

## BRAND ME PROJECT

Project Number: 2022-2-PT02-KA220-YOU-000101893



## PR1 – NATIONAL SURVEY REPORT

VAEV  
AUSTRIA



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## 1. BACKGROUND

### 1.1. BAM PROJECT & VAEV

The BAM Project has emerged from common personal, and HR practices the idea that young talents need to learn how to promote themselves and their brand as professionals and experts in the field, how to learn the market and how to "sell" their skills to be noticed and hired by companies and HR recruiters. BAM proposes the preparation of training resources and tools that promote the participation of young people in the labour market and develop their professionalism in terms of acquiring skills, integrating, and becoming more recognisable and competitive in the labour market.

The project will also seek to strengthen the profile of professionals operating in this sector by raising awareness of the need to develop career paths from the early stages of life and beyond. Vienna Association of Educational Volunteers (V.A.E.V.) is a non-profit, non-political organization, which aims to empower people, promoting peace, tolerance and social equality among people through assisting people in acquiring knowledge and developing their skills and competencies for professional and personal success.

VAEV's focus is to provide community-based coaching as well as educational and career opportunities for disadvantaged people including immigrants, refugees, unemployed individuals, NEETs and people from lower socio-economic backgrounds and with disabilities. Vaev is to support VET centres, youth centres, career centres, adult education centres and relevant NGOs and institutions by assisting in building up and spreading necessary curriculums that fit the needs of migrants, minorities and people from low socio-economic background who faces unemployment constantly.

Vaev also provides non-formal educational and voluntary-based opportunities for disadvantaged young people to give a chance to be educated, to learn, and to be guided along a career path and social life.

### 1.2. NATIONAL CONTEXT IN AUSTRIA

Studies examining the factors affecting NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) often emphasise individual characteristics such as gender and migration background, as well



as macro-level factors such as economic growth, education system and labour market institutions. As of 2014, Vienna had 1.8 million inhabitants, while Burgenland had 300,000 inhabitants. The proportion of people with a migrant background also varies: 40.7 per cent in Vienna and 10.9 per cent in Carinthia. In 2014, the NEET rates in the federal states of Austria ranged from 5.6 per cent in Salzburg to 11.1 per cent in Vienna. Overall, Austria has one of the lowest NEET rates at 7.7 per cent.

Austria is classified as a coordinated market economy, characterised by strong industrial relations and a vocational system offering specific skills. Initially, Austria's dual apprenticeship system fits well with this classification. However, there are significant regional differences in the enrolment of young people in dual apprenticeships. In Upper Austria, 35 per cent of high school students participate in dual apprenticeships, whereas in Burgenland this figure is only around 15 per cent. The dual apprenticeship system is an important factor affecting the NEET rate. Ignoring these regional differences may limit the explanation of the NEET phenomenon in Austria.

The Austrian government actively utilizes labor market policies to combat unemployment, with a particular focus on addressing the needs of young individuals. A wide range of instruments and programs are implemented, including short-term work, government funding to enhance employment opportunities for specific target groups, and traditional training programs. In the late 1990s, Austria introduced a "youth safety net," which evolved into a youth guarantee scheme during the financial crisis in 2008. The goal of this scheme is to ensure that every young person seeking training is provided with a placement in a company or specialized workshop.

Currently, Austria has four main components within its active labor market policy for young people: supra-company training measures, initiatives to increase the availability of apprenticeships, programs to prepare young individuals for vocational training, and specific qualification and employment programs for unemployed individuals aged 19-24. Unlike youth guarantee schemes in Nordic countries, Austria places a stronger emphasis on vocational training within its active labor market policy for young people. Although labor market policy falls primarily under the jurisdiction of the federal government, with the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, and Consumer Protection taking the lead, the federal provinces also have significant influence. The public employment service (PES), operating as a public enterprise, delivers most labor market-related services on behalf of the federal government. It consists of one federal organization, nine provincial organizations (one in each federal state), and 104 local organizations. Throughout these levels, the social partners, including employers and trade unions, play a substantial role and have a notable impact on labor market policy, especially at the provincial level.

## 2. NATIONAL SURVEY FINDINGS



The survey collected 42 answers. Considering VAEV's commitment in organizing and implementing workshops, trainings and educational activities for disadvantaged groups, the organization has a strong network of stakeholders. Indeed, once the translation was completed in April, VAEV disseminated the survey among the stakeholders and experts that have collaborated with us in previous projects in a similar field and topic. Indeed, one of our fields of action is NEETs and upskilling for migrants, adult learners and individuals facing various kind of obstacles.

The survey link was shared through VAEV's channels, like mailing list and Whatsapp group, collecting beforehand a list of potential participants that we contacted directly. Internal personnel contributed to share the link among their social network, being careful of the profile needed for the project's scope. The selection process aimed to identify reliable answers, ensured by previous collaboration. We are aware that the main group involved is working with youth and many of them with NEETs.

The expected result was to receive feedback from experts involved regarding the skills that young people need the most to learn how to present and promote themselves online. Considering Austrian context, it was not foreseen a specific result given the low unemployment rate.

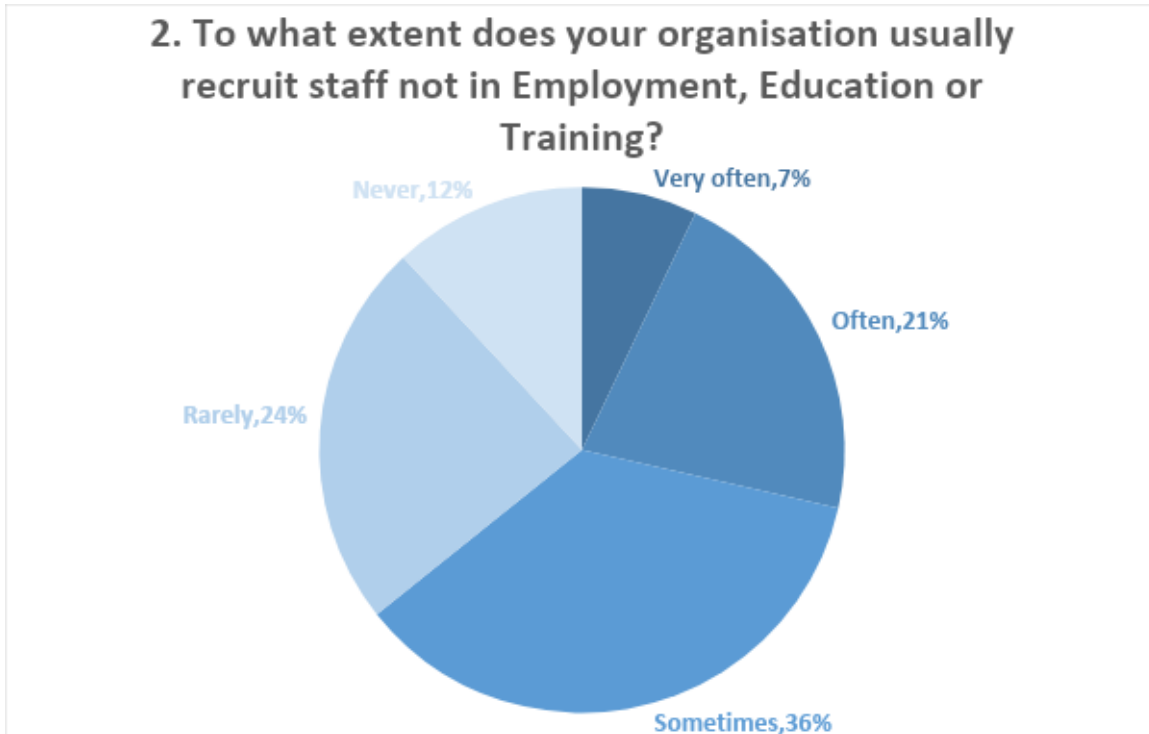
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## 2.1. BUSINESS BACKGROUND

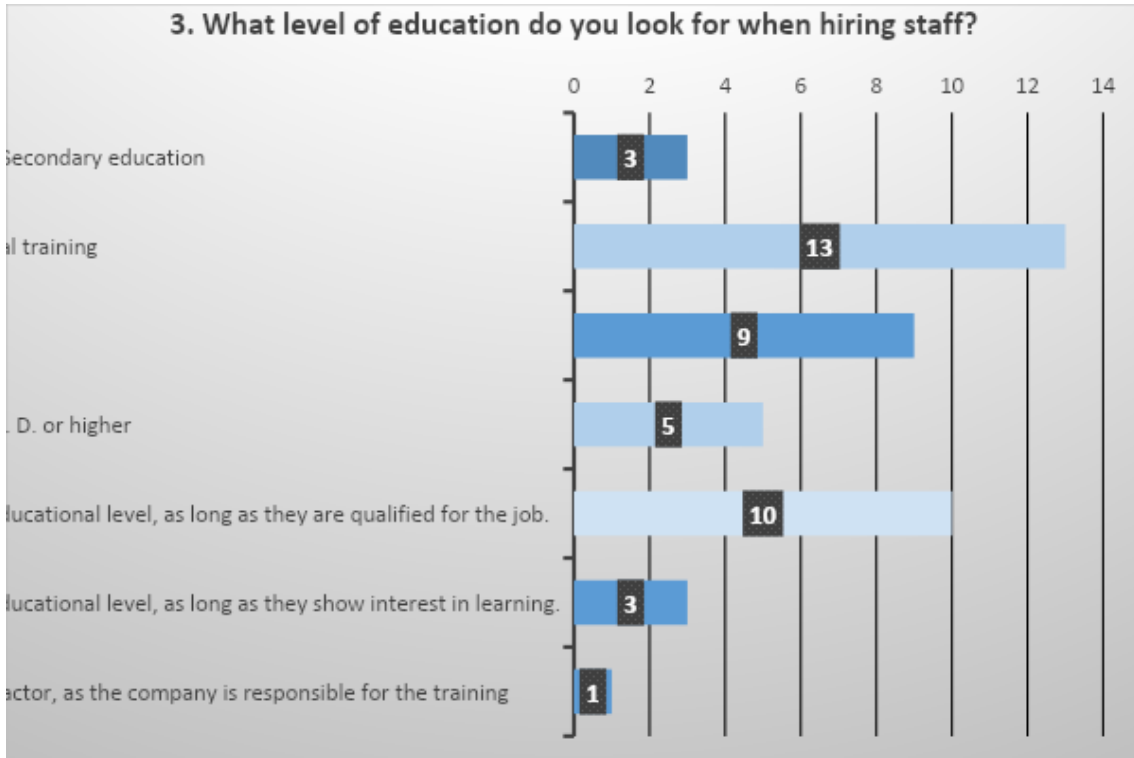


Out of all the respondents, 33 % people answered "yes," indicating that they are involved in the human resources team or employee selection process. On the other hand, 67%

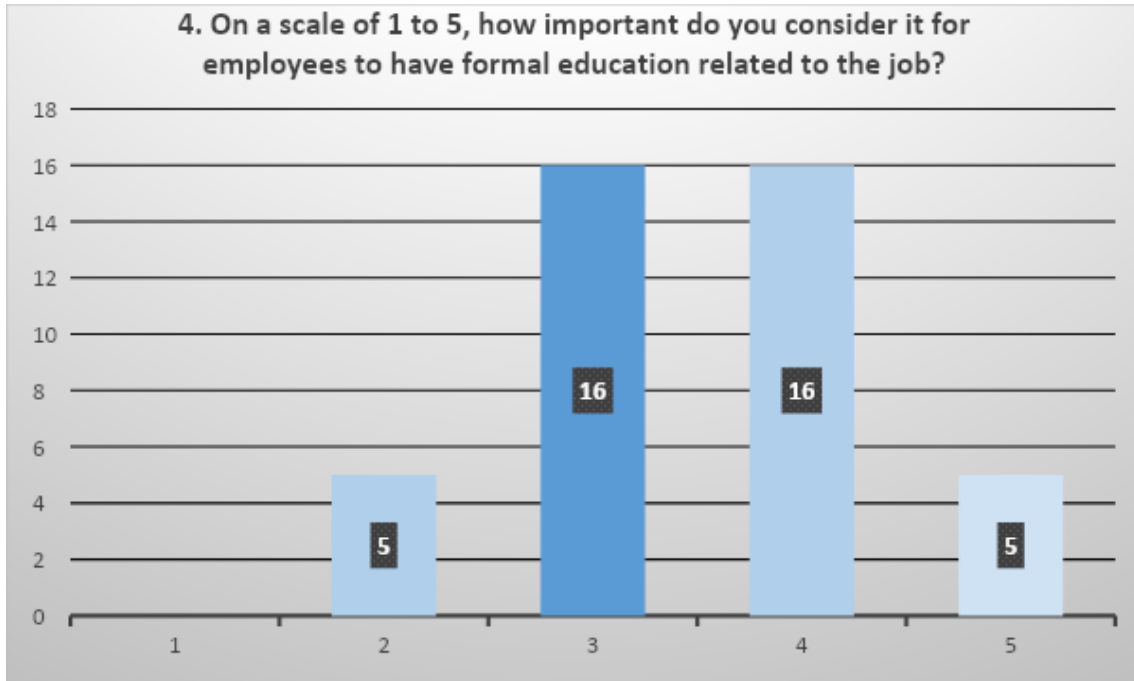
answered "no," meaning they are not part of the human resources team or involved in employee selection.



The options for the respondents were "very often," "often," "sometimes," "rarely," and "never." The data shows that 7% of the respondents recruits "very often" candidates that belong to the so-called category of NEETs (not in employment, education and/or training); while 21 % declared "often," 36 % said "sometimes," against 24% who declared "rarely," and 12% stated "never." This information provides insight into how frequently organizations hire individuals who are not currently employed, in education, or undergoing training.



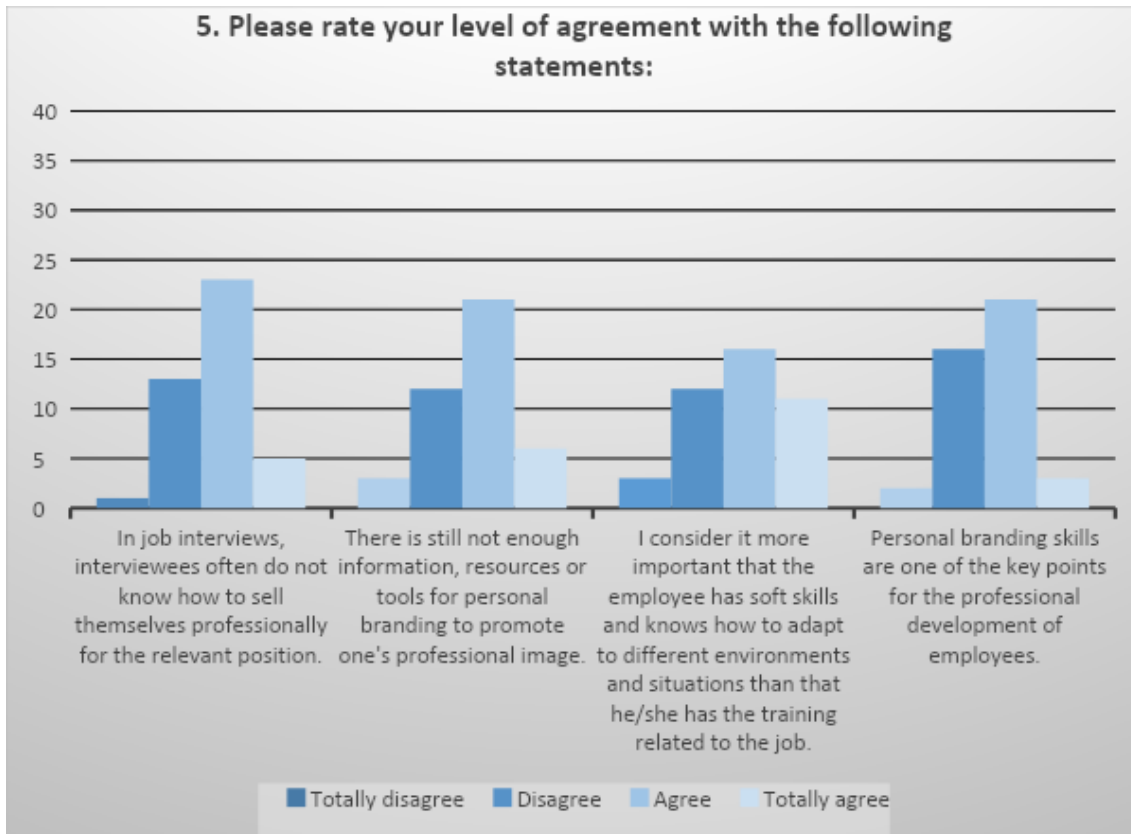
The graphic shows the educational requirements that are usually preferred when it comes to the hiring process. 3 respondents prioritize "primary education/secondary education," 13 opted for "technical/vocational training"; 9 voters seek candidates with a "bachelor's degree," while 5 voters prefer candidates with a "master's degree/PhD or higher." Additionally, 10 respondents declared that the educational level is not a crucial factor in the selection as long as the candidate is qualified, while 3 people are open to candidates showing interest in learning. Lastly, 1 person declared education irrelevant, as the company takes responsibility for training. These insights provide valuable information on the requirements taken into account during the hiring process, showing a preference towards the real skills of the candidate and their willingness/ability to learn against an academic title.



Out of the 42 participants, 5 people rated the importance as 2, 16 people as 3, and 16 people as 4. Additionally, 5 people considered it highly important, giving a rating of 5. These responses provide valuable insights into the perceived significance of formal education related to the job among the surveyed participants. The perfect balance among the responses highlights a quite important role played by formal education.

## 2.2. RECRUITMENT BACKGROUND



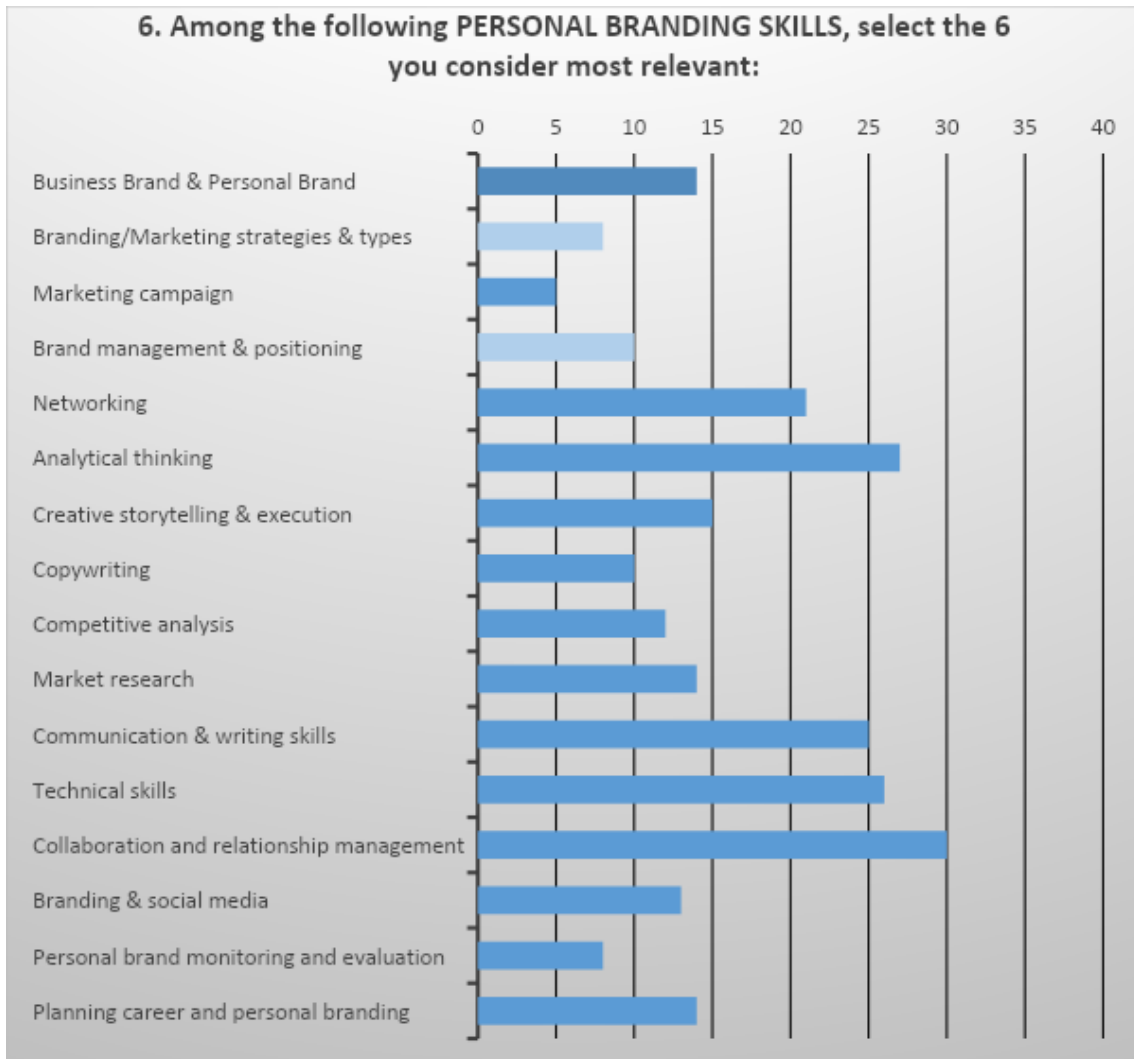


The highest agreement was with the statement that there is a lack of information, resources, or tools for personal branding (27 respondents agreed). The highest disagreement was regarding personal branding skills being a key for professional development (18 people disagreed). For the importance of soft skills compared to job-related training, responses were more balanced (27 people agreed, 15 disagreed). Concerning job interviews, there was disagreement that interviewees know how to sell themselves professionally (23 people agreed, 1 totally disagreed).

Lastly, it is possible to infer from these answers that personal branding is a topic of interest, considering that the majority of respondents do not find enough resources and also consider it an important skill for being professionally competitive in the market.

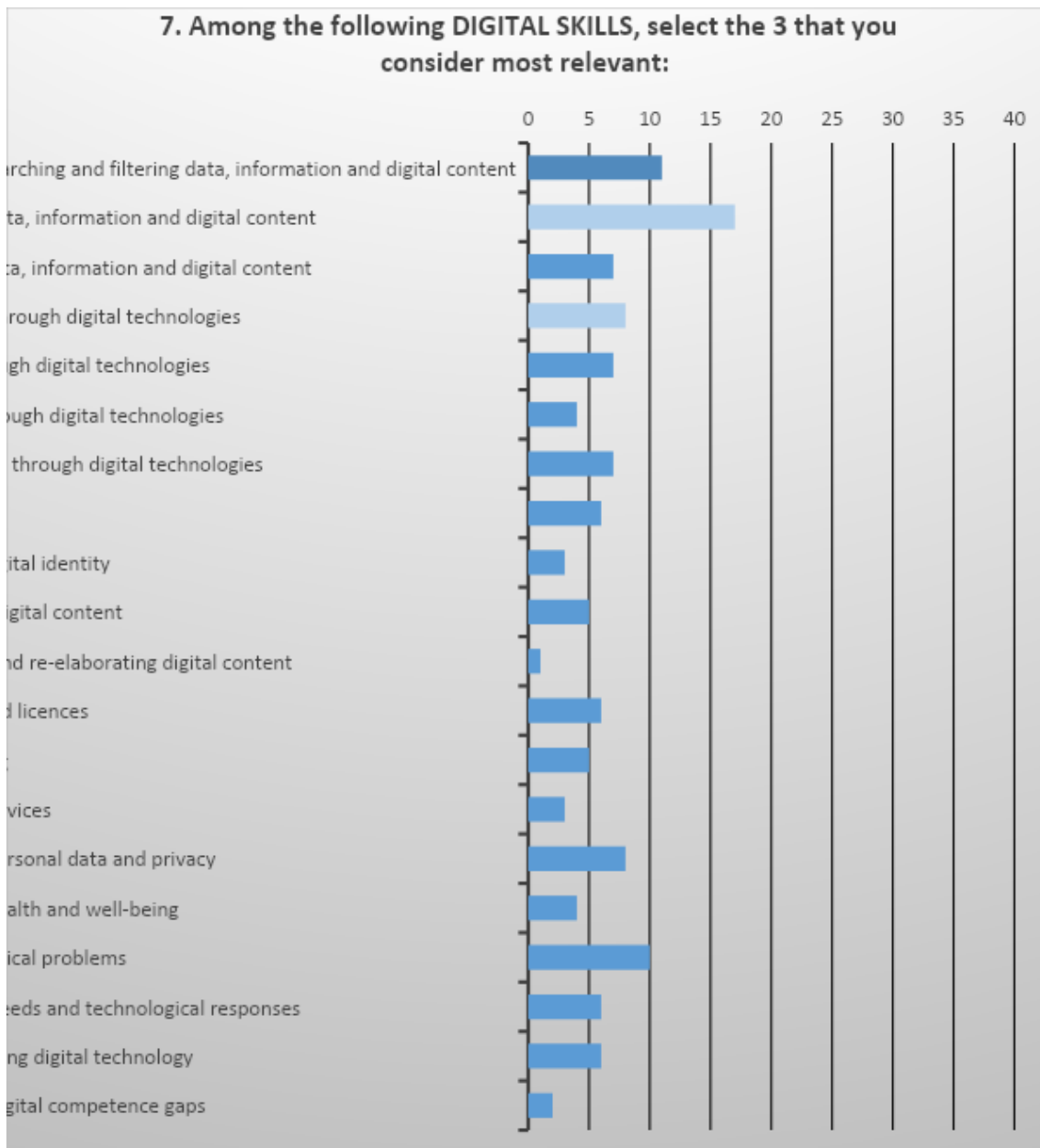
### 2.3. SKILLS SELECTION

Please, list the 6 most voted skills in your country.



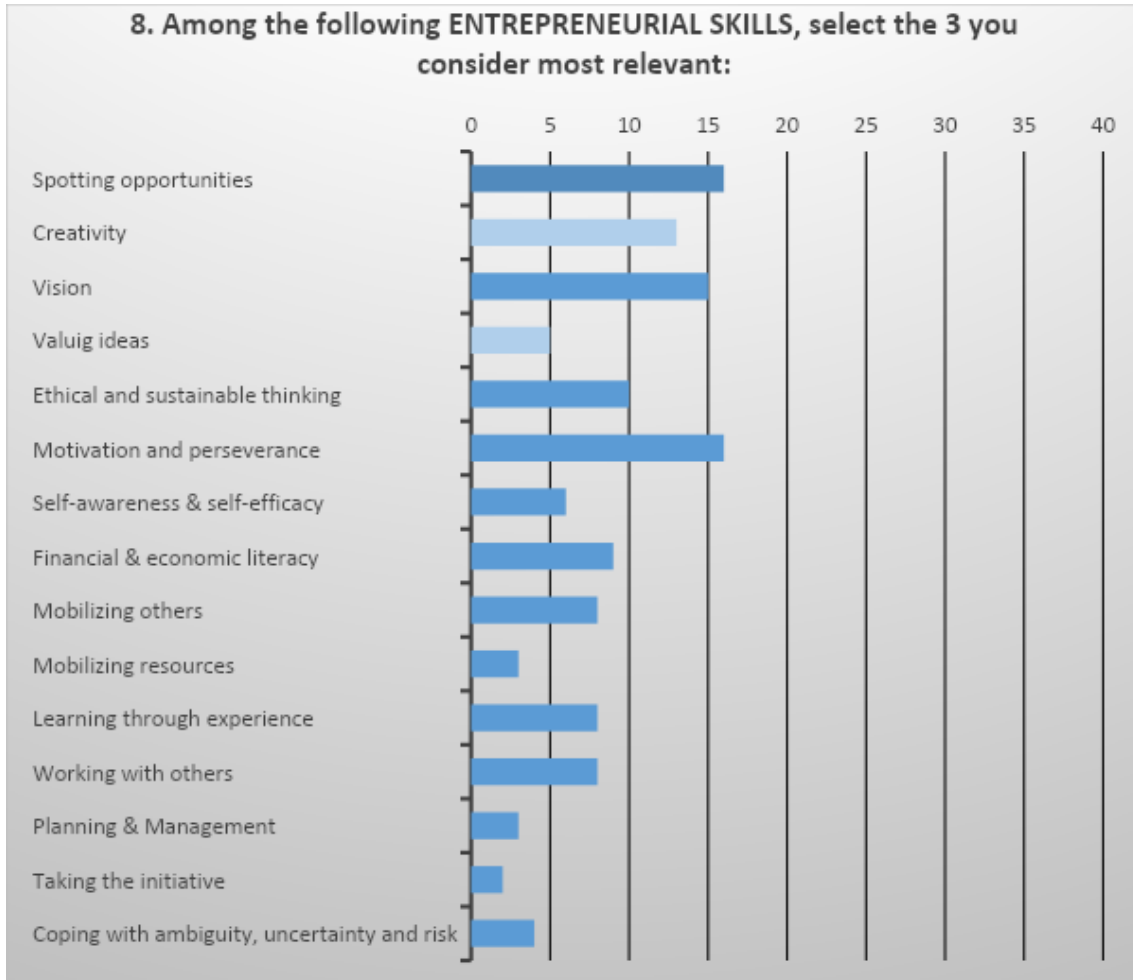
From the highest to the lowest, these are the 6 skills that were chosen most relevant:

- 1-Collaboration and relationship management
- 2-Analytical thinking
- 3-Technical skills
- 4-Communication&writing skills
- 5-Networking
- 6-Business Brand &Personal Brand



From the highest to the lowest, the 3 digital skills that were considered most relevant are:

- 1-Evaluating data, information and digital content
- 2-Browsing, searching and filtering data, information and digital content
- 3-Solving technical problems



From the highest to the lowest, the top 3 entrepreneurial skills were:

- 1-Spotting opportunities
- 2-Motivation and Perseverance
- 3-Vision

## 2.4. OPEN QUESTIONS

9. *Would you like to share any recommendations or experiences you have had when recruiting staff regarding personal branding?*

- I focus on creativity and personal thoughts. The presentations or information shared during the interview show whether the person is suitable for the job.
- General behaviour and personality must be appropriate.
- Developing a strong personal brand is crucial when it comes to standing out in the job market. It is important to encourage employees to cultivate their personal brands to not only enhance their own professional reputation but also to elevate the reputation of your company. One way to do this is to provide them with the tools and resources they need to create a strong online presence, such as LinkedIn profiles and personal websites. Encourage them to showcase their expertise by sharing their insights and experiences on social media, blogs, or other online platforms relevant to your industry. Also, it may be helpful to encourage individuals to seek out opportunities to network and build relationships with others in their field. By investing in the personal branding of your employees, you can help them to become ambassadors of your company and to attract top talent to your organization.

10. *Would you add any skills to the above lists? If so, please specify:*

- Communication skills: Being able to communicate effectively both in writing and verbally is crucial for personal branding.  
Social media skills: It is important to have a strong understanding of social media platforms and how to use them effectively to promote one's brand.  
Networking skills: Building strong relationships with other professionals in one's field is a key component of personal branding. Networking skills, such as the ability to build rapport, follow up, and maintain relationships.  
Presentation skills: Being able to deliver compelling presentations and public speaking is important for showcasing expertise and building credibility in one's field.  
Adaptability: Personal branding is an ongoing process and it requires individuals to be adaptable to changes in their industry and the job market. The ability to learn new skills and adapt to new trends is important for building a strong personal brand over time.
- Branding yourself can help you "sell" yourself better. How you want people to perceive you.
- Conflict management

11. Do you have any additional comments you would like to make?

- The place should have been described in more detail.
- Lastly, I would like to add the in my humble opinion, the most essential thing for being good at personal branding is to have a clear understanding of one's unique value proposition, which means having a clear idea of what sets you apart from others in your industry or field in addition to being able to communicate this effectively through various channels.

### 3. PARTNER REFLECTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Vaev has actively collaborated on numerous initiatives aimed at supporting the employment and entrepreneurial endeavors of NEETs (young people Not in Employment, Education, or Training). As part of these projects, they have created toolkits, learning platforms, conducted workshops, and released public reports.

As technology continues to advance, mobile devices have become increasingly integral to our daily lives, permeating almost every aspect. It is crucial for job seekers and individuals seeking to promote their own businesses to stay abreast of these technological advancements. However, staying informed and utilizing such developments can prove challenging for disadvantaged individuals or immigrants who have fled from war.

Recognizing this reality, we have addressed these issues within different projects such as:

- A project addressing the educational barriers met by women living in rural areas. In fact, we have incorporated comprehensive information on mobile facilities into the e-learning platform we have developed. Our aim is to provide individuals, adults and women with detailed guidance on effectively utilizing mobile devices in their job search endeavors.
- In another project supporting the entrepreneurship of migrant youth, we developed a training module for migrant youth who want to start a business in Austria. Even educated individuals with a certain level of achievement find it difficult to overcome the complexity of starting a business and understanding the legal obligations involved. This difficulty is compounded for disadvantaged groups. With the training module we aimed to provide information on the following topics.

-Learn the requirements for starting a business in Austria



-General information about Austrian work ethics and situations they may encounter in business life.

-Business Model Canvas Concept

-Marketing and Sales

-Business Management and Accounting and Finance

Our aim was to address this inequality by providing migrant youth with information on work ethics and what it takes to start a business in Austria, thus empowering them to enter the market.

Furthermore, as a component of the identical initiative, we arranged a webinar involving migrant youth, where we put into practice the training we had developed. Upon receiving feedback at the conclusion of the training, we determined that it was effective, and we enhanced our training material by incorporating student evaluations. Subsequently, we published the enriched content on the e-learning platform.

Based on the knowledge and insights gained from our involvement in various projects, we have come to recognize the significance of practical, cost-free training programs that assist NEETs (young people not in education, employment, or training) in their entrepreneurship endeavors or career advancement. In addition to the existing availability of free vocational courses in numerous European nations, easily accessible online training materials can prove highly beneficial for individuals from all backgrounds.

## 4. CONCLUSIONS

5.

Austria boasts one of the lowest unemployment rates among individuals aged 18-24 who are not in education, employment, or training (NEETs). This might lead one to believe that NEETs in Austria don't encounter unemployment issues. However, Austria faces its own challenges due to its unique socio-economic and political structure. The aforementioned international findings indicate that variations in NEET rates at the sub-national level, specifically among federal states, can be attributed to structural characteristics. It is important to note that Austria operates under a federal political system, where each sub-national state possesses distinct financial resources and the ability to shape education systems, economies, and labor market policies. It is widely assumed that regional governments in Austria often exert informal influence over federal politics, enabling each state to pursue and safeguard its own interests. Consequently, the actual power held by federal states is far greater than what might be assumed based solely on legal considerations.

According to the Austrian constitution [Article 14 (1) BV-G], the federal government holds responsibility for upper secondary education. However, the management of compulsory public schools, including vocational training schools, is delegated to the federal states. This means that each state is accountable for establishing and maintaining schools for dual



vocational training. Furthermore, the states and municipalities contribute to the financing of secondary education (Statistik Austria 2015, p. 82f). The fact that each subnational state has the opportunity to pursue specific educational objectives is also evident in the varying significance of different types of schools. The National Education Report (Vogten-Huber et al. 2012, 34f) reveals that the proportion of students engaged in (general and vocational) upper secondary education and dual vocational education varies significantly among Austrian federal states. For instance, in Upper Austria, 35 percent of all students in upper secondary education participate in dual apprenticeships, whereas the corresponding figure in Burgenland is only around 15 percent.

These educational disparities across federal divisions are reflected in the unemployment rate. For instance, based on 2022 data, the unemployment rate among young people up to the age of 25 is 9.8 percent in Vienna, compared to 3.5 percent in Salzburg. Consequently, it is crucial to consider regional differences when addressing the issue of NEET unemployment in Austria

Below are the 12 most favoured skills from the survey we conducted in Austria:

- 1-Collaboration and relationship management
- 2-Analytical thinking
- 3-Technical skills
- 4-Communication&writing skills
- 5-Networking
- 6-Business Brand &Personal Brand
- 7-Evaluating data, information and digital content
- 8-Browsing, searching and filtering data, information and digital content
- 9-Solving technical problems
- 10-Spotting opportunities
- 11-Motivation and Perseverance
- 12-Vision

Based on these results, we can categorise the skills for the employment of needs under 2 main headings: technological skills and personal development.

## **Technological Skills**

Entrepreneurship is the process of realising new business ideas and stimulating economic growth. Technology offers many opportunities for today's entrepreneurs. The Internet and digital platforms facilitate access to global markets at low costs, while technological





competences such as software and application development enable the emergence of new business models and innovative products. By improving the technology skills of neets, it increases their entrepreneurial potential and provides them with a stronger foundation for starting their own business.

In addition, technology skills increase the employability of neets. As technology advances rapidly in today's business world, employers expect employees to have the skills to adapt to technology and use digital tools effectively. When neets develop their technology skills, they gain an advantage in job search processes and can access a wider range of employment opportunities. Moreover, neets specialised in technology can be employed at competitive wages as they have in-demand qualifications.

## Personal Development

Personal development of NEETs increases their entrepreneurial potential. The process of personal development helps individuals to discover their strengths, develop their talents and acquire the skills to start their own business. This enables NEETs to move towards entrepreneurship and helps them gain more self-confidence in starting their own business.

What are the main training needs in your country? Which 12 skills would you select in light of the survey results? (approx. 1-2 pages)

## 6. REFERENCES

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