

Austria

Introduction

The analysis in the study by St. Aubyn et al. (2009) shows a high efficiency especially as regards research activities. As regards changes over time, it suggests that Austria became significantly more efficient over the period 2002-2005 relative to the period 1998-2001. Austria reduced the academic staff and the number of students without worsening the scientific production and only slightly reducing the number of weighted graduates. The number of students however is relatively low.

Austria has a traditional emphasis on vocational education, with the highest share of vocational students in secondary education in the EU. The quality of upper secondary vocational education seems high and employment prospects are good. The education system in Austria provides a good basis (as PISA scores suggest). 30% of secondary education students are in "academic" schools preparing for University, while most students follow various types of vocational programmes. The relative demand for tertiary education among prospective students is rather low, as indicated by a below average ratio of students per 1000 inhabitants.

Indicators

As regards the determinants of efficiency, the indicators show excellent staff regulations, average funding rules and a low score on evaluation. The score for the PISA 2000 indicator is average, and this result should be seen in combination with a yearly spending per student among the highest (OECD, 2009). In Austria, total expenditure on tertiary education is moderated by relatively low enrolment rates. Furthermore, the production of graduates is below average. Drop-out rates approach 30% (OECD, 2009).

Table - Summary of indicators in St. Aubyn (2009)

Scores of efficiency indicators						
	Average ISI citation		Recruiter review		Peer review	
	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank
AT	5.16	5	1.26	8	1.59	8
best performer	NL - 5,51	1	IE - 2	1	FI - 2	1
worst performer	RO - 1,63	26	CZ -1.06	16	GR - 1.02	16

Indicators of main determinants of efficiency						
	Funding rules		Staff policy		Evaluation	
	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank
AT	5.50	6	10	1	5.1	14
best performer	PT - 7,8	1	CZ, DK, NL, AT, SK, SE,	1	HU - 8,3	1
worst performer	SK - 2,9	18	FR - 1,8	18	GR - 2,3	18

Descriptive indicators							
	Academic staff	Students	Graduates		Publications	Graduates	
			<i>per capita</i>			<i>per academic staff</i>	
AT	1.85	29.7	4.3	0.9	16.1	2.3	14.4
EU27	1.9	33.7	7.1	0.6	17.8	3.7	19.8

PISA		
	Score 2000*	Rank
AT	514	4
best performer	FI - 540	1
worst performer	RO - 410	18

The indicators compiled by St. Aubyn (2008) show an excellent staff policy indicator, average funding rules but the score for evaluation is relatively low.

Policy developments

Austria implemented two main reforms in recent years:

- creation of a new type of institution (Universities of Applied Sciences or *Fachhochschule*) with strong emphasis on quality and efficiency,
- the 2002 law on Universities based on "new public management" (to increase autonomy, output orientation and performance-based funding and to ensure strong quality assurance).