The Federal Chancellery is in charge of the Austrian youth strategy at the national level. Due to the federal structure of the state, the competencies are divided between the central organ of the state, the federal government, and the federal states. The areas of state action with regard to the legislature and the executive are clearly assigned to the federal government or the federal states.

On the federal site, the Federal Chancellery is mainly in charge of youth, but parts of the youth policies are implemented in other sectors of a range of ministries. To chaperone the development of the Austrian youth strategy a working committee has been established in 2012. This working group ensures to imply the extracurricular youth work, their expertise and support.

The National Youth Council (Bundesjugendvertretung [1], BJV), the Centre of Competence for Open Youth work (bundesweites Netzwerk offene Jugendarbeit, bOJA [2]) and the National Network of Austrian Youth Information Centres (Bundesnetzwerk Österreichische Jugendinfos, BÖJI [3]) are therefore members of the development group, that is supported by the institute of strategic analysis. This core group is further supported by workgroups on specific subjects as e.g. general and vocational training, employment and entrepreneurship.

The Strategy defines eight fields of action, namely education and training, employment and entrepreneurship, voluntary work, health and well-being, youth in the world, creativity and culture, social inclusion, and participation. These eight fields of action are complemented by strategic framework objectives.

The basis for describing the fields of action in the Austrian youth policy is the EU youth strategy.
2010-2018. Already existing youth policy goals and measures also incorporated in national action plans have been allocated to the 8 areas of activity.

Previous national action plans have been screened in order to get an overview of youth relevant perspectives of these documents. Most youth relevant perspectives were found in the field of general and vocational education. Every educational institution is meant to be a major starting point for any measures to promote and support young people. The national action plan on a balanced diet, on health and well-being, targets young people as well.

**Main Themes**

The development group discusses policy focuses for the Youth Strategy and develops recommendations for relevant measures. Based on this core group and the impulses it creates, working groups and roundtables with additional stakeholders on specific topics are organised.

**Youth Screening**

A further instrument of the Youth Strategy is the Youth Screening initiative. It draws attention to the concerns of young people in all areas of politics and the bureaucracy. Within the different administrative departments, the “Knowledge – Transparency – Latitude” process provides for stable structures. A summary of the KTL model is as follows:

- Providing knowledge about the situation, needs and diversity of the target group (young people) as well as about important youth policy stakeholders at the various levels.
- Providing transparency about important youth policy measures, activities and services of the individual administrative departments as the necessary foundation for youth policy coordination efforts.
- Engendering innovative and creative cooperation between elected officials, government agencies, young people and other stakeholders give everyone involved a new kind of latitude.

The Youth Competence Centre supports administrative departments as they make use of this process.

**Incorporating the Provinces**

Active cooperation with the provincial governments will be a decisive factor in the success of the Youth Strategy in a federally structured country like Austria. With the resolution of April 2013, ranking officials in the individual provincial governments initiated the Youth Offensive 2020. In the wording of the resolution, they declared that “the goals of the Youth Strategy set forth by the Federal Ministry of Science, Research and Economy are in their entirety [commensurate with] their own goals.” The Youth Offensive 2020 in the provincial governments stipulates that numerous structural elements of the Youth Strategy be incorporated in the work of the individual provinces.

**The National Agency for Youth**

**Youth Competence Centre**

The operating unit for the Youth Strategy is the Youth Competence Centre. Established in May 2013, the centre coordinates key activities, offers knowledge and skills, and establishes contact with experts. The goal of the centre is to develop a stable network between a diverse group of youth policy stakeholders. However, the political responsibility for the implementation still lies with the province of the individual government departments and institutions.

Together with BJV, bOJA and BÖJI, and in collaboration with the provincial youth departments, this
competence centre acts as a **National Agency for Youth**.

**Development Group**

A development group was established to guide the Youth Strategy in its efforts to integrate the Youth Council and extracurricular youth work and maintain the expertise and support of these organisations.

The Youth Strategy development group meets monthly and is comprised of

- the National Youth Council,
- the Centre of Competence for Open Youth work in Austria,
- the National Network of Austrian Youth Information Centres,
- the National Correspondent to the European research networks and
- Employees of the Youth Policy Department and the Youth Competence Centre at the Federal Chancellery.

The development group discusses policy focuses for the Youth Strategy and develops recommendations for relevant measures. Based on this core group and the impulses it creates, working groups and roundtables with additional stakeholders on specific topics are organised.

**Policy Monitoring and Evaluation**

The Austrian Institute of Economic Research (**Österreichisches Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung** [ÖWIFO]) conducts a regular progress evaluation with regard to Austria's national Europe 2020 targets as well as the implementation of country-specific recommendations issued to Austria. The most recent evaluation report states that Austria is at a more favourable level than the EU average in all areas.

As of 1 January, 2013, a new impact assessment system (result-oriented impact assessment) was introduced in Austria as part of the 2013 Federal Budget Act. In nine areas of policy (so-called impact dimensions), the effects of draft legislation will have to be presented in a systematic and obligatory way for every draft law (e.g. the financial, overall economic, social and environmental policy effects, and also the effects on women and men, children, consumers and administrative costs).

The impact dimension ‘social affairs’ is sub-divided into five core areas. One of these is intended to illustrate the effects of planned legislative measures on the group of persons at risk of poverty or exclusion as defined in the Europe 2020 Strategy.

In order to make it possible to implement this, a web-based social reform micro-simulation tool (SORESI) was developed which facilitates a quantitative estimation of the impact of specific planned legislative measures on the income situations of the Europe 2020 social target group.

Apart from the issues related to the Europe 2020 social target group, there is also the opportunity to simulate various measures in the field of cash benefits, social insurance and other contributions and income taxes, and to calculate their effects on the risk of poverty, the distribution of income, and their fiscal consequences.

These services are free of charge after registration on the internet.

**Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan**

Reforms within the youth guarantee implementation plan with explicitly mentioned monitoring strategies:
1. Further development of the quality-focused subsidies and supporting instruments within the apprenticeship system (including different measures).

2. Increasing the number of skilled workers
   ○ Means through which change will be measured: Evaluation studies.
   ○ Source of information/planned evaluations: Statistics of apprenticeships; DWH for apprenticeship training subsidies.


4. Further decrease of ESL rate.
   ○ Means through which change will be measured: Planned Evaluation of Youth Coaching as part of the measurement of success of the strategy.
   ○ Source of information/planned evaluations: ESL benchmark, Monitoring at school level (under discussion).

5. New upper secondary level (Oberstufe NEU).

6. Further decrease of grade repetition.

7. Means through which change will be measured: Monitoring of grade repetition rate.


9. Introduction of educational standards

10. Improvements in educational outcomes.
    ○ Source of information/planned evaluations: Testing of educational standards, international assessments.

11. Improvements in Career Counselling (IBOBB).

12. Improvements in transitional process between lower and upper secondary level education, between school and labour market; improved offers in career counselling.
    ○ Means through which change will be measured: Applied whole-school concepts for career counselling.

13. Introduction of educational standards (Bildungsstandards)

    ○ Source of information/planned evaluations: Testing of educational standards, international assessments.

15. Youth Coaching (Jugendcoaching)

16. A follow-up evaluation study will analyse the impact of youth coaching.

Youth related labour market policy objectives 2015:

1. Increase advertisement on the labour market
2. Acquisition of skilled positions (at least apprenticeship)
3. Keeping youth unemployment periods short (unemployment no longer than six months
4. Get labour market distanced persons into jobs
5. Increase training effectiveness (proportion of job take-ups within three months after training)
6. Post-qualification job take-up in selected sectors: women in crafts and technology, intensive skilled worker training or intermediate-level secondary technical respectively vocational schools
7. Post-qualification job take-up in selected sectors: migrants in crafts and technology, intensive skilled worker training or intermediate-level secondary technical respectively vocational schools

Research

The Institute for Research on Qualifications and Training of the Austrian Economy (Institut für Bildungsforschung der Wirtschaft, ibw), Austrian Institute for SME Research (KMU Forschung Austria) and the Institute for advanced studies (Institut für Höhere Studien, IHS) frequently conduct studies on behalf of public authorities. Within those studies, important stakeholders are interviewed. External evaluations are also carried out by these institutions.
Recent studies and study projects on employment and entrepreneurship:

- **Success factors for the Dual VET System.** [6]
- **Postsecondary vocational education and training in Austria** [7].
- **Muddling through’ and historical institutionalism – Explanatory devices for the long-term development of the dualistic Austrian VET system (IHS)** [8].
- National education report (**Nationaler Bildungsbericht** [9]).

**Education 18 - Basic Research**

'The aim of this basic research is to investigate the preconditions the planned initiative to extend compulsory education until the age of 18 can build upon. Therefore we calculate the number of young people affected and analyze their need of support. By contrast, supply and demand of support in a qualitative and quantitative perspective conclusions can be drawn, which measures should be implemented.'

The outcomes of the studies are being considered in any kind of decision-making. The National youth council has to be consulted for any youth related law.