

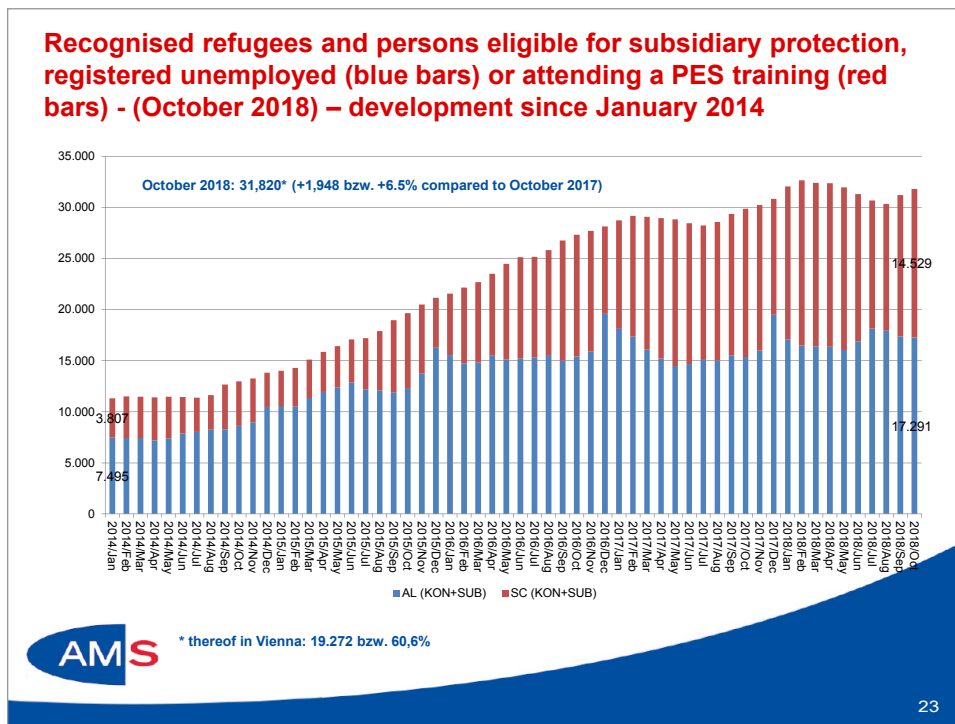
PES Austria: The support of recognised refugees and persons eligible for subsidiary protection

Recognised refugees and persons eligible fo subsidiary protection have free access to the Austrian Labour market. The PES in Austria helps them to find a job, a qualification measure and gives them support in their career counselling.

Asylum seekers are in principle not registered with the Austrian PES, except those that have to attend the integration year (more details see under „integration year“).

Latest Figures – October 2018

In October 2018 **31,820 (+1,948 resp. +6.5% compared to October 2017)** recognised refugees and persons eligible for subsidiary protection were registered unemployed (blue bars) or attending a PES training (red bars). 60.6% thereof were registered with the PES Vienna. The graph shows the development since January 2014:



Procedure of the customer support

After having received a positive decision on asylum or subsidiary protection, refugees have to contact a regional integration centre of the Austrian Integration Fund (ÖIF).

In counselling interviews the ÖIF identifies the needs for integration measures. In most cases, the ÖIF refers individuals to basic German language courses (A1, beginner) which are offered by providers accredited by the ÖIF.

Particularity in Vienna: The PES Vienna founded a central information centre for recognised refugees and persons eligible for subsidiary protection in May 2017. This centre is responsible for recognised refugees and persons eligible for subsidiary protection having their first consultation with the AMS. Clients have to have German A1 level. Consultation and information is offered there by native speaking colleagues in Arabic, Farsi/Dari and Russian. During the integration year clients are cared for in the central information centre. Afterwards they have to change to the local office situated in their responsible residential district.

AMS usually refers clients to two parallel measures: a second basic course (A2, elementary) and the Check of Competences carried out by one of the contracted providers. Details on the Check of Competences see below.

When returning to the AMS from the Competence Check, the AMS case worker has already received the results report of the Competence Check. Basing on these results, the case worker decides about the further steps in the consultation process. The AMS case worker can now integrate the client into the regular consultation process and decide on immediate placement opportunities or on further training measures.

Overview of measures offered by the PES Austria (AMS) to recognised refugees and persons eligible for subsidiary protection

The AMS offers a wide range of labour market policy measures that are fully available for recognised refugees and persons eligible for subsidiary protection.

Especially for this target group the AMS offers:

- Checks of Competences,
- German language courses,
- support offered by specialised counselling and assistance centres especially concerning the recognition of competences and skills to further the process of integration; e.g. all doctors of medicine with need for nostrification registered with the PES Vienna are supported by a counselling and assistance centre in Vienna („CHECKIN Plus“).
- measures being offered after the competence check: all labour market policy measures are fully available for the target group; the measures chosen depend on the individual situation of the client; examples: specialised counselling and assistance centres with different offers, youth college, etc.

To summarise: programmes range from placement support, German language and value courses or specialised counselling and assistance centres to skills training.

Check of Competences

The Check of Competences was piloted from August 2015 until December 2015 by the PES Vienna.

During 2016 the measure was rolled out and meanwhile it is offered by every local PES office in the federal provinces.

There is not a standardised format, but every local office carries out the check of competences considering the circumstances in the respective federal province.

As 60.6% of the recognised refugees and persons eligible for subsidiary protection are registered with the PES Vienna, in the following the Check of Competences of the PES Vienna is explained in more details:

Check of Competences – PES Vienna

formal requirements

- Recognised refugees and persons eligible for subsidiary protection
- German level at least A1 or mother tongue Arabic/ Farsi-Dari
- to be alphabetised in the Latin alphabet
- older than 18 years

content

- Check of Competences are offered
 - for men at the age between 18 and 25 years,
 - for men older than 25 years
 - for women older than 18
- Duration
 - 5 weeks for men, 7 weeks for women
 - The participants have 10 hours of workshop and 1 hour one-on-one biographical interview per week.

methods and tools

- Biographical interviews (one-on-one setting)
 - offered in Arabic, Farsi/Dari
 - to survey their formal and practical qualifications and skills
 - to find out if there is need of guidance and support in the process of validation and formal recognition
- Workshops (groups of 12 persons)
 - information about the Austrian labour market, living and working in Austria, the Austrian culture, the social insurance system, education system and health system, civic courses etc.

- Practical testing
 - for people with practical competences but no written evidence
 - check of theoretical and practical competences and skills in certain professions is carried out by private companies or training institutes and reporting.

Reporting of the results

- Report of the results contains:
 - detailed documentation of the skills and competences surveyed with the help of the check of competences
 - a note if a practical testing has been made, if yes, detailed reporting on the practical qualifications
 - career aspiration
 - medium-term resp. long-term planning of perspectives

Integration year

For Whom?

- Persons who are entitled to asylum or subsidiary protection and who have been awarded this status after 31 December 2014 and have not found any job yet, are even obliged to participate in the integration year.
- Or asylum-seekers with high probability of being granted a residence permit may participate in the integration year from 1 January 2018, subject to certain prerequisites. A rejection of the asylum application will however end the participation with immediate effect.

Other prerequisites are German skills at the A1 level, completed compulsory schooling and ability to work.

What?

The integration year offers a better chance of participating in social life in Austria, enhances the prospects of success on the labour market by extending and acquiring skills in various professions and occupations and assists in learning German. It is comprised of the following modules:

- Determination of professional competencies
- German skills
- Career orientation
- Application training
- On-the-job training (at community service facilities)
- Courses for obtaining professional qualifications, etc.

The current on-the-job training opportunities (at community service facilities) are listed on the internet under www.integrationsjahr.at.

For how long?

The integration year ends at the latest after one year, whereby any programmes started before the lapse of this year can still be completed.

How much?

Persons eligible for asylum and subsidiary protection will be granted aid from the Public Employment Service Austria (AMS) when participating in the programme (aid for covering the costs of living, subsidy for auxiliary course costs). Asylum-seekers continue receiving basic subsidy benefits.

Apprenticeship and Supra-company training programme

are important labour market measures. Especially the Supra-company training programme is particularly suited for the integration of young recognised refugees and persons eligible for subsidiary protection into the labour market.

Labour market policy for young adults “FacharbeiterInnen – Intensivausbildung”

- Basically this measure supports young adults to get prepared for their final apprenticeship examinations.
- Target group: semi-skilled and unskilled persons with compulsory schooling that are registered with the AMS from the age of 18.
- Possible occupations: e.g. mechatronics, plumbers, occupations in the sanitary engineering, heating and air conditioning sector, IT assistants etc.
- Usually this measure lasts about 12 to 18 months
- This measure is also offered to recognised refugees and persons eligible for subsidiary protection. For this target group the measure might take a few months longer because of German and preparation courses.

Youth-college for refugees (PES Vienna)

- Project of the PES Vienna, the Vienna Social Fund and the municipal administration being responsible for integration and diversity. The project is co-financed by the European Social Fund.
- Start: August 2016
- Participants: 750
- target group: asylum seekers and recognised refugees between 15 und 21 years, that are not required to attend school anymore and whose basis qualification is not sufficient to find a job or to get a foothold in the regular education system.
- target: further training for this target group so that these young people can live an independent life as soon as possible and to avoid that they are dependent on guaranteed minimum income
- Besides German, English, Mathematics and information and communication technology courses, special modules are offered like completing compulsory schooling, workshops etc.. Further offers are e.g. educational and vocational guidance, socially integrative activities and so on and so forth.

Project „b.mobile“ - Nationwide job-placement of apprentices“ (PES Vienna)

- Target group and prerequisites:
 - persons registered with the PES Vienna at the age between 18-25 years who are interested in an apprenticeship and are prepared to be mobile and who are in the need for support – especially young recognised refugees and persons eligible for subsidiary protection.
 - „Need for support“ includes migration, German as foreign language, immobility, and any other integration difficulties.
 - German level A2 is required.
- Preparation course contains: German, Mathematics, English, practical testing, possibility of doing a traineeship in a company

What outcomes have been identified?

What do we know about the participants of the Check of Competences? (data available until the end of 2017)

- **participants:** 14.050 persons (10.808 men, 3.242 women)
(%-percentage: men: 77%; women 23%)
- **country of origin:** 20% Afghanistan, 52% Syria, 6% Iran, 7% Iraq und 15% other countries
- **level of education:** 58% of the participants from Syria, 85% of those from Iran and 58% of those from Irak have a higher school certificate or an university degree.
- Only 20% of the participants coming from Afghanistan have an educational level above lower secondary school.
- **Formal education of women is higher than of men:** a high proportion of women (27%) has an university degree (Männer: 18%).

The first results on the Competence Check were published after the pilot project at the beginning of 2016. The observations for these groups were confirmed by the insights the Austrian Academy of Science gained in an independent, parallel study on refugees in Austria at that time (ÖAW 2016).

The Competence Check is also listed in the PES Practices:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1206&langId=en>

Monitoring of the labour market integration

The AMS monitors regularly a group of about 9.500 individuals given residence status in 2015 and were registered with the AMS between January 2015 and June 2016. While by June 2016 10.1% of this group were employed, already 37.6% of them were employed by September 2018. Of those who were given residence status in 2016 and were registered with the AMS between January 2016 and June 2017 (group of about 11.600 persons) 30.9% were employed by September 2018.