



## Desk research report - Best practices from partner countries regarding cognitive games for seniors

### I. Adult educational system in Austria:

#### 1) Adult education in Austria

**Adult education and training** in Austria covers a **large number of educational institutions** with different objectives and educational programs. The **educational spectrum** ranges from general education, basic education, and the acquisition of qualifications in “second-chance education”, vocational education and training (VET) programs, on to management courses and personal development programs, to higher education and university-based programs.

#### 2) Providers of adult education:

##### “Non-Formal” Learning

##### - Bildungshäuser

The term "house" or Bildungshäuser (the general term Bildungshaus) is used to refer to institutions that provide the space for a variety of adult education activities. In Austria, the "houses" are buildings in which a variety of non-profit organizations can offer their courses, ranging across a broad spectrum.

##### - Volkshochschule

The Volkshochschule (VHS) or "folk high schools" have existed since the 19th century. They provide a variety of courses in a variety of areas of self-development including languages, non-vocational courses in areas like art and music, courses in politics, IT and computer courses, and many other hobby-related areas. The VHS are sponsored in various ways, firstly at a federal level (the BMBWK), by the municipalities and the Chamber of Labour, however over half of their income comes from fees paid by individual course participants.

##### - Forum Katholischer Erwachsenenbildung in Österreich (FORUM) (Forum for catholic adult education in Austria).

As the federal organization for Austrian adult education the Forum Katholischer Erwachsenenbildung is one of Austria's leading organizations on adult education. It serves the interests of more than 60 member organizations, provides catholic adult education programs for around 1 million participants annually, and primarily operates through volunteers.



- Ländliches Fortbildungsinstitut (LFI)

Rural continuing education institute

- Ring Österreichischer Bildungswerke (RÖBW)

Network of Austrian adult education institutes

- Volkswirtschaftliche Gesellschaft Österreich (VGÖ): Austrian Association for Education and Economics.

Founded more than 50 years ago, the VGÖ aim to offer connecting programs between the end of formal education and the world of business. The VGÖ and its regional network associates are involved on a local, national and European level to promote entrepreneurship and economic thinking. Their primary focus is on students and young adults, but also apprentices and stakeholders in the society.

- Verband Österreichischer Gewerkschaftlicher Bildung (VÖGB) Association of adult education for Austrian trade unionists

The Association of Austrian Trade Union Education (VÖGB) at the Austrian Trade Union Federation (ÖGB) is mainly responsible for the education of workers' representatives, such as members of works councils. Through this they are supplied with the abilities, skills and knowledge necessary for their work within their companies. It also provides training and development for professional trade union officers and staff. The VÖGB offer seminars and events for workers' representatives which focus on currently important topics, such as social and economic policy, workers' participation, media, law, communication, languages, workforce representation, computer application, and European issues. Special courses are provided for specific target groups such as European Works Councils, Health & Safety Officers, employee representatives in supervisory boards, juries, members of youth councils, workers' representatives in social insurance, workers' representatives for the disabled, educational and cultural advisors and women.

### Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

As in most countries non-vocational adult education is provided by a wide variety of voluntary and non-governmental organizations including religious groups, advocates for specific groups within the population (for example women, arts organizations, etc.). In Austria the big non-profit adult education institutions are members of an umbrella group called **KEBÖ** (Austrian Conference of Adult Education Institutions, the organization of non-governmental providers of adult education), which includes **BFI** (Berufsförderungsinstitut Österreich, the Vocational Training Institute of the Chamber of Labor), **WIFI** (Wirtschaftsförderungsinstitut, the Institute of Economy Promotion of the Austrian Economic Chamber to which all employers belong) and other "non formal" providers as listed above.

### Vocational Institutions and career-related training

- Foremen Courses

Foremen courses (Werkmeisterschulen) offer further job-related theoretical education for people who have completed initial training in the industrial and trade sector. Foremen courses can be considered as one of the largest educational institutions in this sector, only after technical and vocational schools and colleges. Foremen courses are mainly offered by private institutions,



training institutions of employers (Institutes for Economic Development) and employees' organizations (Vocational Training Institutes); teaching is based on a national curriculum. Within the sector of regulated further education and training, foremen courses are nationwide the best represented educational facilities.

#### - Master Craftsmen Courses

Just as foremen courses, courses for master craftsmen (Meisterschulen) aim at enhancing technical knowledge and at preparing students for their Master Craftsman Examination. Master craftsmen courses are established at secondary technical and vocational schools and do not charge fees. Training at master craftsmen courses usually lasts for 2 years and ends with a final exam. After two years of work experience graduates of master craftsmen courses may become self-employed. Master craftsmen courses are offered in the following areas: painting, sculpture, joinery and interior design, metal design, fashion design, ceramics and stove design, milling, baking and clothing, optometry and contact lens optics.

#### - Courses for Building Workers

The aim of further education and training of courses for building workers (Bauhandwerkerschulen) is to secure employment and to raise qualification standards of employees in small and medium-sized enterprises. Courses for building workers offer further education and training for bricklayers, stonemasons and carpenters, they last for three years and are held at colleges for engineering.

#### - Schools and Colleges for Employed Persons - Second Educational Pathway

The second educational pathway provides adults with the opportunity to take school-leaving certificates of a secondary academic school or a technical and vocational school or college at a later point in their lives. Furthermore, it gives people with completed initial vocational training (obtained at a secondary technical and vocational school or through apprenticeship training) the opportunity to acquire higher qualifications.

#### - Fachhochschulen

The Fachhochschulen (FHS) aim to expand tertiary education in more occupationally-oriented forms than universities. For the most part, FHS are oriented towards conventional-age full-time students preparing for employment. However, several FHS have developed programs for part-time working students, who attend in the evenings while they work full-time during the day, mainly aimed to retrain adult workers. The institutions with such programs appear to have roughly one-third of their students in such evening programs. As in other parts of the Beruf-oriented system, these are extensive programs lasting four years. In addition, the FHS have been designed to work extensively with employers.

#### Universities

Most universities play only a small role in adult education (although of course adults may enroll). They have only recently started to recognize the potential of continuing education, or the education of professionals to keep up with developments in their field. Some universities are beginning to provide programs like master's degree programs for alumni, summer programs in areas like medicine and health, law, media, psychology and psychotherapy, philosophy, and other academically-oriented areas. There is also an association of university continuing education centers, the Austrian Universities Continuing Education and Staff Development Network



(AUCEN) although currently this makes up a relatively small proportion of the universities activities.

## E-learning

Overall, distance learning and e-learning are not well-developed in Austria, with a few important exceptions. Teachers and Students Councils have opted for distance learning approaches in evening schools in rural areas; furthermore, there are pilot projects in some VHS. But apart from these exceptions, e-learning has not been extensively used.

## II. Current situation with existing training for elderly

### 1) Policy and legislative framework in Austria regarding adult education

#### Lifelong learning and education in old age

The right of older people to equal participation in political, social, cultural and economic life is an important goal of Austria social policy. Participation is conditional on older people having access to a variety of high-quality educational programs.

Policy in the field of education in old age is based on the **Federal Senior Citizens' Plan (2011)** and the **LLL (lifelong learning) strategy 2020**.

It also includes intergenerational projects and programs in the field of new communications technologies.

#### Senior citizens' policy

Austrian senior citizens' policy is seen as policy conducted with senior citizens, which as a cross-sectional issue (mainstreaming ageing) extends into the various specialist departments of the Ministry. Austrian senior citizens policy focuses on people with their abilities and resources. Policy on senior citizens and volunteers has the goal of safeguarding and further improving the quality of life of older people.

**The Federal Senior Citizens Act** and the **Federal Senior Citizens Advisory Council** promote and ensure opportunities for older people to participate in social, political, economic and cultural life. Senior citizens' policy promotes learning and education in old age, because lifelong learning helps people to cope with new requirements and challenges, for example in the field of new technologies.

**Department V/A/6 of the Ministry of Social Affairs, Fundamental Issues of Senior Citizens', Population and Volunteers' Policy**, can also support non-profit associations in relation to projects concerning senior citizens' and voluntary work policy as well as innovative model projects of national significance.

The main focuses are, for example, on projects to promote active ageing, quality of life and dignity in old age, lifelong learning and promoting the competences of older people. Projects to strengthen solidarity and the dialogue between the generations as well as projects on the participation of senior citizens at social, political and cultural levels can also be eligible for support.



## 2) Education for seniors in Austria and main Providers

Seniors in Vienna can choose between participation in a further education program or full-fledged study. With a few exceptions (studies in the field of medicine or psychology), seniors are generally allowed to enter all bachelor's programs. It is also possible to complete a master or doctorate program. For seniors, the university had set up a counseling center for older students with monthly counseling sessions.

There is also a regularly held table, where older students can not only discuss the specific study conditions and problems, but also share their suggestions. However, advanced skills in dealing with PCs and the Internet are necessary, as the enrollment for studies already takes place online. In addition, seminar and graduation work must generally be written with the computer.

### Regular studies at the University of Vienna

If you want to complete a full degree as an older prospective student, the same conditions apply for you as for younger students. Admission requirement for participation in the regular study programs is the Matura (the secondary school exit exam).

If admission to the program is a first degree course, the university will not charge any tuition fees. Seniors must pay for their studies if they have already completed a full-fledged study and would like to begin a second degree course. In that case they will have to pay tuition fee in the amount of 16.50 euros.

### Further education for seniors at the University of Vienna

The further education programs of the university are regarded as supplementary additional qualifications in the context of the lifelong learning concept. You can choose from a total of 20 master programs, a variety of university courses, certificate courses and seminars. The participation fees and requirements apply individually for each course. You can choose from the following subject areas:

- Pedagogy and art
- Health care and Social science
- Management and Economics
- International relations and politics
- Law
- Communication and media

### Senior studies at the Sigmund Freud Private University in Vienna

The university offers a three-semester senior studies program specifically for older students with a defined course of studies. The students must first complete a theoretical part during their studies;



these include topics such as Psychiatry, social psychology and mental problems in old age. This is followed by a practical part in group self-experience and diagnostic practice.

Admission:

Admission to the course is not limited. There is no Matura required.

Graduation:

In order to successfully complete the degree program, students should pass an oral examination and write a thesis. In that case graduates receive a certificate.

Costs:

The total costs for senior studies are fixed at 3000, - €.

### 3) Cognitive skills training for seniors in Austria

There are a lot of organizations in Austria that provide cognitive training for different age groups including senior. Most of them are non-governmental organizations. Here are few examples of training organizations and courses that offer various cognitive training activities.

#### ÖBV-GT

**The Austrian Federal Association for learning, thinking and memory training and multimodal biography-oriented activation** (short ÖBV-GT) offers various cognitive skills training. Since its founding in 1997, the ÖBV-GT has been serving its members and all those interested in cognitive training.

Cognitive training for seniors includes:

- Exercises for all brain activities
- Physical movement
- Writing a biography
- Orientation in reality
- Expanding mental capacity
- Preventing mental degradation
- Strengthening self-identity
- Convey social cohesion
- Increase communication quality

#### Training for seniors - LIMA

The program is aimed at people over the age of 60 years. In exercise groups, which meet weekly up to 14 days, seniors train their mind and body and discuss questions of everyday senior life.



LIMA stands for "quality of life in old age" ("Lebensqualität im Alter") and is a training program that

- Combines memory and exercise training
- Increases abilities of body, mind and soul
- Scientifically approved, everyday life - oriented and practically tested
- Help senior citizens to maintain and increase their independence
- Available for everyone

The trainings include the following areas:

Memory training:

Strengthens cognitive performance through exercises for concentration, attention and the training of memo techniques.

Movement training:

Exercises that increase endurance and movement coordination. Breathing exercises, dances and games that make this program even more appealing.

Training of everyday skills:

Challenges in senior life, housing as a senior individual, nutrition in old age, social contacts, information on regional support services. Information and tips are passed on other similar topics as well.

### Other assistance

Many other organization provide various surveys to check overall mental abilities of seniors. Such brochures can be distributed among various retirement houses. Here are some of them:

1) "Gedächtnisübungen" by Austroplant-Arzneimittel GmbH

[https://demenz-portal.at/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Cerebokan-Ged%C3%A4chtnistraining\\_WEB.pdf](https://demenz-portal.at/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Cerebokan-Ged%C3%A4chtnistraining_WEB.pdf)

2) „Kopfnüsse! Stärken Sie Ihr Gedächtnis!“ by Österreichischer Seniorenbund

[https://www.seniorenbund.at/fileadmin/user\\_upload/Kopfnu\\_sse\\_1\\_komplett.pdf](https://www.seniorenbund.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Kopfnu_sse_1_komplett.pdf)

3) "Fitness für Körper und Geist" by Erdiözese Wien

[https://www.erzdioezese-wien.at/dl/kolOJKJKKnNJqx4LoJK/Fitness\\_f\\_r\\_K\\_rper\\_und\\_Geist.pdf](https://www.erzdioezese-wien.at/dl/kolOJKJKKnNJqx4LoJK/Fitness_f_r_K_rper_und_Geist.pdf)





### III. Good practices existing in Austria regarding cognitive games for seniors.

#### 1) Mobi.senior.A



**Date of creation:** 09.2013

**Description:** Mobi.senior.a is a project dedicated to enhancing tablet and internet usability for the elderly. They have been working on the premise that information should come easily to seniors and have developed guides for the elderly and for coaches as well. These guides include everything from online shopping, e-government, getting to know operating systems, adjusting display settings, overall better interface, and much more. These guides have been used since the beginning of the project and the results can be found on their website.

**Objectives :**

- Guidelines for improving the usability of senior citizens. They outline what needs to be done to meet the needs of seniors for apps, and why this is important. They should help to better understand the target group 60 plus.
- Guides & exercises that support the handling of smart phones and tablets for senior citizens. The guideline is divided into three parts: Part 1 - General Basics, Part 2 - Topics and Applications, Part 3 - Exercises and Methods.
- **Workshop documents to sensitize the sales and support staff for the target group. In addition to the description of the specificity of the target group, there is also a list of possible operating aids of the systems from Apple and Android.**
- Terms about smart phone and tablet understandable to the target audience.

Contacts:

<http://www.mobiseniora.at/>

Supported by: The Austria Research Promotion Agency (FFG)

[www.ffg.at/en](http://www.ffg.at/en)





## 2) Emporia



**Creation Date:** 1991, Linz, Austria

**Description:** This Austria Cell phone producer company has integrated an „Easy-to-use” technology on their cell phones which includes seniors’ needs and facilitates their interface. This feature is available for everyone who uses their services.

- Good readability, contrasting font and clear color and style
- Large icons and control surfaces
- Simple structure of the three main pages: Home screen, Personal Screen and App Screen
- no erroneous moving or deleting of apps

### **Objectives:**

- Facilitating the usability
- Simple overview of the settings
- Having All notifications at a glance in the Info Center
- Bringing fun and joy in using the smart phone

**Contacts:** <https://www.emporia.eu/en/app/>



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union



### 3) SeniorenColleg

SENIOREN  
COLLEG

**Creation Date:** 2006, Vienna, Austria

**Description:** This organization offers courses in addition to Webinars (Online Seminars) for seniors. These courses include topics such as computer-related issues, Smartphone use, and tablets. They are certified by the Federal Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Health and Consumer Protection as a Good Practice Model for Digital Senior Formation.

#### **Objectives:**

- Familiarizing seniors with the internet and the utilization of digital devices.
- Holding courses at „Senioren Colleg“ as well as at the client’s residence.
- Omitting the fear of being lost in a new setting for seniors.
- Offering private at home courses, even on the weekend as per request.

#### **Contacts:**

<https://www.seniorencolleg.at/>