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DIRECTORATE FOR EDUCATION

IMPROVING SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

COUNTRY BACKGROUND REPORT FOR AUSTRIA

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GLOSSARY

ABBREVIATIONS

BDG = Beamten-Dienstrechtsgesetz = Civil Service Code

BMBWK = Bundes Ministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft und Kultur (Federal Ministry for Education, Science and Culture)

Eurydice = The information network on education in Europe by the European Commission

IBW = Institut für Bildungsforschung der Wirtschaft (Institute for Research on Qualifications and Training of the Austrian Economy)

LDG = Landeslehrer-Dienstrechtsgesetz = Service Code for provincial teachers

PA = Pädagogische Akademie (teacher training college)

PH = Pädagogische Hochschule (PH, University College of Education) (from 2007 the PAs will become PHs, getting university-like status in tertiary education)

PI = Pädagogisches Institut (in-service training institution)

QIS = Qualität In Schulen (Quality in Schools) www.qis.at (web-based quality framework)

SCHOOL AUTHORITIES

Federal ministry = ministry of the federal states (federal school authority)

Provincial ministries = ministries of the province (provincial school authorities)

SCHOOL TYPES

AHS-Unterstufe = lower level of academic secondary school,

Gymnasium = Classical academic secondary school

Hauptschule = general secondary school,

naturwissenschaftliches Oberstufenrealgymnasium = Upper-level form of academic secondary school (for science)

Oberstufenrealgymnasium mit bildnerischem Schwerpunkt = Upper-level form of academic secondary school specializing in fine arts

Oberstufenrealgymnasium mit Instrumentalunterricht = Upper-level form of academic secondary school specializing in instrumental music

Poly (Polytechnikum) = pre-vocational school

Realgymnasium = Academic secondary school emphasizing mathematics and science

Sonderschule = special needs school,

Volksschule [Grundschule] = primary school,

wirtschaftskundliches Realgymnasium = Academic secondary school emphasizing economics []

TABLES

CHAPTER 1: THE NATIONAL CONTEXT OF SCHOOLING

Q1.1 The economic, social and cultural background of Austria

1.	Austria is mostly German speaking. Austria is a federal State with a total area of 83,858 square kilometres, consisting of nine provinces (Länder). When the 2001 census was taken, Austria's population was 8,032,926, of which 1,550,123 lived in Vienna, the capital. 67% of the population lived in urban areas. A monarchy up until 1918, Austria is now a parliamentary democracy with a Constitution, established in the period between 1920 and 1929, based on republican, democratic, federal and legal principles, as well as the principle of the separation of powers. The Federal President is the supreme representative of the State, elected directly by the people for a six-year term. The National and Federal Chambers are the legislative bodies of the Republic, the National Chamber (Nationalrat) being the most important. The members of the Federal Chamber (Bundesrat) are appointed by the parliaments of the nine Länder.

2.	Commentators on Austrian society point to the strong emphasis placed on social cohesion, trust, and stability in organisational structures. In the school system, there are many consultative processes, groups, and organisations involved in decision-making. According to the School Organization Act of 25 July 1962 'it shall be the task of the Austrian school to foster the development of the talents and potential abilities of young persons in accordance with ethical, religious and social values and the appreciation of that which is true, good and beautiful, by giving them an education corresponding to their respective courses of studies. It shall give young people the knowledge and skills required for their future lives and occupations and train them to acquire knowledge on their own initiative'. The Austrian legal system guarantees general access to public schools without distinction of birth, gender, race, status, class, language or religion. Private sector schools, in contrast, may select pupils according to these criteria, although such selection is rarely applied.

3.	Austrian people usually do not move very much. It is also very unusual if a teacher who has a permanent appointment moves to another school. Due to this immobility of the Austrians, several regions have too many teachers, while other regions have too few. Nevertheless, usually teachers strongly resist moving to another region.

4.	 In Austria there is an organizational and institutional division between Church and State. Religion is taught at schools; dispensation from instruction is possible. The predominant religion is Roman Catholicism. The official language is German. The legal system guarantees the rights of local ethnic groups (Slovenians, Croats, Hungarians, Czechs, Slovaks, Roma and Sinti). This guarantee also covers their education.

Q1.2 Broad population trends

5.	The population in Austria is ageing; the proportion of young people (between 5 and 19 years) was 18% in 1999. It is predicted that in 2010 only 13% of Austrians will be aged between 5 and 19 years. This decline in the number of births has been partly compensated by immigration flows. About 10% of the Austrians are non-nationalists, most of them living in Vienna and on the Eastern border. Austria is the home of many immigrants, many of these immigrants coming from Eastern European countries and from the former Yugoslavia. These changes have created several challenges for the teachers and school heads, for example, they have to adapt their teaching to this new multiculturalism.

Table 1/1.2.   Development of Austria's population in selected age groups from 1981 to 2020 (main variant of projection) (Schmid, 2005a, p. 1, based on population extrapolation and projection of Austria Statistics, as well as analyses by the ibw)
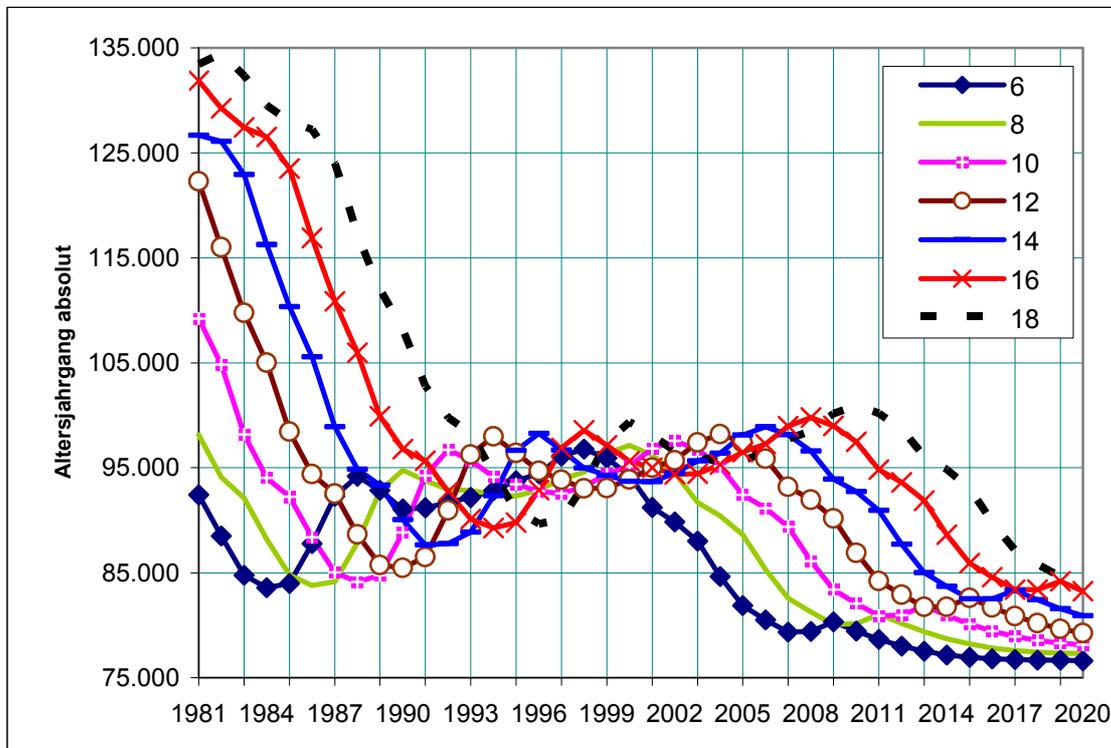
6.   This table shows that the number of children who are aged 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16 and 18 years is going to decline in the future. This trend, towards the ageing of the population is going to influence the composition of the school system. If we look at projection extrapolation and projection models we have to take into consideration that there are various models in use considering variants such as fertility and immigration rates. The different models (high/low fertility/immigration) show "for the age group in compulsory schooling that all three projection variants forecast decreasing numbers until the end of the decade and that they hardly differ at all. Yet, after this point, prognostic uncertainty sets in, i.e., the three variants expect age group numbers that differ considerably. The main variant sees a certain stabilisation of the age groups in the second decade. The high variant, however, expects a sharp rise for this period, which will in 2020 again reach today's level. The bottom variant finally predicts plummeting numbers in the age groups mentioned." (Schmid, 2005a, p. 2)

7.   Concerning primary schools, the numbers of pupils are already declining. This trend is going to continue until 2008. Concerning secondary schools, the number of pupils has already started to decline, which will not have the same effect on the different types of schools in the lower secondary level, however. Today there are about 270.000 pupils attending secondary schools, in the year 2012 there will be only 230.000 pupils attending secondary schools.

Table 2/1.2:   Trends concerning school choice including flow projection (Schmid, 2005a, p. 2)

Szenario: Fixe Schulwahl & Schulwahltrends auf Basis der Hauptvariante der Bevölkerungsprognose

Volksschule
Hauptschule
AHS-Unterstufe
Sonderschul
Poly
PROGNOSE

(y-axis: Schülerinnen absolut; values 0 to 400.000 in steps of 25.000; x-axis: 1984–2020)
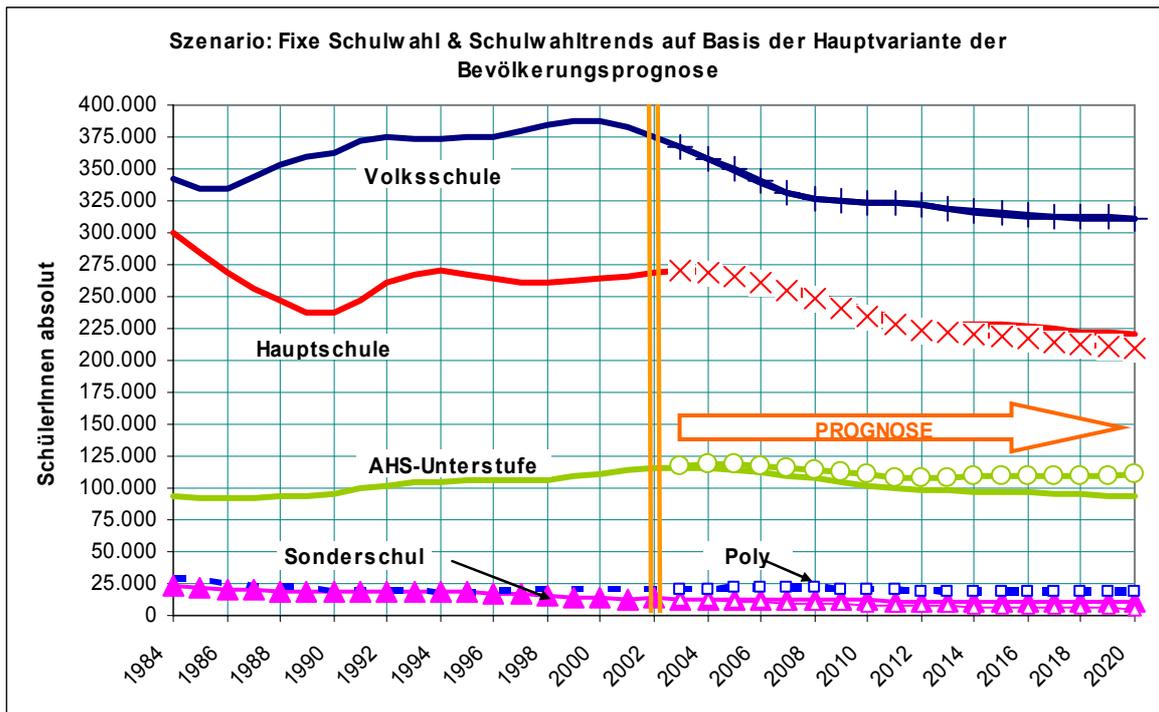
Volksschule [Grundschule] = primary school,
Hauptschule = general secondary school,
AHS-Unterstufe = lower level of academic secondary school,
Sonderschule = special needs school,
Poly = pre-vocational school

8.   The results of the projection of educational flows in table 1.2/2 shows slimmer student flows from primary schools towards general secondary schools and increasing flows towards lower level of academic secondary school (circled line compared to the fixed variant indicated by the straight line). This tendency has long been known as a trend of parents preferring to send their children to lower level of academic secondary school after primary education.

Q1.3 The main economic and labour market trends

9.   Austria disposes over a well-developed market economy and high economic status. Austria is a member of the EU and in the last years, this membership has attracted many foreign investors. Economic growth fell which caused an increase of unemployment. This rising unemployment rate has increased the attractiveness of public service occupations. The past government was seeking to introduce a more liberal, market-oriented economic agenda. It has engaged in programmes involving a reduction of the tax burden and public expenditure, as well as a rethinking of the role of the State, including more emphasis on deregulation and privatisation, reform of public administration, and tighter targeting of social benefits.

10.   Austria is facing some long-term economic challenges. One of them is globalisation and the expansion of Europe, which will involve more competition and concentration on knowledge-based and value-added sectors. Austria will also have to deal with the ageing of the population, which forces the nation to rethink and change the pension and health systems, and with the rising of migration. These changes have forced to pay more attention on the education system, instead of focusing on specific

skills; it should provide the young people with broad and flexible competencies. They should also be provided with the social skills and attitudes.

CHAPTER 2: OVERALL DESCRIPTION OF THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

Q2.1 The main structural features of the school system

The types of schools

11.   School attendance is compulsory for all children permanently resident in Austria irrespective of their nationality, and lasts for nine years. Pupils are free to choose whether to attend a state or a private school, attendance of a state school, however, is free of charge. Compulsory schooling starts on the first of September following the child's sixth birthday. Children who celebrate their sixth birthday between September 1 (start of the academic year) and December 31, may start primary school prematurely, provided they are mentally and physically mature enough to follow lessons. Compulsory schooling either starts with a pre-primary year at school or a four-year attendance of a primary school (years 1 to 4 of a primary or a special school). Years 5 to 8 may be completed at a general secondary school, an academic secondary school, a primary school (upper bracket) or a special school (upper bracket). The 9th year may in turn be completed by attending a pre-vocational school, a secondary academic school or a vocational school or college. Pupils may choose among a variety of secondary academic vocational schools and colleges. The following table presents an overview of educational opportunities in the Austrian school system.

Table 3/2.1:   Educational opportunities in Austria (BMBWK, 2003)
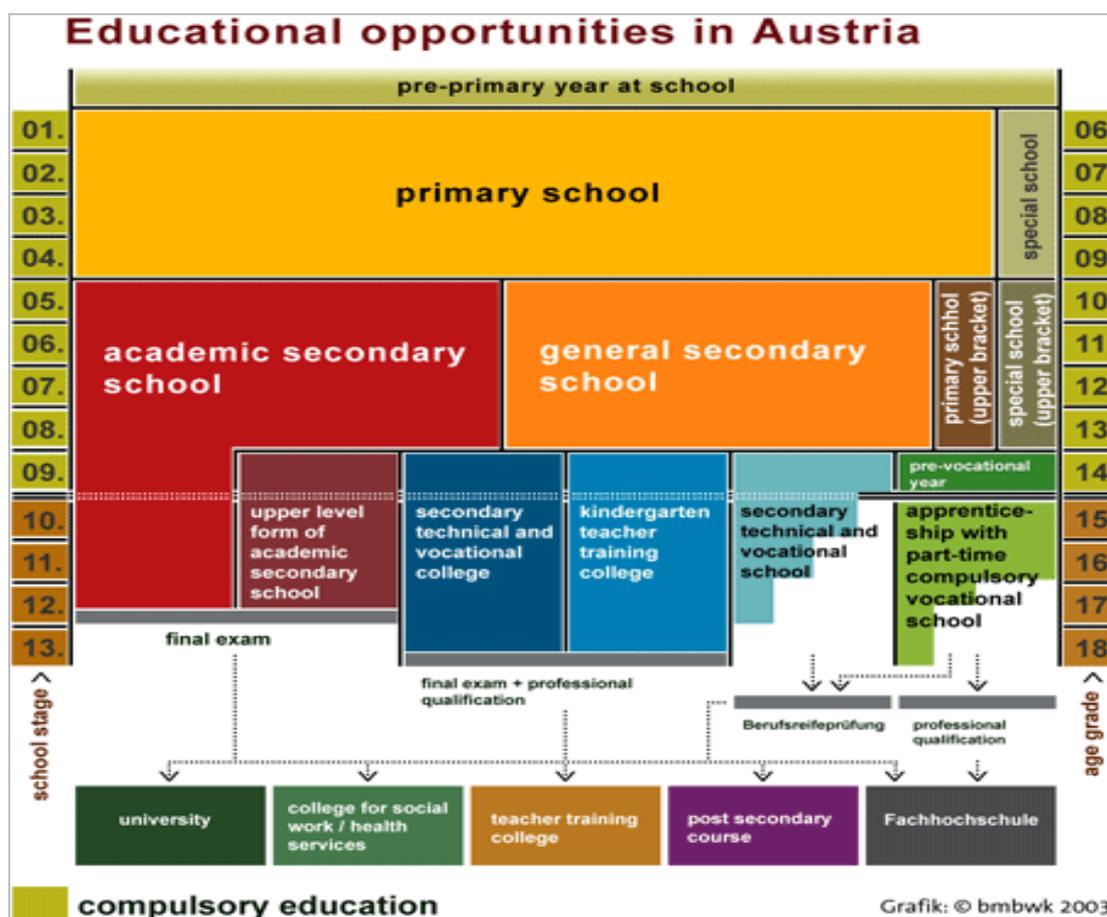
Pre-primary Year at School

12.   Compulsory schooling starts on the first of September following the child's sixth birthday. Children who celebrate their sixth birthday between September 1 (start of the academic year) and March 1st of the following year,, may start primary school prematurely, provided they are mentally and physically mature enough to follow lessons and dispose of the necessary social skills to attend school. Compulsory schooling either starts with a pre-primary year at school or a four-year attendance of a primary school (years 1 to 4 of a primary or a special school). In the pre-primary year there is no assessment of the child's performance, the annual report only states that the child participated in the non-assessed compulsory subject classes. Pre-primary classes are located in primary school buildings.

Schools Providing General Education

Primary School

13.   Primary schools [Grundschulen] are designed to provide all pupils with the same elementary education. Special attention is being paid to the social integration of children with special needs. The objective of primary schools is to provide children with a basic and well-balanced general education which fosters their social, emotional, intellectual and physical skills and abilities. Depending on the number of pupils, there is one class for each primary school year. If there are not enough pupils to set up a class for each year, children of several years may be grouped in one class. In addition to that and depending on the possibilities, primary schools are also requested to provide for a pre-primary year at school.

Special School

14.   Special schools [Sonderschulen] are designed to promote and educate mentally or physically disadvantaged children, who are not able to follow lessons in primary or general secondary school, according to their special needs and to prepare them for integration into the world of work. Special schools do constitute an alternative to integrated teaching of children in conventional schools. There are eleven different types of special needs schools which cater for the various types of mental or physical disadvantages by means of small student groups, especially trained teachers, curricula paying attention to the respective disadvantages and by means of using special methods and materials paying attention to the respective special needs. Education in Special schools covers the whole period of compulsory schooling. Upon request of the person vested with the right of education, disadvantaged children may attend an optional 10th year of schooling. And provided the school authorities of first instance and the school-maintaining body approve of it, students may even attend Special schools beyond their 10th year of schooling.

General Secondary School

15.   The general secondary school [Hauptschule] is designed to provide all pupils with a basic general education within a four-year period. Its purpose is to prepare pupils for working life and to equip them with the necessary knowledge for transfer to upper-secondary schools. Lessons in general secondary school are designed to pay special attention to the interests, skills and abilities of the individual pupils. In the 3rd and 4th year of general secondary school much attention is being paid to prepare pupils for their further educational and vocational career. Thus, the subject "careers guidance" has been introduced and practical training sessions in companies as well as educational visits to companies are organized.

16.   In order to do justice to the individual pupil's abilities and pace of work, general secondary school streams pupils in the subjects German, mathematics and modern foreign language. Transfer between the individual streams is possible not only after each year but also during the school year. Within the framework of school autonomy schools are given the opportunity to introduce their own modified curricula. By doing so, schools may specify in certain areas such as modern foreign languages, sports, fine arts, science and technology, ecology, computer science etc. In addition to that, special types of general secondary school offer orientation towards sports or musical education.

Pre-vocational School

17.   Some 20 per cent of the Austrian teenagers choose to complete compulsory education by attending the pre-vocational school [Polytechnische Schule]. This possibility is mainly used by those 14 to 15 year-olds who intend to enter apprenticeship training. The purpose of the pre-vocational school is to qualify them for transition to apprenticeship training or continuing education; special attention is being paid to the individual pupil's interests, abilities and skills. A variety of practice-oriented lessons and teaching methods based on the idea of learning by doing used for compulsory and technical subjects do not only provide pupils with basic skills, qualifications and know-how but also promote their individual abilities and their willingness to study. At the same time, the pre-vocational school offers visits to companies and part-time vocational schools for apprentices as well as practical training sessions in workshops. All this aims at preparing pupils for their future career.

Academic Secondary Schools

18.   The purpose of a academic secondary school [allgemeinbildende höhere Schule] is to impart broad and extended general education, thereby providing pupils with standard entry qualifications for university and a solid basis for more specialized education or training – in post-secondary courses, at post-secondary colleges, universities of applied sciences (Fachhochschulen) or on the job. But although the academic secondary school considers it one of its foremost tasks to impart knowledge, it also aims at providing students with numerous other qualifications and skills (e.g. working methods, the ability to co-operate, independence and responsibility). In order to provide for a broad and extended general education, there is a core curriculum which is taught in all school types up to the "Reifeprüfung"-Exam. In addition to these compulsory subjects, the individual school types provide for further specialization in certain subject areas depending on their special focus.

19.   Education at a academic secondary school lasts for an overall period of eight years and is divided into a lower (years 5 to 8) and an upper (years 9 to 12) level. The upper-level form of academic secondary school [Oberstufenrealgymnasium] only comprises years 9 to 12 and may be attended after successful completion of the fourth year of a lower secondary school. The various forms and special types of academic secondary school constitute a range of options among which students may choose. Within the framework of school autonomy and pilot projects, the individual schools may modify their curricula and develop their own specific profiles. In addition to that, upper level-students are given the opportunity to set their own priorities with an eye to their future career by choosing compulsory electives.

20.   The following types of academic secondary school exist:

- Classical academic secondary school [Gymnasium]
- Academic secondary school emphasizing mathematics and science [Realgymnasium]

- Academic secondary school emphasizing economics [wirtschaftskundliches Realgymnasium]
- Upper-level form of academic secondary school (for science) [naturwissenschaftliches Oberstufenrealgymnasium]
- Upper-level form of academic secondary school specializing in instrumental music [Oberstufenrealgymnasium mit Instrumentalunterricht]
- Upper-level form of academic secondary school specializing in fine arts [Oberstufenrealgymnasium mit bildnerischem Schwerpunkt]

21.   Admission to the first year of an academic secondary school is conditional upon successful completion of the fourth year of primary school and the pupil's performance in the subjects German, Reading and Mathematics, which needs to have been assessed as "excellent" or "good". If the pupil's performance in the subjects mentioned above has been assessed as "satisfactory" he or she can be admitted upon recommendation by the teaching staff of the primary school. If a pupil fails to meet these requirements, he or she has to take an entrance exam. Transfer to another academic secondary school is possible, transfer to another school type, however, is conditional upon an entrance exam which covers the areas not included in the entrance exam of the previous school. Transfer from a general secondary school to a academic secondary school without having to do an entrance exam is possible if the student has either attended set I in the subjects German, mathematics and foreign language and has, moreover, obtained the mark "satisfactory" or a better one in all the other subjects or if he/she has completed the respective general secondary school year with distinction.

22.   Upon completion of the fourth year of a general secondary school students may transfer to an upper-level form of academic secondary school without having to do an entrance exam upon the condition that they have either successfully completed set I in the subjects German, mathematics and foreign language or that they have obtained the mark "good" or a better one in these subjects and "satisfactory" or a better one in all the other compulsory subjects or that they have completed the respective year with distinction in set II.

23.   The "Reifeprüfung"-Certificate is a school-leaving certificate which provides access to studies at institutes of higher education. The "Reifeprüfung"-Exam puts emphasis on reality-oriented studying, independent working, interdisciplinarity and on foreign languages. The subjects in which the students have to sit an exam differ according to the school type. Each student, however, has to do a written exam in the core subjects of German, mathematics and foreign language. Students who opt for a fourth written exam only have to do three oral exams, all others have to do four. In addition to that, special attention is being paid to the students' individual interests providing them with the opportunity to choose among various types of written and oral exams. Instead of doing a fourth written exam students may also choose to do a written project in the first semester of the eighth year. This written project will be discussed in the course of the oral "Reifeprüfung"-Exam and is supposed to prepare students for university-like working methods. The oral exam specializing in a particular subject area either comprises the combination of a compulsory subject with a deepening compulsory elective or the combination of two related compulsory subjects. The student is free to choose the subject area. In accordance with his/her teacher s/he may also decide on the field of the specialized question asked in each oral exam; as for the core question the focus, however, remains on the student's sound knowledge in the respective subject.

Apprenticeship training (dual system)

24.   In Austria apprenticeship training takes places at two different sites: company-based training of apprentices is complemented by compulsory attendance of a part-time vocational school for apprentices [Berufsschule]. Thus, apprenticeship training is also referred to as "dual vocational training system" or as "dual system". Apprentices may only be trained in the legally recognized apprenticeship trades. These skilled trades (presently approximately 240) are included in the list of apprenticeship trades [Lehrberufsliste] published by the Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs and Labour in co-operation with the Federal Ministry of Social Security and Generations. Moreover, there are 14 legally recognized apprenticeship trades in the agriculture and forestry sector which are not included in the list.

25.   Apprenticeship training lasts two to four years, in most cases, however, three years. In case of accreditation of other educational pathways (e.g. vocational schools, vocational training abroad) the period of apprenticeship may be reduced. Moreover, the period of apprenticeship training may also be reduced for students holding certain qualifications. This especially benefits holders of the "Reifeprüfung"-Certificate for it increases their choice and makes it easier for them to find employment. Training for several occupations at the same time is possible provided certain requirements are met. Education in part-time vocational schools for apprentices may take on the following organizational forms:

- day-release system with courses running for a complete academic year, apprentices attend school for a minimum of one full or two half days a week
- block-release system with courses lasting for a minimum of eight or four weeks per year
- seasonal-release system, depending on the occupational sector classes may be held during a certain season only

26.   The contract between the employer and the apprentice ends automatically after the stipulated period of time. At the end of apprenticeship training each apprentice may decide whether or not to take the Apprenticeship Leave Exam [Lehrabschlussprüfung]. This exam tests whether the apprentice has acquired the practical skills and qualifications relevant to his occupation and whether he is able to properly perform the tasks characteristic to the apprenticeship trade. The Apprenticeship Leave Exam is divided into a practical and a theoretical part and consists of a written and an oral exam.

Upper secondary vocational schools and colleges

General Information on Secondary Vocational Schools and Colleges

27.   For the last two decades secondary vocational schools and colleges have been experiencing a steady rise in student numbers. This is partly due to the well-balanced curriculum they offer and which comprises general education and technical theory in the respective fields as well as practical training (compulsory work placements varying from school to school), and partly to the variety of educational possibilities and fields of specialization. There are different organizational forms of secondary vocational schools and colleges which last from three to five years – vocational schools lasting either for three or four years and vocational colleges lasting for five years. They may either be organized as full-time schools to be attended after grade 8 of compulsory education (secondary vocational schools and colleges), as full-time schools to be attended after the "Reifeprüfung"-Exam (post-secondary courses) or as evening classes (for people under employment). The curricula of secondary vocational schools and colleges in Austria include compulsory work placement periods in the industry, the purpose of which is the practical application of knowledge and skills acquired in the various theory lessons and during training periods in workshops, labs, kitchens, etc.

Work placements in schools and colleges for occupations in the business sector are optional. Depending on the respective school type, compulsory work placement periods may cover 4 to 24 weeks. Apart from general education the focus of secondary vocational schools and colleges is on initial vocational training. Upon completion of these schools and colleges graduates may either immediately enter the world of work or go for further education – depending on the respective educational level.

28.   Admission to secondary vocational schools and colleges presupposes successful completion of grade 8 of compulsory education. Depending on the school type, admission is also made conditional upon the assessment of the student's performance in certain subjects and on entrance exams. Some types of vocational schools and colleges also require an aptitude test.

29.   After having worked in their respective fields for a period of at least 6 years and upon having written a paper on a subject matter in the relevant field and subsequently having passed an exam held before a committee, graduates of colleges for engineering or colleges for agriculture and forestry may apply for the conferment of the title "Diplom-HTL-Ingenieur" or "Diplom-HLFL-Ingenieur".

There are vocational schools and colleges for the following areas:

Schools and colleges for engineering

30.   Secondary vocational schools for engineering, arts and crafts [gewerbliche, technische und kunstgewerbliche Fachschulen] usually run for 4 years. They aim at providing students with the technical knowledge and skills necessary for the respective occupations. Colleges for engineering last five years and provide for very intensive education (39 hours per week). During the first two years the emphasis is on general education and the imparting of scientific and technical basics. After the second year students may further specialize within the respective area. After having worked in their respective fields for a period of 2 years, graduates of colleges for engineering qualify for self-employment in various trades. And after having worked in their respective fields for a period of 3 years, they may apply to the Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs for conferment of the occupational title "Ingenieur".

Schools and colleges of business administration

31.   Education at secondary schools and colleges for occupations in the business sector comprises business subjects (applied economics, accounting, business computing, word processing, etc.) and general subjects (German, history, biology, mathematics, etc.). Quite some emphasis is also put on foreign languages, to be more precise on English, and in colleges for business administration also on a second modern foreign language which the student may choose out of the range of offered foreign languages. Apart from the necessary basic language training the focus is on business vocabulary, and special attention is being paid to communication skills in the foreign language. Graduates of schools and colleges for occupations in the business sector are qualified for white-collar jobs in commercial and administrative branches.

Schools and colleges for tourism

32.   Secondary schools for tourism [Schulen für Tourismus] qualify students for jobs in travel agencies as well as in tourism organizations and other services sectors. Students of secondary schools for hotel and catering [Hotelfachschule] may choose one of the following special foci: second foreign language, catering or sports. These schools qualify for jobs in the hotel and catering industry. Colleges for tourism [Höhere Lehranstalten für Tourismus] offer an additional choice in the following areas: third

foreign language, languages and business, hotel management, tourism management and cultural entertainment.

Schools and colleges for fashion and clothing

33.   Apart from general subjects, secondary schools and colleges for fashion and clothing [Schulen für Mode und Bekleidungstechnik] also offer type-specific subjects like production planning and operational organization, textile technology, design and fashion drawing, pattern making, grading and modelling with CAD, technology of garment manufacturing machines, workshop and production techniques. The colleges offer the following special foci: clothing industry, fashion design and marketing while secondary schools for fashion and clothing offer tailoring.

Schools and colleges of social and services industries

34.   Apart from broad general education, education in secondary schools and colleges for occupations in the social and services sector [humanberufliche Schulen] also comprise business studies, theoretical and technical theory in the respective area as well as compulsory work placements, the purpose of which is to prepare students for working life. Much emphasis is also put on career-related language instruction. The secondary schools and colleges for occupations in the social and services sector comprise courses in the following areas: service industries management, tourism, fashion and clothing and social occupations.

Schools and Colleges of Management and Service Industries

35.   Secondary schools for occupations in the service industries management [Fachschule für wirtschaftliche Berufe] put the main emphasis on a second foreign language, nutrition and business management, business organization and industrial management, human ecology, social services and health care and cultural tourism. Colleges for occupations in the service industries management [Höhere Lehranstalten für wirtschaftliche Berufe] offer a third foreign language, foreign languages and business, ecology, nutrition and business management, business organization and industrial management, human ecology, social administration, social services and health care and cultural tourism. Educational contents: general and business subjects as well as type-specific subjects.

Schools and colleges for agriculture and forestry

36.   Graduates of colleges for agriculture and forestry [höhere land- und forstwirtschaftliche Schulen] are to be provided with the relevant up-to-date scientific and technical know-how and skills which qualify them for managerial positions in the agriculture and forestry sector as well as in related fields. Graduates are to be open to the concerns of people in rural areas as well as to the global concerns of mankind, they are to welcome the principles of democracy and to have a sound understanding of the historical, cultural, economic and social aspects of the European Union and its Member States. Courses are running for three, four or five years.

Private Schools

37.   The Austrian Constitution lays down the right to establish private schools. Most private schools are run by the churches or special interest groups (chambers). There are two basic types of private schools: those that teach the official curriculum and those that have their own curriculum The amount of support given to private schools depends in large part on who runs them. Those run by an officially recognised church can claim to have their teaching staff paid by the State. These teachers remain federal employees (at intermediate and upper secondary schools/colleges) or provincial employees (in compulsory education). Private schools that are not run by an officially

recognised church cannot claim to have their teaching staff paid by the State. On the basis of a private contract, these schools may be treated in the same way as those run by an officially recognised church. All private schools may apply to the Federal Ministry for extraordinary expenses on the basis of a private contract, for example, for building costs.

The types of personnel working in schools

School Administrative and/or Management Staff

38.   The school head is the person in charge of a school, all teachers and other staff report to him or her. He or she is responsible for the running of the school and the cooperation between teachers, parents and pupils. The school head has to advise the teachers and to monitor the performance of the pupils. Further duties of the school head are laid down in the Civil Service Code and the Province Teacher Service Code.

39.   At academic secondary schools, a permanent deputy, usually a teacher of his or her school, assists the school head. The teaching responsibility of this permanent deputy is reduced between 20 and 70%, depending on the size of the school.

40.   Department heads exist in the schools and colleges for engineering, in schools of agriculture and forestry, and in teacher and supervisory staff training institutions. They have different functions; these functions depend on the school type. In vocational schools, in schools of agriculture and forestry, and in the pedagogical academies, which belong to the teacher and supervisory staff training institutions, department heads are in charge of a specialist department installed at the school. They report to the school head.

41.   Subject heads are installed at vocational schools, which are not divided into departments. They are in charge of the theoretical and practical vocational subjects. Like department heads, they have to fulfil a teaching assignment, which varies according to the size of the school. Department heads and subject heads are superiors for the teaching staff. Since both positions are management-level functions, the same appointment procedures as for school heads apply.

42.   At the medium-level, vocational school and the secondary vocational college construction-yard-managers and workshop managers are responsible for the direction of construction-yards and -workshops, which give practical vocational training to students. They have to handle day-to-day operations, to organise workshops and they are responsible to provide the school with all necessary materials. They do not act as superiors for teachers; their teaching responsibility varies according to the size of the school.

Staff involved in Monitoring Educational Quality

43.   School heads are the superiors of all teachers and they are responsible for monitoring and inspecting teaching and learning. They have to act as advisors and mentors; furthermore, they have to assure themselves regularly about the quality of teaching.

44.   Austria's education system is characterised by a long tradition of school inspection. The Federal School Inspection Act establishes the school inspectorate. It is conducted by school inspection officials - province school inspectors, district school inspectors, subject inspectors, and by teachers upon whom inspection duties have been conferred.

45.   Individual school inspection officials are usually appointed for specific school types (e.g. academic secondary schools, secondary vocational schools and colleges, general compulsory schools, compulsory vocational schools) and they are either responsible for an entire province or a school district. School inspectors look at the quality of teaching and the implementation of administrative tasks. After the inspection a meeting between the school inspectors and the teachers takes place, the school leader can also attend this meeting. The school inspection ends with a meeting of the inspectors and the inspected teachers, which the school head may attend. In most cases, the school inspectors act as advisors and mentors. It is also a duty of the school inspectors to look at all activities of the school leader and the teachers; they also look at the environment and equipment of the individual schools.

The overall size and composition of the school system

The following table gives an overview of the age groups in the Austrian population to set the overall context for the tables to follow.

Table 4/2.1:   Austrian population in age groups (BMBWK, 2006, p. 10)

Bevölkerung in Österreich / *Austria's population*

Wohnbevölkerung[1] nach Altersgruppen / *Resident population[1] by age groups*

Alter / Age	gesamt / total	weiblich / female	männlich / male
Gesamt[2] / *Total*[2]	8,073.432	4,146.739	3,926.693
0 - 5 Jahre / *Years:*	477.408	232.424	244.984
6 - 14 Jahre / *Years:*	843.199	411.264	431.935
15 - 24 Jahre / *Years:*	988.140	485.457	502.683
25 - 64 Jahre / *Years:*	4,524.878	2,271.183	2,253.694
65 und älter / *65 and older:*	1,239.807	746.411	493.397

1 Personen in Privathaushalten inklusive Präsenz- und Zivildiener. / *Persons in private households including persons in military and alternative service.*
2 Darunter mit ausländischer Staatsbürgerschaft: 753.000. / *Of which foreigners: 753.000.*

The following table presents an overview of the number of pupils and students in the different types of schools available in the Austrian school system.

Table 5/2.1:   Children, pupils and students, 2005 (BMBWK, 2006, p. 11)

Kinder, Schüler/innen und Studierende[1], 2005 / Children, pupils and students[1], 2005	gesamt total	weiblich female	männlich male
Kindergarten / *Kindergarten*	198.652	97.135	101.517
Allgemein bildende Pflichtschulen[2] / *Compulsory schools[2]*	669.388	317.698	351.690
Allgemein bildende höhere Schulen / *Academic secondary schools*	197.418	106.607	90.811
Berufsbildende Pflichtschulen (Lehre) / *Vocational schools for apprentices*	124.983	42.033	82.950
Berufsbildende mittlere Schulen / *Intermediate technical and vocational schools*	58.847	28.957	29.890
darunter mittlere Lehrer bildende Schulen / *of which intermediate schools for teacher training*	4.112	1.179	2.933
Berufsbildende höhere Schulen / *Higher technical and vocational colleges*	140.949	74.659	66.290
darunter höhere Lehrer bildende Schulen / *of which higher colleges for teacher training*	8.889	8.506	383

1 Ohne Schulen und Akademien des Gesundheitswesens. / *Without schools and post-secondary colleges for the medical services.*
2 Allgemein bildende Pflichtschulen: Volksschulen, Hauptschulen, Sonderschulen und Polytechnische Schulen.
Compulsory schools: primary schools, lower secondary schools, special schools and pre-vocational schools.

46.   In Austria, about 70% of pupils who attended a primary school go to a general secondary school, about 30 % attend an academic secondary school, which varies regionally. Particularly Vienna has some districts where the number of pupils attending academic secondary schools is far higher. In remote rural areas, almost 100% of the student population attends general secondary school.

The following table presents an overview of the number of graduates (male and female) from the different types of schools.

Table 6.2.1: Graduates (BMBWK, 2006, p. 13)

Absolvent/inn/en[1], 2004 / Graduates[1], 2004	gesamt total	weiblich female	männlich male
Allgemeine Schulpflicht / *Compulsory years*	100.625	50.623	50.002
Allgemein bildende höhere Schulen / *Academic secondary schools*	16.113	9.504	6.609
Berufsbildende Pflichtschulen (Lehre) / *Vocational schools for apprentices*	36.938	13.436	23.502
Berufsbildende mittlere Schulen / *Intermediate technical and vocational schools*	16.017	7.936	8.081
darunter mittlere Lehrer bildende Schulen / *of which intermediate schools for teacher training*	3.948	1.121	2.827
Berufsbildende höhere Schulen / *Higher technical and vocational colleges*	23.032	12.483	10.549
darunter höhere Lehrer bildende Schulen / *of which higher colleges for teacher training*	1.710	1.637	73

1 Ohne Schulen und Akademien des Gesundheitswesens; Schulen: Schüler/innen in Abschlussklassen, Schuljahr 2004/05. / *Without schools and post-secondary colleges for the medical services; schools: pupils in final year classes, year 2004/05.*

The following table presents an overview of the schools, classes and pupils/students in the different types of schools available in the Austrian school system.

Table 7/2.1:   Schools, classes and pupils/students by type of school, school year 2004/05 (BMBWK, 2006, p. 12)

Schulen, Klassen und Schüler/innen nach Schularten, Schuljahr 2004/05
Schools, classes and pupils by type of school, school year 2004/05

Schulart[1] / Type of school[1]	Schulen[2] Schools[2]	Klassen Classes	Schüler/innen / Pupils gesamt total	davon weiblich of which female
Allgemein bildende Schulen / General schools	**5.244**	**40.865**	**866.806**	**424.305**
Allgemein bildende Pflichtschulen / Compulsory schools	4.917	32.771	669.388	317.698
Volksschulen / Primary schools	3.324	18.271	364.900	177.268
Hauptschulen / Lower secondary schools	1.170	11.589	269.418	127.646
Sonderschulen / Special schools	385	1.975	13.301	4.808
Polytechnische Schulen / Pre-vocational year	294	936	21.769	7.976
Allgemein bildende höhere Schulen / Academic secondary schools	327	8.094	197.418	106.607
Allgemein bildende höhere Schulen, Langform / Academic secondary schools with full 8/9 year programmes	267	6.893	170.526	90.244
AHS – 1. bis 4. Klasse (Unterstufe) / Academic secondary schools first stage	266	4.323	116.283	60.279
AHS – 5. bis 8./9. Klasse (Oberstufe) / Academic secondary schools second stage	256	2.570	54.243	30.143
Oberstufenrealgymnasien, Aufbaugymnasien und Aufbaurealgymnasien / Separate second stage, add-on courses	89	1.029	22.500	13.741
Allgemein bildende höhere Schulen für Berufstätige / Adult education programmes	8	140	3.659	2.085
Berufsbildende Schulen / Technical and vocational schools	**666**	**13.211**	**311.925**	**136.070**
Berufsbildende Pflichtschulen (Lehre) / Vocational schools for apprentices	175	5.520	124.983	42.033
Berufsbildende mittlere Schulen / Intermediate technical and vocational schools	436	2.320	54.735	27.778
Gewerbliche, technische und kunstgewerbliche / Technical, trades, arts and crafts	130	798	17.221	3.242
Kaufmännische / Business	109	530	13.371	7.893
Wirtschaftliche Berufe / Management and service industries	94	421	10.084	8.869
Sozialberufliche / Social care	15	64	1.704	1.583
Land- und forstwirtschaftliche / Agriculture and forestry	103	507	12.355	6.191
Berufsbildende höhere Schulen / Higher technical and vocational colleges	296	5.366	132.060	66.153
Gewerbliche, technische und kunstgewerbliche / Technical, trades, arts and crafts	107	2.433	59.437	14.286
Kaufmännische / Business	108	1.775	43.469	26.704
Wirtschaftliche Berufe / Management and service industries	83	1.023	25.694	23.650
Land- und forstwirtschaftliche / Agriculture and forestry	13	135	3.460	1.513
Lehrer und Erzieher bildende Schulen / Teacher training colleges	**67**	**490**	**26.569**	**20.410**
Mittlere Lehrer bildende Schulen / Intermediate schools for teacher training	4	143	4.112	1.179
Höhere Lehrer bildende Schulen / Higher colleges for teacher training	35	347	8.889	8.506
Alle Schulen[1,2] / Total for all schools[1,2]	**5.960**	**54.566**	**1,205.300**	**580.785**

1 Ohne Schulen des Gesundheitswesens; ohne Akademien. / Without schools for the medical services; without post-secondary colleges.
2 Schulen, an denen mehrere Schularten eingerichtet sind, sind in den Summenzeilen nur einmal gezählt. / Calculation of row sums count schools that offer several types of schooling only once.

Q2.2 The availability of public and private resources for schooling

47.   In Austria, considerable resources are provided for education. Most of these expenditures are funded from public sources.

48.   In 2001, public spending on education amounted to approx. EUR 12.3 billion or 5.8% of the total gross domestic product. In 2002, federal funds allocated to school instruction, tertiary education and scientific research accounted for 13.7% of the total federal budget.

Budget indices according to the Federal Draft Budget 2002 – Expenditure (in EUR million)

Table 8/2.2:   Budget indices in € millions

General compulsory schools	2,674.1
Academic secondary schools	981.6
Vocational schools	1,102.1

49. The public funding of schools comes from different levels of government, from the provincial and from the federal level. Most teachers – also provincial teachers and private school teachers – are paid from the federal budget. The amount of these federal funds varies according to the population size and other characteristics, for example, wealth and population structure, of the provinces.

There are two other types of public subsidies:

- All public schools may get public subsidies for their expenditures – it is left to the public authorities to decide over these subsidies.

- Private schools whose educational profile is officially recognized as being equivalent to those of the public sector. If there is a demand school types in a region the government usually cooperates with those schools – the government may subsidize up to 1/3 of the expenditure. This happens based on a temporary contract.

50. Additionally the transport of the children to and from school is usually provided free. Teaching materials (text books) are to a certain extent subsidised by the State and school meals have to be paid for. The variety of different school types provides the parents with a great choice. They might also choose a private school for their children, but to be admitted to this school regular fees have to be paid.

The legal basis for the funding of private schools is in the Act on private schools.
A distinction between private schools run by the church and other private schools:

51. The Austrian Constitution lays down the right to establish private schools. Most private schools are run by the churches or special interest groups (chambers). There are two basic types of private schools: those that teach the official curriculum and those that have their own curriculum. The amount of support given to private schools depends in large part on who runs them. Those run by an officially recognised church can claim to have their teaching staff paid by the State. These teachers remain federal employees (at intermediate and upper secondary schools/colleges) or provincial employees (in compulsory education). Private schools that are not run by an officially recognised church cannot claim to have their teaching staff paid by the State. On the basis of a private contract, these schools may be treated in the same way as those run by an officially recognised church. All private schools may apply to the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture for a subsidy for extraordinary expenses on the basis of a private contract, for example, for building costs.[1]

Q2.3 The basic governance of and framework for the school system

52. In Austria, education has always been a most sensitive area, heavily disputed among political decision-makers. This explains the casuistic distribution of responsibilities between different bodies and entities. The existing legal framework therefore renders attempts at amending education laws very difficult. The Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture (*Bundesministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft und Kultur,* BMBWK[2]) has overall responsibility for primary and secondary education, including general education and vocational schools. The work

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[2] This study still contains the old name of the joint ministry before the last elections, which will change after the separation into two ministries (education and culture and science and research).

experience part of initial vocational training is the responsibility of the Federal Ministry of Labour and Economic Affairs. As is the case with government administration in general, responsibilities for legislation and implementation in school education are divided between the Federation and the *Länder*.

This division is made as follows:

- The Federation has exclusive responsibility for legislation and implementation with regard to the academic secondary school and the entire field of general upper secondary education, intermediate and upper secondary vocational education and training for kindergarten teaching staff and non-teaching supervisory staff, and with regard to the conditions of service and staff representation rights of teachers at these schools/colleges.
- The Federation is responsible for legislation, and the individual *Länder* are responsible for implementation with regard to the conditions of service and staff representation rights of teachers at public sector schools of compulsory education.
- The Federation is responsible for basic legislation, and the *Länder* are responsible for issuing and implementing laws with regard to the organizational structure of federal education authorities in the *Länder* and the external organization of public sector schools of compulsory education. External organization includes the development, construction, maintenance and approval of schools, but also the establishment of pupil numbers per class and teaching periods. All basic legislation has a framework character and is expressed through implementing laws promulgated by the *Landtage*, the legislative bodies at *Länder* level.
- The *Länder* are responsible for legislation and implementation as, for example, with regard to nursery schools.

53.   Individual schools have little autonomy; they have some budgetary autonomy and they are allowed to adapt the curricula to their needs within limited boundaries. The teachers are responsible for the interpretation of the curricular guidelines.

54.   Consultations play an important part in the Austrian school system. Through the School Education Act of 1974, the stakeholders – teachers, parents, students and the community – are invited to participate in decision-making. Teacher unions, organisations, and groups have a strong influence on decision-making. Since the school year 1993/94, the 14th amendment to the School Organization Act has empowered the respective school partnership body (*Schulgemeinschaftsausschuss* [SGA]: School Committee comprising teachers', pupils' and parents' representatives or *Schulforum*: School Forum in compulsory schools in which only teachers' and parents' representatives are involved) to issue its own curricular regulations autonomously by a two-thirds vote. This means that main focal points may be chosen within a given framework and schools can develop their own profile. Provisions governing school autonomy at pre-vocational schools enable a flexible response to the vocational interests of pupils and the respective demands of the particular region.

The following tables show the financial flows in compulsory education at the different levels and for the different types of schools.

Table 9/2.3: Financial flows in compulsory education
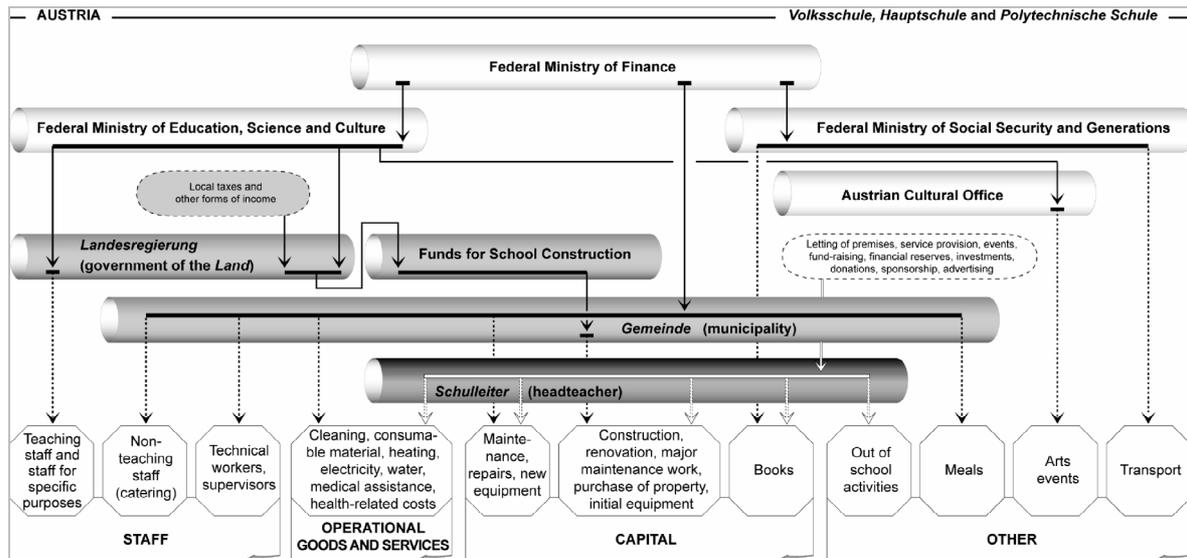
(Eurydice, 2001, p. 38)
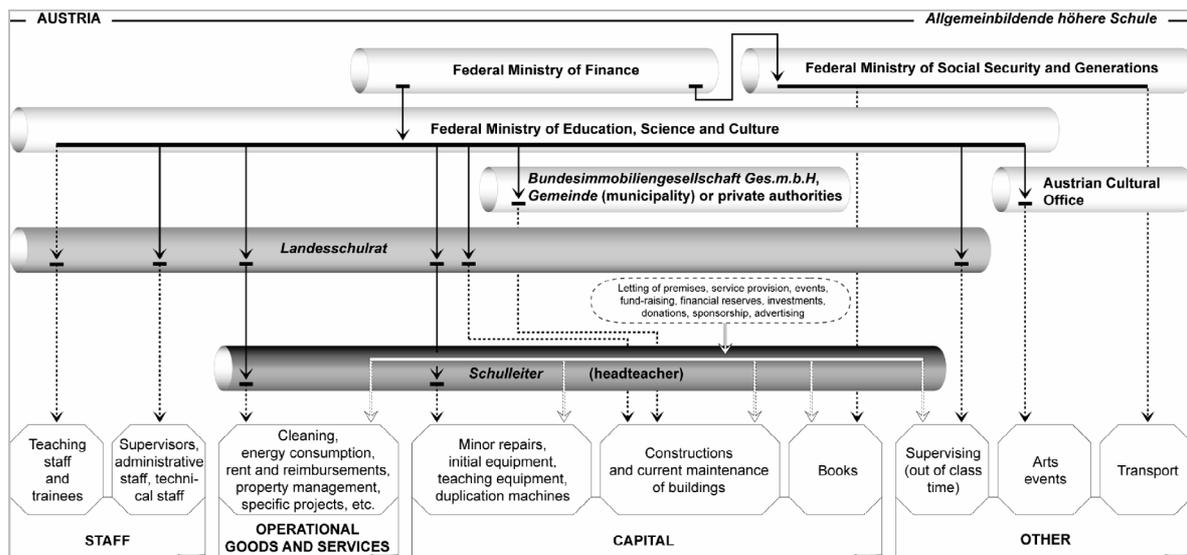
 (Eurydice, 2001, p. 39)

Q2.4 The goals and objectives of the school system

55. The general part of the curricula consists of four main parts: The first part describes the general educational goals, the second part contains general didactic principles, the content of the third part is the scheduling of school and tuition, and the fourth part describes the course of instruction.

56. The school has the duty to provide the pupils with a broad and deepened general education. In upper secondary education the school system is divided into a general education branch and a vocational branch. Both, however, lead the students towards higher education entrance qualifications. Furthermore, the school has to contribute to the continuing development of young people, concerning the gaining of

knowledge, the development of skills, and the intermediation of values. The readiness to autonomous thinking and critical reflection has to be encouraged. The pupils have to be encouraged towards a social oriented and positive way of life.

57.　　The challenges for educational development lie in the fast societal development – especially concerning culture, science, technique, environment, law, and economy. The number of immigrants with different cultural background increases. Therefore, while teaching pupils with different cultural backgrounds, for example different mother tongues, particular attention has to be turned to the confident use of the language of instruction. People have to learn to live in a democratic way, therefore the competence of a subject- and value-oriented judgement is necessary. Furthermore, people have to recognize and enact their social responsibility. To be able to develop these competences self-assurance and self-organized learning and acting have to be encouraged. The pupils should acquire abilities and competences necessary for their further education and profession, for example the ability to cope with communicative and cooperative duties. The young people also have to be lead towards becoming independent personalities. Additionally innovative technologies of information and communication and the mass media, which are becoming more and more important in our lives, have to be made accessible to young people. The pupils should be enabled to appreciate the didactic potential of these information technologies, but they should also learn to be critical towards the impact in community and economy. The pupils should be provided with a selective assortment of computer-based information- and knowledge-sources.

58.　　The curricula of the first streams in the general secondary schools and lower academic secondary schools are kept as closely identical as possible so that the transfer from one school type to the other as well as the transfer to upper secondary education is secured. Apart from that, in the curricula of both school types great emphasis is laid on the development of subject-specific competence, social competence and personal competence. Furthermore several key competences can be identified:

Key Competencies:

- reading, writing, calculating
- foreign languages
- understanding of mathematical concepts
- information and communication technology
- subject-based competence (general knowledge in humanities, and the natural and social sciences acquired through independent and active study involving critical examination)

Dynamic skills:

- personal competence (development of one's talents and possibilities; awareness of one's strengths and weaknesses, self-reflection)
- social competence (accepting responsibility cooperation, initiative, creatively)

Q2.5 Unions for teachers and school leaders

59.　　In Austria, several teacher unions exist, which are part of the national trade union system (*Österreichischer Gewerkschaftsbund* [ÖGB]). Within the unions there is a differentiation between types of schools (compulsory schools, academic secondary schools, secondary vocational schools and colleges etc.) and along partisanship (e.g. Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreichs [SPÖ], Österrreichische Volkspartei [ÖVP] etc.). More recently alternative groups of teachers and school leaders have started

their own union representation with the purpose not to be part of the ÖGB. School leaders do not have an extra representation among the unions, but are part of the teacher unions.

Q2.6 The broad public perceptions about the role of schools, the quality of schooling, and the status of teachers and school leaders

60.   Due to socio-economic development nowadays many children grow up in different socio-cultural contexts: Family ties have lost their strengths, single parents form a growing number in today's Austrian society. Many parents have to work during the day and are not able to stay at home and look after their children. The school's intake of pupils and students has changed in the past few years, and schools get under pressure to deal with the changing contexts they work in. For example, if there is a delinquent problem often the school and the teachers are blamed. These developments have caused a rising worry about the status of the school, the teachers, and the school leaders. Especially schools in inner cities (particularly Vienna) suffer from the early separation of pupils after primary education because parents try to send their children into academic secondary schools, which leaves the "more difficult" children to teach (with multi-ethnic backgrounds etc.) for the general secondary schools. In some areas those have become "rest schools", which are not regarded as desirable places to sent the children to.

61.   A widespread public perception still is that teachers have more free time and longer holidays than other employees and that they do not have to work physically hard. Nevertheless, through the growing pressure, the burn-out-rates among teachers are rising, many of them are not able to cope with these high expectations, but try to give their best – until they have reached their personal limit. The status of teachers and school heads in particular is higher in rural areas than in urban ones. Although Austrian schools have generally had a good reputation in the Austrian public according to yearly ratings, the recent results of the PISA study have brought about heated political and public discussions about the quality of schooling in Austria. also contributed to the negative status of teachers, schools and the quality of schooling.

CHAPTER 3: SCHOOL GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

Q3.1 Who are considered "school leaders"?

62.   Heads of school in Austria are either civil servants of the federation (the heads of academic secondary schools or secondary vocational schools) or of the federal state (the heads of primary, general secondary schools, special schools or vocational schools). The school leader is the head of a school, all teachers and other staff directly report to him or her. He or she is responsible for the running of the school and the interactions between teachers, parents, and pupils. Moreover, he or she has to communicate with superiors (e.g. inspectors) and stakeholders outside school.

63.   The school head has to advise the teachers and to monitor the performance of the pupils. Further duties of the school head are laid down in the Civil Service Code and the Province Teacher Service Code. He or she runs the school, corresponds with the school authorities, and advises teachers on their teaching and educational work. School heads may inspect instruction being given in the classrooms at any time, in order to monitor the quality of teaching. The school head is responsible for implementing laws and other legal regulations as well as instructions issued by the educational authorities. The school head prepares the meetings of the school partners and is responsible for executing the decisions made at these meetings. School heads have to adapt the annual budget to the needs of their school and prepare the school. In smaller schools, school heads have a partial teaching assignment, which depends on the number of classes at their school. After a four-year probation phase, the position of the school head becomes a permanent post. The position is permanently linked to a defined school (to defined schools), if he or she has successfully completed the compulsory school management training. Holders of permanent posts have a right to be employed at the school and may be transferred from one school to another under the conditions, which are exhaustively set out in the Civil Service Code and the Service Code for Province Teachers.

Q3.2 The basic framework that governs the roles and responsibilities of school leaders

64.   The duties and responsibilities of a school leader are regulated through laws established by the Austrian Parliament.

„Bundesgesetz über die Ordnung von Unterricht und Erziehung in den im Schulorganisationsgesetz geregelten Schulen" (Schulunterrichtsgesetz 1986 - SchUG) § 56:

(1) The school head has to arrange all matters, regarding the federal law – except concerns belonging under the jurisdiction of other elements of the schooling system or of the supervisory school authorities.
(2) The school head is the direct superior of all teachers working at the school, and of all other attendants. He or she is responsible to run the school and to cultivate the contact between the school, the pupils, the legal guardians, and (at secondary vocational schools) other staff with teaching duties.
(3) The school head has to advise the teachers concerning their teaching and their contribution to the education of the children, he or she also periodically has to monitor both quality of teaching and of the pupils' performance.
(4) Apart from the educational and administrative duties, he or she has to see that all statutory provisions and instructions of supervisory school authorities are complied. Furthermore, the school head has to care for the guiding of the official documents and the order in school. The school head has to arrange a staff roster

concerning the supervision of the pupils. He or she has to report noticed deficiencies to the provider of the school.

(5) Other duties, incumbent upon the school head from other, particularly concerning instructions from public service law, remain unaffected.

(6) In schools where a permanent deputy of the school leader is appointed, he or she has to assist the school head fulfilling his or her duties. Individual duties incumbent upon this deputy head have to be determined by service instructions given by the Federal Ministry of Education.

(7) In schools in which a teacher is appointed for the assistance of the school head the assistant has to fulfil all administrative duties linked with the pedagogical work in the school. Duties which are incumbent on this teacher have to be determined by the Federal Ministry of Education.

(8) In schools offering day care where a teacher or educator is appointed for the assistance of the school head concerning the duties of supervision, he or she has to fulfil all administrative duties closely linked with the supervisory part of the school. Duties which are incumbent on this teacher can be determined by the Federal Ministry of Education or by the school head.

Bundesgesetz vom 27. Juni 1984 über das Dienstrecht der Landeslehrer (Landeslehrer-Dienstrechtsgesetz - LDG 1984):

§32: Responsibilities of office of school heads

(1) The school head has to fulfil all duties incumbent on his or her function conscientiously.

(2) The school head has to take care that all teachers working at the school fulfil their duties in a regular, appropriate, economic, and economical manner. He or she has to guide them, to give them appropriate instructions, to suppress occurring mistakes and grievances, and to see about the adherence to the office hours.

(3) The school head has to promote the professional advancement of the teachers in proportion of their performances.

(4) As a general rule the school head has to be present in school during the teaching hours. In case of a temporary absence during teaching hours he or she has to provide a substitute. At schools with teaching hours in the mornings and afternoons, the school board can shorten the compulsory attendance of the school leader, in which case a substitute has to be provided.

(5) The school leader has to establish a strategic plan for staff requirements and personnel development.[3]

65.   Many / some decisions at school level are taken in a representative manner. The democratic decision-making process involves the agreement of a two-third majority in each of the groups involved by the respective committee – consisting of the head of school (he or she has no right to vote), teaching staff (depending on the form, either three representatives or all teachers), and parents (depending on the form, either three representatives or all parents), in academic secondary education also pupils' representatives belong to this committee. The role of the head of school is being the moderator in the process of decision-making and executing of these decisions. Since schools will have more autonomy in the future the principles of what is commonly understood as "New Public Management" will become more and more a challenge for the work of the school leader.

66.   The duties of the school head and the school authorities are defined in the law, but only in form of a broad description without details, which offers various possibilities of interpretation. The different areas of responsibilities often overlap. Interview partners

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[3] http://www.bmbwk.gv.at/schulen/lehrdr/gesetze/ldg.xml

for this study suggest that the responsibilities of the school authorities and of the school head should be more clearly defined. For example, it is not clearly defined who has to solve occurring problems, for example when a conflict arises between a school head and a teacher. Some school heads deal with the problems alone, or at least they try to, others transfer the problem to the school authorities, because they do not want to get in conflict with their teachers. A loosely defined system has advantages for different interpretations according to the situative context, but it can also lead to arbitrary actions in decision-making.

Q3.3 What challenges does school leadership face in your country?

Major policy concerns

67.   The present policy concerns have to be seen in the present situation of school leaders who have to master various different roles. They should act as a leader, manager and moderator, additionally they should do all the administrative work, they should manage all financial and pedagogical concerns, and they are also responsible for public relations – just to name a few. School leaders were always meant to be leaders and administrators, and they still are. Nevertheless, today their roles have grown more complex: They are also responsible for staff development, quality development, and school development as well as the development of teaching and learning. Through this complexity of tasks numerous dilemmas concerning leadership occur. School heads have to act as a leader, but also as a friend and mentor, they have to find the right balance between stability and change, they have to support their teachers, but they are also responsible to challenge the system. Furthermore, school leaders should be loyal to their pupils or students and their teachers, but they should also be loyal to themselves, and loyal to superiors and national curriculum guidelines. To be able to manage all their tasks well school leaders have to delegate certain duties to other staff members. Leadership is not about giving orders but about an effective relationship between school leaders and teachers, students, parents and other stakeholders. This is only possible if a common vision for change exists. The ability to co-operate with others has become an important ability for a school leader.

68.   Similarly to other countries, Austria is a society that is changing. The tradition of bureaucratic governance models, to which Austria has historically belonged to for a long time, cannot easily cope with the global changes occurring in society. The move of political decision-making from a national to a European framework has opened up the previous insularity of policy-making and brought new dynamics into play, both in the overall state system in general and in the educational sub-system in particular.(In the school system, the EU has not had such a strong influence; it was more the PISA results which have brought new dynamics into play.) By means of example, this can be seen in the European jurisdiction concerning university entrance policies. Whereas previously Austrian universities, which are characterized by granting non-restricted entry to students graduating firm upper secondary schools, could exclude foreign students if they did not provide entry certificates for universities in their own countries, they are no longer allowed to do that. This change has lead to the introduction of entrance examinations as a selection device. This has a backwash effect in so far that some provinces have started introducing selective examinations at the end of primary education to steer the flow of pupils after year 4. There is a strong pressure on parents, especially in the higher socio-economic sector, who want to get their children into academic secondary education.

69.   In the last few years it has therefore become necessary for teachers and school heads to be able to act as intermediates. In daily school life, many conflicts take place – between pupils, pupils and teachers, between teachers and between parents and teachers. Teachers and school heads have to be able to recognize occurring conflicts,

to act as intermediates, and to find workable solutions, which is often difficult if the structural conditions do not fit. Schools are confronted with increasingly heterogeneous student populations, which particularly in larger cities challenge the traditional delivery of teaching. New organizational forms of schooling like day schools are necessary, but the present policy measures and local structures often do not allow school heads to put innovative approaches into practice.

New school policies

70.   On the systems level, the following four principles are promoted by experts of the *Zukunftskommission* (Future Commission), which was set up to develop a proposal for policy development in the Austrian school system.

- *Systematic quality management:* promotion of quality improvement on all three stages (teacher, school, education policy).
- *More autonomy and more responsibility:* more flexibility by transparent performance and accountability at the same time. The initiative of providing schools with more autonomy should be carried on. At the same time this made more transparency and accountability necessary not only for schools but for teachers and the policy as well.
- *Improvement of the teacher profession:* criteria based selection, competence-oriented training and performance-oriented career advancement.
- *More research and development and better support systems (for* e.g. the implementation of internal evaluation). (cf. Haider et al., 2003, pp. 18-21).

71.   In the years 2006 and 2007 the following changes are taking place or are planned to be put into practice[4]:

- In autumn 2006, about 80.000 pupils attend day care. These are about 10% of all pupils who would be able to attend day care. The policy makers emphasize that each child should have the opportunity to attend day care. The Federation provides all compulsory schools with 10 hours for each 15 children. These groups can be formed according to classes, levels, or interdisciplinary arrangements.
- All schools for pupils aged between six and 14 years have a five days week, Saturdays will be free. The policy makers aim at providing more time for activities for the whole family.
- In primary schools in Austria 25.000 service positions for teachers were offered. In the years, 2006 and 2007 330 additional teachers will be employed. This offers the possibility of special teaching for children who are not able to understand and speak proper German. The federal government also requires to offer more opportunities in all towns and communities to provide the children with language-promotion from kindergarten onwards – 640.000 Euro are spent on this project. In the past months, about 8.000 children have attended this language-promotion, which ensures a good start of their further educational career.
- Special abilities should be supported. Children should be offered the possibility to attend primary schools at an even earlier stage – if they possess outstanding talents and abilities.
- Each pupil is an individual with different strengths and weaknesses. To be able to concentrate on the needs of the individual pupils 36 hours each year (for primary schools) and 72 hours each year (for general secondary

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[4] Since a new government was installed in January 2007, a change in certain policies may occur.

schools and academic secondary schools) are reserved for special teaching. Each school has to explain the use of these hours in a yearly report.

- In previous years, each pupil who entered general secondary school was observed and it was only possible to enter the first ability group after a longer period of performing well, which will be changed: previous information about the pupils' performance will be used to group them in homogeneous ability groups from the beginning.
- The function of the class teachers is strengthened. Class teachers are provided with several important duties; they should recognize the strengths and weaknesses of their pupils and support them according to their individual needs. Furthermore, it belongs to their duty to warn the parents if their children might fail to enter the next class, additionally class teachers have to help to establish and coordinate special teaching and day care. From 2006 on also class teachers of general compulsory schools will be provided with additional money (€ 70 per month).
- Continuing development of teachers will be strengthened, the attendance of training courses will be compulsory.
- School heads should be provided with more co-determination concerning the employment and development of teachers.
- An individual school head could lead several smaller schools, which brings the resources from the administration to the pupils.
- Many schools have already established their own profiles. To make these profiles more visible to the outside and to help the pupils to attend the appropriate school, the schools are given the possibility to mention their focus in the identification of the school (e.g. EDV-Hauptschule [ICT General Secondary School]).
- In their final year in academic secondary education students will only receive one school report – at the end of the school year, which will detain the separation of the school year in two parts (the summer semester is too short).
- In the future only 2,5% of the school hours may slip. On Monday and Tuesday of the first school week, an introductory phase takes place. Repetition exams may take place on Thursday or Friday of the last holiday week to ensure a punctual start of the school year.
- Pupils and their parents shall be provided with all possible information when they move on to another school. Possible qualification examinations teak place at the beginning of the summer semester. Each pupil should know at the beginning of the summer holidays which school he or she will attend in autumn.
- The final staff meeting deciding on the grades of the pupils will take place at the latest possible date (week before the last school week).
- Schools are entitled to block lessons, which offers a more flexible organisation and modern methods of teaching (e.g. project work or interdisciplinary teaching).
- Class size will be limited to 25 pupils/students per class – with the freedom to have different variations on the general class size proportion.

Changing composition of student population

70. Due to the high immigration rates and to the fact that many children of the 2nd or 3rd generation of immigrants are now attending Austrian schools the student population is becoming more and more multicultural. Children with different mother tongues, different religious and cultural backgrounds are to be taught in one class.

Nowadays one of the most important duties of a teacher is to pay attention to these cultures, to educate the children to open-minded citizens who see multiculturalism as something positive, as an opportunity in a global society. The school head has to take care that immigrant children are offered the possibility to improve their German, or they might fail in all (other) subjects. However, the necessary resources for supplementary resources have to be provided by the education authorities.

Rising accountability for results and social equity

71.   Currently, the hitherto insularly acting education system (Altrichter and Schratz 2004) is undergoing a major "cultural change" as a result of the global testing by large scale assessments (e.g. TIMSS, PISA, IGLU). Like other continental European education systems, the Austrian education system has mainly been input controlled (laws, resources, curricula, teacher education, school supervisory boards) with no central or standardised final exams or standardised tests of the output through national tests or performance assessments. Studies have shown the inequalities of the teacher centred assessments so far used in Austria (cf. Eder 2001). In fact there has been a strong aversion against tests in education. Gruber (2004) connects this faith belief in the immeasurability of *Bildung* to the impact of the German Idealism. It is more or less exclusively up to teachers to assess their pupils. The Austrian school system is selective, after only four years in primary school, pupils are allocated to general secondary schools *or* academic secondary schools according to their marks of their last year in primary school. This causes pressure on primary teachers, students and parents. In urban areas a highly competitive market exists, so that additionally to the year 4 reports the year 3 reports are used to screen children's achievements. General secondary schools try to attract pupils through specialised school profiles (e.g. computer or sport), a result of granting them more autonomy in the 90s.

72.   The PISA results initiated a public and political discourse about students' performance. PISA 2003 showed, that a lot of pupils don't achieve the necessary skills to participate in life long learning, it also showed big differences about students performances in different classes, schools and regions within the same sort of schools and the inequalities about performance assessment and the allocation of entitlements (Haider et al., 2003). The Austrian Ministry of Education set up a "*Zukunftskommission*" (*Future Commission*) which was asked to come up with a proposal for policy development in the Austrian school system. An overall reform concept was proposed by the commission, but only few policy measures have so far been put into practice. As one of the consequences, in December 2003 the Austrian Ministry of Education installed a team of experts to develop and implement national standards (*Bildungsstandards*) in year 4 (primary school) and year 8 (general secondary school and academic secondary school) (cf. Lucyshyn, 2006).

Changing societal and community expectations

73.   Today schools are expected to take over with the upbringing of the children because many parents are either single parents or both of them have to work. Today the schools are not expected to be "only" a place of learning, but also a place to substitute a "missing" educational environment. In daily school life, however, there is usually not enough time for this complex task. In recent years, again and again public discussions started arguing for the introduction of all-day schooling. The demand for all-day schooling from the parents' point of view varies regionally. In Vienna, about 30% of the parents would prefer all-day schooling, in Innsbruck only about 3%. Because of the local pressure the Viennese school board has started experimenting with campus-like schools which offer all-day school facilities. Although there is an ideological bias among certain citizen groups against all-day schooling because of the possible loss of family time for children, the actual demand – especially in urban areas

– has lead to a new legislation, which allows schools to introduce afternoon supervision for pupils if a certain number of parents enrol their children. The federal government provides all compulsory schools with 10 hours for each 15 children. This number varies from federal state to federal state (10 children in several provinces). However, this policy decision does not lead to all-day schooling in Austria, because it is not compulsory and rather used as time for homework supervision. Nevertheless, it is one step into the direction where working parents are relieved.

Innovations

74.   In the last years, the internet has gained a great importance in daily life, and nearly each household possesses a computer. It has become one of the duties of the school to enable the pupils to use the computer. Furthermore they have to teach the pupils an appropriate handling of the internet, how to use this complex medium according to their needs. They also have to assure that the pupils scrutinise the information found in the internet. The BMBWK has introduced a nation-wide strategy called E-Fit Austria, which is a comprehensive strategy with the aim to assure and improve the quality and productivity of education, culture and science by means ot ICT, Computer, Internet and innovative media. So far the use of ICT in schools has mainly been dealt with in a subject area dealing with modern information technologies or similar, whereas teachers in other subjects introduced ICT competences to their pupils only if they were enthusiastic about the new technology themselves. This has lead to a pilot project of the Ministry of Education, called eLSA (*eLearning im Schulalltag* – e-learning in every day schooling), in which one pilot school of each province took part.

75.   The results of the evaluation of the pilot project showed that teachers have gained a more positive attitude towards e-learning and that they overcame reservation and prejudice more and more (in) during the course of the project. Thus, eLSA led to a more sensible and professional use of e-media in classroom and has become an essential part of both teaching and personnel development in schools. Finally, blended learning served to open up the classroom as well as to intensify the interdisciplinary exchange among schools all over Austria. Furthermore, the project also touched on the children's reading and writing skills and habits as well as on their changing handling of texts in interrelation with the media in use.

Q3.4 The distribution of responsibilities for decision making in public schools

Financing and resource allocation

76.   In Austria, the financial sovereignty is divided: For the federal schools the financial sovereignty is in the federal administration. In the compulsory schools sector the providers of the particular school are responsible for resource allocation (e.g. building, maintenance, running costs) - in the public area these are the local communities, in the private area they are the bodies or authorities responsible for the school. In federal schools the salary of the teachers is paid by the federal government, in compulsory schools the regional school board delivers the money, but reclaims it from the federal government. The schools have little financial autonomy. They can only decide autonomously about third-party funds. Parents do not have any direct decision-making power in financing, unless parents associations grant benefits to the school from their financial contributions to these associations. According to OECD data 27% of the decisions on resource allocation are taken by the federal states, 54% by the local authorities, and 17% directly by the schools (see table 3.4).

Table 10/3.4.   Resource allocation (Schmid, 2005b, p. 38)

% Ressourcen (Zuweisung und Verwendung)

Legend: In völliger Autonomie | In Beratung mit anderen | Innerhalb eines vorgegebenen Rahmens | Sonstige

explanation of colour code:
in full autonomy
in consultation with others
in a given framework
others
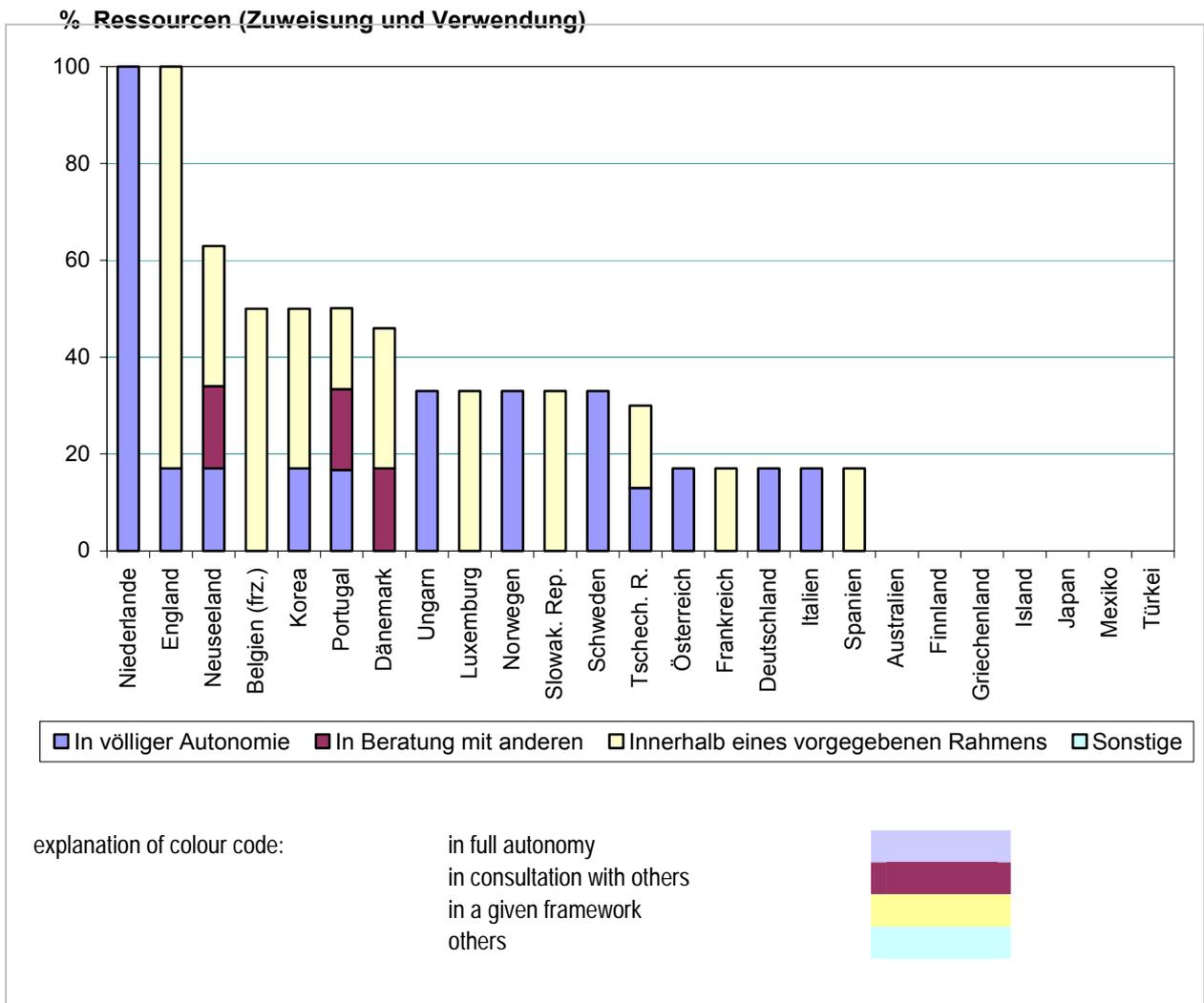
Curriculum development and implementation

77.   The ministry sets the general curriculum. The individual school has a possibility
to adjust the school curriculum according to its geographical circumstances and local
demands within defined boundaries. In order to establish its own school profile the
school can focus its curriculum on a particular pedagogical and/or topical emphasis. In
this way, the school is able to be responsive to the interests and abilities of the pupils
and can place the teachers in their appropriate positions. The school can also consider
regional characteristics, equipment, and space in its curricular approach. Table 3.4/2
gives an overview of the relation of full curricular autonomy and autonomy within a
certain framework.

Table 11/ 3.4:   Responsibility for curriculum development (Schmid, 2005b, p. 33)

% Unterrichtsorganisation

Legend: In völliger Autonomie | In Beratung mit anderen | Innerhalb eines vorgegebenen Rahmens | Sonstige

explanation of colour code:
- in full autonomy
- in consultation with others
- in a given framework
- others
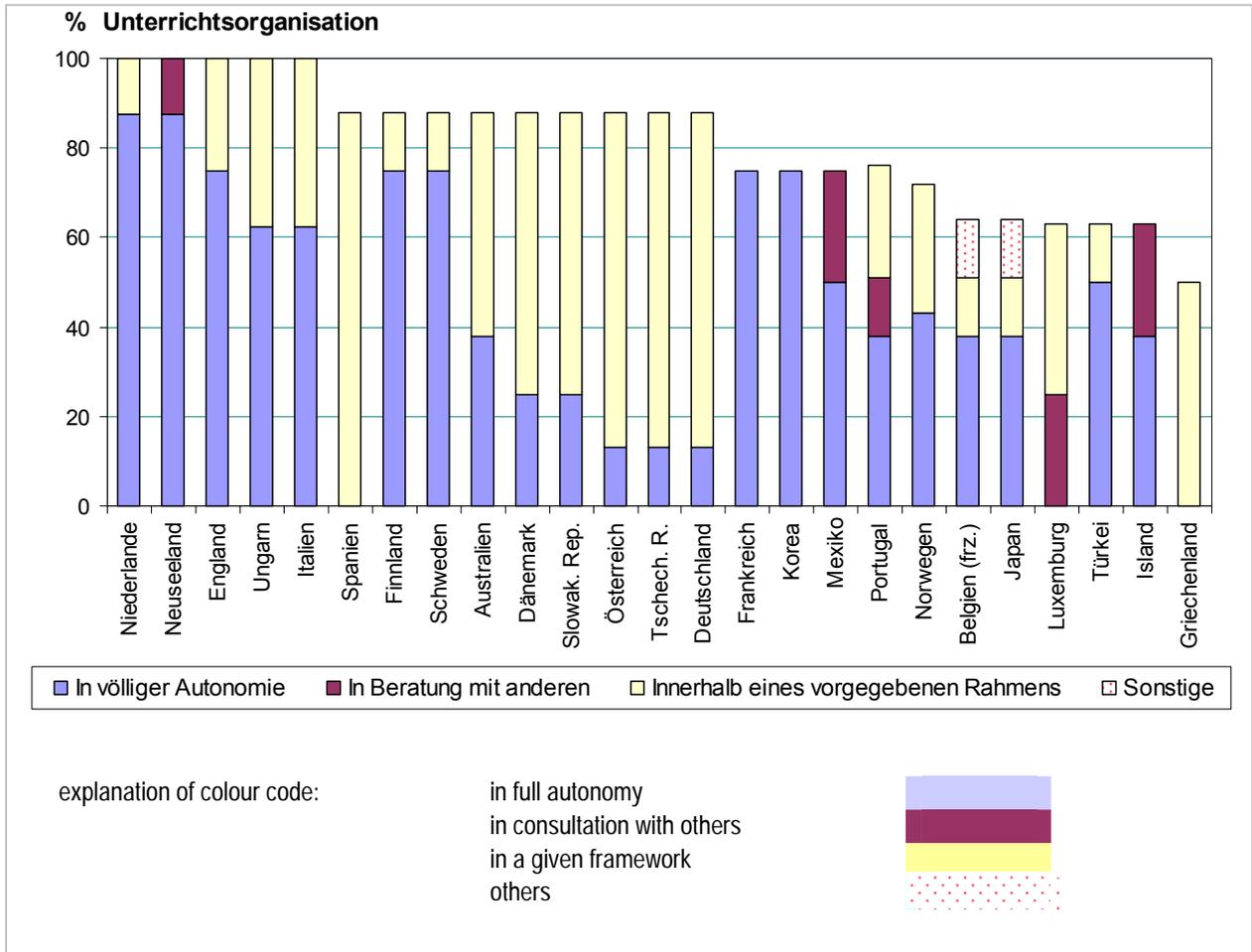
78. As far as the organisation of daily school life is concerned, the autonomy of the school head is limited. Some decisions are taken autonomously by the school committee:

- Variation in number of lessons in compulsory subjects
- Variation of group sizes in class compositions or year groups
- Introduction of new fields of learning and transformation of optional subjects into compulsory ones

Other decisions are the school head's task:

- Composition of student groups in optional subjects and special needs teaching
- Opening the school to people from outside (e.g. extra-curricular activities)

79. However, there are several conditions which have to be considered: The scope for such variations is limited to a maximum of 16 hours in general secondary schools and 8 hours in lower academic secondary schools. The budgetary neutrality has to be assured, and all orders and school laws have to be followed.

Employment of school leaders:

80.   Heads of school in Austria are either civil servants of the Federation (e.g. the "heads" of the academic secondary schools) or of the federal state (the "compulsory schools"). When a public call for a vacant school headship is published, teaching staff who are interested in the position apply to their respective educational authority. Representatives of the educational department then make the choice according to professional and personal suitability and length of service. In the case of federal state schools, this choice is made by the authorities of the federal state government, advised by the school inspector(s), union representatives and a representative of the community which is the provider of the school. Head-of-school posts are securely 'anchored' – i.e. a head of school can only be transferred to another school for clearly defined reasons, which are officially determined by law.

81.   The legal basis for the appointment of heads of schools is regulated in the respective Service Code. School heads are first appointed provisionally for a period of four years. If they have proved their capabilities in this function (school partners and school authorities should have no objections to raise) and have completed the compulsory course in "Professional Management Training" they are appointed definitely. The compulsory qualification programmes are organised by the in-service training institutes of the federal states (which will be integrated into the *Pädagogische Hochschulen* [University Colleges of Education]) in the coming school year.

82.   Recently, the ministry introduced several reforms which put some pressure on the school's ability to put them into practice. In order to educate school heads in leadership for change, the Ministry of Education introduced a system-wide initiative for school heads as a professional development activity called *Leadership Academy* in 2004. School principals, inspectors and leaders from the Ministry of Education are invited to take part in this initiative to take leadership to a new level under the shared vision of a nation-wide educational reform process.

Student intake, retention, and promotion

83.   In the last years, the number of students attending lower academic secondary schools has increased, while the number of students entering compulsory schools is decreasing. In certain regions compulsory schools have to close because they do not get enough student intake any more. In upper secondary education more students move to secondary vocational schools and colleges. The (projected) numbers of student intake can be seen in tables 1/1.2 and 2/1.2.

84.   If students do not succeed in completing the requirements for the school year, they have to repeat classes. Every year about 40.000 pupils are retained in Austrian schools. Some of them succeed in second chance exams after the holidays at the beginning of the new school year, most of them, however, have to repeat the school year. It is also possible for fast learners and so-called specially gifted children to overtake one class, but their number is relatively small.

How does the private school sector differ in any of these regards?

85.   See also Q2.2. In earlier times most private schools were schools run by the Catholic Church and most of the teachers were nuns and priests. Many of the schools were single sex schools. Many of them provided boarding facilities for their students. Times have changed, and nowadays most of them are no longer boarding schools any more, most of the teachers are regular teachers, and the schools started to admit both boys and girls. It might be an advantage for a student to enter a private school, because there is not such a great intake since parents have to pay school fees for their children. Therefore, there are usually also fewer immigrant children in private schools.

Retention rates may be lower than in regular state schools. Some private schools have a better reputation than public schools.

Q3.5 The governance structure of schools

86.   An international comparison among school governance models of schools show different ramifications, which can be differentiated in three particularly distinct structures (cf. Schmid, 2005b, p. 11):

- Bureaucratic model (Austria, Germany)
- Local Empowerment Model (Finland, Sweden)
- School Empowerment Model (UK, Netherlands)

According to PISA results, there is not one model which renders itself to excellent results of schooling. Austria belongs to the countries which has a decision-making structure with many actors involved, which makes it far more difficult to have a systemic influence in a change process, e.g. by devolution processes of decision-making processes. According to the bureaucratic school governance model, Austria still has a strongly input-regulated, hierarchical system, which is interwoven with federal elements, causing parallel structures on the national and federal state level.

87.   The visitors of the OECD study on attracting, developing and retaining effective teachers describe that Austrian schools do not possess a lot of autonomy; furthermore, they describe the Austrian school system as highly bureaucratic:

> […] apparent legalistic bias, with a strong focus of the educational debate on legislation (existing and forthcoming), on the 'what' and 'how' of education reform rather than the 'why' and the outcome. As many people indicated to us, this can result in schools and other educational actors looking upwards to the legislature for initiatives, instead of taking charge in tackling their own problems. This tendency is exacerbated by the complex distribution of roles, related in part to the federal structure of government. There are many different stakeholders and actors, but limited transparency as to who is responsible for what, and who should take the lead in solving problems. (Dellanoy et al., 2004, p. 18) See also 2.3.

88.   Because of this governance structure, decision-making in the different schools and school types does not vary much. At each school, the school leader has to follow the line structure, and there is little autonomy in curricular, personnel and budgetary issues, as pointed out in more detail earlier in this study. There is a difference between the so-called compulsory schools (covering the compulsory schooling period of students) and academic lower and upper secondary education. The latter only have one level of inspectorate between the ministry and the schools (Landesschulinspektor/innen), whereas the compulsory schools have an extra inspectorial level in the respective school districts (Bezirksschulinspektor/innen).

89.   Since the devolution itself is not an aim in itself, the question is how it is possible in the Austrian bureaucratic model to organize the school system in a way that the interplay of decision-making power in curricular, personnel and budgetary matters, national targets for success (curricula, education standards) and the transparency of the result orientation (standardised tests, comparison of results etc.) work towards a quality improvement policy and strategy. A national reform convent on constitutional reforms has started working on suggestions how to deal with the complexity of the interference of national and regional decision-making structures at large and of schooling in particular. Its aim is to come up with suggestions how to set clear responsibilities for the different agents and give them a structure which makes (school) administration less of a burden in decision making processes. On the school

level, it will be the question which responsibilities and support structure a school leader gets to run a school effectively.

Q3.6 The division of responsibility between school leaders and the school governing board or local/regional authority

Table 12/3.6.   The proportion of regional and local decisions (Schmid, 2005b, p. 21)
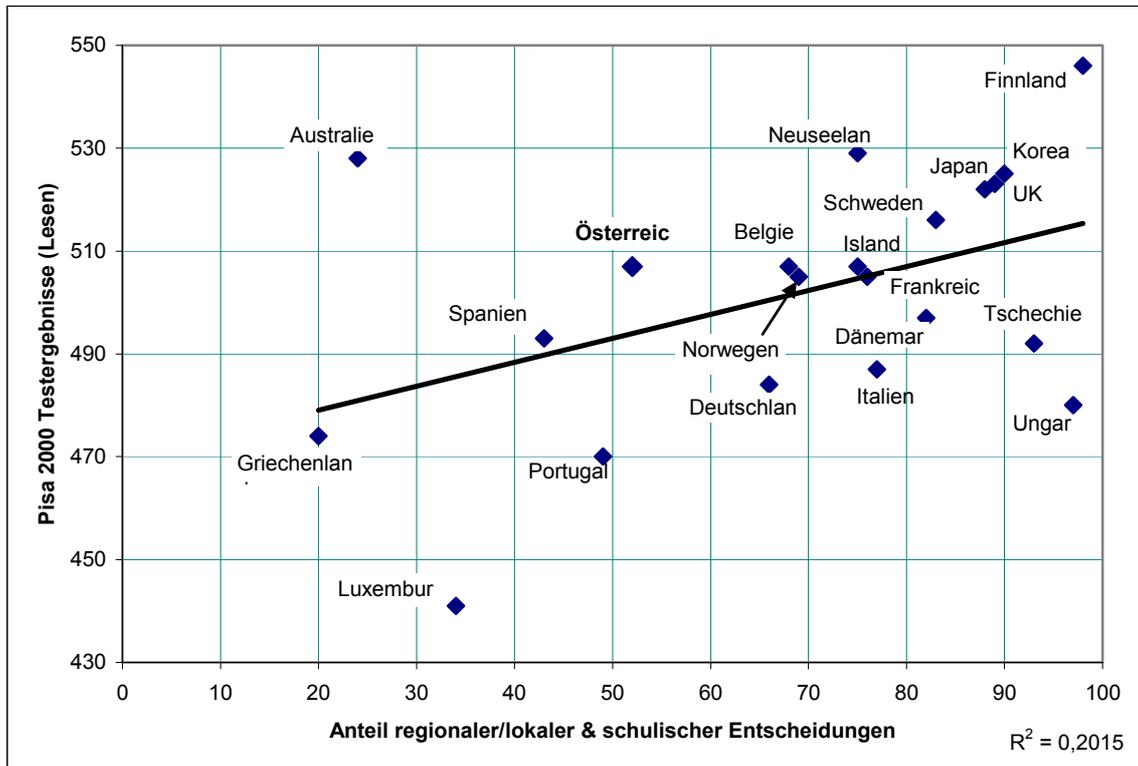
90.   This table shows that most of the countries which did well in the PISA test of 2000 have a higher proportion of decisions which are taken at regional, local and school level than is the case in Austria. In Austria, the responsibilities are divided between individual schools, and local and regional authorities: Through the parallel composition of the administration at federal and provincial levels, many parallel and multiplex jurisdictions arise. Since there is little responsibility left for the school level, there is little division of responsibility between school leaders and the local/regional education authority. Because of the bureaucratic governance model, schools do not have governing boards which share responsibility on school decision-making.

Q3.7 Balance between autonomy, transparency and accountability

91.   According to the bureaucratic governance model school leaders only have autonomy within limited boundaries. They are not able to appoint new teachers according to the needs of their schools, personnel selection is conducted by the regional education authorities or the ministry. Concerning the curriculum, the school leaders have limited autonomy within the boundaries of the curriculum. Although compulsory schools receive a financial budget from the local community, budgetary decision-making is very limited. Many school leaders demand more autonomy for their

decision-making in order to use their resources better for improving their students' performance.

92.   Decision-making in appointing staff in Austria is divided between all three levels of authority: the staff appointments scheme of the federal schools is defined by the ministry, the employment and dismissal of teachers is regulated by the regional school authority. The latter is also the authority that allocates teachers to the schools, which – for compulsory schools - happens in collaboration with the school partners, the teacher union, the local community and the school inspector(s). Public schools do not have any personnel sovereignty in employing or dismissing staff. Tables 3.7 and 3.7/1 show the Austrian position in relation to other countries (also with a view to PISA results).

Table 13/3.7.   Decisions concerning staff(Schmid, 2005b, p. 35)
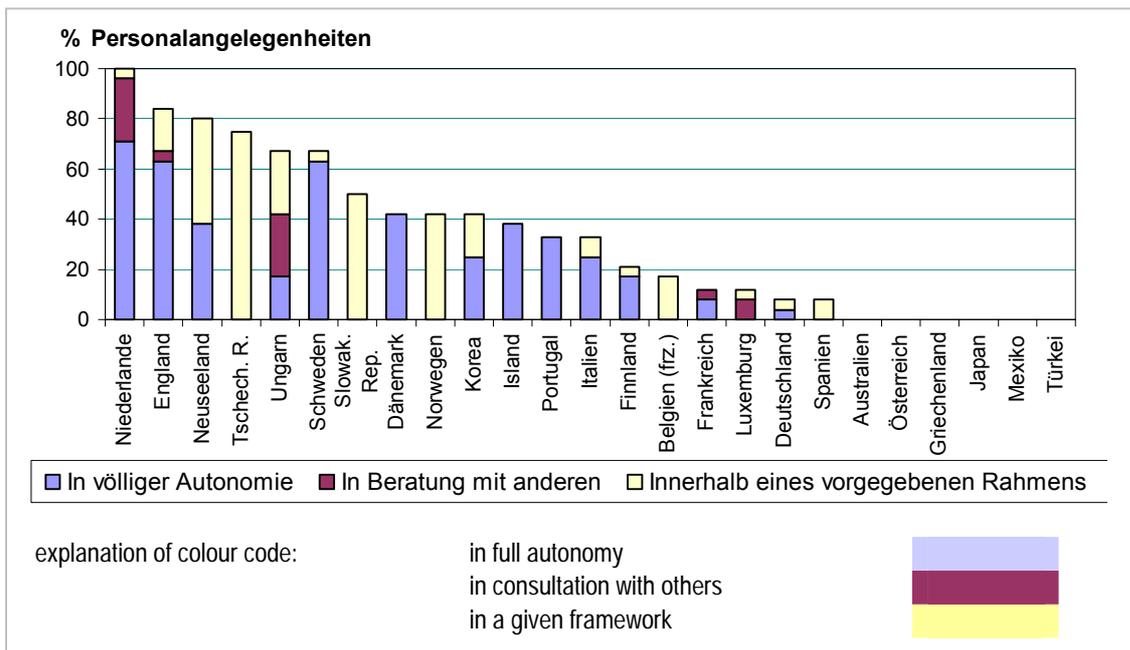
Table 14/3.7 indicates that Austria belongs to those countries where schools do not take the decision in employing and dismissing personnel. 25% of decisions concerning staff in lower secondary education are taken on the national level, 38% on the regional level and 38% on the local (community) level (Schmid, 2005b, p. 34).

Table 14/3.7.   Distribution of the structures of decision making in compulsory schooling / degree of autonomy (Schmid, 2005b, p. 21)
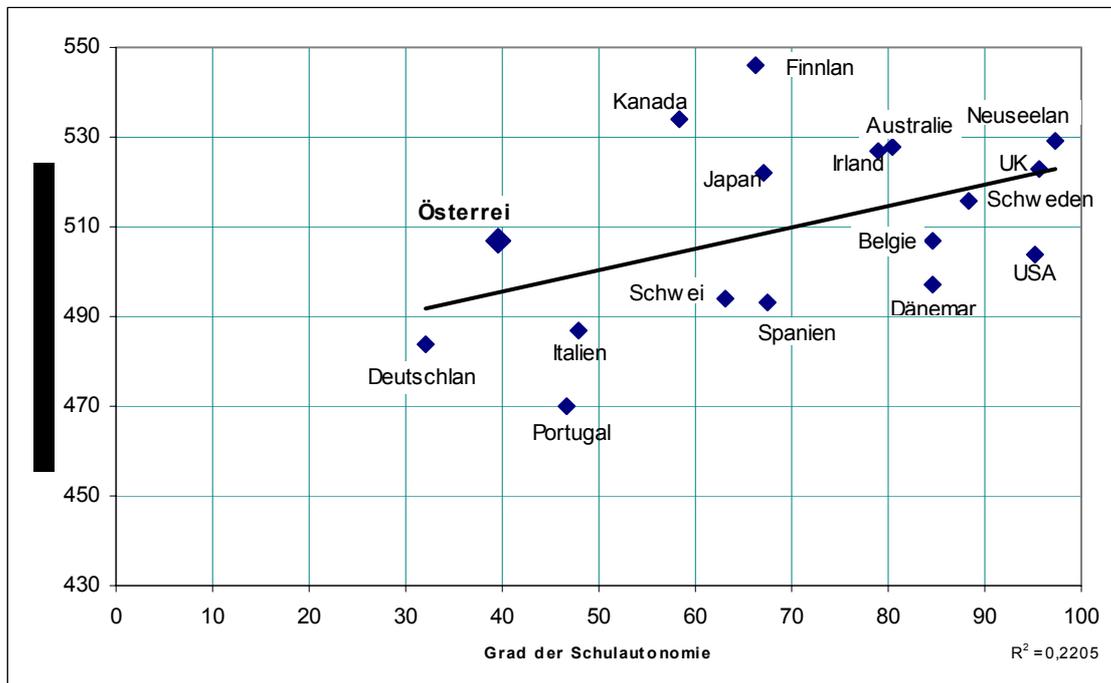
93.   Table 3.7/2 shows that the countries which did well in the PISA study have a higher degree of school autonomy and more decisions are taken at regional or local level. The range of autonomy in Austria consists of about 40%, clearly below the degree of autonomy in Finland and other nations, which achieved higher results in the PISA test. Nevertheless, a high degree of autonomy at local level does not necessarily lead to good performances since there are also other influential factors. However, no country with low levels of autonomy (Germany, Austria, Portugal, and Italy) belongs to the top performers.

Q3.8 The organisation and leadership structures within a school

94.   The school head is the superior to all teachers, but for relevant decisions in school life a two-third majority among teachers, parents and, if applicable, students is necessary. This offers teachers, parents, and students the ability to participate in decision-making (cf. 2.3). The teachers have a lot of autonomy in their classrooms as long as they follow the curriculum. It is the duty of the school leader to assure that all teachers at their schools teach according to the national requirements.

95.   The organisation and leadership structures do not vary much between the different school types. In all schools the school leaders are responsible for both the pedagogy and the administration of the school. Several school heads complain that the administrative work takes so much time that they do not have enough time left to take care of other matters. At primary and general secondary schools, the school head has to do all administrative work alone; at academic secondary lower and upper secondary schools and secondary vocational schools and colleges, he or she usually has secretarial support. Depending on the size of the individual school: The bigger the school, the fewer teaching obligations the school head has.

96.   A distribution of responsibilities may happen at school level. In the present system some school types do already, at least partly, practise a distribution of responsibilities. At some bigger schools the function of a permanent deputy has been established. A teacher with a reduced teaching load supports the school head with the administrative work; the permanent deputy is no superior to the other teachers. At secondary technical schools and colleges, the function of department heads has been established. The department heads take over some of the duties of the school head and they are responsible for their areas. At vocational schools and colleges, which are not divided in departments subject heads have been established, they have similar duties as department heads. At the medium-level, vocational schools and the secondary vocational colleges construction yard managers and workshop managers are responsible for the direction of construction yards and workshops, they have to deal with daily matters, but they do not act as superiors to teachers. Recently, there have been discussions about the introduction of a middle management structure, whereby different teachers could have constant leadership functions in particular areas (e.g. subject areas). This would, of course, ask for a new salary structure, which makes the government hesitant to put such a policy immediately into practice.

Q3.9 Do tensions exist over the relative weight that should be given to different leadership responsibilities?

97.   The leadership responsibilities for school heads are threefold, as depicted in Figure 15/3.9.

Table 15/3.9.   Tasks and responsibilities for school leaders. (Schratz, 2003, p. 406)
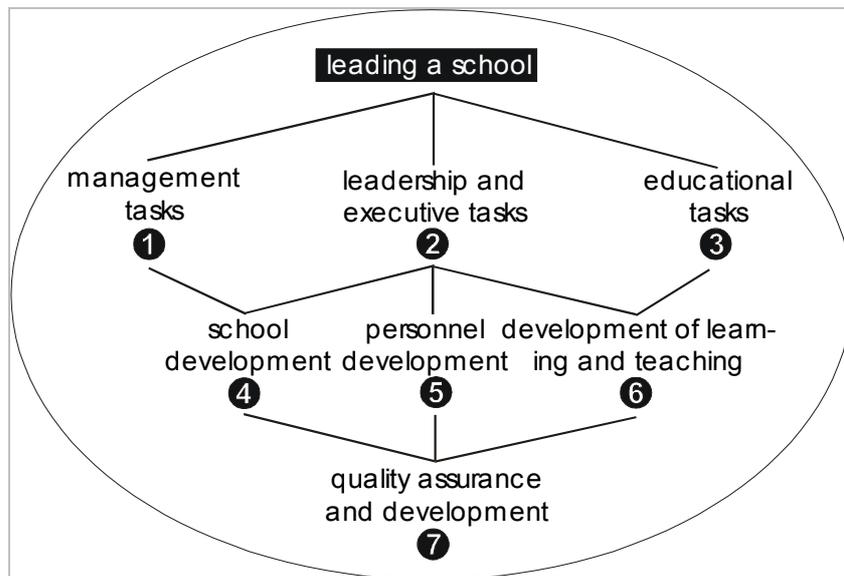
98.   In Austrian schools, the handling of educational tasks is first acquired in the teaching career. However, if teachers are promoted into headship, their responsibility changes: They are no longer responsible for educational affairs in a particular subject in particular classes, but for the teaching in all subjects in school with a particular view towards good results. School heads are usually detached from the production site of learning and their influence through leading teachers is only possible indirectly. Only later, they get feedback on their success or failure through test results. This delayed feedback is not always helpful because co-construction processes in learning do not work along a linear chain of actions. Management and leadership responsibilities are

necessary to organize the school in a way that it enhances learning on all levels and to help teachers working into a desired direction of the school's mission.

99.   Competency in management is easier to acquire than the capability of leadership, not least because leadership is never a solo act. Rather it is a social activity, enabling others to rise to their individual challenges and to take action as they themselves deem fit. Due to internal and external conflicts of interest, Austrian heads in leadership positions often shy away from accepting leadership tasks, in large part because the assumption of such responsibility often leads to interpersonal conflicts. ("How can I equitably address many different claims, perceptions and expectations?") Especially novices in leadership positions concentrate more on the management tasks while they struggle with the administrative challenges of leading a school. This quickly leads to the tension that they do not have enough time for leadership tasks, which remains unsolved if they do not have any administrative support to get their hands free for leadership activities towards the development of learning and teaching.

Q3.10 School collaboration and collaborative networks

100.   Schools usually collaborate only loosely on different levels with varying degrees of intensity. For example when there are meetings of the school leaders of each federal state, organized by the regional school authority, which take place (at least) once a year. Some schools collaborate individually in order to exchange knowledge and experience. Networks of innovative schools are formed when new reforms or regulations (like national standards) are introduced or when field experiments (e.g. on new methods of teaching and learning) take place.

101.   More formal networks occur in larger policy implementation projects such as "Innovations in Mathematics, Science and Technology Teaching IMST[3]", which is a national programme for effective teaching and learning in the sciences. In each federal state a network exists to exchange innovative experiences in this field. Similarly, the Leadership Academy, a national initiative for the enhancement of leadership, builds on regional networks of school leaders forming the virtual academy. In such networks school leaders play a vital part, in collaborative networks which are more classroom based they play a lesser role and are partly not involved directly.

Q3.11 Are schools expected to play a role in broader community service and development?

102.   To be able to create a community-based school an outward opening of schools is expected. The cooperation with the social and cultural environment, the institutions of social and youth welfare service, and other educational institutions is prescribed by law. Furthermore, the contact to the institutions responsible for the welfare of young people is particularly necessary in schools with an intake of difficult pupils. The way how schools actually open up their schools to the wider community very much depends on the situation: If there is a lot of pressure from the outside (e.g. culture clash because of a certain number of immigrants), schools usually react more willingly than if things work smoothly. The role of the school leader is very crucial in this respect, because he or she is the official who represents the school to the outside world.

103.   The necessity of the opening to the public also helps to improve the public image of the school. Cooperation between the school, the teachers, the parents and other members of the local community is necessary if schools want to develop collective values and try to agree on important aims, which are built into a school programme. School leaders should therefore establish good communication and cooperation with the local environment and possible employees of their pupils in the

future. School leaders should encourage the opening of their schools to the outside world, they should deal with societal guidelines and cooperate with external institutions, and they should also try to participate at regional, national, and international competitions. These issues are discussed and debated nation-wide on different system levels, but not executed by legislation. The opening up of schools works best where the school is used by people outside the school, for example if the school library is at the same time the public library of the local community.

Q3.12 Is there any evidence based on published research that the competencies required of effective leaders vary depending on the school characteristics?

104.   The competencies required of effective leaders do vary depending on school characteristics. There are great differences between school types ranging from small primary schools consisting of two teachers, one of them being the head, and large schools with 200 teachers, as is the case with large secondary vocational schools and colleges. There are also differences among schools of the same type in different locations. Particularly general secondary schools in rural areas, where almost 100% of the population of a cohort can be found, and inner city general secondary schools - sometimes called "rest schools" - which get the remaining students with difficult backgrounds who did not succeed getting into other schools, where there might not be any Austrian students left.

105.   There is not much research evidence on the competencies required of effective leaders according to leading a school under such circumstances in Austria, but school inspectors pay attention by allocating school leaders to "difficult" schools that they have the competences required to "succeed" in difficult social contexts. There is some evidence, though, in school portraits or case studies such as Altrichter et al., 1994, and Krainz-Dürr et al., 1997, which deal with school effectiveness and improvement, where the role of the school head usually plays an important role. Another source is the research done in the Leadership Academy, where the school project of the participants are monitored and data from collegial team coaching are analysed with a view towards improvement in leadership competencies. However, they are not systematized in a way as Q3.12 would require to list them up.

Q3.13 Is there any evidence on the existence of a set of core competencies that school leaders require to be effective?

106.   In order to set up management and leadership programmes literature reviews on international research findings were used for the curricular build-up. On this basis, the curriculum for the (initial) management courses in Austria is based on the following units, which are regarded as core competencies for new school leaders (cf. Fischer & Schratz, 1993):

- school laws, school administration and school organization,
- communication and leadership,
- conflict management,
- lesson supervision, teacher consultation, and teacher assessment,
- school improvement.

Newer developments include learning groups and networks.

107.   The curriculum of the Leadership Academy builds on the findings from Riemann (1977) and Ulrich et al. (1999), which are summarized in Figure 16/3.13.

Table 16/ 3.13.   Leadership Competence Model (Riemann, 1977, Ulrich et al., 1999)

Leadership Competence Model

```
                    Future /
              Innovation Orientation
                        ↑
                        |
       Competence:      | Competence:
       giving direction | creating organisational
                        | effectiveness and
Goals /                 | building community        People /
Results  ←──────────────┼──────────────→            Communication
Orientation             |                           Orientation
       Competence:      | Competence:
       show character   | mobilise individual
       strength         | engagement of people
                        |
                        ↓
                 Daily Actions /
             Continuation Orientation
```

According to the model in 16/3.13., leadership competences are situated between the two axes: On the one hand, school leaders have to balance their work between continuation and innovation, on the other hand they have to achieve results through communication with the people involved. Successful leaders have to be competent in all four quadrants, which means they have to

- give the direction where the school is heading for,
- create organisational effectiveness and build community to achieve the goals,
- show character to live the values which are convincing and support the leadership attitude,
- mobilise individual engagement among all the actors involved.

A leadership inventory is used to assess the participants at the beginning and at the end of the programme (cf. Pool, 2007).

Q3.14 Recent innovations in your country in relation to the organization of leadership roles in schools

108.   In Austria, the organization of schools is characterised by a very flat structure (one head and many teachers, which fosters what is called an `equality myth' among the teaching staff. The inner hierarchy is simply concealed and the distribution of organisational tasks is difficult to achieve. Additionally, heads of school are often regarded as being primus inter pares – a perception that leads to additional problems in the safeguarding of organisational tasks. Heads of school regard their `managerial functions' in terms of dutiful compliance with what is laid down in rules and statutes. The hierarchical structure of the school system offers them no other means of safeguarding their professional positions. Therefore, leadership is still often seen as an individual task which puts a lot of pressure on the school heads. Recent developments in Austria aim at changing the role of the individualistic leader towards a more systemic leadership role, which distributes leadership among several actors in the school. Sharing leadership renders people more ownership of what happens in school and asks them for taking over responsibility accordingly. Some schools started experimenting with a "middle management" structure in schools (e.g. subject area

heads), which the ministry is planning to introduce nation-wide in bigger schools. This will enhance the distribution of leadership at the school level.

CHAPTER 4: ENHANCING LEARNING AND SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Q4.1 Major concerns about the quality of teaching, learning, and assessment in schools

109. In the years 2006 and 2007 important changes have taken and are taking place, which mirror the quality concerns from the policy level. They were summarized in Q3.3.

110. Large scale assessments, and particularly PISA, have contributed to concerns about how to establish quality awareness in schools. Already, as early as 1999, QIS (Quality in Schools), a national framework for quality assurance, was introduced to assure good teaching and learning quality (cf. www.qis.at). With the QIS framework the Austrian Ministry of Education intends to encourage and to support schools to review, monitor, and develop their own quality. Teachers, students, and parents who occupy themselves jointly and systematically with quality issues are an indispensable part of school culture. Autonomous quality assurance and quality development of schools is the precondition and starting point for a future-oriented school system of high quality.

QIS has established five quality areas which form the basis for evaluation and planning:

- Teaching and learning
- The environment in class and school
- School cooperation and external relations
- School management
- Professionalism and its development

111. The core element of QIS and every school's quality activity is the school development plan (*Schulprogramm*). It contains the school's guiding principles, an account of the status quo and specific objectives and measures quality in different areas. This plan is a temporary agreement with internal and external effect: It serves as a guideline for educational action, as information to the public, as a planning tool and a yardstick to be applied to the development of schools.

112. Evaluation is an integral feature of the school development plan. It is needed to keep track of developments and to ascertain the implementation and the impact of measures. It has to be performed at appropriate intervals, individually and jointly, by means of appropriate methods. Personal data are kept confidential what has been achieved, what remains to be done is made visible, and a common basis is created for further development steps.

Quality development and assurance can be seen as a permanent sequence of discussing, planning, implementing, and evaluating.

Q4.2 The role of school leadership in the development and evaluation of policies for teaching, learning, and assessment

113. The school head is responsible for implementing laws and other legal regulations as well as instructions issued by the educational authorities. Since he or she has the duty to evaluate the work of the teaching personnel, he or she has a strong influence on monitoring teaching and learning in school. However, teachers still work along their own teaching philosophy, that is why it is difficult for the school head to lead all teachers' individual achievements into an orchestrated school result.

114.   This will change with the introduction of national standards in three subject areas (German, Maths and first Foreign Language). The increasing standardisation in the Austrian school system will create more transparency in what the students have to achieve in each of the stages of progression in the students' school career paths. The introduction of result-based exercise types and national tests will give teachers the chance to compare and contrast their students' results with those of regional or national averages. School leaders have a key role in using the evidence to enable teachers to enhance teaching and learning in their classes (cf. Schluga, 2006, p. 162).

Q4.3 Forms of school accountability

115.   There has not been much tradition of school accountability in Austrian schools, but recent challenges caused by PISA results have caused intensified discussions about a system-wide quality assurance system with different layers of accountability, which is presented in table 4.3/1 (from Eder et al., 2002).

Table 17/4.3.   National Quality Accountability System (Eder et al., 2002, p. 31)
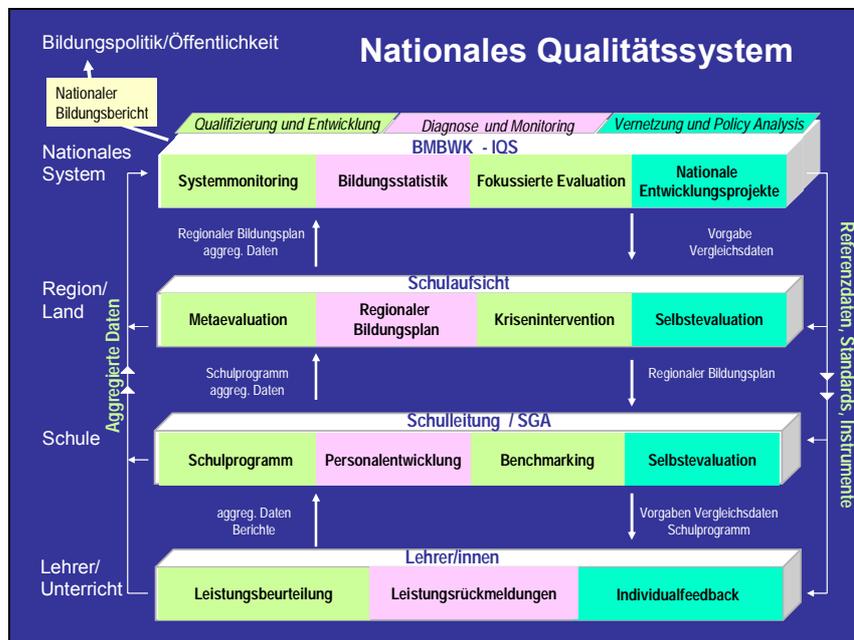
116.   The model in table 17/4.3, which has been suggested by a working group of the Ministry of Education, depicts the accountability functions on each of the levels of the system. At the level of teaching and learning, it is the teachers' responsibility for quality assurance measures through assessments, feedback etc. On the school level it is the head of school together with the democratically chosen representatives of teachers and parents and students, respectively. They have to evaluate their actions to fulfil the goals of the school programme and feedback to the other levels. On the regional level it is the inspectorate which is in charge of meta-evaluation and the fulfilment of the regional development plan. On the national level it is the task to use the data from the other levels for system monitoring to make sure that the whole system is "on track" and has to feed back data to the different levels and regions again in order to stimulate further development. The Future Commission (*Zukunftskommission*) has made similar suggestions (Haider et al., 2003). However, the model presented is not enforced yet, because there has been a change of government, and a new Minister has only been

appointed recently. The following table 4.3/1 gives a more detailed perspective of the different actors responsible for both internal and external evaluation.

Table 18/4.3.   Overview of approaches to school evaluation in Austria (Eurydice, 2000/01, 2003a, p. 4)

Tasks evaluated		Evaluators		
		External evaluation	Internal evaluation	Joint evalua-tion
Educational tasks	**Imparting of skills and knowledge**	Schools Inspectorate	Head teacher *Schulforum* or *Schulgemeinschaft sausschuss*	Not evaluated [1]
	Education, counselling, supervision	Schools Inspectorate	Head teacher *Schulforum* or *Schulgemeinschaft sausschuss*	Not evaluated
Administrative tasks	**Staff administration**	Schools Inspectorate [2]	Headteacher[2]	Not evaluated
	Administration of operating expenses	Not evaluated[3]	Not evaluated[3]	Not evaluated
	Administration of capital assets	Schools Inspectorate [4]	Headteacher[4]	Not evaluated
	Information/information resources, external relations/ partnerships	Schools Inspectorate	Headteacher[5] *Schulforum* or *Schulgemeinschaft sausschuss*	Not evaluated

[1] Austria does not have joint evaluation.

[2] The Schools Authority (Schools Inspectorate) is in charge of personnel policy (e.g. hiring and assigning a teacher to a particular school). However, head teachers are responsible for the staff at their school, so it is they who initially evaluate teachers. The Schools Inspectorate evaluates the teachers in its capacity as an overriding authority.

[3] Head teachers (in cooperation with the *Schulforum* or the *Schulgemeinschaftsausschuss [school community]*) take the initial responsibility for operating expenses, with the school's task limited to administering any allocated funding. The municipality performs the controlling. This is not an evaluation as such, but merely a control of the handling of finances.

[4] The administration of capital assets (school maintenance) falls under the purview of the municipalities, *Länder* [provincial] and federal government as agencies responsible for schools. However, it is the duty of the head teacher to properly manage any capital assets, evaluate their condition, and report any deficiencies observed in the school property and its facilities. The agencies responsible for schools review the head teacher's reports of deficiencies in their capacity as external evaluators and have to eliminate from them any shortcomings if deemed necessary.

The Schools Inspectorate is also responsible for ensuring that material resources in the school are handled in a cost-effective, economical, and appropriate manner.

[5] Head teachers serve here as internal evaluators. For example, they must evaluate whether the teachers are fulfilling their duty to keep parents informed, whether they report on school activities in accordance with any decisions in this regard, and so forth.

Q4.4 Monitoring students' disciplinary behaviour, learning progress and outcomes

117.   Since the Austrian school system does not posses a national system for quality assurance yet, the monitoring and control takes place more or less informally, depending on the structure of the system and the individuals involved. This happens at the interfaces of the school types, because in a stratified school system the pupils' and students' achievements decide on their future paths through the school system combined with qualification awards. This happens for the first time after four years of primary schools, where pupils can move on either to general secondary schools or to academic secondary schools, when the grade average decides on the choice of school. Because of the limitations of places in academic secondary education the school authorities have a good overview of the pupils' achievement as far as grades are concerned. A similar situation exists at the end of upper secondary education, where students have to take written and oral exams (*Matura*) which are a prerequisite for attending university studies. The teachers have to present their assignments to the regional education authority and the examination papers have to be checked by the inspectorate, additionally the external chairperson is allowed to exert influence concerning the grades of the students and attends the oral examinations. Thus students achievements are monitored at the regional level, and the data can be used as reference markers for individual schools.

118.   Through the introduction of educational standards the monitoring of students' learning progress and outcomes will be measurable more systematically, since the test results in the main subject areas will be available for different schools or regions. These tests are presently piloted all over Austria and are expected to be enforced as a compulsory element in the school system in the school year 2007/08.

119.   Disciplinary behaviour is usually only monitored on the class or school levels. A so-called early warning system (*Frühwarnsystem*) was introduced by the Ministry of Education as a regulatory device which asks teachers to contact parents immediately if they notice a decline in a pupils' or student's achievement or behaviour and to arrange a meeting to jointly find a solution to the respective problem(s) with a view to improvement. Only if schools fail in settling problems on the school level, the local educational authority will be involved.

Q4.5 Monitoring curriculum development and implementation

120.   School autonomy has brought schools some flexibility in curriculum development and implementation. The national framework for the different stages and types of school – within given limits - allow to introduce new curricular areas or change the number of hours dedicated to certain subject areas. They can also move some hours from one school year to the following or introduce focused teaching in a particular area by using more lessons than schools would regularly do (e.g. with a particular school profile). The national framework offers core elements which have to be covered by all schools and elective parts which the schools can decide on autonomously. In upper secondary education, the number of compulsory written exams has been limited to one per semester and additional forms of assessment can be decided on by the schools.

121. The new curricula offer the schools more freedom and flexibility in the implementation to their own needs and expectations. It is the school leaders' task to decide on the local interpretation and regulation, but usually it is the subject teachers or subject teams which decide on the local curricular agreements, and the school head only interferes if agreement cannot be reached on the teachers' level. In upper secondary education, the decision-making process is more a cross-curricular one, which brings the school head more into the leadership function. Private schools which act according to the national framework have the same flexibility and autonomy. Private schools working according to their own curricula are more autonomous, but the students' qualifications might not be acknowledged within the public school system.

Q4.6 Teaching responsibilities of school leaders

122. In compulsory schools the teaching responsibilities of the school leader vary according to the size of the school, for each additional class the teaching responsibility is reduced. If a school has six classes, the teaching responsibilities for the school leader are reduced 50%. If a school has more than eight classes he or she does not have any teaching responsibilities - except for substitution if a teacher cannot perform his or her duties at short notice.

Q4.7 Teacher observation / peer coaching / mentoring

123. The duties of head teachers have changed a lot as the education system has became more autonomous. Whereas they previously used to be mainly responsible for administrative tasks, deregulation has brought the head teachers an increase in pedagogical leadership duties. As the direct supervisor of all teachers and other employees working at the school, the head teacher is the connecting link between the school staff, the pupils and their parents and legal guardians. The head teacher has to draw up a work schedule and must monitor the teaching work done by the staff, with the emphasis on providing advice.

124. According to the law, it is the duty of the school leader to observe and evaluate the teaching of his or her teachers. Furthermore, he or she should act as a mentor. In reality, most school heads are mentors and instructors for their teachers – for example, the school heads assist their teaching staff when they have to solve conflicts with other teachers, with pupils or parents. Concerning the evaluation and mentoring of teachers, most school leaders neglect this duty for several reasons. In small schools, it is often because of the close collegiality, in large schools it is often the number of staff which is difficult to reach individually. Peer coaching is not an established practice in Austrian schools, although there seems to be demand. School heads who are members of the Leadership Academy learnt collegial peer coaching as an important vehicle for bring about change. That is why some of them have introduced collegial peer coaching as professional development at their schools.

Q4.8 The role of school leadership in evaluating teacher performance

125. The criteria for the assessment of teachers through school heads is regulated by the public services act: It is their duty to monitor the teachers' performance in alignment with the curriculum prescriptions. In reality, however, teacher evaluation by school leaders does not take place on a regular basis. Furthermore, the school head has no autonomy to reward or sanction teachers, but if they want to become active in those areas, they can involve the next higher levels of authority. They can, for example, ask for gratifications (on a limited budget) for teachers who are doing extra work, which will be granted by the regional or national level. If teachers fail to do their work expectedly, the regional education authority has to be informed and formal

inspections are executed, which deal with such cases (in conjunction with the teachers union).

126.   Experts interviewed for this study point out that an annual meeting between a school leader and his or her or her teachers should be compulsory, which should last at least two hours and give the teachers and the school leader the opportunity to discuss occurring problems or other important matters. In large schools, annual meetings with each individual teacher are not possible; simply because there is usually not enough time to do so. Therefore, political discussions are presently going on with a view to establishing a middle management or a permanent deputy who could give the school leaders more time for such meetings.

Q4.9 Professional development of teachers

127.   Until recently, it used to be the practice that teachers – or in larger schools, subject-departments - themselves decided on their own which in-service activities they wanted to take part in, which are usually offered by the regional in-service training institution. They only had to apply to the school head and the regional education authority to be granted permission for participation. The new laws regulating the yearly time budget for the work of the teachers in compulsory schools involves the school leader more in steering in-service activities in his or her school. The planned introduction of school development plans asks for professional development policies in school. Budgetary reasons have also contributed to a streamlined decision-making process about the internal policy on which teacher should attend which in-service activities. The school head is challenged to make good use of sending the appropriate teachers according to the needs of the school. This policy should also make teachers more responsible for bringing home the added value of their professional learning to the schools. A study on the implementation of the new law commissioned by the ministry shows that there have been mixed experiences implementing this professional development policy (cf. Altrichter et al., 2004, and Seel et al., 2006).

128.   In the last century, there has been the tendency to invest more into school-based in-service activities, which involve all members of staff rather than sending individuals to external places for acquiring knowledge and skills. Professional development is offered on all levels of the system, depending on what is needed for whom and for what reason. In national innovation projects, this is usually organized nationally to implement innovative practices system-wide. Tensions exist about the timing of in-service activities. Whereas teachers often expect professional development to be part of their regular teaching schedules, the national regulations ask for the attendance of in-service activities outside the actual teaching commitment, e.g. during school holidays. Whereas this has been practice for some time in compulsory education, where in-service training is usually offered both in the first and last weeks of the school holidays, academic secondary teachers do not expect in-service to take place outside their regular teaching schedule. The school leader is often in the position to balance these points of view.

Q4.10 Do particular leadership practices exist which are more conducive to learning-centred leadership practices in schools?

129.   No published evidence available. There are some evaluation studies as part of international projects in which Austria took part (such as Carpe Vitam *Leadership for Learning[5],* see also Schratz, forthcoming), which cannot be seen as nationally representative. However, a research project funded by the Ministry of Education was started in 2006, which looks at leadership practices in schools of participants of the Leadership Academy with a particular view on learning. The results will not be available until the end of 2007.

Q4.11 Is there any evidence based on published research conducted in your country that particular contexts and conditions are more conducive to learning-centred leadership practices in schools?

See Q4.10.

Q4.12 Policies strengthening learning-centred leadership

130.   Several initiatives have been introduced by the Ministry of Education to support learning-centred leadership, but not only restricted to the school head, but also for the teachers. An example for this is the introduction of the early warning system (*Frühwarnsystem*), a regulation which asks teachers to contact parents immediately if they notice a decline in a pupils' or student's achievement or behaviour and to arrange a meeting to jointly find a solution to the respective problem(s) with a view to improvement. The impact of this policy measure can be noticed in the decrease of retention numbers.

131.   In 2005 a policy initiative was introduced which concerns particularly the school head: school specific remediation policy (*standortbezogenes Förderkonzept*). Each school has to develop a school specific programme how each individual pupil or student receives the support he or she needs to be best supported in his or her learning. Since teachers had so far been only used to remedial teaching classes, it meant to change their practices according to a more systemic way of looking at remediation. Most school leaders find it very demanding to introduce an effective programme dealing with all individual students. It is too early to find evidence on the effectiveness of this policy.

132.   In the context of the Leadership Academy, Wilfried Schley and Michael Schratz (2004) have developed a diagram illustrating a chain of effects in their leadership work serving as a mental web of meaningful relationships that point the way from leading to learning and back again (see table 4.12/1). This chain of effects shows in theory how leadership impacts on people, planning, culture and structure and how, through interaction produces action and results related to the school's goals. It is used as a professional development tool to sensitise school heads in linking up leading with learning.

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[5] Carpe Vitam is an international research and development project funded for three years until December 2005 by the Wallenberg Foundation in Sweden, with further financial support from participating countries. The project is directed from the University of Cambridge by John MacBeath, and co-directed by David Frost and Sue Swaffield. Team leaders in other countries are: George Bagakis (University of Patras, Greece), Neil Dempster (Griffith University, Brisbane), David Green (Centre for Evidence Based Education, Trenton, New Jersey), Lejf Moos (Danish University of Education), Jorunn Möller (University of Oslo, Norway), Bradley Portin (University of Washington) and Michael Schratz (University of Innsbruck, Austria).

Table 19/4.12.   Chain of effects from leadership to learning and back (Schley & Schratz, 2004, p. 4)
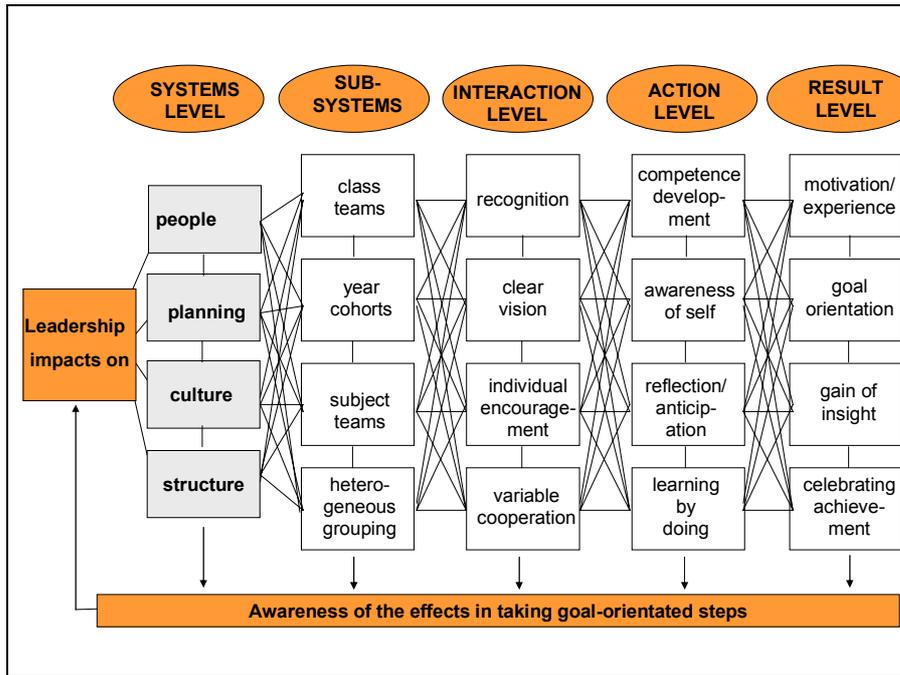
Q4.13 What issues have the highest priority for future policy development in strengthening learning-centred leadership?

133.   The highest priority will be the implementation of the education standards after the pilot phase in 2007. Since the step from an in-put orientation towards an out-put orientation is like a paradigm shift for Austrian schools, it will be necessary to support schools to deal with evidences from national tests on how to improve teaching and learning. Especially school heads will have to acquire learning-centred leadership competences. Therefore this will be a policy priority in the years to come.

136.   When class size will be limited to 25 pupils/students per class beginning in the school year 2007/08, a system-wide initiative is planned to link this reduction of class size with individualised instruction (including quality assurance). This initiative by the Ministry of Education aims at using the policy measure for reducing the teacher-student relation as a step towards quality development through strengthening learning-centred leadership.

CHAPTER 5: THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF SCHOOL LEADERS' ROLE

Q5.1 Supply and quality of school leaders

137.   Generally speaking, the demand of school leaders is covered by the supply, but sometimes there is little choice because of the small number of applicants for an advertised position. The balance of supply and demand varies according to the geographical region where the individual school is situated and according to the type of school. If a school leader position is advertised, in a preferred area, there are usually more than enough applications, but if it is a remotely situated regional school, it might be difficult to fill the vacant position. Additionally it is more difficult to find a school leader for a primary school and a general secondary school than for an academic lower and upper secondary school. The reasons might be that Austrian teachers are not very mobile and that a school leader working at a primary or general secondary school has to manage all duties without secretarial assistance. Moreover, the extra pay for a school leader is not very high.

Q5.2 Is there any monitoring of the supply versus demand situation of school leaders?

138.   A formal monitoring of the supply versus demand of school leaders does not take place. Nevertheless, several experts who were interviewed for this study mentioned that the demand of school heads is covered by the supply and that they did not notice any obvious changes in the recent years. For years there have been discussions about and suggestions for offering courses to encourage advanced teachers to apply for headship positions, but they have not yet materialised on a large scale. This might possibly attract more teachers to apply for leadership positions, which could enrich the quality of applicants to choose from.

Q5.3 How has the total number and composition of school leaders changed over the past 10 years?

139.   Interviewees for this study mention that the entry age into headships has become lower and that women apply for positions in academic secondary schools with a view towards a gender balance.

Q5.4 Is there any evidence on the reasons why qualified candidates may choose not to apply for leadership positions?

140.   There is no research evidence why qualified candidates may not apply for a leadership position. Nevertheless, experts interviewed for this study mention that one possibility not to apply could be the lot of administrative work a school leader has to cope with, which does not allow implementing pedagogical ambitions. Therefore they rather prefer remaining classroom teachers than become administrators. Furthermore, qualified candidates may choose not to apply because the appointment offered does not comply with their general situation, for example if the school is too far away from their place of residence.

Q5.5 Is there any evidence on the proportion of teachers who aspire to school leadership positions as part of their career path?

141.   There is only informal evidence from discussions with people and expert interviews which show that there are many good teachers who would also be good school heads, who never apply for a position as a school leader, because of all the administrative work. School leaders at primary and lower general secondary schools

do not have a secretarial support. Consequently, former teachers, who chose their profession because they like to work with children, envisage themselves only doing administrative jobs in a school leadership position. Therefore, the number of teachers aspiring to school leadership positions as part of their career path is not very high.

Q5.6 How are vacancies of leadership positions determined, applications invited, and successful candidates chosen?

142.   If a vacancy for the position of a school head is advertised, anybody with the necessary qualifications is invited to apply – very often teachers from the same school apply. First, a committee at the school level screens the applicants through presentations, interviews etc. and choose three candidates and rank them in their desired order giving reasons explaining their choice. At this point, the short list is handed to the regional school board, which might change the rank order, but cannot choose other candidates who are not on the short list. In 70-80% of the cases, the first rated candidates on the short list are accepted, in 20-30% this is not the case. Finally, the regional education authority, supported by the teachers union, the local community and the school inspector(s), chooses a candidate from this list. In the case of federal schools, the shortlist is sent to the Ministry of Education and has to be approved. The newly appointed school leader is first installed provisionally for a period of four years, during which he or she has to attend a management training course.

Q5.7 On what bases do school leaders occupy their leadership positions?

143.   The first contract of a newly appointed school head is for four years, which is a kind of probation phase. During this period, he or she has to attend the compulsory management course offered by the regional in-service training institution (which will become part of the *Pädagogische Hochschule* in the future). After graduating from the management course and after proving that he or she has done a satisfactory job leading the school, the new school leader's appointment is made definitive. This procedure is true for almost all new heads finishing the first four years of their headship.

144.   Some experts who were interviewed for this study would prefer a newly appointed school leader who had not taught at the same school before. A former teacher as school leader has to act as a superior to his or her former colleagues, which might cause difficulties to implement his or her opinion, visions and actions.

Q5.8 How frequently are school leaders evaluated and decisions made about their employment renewal? What processes and criteria are involved?

145.   Schools, head teachers, and teachers are externally evaluated by school inspections carried out by inspectors from the regional or district education authority, as stipulated in the Federal Schools Inspectorate Act. The district school inspectors are responsible for schools of one or more types, subject areas, or forms within their respective federal state. Federal school inspectors support their provincial school inspector colleagues, inspecting general compulsory schools within one or more political districts. In addition, there are also subject inspectors who are responsible for teaching subjects depending on the area and type of school. However, there is no formal inspection policy for the evaluation of school leaders. The school inspectors apply the school regulations and laws as evaluation criteria.

146.   School leaders are initially appointed provisionally for four years. After these four years their appointment is usually made definitive if they have done their work satisfactorily and have completed the compulsory management training programme. If school leaders' work is regarded as ineffective, for example if they do not possess the

necessary competences to solve occurring problems, they can be dismissed by the education authority after evaluation by the inspectorate. The procedure is the same for all schools. Recently, the salary situation for civil servants has been publicly discussed especially their status of life long tenure. New contracts of teachers do not automatically lead to full civil servant positions, which will also have a consequence for (the dismissal of) future school leaders.

Q5.9 Leadership salary scales

147.   The salary of school heads varies according to the size of school and the length of service. The basic gross annual salary is the amount paid by the employer in a year, including bonuses, increases and allowances, such as those related to the cost of living, the 13th month and holidays, etc. less employers' social security and pension contributions. This gross basic salary takes into account no taxation at source.

148.   In Table 20/5.9 the minimum and maximum basic gross annual salaries of school heads in primary education are shown. The minimum salary is the salary received by school heads at the start of their career. The maximum salary is the salary received by school heads after a certain number of years of salary – it is only linked to one criterion, the length of service.

Table 20/5.9.   Salaries of school heads (Eurydice, 2005, p. 238)

Figure D51: Minimum and maximum basic gross annual salaries of school heads in primary education, relative to per capita GDP, 2002/03

	BE fr	BE de		BE nl		CZ	DK		DE		EE		EL		ES		FR	IE	IT	CY	LV		LT		LU
		a	b	a	b		a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b					a	b	a	b	
▢	142	130	144	123	126	98	126	139	171	187	115	154	150	164	141	166	119	101	87	248	137	195	68	94	⊗
■	176	166	179	185	188	145			190	210	149	200	175	189	199	226	186	208	153	352	137	195	127	180	⊗

	HU	MT	NL	AT		PL	PT		SI	SK	FI		SE	UK-ENG/	UK-		IS		LI	NO		BG		RO
				a	b		a	b			a	b		WLS/NIR	SCT		a	b		a	b	a	b	
▢	(:)	141		102	116	119	148	156	198	71	113	121	103	214	199		128	173	(:)	104	127	73	84	68
■	(:)	171	150	175	191	142	360	368	278	113	162	176	186	504	268		144	208	(:)			103	117	106

Sources: Eurostat and Eurydice.

Q5.10 Salaries, financial and non-financial benefits and working conditions of school leaders compared with those of teachers or equivalent positions

149.   The salaries of school heads vary according to different factors. School heads have higher salaries than teachers do, at all levels of the system. The salary of school heads working at a smaller school is lower than the salary of those working at a larger school. The salary also varies according to the length of service of a school head. The contrast between the maximum and minimum basic salaries of school heads as a means of assessing their prospects for an increase in their basic salary throughout their career is not as marked as in the case of teachers. In financial terms, the careers of school heads progress more evenly. Although the salary increases of school heads during their career are not exceptional, their maximum salaries remain higher than those of their teacher colleagues given that their starting salaries are higher.

150.   Since school heads get a special supplementary allowance on their teacher salary varying according to the types of schools, the salary situation has remained similar for the past 10 years. The working conditions have not changed a lot, but the time allocation to administrative work has increased. This is why many school leaders complain about the amount of management and the little time they have left for

leadership work. Like teachers, heads in academic lower and secondary education get higher salaries than those at compulsory schools receive.

Q5.11 Is there any evidence on whether those who become school leaders view this as a long-term career commitment or a short-time assignment?

151.   Most school leaders view their profession as a long-term career commitment; most of them stay school leaders until their retirement. Some of them apply for positions at the level of inspectorate. Apart from this career step there are hardly any other promotion opportunities. Since most school leaders view their profession as a long-term career commitment discussions on the policy level lead to the proposal for the introduction of a temporary school leader. New school leaders would be appointed for a limited period of four or five years and reappointed in case of success. According to this philosophy school leaders would be motivated to perform well and to attend professional development courses to be reappointed.

Q5.12 Summarise the date on the numbers of school leaders who leave the profession each year – if possible by age, gender, leadership post, extent of leadership experience, reasons given, and destination.

No evidence available.

Q5.13 The retirement age for school leaders

152.   In Austria the retirement ages are 65 years for men and 60 years for women. For each year of early retirement the monthly payments are reduced by 4,2%. Many school leaders work until their retirement age, the average age of school leaders who retire is 63 years. Until recently, a lot of teachers retired earlier than school leaders because of attractive incentives to do so.

Q5.14 Are there any instituted processes for leadership succession?

153.   There is no institutionalised form of leadership succession. If a school head retires, the position is advertised again and anybody who is eligible can apply. This might sometimes lead to a disruption in the development of a school's mission. However, schools with an explicit orientation or profile (like languages, ICT, sports etc.) can advertise their vacancies with that particular orientation in order to keep up the quality of the programmes offered. It is up to the deciding authorities to obey that line, but it is not a legal obligation.

Q5.15 What policy initiatives have been undertaken or are planned to improve the recruitment and retention of effective school leaders?

154.   Because of public criticism on too strong an influence of political parties through their affiliated teacher unions policy measures have been undertaken, both on the national and federal levels with a view towards more transparency in the recruiting process. This has lead to more competence oriented selection criteria, such as assessment centres, potential analyses and similar. The introduction of such procedures, which are partly commissioned by private firms, has helped to raise the standards in the selection of school leaders, but hiring firms or buying software makes the process costly. The new development has also motivated teachers to apply for positions who previously would not have done so for reasons believing they would not stand be recruited.

Q5.16 What issues have the highest priority for future policy development in attracting and retaining effective school leaders?

155.   A pressing issue in compulsory schools is the establishment of a new management structure in order to take off some administrative work from school leaders. Different models have been discussed in this respect. For example, four or five schools in the same district could have one person responsible for their administrative work. This person with the appropriate skills could do the work of all five schools in less time. Another advantage of this system would be the demand for fewer school leaders, a situation which could help appointing the right people and offering the position to the best applicant. However, no concrete policy measures have been put into practice.

CHAPTER 6: TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF SCHOOL LEADERS

Q6.1 Are there major concerns about school leaders' preparation, development or certification?

156. For more than 10 years, Austria has had a systematic training for newly appointed school heads in the initiating phase into school leading. After that, however, all further professional development activities are not compulsory. Only recent policy decisions have introduced a national programme for further professionalism. The main challenges for preparing school leaders in Austria lie in the following areas:

1) Personnel Development: The decentralisation process of schools has shown that the heads need more capacity in leading their teachers and non-teaching staff towards the fulfilment of pressing tasks.
2) School Development: Most heads were trained as teachers so they lack the capacity to do work on the organisational level, e.g. preparing a development plan, doing evaluative work etc.
3) Opening up school towards its environment: Heads still see schools as the main place of learning in today's society; they find it difficult to see school in the social context of other actors around it.
4) Paying more attention to the results of teaching and learning (outcome orientation).

Q6.2 What are the main pathways by which people become school leaders?

157. All school leaders have a similar background, they are former teachers. Generally, there is no alternative pathway towards becoming a teacher, except for vocational schools and colleges, where people who have joined the teaching force can be recruited from the world of work. However, they also have to attend courses in pedagogy, didactics etc. to become eligible for a regular teaching position. A particular career path by which teachers become school leaders can be found among members of the teacher union, the employee representation or political parties. Public discussions have lead to the introduction of assessment procedures in the selection process which should push political influence into the background.

Q6.3 What are the major requirements to qualify for school leadership positions and who sets them?

158. The main "qualification" which is necessary to apply for a position of a school leader, is to have enough teaching experience, and they are expected to have very good results in previous evaluations. Generally, teachers only apply for positions of school leaders of the type of school they have a teaching licence for, that means they have to have the legal teaching qualification (certificate) for secondary schools or compulsory schools. These pedagogical guidelines were set by the Ministry of Education and are applied all over Austria for all types of schools. In private schools the criteria may vary, particularly in church schools head positions are decided by the respective church authority, but if they are publicly recognized, the applicants have to comply with the regulations of the teaching qualification of the respective school type. An informal requirement to a leadership position can be found in a high number of school heads who as former teachers were members of the teacher union or belong or are close to a political party.

Q6.4 The basic regulatory framework and legislation that applies to school leadership preparation programmes

159.   The legal basis for the appointment of school leaders was regulated in 1996 in the LDG (*Landeslehrer-Dienstrechtsgesetz* [Provincial Service Code]) on the provincial level and the BDG (*Beamten-Dienstrechtsgesetz* [Civil Service Code]) on the national level. School heads are first appointed provisionally for four years, but the condition for an extension of the appointment depends on the completion of a course in management training, which has to be completed within the four years when taking up the position. Moreover, the school leader also has to prove his or her capabilities.

160.   Initially the training for school leaders was limited to a preparation for handling legal and administrative tasks since these were new to practicing teachers applying for a head position. However, the more autonomy was given to schools, the more appropriate qualifications had to be found. A task force was set up by the Ministry of Education to develop a more systematic training programme for newly appointed school heads.

161.   Traditionally, in German speaking countries qualification programmes for school heads were derived from behaviorist theories relying heavily on 'instruction'. This was in turn related to a central hierarchical system. In the implementation of the programme, however, it became increasingly apparent that a one-dimensional approach to effectiveness was unworkable and that organizational development could not be simply standardized in this way. Given the limited effectiveness of such standardized training programmes, the task force was looking for a more open-minded approach which seeks rather to promote new constructivist approaches to learning, which are represented in the following table (cf. Schratz, 1999).

Table 21/6.4/1: Paradigms of educational concepts and their theoretical premises

DIRECTION Aspects	BEHAVIORISM	COGNITIVISM	CONSTRUCTIVISM
Paradigm	Instruction paradigm	Production paradigm	Construction paradigm
Way of thinking	reproductive thought	productive thought	systemic thought
Direction of development	Improve school	change school	re-think school
Criterion of success Example	achievement is the reconstruction of the pre-determined contents the school management is responsible for compliance with the legal aspects of the work-at-hand	achievement is the search for the best method of solving the problem implementation of school-autonomous measures and integration with the decision-making committee	achievement is the process of cognition in which a new construction of perception follows create new conditions of expenditure as a basis for decision-making
Educational pattern	external guidelines are implemented as closely as possible (e.g. practising techniques of communication)	guidelines are presented for methods of learning – they should be implemented to an optimal degree (e.g. simulating a conference)	methods become apparent along the way; reflection of experiences in context leads to further steps and measures
Role of trainees	passive recipients	active recipients	creative actors

Training activities	training units on · pre-determined methods of learning · repetitive work · external aid	drawing up personal methods of learning on · identifying problems · searching for resources · solving problems	methods of learning prove to be a challenge · actual situation · multiple perspectives · ecological contexts
Social form	individual tasks	co-operative tasks	systemic tasks

162.   The different paradigmatic concepts were the basis for a curricular training design of a six weeks training course, organized in a part-time arrangement so that the newly appointed heads could start working as school leaders in their new position. The programme envisages a course consisting of a "social phase" and an "individual phase", i.e. a phase of self-study. The "social phase" consists of a compulsory "basic module" and a compulsory choice, "extended modules". These seminary modules are to be adjusted to the professional experience of the participants and are not only to arouse reflection, but also, using concrete examples, are to work out significant pedagogical tasks and topics of school leadership. Since the programme is concerned with a comprehensive mixture of various types of schools its participation is regarded as a chance to extend perspectives. 24 working days are allotted for the school management course (240 study units (UE), each 45 minutes). The qualification usually begins each year in summer and should be carried through three or four terms. Part of the course is held during school-free time.

The "basic modules" with the following topics are compulsory:

1. Communication and leadership (with 38 UE = 41/2 days): Basic psychology of leadership; a new comprehension of leadership/guidance; an analysis of approach to dialogue; consultation and discussion of problems.
2. Conflict management (with 38 UE = 41/2 days): work on case examples; personal attitude towards conflict - situations and solutions; nature of conflicts; diagnosis of conflicts; strategies of solving conflicts in concrete terms; dealing with conflict as a managerial task.
3. Lesson supervision: analysis – consultation – assessment (with 22 UE = 3 days): analysis of pedagogical (didactic-methodical) drafts; categories of lesson observation and methods of observation; cycle of consultation on lesson observation; re-registration and feed-back procedures; educational controlling.
4. School development (with 22 UE = 3 days): an analysis of personal conceptions; systemic attitudes and strategies; possibilities of cooperation and team development; simulation of a development process; supportive measures for planning, implementation and evaluation in securing quality.
5. Educational rights, vocational rights, household rights (with 22 UE = 3 days): - an additional module offered for participants listed under the BDG (from general schools of academic secondary education and vocational schools of academic secondary education) – practice-orientated introduction to the basic issue of educational rights, vocational rights and household rights; search strategies,   decision-making   techniques,   phrasing   decisions,   issuing notifications; working out case examples taken from practical examples of the respective participants, concerning educational rights and vocational rights.

Additionally, heads of school of the category LDG are obliged to participate in 2 modules of the voluntary-compulsory "extended module" course. Heads of school of the category BDG are obliged to participate in one such course. Choice can be made from the following modules[2] (with a duration of 3 days respectively):

- Educational rights, vocational rights and household rights (for heads of school of the category LDG) (contents as above)
- Administration and School Administration
  Personal development and collegial discussions
- Meeting techniques – effective discussions
- Time management and self-management
- Project management
- New curriculum – the role of the head of school
- Topics of current interest (Suggestions are orientated according to the priority of the respective educational policy, current necessities and needs of the target group.)

163.   The "Individual Phase", or self-study, is compulsory for approx. 80 study periods, 15 of which are intended for a study of literature, 25 for project work and 40 for further offers of training which are relevant for heads of schools. The individual phase can also be covered by professional learning communities or collegial team coaching. In the course of the study of literature, it is expected that texts which have been chosen by the trainers will not only inspire a more deep and extended analysis of the substance of the course, but that a preparation will be made for new topics, too. The project work is designed to combine theory and practice and should end up in a written account of a project (about 20 pages), which must be in agreement with the supervisor (trainer). Sometimes a portfolio has to be developed. Examples of suitable topics are listed in the study plan: "An account of a school development process or a project in the field of school autonomy, description of the practical implementation of the contents of a seminar and/or the application of literature in the daily task or teachers, keeping a daily written account of the seminar ("innovation diary")." The project is to be carried out during the basic module and to be suitably presented to the other participants (with the use of suitable media – photos, wall newspapers, videos and internet-homepages). The attendance of further training courses for further education which are relevant for heads of schools and the choice of topics depend on personal needs and the information requirements of the respective schools. Naturally, one can take advantage of offers other than those of the regional in-service training institution, if one so wishes. The study plan names topics from which one can choose (e.g. school entrance, school autonomy, certain aspects of management as well as training for special skills required for leadership etc.).

164.   Most of the training programmes for school leaders are offered by the regional in-service training institutions. Presently the in-service training institutions are undergoing a great change. In some experts' minds, this could have an influence on the management training programmes, which are a central element in the qualification of school leaders and which have some influence on how the school leaders will perform in their job. The in-service training institutions will become part of the *Pädagogische Hochschulen*, but the personnel at those new institutions may not posses the competences to train and educate future school heads.

Q6.5 What agencies and/or organisations are involved in this framework and in assuring quality provision? What mechanism and criteria are used to assess and assure the quality of school leadership preparation programmes?

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[2] The "Educational and Teaching Tasks", i.e. the learning/teaching aims as well the contents of the individual modules are classified respectively.

165.   Since the School Management courses for newly appointed school heads are offered by the individual regional in-service institutions, first steps of a national monitoring have been taken. This was installed in 2004 by the sections General Education and Vocational Education of the Ministry of Education in order to supervise the initiatives in school management training across the different school types and throughout Austria. This coordination group consists of representatives of the Federal Ministry, the providers of the training programmes from the provinces and two members of the consortium of school management trainers and mentors. The work of the coordination group concentrates on the quality control of the different management programmes all over Austria and the professional development of trainers. In 2004 they commissioned an evaluation of the management programmes in the Austrian provinces to find out about their effectiveness and to identify possibly new needs by the participants.

Q6.6 Are there any special support or induction programmes for new school leaders?

166.   There is no compulsory provision of induction programmes, but the different provinces offer special support programmes for newly appointed school heads. They are different in character and form, such as coaching, supervision and other regular meetings to exchange experiences of novices and experts. A more structured accompanying induction programme is planned.

Q6.7 What types of professional development options and programmes exist for school leaders?

167.   For a long time there have not been any systematic professional development programmes, but rather short-term options on the regional level. They usually served the introduction of new reform initiatives with a more informative character than a systematic professional development. They are important to keep school leaders abreast with innovation both on the regional and national levels. However, their impact was only limited or focused on a certain thematic orientation.

168.   In 2004, the Austrian Ministry of Education started a Leadership Academy, which addresses heads of Austrian schools as well as executives in the ministry and regional education authorities, member of the school inspectorate and in-service training institutions. It is offered to school leaders who have proven qualifications in the area of school management, school law or school administration (for school heads the certificate of the school management training courses in their first years of practice is a prerequisite). Further information (see Q6.12).

Q6.8 Is participation in professional development programmes a condition of continued employment as a school leader, or for promotion or increased compensation?

169.   Active participation in professional development programmes is expected but not compulsory or a condition of continued employment as a school leader, or for promotion or increased compensation. However, a lot of school leaders and other personnel in leadership position in the Austrian education system take part in the Leadership Academy because they expect it to be a bonus when they apply for higher positions.

Q6.9 Is there any evidence based on published research conducted in your country regarding the features (e.g. content, methods, structure) that school

leadership preparation and development programmes should have to be effective? Has this evidence informed policy development and to what extent?

170.   In 2004, an evaluation study was carried out by the Ministry of Education, in which school leaders who had participated in school management programmes were asked to describe their own competences, and the degree of improvement of these competences through the training programmes. The participants of 17 school management training courses (of the in-service institutions) within the last two years were interviewed by questionnaires. The aim of this evaluation was to get feedback on the self-evaluation of the school leaders' competences and the evaluation on the impact of the training courses throughout Austria. The results form the basis for further improvement (cf. BMBWK, 2005). The school heads were asked to evaluate their own competences and the relevance they attributed to them.

Table 22/6.9.   **Competence self-evaluation and the relevance of the different competences (BMBWK, 2005, p. 17)**

N = 693, means between scale 1 (low) and scale 6 (high)

Abbildung 7:
Kompetenz-Selbsteinschätzungen nach thematischen Bereichen sowie deren Relevanz (Mittelwerte - 693 Befragte)

Bereich	Kompetenz	Relevanz
Gesamt	4,9	
Professionalität, Personalentwicklung	4,8	
Außenbeziehungen	4,9	
Unterrichts-, Schulentwicklung	4,7	
Kommunikation	4,9	
Führung	5	
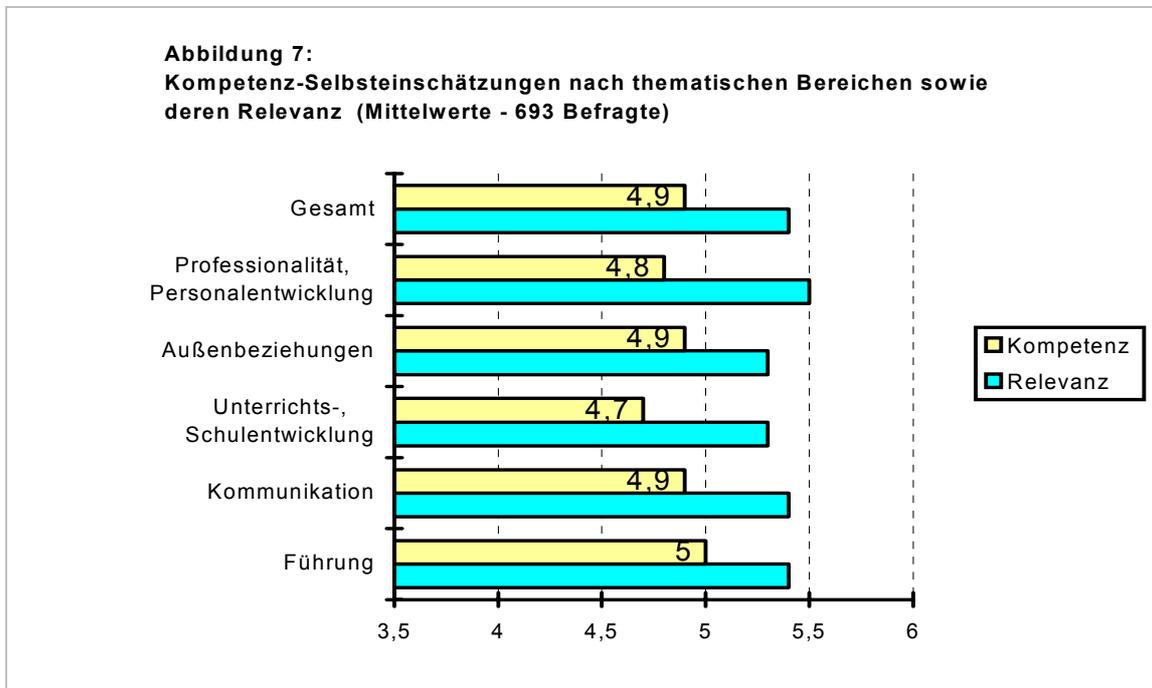
The results depicted in this table show that the school heads rate the relevance of the thematic areas mentioned significantly higher than their own competences.

171.   The following table 6.9/2 shows the impact of the training programmes in school management and the improvement of the participants' competences in their own views. They are compared with the self-evaluation of their own competencies.

Table 23/6.9. **The promotion of competences (through training programmes) and the competence-evaluation (BMBWK, 2005, p. 23)**

N = 692, means between scale 1 (low) and scale 6 (high)

Abbildung 18: Kompetenzförderung und Kompetenzeinschätzung nach thematischen Bereichen (Mittelwerte - 692 Befragte)
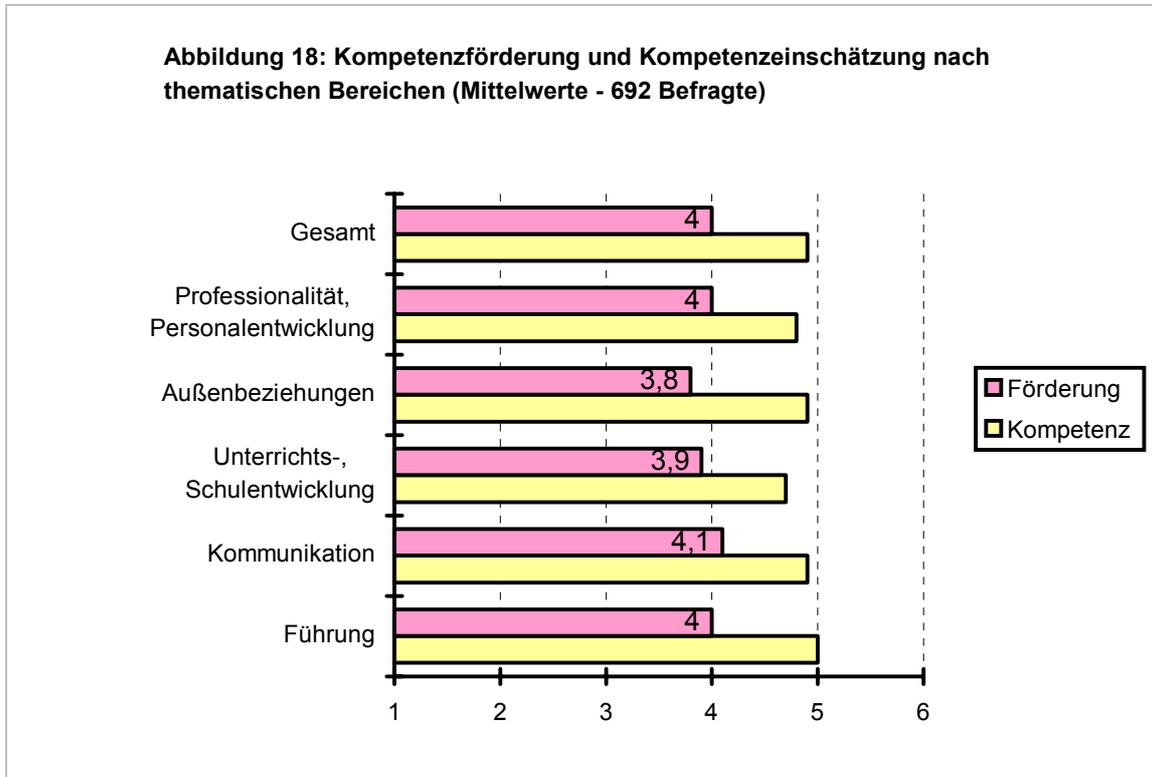
172.	Most of the participants in this study rated their own competences higher than the training effects through the school management training. The findings show that the training contributes to the participants' competences, but also other influences seem to play an important role. Since it is organized as a part-time course over the period of two years, the participants bring in various degrees of competences and make use of various formal or informal experiences in gaining work-related competencies.

Table 24/6.9.   **The central elements of the courses – and their contribution to the promotion of competences (BMBWK, 2005, p. 34)**

N = 689, means between scale 1 (low) and scale 6 (high)

Abbildung 31: Beiträge der zentralen Elemente der Schul-management-Kurse zur Kompetenzentwicklung insgesamt
(Mittelwerte - 689 Befragte)
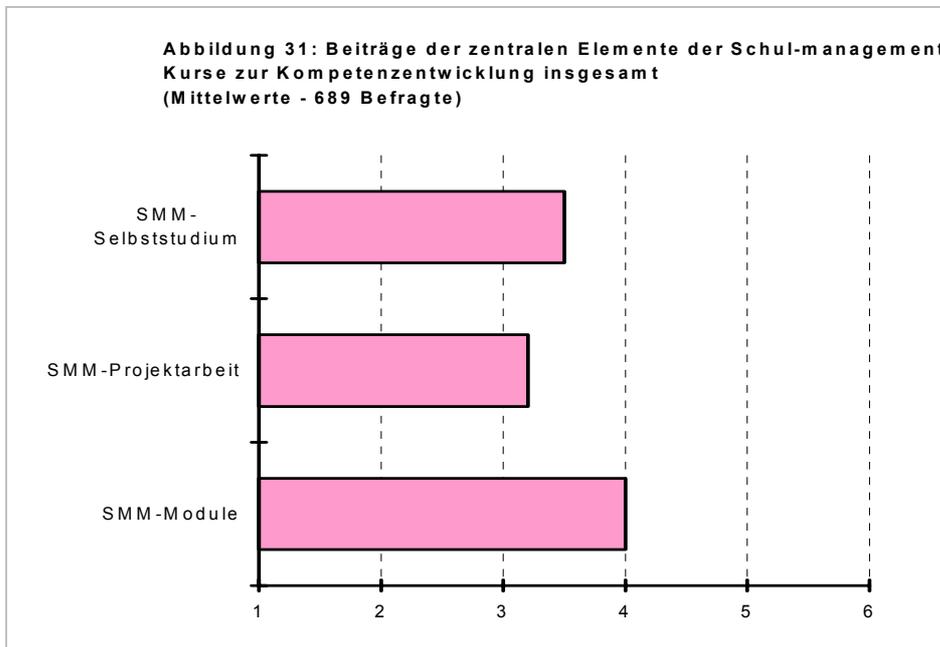
173.   The face to face meetings of the modules are rated highest in contributing to their competencies. It is interesting that the application of their knowledge through the project work at their own schools gets the lowest rates, whereas self-study is rated higher. Table 6.9/4 adds further factors which contribute to the promotion of competences of the participants of the study.

Table 25/6.9.   **The contribution of different factors to competence-promotion (BMBWK, 2005, p. 35)**

N = 622, means between scale 1 (low) and scale 6 (high), highest and lowest contributions

Abbildung 32: Beiträge verschiedener Faktoren zur Kompetenzentwicklung nach Kursen (Mittelwerte von 622 Befragten); 8 Kurse mit jeweils kleiner Fallzahl blieben unberücksichtigt

Legend:
- größter durchschnittlicher Beitrag innerhalb eines Kurses
- kleinster durchschnittlicher Beitrag innerhalb eines Kurses
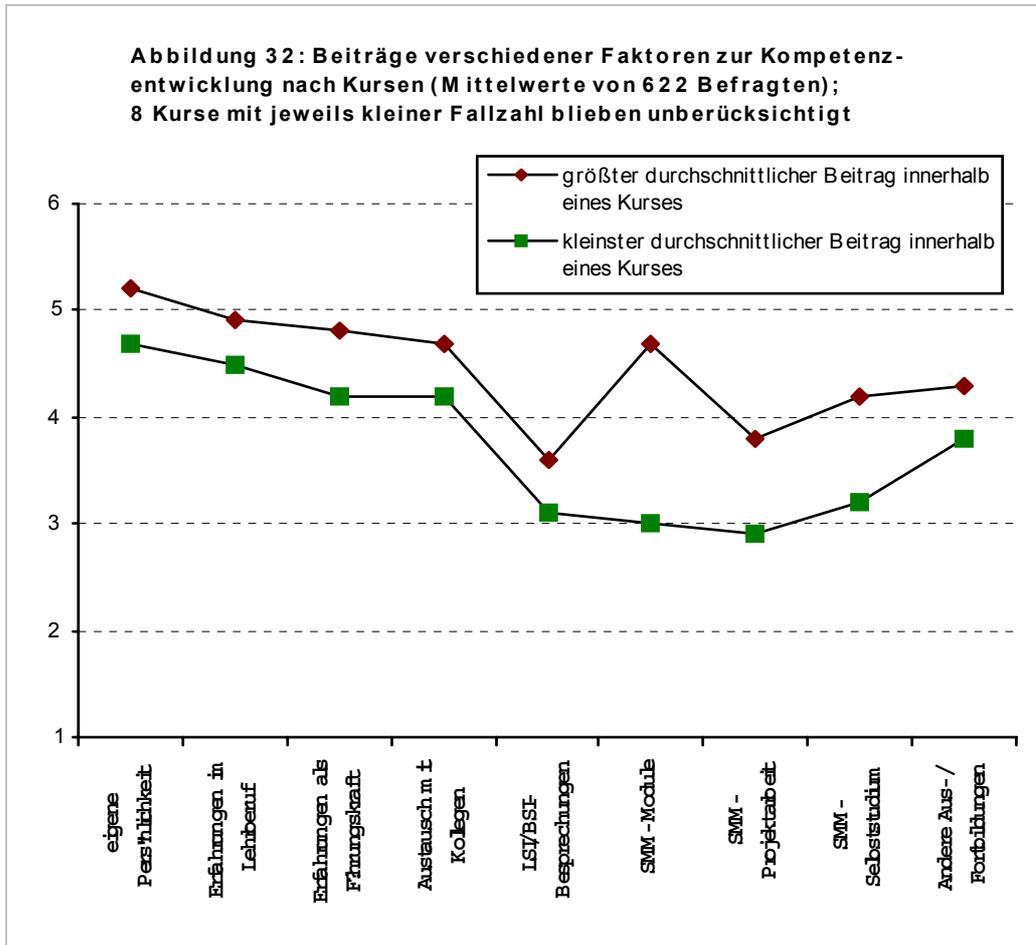
174.   The graphs in table 6.9/4 gives the highest average contribution in a course (upper line sequence) and the lowest average contribution (lower line sequence) according to certain curricular elements of the programmes. The results show that the participants rate their own personality as the highest factor in the development of leader competences, followed by experiences both as a teacher and as a leader, next followed by exchange with colleagues.

175.   All in all 17 individual school management courses offered by the in-service training institutions were evaluated in the study. The overall findings are summarised here:

- The importance of the different competences of school leaders showed many differences.
- The evaluation of the self-competences of the school leaders is generally high, but there are some competencies that could (should) be improved – in each thematically area strengths and weaknesses could be found.
- The division in different groups of competences showed that the evaluation of the own competences is fairly lower in school leaders at higher secondary schools, in schools with more classes (17 or more) and in some federal states.

- The variation in the evaluation of competence-development could be put down to the different courses and to the school types to which the school heads belong. Gender does not play an important role.
- The school management courses do have a great influence on the development of competences of school leaders, but there are significant differences between the effectiveness of the different courses. This offers possibilities of further development, for example the orientation on successful examples which should take place with a focus on the context and on the school type.

176.   The evaluation of the results confirmed the structure of the course system of the management training programme in the past, but some basic themes and questions were raised, which are summarized here:

- The courses have to contribute to the changing role of the school leader (personnel development, resolution of conflicts, TC-competences etc.).
- The course should offer an appropriate balance between self-study, project-work, peer-work, and individual and team coaching.
- The courses should be created with a regional focus; the focus should also be put on competences dealing with methods.
- The providers could optimize the courses, and carry out a systematic exchange of experiences, on the federal level.
- Cooperation between different school types should be emphasized, to a conscious dealing with differences.
- *Leadership Academy*: How to link basic training with professional development.

177.   The first consequences on the level of the course providers (in-service training institutions) have been so far:

- Impulses for an intensive self-evaluation of the courses.
- A greater emphasizes will be put on feedback and feedback culture, also on time and stress management.
- The duration of the courses will be longer, the new school leaders will be looked after by the provincial school inspectors.
- In the future, the school leaders will contribute to the planning of the different courses.
- The future courses will try to create cross-school models.
- Emphasise will be put on internal reflection and co-operation between different trainers.

Q6.10 What policy initiatives have been undertaken or are planned to improve the quality of school leadership preparation, certification, and development?

178.   On the policy level discussions are lead about future quality improvements in the quality of school leadership in general and their training in particular. Future laws should anchor the necessity of continuous professional training and continuous exchange with other school leaders in networks or other forums of cooperation by compulsory prescription. Many school leaders do mention that they already have to cope with a lot of administrative work, that they do not have the time to attend training courses. This leads to a vicious circle (less time for professional development, less competence in dealing with work professionally, etc.).

179.   Within the framework of eFit Austria a pilot project has started all over Austria to include eLearning components in the school management training and evaluate their effectiveness. Different *Länder* are responsible for individual parts of the pilot project (e.g. Vienna: school development, Burgenland: evaluation, Carinthia: school

law, Lower Austria: leadership, Salzburg: ICT, Tyrol: observing teaching,). On the train the trainer level professional development offerings have started to fine-tune the quality of the training modules. It is also planned to continue the evaluation of the school management courses all over Austria as a measure of continuous improvement.

180.   In the past, the development of school leaders usually took place through accompanying (nearly) monopolized programmes of the in-service training institutions. As consequence, these central administrative agencies were able to exert a lot of influence on the selection and the content of the training programmes. Concerning the growing autonomy and the enhancement of the professional quality and the economy, it could be better to establish a graduate programme for school management and school development leading to an academic degree, which should be a requirement to apply for a post as a school leader.

Q6.11 What issues have the highest priority for future policy development in school leadership preparation, certification, and development?

181.   In interviews for this study, experts stressed that school leaders should be more enabled to recognize conflict situations, to handle them and to solve the conflicts; furthermore they should be able to act as mentors and advisors. Furthermore, they should also have experience in project management, and they should posses an appropriate capacity of leadership. They should also see the necessity of continued development also in cooperation with other school leaders and teachers. School leaders should be able to take decisions and to stick to their decisions; they should have visions and "fight" for them. Assessment centres could be provided with simulated situations in which future school leaders should act appropriately. They should also be encouraged to take part in professional development offerings such as the *Leadership Academy* and receive appropriate certificates. In the position of school leaders and other leading positions career women are a minority – like in many OECD countries. Equal opportunities and advancement training programmes should be established.

Q6.12 Recent innovations in relation to school leadership preparation and development programmes

Leadership Academy

Background

182.   In 2004, with the Leadership Academy, the Austrian Ministry of Education, Science and Culture started an innovative concept for the professionalizing of 6.500 school leaders and other executives in leadership positions in the Austrian school system in a very short period of time on the basis of the latest scientific findings on innovation and change. The *Leadership Academy* thus addresses heads of Austrian schools as well as executives in the ministry, school inspectorate and in-service training. It is geared towards managers in leading positions and requires proven qualifications in the area of school management, school law or school administration as application permit.

183.   The *Leadership Academy* comes alive through *generations*. Each *generation* is composed of 250 to 300 participants from the educational system who come from all provinces and school types as well as the ministry and regional education authorities (e.g. inspectorate). This ensures right from the beginning that a systemic impact on change and transformation is possible and that the "whole system" is involved in a joint learning process. The *Leadership Academy* is designed in compliance with the

principles of a learning organisation and cooperates closely with responsible decision makers in the ministry.

Philosophy

184.   The *Leadership Academy* (LEA) creates an intellectual as well as practical focus within a new paradigm of both personal and institutional improvement in leadership capacities on all levels of the school system. The programme for the *professionalism in leadership* works along a new understanding of theory and practice which transforms the educational system by taking the quality of leadership as the starting point for systemic innovation. The *Leadership Academy* creates a learning context aiming to influence the *patterns* and habits of professionals in leading positions with regard to their capacity of developing and transforming their organisations.

185.   The *Leadership Academy* functions as a project organisation and is constituted through *generations*. It is a virtual organisation and not built as a physical environment. It is carried out through a project management team, a scientific research team, an organisational support team linked with the Universities of Innsbruck and Zurich and the Ministry of Education. Network co-ordinators in all Austrian provinces function as the regional support system assuring regional networking. The website www.leadershipacademy.at is the central communication platform which offers participants of the *Leadership Academy* immediate and project focussed support in the members sections.

Goals

186.   The *Leadership Academy* serves the capacity building, qualification and empowerment of leaders in the Austrian educational system. Leaders are motivated to strategically target complex development tasks through priority setting, focussing on solutions, individual development projects and creating organisation profiles. The participants learn to translate *challenges* into innovative development processes and entice and empower staff in their work environment to achieve top performances. The *Leadership Academy* aims at creating a new mentality of leadership which rather draws on trust and authenticity than on power through position. The ultimate goal of the *Leadership Academy* lies in sustainably improving the preconditions and processes of young people's learning in all educational institutions.

Principles

187.   The *Leadership Academy* is committed to the following principles:

- Offering self-organised learning learning opportunities in a strong learning environment.
- Enforcing individual and collective learning through co-operation and collaboration in work-based learning projects.
- Combining personal initiative and responsibility with ownership and pro-active participation.
- Motivation through active participation in a demanding and sophisticated qualification process, which renders the whole system immediate profit through systems thinking in action.
- Diversity through the pluralism of leaders from different school types, regions and levels of the hierarchy, which enhances system learning both horizontally and vertically.

Social Architecture

188.   The *Leadership Academy* is composed as a network building its foundation on the smallest organisational entity, the *learning partnership*. This *learning partnership* is the home base for two participants each who align in a trustful reciprocal coaching partnership. They support each other through explorative questions, help to define project milestones and guide each other through their individual learning processes. Three *learning partnerships* respectively merge in *collegial team coachings* (CTCs) forming learning groups of six, who consult and coach each other collegially.

189.   The collegial team coaching works along a solution-oriented approach, through which working in a "*problem space*" is transferred towards a "*solution space*". This goal oriented, creative and inventive work is the foundation and philosophy of the CTC. The heterogeneous coaching groups of six are combined together on a regional level. These regional groups are co-ordinated by their respective network co-ordinators who co-ordinate all *LEA Generations* in the Bundesländer. One *LEA Generation* consists of 250 to 300 participants forming the *learning partnerships*, *CTCs* and *regional groups*.

Processes

190.   Interested leaders can register online at the LEA homepage www.leadershipacademy.at. According to the regional contingents they are nominated by the regional school authority to the ministry which processes registration and participation.

191.   The kick-off takes place in the *First Forum*, which gives the participants orientation on the philosophy, organisation and structure of the *Leadership Academy* and the underlying processes. They are introduced to the approach of setting their own goals and choosing their personal professional projects which build the heart of their individual development. Centre stage takes the creation of trust into the network, the forming of *learning partnerships* and CTCs and the elaboration of possible innovation themes.

192.   All participants of the same *generation* meet in three *Forums* of three days each, and a final two day *Certification Forum,* which is dedicated to the presentation and appraisal of the results. With the certification process the participants become *members* of the *Leadership Academy*. Between *Forums* the *learning partnerships* and the *CTC*s meet regionally or locally. They reflect on the reactions of their stakeholder groups in their schools, education authorities and inspectoral systems or in-service training institutions considering their individual development projects. These processes develop through cycles of anticipation, action and reflection. The principle of ownership and responsibility is combined with a goal and result, which demands respect, openness and flexibility from everybody involved.

193.   In the *Second Forum* the individual development projects of participants are defined, developed and outlined, using project management methods and tools. In this phase the CTCs are responsible for collaborative reflection on the individual development processes with a view to innovative ideas for changing the patterns of thinking along old solutions. In the *Third Forum* the participants reflect on their mutual experiences of the implementation of their development projects. This is the creative space where scepticism, resistance, conflicts and tensions come to the fore just as much as agreement, motivation and enthusiasm. Different workshops on communication, motivation, conflict resolution and decision making are offered as a support for individual learning and capacity building. Art workshops, dance or survival camp techniques support the holistic learning approach.

194.   In the *Certification Forum* the participants present their professional learning processes and their results – first in the intimacy of their collegial team coaching groups. They then decide collaboratively on one project of their CTC to be presented

to the others in a final phase of parallel sessions. For successful certification each participant of the *Leadership Academy* has to hand in a thesis on individual personal and professional development process in written form.

Research

195.   A tailor-made research approach is used in the Leadership Academy to feed back the findings from the ongoing leadership work into the transformation process: The *Leadership Competence Scale* (LCS) records the participants' competences, which forms a kind of indicator of the innovation potential in the present education system. The same kind of scale is given to the staff at school so that the results can be triangulated with the leaders' results. *MicroArts* about critical incidents in their leadership work written by the participants highlight the dilemmas in leading for change form the discursive base for reinventing oneself and the school. After the graduation of the participants of the first generation , 10 schools have been chosen to analyse and explore in detail the effectiveness of the Leadership Academy.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS

Q7.1 What are the major strengths and weaknesses in current policy on school leadership?

196.   In the Austrian school system the different responsibilities concerning financial, personal and other policy decisions are divided within the ministry, between federal and the provincial school authorities, between the different layers of the school system and the school leaders. Due to the manifold negotiation processes, school leaders are only left with little autonomy in taking decisive decisions for school improvement. Because of the ramified distribution in decision-making throughout the system, there is too much loss of influence, which makes it difficult to perform results-based management for both, the policy makers in the ministry and the school heads at the far end of the line. Both seem to be toothless when it comes to have a sustainable impact on the development of both the system at large and the individual schools in particular.

197.   Many qualified school leaders take a lot of effort into putting their visions and ideas on school improvement and how to establish better learning for their pupils into practice. However, many of those visions never become reality, partly because of the lack of opportunities and resources, partly because of the lack of capacity to do so. Many of them feel overloaded with administrative tasks, especially school leaders of primary and general secondary school levels, who have little or no administrative support. Several provinces are planning or introducing new regional structures which reorganise school administration. It is suggested that all administrative work for a certain number of schools could be organized centrally, and managed by people who have the right skills to do the same work in less time.

198.   The recent coalition agreement of the new government contains the plan to establish a middle management structure for schools with large student numbers (particularly academic secondary and upper secondary academic vocational schools and colleges). Such a middle management could take the burden of administrative work away from the school leaders and distribute leadership within the school.

199.   According to current policy, school leaders in Austria are still "lonely fighters" at their work places. Therefore, leadership is rarely distributed among others with the exception of large professionally oriented upper secondary schools. For the people concerned on all levels of the system - ministry, regional and local education school authority, school heads, teachers - this leads to a high responsibility and agency of individuals, who feel that they have to do "everything". As a consequence, those individuals have acquired a high capacity of problem solving on the operative level. The positive part of this is the individual leaders high competence on all levels, which leads to administrative excellence and motivation of individuals. The negative part of this is that the system has to highly rely on individuals, which on the one hand not too seldom leads to burn-out problems of engaged leaders, on the other hand hinders the introduction of systemic thinking and acting through the distribution of leadership both on the vertical and horizontal levels.

200.   A study on the micro-political situation of school leaders on decision-making in schools reveals that the recent tendency of the ministry to introduce several reform acts concerning the workings of the individual schools have put a high burden on school leaders (cf. Schley & Schratz, 2006). This has caused the work of school leaders to focus more on problem-solving than solution-finding. Therefore, there are more deficits that occupy the capacity of their work rather than there is thinking about next practice, which creates the tendency of vicious circles in problem-solving on the school management level (cf. Krüger & Ebeling, 1991).

201.   Another strength in current policy on school leadership lies in the situation that school leaders have – apart from the missing autonomous decision-making options mentioned – great freedom in leading their schools according to their own leadership expectations. Since there is little external control on the work of the individual school, the school leaders have the chance to operate their school along their leadership abilities. Therefore, you can find schools which are highly estimated among parents, teachers and students, and the school heads have a high reputation. Newspapers and journals regularly review schools on a journalistic level, which creates a lot of publicity. In order to reach a more objective award system, the ministry suggested to advertise a quality seal the schools could apply for, and then they would be assessed according to certain quality criteria. Because of the change of government, this policy suggestion has not yet been put into practice.

202.   Several measures and activities have contributed substantially to strengthening school leadership in Austria. The introduction of mandatory school management training programmes (including measures for training the trainers) has helped to institutionalise the professionalisation of school leaders on all levels of the system. An Austrian-wide pilot project explores innovative practices of blended learning through eLearning components in different content areas. After successful trial phases the products, which are developed in different provinces, will be integrated into the regional training programmes all over Austria.

203.   Whereas new school leaders are mainly confronted with new management challenges in the transition process from being a teacher to becoming a school head, school leaders already in office for several years need further professionalisation on a higher level. The Leadership Academy was introduced as an innovative programme which aims at linking up individual needs of professionals with the requirements of the education system. It recruits school heads of all types of schools and school inspectors from the district and regional levels as well as administrators of regional school boards and of the ministry. This mix of key people from different levels contributes to both horizontal and vertical interchange within the system aiming at sustainability of system-wide leadership.

Q7.2 What are the trends and changes that might be anticipated in future policy development, in both the short and the long term, and what are the highest priorities of future policy development in the field of school leadership?

204.   The trends and changes in future policy development which have the highest priorities in the field of school leadership in Austria are:
- Strengthening the position of school leaders in their function as the persons who are responsible for the improvement of the school and the teaching and learning taking place in it.
- Policy measures for improving system-wide change in school leadership.
- Improving the national quality assurance system with a view to result-orientation and data feedback to school leaders as a basis for school development.

205.   International studies show that successful schools need school leaders who have a certain degree of curricular, personnel and budgetary autonomy. This will have to be achieved through the disentanglement of the complex decision-making structure in the Austrian school system. In the *Bundesländer* (regions) the first steps have been taken to change the administrative level from parallel decision-making bodies to educational "directorates", which are supposed to streamline the hierarchical line. During the coming parliamentary period this process will be continued with a view towards more transparency in decision-making and the distribution of power and responsibility. This process should take into consideration which functions and

autonomous freedom the individual leaders will have in order to be powerful enough and to have the authority in implementing educational reforms on each level. In the long term, school heads could thus gain more autonomy in their field of acting.

206. Successful schools need school leaders who see wider and farther than the range of their own school buildings. Leaders at the respective system level need to engage other levels so that policies and strategies are shaped and reshaped, and the emerging bigger picture is communicated among the people involved. To achieve this discursive development, networks and collaboratives, which partly exist and partly have yet to be initiated, have to be nurtured and supported. Through such collaboration, the dilemmas between top-down versus bottom-up, local and central accountability, informed prescription and informed professional judgement could be dealt with constructively with a view towards system-wide change. To reach such goals policy measures for the training of school heads will have to include the following principles:

- Working with the whole system
- Involving all types of schools and all levels of the system
- Building networks
- Developing both the person and the system
- Creating a mind-set for sustainable change
- Producing system thinkers in action
- Reflecting and connecting
- Linking up leadership with learning
- Using energy as the currency of high leadership competence

207. A national quality assurance system will be needed which links up the different levels of the school system with a view towards monitoring the working of the leaders with different responsibility and linking up processes through the aggregation of data and respective feedback processes. Such a national quality assurance system, which has been proposed by researchers, builds on recognised principles of modern quality management systems and complements traditional long-term procedures to safeguard the quality of the education system. The initiatives QIS (*Qualität in Schulen*: Quality in Schools), launched in 1999, and QIBB (*Qualitätsinitiative Berufsbildung*: VET Quality Initiative, www.qibb.at), introduced in 2004, are quality programmes which have contributed substantially to the development of quality awareness in schools. They will have to be further developed into a national quality framework, which will serve as a steering matrix for all other levels of the system.

208. Development and evaluation plans will be developed at every system level, pursuant to which the development and implementation objectives are evaluated regularly and systematically. Each institutional unit reports to the next management level, which leads to quality reports from the individual school to the ministerial level. Together with the introduction of educational standards and subsequent testing results the school leaders should be able to have feedback on the outcome of the teachers' work, which will render them more evidence to base their decisions on. They will be able to compare and contrast their own work with that of other schools or reference data. Furthermore, the development of result-based steering options will also ask for a new role of the inspection system. Together with the introduction of educational directorates in the provinces, the functions and roles of the school inspectors will have to be re-assessed. This should also lead to a strengthening of the position of the school leaders.

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