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### **New apprenticeship occupations drive digitisation in dual vocational education and training forward**

*The introduction of new training regulations for apprenticeship occupations marks a major step into the digital future for dual vocational education and training (VET) in Austria. New apprenticeships such as E-Commerce Merchant (E-Commerce-Kaufmann/-frau) or Construction Engineering Assistant (Bautechnische Assistenz) show that the topic of digitisation has finally reached the apprenticeship training system.*

In the summer of 2018, the Federal Ministry for Digital and Economic Affairs (BMDW), which is responsible for apprenticeship training, is introducing seven new apprenticeships which cover a wide range of fields from construction engineering assistant and glass process engineering onto e-commerce. In addition, training contents of eight existing occupations will be modernised. A joint feature of the new and updated training programmes is the inclusion of digital skills in the training contents.

This will not only increase the number of different training pathways in the apprenticeship training system to over 200 but also continue the trend of continually enhancing the existing training range. The job-specific application of digital technologies – from monitoring and controlling automated production processes to handling IT applications in everyday office routine – is taken into account to a similarly wide extent as the topic of data protection.

This development is reflected most clearly in the training of the E-Commerce Merchant, which, for the first time, now makes it possible for trading companies to cover their demand for staff in online trading with a dual programme. The modernisation of the training of media experts specialising in web development and online marketing is also proof of the increasing importance of internet and social media applications.

Other modernisations are currently being prepared for training programmes in information technology and are planned to take effect as early as this autumn. Here application development and coding will form special focuses.

The development of new training programmes and the modernisation of existing ones do not only meet the demand of companies for a secure pool of future skilled workers in these fields. The digital orientation of many programmes is also an opportunity to further enhance the attractiveness of apprenticeship training for young people. The indication that it is a future-oriented range of training programmes in touch with the latest developments can make a major contribution in this respect.

*More information:*

- <https://www.bmdw.gv.at/Berufsausbildung/LehrberufeInOesterreich/Seiten/Lehrberufspaket-2018.aspx>
- <https://www.bmdw.gv.at/Berufsausbildung/LehrberufeInOesterreich/Seiten/Lehrberufspaket-II-2018.aspx>