting more than twelve months.

During participation in AQUA programmes, the company providing such training can also pay a supplement – up to the marginal earnings threshold – to the beneficiary. In this case, the maximum training supplement amounts to around €224 a month.

The PES covers 100% of the AQUA course costs (e.g. course and examination fees, sign language interpreter) as well as jobseekers' travelling and accommodation expenses (upper limits apply).

**Duration:** Benefits are granted for as long as claimants participate in the AQUA programme. The minimum duration is 13 weeks and the minimum intensity 16 weekly hours.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** Responsibility rests with the PES. AQUA is an individual measure and regulated in the current Federal PES Guideline on initial and continuing training (BEMO), BGS/AMF/0702/9997/2024, effective since 1 Apr 2024.

Allowances for course costs and course-related costs are granted in accordance with §34 of the AMMSG. Continued receipt of unemployment benefit or unemployment assistance during participation in LMP training measures is governed by §12(5) of the AIVG, in the case of unemployment benefit in conjunction with §18(4)-(7). The flat-rate refund for course-related costs is granted in accordance with §20(6) of the AIVG. Accident insurance is defined in §8(1)3c and §74(2) of the ASVG.

**Financial resources:** In the case of continued receipt of unemployment benefit/assistance, the scheme is financed from UI funds (activated passive funds); a payment of subsistence allowance comes from PES funds. Possible entitlements from unemployment insurance will be drawn, with any difference compared with the 'minimum standard' being covered by active LMP funds (funding budget). Additional, individually agreed financial support such as course costs or travelling expenses are financed from PES funds.

Table 21: Job-related skills training – AQUA (number of persons)

Year	Persons (m+w)	Persons in % of employment	Men	Women	Expenditure in €	Expenditure as % of GDP
2017	3,906	0.093	2,060	1,846	5,151,839	0.0014
2018	4,448	0.105	2,292	2,156	6,753,417	0.0018
2019	5,022	0.117	2,587	2,435	8,267,637	0.0021
2020	4,754	0.114	2,437	2,317	9,061,141	0.0024
2021	5,173	0.122	2,647	2,526	8,747,395	0.0022
2022	5,205	0.119	2,631	2,574	8,670,161	0.0019
2023	4,875	0.111	2,440	2,435	8,363,101	0.0018

Sources: PES-DWH, 2023 annual report cube for the year 2023; Statistics Austria: GDP retrieved on 29 Feb 2024 (in €bn at current prices), EUROSTAT data retrieved on 24 Apr 2024 (employment total/resident population/LFS/15 to 64 years); BMAW's own calculations.

Note on the availability of data: Since 2017, there have been uniform rules for the AQUA programme throughout Austria as defined in the Federal PES Guideline on initial and continuing training (BEMO). Since then, AQUA has been recorded as a funding instrument in its own right.

## 7.2.5 Intensive training to qualify as skilled workers

**In a nutshell:** The intensive training to qualify as skilled workers (Fachkräfte-IntensivAusbildung – FIA) is a PES offer for jobseekers over 19 who dropped out from an apprenticeship or who have poor skills or skills that are no longer of use, enabling them to complete their apprenticeship and boosting their chances in the labour market. FIA is also an important instrument to reduce the shortage of skilled workers.

**Description:** Poorly qualified workers have poor chances in the labour market. At the same time, there is a shortage of skilled workers in technical jobs. Disadvantaged groups of people, unemployed or poorly qualified unemployed people may, for example, complete their apprenticeship and thus improve their chances of finding a job. In 2022, 39% of the reported vacancies that were immediately available required a completed apprenticeship. For unemployed young adults (aged 19-24) with only compulsory schooling or less, the Federal Government offers an additional training and upskilling programme called 'Training Guarantee

till 25' (see also item 7.2.15 on page 114). Following clearing of the applicants' suitability, they can choose from a broad range of apprenticeships, e.g. construction work, wood and metal processing, electrical engineering and IT. Training is completed in educational institutions commissioned by the PES.

**Target group:** Poorly qualified unemployed people, disadvantaged groups of people, unemployed young adults (aged 19-24) within the scope of the Training Guarantee till 25 scheme.

**Eligibility criteria:** Persons with only compulsory schooling are eligible for participation if they successfully passed the clearing phase.

**Amount:** The PES provides financial support to participants during training. The subsistence allowance depends on individual entitlements from unemployment insurance (unemployment benefit or assistance). If these entitlements are below the 'minimum standard' as determined by the PES for the whole of Austria, a subsistence allowance will be granted. If they are higher, unemployment benefit or assistance will continue to be paid out. The minimum standard for 2024 amounts to €12.85 (2023: €12.42) daily for young people up to 18 and people in preparatory measures; €20.88 (2023: €20.17) daily for adults participating in measures of at least 16 but less than 25 weekly hours; €29.69 (2023: €28.69) daily for adults participating in measures of 25 and more weekly hours.

**Duration:** Such a second-chance apprenticeship may be completed within 12 to 24 months.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** The PES processes the FIA in the form of a training measure. Federal PES guideline on contracting training measures (BM 1) – BGS/AMF/0722/9960/2020; federal guideline on compensating staff and material expenses of education providers (BM 2) – BGS/AMF/0722/9975/2023 and Federal Guideline BEMO, BGS/AMF/0702/9997/2024, effective since 1 Apr 2024.

**Financial resources:** The PES commissions educational institutions to implement the FIA and covers staff and material expenses. The scheme is financed from active LMP funds. The livelihood of participants is secured either by continued receipt of UI benefits or under the subsistence allowance scheme from PES funds.

Table 22: Intensive training to qualify as skilled workers (number of persons per year)

Year	Persons (m+w)	Persons in % of employment	Men	Women	Expenditure in €	Expenditure as % of GDP
2016	8,459	0.204	4,623	3,836	66,972,354	0.0190
2017	8,716	0.208	4,684	4,032	71,809,905	0.0194
2018	9,716	0.229	5,027	4,689	71,390,684	0.0185
2019	9,258	0.216	4,733	4,525	70,445,323	0.0177
2020	8,416	0.201	4,164	4,252	71,686,566	0.0188
2021	8,585	0.203	4,321	4,264	75,151,597	0.0185
2022	8,157	0.187	4,191	3,966	68,810,885	0.0154
2023	7,308	0.166	3,834	3,474	77,075,203	0.0161

Sources: PES-DWH, 2023 annual report cube for the year 2023; Statistics Austria: GDP retrieved on 29 Feb 2024 (in €bn at current prices), EUROSTAT data retrieved on 24 Apr 2024 (employment total/resident population/LFS/15 to 64 years); BMAW's own calculations.

## 7.2.6 In-work training subsidy

**In a nutshell:** The in-work training subsidy (Qualifizierungsförderung für Beschäftigte – QBN) gives poorly qualified and older employees (including those on leave) the opportunity to complete in-company further training. Training must provide them with marketable skills. This should help participants keep and secure their jobs, as well as improve their career prospects and income situation.

**Description:** With its QBN, the PES funds participation in an LMP-related and marketable skills training of at least 16 hours (including breaks). Practical training hours are only eligible for funding if they take place in, or are organised by, a training or further training establishment. They must also be separate from other in-company processes. Under the scheme, course costs and costs for working time lost because of attending the course are partially refunded (50% each).

Training services are only eligible for funding if the employer purchased them and made them available to employees as a benefit in kind (course fees by external training institutions, fees by external trainers, fees for course documents, examinations and classrooms,

board as part of a seminar flat rate). Since January 2022, online courses have also become eligible under certain conditions within this measure.

**Target group:** The following persons may qualify for subsidies, with defined LMP objectives:

- Employees with no more than compulsory schooling (or less than that),
- Employees with a completed apprenticeship or school for intermediate vocational education (BMS),
- Employees with more than compulsory schooling from the age of 45, and
- Quasi-freelancers subject to the above conditions.

**Amount:** As a rule, the PES covers 50% of the course costs, with the PES Länder offices entitled to set upper limits for eligible costs. If course costs are funded, 50% of the staff costs for skills training courses that are attended during working time and exceed 24 hours are also covered. These costs are funded from the first course hour for workers with no more than compulsory schooling. The PES does not fund the staff costs for quasi-freelancers, persons on part-time training leave or older workers using the part-time scheme. A maximum of 10 hours per day are eligible for funding. Funding must not exceed €10,000 per person and application.

**Duration:** The subsidy refers specifically to training periods during working time and is paid to the company after completion.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** Responsibility rests with the PES. The QBN is regulated in §34 of the AMMSG, in Commission Regulation (EU) no. 651/2014 of 17 June 2014 declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty (General Block Exemption Regulation) and in the Federal PES Guideline on in-work training subsidies (last amendment: BGS/AMF/0702/9996/2022, effective since 13 June 2022).

**Financial resources:** This measure is financed from the PES budget for active measures (i.e. the funding budget).

Table 23: In-work training subsidy (number of persons)

Year	Persons (m+w)	Persons in % of employment	Men	Women	Expenditure in €	Expenditure as % of GDP
2015	10,157	0.2497	3,147	7,013	3,218,914	0.0009
2016	13,512	0.3262	4,433	9,081	6,534,101	0.0018
2017	15,629	0.3734	5,512	10,122	7,307,129	0.0020
2018	16,649	0.3926	6,431	10,223	7,625,520	0.0020
2019	17,747	0.4146	7,298	10,454	8,289,688	0.0021
2020	9,261	0.2213	2,868	6,398	5,427,848	0.0142
2021	9,927	0.2346	3,287	5,201	5,446,957	0.0013
2022	13,562	0.3113	5,201	8,369	5,864,414	0.0013
2023	14,451	0.3289	5,789	8,675	7,425,963	0.0016

Sources: PES-DWH, 2023 annual report cube for the year 2023; retrieved on 8 Apr 2024; Statistics Austria: GDP retrieved on 29 Feb 2024 (in €bn at current prices), EUROSTAT data retrieved on 24 Apr 2024 (employment total/resident population/LFS/15 to 64 years); BMAW's own calculations.

Note: Indicator number of persons = Number of persons subsidised on at least one day in a given year. Each individual is counted only once even if involved in several cases of subsidisation.

## 7.2.7 Supporting skills enhancement of those working in social services of general interest

**In a nutshell:** This PES subsidy (Förderung der Höherqualifizierung von Beschäftigten im Bereich soziale Dienstleistungen von allgemeinem Interesse – GSK) is intended to cover the costs of skills enhancement of those working in health and social services, preschool education, as well as asylum and refugee support. This should help reduce the shortage of skilled labour, secure the jobs of poorly qualified workers and improve their career prospects. The subsidy is also specifically geared towards women and increases their access to in-company training and skills enhancement.

**Description:** The following training and skills enhancement programmes are eligible for funding:

- Care assistant pursuant to §92 of the Health Care and Nursing Act (Gesundheits- und Krankenpflegegesetz – GuKG);
- Skilled care assistant pursuant to §92 of the GuKG;
- Skilled social care professional specialised in working with the elderly;
- Certified social care professional specialised in working with the elderly;
- Skilled social care professional specialised in working with the disabled;
- Certified social care professional specialised in working with the disabled;
- Skilled social care professional specialised in assisting the disabled;
- Certified social care professional specialised in assisting the disabled;
- Preschool teacher;
- Special-needs kindergarten teacher;
- Day-care professional for schoolchildren;
- Asylum and migration support worker;
- From care assistant to skilled care assistant;
- From care assistant to certified health carer and nurse pursuant to §44 of the GuKG;
- From skilled care assistant to certified health carer and nurse.

Further information about this measure can be found on the German [website of the PES](#).

**Target group:** Fully insured employees<sup>10</sup> or employees on leave wishing to take part in the specific courses and skills enhancement training seminars listed above<sup>11</sup>, quasi-freelancers.

**Eligibility criteria:** Applications must be submitted to the PES no later than four months before the start of the subsidy period.

**Amount:** The subsidy covers 75% of eligible course costs. If other public funds provide for more than 25%, the subsidy is reduced. For final settlement of the subsidy, the educational institution must issue confirmation of attendance.

In addition to the course cost allowance or under certain circumstances (no attendance fee, course cost allowance paid by the Land), 75% of eligible staff costs for training periods during paid working hours may also be subsidised. If other public funds provide for more

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<sup>10</sup> Claimants of further training allowance, part-time training allowance, part-time allowance for older workers and a skilled workers' grant are only eligible in relation to the course costs.

<sup>11</sup> Employees with tenure, temporary blue-collar and white-collar workers from a commercial temping agency for which the social and continuing training fund provides for an allowance in accordance with the Temporary Employment Act (Arbeitskräfteüberlassungsgesetz – AÜG) are not eligible for funding.

than 25%, the subsidy is reduced. Staff costs for persons on part-time training leave and for older workers using the part-time scheme are not eligible for funding. It is now possible to simultaneously subsidise a person on leave with a nursing care grant and the company with a GSK subsidy regarding course costs (but not staff costs).

**Duration:** The subsidy refers specifically to the training periods during working time and is paid to the company after completion.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** Responsibility rests with the PES. This subsidy is regulated in §34 of the AMMSG and the federal guideline on supporting skills enhancement of those working in social services of general interest (last amendment: BGS/AMF/0702/9996/2024, effective since 1 Apr 2024).

**Financial resources:** This subsidy is financed from the PES's active LMP funds (funding budget).

Table 24: Supporting skills enhancement of those working in social services of general interest (number of persons)

Year	Persons (m+w)	Persons in % of employment	Men	Women	Expenditure in €	Expenditure as % of GDP
2015	327	0.0080	92	235	129,979	0.00004
2016	378	0.0091	103	275	734,263	0.00021
2017	388	0.0093	99	289	689,814	0.00019
2018	428	0.0101	95	333	1,050,302	0.00027
2019	475	0.0111	86	389	822,630	0.00021
2020	540	0.0129	92	448	979,346	0.00026
2021	633	0.0150	112	521	1,619,380	0.00040
2022	641	0.0147	127	514	1,571,501	0.00035
2023	777	0.0177	192	585	2,716,585	0.00057

Sources: PES-DWH, 2023 annual report cube for the year 2023; retrieved on 8 Apr 2024; Statistics Austria: GDP retrieved on 29 Feb 2024 (in €bn at current prices), EUROSTAT data retrieved on 24 Apr 2024 (employment total/resident population/LFS/15 to 64 years); BMAW's own calculations.



Note: Indicator number of persons = Number of persons subsidised on at least one day in a given year. Each individual is counted only once even if involved in several cases of subsidisation.

## 7.2.8 Skilled workers' grant

**In a nutshell:** The skilled workers' grant (Fachkräftestipendium – FKS) is aimed at enabling employees and unemployed people to train as skilled workers in sectors affected by labour shortages. This improves their opportunities in the labour market and increases the number of skilled workers.

**Description:** Any training for sectors with a shortage of skilled workers (e.g. STEM<sup>12</sup>, health, care and social services) that can be completed within four years is eligible for the grant. The training programme must start before 31 Dec 2025 and fully attended in Austria. The list of programmes eligible for funding can be found on the [German website of the PES](#). Participants are covered by health, work accident and pension insurance during the training.

**Target group:** Employees who are on leave for the duration of training; unemployed workers and previously self-employed workers<sup>13</sup> with qualifications below those from a university of applied sciences.

### Eligibility criteria:

- UI-covered employment or pension insurance-covered self-employment for at least four years within the past 15 years;
- All requirements for admission (passed entrance examination, etc.) must be met;
- Participation in education and career counselling sessions, conclusive proof of being suited for one of the training options in the list including formal educational attainment;
- Permanent residence in Austria;
- Qualifications below those from universities of applied sciences;
- Training lasting for at least three months and needing to be full-time with 20 weekly hours over the entire training period.

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<sup>12</sup> Science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

<sup>13</sup> Their business must be suspended.

**Amount:** Subsistence allowance depends on individual entitlements from unemployment insurance (unemployment benefit or assistance). If these entitlements are below the 'minimum standard' as determined by the PES for the whole of Austria, a subsistence allowance will be granted. If they are higher, unemployment benefit or assistance will continue to be paid out.

A training supplement is granted for training courses beginning on 1 Jan 2024 – 31 Dec 2025 at the latest. The amount paid depends on the duration of training and on whether there is any entitlement to UI benefits. Unless there is such entitlement to UI benefits directly before the start of the measure, a basic training supplement (€2.49 per day or roughly €75 per month / 2024) is due regardless of the duration of the measure. If participants are entitled to UI benefits directly before the start of the measure, a basic training supplement is awarded for measures lasting less than 120 days. This amount is tripled (approx. €224 per month) for participants entitled to UI benefits directly before the start of a training course lasting more than 120 days and quintupled (approx. €374 per month) for such participants in training courses lasting 365 days or longer. In the case of five-fold training supplements, however, the daily benefits due may not exceed the limit amount of €51.20; if they do, the five-fold training supplement is due on a pro rata basis or not at all, with the triple training supplement being applied in these cases. Persons who entered the measure before 1 Jan 2024 and who meet the criteria will continue to receive training bonuses until the end of the measure.

**Duration:** Grants are available for as long as claimants participate in training, but for no more than three years, provided training has been completed and the LMP target attained. Exception: If a training programme is discontinued, yet another skilled workers' grant may be claimed for a maximum of three years (=1,096 days) for a new training programme beginning by 31 Dec 2025 at the latest ('second chance')

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** Responsibility rests with the PES. This grant is regulated in §34b in conjunction with §34 of the AMMSG, in §12(5) in conjunction with §18(4), §20(6) and (7), §79(169) of the AIVG, in §1(3) and (13) of the AMPFG, in §80 and §78(40) of the AMMSG and the Federal PES Guideline on the skilled workers' grant (last amendment: BGS/AMF/0722/9964/2023, effective since 1 Jan 2024).

**Financial resources:** Funding is provided depending on the claimant's individual requirements either from the PES's active LMP funds (funding budget) or from unemployment insurance funds.

Table 25: Skilled workers' grant (number of persons)

Year	Persons (m+w)	Persons in % of employment	Men	Women	Expenditure in €	Expenditure as % of GDP
2014	5,301	0.1314	1,747	3,554	18,127,201	0.0054
2015	7,095	0.1744	2,764	4,331	20,796,533	0.0060
2016	5,463	0.1319	2,187	3,276	13,617,487	0.0039
2017	4,856	0.1160	2,200	2,656	5,560,157	0.0015
2018	4,294	0.1012	2,063	2,231	3,812,378	0.0010
2019	5,296	0.1237	2,188	3,108	3,678,614	0.0009
2020	7,230	0.1728	2,809	4,421	5,555,859	0.0015
2021	8,294	0.1960	3,002	5,292	7,200,445	0.0018
2022	8,280	0.1900	2,682	5,598	8,598,409	0.0019
2023	5,511	0.1254	1,874	3,637	6,545,695	0.0014

Sources: PES-DWH, 2023 annual report cube for the year 2023; retrieved on 8 Apr 2024; Statistics Austria: GDP retrieved on 29 Feb 2024 (in €bn at current prices), EUROSTAT data retrieved on 24 Apr 2024 (employment total/resident population/LFS/15 to 64 years); BMAW's own calculations.

Note: Indicator number of persons = Number of persons subsidised on at least one day in a given year. Each individual is counted only once even if involved in several cases of subsidisation.

## 7.2.9 Women in crafts and engineering

**In a nutshell:** As part of the women in crafts and engineering programme (Frauen in Handwerk und Technik – FIT), women have the opportunity to enter training in crafts and engineering, including green jobs. Training programmes involving apprenticeships and school-based training programmes up to the level of universities of applied sciences are eligible for funding. Interested women with at least compulsory school-leaving certificates will be prepared for training and receive advice and support throughout their participation in the programme. The aim is to get more women into occupations that promise higher income and will be in demand in future.

**Description:** Participants are prepared for training in three consecutive courses. In addition, the women are offered specific counselling and support during the entire programme. Offered courses and FIT programme:

- FIT information days: overview of the programme, training courses, monetary benefits; workshops on offer,
- Widening of perspectives: familiarisation with job profiles, information about specific training programmes, income and employment opportunities, specific work-related internships, basic skills in IT and digital skills.
- Technical pre-training for women: brushing up school knowledge and acquiring basic skills in IT, mathematics and physics, tailored to the desired training. Additionally, basic skills in digitalisation are also taught.
- Following completion of the preparatory programme, the actual training may be started (occupations with a female share of less than 40% and occupations with special labour market opportunities such as green jobs):
  - full-fledged apprenticeship including final examination in a crafts/engineering occupation
  - school-based training courses such as at technical universities of applied sciences, higher technical colleges (HTL), post-secondary VET courses, etc.
- Participants are supported during the entire training programme by specialised women's or girls' counselling centres.
- Cooperation with and counselling of companies help women find training places and employment which match their skills.

**Target group:** All women with compulsory education registered with the PES and young women up to 19 under the supra-company training scheme as defined in §30 of the Vocational Training Act (BAG) wishing to train in a craft or engineering.

**Amount:** Financial support during participation in the form of a subsistence allowance and/or continued payment of benefits plus training bonus, if applicable (see **Fehler! Verweisquelle konnte nicht gefunden werden. Fehler! Verweisquelle konnte nicht gefunden werden.** on page **Fehler! Textmarke nicht definiert.**).

**Duration:** The programme's duration varies according to the need for preparatory measures and type of training.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** Responsibility rests with the PES. Legal basis is §31 of the AMSG. (The PES is obliged to use its programmes in a manner suited to counteract the gender-specific segregation of the job market and to combat discrimination against women on the labour market.)

**Financial resources:** The programme is financed from the PES's active LMP funds (funding budget).

Table 26: Women in crafts and engineering (number of persons in the programme)

Year	Persons (Women)	Persons in % of female employmen (15-64 years)	Expenditure in million Euros	Expenditure as % of GDP
2013	6,818	0.36	20,37	0.0063
2014	7,241	0.38	20,13	0.0060
2015	6,764	0.35	19,30	0.0056
2016	6,700	0.34	21,01	0.0059
2017	7,255	0.37	25,00	0.0068
2018	7,362	0.37	23,67	0.0061
2019	6,897	0.34	21,88	0.0055
2020	6,929	0.35	22,70	0.0060
2021	9,494	0.48	33,90	0.0084
2022	9,652	0.47	27,80	0.0062
2023	10,188	0.49	29,73	0.0058

Sources: AMS-DWH: retrieved in May 2024; GDP retrieved on 29 Feb 2024 (in €bn at current prices), BMAW's own calculations, EUROSTAT data retrieved on 2 May 2024 (employment total/resident population/LFS/15 to 64 years); BMAW's own calculations.

Note: Indicator number of persons = Number of persons subsidised on at least one day in a given year. Each individual is counted only once even if involved in several cases of subsidisation.

## 7.2.10 Subsistence allowance

**In a nutshell:** The subsistence allowance scheme (Beihilfe zur Deckung des Lebensunterhalts – DLU) is aimed at securing the livelihood of individuals participating in an LMP measure, such as a skills training programme.

**Description:** Subsistence allowance is paid during participation in initial and continuing training, career guidance, work experience and get ready for work training, active job search programmes, business start-up programmes for the unemployed or in a labour foundation. The measure must last for at least one week of at least 16 hours.

Any entitlements to unemployment benefit or unemployment assistance will be credited towards the subsistence allowance. If these entitlements exceed the amount of the subsistence allowance, the latter will not be granted and only the benefits will continue to be paid out. All DLU claimants are covered by social insurance (work accident, health and pension insurance).

**Target group:** Unemployed participants in vocational training and upskilling measures; workers on short hours; workers whose gross income does not exceed €2,300 per month (including workers on leave claiming further training allowance or part-time training allowance); workers who intend to acquire qualifications in job segments suffering from skills shortages; workers already dismissed; workers with a physical, psychological or mental disability; older workers; workers supported by integration subsidies; individuals without an ongoing employment relationship who draw childcare allowance<sup>14</sup>; apprenticeship-seekers; farmers<sup>15</sup>; participants in business start-up programmes; participants in labour foundation or AQUA programmes.

As far as *school-based education* is concerned, the *following target groups may also be supported* within the meaning of §31(3) of the Public Employment Service Act (AMSG): individuals who have not completed their school education; individuals without any form of vocational training (except for graduates of academic secondary schools); upper secondary school graduates and university drop-outs two years after having passed their matriculation

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<sup>14</sup> They need to be able to attend a PES measure and again be available to the labour market within one year.

<sup>15</sup> The standard value of the agricultural/forest property must not exceed €17,020.

examination or provided they meet the eligibility criteria as defined by the Unemployment Insurance Act (AIVG); school drop-outs two years after having dropped out or provided they meet the eligibility criteria as defined by the AIVG; individuals with qualifications that are no longer marketable (e.g. women returners); the long-term unemployed (younger persons under 25 and older persons<sup>16</sup> who have been out of work for more than 6 months, all other age groups for more than 12 months); the older unemployed.

The **nursing care grant** is implemented as a 'special form' of subsistence allowance. Applications for this grant may be filed as of 1 Jan 2023. Unemployed persons and persons on leave will qualify for funding if they start eligible training at least two years after the end of Compulsory Education/Training till 18, i.e. after reaching the age of 20, and

- in the case of upper secondary school graduates as well as university and FH dropouts, an additional two years have passed after graduation from upper secondary school or the eligibility criteria under the AIVG have been met;
- in the case of school dropouts, an additional two years have passed after dropping out of school or the eligibility criteria under the AIVG have been met.
- the person must fulfil the entry requirements for training (e.g. entrance examination).

The following training programmes can be completed with the nursing care grant:

- Care assistant (school/training course, full-time/part-time);
- Skilled care assistant (school/training course, full-time/part-time);
- School for social care professions (2 years, qualifying examination);
- School for social care professions (3 years, diploma examination);
- School for social care professions (for working students, diploma examination) – in all specialisations, i.e. work with the elderly, the disabled, family work, support for the disabled.

Training must be agreed with the public employment service prior to commencement and must comprise at least 25 weekly hours. As of 1 Jan 2024, training for higher-level healthcare and nursing services (Dienst für Gesundheits- und Krankenpflege – DGKP) takes place exclusively at universities of applied sciences. Training programmes at universities of applied sciences are not eligible for nursing care grants.

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<sup>16</sup> Older workers are registered unemployed as from the age defined in the targets.

**Eligibility criteria:** A DLU allowance is only granted if an ex-ante counselling meeting is held between the PES and the applicant. The intended measure must improve the beneficiary's employability.

**Amount:** The minimum standard for 2024 amounts to €12.85 (2023: €12.42) daily for young people up to 18 and people in preparatory measures; €20.88 (2023: €20.17) daily for adults participating in measures of at least 16 but less than 25 weekly hours; €29.60 (2023: €28.69) daily for adults participating in measures of 25 and more weekly hours as well as for participants in the preparatory stage of business start-up programmes (Unternehmensgründungsprogramm – UGP) and €51.20 (2023: €46.67) daily for participants in training programmes (nursing care grant) and €47.87 (2023: €43.44) daily for participants in labour foundations subject to programmes of at least 25 weekly hours who are on continued benefit receipt according to §18(5) AIVG.

Persons who enter the measure on or after 1 Jan 2024 will receive a training supplement, its amount depending on the duration of the measure and on whether there is any entitlement to benefits before the start of the measure – for a detailed description of the training supplement see item 7.2.2. Persons who entered the measure before 1 Jan 2024 and who meet the criteria will continue to receive training bonuses until the end of the measure, while the training bonus programme as such expired on 31 Dec 2023.

**Duration:** The allowance is paid for the total length of a programme or for an associated package of programmes (e.g. IT 1 and 2). Participants in school-type education and training will continue receiving their DLU allowance during summer holidays. The nursing care grant may be awarded per person for a maximum of two different training courses, the maximum total funding period being up to four years.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** Responsibility rests with the PES. The DLU allowance is regulated in §35 of the AMMSG; continuing receipt of unemployment benefit or unemployment assistance during participation in LMP training measures is governed by §12(5) of the AIVG, in the case of unemployment benefit by §12(5) in conjunction with §18(4)-(7) of the AIVG. Participants with no benefit entitlements are subject to the following legal provisions: Work accident insurance in §8(1)3c and other provisions in §74(2) of the ASVG. Training bonuses are granted under §20(7) and §79(169) of the AIVG and flat-rate refunds of course-related costs under §20(6) of the AIVG. Rules on the DLU are also included in the Federal PES Guideline on training and upskilling subsidies (BEMO),



BGS/AMF/0702/9965/2022, effective since 1 Jan 2023. The nursing care grant is awarded on the basis of targets set by the Federal Minister of Labour and Economy.

**Financial resources:** Income support whilst on unemployment benefits/unemployment assistance is financed by the unemployment insurance scheme, and subsistence allowance via PES funding.

Table 27: Subsistence allowance (number of persons)

Year	Persons (m+w)	Persons in % of employment	Men	Women	Expenditure in €	Expenditure as % of GDP
2013	268,838	6.67	137,209	131,637	657,445,447	0.203
2014	271,907	6.74	140,044	131,869	719,266,665	0.216
2015	218,751	5.38	107,744	111,014	632,471,599	0.184
2016	211,404	5.10	104,002	107,409	650,589,679	0.184
2017	214,237	5.12	105,538	108,708	678,248,337	0.184
2018	194,795	4.59	92,966	101,836	673,716,032	0.175
2019	176,002	4.11	82,267	93,744	641,108,296	0.161
2020	157,295	3.76	73 596	83 705	645,608,955	0.169
2021	196,824	4.65	91,518	105,324	825,507,005	0.204
2022	178,069	4.09	82,948	95,131	775,511,096	0.173
2023	170,761	3.89	80,925	89,851	764,775,529	0.160

Sources: PES-DWH, 2023 annual report cube for the year 2023; retrieved on 8 Apr 2024; Statistics Austria: GDP retrieved on 29 Feb 2024 (in €bn at current prices), EUROSTAT data retrieved on 24 Apr 2024 (employment total/resident population/LFS/15 to 64 years); budget spending: Division III/A/6; BMAW's own calculations.

Note: Spending on DLU allowance includes continued receipt of unemployment benefit and unemployment assistance during the PES measure and social security contributions.

Indicator number of persons = Number of persons subsidised on at least one day in a given year. Each individual is counted only once even if involved in several cases of subsidisation.

### 7.2.11 Subsidies to company-based apprenticeships

**In a nutshell:** Subsidies to company-based apprenticeships (Betriebliche Lehrstellenförderung) support companies that train apprentices. They receive subsidies for each apprentice depending on the year of apprenticeship training and the apprentice's pay rate. In addition, quality- and labour market related subsidies are available.

**Description:** Subsidies to company-based apprenticeships have been available under the Vocational Training Act (BAG) since 2008. They support the training of apprentices in general (basic subsidies) on the one hand, and pursue specific goals on the other, such as improving the quality of apprenticeships or supporting apprentices in preparation for their exams.

**Basic subsidies:** A large part of these funds is used for basic subsidies granted to companies training apprentices. The level of these subsidies is based on the remuneration scheme for apprentices as agreed under collective agreements and varies according to the year of apprenticeship training.

Quality and labour market related subsidies include:

- Inter- and supra-company training measures (e.g. covering part of the costs for these types of training);
- Professional development for trainers (covering part of the course costs);
- Refunding apprenticeship pay in programmes combining apprenticeships with matriculation examinations;
- Refunding apprenticeship pay in case of internships and language courses abroad;
- Courses for apprentices with learning difficulties;
- Additional attendance of vocational school classes;
- Preparation courses for final apprenticeship examinations;
- Bonuses for excellent or good final examinations;
- Apprenticeship training for adults;
- Bonus for training apprentices from supra-company training establishments;

Assistance and programmes under the BAG:

- Coaching and counselling for apprentices and their employers;
- Apprentices' internships and language courses abroad;
- Training guidebooks for companies training apprentices;

- Preparation of examiners for final apprenticeship exams (LAPs);
- Clearing centre for final apprenticeship examinations (standards for test questions);
- Participation in international skills competitions;
- Funding the costs of repeat LAP examinations;

Project grants:

- Grants to support integration into company-based apprenticeship training and the labour market;
- Grants to support quality management and innovation in company-based training;
- Grants to support equal access of young women and young men to apprenticeship training.

**Target group:** Apprentices, companies training apprentices.

**Amount:** Basic subsidies are determined by the rate of remuneration paid to apprentices (called 'Lehrlingseinkommen'). In the first year of training they total three monthly gross remunerations for apprentices as defined by collective agreements, in the second year they total two monthly gross remunerations and in the third and fourth year they total one such remuneration. A special variant of these basic subsidies is available to apprenticeships for adults (persons who are over 18, without upper secondary VET qualifications and do not claim other PES subsidies). In such cases, the level of subsidisation for remunerations paid to apprentices over 18 is based on the remuneration for unskilled workers.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** The guidelines are defined by the funding committee of the Federal Advisory Board on Vocational Training (Bundes-Berufsausbildungsbeirat – BBAB) composed of representatives of the Federal Ministry of Labour and Economy (BMAW), the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber (WKO) and the Chamber of Labour (AK). Certain guidelines, such as those on coaching for apprentices and their employers, are drafted exclusively by the Federal Minister of Labour and Economy. Subsidies to company-based apprenticeships are processed by the WKO's apprenticeship offices (Lehrlingsstellen) and are financed by the Insolvency Contingency Fund (IEF).

The subsidies are regulated in the Vocational Training Act (BAG) and in the guidelines of the funding committee of the Federal Advisory Board on Vocational Training (guidelines according to §19c(1)1-7 and § 19c(1)8 BAG) and in guidelines issued by the Federal Minister of Labour and Economy.

**Financial resources:** The subsidies were financed by Insolvency Contingency Fund (IEF) till 2022; €229.4m were spent from the federal budget (Insolvency Contingency Fund) for this purpose in 2022. As of 2023, subsidies to company-based apprenticeships will no longer be financed from the Insolvency Contingency Fund, but from the LMP budget. €270m have been earmarked for this purpose in 2023 and €289m in 2024.

### 7.2.12 PES subsidies to apprenticeships

**In a nutshell:** PES subsidies to apprenticeships (Lehrstellenförderung – LST) support companies and training establishments which offer training slots to certain target groups. They are intended to integrate hard-to-place groups into the labour market, counteract the discrimination of women in the labour market und create more training slots.

**Description:** Companies and training entities may claim this subsidy, which is paid as a monthly flat-rate grant towards the costs of apprenticeships or extended apprenticeship training or the acquisition of partial skills (apprentices' remuneration, staff and material expenses). Excluded are the Federal Government, political parties and institutions defined by §29 of the BAG (socio-educational establishments, prisons and institutions for people with physical or sensory impairments).

#### Target group

- Girls/women in apprenticed trades with a low proportion of women (below 40%);
- Specially disadvantaged apprenticeship-seekers: apprenticeship-seekers with physical, psychological or mental impairment; socially maladjusted apprenticeship-seekers; apprenticeship-seekers who spent part or all of their education in special needs schools or in general secondary schools with special educational needs (including courses in preparation for completing compulsory education externally); slow learners who completed their compulsory schooling or dropped out of school early, apprenticeship-seekers who completed compulsory schooling at a non-German speaking school; apprentices who lost their training slot outside of the statutory probationary period provided that the training period is credited towards a subsequent equal or related apprenticeship; apprenticeship-seekers claiming benefits under the Unemployment Insurance Act.
- Over-18-year-olds whose employability problems caused by inadequate skills can be addressed by apprenticeship training or who are early school leavers;

- Participants in programmes offering extended apprenticeship training or the acquisition of partial skills.

**Amount:** For girls/women, for disadvantaged apprenticeship-seekers, for over 18-year-olds whose inadequate skills can be addressed by apprenticeship training or who are early school leavers, as well as for participants in apprenticeship training, extended apprenticeship training or the acquisition of partial skills, companies may receive up to €400 a month, and training establishments up to €453 a month.

Companies and training establishments may receive up to €900 per month for workers over 18 if, under the related collective agreement, these workers receive higher apprentice's remuneration or wages for unskilled workers.

**Duration:** Subsidies may be claimed and granted for one year of apprenticeship/training at a time, and for up to three years at most. They may also be granted for apprenticeships with extended training or the acquisition of partial skills for the whole duration of training.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** Public Employment Service (PES); subsidies are regulated in §34 of the AMSG 1994, §8b, §8c of the BAG and §§11a-11i of the Vocational Training in Agriculture and Forestry Act (Land- und Forstwirtschaftliches Berufsausbildungsgesetz – LFBAG) concerning extended apprenticeship training or the acquisition of partial skills and in the Federal PES Guideline – BGS/AMF/0722/9965/2023, effective since 18 Nov 2023.

**Financial resources:** The subsidies are financed from UI funds.

Table 28: PES subsidies to apprenticeships (number of persons)

Year	Persons (m+w)	Persons in % of employment	Men	Women	Expenditure in €	Expenditure as % of GDP
2013	13,654	0.34	7,673	5,983	25,226,931	0.0078
2014	14,156	0.35	8,120	6,037	27,945,064	0.0084
2015	14,102	0.35	8,324	5,779	27,563,919	0.0080
2016	13,667	0.33	8,092	5,575	25,927,841	0.0073
2017	14,359	0.34	8,627	5,735	27,727,977	0.0075

Year	Persons (m+w)	Persons in % of employment	Men	Women	Expenditure in €	Expenditure as % of GDP
2018	14,845	0.35	9,152	5,694	34,782,868	0.0090
2019	16,229	0.38	10,243	5,986	40,998,571	0.0103
2020	16,437	0.39	10,407	6,031	43,174,292	0.0113
2021	17,327	0.41	10,901	6,426	46,238,793	0.0114
2022	18,095	0.42	11,383	6,714	52,485,911	0.0117
2023	18,871	0.43	11,646	7,225	54,974,233	0.0115

Sources: PES-DWH, 2023 annual report cube for the year 2023; retrieved on 8 Apr 2024; Statistics Austria: GDP retrieved on 29 Feb 2024 (in €bn at current prices), EUROSTAT data retrieved on 24 Apr 2024 (employment total/resident population/LFS/15 to 64 years); budget spending: Division III/A/6; BMAW's own calculations.

Note: Indicator number of persons = Number of persons subsidised on at least one day in a given year. Each individual is counted only once even if involved in several cases of subsidisation.

### 7.2.13 Supra-company apprenticeship training

**In a nutshell:** The Training Guarantee (Ausbildungsgarantie) and the related supra-company training scheme (Überbetriebliche Lehrausbildung – ÜBA) guarantee that all young people who fail to find a company-based training slot will be offered a training slot in a supra-company training establishment.

**Description:** There are two types of supra-company training, ÜBA 1 and ÜBA 2. Arrangements for the two differ depending on training providers. Both models are intended to ultimately place young people in company-run apprenticeships. Unlike ÜBA 2, ÜBA 1 is a training course that offers completion of the entire apprenticeship in a training entity or such an entity in cooperation with a company. In all forms of ÜBA, young people may also enter work placement in companies which are not authorised to train apprentices. Although, in principle, participants can complete training in a supra-company training establishment, a key objective is to help them switch to regular company-based apprenticeships during their period of training. Supra-company apprenticeships are concluded with the regular final apprenticeship exam. Training contracts for all types of ÜBA are of a fixed-term nature and concluded for the period of the respective (individual) training year.

Participants complete their training either by being placed in company-based training slots or by passing the final apprenticeship exam within the supra-company scheme. The programme is run under the dual system, i.e. while in training, attendance of vocational school is mandatory (except for trainees acquiring partial skills). In case of part-time training, the training period of regular apprenticeships may be extended by up to two years; however, the PES must approve any part-time training within the supra-company apprenticeship scheme.

Disadvantaged persons or people with disabilities may enter ÜBA-based apprenticeships to acquire partial skills or extended apprenticeships. During their entire training period, these young people will be supported by the counselling and assistance services of the Training Assistance (BAS) programme.

**Target group:** PES-registered apprenticeship-seekers who completed compulsory schooling and are unable to find suitable company-based training slots despite enhanced placement efforts, or who dropped out of an apprenticeship.

**Amount:** Participants receive an age-dependent training subsidy in the amount of the subsistence allowance (DLU). The DLU for young people will be disbursed until the participants' 19<sup>th</sup> birthday and the DLU for adults as of their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday. As of the third year of training, all participants in training courses receive training grants equal to the DLU for adult participants. Training participants are considered as apprentices within the meaning of the ASVG (in regard to health, work accident and pension insurance).

**Duration:** Duration varies depending on the type of training: till final apprenticeship exam or placement in company-based apprenticeship.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** Public Employment Service. Supra-company apprenticeship training is regulated in §§ 29 and 38d-e of the 1994 Public Employment Service Act (AMSG) – in §§ 8b and 30b of the Vocational Training Act (BAG), in §§ 11a – 11i of the Vocational Training in Agriculture and Forestry Act (LFBAG), in §2(7) of the Labour Market Policy Finance Act (AMPFG) and in the Federal PES Guideline on implementation of the supra-company training scheme – BGS/AMF/0722/9951/2021, effective since 1 Nov 2022.

**Financial resources:** Financial support to supra-company training programmes is provided from PES and – to varying degrees – Länder resources.

Table 29: Supra-company apprenticeship training

Year	Persons (m+w)	Persons in % of employment	Men	Women	Expenditure in €	Expenditure as % of GDP
2013	14,988	12.4	8,910	6,079	108,869,382	0.0336
2014	15,307	13.3	9,162	6,147	117,293,754	0.0352
2015	15,561	14.2	9,407	6,154	140,558,276	0.0408
2016	15,006	14.0	9,392	5,614	156,286,957	0.0437
2017	14,370	13.5	9,016	5,355	152,553,227	0.0413
2018	13,909	12.9	8,674	5,236	172,984,833	0.0449
2019	12,609	11.6	7,737	4,875	159,192,931	0.0400
2020	11,407	10.5	6,865	4,543	147,772,988	0.0388
2021	12,081	11.2	7,369	4,715	148,380,928	0.0366
2022	11,043	10.2	6,840	4,207	143,026,373	0.0320
2023	10,202	9.4	6,236	3,966	149,208,110	0.0313

Sources: PES DWH: retrieved on 6 May 2024 (data as at: 30 Apr 2024); Statistics Austria: GDP retrieved on 29 Feb 2024 (in €bn at current prices), WKO apprenticeship statistics 2023; BMAW's own calculations.

### 7.2.14 Education/Training till 18 (mandatory)

**In a nutshell:** All young people are expected to continue education/training following completion of compulsory school. The mandatory education/training programme (Ausbildungspflicht) may be fulfilled primarily by continuing school education, by entering company-based or supra-company apprenticeship training or other suitable LMP schemes. Education-Training till 18 (AusBildung bis 18) is intended to keep young people in education/training or to motivate them towards continuing education/training and assist them in pursuing any one of the numerous programmes on offer.

**Description:** EducationTraining till 18 is designed to support the mandatory education/training programme (Ausbildungspflicht). Under Education/Training till 18, the Federal Government aims to provide a wide variety of dovetailing schemes, the necessary assis-



tance and appropriate incentives to enhance awareness of the mandatory nature of continuing education and training. This is ensured by better coordination and greater efficiency in using the many existing schemes as well as by closing the gaps in current programmes, with the coordination offices playing a key role in this context. Parents or guardians are responsible for their children taking part in mandatory education/training. Non-compliance with this obligation may eventually result in penalties of between €100 and €500 (in repeat cases €200-€1,000).

Current information on education and training programmes available to fulfil this obligation is constantly updated on the website of the SMS and that of the Education/Training till 18 scheme ([AusBildungsbis18.at](http://AusBildungsbis18.at)), Young people may meet their education/training obligation by moving on to the various types of upper secondary schools or by entering apprenticeships. Special programmes as well as supra-company apprenticeships (see item 7.2.13 on page 110) are available to disadvantaged young people.

In addition to programmes offered by the Public Employment Service (PES) under the Education/Training till 18 scheme, two programmes offered by the SMS play a particularly important role: Youth Coaching and Fit for Training. Both are **NEBA measures (NEBA = Netzwerk Berufliche Assistenz or Employment Assistance Network)**.

**Youth Coaching** (for a detailed description see item 9.5.1 on page 177): Youth Coaching (Jugendcoaching) is a counselling programme offered to young people to avoid early school leaving and reintegrate young NEETs<sup>17</sup>. It seeks to guide young people towards continuing education (training), while helping them to avoid stumbling blocks on this journey. It does so by offering 'advice, guidance and support' to young people until they have been successfully integrated into (continuing) training or education.

**Fit for Training** (for a detailed description see item 9.5.2 on page 179): The Fit for Training programme (AusbildungsFit) helps young people prepare for continuing training and opens up (career) perspectives. The focus is on the acquisition of individual skills necessary for the subsequent stage of training. Fit for Training consists of four pillars: training modules, coaching, knowledge workshop and sports activities.

**Target group:** young people under 18 who have completed compulsory schooling.

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<sup>17</sup> NEET: not in education, employment and training.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** The Federal Ministry of Labour and Economy (BMAW), the Federal Ministry of Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection (BMSGPK) and the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research (BMBWF) are responsible for the implementation of the Education/Training till 18 programme, with the Federal Chancellery being included in control functions. Other relevant actors involved in this process include the PES, the SMS, the Länder, social partners, youth representatives at the federal level (BJV) and the local communities. The programme is regulated in the Mandatory Education or Training Act (Ausbildungspflichtgesetz – APfIG).

**Financial resources:** As of 2020, roughly €57m per year are earmarked for targeted Education/Training till 18 expansion.

### 7.2.15 Training Guarantee till 25

**In a nutshell:** Under the Training Guarantee till 25 (Ausbildungsgarantie bis 25), the PES offers additional (skills) training options to unemployed young adults with no more than compulsory education.

**Description:** The Training Guarantee till 25 (Ausbildungsgarantie bis 25) is Austria's key programme for upskilling young people aged 19-24 and supplements the Education/Training till 18 scheme. A variety of qualification-based training programmes are available to young adults (having no more than compulsory education) to open up good labour market prospects in the long term and effectively address the impending shortage of skilled workers in Austria. The Training Guarantee till 25 programme has been implemented by the PES since 2017. Young people under 25 who register with the PES as apprenticeship-seekers and have no more than compulsory schooling are guaranteed to get company-based or supra-company training slots. On an annual average, roughly 12,400 young people aged 19-24 years with no more than compulsory schooling were registered as unemployed in 2023.

The Training Guarantee is implemented under applicable federal guidelines through funding of PES programmes which are primarily aimed at enabling participants to complete a vocational training pathway. In 2023, roughly 11,600 persons benefited from the Training Guarantee till 25 offered by the PES.

The following tools are used for this purpose:

- Apprenticeship training for young adults over 18,

- Intensive programmes to train young people to become skilled workers (FIA),
- Supra-company vocational training,
- Preparation for final apprenticeship examinations,
- Job-related skills training,
- Training within the framework of labour foundation / placement foundation schemes,
- School-based education and training.

**Target group:** Unemployed young adults (aged 19-24) with no more than compulsory schooling.

**Amount and duration:** Vary by measure.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** Public Employment Service.

**Financial resources:** The programme is financed from UI funds (employers' and employees' contributions).

### 7.2.16 Placement foundation JuSt2Job

**In a nutshell:** JuSt2Job has been in place since 2021. It is an Austria-wide placement foundation programme supporting young people aged 20-30 years who are registered as unemployed. This labour foundation programme is designed for a period of 5 years (**entry is open till the end of 2024**) and seeks to enable low-skilled persons to complete apprenticeships and re-enter the job market.

**Description:** The foundation programme uses job-related skills training, case management and coaching to assist members of this target group to pass the (extraordinary) final apprenticeship exam and find a new job or re-employment.

**Target group:** The programme supports young people aged 20-30 who have low formal education attainment levels. Up to 1,000 participants are supported by the programme, its priorities being: supra-regional placement, mobility and job returners. Support measures for supra-regional placement comprise funding the costs of changing residence or partially funding rent and travel expenses. Unemployed young people are to be motivated to enter

placements and take up jobs in another Bundesland. Financial support and case management are used to enable participants to complete apprenticeships and (re-)enter employment. The foundation has registered 464 entries up until now (as at January 2023).

**Duration:** Young people's period of participation will depend on their personal needs.

**Responsible organisation:** AUFLEB GmbH.

**Financial resources:** The programme is financed from funds provided by the participating companies, from appropriations of the Insolvency Contingency Fund and the Public Employment Service.

## 7.3 Support Measures

### 7.3.1 Providers of counselling and support

**In a nutshell:** Providers of labour market related counselling and support (Arbeitsmarktbezogene Beratungs- und Betreuungseinrichtungen – BBEs) offer individual services to people with different problems (to help them re-enter the labour market).

**Description:** BBEs offer assistance to unemployed people in search of a job as well as advice and support to overcome barriers to employment (such as debts, psychological stress, homelessness, imprisonment, migration, etc.). Economically active people are also supported. There are a great many entities that provide counselling and support with differing priorities:

- **BBEV:** to enhance the employability of the counselled/supported person by providing debt advice, assistance in addressing migration problems, etc.;
- **BBES:** to provide specific placement services using special methods such as accompanying clients to job interviews, active placement efforts and finding vacancies for artists, older executives, etc.;
- **BBEA:** to support vocational integration of special groups and to stabilise employment relationships through Job Assistance, etc., and provide special assistance during apprenticeships or other training programmes.
- **BBEB:** to support access to initial and further vocational training through educational guidance, assistance/coaching for participants in skills training measures, etc;

- **BBEU:** BIZ-based support services for pupils (as of Year 7) of school classes in need of special educational or foreign language support, etc.;
- **BBEP:** to check perspectives by, for example, analysing an individual's problem areas (improved job perspectives through qualified assessment of labour market opportunities and identification of options for action);
- **BBEN:** to maintain labour market prospects for people with multiple barriers to placement, using a comprehensive range of low-threshold programmes based on voluntary participation.

**Target group:** Jobseekers; employed jobseekers at risk of losing their job; unemployed apprenticeship-seekers and pupils about to choose a career; long-term or chronically unemployed people, people with disabilities, foreign workers, members of ethnic minorities, returners, single parents; individuals faced with complex problems: e.g. debts, housing problems, inclusion following release from prison, migration problems, substance abuse, physical, sensory and learning impairment (Job Assistance, Training Assistance), gender-specific discrimination (women and girls); semi-skilled and unskilled workers, or workers on leave with only compulsory or lower levels of educational attainment; persons with multiple barriers to placement, assistance to young people under the Training Guarantee till 25.

**Amount:** The level of funding varies according to the maximum amount of staff and material expenses incurred by BBEs.

**Duration:** Funding is usually granted for one year but may cover up to five years. A multi-year agreement involves at least annual billing and requires longer-term planning by the PES as well as several years of cooperation between the BBE and the PES.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** Responsibility rests with the PES. BBEs are regulated in §34 in conjunction with §32(3) and §34(5) of the AMSG; in §8b of the BAG and in §§2-7 of the AMFG as well as in the Federal PES Guideline BGS/AMF/0702/9971/2023, effective since 1 July 2023.

**Financial resources:** BBE programmes are financed from the LMP funding budget of the Public Employment Service. If providers negotiate funding with the competent bodies in due time, they may also receive funds from the Länder and local governments.

Table 30: Providers of counselling and support (BBEs) – Number of persons

Year	Persons (m+w)	Persons in % of employment	Men	Women	Expenditure in €	Expenditure as % of GDP
2013	102,318	2.54	48,819	53,502	59,059,047	0.0182
2014	120,054	2.98	57,367	62,690	74,810,942	0.0225
2015	131,488	3.23	66,199	65,290	70,276,550	0.0204
2016	150,641	3.64	76,736	73,907	84,121,722	0.0238
2017	170,098	4.06	86,660	83,440	98,347,628	0.0266
2018	177,684	4.19	88,116	89,569	99,316,419	0.0258
2019	167,114	3.90	80,550	86,572	103,781,667	0.0255
2020	170,746	4.08	82,810	87,941	125,053,913	0.0328
2021	226,362	5.35	110,693	115,680	176,128,464	0.0435
2022	214,933	4.93	103,113	111,823	180,667,399	0.0404
2023	204,553	4.66	103,113	111,823	154,713,356	0.0324

Sources: PES-DWH, 2023 annual report cube for the year 2023; retrieved on 8 Apr 2024; Statistics Austria: GDP retrieved on 29 Feb 2024 (in €bn at current prices), EUROSTAT data retrieved on 24 Apr 2024 (employment total/resident population/LFS/15 to 64 years); BMAW's own calculations.

Note: Indicator number of persons = Number of persons subsidised on at least one day in a given year. Each individual is counted only once even if involved in several cases of subsidisation.

### 7.3.2 Childcare subsidy

**In a nutshell:** The childcare subsidy (Kinderbetreuungsbeihilfe – KBH) enables mothers or fathers to take up/retain a job or participate in a labour market policy measure. This subsidy scheme is intended to provide incentives for parents to use professional childcare.

**Description:** The PES grants KBH for paid childcare. It supports full-day, half-day or hourly care for children up to their 15<sup>th</sup> birthday (for children with verified disabilities up to their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday). Crèches, kindergartens, day care for schoolchildren, child minders and private persons (with the exception of family members and au-pairs) are recognised providers of such childcare.

**Target group:** Jobseekers, unemployed workers or wage/salary earners who need support to pay for their child's care:

- so they can take up employment,
- so they can participate in an LMP measure (e.g. training course);
- because their financial situation has substantially worsened despite employment;
- because major changes in working hours require new providers/forms of childcare; or
- because their previous carer is no longer available.

Participants in the business start-up programme for the unemployed.

**Eligibility criteria:** The subsidy is conditional on a PES counselling meeting. The applicant must contact the PES in good time before taking up employment, entering the LMP scheme or using care providers for the child.

**Amount:** Childcare subsidies total €300 per month at most. They are staggered and depend on gross income (which must not exceed €2,700 per month) and the childcare costs incurred.

**Duration:** KBH may be granted for 26 weeks at a time (for jobseekers and prior to taking up a job for up to 13 weeks, in exceptional cases for 26 weeks). If claimants participate in a PES measure, it may be granted for up to 52 weeks. For continued payment, claimants need to file a new application. KBH payments per child may be extended to 156 weeks (three years) and may even be granted for another 26 weeks in exceptional cases. Participants in the business start-up programme for the unemployed will receive the childcare subsidy as long as they also receive start-up subsidy.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** Responsibility rests with the PES. KBH is regulated in §34 of the AMSG and the Federal PES Guideline on childcare subsidies (KBH) BGS/AMF/0702/9950/2022, effective since 1 Jan 2023.

**Financial resources:** KBH subsidies are financed from UI funds.

Table 31: Childcare subsidy (number of persons)

Year	Persons (m+w)	Persons in % of employment	Men	Women	Expenditure in €	Expenditure as % of GDP
2013	7,032	0.174	194	7,108	4,822,231	0.0015
2014	7,114	0.176	207	6,907	4,722,770	0.0014
2015	7,209	0.177	198	7,011	4,495,102	0.0013
2016	9,166	0.221	233	8,933	6,777,800	0.0019
2017	10,945	0.262	262	10,683	8,407,302	0.0023
2018	11,826	0.279	266	11,561	9,755,643	0.0025
2019	12,037	0.281	218	11,819	9,325,434	0.0023
2020	9,536	0.228	164	9,372	6,555,155	0.0017
2021	8,822	0.208	179	8,643	6,215,082	0.0015
2022	10,363	0.238	238	10,125	7,752,375	0.0017
2023	10,613	0.242	195	10,418	7,928,700	0.0017

Sources: PES-DWH, 2023 annual report cube for the year 2023; retrieved on 8 Apr 2024; Statistics Austria: GDP retrieved on 29 Feb 2024 (in €bn at current prices), EUROSTAT data retrieved on 24 Apr 2024 (employment total/resident population/LFS/15 to 64 years); BMAW's own calculations.

Note: Indicator number of persons = Number of persons subsidised on at least one day in a given year. Each individual is counted only once even if involved in several cases of subsidisation.

### 7.3.3 Subsidies to childcare facilities

**In a nutshell:** Subsidies to childcare facilities (Förderung von Kinderbetreuungseinrichtungen – KBE) support employment relationships of organisational and care staff in childcare facilities.

**Description:** Persons employed by private childcare facilities as carers or persons employed by private facilities to organise, coordinate and train other carers in a supra-regional context (e.g. district, Land) can be subsidised. The scheme is intended to increase the number of childcare facilities and secure the jobs of workers with childcare duties.



**Target group:** Private childcare facilities (parents' initiatives, children's groups, child mind-ing projects, company-based childcare, private kindergartens, etc.) which offer supplementary care programmes if required.

**Eligibility criteria:** For at least as long as the subsidy is granted, the applicant must provide social insurance-covered employment to the worker for whom the subsidy is granted. The care places available must first be offered to PES clients, at least to the extent of the PES's funding share.

**Amount:** The programme subsidises carer staff costs up to 50% and organisational staff costs up to 100% of the assessment basis.

**Duration:** Subsidies are granted for up to four years per carer or job in the case of funds made available for carer staff costs. They are granted for at least one year in the case of funds made available for organisational staff costs (may be extended upon review by the PES).

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** Responsibility rests with the PES. The KBE subsidy is regulated in §34 of the AMMSG and the Federal PES Guideline on subsidies to childcare facilities (KBE) BGS/AMF/0722/9996/2018, effective since 1 Feb 2018.

**Financial resources:** The KBE programme is financed from UI funds (employers' and employees' contributions).

Table 32: Subsidies to childcare facilities (number of persons)

Year	Persons (m+w)	Persons in % of employment	Men	Women	Expenditure in €	Expenditure as % of GDP
2013	221	0.00548	5	216	2,490,807	0.00077
2014	200	0.00496	2	198	2,547,510	0.00076
2015	150	0.00369	1	149	1,685,532	0.00049
2016	118	0.00285	2	116	1,600,874	0.00045
2017	83	0.00198	0	83	1,004,743	0.00027
2018	80	0.00189	0	80	907,255	0.00024

Year	Persons (m+w)	Persons in % of employment	Men	Women	Expenditure in €	Expenditure as % of GDP
2019	67	0.00157	1	66	586,229	0.00014
2020	2	0.00005	0	2	222,806	0.00006
2021	1	0.00002	0	1	126,186	0.00003
2022	1	0.00002	0	1	81,115	0.00002
2023	1	0.00002	0	1	23 166	0.00000

Sources: PES-DWH, 2023 annual report cube for the year 2023; retrieved on 8 Apr 2024; Statistics Austria: GDP retrieved on 29 Feb 2024 (in €bn at current prices), EUROSTAT data retrieved on 24 Apr 2024 (employment total/resident population/LFS/15 to 64 years); BMAW's own calculations.

Note: Indicator number of persons = Number of persons subsidised on at least one day in a given year. Each individual is counted only once even if involved in several cases of subsidisation.

### 7.3.4 Business start-up programme for the unemployed

**In a nutshell:** This business start-up programme helps unemployed workers become self-employed.

**Description:** The business start-up programme for the unemployed (Unternehmensgründungsprogramm für Arbeitslose – UGP) includes four stages:

- The first stage – the clarification stage – is designed to verify the feasibility of the applicants' business idea and their personal suitability. This stage is also used to offer counselling appointments for women (to clarify women-specific problems, in particular with regard to earning a living income) and special counselling for people from a migrant background. This period of clarification lasts no more than 8 weeks. It may be extended to 10 weeks for returners to give them more time to resolve issues of childcare.
- During the second stage – the preparatory stage –, assistance is provided in the form of start-up counselling and business-related training. Training targeted at women is funded by a higher allowance (+50%) for course costs. With the beginning of this preparatory stage, participants will receive income support either through continuing receipt of UI benefits or through subsistence allowance (DLU).

- The third stage is that of implementation. During this stage, when participants have started their business, they receive the start-up subsidy (GB) to help them launch their business.
- In the fourth stage – the follow-up stage –, a ‘business check-up’ is carried out (within two years, programme participants may have up to four consultancy appointments). The start-up counselling firms must actively reach out to fledgling entrepreneurs four months after they established their businesses.

Businesses may also be launched in other EU Member States or in countries having Association Agreements (AA) with the European Union. In order to secure the business’s success, business start-up subsidies are granted for at least two months within the entire nine months of the programme.

In order to also enable unemployed persons with no benefit entitlements (e.g. returners) to launch their own business, subsistence allowances are granted to programme participants during the preparatory stage and start-up subsidies during the implementation stage to secure their livelihood.

Participants must meet the following eligibility criteria<sup>18</sup>:

- They must be unemployed at the beginning of the preparatory stage (irrespective of benefit receipt).
- They must have the intention of entering self-employment.
- They must have a concrete business idea and have the necessary skills and qualifications for starting a business.
- They must participate in start-up counselling offered by the PES in association with an external start-up counselling firm.
- Participation in the business start-up programme must be the result of a counselling and guidance process of up to eight – for returners up to ten – weeks and must be subject to a formal agreement between potential entrepreneur and PES counsellor.
- They must provide evidence of participation in a social insurance scheme (for the self-employed or for farmers).

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<sup>18</sup> Participation in the business start-up programme is denied to applicants who are subject to ongoing attachment or foreclosure proceedings and ongoing debt settlement procedures (out-of-court settlement, forced composition with creditors, payment plan or skimming-off procedure).

**Target group:** Unemployed individuals (irrespective of their entitlement to UI benefits); employees who will lose their job in the foreseeable future and plan to set up their own business. Unemployed third-country nationals are only included in the programme if they have a valid residence permit. Persons displaced from Ukraine who hold an identity card for displaced persons (Blue Card) (as of April 2023) are eligible.

**Duration:** As a rule, this programme lasts six to nine months at most. In exceptional cases another business may be founded within two years, for example if such a new business is launched in another sector (this also applies to former part-time farmers).

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** Responsibility rests with the PES. The UGP is regulated in §34 in conjunction with §32(3) as well as §35 of the AMMSG, in §12(5) in conjunction with §18(4) of the AIVG and the Federal PES Guideline on the business start-up programme for the unemployed (UGP) BGS/AMF/0722/9997/2023, effective since 1 Feb 2023.

**Financial resources:** The UGP programme is financed from UI funds.

Table 33: Business start-up programme (number of persons)

Year	Persons (m+w)	Persons in % of employment	Men	Women	Expenditure in €	Expenditure as % of GDP
2013	8,652	0.215	4,970	3,682	5,006,367	0.00155
2014	8,936	0.222	5,192	3,744	6,024,185	0.00181
2015	8,763	0.215	5,083	3,680	5,463,376	0.00159
2016	8,251	0.199	4,752	3,499	5,508,827	0.00156
2017	8,467	0.202	4,746	3,721	5,538,501	0.00150
2018	8,703	2.052	4,732	3,971	5,267,266	0.00137
2019	8,726	0.204	4,638	4,088	5,452,823	0.00137
2020	7,843	0.187	4,105	3,738	5,534,602	0.00145
2021	8,243	0.195	4,362	3,882	5,804,438	0.00143
2022	9,101	0.209	4,639	4,462	6,348,757	0.00142
2023	8,852	0.201	4,360	4,492	6,148,543	0.00129

Sources: PES-DWH, 2023 annual report cube for the year 2023; retrieved on 8 Apr 2024; Statistics Austria: GDP retrieved on 29 Feb 2024 (in €bn at current prices), EUROSTAT data retrieved on 24 Apr 2024 (employment total/resident population/LFS/15 to 64 years); BMAW's own calculations.

Note: Indicator number of persons = Number of persons subsidised on at least one day in a given year. Each individual is counted only once even if involved in several cases of subsidisation.

### 7.3.5 Interview/job/apprenticeship start grant

**In a nutshell:** Interview/job/apprenticeship start grants (Vorstellungs-/Arbeits-/Lehrantrittsbeihilfe – VOR) cover expenses arising from job interviews, participation in preliminary talks or similar.

**Description:** VOR grants facilitate job/apprenticeship searches or enable jobseekers to participate in preliminary talks on PES support measures. The added financial burden caused by interviews or participation in preliminary talks is reduced by (partial) refunds of travel expenses, board and lodging.

**Target group:** Unemployed workers, jobseekers, participants in training courses, apprenticeship-seekers or employees (if their jobs are at risk).

**Eligibility criteria:** Financial distress making it difficult to search for a job or apprenticeship. Grants are conditional on a PES counselling meeting.

**Amount:** The scheme involves one-off grants (in cash or in kind) which may be awarded up to the interview costs incurred for travel<sup>19</sup> by bus, rail or own car, and for board and lodging.

**Duration:** One-off payment.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** Responsibility rests with the PES. The interview grant is regulated in §34 of the AMMSG and the Federal PES Guideline on interview grants (VOR) BGS/AMF/0702/9949/2022, effective since 1 Jan 2023.

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<sup>19</sup> Only journeys as far as the Austrian state border are eligible for subsidisation, the only exception being journeys to EURES border regions (EURES PANNONIA, EURES TransTirolia and EURES Lake Constance). Journeys to these regions may also be subsidised.

**Financial resources:** The grants are financed from UI funds.

Table 34: Interview grant (number of persons)

Year	Persons (m+w)	Persons in % of employment	Men	Women	Expenditure in €	Expenditure as % of GDP
2013	9,728	0.24	6,121	3,607	650,506	0.000201
2014	9,695	0.24	6,092	3,603	641,945	0.000193
2015	8,285	0.20	5,156	3,129	566,301	0.000164
2016	7,196	0.17	4,502	2,694	495,098	0.000140
2017	5,857	0.14	3,664	2,193	372,232	0.000101
2018	5,347	0.13	3,396	1,951	374,470	0.000097
2019	4,878	0.11	3,171	1,707	319,916	0.000080
2020	2,376	0.06	1,474	902	159,605	0.000042
2021	1,930	0.05	1,257	673	110,708	0.000027
2022	1,990	0.05	1 272	718	111,216	0.000025
2023	1,974	0.04	1,215	759	125,913	0.000026

Sources: PES-DWH, 2023 PES annual report cube for the year 2023; retrieved on 8 Apr 2024; Statistics Austria: GDP retrieved on 29 Feb 2024 (in €bn at current prices), EUROSTAT data retrieved on 24 Apr 2024 (employment total/resident population/LFS/15 to 64 years); BMAW's own calculations.

Note: Indicator number of persons = Number of persons subsidised on at least one day in a given year. Each individual is counted only once even if involved in several cases of subsidisation.

### 7.3.6 Travel-to-work subsidy

**In a nutshell:** With the travel-to-work subsidy (Entfernungsbeihilfe – ENT) the PES subsidises travel costs and rental costs incurred by workers taking up jobs in other regions because they cannot be placed in jobs in the vicinity.

**Description:** The travel-to-work subsidy helps workers take up jobs in other regions. The PES grants a partial cost refund for the added financial burden caused by the distance between home and work when taking up a job or apprenticeship. The subsidy can be used to bear the costs of daily/weekly/monthly commuting and/or for accommodation at the place of work. Only journeys as far as the Austrian state border and rented accommodation in Austria are eligible for subsidisation.

**Target group:** Unemployed workers, jobseekers, apprenticeship-seekers and employees.

**Amount:** The subsidy may be granted up to the amount of the monthly travel and/or accommodation costs minus contribution by another funding entity and a co-payment of 33.33% of the costs eligible for funding, but it may not exceed €260 per month in the case of travel subsidies and/or €400 per month in the case of rent subsidies.

**Duration:** ENT subsidies may be granted for 26 weeks at a time (52 weeks for apprentices), but for no longer than two years (104 weeks) in total. Apprentices may claim ENT subsidies for the entire period of apprenticeship training. In the case of rent subsidies, duration ends either by exhaustion of the subsidy period or by premature termination of the employment/apprenticeship relationship or tenancy.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** Responsibility rests with the PES. ENT subsidies are regulated in the AMMSG and the Federal PES Guideline on the travel-to-work subsidy (ENT) – BGS/AMF/0702/9948/2022, effective since 1 Jan 2023.

**Financial resources:** The subsidies are financed from UI funds.

Table 35: Travel-to-work subsidy (number of persons)

Year	Persons (m+w)	Persons in % of employment	Men	Women	Expenditure in €	Expenditure as % of GDP
2013	3,569	0.089	1,632	1,939	3,365,814	0.00104
2014	3,818	0.095	1,740	2,078	3,645,841	0.00109
2015	3,777	0.093	1,766	2,011	3,703,794	0.00108
2016	3,756	0.091	1,751	2,005	3,625,316	0.00103

Year	Persons (m+w)	Persons in % of employment	Men	Women	Expenditure in €	Expenditure as % of GDP
<b>2017</b>	2,370	0.057	1,123	1,248	1,935,198	0.00052
<b>2018</b>	1,672	0.039	829	843	1,594,162	0.00041
<b>2019</b>	1,491	0.035	744	747	1,484,816	0.00037
<b>2020</b>	1,164	0.028	575	589	1,249,793	0.00033
<b>2021</b>	1,170	0.028	552	618	1,292,687	0.00032
<b>2022</b>	1,189	0.027	551	638	1,347,527	0.00030
<b>2023</b>	1,008	0.023	482	526	1,240,778	0.00026

Sources: PES-DWH, 2023 annual report cube for the year 2023; retrieved on 8 Apr 2024; Statistics Austria: GDP retrieved on 29 Feb 2024 (in €bn at current prices), EUROSTAT data retrieved on 24 Apr 2024 (employment total/resident population/LFS/15 to 64 years); BMAW's own calculations.

Note: Indicator number of persons = Number of persons subsidised on at least one day in a given year. Each individual is counted only once even if involved in several cases of subsidisation.



# 8 Other Labour Market Policy Measures

Below you will find labour market policy priorities for women, people with health issues, migrants as well as older workers. Alongside general measures, these groups are offered special measures (e.g. counselling, support).

The other labour market policy measures described below include microcredits, Household Services Vouchers, wage compensation (in case employers are insolvent) and bad weather compensation.

## 8.1 Labour Market Policies for Women

The employment situation for women continues to differ greatly from that of men. The factors that disadvantage women include:

- The concentration of employment in a few sectors and occupations (continuing segmentation of the labour market);
- One-sided range of career choices;
- Lower level of suitable training (particularly of older women);
- Significantly lower incomes of women, assignment to jobs beneath their level of qualifications, fewer opportunities for advancement;
- Employers' prejudices regarding the employment of women in non-traditional jobs;
- Career breaks due to traditionally assigned responsibilities for housekeeping and childcare, problems in returning to the job market;
- Shortages of childcare facilities outside the family (nationwide lack of childcare places).
- There is a disproportionate share of women in the services sector with comparatively poor opportunities for advancement and low-income levels. Although the situation has improved in recent years, traditional stereotypes continue to determine the career choices of girls and young women, while the reconciliation of work and family life is yet another major challenge facing women.

Active LMP interventions targeted at women include the following priorities:

## **Focusing support on women**

- The objectives defined by the Federal Minister of Labour and Economy for the PES's implementation of labour market policy explicitly set out that women are to receive enhanced support in relation to labour market integration and to benefit from overproportionate funding aimed at reducing inequities.
- Between 2016 and 2019, the annual LMP objectives of the PES specified that 50% of its funds were to be spent on women.
- Women were to receive 3.5 percentage points more support than their percentage in all unemployed workers in 2020 and 2021.
- In 2022, 2023 and 2024, the focus on supporting women has been further enhanced (+4 percentage points) compared with their proportion in all unemployed. 51.5% of active LMP funds benefited women in 2023 (workers on short hours not included).
- Around €635m were spent on women (workers on short hours not included) in 2023.

## **Improving access to the labour market**

- Offering tailor-made information and counselling services for women and supporting their job integration;
- Providing assistance under the Austria-wide 'support returners' programme (Wiedereinstieg unterstützen) to women returning to the labour market after family-related career breaks. Some of the programmes combine assistance to women returners with options for childcare; in addition, women are offered a special PES course entitled 'returners with a future' (Wiedereinstieg mit Zukunft). The programme goes beyond career guidance and addresses the specific circumstances and difficult situations of the target group, prioritising possibilities of reconciling work and family life, analysis of the client's potential and skills, etc. Specially trained counsellors for returners cater to the needs of this target group; in addition, counselling meetings address the issue of part-time and its impact on lifetime earnings.
- Supporting women with grants for childcare (childcare subsidy) allowing them to take up employment;
- Expanding the jobs available to women (information and advice to companies on employing women in crafts and engineering and on questions of equal treatment), acquiring qualified part-time positions;
- Subsidies to employment such as integration subsidies, wage top-ups or subsidies to apprenticeships in occupations with a low proportion of women;
- Fixed-term employment relationships in non-profit entities;

- Offering information and counselling in relation to self-employment (business start-up programme);
- Providing targeted advice and guidance in cooperation with counselling centres for (young) women to help them enter the labour market.

### **Improving career prospects**

- Offering tailor-made career guidance and skills training measures for women who either lack training or have qualifications that are no longer marketable;
- Offering initial training and upskilling programmes within basic skills training to acquire IT and digital skills;
- Offering women the opportunity to enhance their skills through the modular ‘systematic development of competences’ programme (Kompetenz mit System). Modular forms of training are of particular use to women who cannot enrol in uninterrupted training courses or have frequent spells of unemployment. Training modules enable them to continue skills development and complete apprenticeships. Training courses in 15 apprenticed trades are available under this programme.
- Providing initial training and upskilling measures for unemployed women in new and promising occupations that are in great demand (intensive training, ‘new skills’) as well as in crafts and engineering (FIT programme – see item 7.2.9 on page 99);
- Women seeking jobs are offered intensive and individual guidance by Vocational Centres for Women (Frauenberufszentren – FBZ) where a comprehensive package of counselling and other services is available to women interested in upskilling;
- In the Vocational Centres for Young Women (Young FBZs), women between the ages of 15 and 25 are supported throughout the whole process of career guidance and interest in training and continued training or education. When developing career prospects, a focus is placed on providing information about and access to promising professions (STEM fields, crafts, green jobs). Parents, too, can be actively involved in counselling and supporting these young women.
- Providing special counselling services, German-language courses, intensive training to women for being recognised as skilled workers accompanied by language courses (job-specific German terminology) for women from a migrant background;
- ‘Competence checks’ for women who qualify for asylum as a basis for labour market integration;
- Kick-off counselling for companies (Impulsberatung für Unternehmen) is an initiative under which employers are advised on human resources, organisation, gender

mainstreaming, equal pay, diversity, upskilling and in-work training subsidies for employees.

### **Expanding the range of career opportunities**

- Providing tailor-made counselling services for girls (information leaflets, non-traditional careers).
- Offering school classes the opportunity to visit one of Austria's vocational information centres (BIZs). Crafts and engineering workshops are organised to make girls familiar with non-traditional occupations and help them test their dexterity in these skills at various workstations.
- Age- and gender-appropriate information material helps women and girls choose their careers or embark on new or changed career paths.
- Numerous internet tools provide information on the labour market, job trends and career choices. For instance, the FiT salary calculator may be used to compare income in typically female occupations with income in crafts and engineering.

The tools and resources of active labour market policy are used to increase labour force participation and improve the job opportunities available to women and girls. In 2023, around 213,000 women were supported, including 134,000 with training measures.

**Financial resources:** Funding is provided from active LMP budget resources.

**Responsible organisation/entity:** Public Employment Service; planning is part of the entire organisation's definition of goals and priorities and incorporated into annual work programming. The Länder organisations and regional PES offices are responsible for the implementation and organisation of labour market policies for women.

## **8.2 Labour Market Policies for Persons with Health-Related Barriers to Employment**

In assisting jobless people with health issues, the Public Employment Service bases its approach not only on the legal definitions of disability as set forth in the Disability Employment Act (BEinstG), the Victims Welfare Act (OpferFG) and/or Länder disability legislation (i.e. the so-called 'beneficiary disabled'), but it also takes into account physical, psychological or mental impairment provided that this is supported by a medical report and results in major

placement difficulties or limited job opportunities for those concerned (persons with other health-related barriers to employment).

The entire range of PES services, measures and subsidies is available to people with health-related barriers to employment, with some of these benefits and services being enhanced, adapted or supplemented to meet the needs of this group of persons. Assistance offered by the PES includes training and career information tailored to these clients' needs as well as comprehensive counselling with due regard to their personal situation. Tailor-made skills training and support measures are then used to place these clients in jobs on the primary labour market, in transition jobs or employment projects (for more details item 7.1.4 on page 67). In addition, employment subsidies such as the integration subsidy scheme help people take up jobs. Generally, skills training measures are given priority in order to ensure sustainable job integration.

PES clients with special problems are offered supplementary support measures in external counselling and guidance centres. Whenever the Public Employment Service uses extra support measures, e.g. Job Assistance (for more details see item 9 on page 152), it cooperates with the competent SMS.

The Public Employment Service assesses whether clients have health-related barriers to employment and, if so, considers this in case management to be able to provide suitable job and funding offers, thus supporting labour market integration in the best possible way. In cases of doubt regarding an unemployed worker's capacity to work, the PES asks the PVA to ascertain that person's capacity or incapacity to work in one of its 'assessment competence centres' (Kompetenzzentren Begutachtung). This assessment results in a medical report and a performance score which are binding on both the PES and PVA.

With the entry into force of the corresponding amendment on 'capacity to work up to the age of 25' on 1 Jan 2024, it is no longer possible to have mandatory assessments of a person's incapacity to work at the assessment competence centre if this person is under the age of 25. This legal revision means that adolescents and young adults whose capacity to work is in doubt are now free to register with and receive support from the public employment service and make use of its services. The young people themselves can choose between disability programmes of the PES and disability programmes offered by the Länder. They and their families are supported in decision-making by a network of experts from the PES and the SMS, in particular by the Youth Coaching service. This legal amendment is intended to foster the inclusion of young people with limited capacity to work and contribute

towards comprehensive participation in all areas of life and better financial security for this group of people.

People with health issues are advised by specially trained counsellors of the PES. The needs and support options of people with health issues are part and parcel of the basic training of all PES counsellors. Their professional development programmes, too, include ongoing training and advanced training in respect of people with disabilities and the issue of vocational rehabilitation.

In accordance with the tenet 'rehabilitation takes priority over retirement', workers born in 1964 or earlier are assigned to medical or occupational rehabilitation programmes rather than to fixed-term occupational or invalidity pension schemes. The PVA determines whether medical and/or occupational measures of rehabilitation are expedient and reasonable. If persons entitled to placement in their former occupation (Berufsschutz) are found to be reasonably suited for occupational rehabilitation measures, the PES will be in charge of ensuring skills training in a new occupation (see also retraining benefits under item 6.2.1 on page 51).

Major providers of targeted skills training for people in need of retraining for health reasons are the vocational training and rehabilitation centres (Berufliche Bildungs- und Rehabilitationszentren – BBRZ). After medical rehabilitation, BBRZs develop individual vocational rehabilitation plans and identify the need for retraining or upskilling. Skills training in certain job segments are also available directly from these providers in modular form. In addition, BBRZs have developed special programmes: tailor-made job-related training (Maßgeschneiderte Arbeitsplatznahe Ausbildungsangebote – MAAB) and practical vocational skills training (Berufspraktische Qualifizierungen – BPQ). Job-related training means training directly in the enterprise, which bears the costs for that training while the PES provides income support.

Other equally important standard programmes, in particular for people distant from the labour market with psychological barriers to employment, are the so-called 'get ready for work training centres' (Arbeitstrainingszentren) where hands-on experiences of how to work and learn help develop work attitudes (perseverance, punctuality), address psychological and social problems, develop realistic self-assessments and equally realistic future perspectives. This enables participants to enter the mainstream labour market or upskilling programmes afterwards.

The 'perspectives plan' (Perspektivenplan) is an external counselling programme offered at the PES's request to individuals found to be capable of work by medical assessment. It seeks to develop new and realistic career perspectives. For this purpose, it focuses on the clients' resources and scope for compensation, on possible job areas and suggestions for concrete steps of occupational integration.

In 2023, 87,879 persons with health-related barriers to employment were included in PES-funded programmes, whereof 17,433 persons with officially diagnosed disabilities.

**Financial resources:** Funding is provided from active LMP budget resources.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** Public Employment Service; planning is part of the entire organisation's definition of goals and priorities and incorporated into annual work programming. AMMSG 1994; AMFG 1968; §6 BEinstG as currently amended.

### **8.3 Labour Market Policies for Migrants, for People Qualifying for Asylum or Subsidiary Protection and Asylum-Seekers**

People from migrant backgrounds frequently encounter major challenges in the labour market. The reasons are manifold. Many of this group did not complete their compulsory education or have only very poor basic skills, and foreign qualifications are often not formally recognised in Austria. Basically, all PES programmes are available to migrants who are eligible for entering the labour market (depending on their previous education, training and knowledge).

As a special target group within people from migrant backgrounds, individuals qualifying for asylum or subsidiary protection enjoy unlimited access to the Austrian labour market. Consequently, the entire range of PES services and funding is available to them.

Active LMP interventions targeted at migrants included the following priorities:

#### **Improving access to the labour market**

- Lacking or poor knowledge of German is a major obstacle for many migrants in the labour market. Consequently, job-specific German-language courses and general German-language courses from level A2 are offered as part of active labour market

policy. In addition, German and literacy courses are provided in close cooperation with the Austrian Integration Fund (Österreichischer Integrationsfonds – ÖIF).

- Moreover, basic skills training programmes have been increasingly offered since 2016, their contents covering a broad spectrum from literacy and ECDL to German-language courses to pave an individual's way towards vocational or continued training or direct job take-up.
- Refresher skills training: skills acquired elsewhere by migrants can be used for the labour market by building upon existing qualifications and offering, where required, LMP measures to develop these skills. If necessary, a supportive and targeted set of measures is provided, such as career guidance for non-native speakers of German, special courses to improve their opportunities to access higher-skills segments, and job and application assistance programmes for migrants.
- 'Mentoring for migrants' is a joint initiative of the Austrian Integration Fund (ÖIF), the Austrian Economic Chamber (WKO) and the PES. It is aimed at helping mentees (migrants) with integration into the Austrian labour market. To this end, the business community provides mentors, whereas the PES continues to counsel participants and place them in jobs.
- The supra-company training scheme (see also item 7.2.13 on page 110) offers all young people who want to start an apprenticeship but fail to find a place the opportunity to enrol in training provided by a training workshop or in cooperation with a company.
- Consulting employers on diversity management (kick-off counselling). Employers are assisted in the development of their diversity strategy.
- The Fit for Training programme (AusbildungsFit, which replaces Production Schools) is implemented by the SMS all over Austria. This is a low-threshold programme for young people to help them prepare for an apprenticeship. Disadvantaged young people can be integrated into vocational training or the labour market through individual assistance and support. For more details see item 9.5.2 on page 179.

### **Contact points for the recognition and assessment of qualifications obtained abroad**

- In order to make the best possible use of migrants' qualifications, four contact points were established in Vienna, Linz (Upper Austria), Graz (Styria) and Innsbruck (Tyrol) in 2013. The other Länder offer weekly consultancy days.
- The contact points are advisory offices within the meaning of §5 of the Recognition and Assessment Act (Anerkennungs- und Bewertungsgesetz – AuBG). They offer free information, advice and guidance in several languages throughout Austria.



- These contact points (Anlaufstellen – AST) are low-threshold offices open to all people (whether registered with the PES or not) who have acquired formal qualifications abroad and now have questions concerning the recognition and use of their skills in Austria. For this purpose, the contact points cooperate closely with PES offices to provide the best possible support to people from migrant backgrounds and help them find work commensurate with their qualifications.
- The contact points forward any diplomas and certificates supplied by their clients to the relevant recognition information centres (ENIC-NARIC, school certificates to the BMBWF). Since in most cases formal recognition is only necessary for regulated trades or professions (in particular for health care professionals), assessment by the recognition information centres provides supplementary information for PES case workers and potential employers.
- Skilled workers may have their qualifications declared equivalent with apprenticeships completed in Austria.
- The contact points are financed by the Federal Ministry of Labour and Economy.

### **Improving career prospects**

- Youth Coaching (see also item 9.5.1 on page 177) is part of a comprehensive strategy, which aims to prevent the early dropout of young people from the education/training system at the transition from compulsory education to continuing (vocational) training and/or the labour market. Where required, counselling and assistance services are made available to pupils on an individual basis (pupils from a migrant background account for more than 50% of Youth Coaching participants). The programme is to ensure nationwide cross-cutting advice, guidance and support from the end of compulsory schooling until sustainable integration into continuing training or education.
- Some measures provided as part of the women's labour market policy programme focus particularly on supporting women from migrant backgrounds. For instance, counselling at the Vocational Centres for Young Women (Young FBZs) offers a framework for migration- and culture-specific experiences of young migrant women. Under the 'women in crafts and engineering' (FiT) programme, the employment service supports migrants by enhancing its cooperation with entities specialised in guidance and advice to migrants – see also item 7.2.9 on page 99.
- The 'systematic development of competences' (Kompetenz mit System – KmS) programme offers migrants the opportunity to use periods of unemployment to enhance their skills and complete apprenticeships in certain trades through modular

training. Modular forms of upskilling are of particular use to persons who cannot enrol in uninterrupted training courses or have frequent spells of unemployment. In Vienna, a special retail training programme is offered to migrants within the KmS scheme.

- Information and counselling services in association with advisory centres for migrants focusing on support to women and girls.
- In addition, special counselling is offered to migrants with high education potential to prevent them from needing to work in jobs that are not commensurate with their training.
- Purchase of interpreting services.
- Native-language initial information events and provision of multilingual brochures and information material on career choices and the labour market.
- Another multilingual service, the Berufsinformat, has been available since January 2024. This self-service tool answers jobseekers' questions about career opportunities in a language of their choice.

### **Diversity management within the PES**

- PES executives and counsellors are trained in diversity management and intercultural competences.
- Diversity management is becoming increasingly important both in PES staff recruitment and in services commissioned by the PES.
- The PES office for young people and some Länder have their own diversity officer.

### **Targeted programmes for displaced persons and recognised refugees under active labour market policies**

#### **Measures for the labour market integration of Ukrainian displaced persons:**

- In Austria, displaced persons from Ukraine receive an 'identity card for displaced persons' (Blue Card), which guarantees them access to basic social services (in the respective Land) and to the labour market and/or self-employment. As of 21 April 2023, holders of a Blue Card have free access to the Austrian labour market. They may take up any employment without special authorisation.
- All holders of an ID card for displaced persons who want to take up employment may register with the Public Employment Service (PES). Specially prepared multilingual (German, Ukrainian, Russian and English) information materials as well as information

lectures on relevant topics (such as labour market access, PES services, recognition of professional qualifications) are available to Ukrainian refugees. When registering with the PES, refugees are advised on site at the regional office as well as by special providers of counselling and support (BBEs) on the opportunities and challenges of labour market integration. For integration into the labour market, the first step is to record and, where necessary, formally recognise the refugees' qualifications and to improve their language skills (see also competence checks below).

- The PES website offers the web tool Job Opportunities in Austria (Jobchancen in Österreich) available in German, Ukrainian, Russian and English. It is primarily aimed at displaced persons from Ukraine using illustrations to show where in Austria which professions are most in demand. This kind of display makes it easier to navigate the labour market and search for a suitable job. Two entries are required: the desired occupation and training background. As a result, the map shows how many unemployed people there are per job vacancy in each Land.
- In addition, the site 'all jobs' (alle Jobs) offers the opportunity to use the search term 'Ukraine' to quickly find vacancies throughout Austria in companies that are willing to employ displaced persons.

### **Measures for persons qualifying for asylum or for subsidiary protection status**

- An additional €75m will be made available in 2024 and 2025 to support and integrate recognised refugees into the labour market with the aim of expanding existing services. A key element within these efforts is the significant expansion of 'youth colleges' (Jugendcolleges) in Vienna, a school-like educational programme for young people aged 18-25. For about nine months, participants receive instruction in various fields ranging from literacy, basic education and German to digital skills. Workshops, competence checks, job application training and internships prepare them for working life and the Austrian labour market.
- German-language courses, basic education (see above).
- **Competence checks:** Competence checks are LMP measures aimed at identifying the skills, competences and job experiences acquired elsewhere by recognised refugees listed in the PES's unemployment register. They support needs-based (refresher) training programmes and subsequent placement. For these instruments and activities to be effective it is of utmost importance to determine the status quo of the persons concerned. Moreover, supplementary advice is available within these competence checks, e.g. on questions such as recognition of skills acquired abroad and the Austrian system of training and education. The United Nations have rewarded a sub-programme

of the competence checks – the competence checks for women – with the Public Service Award 2019.

- **Supra-regional placement:** The placement programme b.mobile focuses on supra-regional placement of recognised refugees. The skills and interests of these young people are identified before placement to ensure optimal matching with available training slots. The young refugees will be appropriately prepared for the requirements of an apprenticeship and given comprehensive assistance after placement.
- **Just Integration Implacment – targeted labour foundation for young adults aged 18-30 years, in particular for unemployed individuals qualifying for asylum or subsidiary protection:** The Just Integration Implacment foundation supports and assists young adults (18-30 years of age) with job-related training programmes, case management and coaching until they take the extraordinary final apprenticeship examination, the focus being on the target group of unemployed persons qualifying for asylum or subsidiary protection. During training in a company, ideally with the future employer, Just Integration offers intensive assistance and accompanying measures (e.g. German-language courses, learning support at the vocational school, etc.). This Just scheme aims at achieving vocational upskilling/skills training on the basis of existing previous job experience to facilitate subsequent integration into the labour market.
- **Business start-up programme:** Competence checks are also designed to identify options for launching a business. If suited, recognised refugees may obtain start-up counselling from a consultancy firm cooperating with the PES. It is also possible for them to acquire the necessary skills, with the costs of consultancy and upskilling being borne by the PES. Moreover, under certain conditions, financial support is provided for the duration of programme participation. To enable clients who qualify for asylum to finance the capital investments and equipment necessary for starting their own business, they may also take recourse to the microcredit programme (see also item 8.5 on page 143) in terms of supplementary support on their route to self-employment. With 'step2business', Vienna offers an additional counselling programme targeted at recognised refugees.

In 2023, a total of around 233,000 migrants, among them recognised refugees and displaced persons, were supported with active labour market policy programmes.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** The Public Employment Service is responsible for active labour market policies; planning is part of the federal organisation's definition of pri-

orities and incorporated into annual work programming. The Länder organisations and regional PES offices are responsible for the implementation and organisation of labour market policies for migrants, and the SMS for Youth Coaching.

**Legal basis:** §25(1)9 of the AMSG 1994 and PES guidelines. §6 of the BEinstG as currently amended; framework guideline on participation in working life for people with disabilities; the guideline on NEBA support options. Federal Law Gazette I no. 75/2017 – Year of Integration Act (Integrationsjahrgesetz – IJG); AMPFG as well as the 2005 Asylum Act (Asylgesetz – AsylG), Federal Law Gazette I no. 100/2005; Federal PES Guideline on implementation of the year of integration BGS/SFA/0502/9535/2019 and BGS/AMF/0722/9957/2019, effective since 1 Feb 2020.

## 8.4 fit2work for Older Workers and Workers with Health Issues

**In a nutshell:** The prevention programme fit2work is an initiative of the Austrian Federal Government that has been incorporated into the Work and Health Act (Arbeit-und-Gesundheit-Gesetz – AGG). Available since 2013 throughout Austria, fit2work offers low-threshold advice for workers and companies on issues of work and health. The services are voluntary, confidential and free of charge for all those seeking advice.

**Description:** The fit2work programme is based on the Work and Health Act (AGG), its focus being on secondary prevention measures for workers and their reintegration into jobs. Alongside fit2work counselling services for individuals, which offer tailor-made advice and assistance to people with health issues and disabilities, the fit2work business advisory service is another important component of this prevention programme. The current implementation period (2020-2024) is the first to offer a combined counselling model under which individual and business advisory services are provided by one implementer based on a joint concept.

As of 1 July 2017, the reintegration part-time scheme has been available as an additional option to help workers with long-term illnesses regain or strengthen their capacity to work. Since then, the fit2work counselling portfolio also includes advisory plus occupational health assessment services for devising reintegration part-time plans.

The key objective of fit2work is to maintain and improve workers' employability and ability to work over the long term as well as to prevent their premature retirement due to illness

so as to enable them to remain healthy in their jobs. The introduction of low-threshold advice offerings focusing on secondary prevention measures is intended to ensure early intervention to

- prevent invalidity or unemployment for health reasons early on,
- help workers return to work following lengthy sick leaves, and
- maintain their long-term ability to work through prevention measures.

Since the beginning of 2020 an Austria-wide telephone hotline (0800 500 118) has been added to the combined provision of individual and business advisory services and the related PR campaigns.

**Target group:** The services offered by fit2work are available to

- economically active workers, in particular those with extended sick leaves or health-related problems,
- unemployed individuals with health issues, and
- employers and representatives of employees.

**Eligibility criteria and use:** As of 2013, fit2work runs a nationwide network of counselling centres in all Länder and offers free advice, information and assistance on occupational health. The services are voluntary, confidential and free of charge for all those seeking advice. In 2023, a total of 27,214 persons and 727 counselled companies (Module 1) relied on this scheme, with 22,775 persons in initial advice sessions (whereof 5,632 cases of reintegration in part-time jobs), 17,166 basic check-ups and 6,778 instances of case management (including cases of intensive counselling) being reported.

**Responsible organisation:** Austria-wide coordination of these services is ensured by the staff unit of the SMS, and regional coordination by its Länder offices (funding units). Actual counselling is provided by contracted providers in the relevant Länder based on uniform standards and with due regard to regional requirements.

In order to control implementation and guide measures, a special steering group has been established; it is composed of one representative each of the BMAW (chair), BMSGPK, BMF, PES, the Austrian Workers' Compensation Board (Allgemeine Unfallversicherungsanstalt – AUVA), the PVA, the health insurance institution and the Umbrella Association of Austrian Social Insurance Institutions (advisory function) – owing to the merger of the labour and the

economic affairs ministries, a representative of the economic affairs portfolio has been in this steering group since 2022. In addition, and to ensure involvement and representation of relevant stakeholders, an advisory board has been established composed of representatives of the social partners, the Labour Inspectorates and the Austrian Disability Council (Österreichischer Behindertenrat). They are to be informed and heard on the above issues.

**Financial resources:** Funding of fit2work is regulated in the AGG based on a fixed financing key, which is determined according to how much the programme was used in the previous year. In 2023, funding was partitioned between the labour market policy budget (49.5%), social insurance funds (44.7%) and the Compensatory Levy Fund (5.8%). The same financing key applies to 2024.

Roughly €26,29m were spent on fit2work in 2023. The budget estimate for 2024 is for around €28,17m.

## 8.5 Microcredits

**In a nutshell:** The microcredit programme constitutes a supplementary approach to existing labour market policies, helping people set up their own business and, as a consequence, create new jobs.

**Description:** Microcredits enable and support people to establish, continue, expand and take over small independent businesses of all sectors in Austria. This may also help improve the financing situation for small independent endeavours in Austria. A microcredit is disbursed at once in full, i.e. the requested total amount is usually immediately made available once the application is granted. It is repaid to the credit institution at a favourable, fixed-interest rate for the entire term agreed.

**Target group:** Unemployed persons, persons at risk of unemployment, persons in non-standard employment relationships, groups that are disadvantaged in the job market as well as persons (likely to fall) below the poverty line.

**Eligibility criteria:** Applicants for microcredits must be over 18 and

- they must have registered their usual residence in Austria for six months or more, and be Austrian, EEA/EU or Swiss citizens or hold a residence title that permits self-employment in Austria;
- they must not be subject to ongoing attachment, foreclosure or insolvency proceedings;
- they must pursue a business idea which, according to its nature and scope, is subject to compulsory insurance under social insurance legislation for the self-employed or for farmers;
- they must pursue this business idea as full-time occupation and implement it by launching a new business, or by continuing or taking over an existing business;
- they must have no, difficult or limited access to the conventional loan market, with own funds being insignificant in relation to the overall amount required; and
- they must have sufficient professional and commercial knowledge, be able to provide a viable business plan or a detailed project description, as well as sufficient personal guarantees to ensure compliance with the contractual obligations entered into and successful operation of the business to be set up.

In addition, the following application criteria must be met:

- Before their application can be processed, applicants must prove their financial reliability by submitting a Data Subject Access Report (available from Kreditschutzverband KSV 1870) and successfully complete a 'quick check'.
- The credit application is processed through the electronic application platform: [Der Mikrokredit](#).
- Following processing of their application, applicants need to present their projects in person at a hearing.
- After having decided in favour of the applicant, the credit institution pays out the microcredit.

**Amount:** The maximum amount of the credit is €15,000 as of 1 Sep 2022 (previously €12,500) per person.

**Duration:** After a 6-month period of grace (maximum), the microcredit must be repaid in equal monthly instalments within no more than five years as of the date of the loan agreement.



**Responsible organisation and regulation:** BMAW/EIF/Erste Bank and Austrian savings banks. The BMAW bears the cost of outreach, guidance and counselling services under a service contract awarded by public tender.

**Financial resources:** The BMAW cooperates with Erste Bank. The two fully fund this debt instrument together, and the Austrian savings banks manage the credits. Erste Bank assumes the credit risk via the EU Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) of the European Investment Fund (EIF).

## 8.6 Household Services Voucher: Implementation

**In a nutshell:** The Household Services Voucher (Dienstleistungsscheck – DLS) provides pay for fixed-term, marginal employment (from one day to one month), under which simple household-type jobs are performed in private households, such as cleaning, minding infants and schoolchildren, buying groceries and other essentials of daily life, simple gardening, etc.

**Description:** Introduced on 1 Jan 2006, the Household Services Voucher can be used to pay for the provision of simple household-type jobs in private households under fixed-term employment relationships between workers and natural persons provided that the remuneration does not exceed the monthly marginal earnings threshold. The employment relationships may be concluded between the same persons for no more than one month at a time; the repeated conclusion of such fixed-term employment relationships does not result in a continuing, permanent employment contract.

**Target group:** Persons with free access to the labour market:

- Austrian citizens;
- Nationals of EU Member States;
- Nationals of EEA Member States (Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway) and Switzerland;
- Foreign nationals who have unrestricted access to the Austrian labour market based on one of the following residence titles:
  - Red White Red Card plus
  - Residence title ‘family member’,
  - Permanent residence status under EU law (Daueraufenthalt – EU), or
- Residence entitlement plus (Aufenthaltsberechtigung plus)
- Beneficiaries of asylum and subsidiary protection, and

- Asylum-seekers who have been admitted to asylum procedures for three months. Evidence for admission to asylum procedures is provided by the residence entitlement card ('white card') Asylum-seekers are only exempt from authorisation requirements under the AusIBG with regard to the provision of simple household services in private households!

Employers must verify that their employees are entitled to work in Austria; employees may obtain the appropriate confirmation from the PES or the competent district authority.

**Eligibility criteria:** The Household Service Vouchers are obtainable via DLS-Online or the DLS app for mobile phones via [www.dienstleistungsscheck-online.at](http://www.dienstleistungsscheck-online.at), from news agents and post offices. Private households may buy Household Services Vouchers of between €1 and €100 per day only in full euro amounts and pay for the mentioned services with them. The service providers must submit the voucher no later than in the following month to the Austrian Health Insurance Fund (Österreichische Gesundheitskasse - ÖGK) or to the DLS competence centre of the Insurance Institution for Public-Service Employees, Railway and Mining Workers (BVAEB) either personally, by mail, via DLS-Online or the DLS app, whereupon the BVAEB will transfer the amount in question to a current account or by way of postal order.

Household Services Voucher and family ties: services rendered under the duty to provide assistance to family members do not constitute employment relationships. These duties are defined in §§90 et seq of Austria's General Civil Code (Allgemeines bürgerliches Gesetzbuch – ABGB) for spouses, registered partners and live-in partners, in §137 of the ABGB for the relationship between parents and children and the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren. In any case, household tasks are part of this duty. Basically, the vouchers may be used to employ all other family relationships. If, however, the parties concerned share the same household they may not use the scheme for reimbursement.

**Amount:** The DLS costs €5.10 for a voucher in the amount of €5 and €10.20 for a voucher in the amount of €10. The purchase price includes contributions to the statutory work accident insurance and to administrative costs (2% in total), which explains the difference between the face-value and the purchase price of a DLS. The internet portal DLS-Online and/or the DLS app for mobile phones enable employers and the employees paid and working under this scheme to process all activities relating to the voucher. Employers may use DLS-Online/the DLS app to order, buy/pay for the vouchers and send them to their employees

by electronic means. Employees, in turn, may use the above applications (electronic channels) to cash the vouchers electronically.

**Reimbursement (increased marginal earnings threshold and minimum hourly wage):** The wages can be agreed freely, the floor being the minimum rate for domestic helpers plus prorated supplements (9.6% annual leave compensation and 25% special payments). The wage paid by an individual employer must not exceed the monthly marginal earnings threshold plus annual leave payments as well as pro rata special payments (2022: €655.55 / 2023: €686.18 per month).<sup>20</sup>

If they earn DLS wages up to the marginal earnings threshold, workers may opt into voluntary health and pension insurance pursuant to §19a of the ASVG. The Household Services Voucher is meant to be a legal and attractive alternative to illegal work and offers social security protection (work accident insurance as well as the option of taking out health and pension insurance) to workers. Income under Household Services Vouchers is income from employment resulting in compulsory tax assessment if the annual income threshold of €12,000 is exceeded (any income below this level is exempt from personal income/wage tax).<sup>21</sup>

The brochures on Household Services Vouchers have been translated into several languages and published on the web. In addition to German and English versions, the website of the BVAEB competence centre currently also offers versions in Polish, Slovakian and Hungarian.

**Responsible organisation/entity:** The DLS competence centre of the BVAEB in cooperation with the Federal Ministry of Labour and Economy (BMAW).

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<sup>20</sup> The following activities are exempt from the Act on Household Services Vouchers (Dienstleistungsscheckgesetz – DLSG): activities that require a longer period of training (e.g. nursing of the old and sick, but not simple care services), so-called 'mixed activities' (working in a household as well as in a company) and 'three-way relationships' (activities of persons employed by non-profit associations such as Hilfswerk or Volkshilfe, for example, meaning that support organisations are not part of this scheme, since it is a scheme tailored to individuals).

<sup>21</sup> In practice, taxation usually applies if income is earned under the Household Services Voucher in addition to other income, e.g. pension benefits or income earned from other economic activities.

## 8.7 Wage Compensation from the Insolvency Contingency Fund

**In a nutshell:** Wage compensation from the Insolvency Contingency Fund (Insolvenz-Entgelt – IEG) ensures that employees, quasi-freelancers as well as homeworkers are paid any outstanding pay owed under their employment, quasi-freelance or homework relationships if their employers (quasi-employers, purchasers) become insolvent.

**Description:** Workers who have outstanding claims (wages, salaries, overtime pay, severance pay) when their employer becomes insolvent may apply for wage compensation with the service company managing the Insolvency Contingency Fund (IEF-Service GmbH), thus ensuring that they do not suffer any financial disadvantages because of their employer's inability to pay. This also applies to outstanding claims by quasi-freelancers or homeworkers. In addition, the scheme provides protection of the above group's contributions to health and pension insurance plans that have not been transferred by the insolvent employer.

**Target group:** Employees (quasi-freelancers, homeworkers) whose employers (quasi-employers, purchasers) are insolvent.

**Eligibility criteria:** Employees (quasi-freelancers, homeworkers) must report their outstanding claims in insolvency proceedings to the competent court and apply for IEG compensation with the IEF-Service GmbH.

**Amount:** As a rule, IEG compensation amounts to the net pay owed.

**Duration:** In general, IEG compensation is paid for claims that have become due up to six months before actual insolvency.

**Responsible organisation and legal basis:** The Insolvenz-Entgelt-Fonds-Service GmbH (IEF-Service GmbH) is responsible for managing IEG compensation under the supervision of the Federal Ministry of Labour and Economy. The 1977 Act on Wage Compensation from the Insolvency Contingency Fund (Insolvenz-Entgeltsicherungsgesetz – IESG) primarily defines the requirements to be met and the extent of compensation granted, as well as funding rules, while the Act on the IEF-Service-GmbH (IEF-Service-GmbH-Gesetz – IEF-G) sets out the organisational structure of the private limited company (IEF-Service GmbH) which administers the fund.

**Financial resources:** Compensation is financed from employers' and employees' contributions.

Table 36: IEG compensation granted

Year	Money granted	Expenditure in €	Expenditure as % of GDP
2013	59,361	298,732,409	0.092
2014	45,467	235,920,559	0.071
2015	36,858	175,329,538	0.051
2016	39,454	202,533,509	0.057
2017	37,245	159,175,077	0.043
2018	36,861	166,908,222	0.043
2019	35,543	167,670,020	0.042
2020	35,958	162,408,667	0.043
2021	17,555	85,385,822	0.021
2022	24,550	109,282,398	0.024
2023	40,305	200,091,287	0.042

Sources: IEF-Service-GmbH; Statistics Austria: GDP retrieved on 20 Feb 2024 (in €bn at current prices); BMAW's own calculations.

Note: Refers to the number of payments made in a given year; there may be several disbursements per employee.

## 8.8 Bad Weather Compensation

**In a nutshell:** This compensation is aimed at preventing fluctuations in employment in the construction industry caused by weather-related inactivity.

**Description:** Examples of bad weather include rain, snow, frost or heat. There is a limit on the number of winter or summer working hours for which bad weather compensation

(Schlechtwetterentschädigung – SWE) can be claimed. Contributions to the bad weather compensation scheme amount to 1.4% of the wages, with employer and employee each paying half. Bad weather compensation will be refunded to the employer, upon application, by the Construction Workers' Annual Leave and Severance Pay Fund (Bauarbeiter-Urlaubs- und Abfertigungskasse – BUAK). As of 2017 trade apprentices can be included in the bad weather compensation scheme.

**Target group:** Construction workers affected by weather-related fluctuations in wages.

**Amount of compensation:** The workers concerned receive wage compensation amounting to 60% of the wage due under normal circumstances (no inactive periods). A flat rate of 30% towards social security contributions is included.

**Duration:** There is a limit on the number of winter or summer working hours for which bad weather compensation (SWE) can be claimed. Entitlement to SWE is limited to a maximum of 200 lost working hours per employee from 1 Nov to 30 April (the winter period) and to a maximum of 120 lost working hours per employee from 1 May to 31 Oct (the summer period), while there is the possibility of crediting lost hours not claimed in the summer period towards the subsequent winter period.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** BUAK, BMAW, 1957 Construction Workers' Bad Weather Compensation Act (Bauarbeiter-Schlechtwetterentschädigungsgesetz – BSchEG). Federal Law Gazette I no. 71/2021 set the statutory annual contribution from the LMP budget at €13m per year. As of 2023, €2m of this contribution will be valorised every year based on employment group A3 after the tenth year of the collective agreement for employees of the construction business and industry.

**Financial resources:** Bad weather compensation is financed from the BUAK (employers' and employees' contributions as well as contributions from the LMP budget); in case of deficits, it is financed by adjusting the contribution rates.

Table 37: Bad weather compensation

Year	Hours paid	Income in €	Expenditure in €	Expenditure as % of GDP
<b>2013</b>	5.118.681	43.383.826	51.402.185	0,016
<b>2014</b>	4,325,574	44,900,524	45,444,358	0.001
<b>2015</b>	4,115,644	45,457,168	46,435,690	0.013
<b>2016</b>	5,313,169	46,715,538	56,798,110	0.016
<b>2017</b>	4,920,822	49,559,356	45,477,876	0.012
<b>2018</b>	5,445,702	53,068,946	58,504,695	0.015
<b>2019</b>	6,095,153	57,669,978	68,574,237	0.017
<b>2020</b>	5,749,655	57,523,478	73,771,097	0.019
<b>2021</b>	5,566,540	65,017,774	60,937,190	0.015
<b>2022</b>	4,955,314	68,209,718	63,052,189	0.014
<b>2023</b>	6,700,902	70,747,432	80,030,776	0.017

Sources: Construction Workers' Paid Leave and Severance Pay Fund (Bauarbeiterurlaubskasse – BUAK), Statistics Austria: GDP retrieved on 17 Apr 2023 (in €bn at current prices), BMAW's own calculations.

Note: Annual expenses relate to the period Jan-Dec and annual disbursements relate to the period Nov-Oct as defined in the bad weather section of the BUAK income statement.

# 9 Policy Measures of the Social Affairs Ministry Service for People with Disabilities<sup>22</sup> in Transition to Work

In response to a changing labour market, the Social Affairs Ministry Service (SMS) has shifted the strategic focus of its programmes in recent years. Whereas in the early 1990s measures to encourage participation in working life focused on beneficiary disabled persons (i.e. persons registered as such), the group of persons eligible for support has been gradually widened since then and based on the kind of personal assistance needed by people with disabilities. Specific assistance needs arise from special life situations, age and life course, special types of impairment or the existence of both disability and other disadvantages that are likely to make participation in working life more difficult. Basically, all people with disabilities have access to all general LMP measures and appropriate support, in line with disability mainstreaming. However, a number of disabilities require special assistance in the workplace or in preparation for the labour market.

With the Government Programme 2020-2024 and its Employment Initiative, strengthening participation in working life and fostering the development and continuation of existing programmes for people with disabilities continue to be the focus of disability policy in Austria.

The Employment Assistance Network (Netzwerk Berufliche Assistenz – NEBA) with the employment assistance services it offers is the umbrella brand for a very differentiated system to support people with disabilities as well as young people with disabilities or in need of assistance. Parts of the NEBA programmes are important tools within the context of Education/Training till 18 as these programmes may also reach young people who would otherwise leave the education and training system prematurely. Moreover, employment assistance programmes are a major component of Austria's labour market policy in respect of

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<sup>22</sup> People with disabilities within programmes of the Social Affairs Ministry Service (SMS) are people with disabilities as defined in the Disability Employment Act (BEinstG).



the target group of the SMS. Offering assistance in everyday work, these programmes play a key role in ensuring the equality of people with disabilities and combatting poverty and exclusion.

The NEBA measures provided by the SMS (Youth Coaching, Fit for Training and prep module programme, Training Assistance, Job Assistance, Job Assistance for Young People and NEBA Business Service and Job Coaching), which also help young adults take part in working life, are described in greater detail under items 9.5.1 on page 177, 9.5.2 on page 179, 9.5.3 on page 181 und 9.5.4 on page 184.

In addition to project grants (see item 9.5 on page 176) a great variety of tailor-made individual support measures (see item 9.1 on page 153) are offered to people with disabilities and young people in need of assistance. They are intended to make up for disabilities, thus enabling beneficiaries to participate in the labour market. Where necessary for finding or keeping a job, people with disabilities may claim this type of assistance including support for making workplaces accessible, training costs, sign language interpretation services and mobility aids. A comprehensive programme of wage subsidies is used to incentivise employers to offer jobs to people with disabilities and to help secure the newly created employment relationships in the long term. Another measure is to support people with disabilities who wish to set up their own business. For this purpose, people with disabilities may claim financial aid to improve their economic situation and secure their livelihoods.

In respect of individual support measures, the SMS itself also provides assistance to people with disabilities and companies. This direct contact with employees and their employers ensures targeted use of funds and maximum achievement of funding purposes.

This wide range of funding options for tailor-made individual measures and project grants is used to provide individual support and offer assistance to people with disabilities. They must meet people's needs and result in self-determined, self-organised and equal participation in the labour market.

## **9.1 Wage Subsidies**

People with disabilities may be supported by wage subsidies, in particular for helping them participate in working life and remain in the labour market.

Wage subsidies are intended to provide greater incentives for employing people with disabilities and ensure their long-term participation in working life and/or make up for any disability-induced work limitations.

Wage subsidies can be claimed by employers for their disabled employees as well as by entrepreneurs with disabilities.

No such subsidies can be claimed by federal or Länder authorities, public entities that are themselves providers of rehabilitation services (e.g. social insurance institutions, Public Employment Service, social assistance associations), integration enterprises as well as political parties and parliamentary groups. Municipalities, communities and associations of local authorities with more than 400 employees may not receive any wage subsidies.

### **9.1.1 Inclusion Subsidy, Subsidy Plus/Women**

**In a nutshell:** The Inclusion Subsidy (Inklusionsförderung) and the Inclusion Subsidy Plus/Women (Inklusionsförderung Plus/Frauen) are grants paid by the SMS to employers. This type of subsidy may be claimed for people with disabilities to foster their participation in the primary labour market.

**Description:** Beneficiary disabled persons who have special difficulties in the labour market are to be reintegrated into employment with Inclusion Subsidies and Inclusion Subsidies Plus/Women. This subsidy may be granted directly after expiry of the PES's integration subsidy.

**Target group:** Beneficiary disabled person in accordance with §2 of the Disability Employment Act (BEinstG), Federal Law Gazette I no. 22/1970 as currently amended.

**Eligibility criteria:** Inclusion Subsidies may be granted to companies which are subject to the statutory requirement of hiring people with disabilities as defined in §1 of the BEinstG without verifying whether the beneficiary disabled person has reduced productivity.

Inclusion Subsidies Plus may be granted to companies which are not subject to the statutory requirement of hiring people with disabilities as defined in §1 of the BEinstG without verifying whether the beneficiary disabled person has reduced productivity.

In order to enhance the employment of women with disabilities, Inclusion Subsidy Plus/Women may be granted no matter whether the employer is subject to hiring requirements or not.

**Amount:** The Inclusion Subsidy amounts to 30% of gross wages per month, special payments not included. The monthly ceiling is €1,000. The Inclusion Subsidy Plus/Women amounts to 37.5% of monthly gross wages, special payments not included. This corresponds to the Inclusion Subsidy rates plus 25%. Hence the monthly ceiling in this case is €1,250. Any benefits paid by other rehabilitation or funding agencies for the same purpose are to be taken into account when determining the subsidy rate. This rate must not exceed the actual expenses of the employer.

**Duration:** Inclusion Subsidies, Inclusion Subsidies Plus and Inclusion Subsidies Plus/Women may be granted for twelve months. It is possible to distribute these subsidies over longer periods or interrupt payment, e.g. in the case of seasonal work.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** Responsibility rests with the SMS. The Inclusion Subsidy, Inclusion Subsidy Plus and Inclusion Subsidy Plus/Women are regulated in §6(3) of the BEinstG, Federal Law Gazette I no. 22/1970 as currently amended; in the framework guideline on participation in working life for people with disabilities, in the guideline on wage subsidies to support participation in working life for people with disabilities.

**Financial resources:** The programme is financed from the federal budget and the Compensatory Levy Fund.

Table 38: Inclusion Subsidy, Inclusion Subsidy Plus/Women

Year	Participation (Total)	Women	Men	Disbursements in €	Disbursements in % of GDP
2019	566	213	353	324,434	0.00008
2020	1,115	457	658	2,905,790	0.00076
2021	1,080	447	633	3,801,924	0.00094
2022	1,137	452	685	3,667,953	0.00077
2023	1,301	540	761	4,936,995	0.00110

Sources: BMSGPK; 2022: exported from UeW 2022 (v10) on 31 Jan 2023; 2023: exported from UeW 2023 (v12) on 24 Apr 2024 (data frozen on 01 Jan 2024); Statistics Austria: GDP retrieved on 29 Feb 2024 (in €bn at current prices); BMWA's own calculations (GDP).

### 9.1.2 Inclusion Bonus for Apprentices

**In a nutshell:** The Inclusion Bonus for Apprentices (Inklusionsbonus für Lehrlinge) is an SMS grant for training companies intending to hire an apprentice with disabilities (holder of a disability passport).

**Description:** The Inclusion Bonus for Apprentices is designed to support companies in hiring apprentices who are holders of disability passports. In 2022, companies were granted Inclusion Bonuses for 83 apprentices with disabilities (24 female and 59 male), with €170,773 being spent on this scheme in total.

**Target group:** Companies which conclude an apprenticeship or training contract with workers in accordance with §1 or §8b of the Vocational Training Act (BAG) or in accordance with §5 or §11c of the Vocational Training in Agriculture and Forestry Act (LFBAG) and enable these persons to complete apprenticeships in their companies.

**Eligibility criteria:** The company may file the application no earlier than at the beginning of the apprenticeship or training relationship, or when the disability passport has been issued. If the conditions for claiming an Apprentice Bonus (Lehrlingsbonus) are met as defined in §9a of the Disability Employment Act (BEinstG), no Inclusion Bonus will be granted for this period.

**Amount:** The funding level amounts to the standard compensatory levy per month as defined in the first sentence of §9(2) of the BEinstG, Federal Law Gazette I no. 22/1970.

**Duration:** The Inclusion Bonus for Apprentices may be granted for the entire duration of an apprenticeship or extended apprenticeship.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** Responsibility rests with the SMS. The Inclusion Bonus for Apprentices is regulated in §6(3) of the BEinstG, Federal Law Gazette I no. 22/1970 as currently amended; in the framework guideline on participation in working life for people with disabilities and in the guideline on wage subsidies to support participation in working life for people with disabilities.

**Financial resources:** The programme is financed from the federal budget and the Compensatory Levy Fund.

### 9.1.3 Pay Subsidy

**In a nutshell:** The Pay Subsidy (Entgeltzuschuss) may be granted if employers employ beneficiary disabled to make up for disability-induced reductions in work output, provided productivity is actually reduced.

**Description:** Pay Subsidies may be granted to companies for beneficiary employees (their disability graded by official assessment in accordance with §2(1) and (3) in conjunction with §14 of the BEinstG) whose contractually agreed work output is significantly reduced owing to their disability.

**Eligibility criteria:** Employers must provide satisfactory and conclusive evidence of reduced productivity compared with employees without disabilities in the same jobs. Pay Subsidies may not be granted if the performance of the workers in question can be improved through other support measures to match that of their peers.

**Amount:** Calculation is based on the monthly gross pay (special payments not included) plus a flat-rate compensation for non-wage labour costs of no more than 50%. Depending on the degree of the individual's reduced productivity, the grant totals up to 50% of the assessment basis, the maximum being triple the compensatory levy per month.

**Duration:** Pay Subsidies may be granted for the duration of the employment relationship following receipt of Inclusion Subsidies. They are approved for two years at a time.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** Responsibility rests with the SMS. The Pay Subsidy scheme is regulated in §6(3) of the Disability Employment Act (BEinstG), Federal Law Gazette I no. 22/1970 as currently amended; in the framework guideline on participation in working life for people with disabilities and in the guideline on wage subsidies to support participation in working life for people with disabilities.

**Financial resources:** Pay Subsidies are financed from the federal budget and the Compensatory Levy Fund (Ausgleichstaxfonds).

Table 39: Pay Subsidy

Year	Participation (Total)	Women	Men	Disbursements in €	Disbursements in % of GDP
2017	7,820	3,009	4,811	23,798,260	0.00064
2018	7,897	3,066	4,831	24,176,675	0.00627
2019	7,760	3,052	4,708	24,572,831	0.00618
2020	7,064	2,818	4,246	23,759,501	0.00624
2021	6,836	2,677	4,159	23,478,800	0.00579
2022	6,588	2,534	4,054	21,920,199	0.00490
2023	7,334	2,885	4,449	24,239,468	0.00508

Sources: BMSGPK; 2022: exported from UeW 2022 (v10) on 31 Jan 2023; 2023: exported from UeW 2023 (v12) on 24 Apr 2024 (data frozen on 01 Jan 2024); Statistics Austria: GDP retrieved on 29 Feb 2024 (in €bn at current prices); BMWA's own calculations (GDP).

### 9.1.4 Subsidy to Safeguard Jobs

**In a nutshell:** If a disabled person's workplace or training slot is at risk, a subsidy to the wage and training costs can be granted for as long as the workplace or training slot is at risk.

**Description:** Examples of when these subsidies may be granted include: the employment relationship is at risk because of poor economic conditions; employees with disabilities cannot temporarily work in an optimum manner because of changes in work organisation that do not match their skills or require them to be trained at new workplaces; in dismissal procedures, continuation of employment is only possible with this subsidy, while the notice of dismissal is withdrawn.

**Target group:** Subsidies to Safeguard Jobs (Arbeitsplatzsicherungszuschüsse) may be granted to employers for employees with physical, psychological or cognitive disorders or for workers with sensory impairments whose degree of disability is at least 30% and who are unable to find or keep a job without support measures due to the kind and extent of

their impairment. This also includes young people (up to the age of 24) with learning difficulties or social and emotional issues that are equivalent to a degree of disability of at least 30%.

**Eligibility criteria:** Job insecurity may be due to economic reasons or other risk situations and must be conclusively evidenced by the company. The employer applies for the subsidy for their employees with disabilities.

**Amount:** Calculation is based on the monthly gross pay (special payments not included) plus a flat-rate compensation for non-wage labour costs of no more than 50%. The grant totals up to 50% of the assessment basis, the maximum being triple the compensatory levy per month.

**Duration:** If a job is at risk, the Subsidy to Safeguard Jobs may be paid during the whole time the job is in jeopardy and irrespective of the worker’s actual reduced productivity for one year at a time, but for no more than three years. In the case of the job being in specific jeopardy primarily because of the employee’s condition, the subsidy may be granted for five years for young people in need of increased support (until the age of 24), for people over 50 as well as for people with severe psychological impairments.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** Responsibility rests with the SMS. The Subsidy to Safeguard Jobs is regulated in §6(3) of the Disability Employment Act (BEinstG), Federal Law Gazette I no. 22/1970 as currently amended; in the framework guideline on participation in working life for people with disabilities and in the guideline on wage subsidies to support participation in working life for people with disabilities.

**Financial resources:** The subsidies are financed from the federal budget and the Compensatory Levy Fund (Ausgleichstaxfonds).

Table 40: Subsidy to Safeguard Jobs

Year	Participation (Total)	Women	Men	Disbursements in €	Disbursements in % of GDP
2017	364	114	250	1,335,357	0.00004
2018	308	95	213	1,164,178	0.00030

Year	Participation (Total)	Women	Men	Disbursements in €	Disbursements in % of GDP
2019	352	112	240	1,154,315	0.00029
2020	1,883	620	1,263	6,892,028	0.00181
2021	1,518	584	934	5,944,502	0.00147
2022	1,219	512	707	5,073,099	0.00113
2023	747	296	451	3,533,679	0.00074

Sources: BMSGPK; 2022: exported from UeW 2022 (v10) on 31 Jan 2023; 2023: exported from UeW 2023 (v12) on 24 Apr 2024 (data frozen on 01 Jan 2024); Statistics Austria: GDP retrieved on 29 Feb 2024 (in €bn at current prices); BMWA's own calculations (GDP).

### 9.1.5 Bridging Subsidy for the Self-Employed

**In a nutshell:** This subsidy is intended to secure existing self-employment of people with disabilities.

**Description:** A Bridging Subsidy (Überbrückungszuschuss) may be awarded to secure existing self-employment of entrepreneurs with a degree of disability of at least 50% to cover the additional disability-related expenses incurred in day-to-day operation of the business.

**Target group:** Entrepreneurs with a degree of disability of at least 50% provided that

- they are self-employed in a business with no more than five employees when filing their application (any co-insured family members within the meaning of §2 of the Social Insurance Act for Farmers (Bauern-Sozialversicherungsgesetz – BSVG), Federal Law Gazette no. 559/1978 are deemed to be employees) and
- they are carrying out most of the work themselves (individual entrepreneurs) and
- the disability-related additional expenses constitute a major burden for their entrepreneurial activities.

**Eligibility criteria:** The entrepreneur must provide conclusive evidence of disability-related additional expenses. Eligibility depends on whether these additional expenses can be made up for by relief services (Betriebshilfe) provided by a public entity (chamber, social insurance



institution) or not. No subsidy will be granted if the entrepreneurial activity is basically unsuited to ensure the entrepreneur’s livelihood in the long term.

**Amount:** The funding level is a monthly flat-rate payment in the amount of the standard monthly compensatory levy as defined in the first sentence of §9(2) of the Disability Employment Act (BEinstG). In special circumstances, such as disability-related longer-term absence (illness-related inactive periods, stay at a health resort), this rate can be doubled if the entrepreneur needs to hire a replacement worker (half a full-time equivalent) and their absence would endanger the viability of their business.

**Duration:** A Bridging Subsidy may be granted for no more than six months at a time. It may be granted again if the criteria continue to be met.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** Responsibility rests with the SMS. The Bridging Subsidy scheme is regulated in §6(3) of the Disability Employment Act (BEinstG), Federal Law Gazette I no. 22/1970 as currently amended; in the framework guideline on participation in working life for people with disabilities and in the guideline on wage subsidies to support participation in working life for people with disabilities.

**Financial resources:** The subsidies are financed from the federal budget and the Compensatory Levy Fund (Ausgleichstaxfonds).

Table 41: Bridging Subsidy for the Self-Employed

Year	Participation (Total)	Disbursements in €	Disbursements in % of GDP
2017	25	32,992	0.000001
2018	22	23,207	0.000006
2019	24	28,190	0.000007
2020	171	146,348	0.000038
2021	105	104,978	0.000026
2022	32	45,134	0.000010
2023	27	36,170	0.000008

Sources: BMSGPK; 2022: exported from UeW 2022 (v10) on 31 Jan 2023; 2023: exported from UeW 2023 (v12) on 24 Apr 2024 (data frozen on 01 Jan 2024); Statistics Austria: GDP retrieved on 29 Feb 2024 (in €bn at current prices); BMWA's own calculations (GDP).

## 9.2 Work and Training

Job-related subsidies are intended to facilitate entry into working life and to maintain and secure existing jobs.

### 9.2.1 Accessibility adaptations of workplaces for people with disabilities

**In a nutshell:** This subsidy scheme aims to safeguard existing jobs or enable people with disabilities to find a new job and meet its requirements.

**Description:** Supports for making workplaces accessible must be required by the disability of the worker concerned. They include either personal work aids or mobile technical work aids designed to make up for disability-induced functional impairments, foster existing capabilities of employees with disabilities, support and at the same time protect remaining capabilities, but also largely substitute missing functions, reduce workloads and ensure safety at work.

As well as the costs of state-of-the-art technical work aids (e.g. equipment, software) compensating for disabilities and demonstrably related to entering or doing work, the costs of training in the use of subsidised work aids may also be funded.

**Target group:** People with disabilities with a degree of disability of at least 50%. Young people (up to age 24) with learning difficulties or social and emotional issues which have an impact equivalent to a degree of disability of at least 30%.

**Eligibility criteria:** Subsidies for other disability-related additional expenses may be granted if they are related to doing work or significantly contribute to fostering participation in working life and cannot be covered by other earmarked subsidies. Only those costs are to be deemed disability-related additional expenses that arise from disability (causal relationship) and do not constitute cost of living or luxury expenses. In principle, ownership of all technical work aids within the meaning of this guideline transfers to the employees in question.

Adaptations to make workplaces accessible as well as disability-related additional expenses required in the context of school or vocational training, in particular during study programmes, can only be funded by grants for accessible training (Zuschuss zur barrierefreien Ausbildung).

Consequently, when granting the subsidy, it is necessary to ensure that in the event of termination of the employment relationship, the employer enables the employee to take the technical work aids to the next place of work. Immovable technical work aids remain the property of the company.

**Amount:** Funding is provided in the form of a grant up to the full amount of the costs and, in the case of technical work aids, includes initial and replacement purchases, maintenance and training in and for their use. Any benefits provided by other rehabilitation or funding agencies for the same purpose are to be taken into account when determining the amount of funding. Medical aids and therapeutic appliances are to be borne by the competent health insurance institutions.

**Duration:** Grants are one-off payments.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** Funding is regulated in §6(3) of the Disability Employment Act (BEinstG), Federal Law Gazette I no. 22/1970 as currently amended; framework guideline on participation in working life of people with disabilities; guideline on work and training.

**Financial resources:** Funding is provided from the federal budget and the Compensatory Levy Fund (Ausgleichstaxfonds).

## 9.2.2 Accessibility adaptations of workplaces for companies

**In a nutshell:** This subsidy scheme aims to safeguard existing jobs or enable people with disabilities to have a new workplace adapted to meet its requirements.

**Description:** Occupational aids or technical work aids must be disability-related and wholly and exclusively necessary for performing certain occupational activities or for performing other jobs in working life.

**Target group:** People with disabilities with a degree of disability of at least 50%. Young people (up to their 25<sup>th</sup> birthday) with learning difficulties or social and emotional issues which have an impact equivalent to a degree of disability of at least 30%.

**Eligibility criteria:** Financial support must go beyond the usual subsidies and be required by the claimants' disability. It includes either personal work aids or mobile technical work aids designed to make up for disability-induced functional impairments, foster existing capabilities of employees with disabilities, support and at the same time protect remaining capabilities. In addition, they should largely replace missing functions, reduce workloads and ensure safety at work. Only those costs are to be deemed disability-related additional expenses that arise from disability (causal relationship) and do not constitute cost of living or luxury expenses.

**Amount:** The amount of funding granted is at the discretion of the SMS. It varies according to the circumstances of the individual case and depends on criteria such as the degree of impairment of the person with disabilities, obligation to hire people with disabilities, investment costs, amount of disability-related additional expenses, current labour market situation (in case of pending job loss), proportion of women in the workforce as well as the company's performance. Employers of people with disabilities must contribute to the total costs in an appropriate proportion (as a rule 50%).

**Duration:** Grants are one-off payments.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** Responsibility rests with the SMS. Funding is regulated in §6(3) of the Disability Employment Act (BEinstG), Federal Law Gazette I no. 22/1970 as currently amended; framework guideline on participation in working life of people with disabilities; guideline on work and training.

**Financial resources:** Funding is provided from the federal budget and the Compensatory Levy Fund (Ausgleichstaxfonds).

### 9.2.3 Training costs

**In a nutshell:** Supporting training costs aims to safeguard existing jobs or enable people with disabilities to find a new job and meet its requirements,

**Description:** This support can be used to cover the costs of disability-related retraining, in-service training or initial and continuing training as well as orientation and mobility training inasmuch as these measures are necessary for participation in working life by people with disabilities and are demonstrably not covered by other agencies.

In-service and continuing training are retraining programmes or programmes to acquire additional skills which must significantly enhance the career prospects of those concerned or appear necessary for disability-related career planning. They include, e.g., preparations for foreman/forewoman examinations, massage training, training in the context of digitalisation, etc.

Furthermore, orientation and mobility training as well as training to acquire communication and practical life skills can be supported, provided that these training courses appear to be indispensable for starting or pursuing gainful employment.

**Target group:** People with disabilities with a degree of disability of at least 50%. Young people (up to their 25<sup>th</sup> birthday) with learning difficulties or social and emotional issues which have an impact equivalent to a degree of disability of at least 30%.

**Eligibility criteria:** In case of an ongoing employment relationship or self-employment, the disability-related costs of external in-service training or continuing training courses can be covered in full.

The programme does not support study programmes and courses at universities and universities of applied sciences, vocational matriculation examinations or academic entrance examinations, initial and continued training offered by federal or Länder entities within the framework of adult education, meetings, conferences, congresses and symposia of a purely informative nature, training courses to be completed by all employees, mere product training, skills training measures held abroad, training courses where one can assume that the career prospects of those concerned will not improve if they complete these courses as well as voluntary non-work-related initial and continued training for hobby and leisure time purposes.

**Amount:** The amount of funding granted is at the discretion of the SMS. It varies according to the circumstances of the individual case and depends on criteria such as the degree of impairment of the person with disabilities, training costs, amount of disability-related additional expenses, obligation to hire people with disabilities, current labour market situation

(in case of pending job loss) as well as the company's performance. In justified individual cases, training that is demonstrably not funded by the Public Employment Services and concerns people with a confirmed job offer can be covered. Subsidies to in-service training costs will not be granted if the employer is obliged to pay them anyway.

**Duration:** Grants are one-off payments.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** Responsibility rests with the SMS. Funding is regulated in §6(3) of the Disability Employment Act (BEinstG), Federal Law Gazette I no. 22/1970 as currently amended; framework guideline on participation in working life of people with disabilities; guideline on work and training.

**Financial resources:** Funding is provided from the federal budget and the Compensatory Levy Fund (Ausgleichstaxfonds).

#### 9.2.4 Grant for accessible training

**In a nutshell:** A grant for accessible training (Zuschuss zur barrierefreien Ausbildung) may be granted for disability-related additional expenses incurred during school and vocational training.

**Description:** Grants for accessible training can generally be awarded after completion of Year Nine in the context of school or vocational training. Training means recognised training of upper secondary level (secondary level II) and post-secondary and tertiary levels of the Austrian education system according to the guidelines of the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research.

**Target group:** People with disabilities with a degree of disability of at least 50%. Young people (up to their 25<sup>th</sup> birthday) with learning difficulties or social and emotional issues which have an impact equivalent to a degree of disability of at least 30%.

**Eligibility criteria:** In principle, this grant can be awarded after completion of Year Nine in the context of school or vocational training. As funding refers to measures designed to provide accessibility and help ensure equality and inclusion of people with disabilities, it is the obligation of the educational institutions to bear disability-related additional expenses within the meaning of §6 of the Disability Employment Act (Behinderteneinstellungsgesetz

– BEinstG) and according to the provisions of the UN Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD or UN Disability Rights Convention), Federal Law Gazette III 155/2008. Due to equality law provisions, the SMS cannot award grants to accessible training required in the context of school education.

Nor can it cover the costs of disability-related support incurred during school and classroom activities and activities added to the curriculum such as school-related events.

**Duration and amount:** In order to compensate for disability-related additional expenses, an annual grant can be paid for the duration of school or vocational training up to a maximum of 36 times the compensatory levy. The applicant must provide credible evidence for the additional expenses due to disability. If training does not extend over at least six months within one calendar year, a grant amounting to a maximum of 18 times the compensatory levy is due.

Basically, grants to accessible training can only be awarded for initial training.

An application for a grant for accessible training is valid for the entire duration of school or vocational training.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** Responsibility rests with the SMS. Funding is regulated in §6(3) of the Disability Employment Act (BEinstG), Federal Law Gazette I no. 22/1970 as currently amended; Table 45: Aids to enter or pursue an employment or training relationship; framework guideline on participation in working life of people with disabilities; guideline on work and training.

**Financial resources:** Funding is provided from the federal budget and the Compensatory Levy Fund (Ausgleichstaxfonds).

## 9.2.5 Support offered to the deaf and hard of hearing

**In a nutshell:** Financial support to deaf and hard of hearing people is provided if it serves to find or keep a job and/or is required for job-related courses and training measures.

**Description:** Sign language and speech-to-text interpretation services are designed to improve accessibility, the aim being social, educational and vocational participation of people

with disabilities. They serve to help the deaf and hard of hearing find jobs and secure existing employment relationships. Under this scheme, the costs of sign language and speech-to-text interpretation services, other support measures as well as the use of new technologies may be funded.

**Target group:** Deaf and hard of hearing people as well as people wearing CIs (cochlea implants).

**Eligibility criteria:** Within the meaning of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN Disability Rights Convention), Federal Law Gazette III 155/2008 and the equality in communication required therein, the deaf or hard of hearing may freely choose from the support services listed above the one that is most suitable provided the legal requirements are met.

Applications for support must always be submitted in writing (electronically) by the deaf or hard of hearing to the SMS before using such support. In the case of longer-term support, a cost estimate must be attached. In case of regular and repeated support for the deaf and hard of hearing, the application must always be submitted in advance.

**Amount:** As a matter of principle, the costs of support to the deaf and hard of hearing are paid in full.

**Duration:** Subsidies to support deaf and hard of hearing people are one-off payments. In case of longer-term support (e.g. for job-related training), flat-rate payments can be made.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** Responsibility rests with the SMS. Funding is regulated in §6(3) of the Disability Employment Act (BEinstG), Federal Law Gazette I no. 22/1970 as currently amended; framework guideline on participation in working life of people with disabilities; guideline on work and training.

**Financial resources:** Funding is provided from the federal budget and the Compensatory Levy Fund (Ausgleichstaxfonds).

## 9.2.6 Kick-off funding for the self-employed

**In a nutshell:** Grants can be awarded to people with disabilities who enter self-employment.



**Description:** This kick-off funding scheme (Startförderung), a kind of launch aid to finance capital investments and equipment, is intended to facilitate business start-ups which safeguard the livelihoods of people with disabilities who want to take up self-employment.

**Target group:** Beneficiary disabled persons or people with a degree of disability of at least 50% may claim kick-off funding to cover the verifiable costs incurred in establishing self-employment.

**Eligibility criteria:** Applications for covering the costs will be granted if the economic situation of the person with disabilities can be improved by self-employment, if the necessary personal, legal and professional requirements for pursuing the desired activity are met and if the livelihood of the person with disabilities and their dependant relatives is likely to be basically secured by self-employment in the long term. Unless self-employment lasts a minimum of three years, the grant must be repaid pro rata to the actual duration of the self-employment spell provided this is justifiable from an economic and social point of view. Subsidies to cover the costs of running a business cannot be granted under this scheme.

**Amount:** These grants amount to 50% of the verifiable costs incurred when entering self-employment but may not exceed 100 times the compensatory levy in accordance with §9(2) first sentence of the Disability Employment Act (BEinstG).

**Duration:** The grant to enter self-employment is a one-off flat-rate allowance.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** Responsibility rests with the SMS. Funding is regulated in §6(3) of the Disability Employment Act (BEinstG), Federal Law Gazette I no. 22/1970 as currently amended; in the framework guideline on participation in working life of people with disabilities and in the guideline on work and training.

**Financial resources:** Funding is provided from the federal budget and the Compensatory Levy Fund (Ausgleichstaxfonds).

Table 42: Work and training

Year	Participation (Total)	Disbursements in €	Disburse- ments in % of GDP
2018	2,159	2,124,520	0.000534
2019	1,783	2,259,273	0.000602
2020	1,480	1,740,073	0.000457
2021	1,327	1,834,624	0.000453
2022	1,447	3,410,094	0.000771
2023	2,028	4,699,005	0.000985

Sources: BMSGPK; 2022: exported from UeW 2022 (v10) on 31 Jan 2023 (data frozen on 01 Jan 2023); 2023: exported from UeW 2023 (v12) on 24 Apr 2024 (data frozen on 01 Jan 2024); Statistics Austria: GDP retrieved on 29 Feb 2024 (in €bn at current prices); BMWA's own calculations (GDP).

## 9.3 Support of Mobility

### 9.3.1 Grant for the purchase of a vehicle

**In a nutshell:** Grant for the purchase of a vehicle within the meaning of §2 of the 1967 Motor Vehicles Act (Kraftfahrgesetz – KFG), Federal Law Gazette no. 267/1967 as currently amended. Motor vehicles are an essential component of individual mobility for people with disabilities.

**Description:** The grant for the purchase of a vehicle aims to promote the mobility of people with disabilities to enable them to lead a self-determined life. Grants prioritise climate-friendly, eco-friendly and sustainable mobility solutions which greatly help promote participation in working life of people with disabilities.

**Target group:** Grants for the purchase of a vehicle may be awarded to people with a degree of disability of at least 50% and an additional entry in their disability passport stating that they cannot reasonably be expected to use public transport for disability-related reasons.

**Eligibility criteria:** The vehicle must be indispensable for taking up or pursuing gainful employment or vocational training or be required for job search, the claimants' disability making them permanently dependent on the use of a car for reaching their place of work or vocational training. An appropriate additional entry in the disability passport must state that its holder cannot be reasonably expected to use public transport in accordance with §§40 et seq of the Federal Disability Act (Bundesbehindertengesetz – BBG), Federal Law Gazette no. 283/1990 as currently amended. In order to avoid special hardship, this requirement may be waived in justified individual cases in consultation with the medical service of the SMS.

Grants can only be awarded if applicants are the owners or lessees (reservation of title) of the vehicle, the vehicle is registered to them, and they hold an authorisation to drive the vehicle. Furthermore, the vehicle must be needed for pursuing an occupation, being trained in an occupation or seeking a job. The applicants' income must not exceed 12 times the compensatory levy (means test), the income threshold being increased by 10% for each person for whom the applicant is required to provide custody. Grants may also be awarded if the applicants cannot acquire the authorisation to drive a vehicle for reasons of age or disability and the vehicle is mainly used for their personal transport needs.

**Amount:** Grants are graded and capped according to vehicle category and may not exceed 25% of the price plus any adaptations required due to disability.

**Duration:** Grants are one-off payments. Five years must have expired since the last grant was awarded (exceptions are made in the case of premature unusability of the motor vehicle or for disability-related reasons).

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** Responsibility rests with the SMS. Funding is regulated in §6(3) of the Disability Employment Act (BEinstG), Federal Law Gazette I no. 22/1970 as currently amended; in the framework guideline on participation in working life of people with disabilities and in the guideline on support of mobility.

**Financial resources:** Funding is provided from the federal budget and the Compensatory Levy Fund (Ausgleichstaxfonds).

### 9.3.2 Grant for accessibility adaptations and conversions of motor vehicles

**In a nutshell:** The grant aims to facilitate self-determined mobility in everyday life, in particular on the way to work, through individual adaptation or conversion of a motor vehicle.

**Description:** Individual adaptation or conversion of motor vehicles for people with disabilities refers to the modification of standard motor vehicle equipment for use and control by drivers with disabilities. In the case of severe impairments, equipment intended for controlling a motor vehicle often cannot be operated or the equipment cannot be operated in accordance with safety regulations.

**Target group:** Grants for the purchase of a vehicle may be awarded to people with a degree of disability of at least 50% and an additional entry in their disability passport stating that they cannot reasonably be expected to use public transport for reasons related to their disability.

**Eligibility criteria:** The vehicle must be indispensable for taking up or pursuing gainful employment or vocational training or be required for job search, the claimants' disability making them permanently dependent on the use of a car for reaching their place of work or vocational training. An appropriate additional entry in the disability passport must state that its holder cannot be reasonably expected to use public transport in accordance with §§40 et seq of the Federal Disability Act (Bundesbehindertengesetz – BBG), Federal Law Gazette no. 283/1990 as currently amended. In order to avoid special hardship, this requirement may be waived in justified individual cases in consultation with the medical service of the SMS.

Grants can only be awarded if applicants are the owners or lessees of the vehicle, the vehicle is registered to them, they hold an authorisation to drive the vehicle and need it for pursuing an occupation, being trained in an occupation or seeking a job. Grants may also be awarded if the applicants cannot acquire the authorisation to drive a vehicle for reasons of age or disability and the vehicle is mainly used for their personal transport needs.

**Amount:** The costs of disability-related adaptations and conversions of a motor vehicle may be covered in full.

**Duration:** Grants for accessibility adaptations and conversions when purchasing a motor vehicle can generally only be granted once and for one vehicle within a period of five years.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** Responsibility rests with the Social Affairs Ministry Service (SMS). Funding is regulated in §6(3) of the Disability Employment Act (BEinstG), Federal Law Gazette I no. 22/1970 as currently amended; in the framework guideline on participation in working life of people with disabilities and in the guideline on support of mobility.

**Financial resources:** Funding is provided from the federal budget and the Compensatory Levy Fund (Ausgleichstaxfonds).

### 9.3.3 Mobility grants

**In a nutshell:** Annual mobility grants (Mobilitätszuschuss) foster the individual mobility of people with disabilities, a key prerequisite for comprehensive participation in working life.

**Description:** Mobility grants are to cushion the disability-related additional expenses incurred by people with disabilities who are dependent on their own motor vehicle for pursuing an occupation or being trained in an occupation because they cannot reasonably be expected to use public transport.

**Target group:** Mobility grants may be claimed by the beneficiary disabled who are in an ongoing social insurance-covered employment relationship or are self-employed and have a monthly income that exceeds the monthly marginal earnings threshold defined in accordance with the General Social Insurance Act (Allgemeines Sozialversicherungsgesetz – ASVG) or who are undergoing vocational training and who have a degree of disability of at least 50% as well as an additional entry in their disability passport stating that they cannot reasonably be expected to use public transport for reasons related to their disability.

**Eligibility criteria:** See target group. People who are entitled to mobility grants according to the records of the SMS are informed of their entitlement within a special campaign (usually in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of any given calendar year) and invited to apply.

**Amount and duration:** The mobility grant is a flat-rate grant for disability-related additional expenses incurred in the context of journeys to work or vocational training (commuting), which is granted once a year.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** Responsibility rests with the SNS. Funding is regulated in §6(3) of the Disability Employment Act (BEinstG), Federal Law Gazette I no.

22/1970 as currently amended; in the framework guideline on participation in working life of people with disabilities and in the guideline on support of mobility.

**Financial resources:** Funding is provided from the federal budget and the Compensatory Levy Fund (Ausgleichstaxfonds).

### 9.3.4 Acquisition of an assistance dog

**In a nutshell:** Assistance dogs, which undergo their own quality-assured training, are intended to support people with disabilities in the event of disability-related restrictions in everyday working life. They are individually selected and specifically trained by those concerned according to their needs. Assistance dogs are used to compensate for limited or missing sensory or physical functions to help people with disabilities participate in working life.

**Description:** Assistance dogs are dogs that are particularly suited for supporting people with disabilities in everyday working life. For this purpose the dogs must hold an appropriate health certificate, have a suitable nature and undergo special training – in particular with a view to their social and environmental behaviour, subordination and specific assistance skills. Guide dogs for the blind, service dogs and signal dogs are considered assistance dogs. Therapy dogs do not come under this scheme.

**Target group:** Funding for the acquisition of an assistance dog may be granted to persons with a degree of disability of at least 50% who are blind or severely visually impaired or who, due to another disability-related restriction, require an assistance dog to increase their mobility for pursuing gainful employment or vocational training within the meaning of this guideline.

**Eligibility criteria:** See target group.

**Amount and duration:** The grant is limited to a maximum of 112 times the compensatory levy in the case of guide dogs for the blind, and to a maximum of 40 times the compensatory levy in the case of service and signal dogs.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** Responsibility rests with the Social Affairs Ministry Service (SMS). Funding is regulated in §6(3) of the Disability Employment Act (BEinstG), Federal Law Gazette I no. 22/1970 as currently amended; in the framework guideline on

participation in working life of people with disabilities and in the guideline on support of mobility.

**Financial resources:** Funding is provided from the federal budget and the Compensatory Levy Fund (Ausgleichstaxfonds).

Table 43: Support of mobility

Year	Participation (Total)	Disbursements in €	Disburse- ments in % of GDP
2018	10,037	8,059,812	0.002027
2019	10,247	8,614,276	0.002294
2020	10,009	8,049,646	0.002113
2021	10,103	7,960,669	0.001964
2022	10,174	7,952,425	0.001778
2023	10,089	8,840,450	0.001852

Sources: BMSGPK; 2022: exported from UeW 2022 (v10) on 31 Jan 2023 (data frozen on 01 Jan 2023); 2023: exported from UeW 2023 (v12) on 24 Apr 2024 (data frozen on 01 Jan 2024); Statistics Austria: GDP retrieved on 29 Feb 2024 (in €bn at current prices); BMWA's own calculations (GDP).

## 9.4 Bonus for Apprentices in Accordance with §9a of the BEinstG

**In a nutshell:** The bonus for apprentices (Prämie für Lehrlinge) is used to support the employment of apprentices who belong to the group of beneficiary disabled.

**Description:** Employers receive a bonus financed from the Compensatory Levy Fund (Ausgleichstaxfonds) for every beneficiary disabled who is employed and trained at the employer's company.

**Target group:** Companies who employ persons under §1 or §8b of the Vocational Training Act (BAG) under an apprenticeship or training relationship.

**Eligibility criteria:** Employers may file applications no later than three years from the end of the calendar year for which the bonus is requested. If the bonuses can be calculated automatically based on the available social insurance data, employers will be informed in writing that they do not need to file an application.

**Amount:** The monthly funding level amounts to the standard compensatory levy as defined in the first sentence of §9(2) of the Disability Employment Act (BEinstG), Federal Law Gazette I no. 22/1970.

**Duration:** The bonus for apprentices may be granted for the entire duration of an apprenticeship or extended apprenticeship.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** Responsibility rests with the Social Affairs Ministry Service (SMS). The bonus for apprentices is regulated in §§9a and 16 of the Disability Employment Act (BEinstG), Federal Law Gazette I no. 22/1970 as currently amended.

**Financial resources:** Funding is provided from the Compensatory Levy Fund (Ausgleichstaxfonds).

## 9.5 Project Grants – NEBA Measures

The Employment Assistance Network (Netzwerk Berufliche Assistenz – NEBA) offers numerous support measures free of charge to secure and maintain paid work in the mainstream labour market. Both persons with disabilities and young people with disabilities and in need of assistance may use these measures – see also item 9 on page 152.

Project grants are intended to enable and facilitate entry into the labour market for persons aged 15 to 65 and to safeguard existing jobs. Most of these labour market projects are managed by the Employment Assistance Network (NEBA). In addition, people with disabilities and in need of assistance are offered employment and skills training, Personal Assistance in the Workplace (Persönliche Assistenz am Arbeitsplatz) and other Austria-wide or regional programmes.



### 9.5.1 Youth Coaching

**In a nutshell:** Youth Coaching (Jugendcoaching) is a programme which has been introduced to avoid early school leaving and to reintegrate young NEETs<sup>23</sup>. Young people are supported by coaches to clarify problems and find a pathway towards continuing training.

**Description:** In the difficult phase of making decisions on their future education and career pathways, young people and their parents or guardians may need professional advice and assistance. At this critical point in time between school, training and working life, the Youth Coaching programme provides assistance in terms of career guidance and choosing suitable apprenticeships, skills training measures or alternative pathways towards integration into education/training and the labour market. Moreover, it offers individual counselling, guidance and assistance in case of personal problems.

Youth Coaching aims to open up future opportunities for young people with disabilities and for young people needing assistance and/or having multiple problems, and to empower them to make their own decisions on suitable education/training programmes after completion of compulsory school. The programme focuses particularly on young people who are obliged to continue training under §3 of the Mandatory Education or Training Act (Ausbildungspflichtgesetz – APfIG).

Support includes counselling, guidance, assistance and case management. Youth Coaches prepare an affinity and aptitude profile, conduct an analysis of young people's strengths and weaknesses, identify any needs for refresher training, highlight career perspectives and devise an individual career and development plan. Youth Coaching does not involve any concrete training, it only offers guidance and assistance.

**Target group:** Youth Coaching is targeted at all Year Nine pupils as well as under-19-year-olds outside the school system. Young people with disabilities as defined in the framework guideline on participation in working life for people with disabilities or young people with special educational needs may use this programme up to the age of 25. Young people who are subject to mandatory education/training may also turn to Youth Coaching for assistance. Youth Coaching assistance is also provided to juvenile offenders.

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<sup>23</sup> NEET: not in education, employment and training.

**Eligibility criteria:** The Youth Coaching programme offers individual advice and guidance. From the beginning, young people have a primary contact who will remain their main Youth Coach until completion of the programme. Youth Coaching is based on a modular three-stage programme composed of initial interviews (stage 1), case management-type counselling (stage 2) and assistance within a case management setting (stage 3).

**Duration:** Counselling and assistance activities depend on individual needs and are limited to one year.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** The Social Affairs Ministry Service (SMS) is responsible for implementation. The Youth Coaching programme is regulated in §6 of the 1969 Disability Employment Act (BEinstG) as currently amended; in the framework guideline on participation in working life for people with disabilities and the guideline on NEBA support options.

**Financial resources:** Project grants are financed from federal active LMP funds (BMAW), from the Compensatory Levy Fund (BMSGPK) and, in part, by the European Social Fund (ESF+).

Table 44: Youth Coaching

Year	Participation (Total)	Women	Men	Diverse	Disbursements in €	Disbursements in € of GDP
2017	49.978	21.755	28.223	0	33.213.965	0,00090
2018	55.599	24.586	31.013	0	40.455.591	0,01050
2019	60.205	26.483	33.722	0	43.629.802	0,01097
2020	53.531	23.511	30.020	0	48.060.933	0,01261
2021	59.988	26.825	33.163	0	53.585.718	0,01322
2022	67.058	30.668	36.390	0	58.780.874	0,01314
2023	70.130	32.078	37.909	143	60.206.753	0,01262

Sources: BMSGPK; 2022: exported from UeW 2022 (v10) on 31 Jan 2023; 2023: exported from UeW 2023 (v12) on 24 Apr 2024 (data frozen on 01 Jan 2024); Statistics Austria: GDP retrieved on 29 Feb 2024 (in €bn at current prices); BMWA's own calculations (GDP).

## 9.5.2 Fit for Training and prep module programme

**In a nutshell:** The objective of Fit for Training (AusbildungsFit) and prep module (Vormodul) is to enhance stability and motivation and to provide special knowledge, basic qualifications and social skills. It is designed to support young people on the path to (re)integration into the labour market, the specific aim being to help them enter an apprenticeship.

**Description:** *'We make young people fit for training'*: Fit for Training and prep module is a programme offered by the SMS intended to greatly help prevent the exclusion of young people at the transition from compulsory education to continuing (vocational) training or the labour market. Access to Fit for Training and prep module is closely coordinated between Youth Coaching and the Public Employment Service. Participation in the Fit for Training and prep module programme is conditional on previous Youth Coaching support.

The transition from school to work is challenging for many young people. Without appropriate support measures, they run the risk of failing to enter continuing education or vocational training. After ending their school education, some young people need more time and support to find their way in the labour market because they lack the essential skills for successful integration. In order to enable these young people to enjoy proper participation in the Austrian labour market in the medium term, the Social Affairs Ministry commissioned the establishment of the Fit for Training and prep module programme to provide a uniform, accessible support structure to close the gap in demand for such services before concrete proposals for training are made.

The objective is to support young people who need to brush up their educational, social and personal skills before they enrol in vocational training or continuing education. In particular, the Fit for Training and prep module programme aims to help them acquire the competences (social skills and foundation skills including new media) they require for their chosen vocational field, a field that is commensurate with their capabilities and offers the best opportunities for development based on their individual potential.

**Target group:** Fit for Training and prep module target young people:

- up to the age of 21 or their 25<sup>th</sup> birthday, respectively,
- with disabilities or special educational needs, learning impairment, social or emotional issues,
- who want to enter vocational training,
- who appear to have clear and feasible ideas for their future career.

**Eligibility criteria:** Since early 2016 the Fit for Training and prep module programme of the SMS and the PES's Production Schools have been gradually dovetailed to enhance synergies and ensure structural improvement for better quality and greater efficiency. Currently, Austria has 57 Fit for Training providers. Essentially, the Fit for Training and prep module programme is based on four pillars:

- Training modules focusing on activation (entry assistance), practice (get ready training, career guidance, etc.) and specialisation (preparation for specific vocational training);
- Coaching: the Fit for Training and prep module programme revolves around individual planning and monitoring of the young people's development process through coaching. Special coaches assist them, talk with them about the progress made and support them during internships with private businesses;
- Knowledge workshop: the knowledge workshop focuses on the acquisition of the necessary competences in terms of foundation skills or skills related to the new media;
- Physical activity: sports and exercise help participants socialise and strengthen self-confidence, develop their personality, improve discipline and reduce aggression. Usually, these activities are attractive to young people and provide opportunities for experiencing success.

At the end of the Fit for Training and prep module cycle, the coach drafts a perspectives plan for the youth concerned. The easily accessible prep modules (Vormodule – VOPs) were developed in 2019 for the purpose of gradually preparing young people for a training suited to their abilities and providing low-threshold access to regular work. Prep modules are uncomplicated 'contact points' for young people for whom Fit for Training is still too difficult or too structured. The prep module focuses on stabilisation and security, on social learning, on building trust and confidence as well as on learning how to structure a day and reduce anxieties.

**Amount:** Young people receive subsistence allowance (DLU) from the PES and, within the low-threshold prep modules, some 'therapeutic pocket money' as an incentive for participating in the measure.

**Duration:** The period of participation and number of modules depend on the young people's individual development plans and needs as well as on the learning progress recorded and the targets agreed (as a rule up to twelve months, in exceptional cases longer).

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** Responsibility rests with the Social Affairs Ministry Service (SMS). The Fit for Training and prep module programme is regulated in §6 of the BEinstG 1969 as currently amended; the framework guideline on participation in working life for people with disabilities and the guideline on NEBA support options.

**Financial resources:** The projects are financed from active LMP resources (BMAW) and the Compensatory Levy Fund including appropriations by the European Social Fund based on the currently applicable ESF Programme. While enrolled in the programme, young people receive subsistence allowance (financed by the Public Employment Service) to secure their livelihood.

Table 45: Fit for Training including prep module (DLU subsistence allowance not included)

Year	Participation (Total)	Women	Men	Diverse	Disbursements in €	Disbursements in € of GDP
2017	3.773	1.437	2.336	0	31.597.210	0,00086
2018	4.771	1.857	2.914	0	41.983.127	0,01089
2019	5.278	2.156	3.122	0	45.374.320	0,01141
2020	4.964	2.021	2.943	0	49.072.409	0,01288
2021	5.996	2.572	3.424	0	58.064.326	0,01433
2022	6.276	2.846	3.430	0	56.476.601	0,01263
2023	6.437	2.920	3.479	38	64.972.363	0,01361

Sources: BMSGPK; 2022: exported from UeW 2022 (v10) on 31 Jan 2023; 2023: exported from UeW 2023 (v12) on 24 Apr 2024 (data frozen on 01 Jan 2024); Statistics Austria: GDP retrieved on 29 Feb 2024 (in €bn at current prices); BMAW's own calculations (GDP)

### 9.5.3 Training Assistance

**In a nutshell:** (Vocational) Training Assistance (Berufsausbildungsassistenz – BAS) provided by the SMS is designed to improve labour force participation of disadvantaged youth with individual impairments.

**Description:** *'A solid basis for the future'*: The option of extending apprenticeships or acquiring partial skills opens up new opportunities for both employers and young people with special barriers to placement. The Training Assistance programme provides tailor-made support for apprentices and employers within the framework of apprenticeships or the acquisition of partial skills. It provides counselling and guidance to young people to ensure they successfully complete their training programme. It facilitates entry into the labour market for young people with special needs at the transition from school to work. The BAS scheme supports young people with disabilities and other barriers to employment, provides assistance both at the workplace and at school and ensures this training pathway's long-term viability. Suitable preparation, support and guidance are offered to enable young people to successfully complete their training.

This service has been introduced for young people with special needs who are unable to complete a 'regular' apprenticeship. New forms of vocational training are used to meet disadvantaged adolescents' individual needs. Training involves apprenticeships extended by up to two years or apprenticeships for the acquisition of only some specific skills rather than all the skills of an apprenticed trade. Trained support workers provide guidance and support to these young people to ensure that they complete their extended apprenticeship training or successfully acquire partial skills. The objective of this kind of vocational training is to enable young people with special barriers to placement to enter the labour market even if they are unable to complete a formal apprenticeship.

**Target group:** Training in the form of extended apprenticeships or apprenticeships involving the acquisition of partial skills is targeted at persons defined in §8b(4) of the BAG as well as at young people of the group defined in §10a(2) and (3a) of the BEinstG. However, these persons only belong to the target group if, after participation in Youth Coaching, they are considered eligible for programmes in accordance with §8b of the BAG that are suited to enhance their participation in working life.

Training Assistance may be claimed by young people for extended apprenticeships or the acquisition of partial skills if

- they had special educational needs at the end of compulsory schooling,
- they have no secondary or new secondary school qualifications, or they have school leaving certificates with negative grades,

- they have disabilities within the meaning of the Disability Employment Act (Behinderteneinstellungsgesetz – BEinstG) or applicable disability legislation of the Länder, or
- a counselling, guidance or assistance provider commissioned by the PES or SMS ascertains that, owing to the youth’s personal situation, they are unable to conclude an apprenticeship contract in accordance with §1 BAG.

**Eligibility criteria:** Young people are eligible for support under the Training Assistance scheme after the PES and SMS have confirmed that they belong to the scheme’s target group and after Youth Coaching has determined their vocational development potential.

**Duration:** For the duration of the apprenticeship.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** Responsibility rests with the Social Affairs Ministry Service (SMS). The Training Assistance programme is regulated in §6 of the 1969 Disability Employment Act (BEinstG) as currently amended; in the framework guideline on participation in working life for people with disabilities and the guideline on NEBA support options.

**Financial resources:** The projects are financed from the federal budget and the Compensatory Levy Fund (Ausgleichstaxfonds) including appropriations by the European Social Fund based on the currently applicable ESF Programme.

Table 46: Training Assistance

Year	Participation (Total)	Women	Men	Disbursements in €	Disbursements in % of GDP
2017	8.102	2.450	5.652	18.451.503	0,00050
2018	9.481	2.809	6.672	20.369.959	0,00529
2019	9.860	2.873	6.987	23.554.260	0,00592
2020	9.748	2.755	6.993	23.944.625	0,00628
2021	10.158	2.839	7.319	27.804.813	0,00686
2022	10.817	3.099	7.718	30.564.579	0,00683

Year	Participation (Total)	Women	Men	Disbursements in €	Disbursements in % of GDP
2023	11.061	3.169	7.885	7	0,00658

Sources: BMSGPK; 2022: exported from UeW 2022 (v10) on 31 Jan 2023; 2023: exported from UeW 2023 (v12) on 24 Apr 2024 (data frozen on 01 Jan 2024); Statistics Austria: GDP retrieved on 29 Feb 2024 (in €bn at current prices); BMWA's own calculations (GDP).

## 9.5.4 Job Assistance for Young People

**In a nutshell:** *'Pathway to jobs'*: Job Assistance for Young People (Jugendarbeitsassistentz) offers young people counselling and support to find and keep training slots and jobs, the focus being on vocational training and entry into the labour market. Job Assistance for Young People is offered as a separate project or comes as part of the Job Assistance programme.

**Description:** Job Assistance for Young People includes counselling, guidance and support for young people in need of assistance and for their employers to make it easier for this group to find jobs and to safeguard these jobs. The related services are available both to the young clients and their employers. They include dedicated assistance for successful job inclusion of young people with disabilities on the one hand, and dedicated assistance to help employers find suitable disabled workers on the other.

### Target group:

- Young people under the Compulsory Education/Training scheme and young adults in need of assistance (including those who exited from Fit for Training projects, released prisoners or juvenile offenders),
- Young people with disabilities as defined in the framework guideline on participation in working life for people with disabilities, and
- Young people with special educational needs and/or social or emotional issues.

**Eligibility criteria:** The services of this Job Assistance scheme may range from jointly analysing the situation to exploring individual career options, providing job-search support and special workplace assistance in the initial phase of an employment relationship. Another key function of the scheme, which is available both to the young people with disabilities and to employers, relates to crisis intervention to safeguard jobs at risk.



**Duration:** The period of counselling and support depends on the young people's individual needs.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** Responsibility rests with the Social Affairs Ministry Service (SMS). Job Assistance for Young People is regulated in §6 of the 1969 Disability Employment Act (BEinstG) as currently amended; in the framework guideline on participation in working life for people with disabilities and the guideline on NEBA support options.

**Financial resources:** The project grants are financed from the federal budget and the Compensatory Levy Fund (Ausgleichstaxfonds).

### 9.5.5 Job Assistance for People with Disabilities

**In a nutshell:** *'Pathway to jobs'*: Job Assistance for People with Disabilities (Arbeitsassistenz für Menschen mit Behinderungen) is intended to help disabled people<sup>24</sup> and young people (see also item 9.5.4 on page 184) enter employment or to protect them against pending job losses, and to inform them about vocational integration measures.

**Description:** This Job Assistance programme is the key instrument of Employment Assistance services available in Austria. It pursues three major goals: to safeguard and maintain existing jobs (preventive function); to help with finding a job (inclusive function); as well as to play the role of central contact for disadvantaged jobseekers and workers, employers, superiors, colleagues, etc. (communicative function). The services of the Job Assistance scheme may range from jointly analysing the situation to exploring individual career options, providing job-search support and special assistance in the initial phase of an employment relationship. Another key function of the scheme, which is available both to people with disabilities and employers, relates to crisis intervention to safeguard jobs at risk. In so doing, the Job Assistance programme has a bridging function.

Job Assistance is designed to counsel, guide and assist people with disabilities and their employers. More specifically, the Job Assistance programme is used to identify the talents and interests of participants and provide job-application support, as well as maintain contacts with employers, talk to prospective superiors and intervene in crisis situations where

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<sup>24</sup> Disabled people within this programme are people with disabilities as defined in the Disability Employment Act (BEinstG).

required. The programme is a voluntary service accessible to all disabled people and free of charge. Clients may opt for anonymous service provision.

**Target group:** People with disabilities (with a minimum degree of disability of 30% and no chances to find or keep a job without this kind of assistance) who are economically active or available to the labour market. Young people with disabilities as defined in the framework guideline on participation in working life for people with disabilities, or young people with special educational needs and/or social or emotional issues.

**Duration:** The period of counselling and support depends on the disabled person’s individual needs.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** Responsibility rests with the Social Affairs Ministry Service (SMS). Job Assistance is regulated in §6 of the 1969 Disability Employment Act (BEinstG) as currently amended; in the framework guideline on participation in working life for people with disabilities and the guideline on NEBA support options.

**Financial resources:** The project grants are financed from the federal budget and the Compensatory Levy Fund (Ausgleichstaxfonds).

Table 47: Job Assistance for People with Disabilities

Year	Participation (Total)	Women	Men	Diverse	Disbursements in €	Disbursements in € of GDP
2017	14,869	7,122	7,747	0	28,085,982	0.0076
2018	15,528	7,428	8,100	0	28,317,802	0.0073
2019	17,235	8,211	9,024	0	30,701,971	0.0077
2020	16,248	7,806	8,442	0	33,137,849	0.0087
2021	17,303	8,270	9,033	0	40,450,799	0.0100
2022	17,782	8,561	9,221	0	41,342,249	0.0092
2023	18,302	8,649	9,634	19	42,152,820	0.0088

Sources: BMSGPK; 2022: exported from UeW 2022 (v10) on 31 Jan 2023; 2023: exported from UeW 2023 (v12) on 24 Apr 2024 (data frozen on 01 Jan 2024); Statistics Austria: GDP retrieved on 29 Feb 2024 (in €bn at current prices); BMWA's own calculations (GDP).

### 9.5.6 NEBA Business Service

**In a nutshell:** *'Rethinking work – using potentials'*: The NEBA Business Service (NEBA-Betriebsservice), a tailor-made counselling and services programme for businesses that want to hire people with disabilities, was developed by the SMS at the end of 2000.

**Description:** Employers are to be won over as partners based on systematic, proactive outreach to employers, a partnership of equals, targeted networking and close relationships as well as business-friendly counselling and services. In addition, employers are to be motivated to employ people with disabilities by providing targeted information, promoting awareness on the issue of work and disability as well highlighting the added value and benefits of such a move. Regionally based NEBA Business Contact Managers are used to cater to the needs of small- and medium-sized enterprises, while special NEBA Key Account Managers are used to reach out to large enterprises and business groups to act as the first and central point of contact in each "Land" and play a key role in establishing contacts and cooperation with the PES and other major partners within the system such as fit2work and Demographic Consulting.

**Target group:** Businesses intending to hire people with disabilities.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** Responsibility rests with the SMS. The NEBA Business Service is regulated in §6 of the 1969 Disability Employment Act (BEinstG) as currently amended; in the framework guideline on participation in working life for people with disabilities.

**Financial resources:** The project grants are financed from the federal budget and the Compensatory Levy Fund (Ausgleichstaxfonds).

### 9.5.7 Job Coaching

**In a nutshell:** *'More success in the job market'*: Disabled people have greater difficulties accessing and retaining employment despite adequate training and skills because of a lack

of individual support services. Job Coaching offers direct and individual support on the job aimed at optimal and sustainable job inclusion of people with disabilities.

**Description:** Job Coaching is a means of ensuring disabled workers' long-term participation in working life through personal assistance. People with disabilities are guided by the Job Coaching scheme and receive individual training for their job. This form of support aims to foster both vocational and social skills, thus enabling disabled workers to meet workplace requirements on their own. At the same time, it will raise awareness for the disability-related needs of these workers.

In addition, Job Coaching may be used to provide support in work experience or trial programmes/get ready for work training so as to help clients early on with clarifying the prospects of and deciding about entering an employment relationship to continue training. With the introduction of Job Coaching, a particularly intensive form of Job Assistance has been made available. People with learning impairment require this kind of assistance in particular. The service is voluntary and free of charge. Job Coaching teams work in an advisory, guiding and supportive capacity. They should empower women and men with impairments to become independent in managing daily working life.

Job Coaching is a particularly intensive measure of Job Assistance: it is targeted at people with special needs due to cognitive or learning impairment or some physical disability, as well as at businesses. Job Coaches provide direct and individual assistance in the workplace, thus promoting the professional, communicative and social skills of employees. Job Coaching focuses on people with learning impairments and can be a major support tool to achieve equality. It aims to enable coached employees to meet workplace requirements independently in the long term.

**Target group:** Job Coaching is primarily targeted at

- People with disabilities and a degree of disability of at least 50% (evidenced, for example, by an official notice that they belong to the group of beneficiary disabled as defined in the BEinstG or disability legislation of the Länder),
- Young men and women with special educational needs (evidenced, for example, by a higher family allowance),
- Young people in need of assistance, and
- Businesses and companies which employ these people or are willing to hire them.

The Job Coaching scheme also supports people with disabilities and a degree of disability of at least 30% who have difficulties or are insecure in coping with daily working life and run the risk of losing their job, who need support at the beginning of an employment relationship or support in work experience or trial programmes/get ready for work training.

**Duration:** The period of counselling and support depends on the disabled person’s individual needs (as a rule six months).

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** Responsibility rests with the SMS. The Job Coaching programme is regulated in §6 of the 1969 Disability Employment Act (BEinstG) as currently amended; in the framework guideline on participation in working life for people with disabilities and the guideline on NEBA support options.

**Financial resources:** The project grants are financed from the federal budget and the Compensatory Levy Fund (Ausgleichstaxfonds).

Table 48: Job Coaching

Year	Participation (Total)	Women	Men	Diverse	Disbursements in €	Disbursements in € of GDP
2017	1,411	694	717	0	5,075,617	0.00137
2018	1,570	736	834	0	5,323,958	0.00138
2019	1,695	728	967	0	5,826,480	0.00147
2020	1,694	749	945	0	6,493,597	0.00170
2021	1,918	833	1,085	0	7,773,125	0.00192
2022	2,267	975	1,292	0	9,661,409	0.00216
2023	2,668	1,131	1,536	1	10,329,532	0.00216

Sources: BMSGPK; 2022: exported from UeW 2022 (v10) on 31 Jan 2023; 2023: exported from UeW 2023 (v12) on 24 Apr 2024 (data frozen on 01 Jan 2024); Statistics Austria: GDP retrieved on 29 Feb 2024 (in €bn at current prices); BMWA’s own calculations (GDP).

## 9.5.8 Personal Assistance in the Workplace

**In a nutshell:** Personal Assistance in the Workplace (Persönliche Assistenz am Arbeitsplatz) is granted by the SMS whenever impairments cannot be remedied by technical equipment and aids. The scheme must meet the workers' needs to ensure self-determined, self-organised and equal participation in the labour market. Workers relying on such personal assistance receive the kind of one-on-one support needed for carrying out their job or completing their training.

**Description:** Disabled people with serious functional impairment frequently have greater difficulties accessing employment despite adequate training and skills because of a lack of individual support services. They also need these assistance services to keep their job. Personal Assistance in the Workplace is intended to enhance vocational inclusion in the open labour market or facilitate successful training for people with disabilities who, owing to their disabilities, need personal assistance to ensure self-determination and autonomy in work or training.

### Target group:

- People with disabilities of working age who have a degree of disability of at least 50% as determined by federal law or who meet the criteria for claiming benefits according to the respective legal provisions applicable in the Land of residence (provisions on participation/(equal) opportunities/disability/social assistance) and who have the requisite vocational and personal aptitude for the present or intended job and are in an ongoing employment relationship under social insurance law;
- Or who are self-employed for profit;
- Or who, with Personal Assistance in the Workplace, can obtain employment under social insurance law for which they have been given a concrete perspective or who can take up self-employment;
- Or who, with Personal Assistance in the Workplace, can complete their studies or vocational training course within the legally defined period of time (including the additional period that is permissible by law for continued entitlement to government study grants), but who require personal assistance due to their impairment.
- If no degree of disability has been determined, receipt of long-term care benefits (care category 3 and higher) under the Federal Long-Term Care Benefit Act (Bundespflegegeldgesetz – BPGG) will be considered proof of eligibility as well.

**Amount:** Expenditure on Personal Assistance in the Workplace needed for being economically active is fully borne.

**Duration:** Personal Assistance in the Workplace may be granted for the duration of economic activity.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** Responsibility rests with the SMS. Personal Assistance in the Workplace is regulated in §6 of the 1969 Disability Employment Act (BEinstG) as currently amended; in the framework guideline on participation in working life for people with disabilities and the guideline on Personal Assistance in the Workplace.

**Financial resources:** The project grants are financed from the federal budget and the Compensatory Levy Fund (Ausgleichstaxfonds).

Table 49: Personal Assistance in the Workplace

Year	Participation (Total)	Women	Men	Disbursements in €	Disbursements in % of GDP
2017	510	244	266	10,388,410	0.00281
2018	526	253	273	10,101,927	0.00262
2019	566	271	295	12,309,381	0.00310
2020	582	273	309	12,461,269	0.00327
2021	611	296	315	13,438,699	0.00332
2022	633	300	333	12,900,558	0.00288
2023	652	300	352	14,243,974	0.00298

Sources: BMSGPK; 2022: exported from UeW 2022 (v10) on 31 Jan 2023; 2023: exported from UeW 2023 (v12) on 24 Apr 2024 (data frozen on 01 Jan 2024); Statistics Austria: GDP retrieved on 29 Feb 2024 (in €bn at current prices); BMWA's own calculations (GDP).

Note: For technical reasons only data of persons may be provided.

### 9.5.9 Skills training and other support projects for people with disabilities

**In a nutshell:** Skills training and other SMS support projects serve to facilitate disabled people's participation in working life.

**Description:** Skills training in companies is intended to improve the social and vocational inclusion of people with disabilities.

**Target group:** People with disabilities (minimum degree of disability: 50%) who are unemployed or available to the labour market, young people with disabilities as defined by the framework guideline on participation in working life for people with disabilities, as well as young people with special educational needs or social and emotional issues.

**Duration:** Duration depends on the disabled people's individual needs and the programmes offered, usually one year (in justified exceptional cases up to three years).

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** Responsibility rests with the SMS. Skills training projects are regulated in §6 of the 1969 Disability Employment Act (BEinstG) as currently amended; in the framework guideline on participation in working life for people with disabilities; in the guideline on skills training and employment and the guideline on other support options.

**Financial resources:** The project grants are financed from the federal budget and the Compensatory Levy Fund (Ausgleichstaxfonds).

## 9.6 Integration Enterprises

**In a nutshell:** Skills training and employment in Integration Enterprises (Integrative Betriebe) is to enable people with disabilities to participate in the labour market and become included in mainstream society.

**Description:** Integration Enterprises offer (re)entry into working life to people who cannot find jobs in the general labour market owing to their disability. Integration Enterprises get the additional expenditure required for the employment of people with disabilities refunded from the public purse, thus putting them on an equal footing with mainstream enterprises. Like other companies they must be viable and compete in the market with their



products and services. Integration Enterprises operate in various lines of business, in production and the services sector, so as to offer people with disabilities the kind of work that is commensurate with their abilities. They must provide a basic level of attendant care involving medical, psychological, pedagogical and social services. Workers employed by Integration Enterprises are subject to the General Social Insurance Act (ASVG) and to at least the pay rates determined by collective agreement. Alongside proper jobs, Integration Enterprises offer low-threshold skills training to people with disabilities as well as top-notch vocational training to prepare participants for placement in the general labour market. One focus is on in-house apprenticeship training for people with disabilities in the form of standard or extended apprenticeships. Since September 2022, participants may also change over to training for the acquisition of partial skills if it is foreseeable that they are unable to complete standard or extended apprenticeships.

A number of implementation measures derived from the study “Integrative Betriebe 2020+” (Integration Companies 2020+) have been included in the National Action Plan on Disability 2021-2030.

**Target group:** People with disabilities whose working capacity is at least half the working capacity of people without disabilities in the same job.

**Eligibility criteria:** The proportion of employees with disabilities in Integration Enterprises must be at least 60% of the total number of employees. Other eligibility criteria are defined in the BEinstG and in the guidelines which are issued on Integration Enterprises and based on this legislation.

**Financial resources:** Most of the money is made available by the Compensatory Levy Fund managed by the Federal Minister of Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection. The remainder is borne by the Länder and the PES.

**Duration:** The funding agreement is concluded for one year at a time.

**Responsible organisation and regulation:** Administration of the scheme at the federal level is provided by the Federal Ministry of Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection (BMSGPK). §11 of the BEinstG 1992, recent revision: Federal Law Gazette I no. 185/2022, and guidelines on Integration Enterprises of 1 July 2004 of the then Federal Minister of La-

bour, Social Affairs, Health and Consumer Protection as well as guidelines on Apprenticeships in Integration Enterprises of 1 Sep 2022 of the Federal Minister of Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection.

Table 50: Integration Enterprises

Year	Persons (m+w)	Men	Women	Expenditure in €	Expenditure as % of GDP
<b>2013</b>	2,107	1,456	651	34,035,817	0.011
<b>2014</b>	2,162	1,480	682	35,158,169	0.011
<b>2015</b>	2,197	1,470	727	36,774,945	0.011
<b>2016</b>	2,196	1,457	739	36,583,628	0.010
<b>2017</b>	2,311	1,531	780	36,373,861	0.010
<b>2018</b>	2,339	1,551	788	38,600,967	0.010
<b>2019</b>	2,383	1,567	816	41,547,314	0.010
<b>2020</b>	2,382	1,573	809	43,017,050	0.011
<b>2021</b>	2,478	1,637	841	45,281,143	0.011
<b>2022</b>	2,608	1,720	888	48,199,112	0.011
<b>2023</b>	2,878	1,845	1,033	55,393,043	0.12

Source: BMSGPK; Statistics Austria, retrieved on 29 Feb 2024; BMA's own calculations (GDP).

Note: the number of employees is indicated in full-time equivalents, refers to the number counted on the cut-off date (1 Jan) of the following year and includes employed workers with and without disability of the 'employment' module as well as, as of 2017, participants in the Apprenticeships in Integration Enterprises scheme (Integrative Betriebe Lehrausbildung – IBL). In 2023, this value refers to headcounts (instead of full-time equivalents) of all people with disabilities employed in integration enterprises (not only those working in the employment module) and of IBL apprentices excluding participants retained for the legally defined period (retention period); and one employed person without disabilities had an inter/diverse/fluid gender identity.

# 10 EU Programmes

EU-wide employment policy uses several channels. At a political level, they include the European Pillar of Social Rights and, due to shared competences between the EU and its Member States, Council recommendations such as those on the Youth Guarantee, on long-term unemployment and further training pathways. The EU's largest policy instrument in this area in terms of financial volume is Cohesion Policy. Of particular relevance to employment policy are the European Social Fund (ESF+), the European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) as an instrument of the ERDF (European Regional Development Fund) and the macroregional European Union Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR).

## 10.1 European Social Fund (+) / Just Transition Fund

### ESF 2014-2020

The ESF is the most important and oldest (in place since 1957) financial instrument of the European Union (EU) for social policy and for investing in people. It aims to improve employment and education opportunities as well as economic and social cohesion in the European Union. ESF funds are managed and spent directly via the Member States.

The **European Social Fund** once again made a significant contribution to Austrian labour market policy **in the 2014-2020 structural fund period**. Funds of roughly €556m, which were earmarked for Austria, were awarded as part the 'Employment Austria 2014-2020' operational programme. They were used to support measures in the areas of 'equality between women and men in the labour market', 'active and healthy ageing', 'active inclusion and improving employability', 'reducing and preventing early school leaving and promoting equality of access to quality early education and quality primary and secondary education', 'promoting equality of access to lifelong learning, increasing the knowledge, skills and competences of the labour force', 'access to employment for jobseekers and economically inactive people', 'adapting workers, businesses and entrepreneurs to change' and 'supporting crisis management in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic and its social consequences and preparing a green, digital and resilient economic recovery (REACT-EU)'.

### ESF+ 2021-2027

The **strategy designed for Austria for 2021-2027** is primarily aimed at combatting unemployment and the risk of poverty as well as strengthening employment, with a key focus being on tackling the consequences of current crises (e.g. concerning health, refugee movements, climate, etc.). The EU invests €393m in ESF+ funding in Austria, money that is managed directly by the Member State and implemented through corresponding projects, with the following key measures being supported:

### **Equality between women and men**

New approaches are intended to particularly help women improve their employment and income situation in the long term, thus contributing towards reducing income disparities and female poverty. Improving the income situation should also counteract child poverty. Childcare facilities and innovative solutions to the issue of often limited mobility in rural areas are designed to make a further contribution to reconciling work and private life. Moreover, initiatives are being developed to reduce gender stereotyping.

### **Active and healthy ageing**

In the course of digitalisation, new challenges arise, in particular for older people, which are to be counteracted. Building on the experiences of the 2014-2020 structural fund period, new advisory services are being developed to support companies in creating an age(ing)-appropriate work environment for employees – especially those aged 45 and over. The consultations with employers will also create awareness as to which areas of a company are particularly affected by digitalisation-driven changes and how digital tools and new forms of work organisation can be used in the best possible way to be intergenerationally equitable so as to increase the employment opportunities of older workers in the longer term.

### **Combatting poverty and promoting active inclusion**

People affected by poverty or at risk of poverty are supported both in labour market integration and in maintaining their employability. This approach is intended to overcome any disadvantages that may exist across generations and foster social inclusion by removing barriers and combatting discrimination. People with a very low level of employability need comprehensive measures up front to reduce barriers to placement. Such measures focus on mobilising and developing individual resources to improve people's life situation and, consequently, their capability of entering the LMP funding system, whereupon further steps

of integrating them into the labour market can be taken, such as support in developing career prospects.

As people with disability are exposed to an increased risk of poverty, the sustainable active inclusion of this group in the mainstream labour market is a key objective of the funded counselling, support and assistance measures.

### **Reducing early school leaving**

Dropping out of school or training early reduces future life and career opportunities and, in the long term, contributes to high personal risks such as health hazards, social exclusion or unemployment over the course of a lifetime. In most cases, school leaving is preceded by persistent problems regarding learning success, skills acquisition and motivation. Psychosocial problems and support that is too little or comes too late for these young people play a role as well. Measures implemented to reduce early school leaving address these problems, which occur both at school and at the transition from school to training / work, with the issue of sustainability and digital skills providing an important frame of reference.

### **Access to lifelong learning**

The introduction of new information and communication technologies is changing the world of work and new – in particular digital – skills are in demand in almost all sectors and occupations. Consequently, adults are offered counselling on education and career options by education networks available in every Land, while adult-friendly forms of education – ranging from catching up on missed compulsory education cycles to new educational programmes to improve digital skills and (further) training for people working in adult education – are being expanded.

### **Social innovation**

When looking for solutions to the problems and challenges facing society, activities are supported which are social both in terms of their objectives and their means, in particular those relating to the development and implementation of new ideas for products, services, processes and models that also meet social needs and create new social relationships or collaborations between public, civil society or private organisations, thus benefiting society and providing a fresh impetus to its potential for action.

## **Just Transition Fund 2021-2027**

The Union aims to achieve climate neutrality by 2050, an effort that will require action in all sectors of the economy. Key starting points include decarbonisation of the energy sector, refurbishment of buildings, support to industry regarding innovation and taking on a global leadership role in the green economy, and the introduction of greener, cheaper and healthier forms of private and public transport.

The *Just Transition Fund* has been set up to help tackle the social, employment, economic and environmental challenges of the transition to a climate-neutral economy in the European Union. It supports employees and jobseekers in terms of upskilling and retraining as well as jobseekers in their job-search activities. Other activities in education and social inclusion as well as active integration of jobseekers may also be areas of intervention for the fund.

Geographically, the measures implemented are targeted at regions particularly affected by economic transition. In Austria, these are regions in Carinthia, Styria, Lower and Upper Austria where more than 71,000 people are employed in greenhouse gas intensive industries. The transformation process will lead to a shift in labour skills requirements, which is expected to generate a high demand for (re)training and upskilling.

## **10.2 INTERREG Programmes – European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) and the Macroregional European Union Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR)**

The INTERREG programmes within the European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) were already an objective in the organisation of Structural Funds in the previous programming period. This structure and designation are retained for the current Structural Funds period 2021-2027 in analogy to the 2014-2020 period. As before, INTERREG is financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). ETC continues to support cross-border cooperation through common local and regional initiatives, as well as transnational and interregional cooperation programmes.

The BMAW's Directorate-General Labour Market is involved in INTERREG activities as a member in various monitoring committees as well as by 'national' co-financing. A number

of projects of relevance to labour market policy are already being implemented in the current programming period. The BMAW is a voting member in the monitoring committees of the programmes of Austria/Czech Republic (administered by the Lower Austrian state government) and Austria/Slovakia (administered by the competent Slovak regional ministry) and an advisory member in the monitoring committees of Austria/Hungary (administered by the Burgenland state government) and Austria/Slovenia (administered by Wirtschaftsagentur Burgenland, a state business consulting agency).

Of particular relevance to labour market policy was the DANUBE TRANSNATIONAL programme. Under this programme, technical assistance for implementing the macroregional EUSDR's priority area of investing in people and skills was financed during the period 2020-2022. Since the above programme expired, the new 2023-2028 edition of this project will continue to be funded from the new DANUBE REGION PROGRAMME (DRP).

This European Union Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR) is one of the EU's macroregional strategies (others relate to the Baltic Sea, Ionian/Adriatic Sea and the Alpine region) and was adopted by the European Council in 2011. 14 countries cooperate within this Strategy for the Danube region, nine of which are Member States of the European Union (AT, BG, CZ, DE, HR, HU, RO, SI, SK) and five are candidate countries (BA, ME, RS, MD, UA). Organisational cooperation is ensured by the 14 national coordinators, work contents are organised within the framework of 12 priority areas managed by Priority Area Coordinators (PACs). The Federal Ministry of Labour and Economy is the leading PAC for investing in people and skills (Priority Area 9) within the Danube Strategy.

Overcoming economic, social and welfare disparities is the actual challenge in this macroregion. As the coordinator of the 'investing in people and skills' priority area, the BMAW cooperates closely with the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education and the relevant ministries in the Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova; a cooperation arrangement that can be considered exemplary. Although the joint financial management of resources provided by the Interreg programme poses a number of administrative challenges to all those mentioned above, cooperation could be raised to a new level of intensity and quality. In particular the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine has made cooperation more difficult in recent times.

The tasks of the PACs include the organisation of meetings of the Steering Group (twice a year, 28 members), of annual stakeholder conferences (including civil society and NGOs),

as well as the provision of support in relation to programme proposals, networking and initiation of funding.



# 11 Research and Statistics

Research and statistics play a major role in evaluating and developing labour market policies. Important sources of information for research results and studies (e.g. evaluation database) and options to obtain labour market data are presented below.

## 11.1 Research

Comprehensive documentation of completed and current research projects by the Federal Ministry of Labour and Economy (BMAW) is included in the research records of the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research (BMBWF). These records, entitled 'Research funding and research contracts' (Forschungsförderungen und Forschungsaufträge), are produced every year and compile the related facts and figures for all federal agencies.

Many studies and brochures commissioned and published by the BMAW can be found on the ministry's website at [Services/Publikationen](#).

The Directorate-General Labour Market issues two other publications on an annual basis:

**Documentation of active labour market policies in Austria:** This publication provides an overview of instruments, measures, programmes, policies and evaluations of Austria's labour market policy. The documentation includes two periods of observation: an annually updated documentation of active labour market policy in Austria (Dokumentation aktive Arbeitsmarktpolitik in Österreich), which currently gives an overview of the 2015-2023 period, and a historical documentation for the 1994-2013 period, i.e. from the devolution of the Public Employment Service from federal administration till 2013. Both publications (the documentation covering the period 1994-2013 and the documentation currently covering the 2015-2023 period) are available on the BMAW website at [Arbeitsrecht und Arbeitsmarkt - Berichte, Broschüren und Leitfäden](#).

**Youth and Work in Austria:** This publication provides an overview of the Austrian education system's basic policies and approaches to prepare young people for the demands of work-

ing life, and of the current labour market and employment policies for young people in Austria. It is available in German and English on the BMAW website at [Arbeitsrecht und Arbeitsmarkt - Berichte, Broschüren und Leitfäden](#).

The **Evaluierungsdatenbank** (evaluation database) is used to evaluate and monitor labour market policy instruments, measures, programmes and policies, currently comprising more than 5,000 reports, studies, surveys, working papers from 1995 to 2023. Around one third of the database relates to studies of Austrian labour market policy and around two thirds to studies of EU and OECD countries. They have been keyworded to facilitate database searches and full text searches. The database holds both German and English texts. Roughly every two months, some 40 newly researched topical reports, studies, surveys and working papers are added to the database. Registration for access is also available on this website.

With its own research network – [AMS-Forschungsnetzwerk](#) – the Austrian Public Employment Service (labour market research and vocational information unit) provides a comprehensive internet platform to present labour market, vocational, educational and skills research activities and enhance their use. Its main features are research (e.g. full-text e-library) and practical knowledge transfer (e.g. news, tips, event calendar, method manuals, etc.). Alongside detailed online archives on research publications by Austria's PES (AMS info, AMS report, etc.), the e-library of the PES research network contains a great variety of other expert publications of national or international origin reflecting the current state of affairs in labour market, vocational, skills and social research. All the publications collected in the e-library are available as full-text documents in pdf format and can be retrieved through both a bibliographical search and full-text search function by various criteria. The editorial team of the PES research network is adding new entries to the e-library on an ongoing basis.

In cooperation with Austria's social partners, the Public Employment Service has established a Standing Committee on New Skills to help employers, employees and jobseekers prepare for new labour market trends as early as possible and in a targeted way.

AMS Vision Rundschau is another German-language publication by the Public Employment Service which addresses different labour market and skills trends to provide practical support for navigating the labour market and finding the right job.

## 11.2 Statistics

The Federal Ministry of Labour and Economy (BMAW) provides several free online databases to the general public:

The **BMAW's online labour market information system (Arbeitsmarktinformationssystem – AMIS)** contains information on the unemployed, participation in PES training courses, employment, job market, apprenticeship market, international unemployment rates and population statistics.

AMIS is composed of two different modules.

### **Module 1: Online-Datenbankabfragesystem AMIS**

This module basically allows to combine the data published by the Umbrella Association of Austrian Social Insurance Institutions (Dachverband der österreichischen Sozialversicherungsträger) on employment with the PES's data on unemployment. It also provides data on self-employment as included in the PES Data Warehouse as well as the unemployment rates published by EUROSTAT and the population data published by Statistics Austria. In addition to retrievals on employment and unemployment, AMIS offers related information on potential labour supply and rates of unemployment (national definition) broken down by gender, age and sectors. Some of the data are available in standard format tables, but also in the form of customisable search queries and time series. This database is managed by the APF team of Directorate-General III, Labour Market, in the Federal Ministry of Labour and Economy.

### **Module 2: AMIS-Tabellen**

This module includes a number of prefab tables on the current labour market and economic situation, overviews of developments in benefit claims, UI revenue and expenditure as well as LMP indicators and separate data on 'foreign nationals in the Austrian labour market'. These tables are updated on an ongoing basis depending on the availability of the underlying data. Those tables that contain monthly updated data on employment (general labour market data, young people, older people as well as foreign nationals) are updated once the final employment data of the Umbrella Association of Austrian Social Insurance Institutions are available (usually around the 20<sup>th</sup> of the following month).

Statistics on temporary work placement in a given year can be found on the BMAW website at [Arbeitsmarkt/Arbeitsmarktdaten](#).

In accordance with its statutory mandate, the PES continuously monitors the labour market and compiles periodic labour market statistics. The findings thus obtained form the basis for devising and implementing labour market policies.

Recent IT upgrades at the PES included the introduction of a detailed Management Information System (MIS). This specially developed Data Warehouse (DWH) is used by PES and BMAW staff to retrieve up-to-date data rapidly with the help of integrated analysis tools. The necessary information is collected and edited according to topics in so-called 'data cubes'. A source for statistics, the DWH system also offers a number of prefab 'standard reports'. A great variety of specific information (by sector, region, persons) is available in the standard report format on the PES's website.

Linking the internal PES data on periods of registered unemployment, benefit claims and active LMPs with the insurance data made available by the Umbrella Association of Austrian Social Insurance Institutions enables staff to monitor the entire labour market. The so-called 'career monitoring' feature (Erwerbskarrierenmonitoring) provides the kind of data needed to give detailed information on movements within the Austrian labour market. For instance, flows from unemployment into employment can be evaluated by various employer and employee characteristics.

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## Abbreviations

AIVG	Unemployment Insurance Act – <i>Arbeitslosenversicherungsgesetz</i>
AMS	Public Employment Service - <i>Arbeitsmarktservice</i>
AMSG	Public Employment Service Act – <i>Arbeitsmarktservicegesetz</i>
AMIS	Labour market information system - <i>Arbeitsmarktinformationssystem</i>
AQUA	Job-related skills training - <i>Arbeitsplatznahe Qualifizierung</i>
AST	Labour foundation - <i>Arbeitsstiftung</i>
ATZG	Part-time allowance for older workers - <i>Altersteilzeitgeld</i>
AUVA	Austrian Workers' Compensation Board – <i>Allgemeine Unfallversicherungsanstalt</i>
BAG	Vocational Training Act – <i>Berufsausbildungsgesetz</i>
BALI	Budget, labour market and benefit claim information
BBE	Providers of counselling and support – <i>Beratungs- und Betreuungseinrichtung</i>
BBRZ	Vocational training and rehabilitation centres – <i>Berufliche Bildungs- und Rehabilitationszentren</i>
BFI	Vocational training institutes – <i>Berufsförderungsinstitute</i>
BIZ	Vocational information centres – <i>BerufsInformationsZentrum</i>
BM	Training measures and financial support for training and upskilling - <i>Bildungsmaßnahmen und Beihilfen zur Aus- und Weiterbildung</i>
BMAW	Federal Ministry of Labour – <i>Bundesministerium für Arbeit und Wirtschaft</i>
BMBWF	Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research – <i>Bundesministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft und Forschung</i>
BMF	Federal Ministry of Finance – <i>Bundesministerium für Finanzen</i>
BMSGPK	Federal Ministry of Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection - <i>Bundesministerium für Soziales, Gesundheit, Pflege und Konsumentenschutz</i>
DLU	Subsistence Allowance – <i>Beihilfe zur Deckung des Lebensunterhalts</i>
DWH	Data Warehouse (of the PES)
EB	Integration subsidy – <i>Eingliederungsbeihilfe</i>
ENT	Travel-to-work subsidy - <i>Entfernungsbeihilfe</i>
ESF	European Social Fund
EURES	European Employment Service



FIA	Intensive training to qualify as skilled workers - <i>Facharbeiter-/Facharbeiterinnen Intensivausbildung</i>
FKS	Skilled workers' grant- <i>Fachkräftestipendium</i>
GB	Business start-up subsidy – <i>Gründungsbeihilfe</i>
GBPs	Non-profit employment projects – <i>Gemeinnützige Beschäftigungsprojekte</i>
GM	Gender mainstreaming
GSK	Supporting skills enhancement of those working in social services of general interest - <i>Förderung der Höherqualifizierung von Beschäftigten im Bereich soziale Dienstleistungen von allgemeinen Interesse</i>
IEG	Wage Compensation from the Insolvency Contingency Fund – <i>Insolvenz-Entgelt</i>
KBE	Subsidies to childcare facilities - <i>Förderung von Kinderbetreuungseinrichtungen</i>
KBH	Childcare subsidies - <i>Kinderbetreuungsbeihilfe</i>
KK	Course cost allowance – <i>Kurskostenbeihilfe</i>
KKN	Allowance for course-related costs - <i>Kursnebenkostenbeihilfe</i>
KOMB	Wage top-up – <i>Kombilohnbeihilfe</i>
Land/Länder	Federal state/Federal states, also: <i>Bundesland</i>
LEHR	PES subsidies to apprenticeships – <i>Lehrstellenförderung</i>
NEBA	Employment Assistance Network – <i>Netzwerk Berufliche Assistenz</i>
ÖGK	Public Health Insurance - <i>Österreichische Gesundheitskasse</i>
OPB	Subsidies to one-person businesses
PES	Public Employment Service
PVA	Pension Insurance Institution - <i>Pensionsversicherungsanstalt</i>
QBN	In-work training subsidy (national) - <i>Qualifizierungsförderung für Beschäftigte (national)</i>
SMS	Social Affairs Ministry Service – <i>Sozialministeriumsservice</i>
SÖBs	Socio-economic enterprises – <i>Social Economic Enterprises</i>
SOL	Solidarity bonus scheme – <i>Solidaritätsbeihilfe</i>
STW	Short-time work compensation – <i>(KAB) Kurzarbeitsbeihilfe/Qualifizierungsbeihilfe bei Kurzarbeit</i>
UA	Unemployment assistance - <i>Notstandshilfe</i>
UB	Unemployment benefit – <i>Arbeitslosengeld</i>
ÜBA	Supra-company apprenticeship training

UI	Unemployment insurance - <i>Arbeitslosenversicherung</i>
UGP	Business start-up programme of the PES – <i>Unternehmensgründungsprogramm</i>
VOR	Interview grant - <i>Vorstellungsbeihilfe</i>
WIFO	Austrian Institute for Economic Research – <i>Österreichisches Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung</i>

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