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BM **BF** Bundesministerium für
Bildung und Frauen



For initial certification, applicants need to choose another 3 categories from the following:

- health promotion, ergonomics and indoors
- transport and mobility
- procurement and teaching materials
- nutrition, including food and beverage offerings
- chemical products and cleaning
- water, waste water, waste prevention and reduction

All the compulsory criteria of each category need to be met. Of the discretionary criteria, 60% of the possible score needs to be achieved (very small schools only need to score 55%).

Audit and Certification

One of the audit's essential components is the educational institution's self-evaluation, which is documented in an xls-protocol, along with the on-site audit. The eco-label audit is organised by VKI and conducted by independent auditors. In the event of a positive assessment, the Austrian eco-label is awarded for a period of four years. External support is occasionally provided by witness auditors in order to ensure consistency and high quality across Austria.

How much will it cost me to obtain the eco-label?

Schools and university colleges for teacher education are exempt from paying the license fees. The costs for workshops, advisor and auditor training and for witness audits are borne by the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management. The audit fees are staggered and range between € 300 and € 600, depending on the type of school. The Federal Ministry of Education, Art and Culture has pledged to refund audit fees to all schools that pass the eco-label audit.

See a list of the schools with the Austrian Eco-label www.umweltzeichen.at

For further information, please contact one of the eco-label addresses below

Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management

Elvira Kreuzpointner, Elisabeth Schneider
Stubenring 1, 1010 Vienna,
Tel.: +43 (0)1 515 22 – 1648 (1650); Fax: ext. 7649
email: elvira.kreuzpointner@bmlfuw.gv.at,
elisabeth.schneider@bmlfuw.gv.at

Responsibilities: overall coordination, cooperation with countries and school networks; contracting, document creation, organisation of loans and all workshops; advisor and auditor training

VKI Verein für Konsumenteninformation

(Austrian Consumer Association) Arno Dermutz
Linke Wienzeile 18, 1060 Vienna
Tel.: +43 (0)1 588 77 - 255; Fax: ext. 99 207
email: adermutz@vki.at

Responsibilities: supervision of interested and eco-labelled schools, audit organisation, review of eco-label criteria and answering questions particularly those concerning: environmental management, energy, procurement, chemistry as well as water and waste.

Credits: published and owned by: Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management (BMLFUW); edited by: VKI; pictures from: picture archives of BMLFUW and VKI; printed by: BMLFUW; April 2014

Federal Minister of Education and Women's Affairs

Günther Pfaffenwimmer
Freyung 1, 1010 Vienna
Tel.: +43 (0)1 531 20 - 2532
email: guenther.pfaffenwimmer@bmbf.gv.at

Responsibilities: grants and audit fee refund within the scope of the Education Support Fund (Bildungsförderungsfonds), administrative support (e.g. leave for school workshops)

FORUM Umweltbildung,

(Environmental Education Forum)
Strozzigasse 10, 1080 Vienna
Tel.: +43 (0)1 402 47 01 - 0; Fax: ext. 51
email: forum@umweltbildung.at

Responsibilities: revision of eco-label criteria and answering of questions concerning: environmental education, health, nutrition, mobility and outdoors.

Austrian Eco-Label for Schools and for Teacher Education





Schools and University Colleges for Teacher Education Use Eco-Label to Promote School Development

Surveys conducted 2005 and 2009 with educational institutions already awarded the Austrian eco-label indicate that they were mainly driven by the possibility of sprucing up their image, promoting school development and gaining new experience.

Experience has shown that schools successfully maintained and improved their quality standards on account of development and participation processes prompted by this distinction. The eco-label certificate gives the people taking part in the process recognition and polishes up the school's image. In eco-label schools the sense of community was strengthened, contacts to school operators and external project partners grew stronger and investments were brought forward.

By exploring the themes relating to the eco-label, teachers, pupils, employees and parents have become more committed to sustainable development in their day-to-day lives. What is more, preventive environmental management has helped to identify potential savings.

The Austrian Eco-label for Schools and University Colleges for Teacher Education, an initiative that was launched jointly by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management and the Austrian Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture, therefore rewards educational institutions for their commitment to environmental and health education, for promoting a socially cohesive school environment but also for their activities which are forward-looking in nature. The criteria were developed jointly by the Austrian Consumer Information Association (VKI), Environmental Education Forum (*FORUM Umweltbildung*) and environmental and educational experts.

What criteria need to be met to become eligible for the eco-label?

There are several crucial factors when it comes to implementing an eco-label programme. A joint decision to go forward with the implementation, teamwork and external advice help facilitate the process. The requirements are flexibly applied and build on known environmental and quality programmes such as ÖKOLOG, QIS, *Klimabündnis*, *Gesundheitsfördernde Schule* or environmental management systems, including EMAS.

Generally, committed educational institutions already meet some or even all of the criteria. A check list (audit protocol) has been drawn up to help anyone interested to determine to what extent they comply with the requirements laid out by the Eco-Label criteria. Once all the requisite criteria have been met, the completed audit protocol can be submitted along with a current school programme and the mission statement to umweltzeichen@vki.at when registering for the audit.

To view the **Eco-Label Criteria for Schools** go to www.umweltzeichen.at → *Für Interessierte* → *Richtlinien*. (in German)

How do I obtain support for the implementation of the programme?

Eco-label consultants who have undergone specialised training are available to support educational institutions in their efforts to satisfy the eco-label criteria. Federal Provinces also provide financial support for these advisory services. The exact conditions must be agreed between the school and the funding agency.

Annual workshops provide an opportunity to attend further training and share experiences with other schools. Comprehensive information and implementation tips have been provided on www.umweltzeichen.at (in German).

In addition, the Education Support Fund for Health and Sustainable Development (Bildungsförderungsfonds für Gesundheit und Nachhaltige Entwicklung) disburses subsidies for environmental and health-related projects. These educational projects can serve as building blocks for ensuring compliance with the eco-label criteria; see: www.umweltbildung.at/bildungsforderungsfonds.

What criteria need to be met?

The criteria document put an emphasis on the following compulsory and discretionary criteria:

- actual analyses (e.g. school atmosphere, forms of teaching, continuing education, energy, noise, waste) and the school programme as a prerequisite for new ideas and quality improvement
- communication and teamwork in order to have as many groups of people participating in the implementation of the eco-label as possible
- various forms of teaching environmentally relevant and health-related topics (e.g. ex-cathedra teaching, projects, excursions, external experts)
- involvement of pupils, particularly in subjects relating to energy, traffic, waste and outdoors
- health promotion for the benefit of physical, psychological and social well-being
- efficient use of resources (e.g. energy, water, paper)
- green procurement

The criteria document covers 10 categories of criteria, 7 of which need to be implemented before the initial audit. The remaining categories need to be met along with the previously selected criteria by the time follow-on audit to be conducted 4 years later.

The following areas need to be developed for the initial award:

- environmental management, information and social matters
- environmental education
- use of energy and energy saving
- outdoors (if applicable)