



20 years Second Phase in Austria

15 years of driver's licence Multiphase Training saves many lives every year in Austria

**Successful concept of driving schools consolidates driving skills and safety awareness
Number of passenger car novice drivers fatally injured in an accident is two-thirds lower**

Perfection rides, safety training lessons and interactive group discussions are the three success factors of driver's licence training according to the Austrian "Multiphase System". Since 2003 already 2 million car drivers and motorcyclists have completed multi-phase training. Professional driving teachers, specially trained instructors and traffic psychologists from three different professions are involved. Training modules are strung together and the novice drivers get feedback about one year after the initial grant of the driver's license to significantly strengthen their driving skills and risk awareness.

In 2003, 11,000 novice car drivers between the ages of 17 and 24 were injured on Austrian roads. In 2020, after the introduction of multi-phase training in 1993, there were 4,000 injured young car drivers. In just under 20 years, the number of injuries has fallen by almost two thirds (2021: 4628). The total number of people injured in road accidents (cars, motorcycles, trucks, bicycles) fell by almost a third during this period.

Austrian driver's licence training is sought-after in Europe. Even nearly after 20 years our multiphase system is still a unique selling feature in Europe and serves as a "Role Model" for EU institutions and for road safety associations in many Member States. Together with the driver's licence on probation (probationary period of three years) the multiphase system contributes to the fact that local young drivers are significantly safer on the road than before.

In **the first phase** the learner driver is prepared for the driver's licence exam. The learner will complete 32 lessons of learning theory (UE) in the classroom and at least 18 lessons of practical driving in the driving school car (when choosing the full training option in the driving school).

With the first grant of the licence the novice driver holds the pink card in his hand. Here Austria differs from other states as the prescribed minimum training hours vary widely across Europe. Only after completing the second phase the driver owns his licence indefinitely, otherwise the authority confiscates the driver's licence.

In **the second phase** the novice driver gets continuously feedback during a one-year continuum - free from preparatory stress and test anxiety. In coordinated further education modules young drivers receive feedback on their personal driving behaviour, get to know their vehicle in borderline situations and estimate their own risk type themselves. The experts from three disciplines, namely driving teachers, instructors and traffic psychologists qualify the novice drivers in terms of driving style, driving skills and safety awareness.

The **first perfection ride** addresses bad driving habits when driving alone with the feedback of the driving teacher. He comments on the correct safety distance, accelerating after motorway accesses, the use of cruise control or the right viewing technique. The safety benefit of the Austrian model is that the second phase starts quite early with a two-hour supervised road trip. The risk of accidents for novice drivers is greatest at this time. The first perfection ride takes place in the period of 2 to 4 months after the issue of the driver's licence. Coaching instead of teaching is paramount in order for the beginner to develop the rightly adapted ways of driving.

At the **driver safety training** novice drivers learn how to control their own vehicle in challenging borderline situations. The focus is on emergency braking, correctly taking bends and correcting sliding or skidding cars. The drivers practice manoeuvres which they haven't experienced yet in their short driving experience. Getting to know one's own vehicle safely and reacting correctly in borderline situations can be seen as a critical driving environment. The driving exercises therefore only take place at the closed training area of a driving safety center under the instruction of a specially trained instructor without public traffic (and without traffic signs). Under no circumstances the driver should be led to overconfidence, which was regrettably already the case internationally.

At the **traffic psychology group discussion** driving newcomers of the same age discuss dangerous incidents experienced so far, learn from the mistakes of others and develop a psychological radar (awareness) for frequent dangerous situations. Distraction because of mobile games, speeding, less safety distance, tiredness or drugs and alcohol are the most common reasons for accidents. Novice drivers share new experiences in the seminar room with other driver types and risk types, which they may not find among their own family members and friends.

They make a self-assessment of their own risk exposure. They self-associate risky situations and types of accidents they might be inclined to. They thereby enhance their sense of responsibility as road users.

The driver safety training including the group discussion needed visions of the four leading people at this time Ing. Norbert Hausherr, chairman Driving Schools Association, Dipl.Ing. Herbert Hübner, director ARBÖ Vienna, Franz Wurz, director ÖAMTC driving safety centres and Dr. Gregor Bartl, expert of KFV (Kuratorium for traffic safety). Nationwide training areas were constructed.

In the first phase the learner drivers often cannot imagine that they might be distracted. They are too busy and can't handle the vehicle properly. With advice of the traffic psychologists, they learn something about their perception as a human, i.e. about their self. The seminar does clearly not serve as a review of the driving safety training with the psychologist performed before in the morning. The instructor is not present in the seminar room.

With the implementation of the 3rd Driver's Licence Directive in Austria motorcyclists have to complete an additional **danger perception training** since 19th January 2013. It takes place at the same day after the driving safety training on the bike and the group discussion with the traffic psychologist. Nearly 350-000 bikers have already completed a multi-phase training, a third of these motorbike novice drivers have done a danger awareness training. Bikers should be able to assess dangers early on time, deal rightly with defensive driving styles and be mentally strengthened in order to avoid competing dynamics in group rides.

The **second perfection ride** focuses on an environmentally conscious and fuel-efficient driving style and finalises the multiphase system after one year. Since the legal anchoring on February 5th 2008, about 1,5 million car and motorbike drivers passed the exam as well as the second perfection ride with the aim of protecting the climate, which has the nice side effect of saving money. The fuel consumption is compared in two 15-minutes comparison

rides on public roads. Discussing fuel saving tips such as timely upshifting, low-rotation driving or skipping gears during special accelerations results in fuel savings of averaging 14 percent.

Since 2004 a team of master trainers from the driving schools throughout Austria trained around 1400 fuel-saving coaches. These fuel-saving trainers instruct both learner drivers and on a voluntary basis professional drivers in companies concerning eco-friendly driving.

The **advantages of the Austrian Multiphase Training (MPA)** are obvious. Relatively early after getting the permission to drive first time alone the novice drivers return to a driving school for a feedback training to correct and consolidate their knowledge, driving skills and behavior in traffic.

The young road users are considered in their entirety and are further developed by professionals from three areas of specialization (driving skills, car operation, driving behavior) with didactically and methodically aligned modules. The second phase acts like prophylactic medicine, not to get sick. Together one analyses common types of accidents as well as dangers of distraction, in order not to cause an accident.

You learn driving by driving a car. If learner drivers, often from the urban area, drive worse in the first perfection ride than at the exam a few months earlier, they are not left alone. Commented driving lessons and exercises strengthen the driving expertise and the awareness that experienced drivers are safer road users. The MPA is a great opportunity to introduce young drivers to new technologies, advanced driver assistants and semi-automated driving, as well as the correct use of automatic start-stop, distance-controlled cruise control or emergency brake assistants. Driving schools are increasingly using e-cars or hybrid cars for perfection rides, which has sparked the interest in new technologies and will allow future drivers to learn how to handle these systems in the early stages.

18.05.22

Dr. Joachim Steininger, Obmann / Chairman

Dr. Stefan Ebner, Geschäftsführer / Director

Fachverband der Fahrschulen und des Allg. Verkehrs / Association of Driving Schools

Wirtschaftskammer Österreich / Austrian Economic Chamber

1045 Wien / Vienna, Wiedner Hauptstraße 63

T +43 5 90 900 4028, M +43 664 8179043

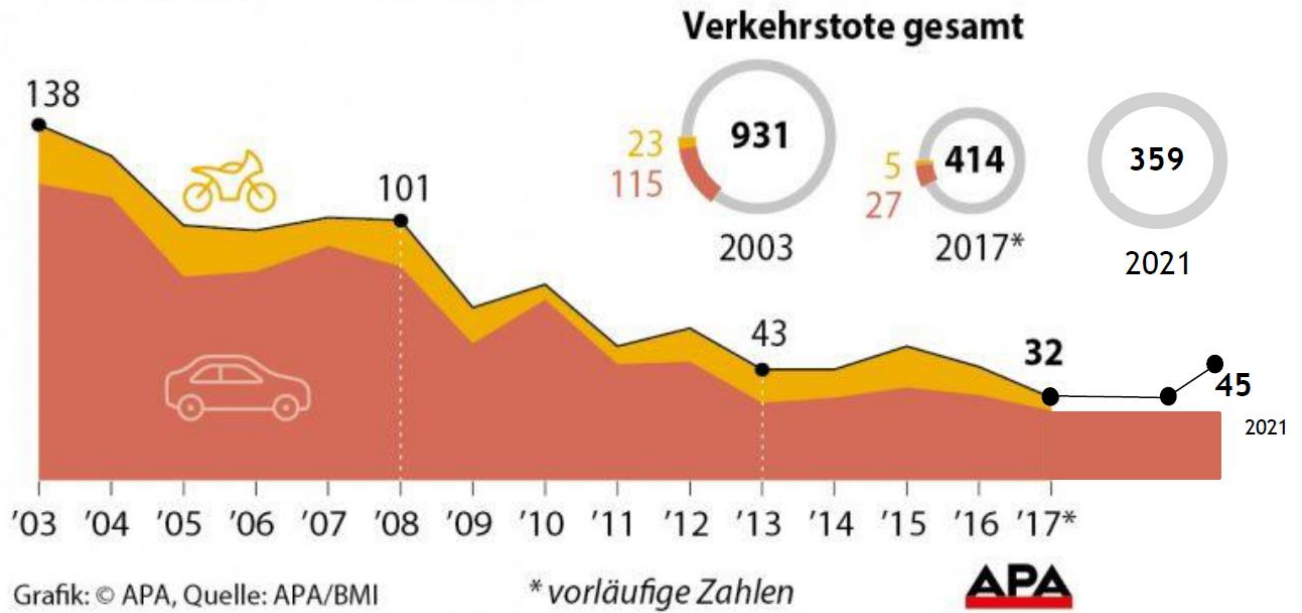
E stefan.ebner@wko.at, | <http://wko.at/verkehr>

Young drivers killed in road traffic

Getötete junge Lenker im Straßenverkehr

● **Pkw-Lenker**
17-24 Jahre

● **Motorradlenker** (inkl. Leichtmotorrad)
16-24 Jahre



Injured with personal injury in Austria

| Injured on the street | 2003 | 2020 | decline |
|---|--------|--------|------------------|
| total, all ¹⁾ | 43,426 | 30.670 | Minus 30 percent |
| 17-24 year old, cars ²⁾ | 10.924 | 4.005 | Minus 63 percent |
| 16-24 year old, motorcycles ³⁾ | 689 | 595 | Minus 14 percent |

¹⁾ all age groups, all means of transport on the road (car, truck, motorcycle, bicycle)

²⁾ 2021: 4628 persons

³⁾ 2021: 733 persons

Road safety measures and trends in accidents in Austria

