



Austrian Corporatism and Institutional Change in the Relationship between Apprenticeship Training and School-Based VET

Lukas Graf (WZB)

Lorenz Lassnigg (IHS Wien)

Justin J.W. Powell (WZB)

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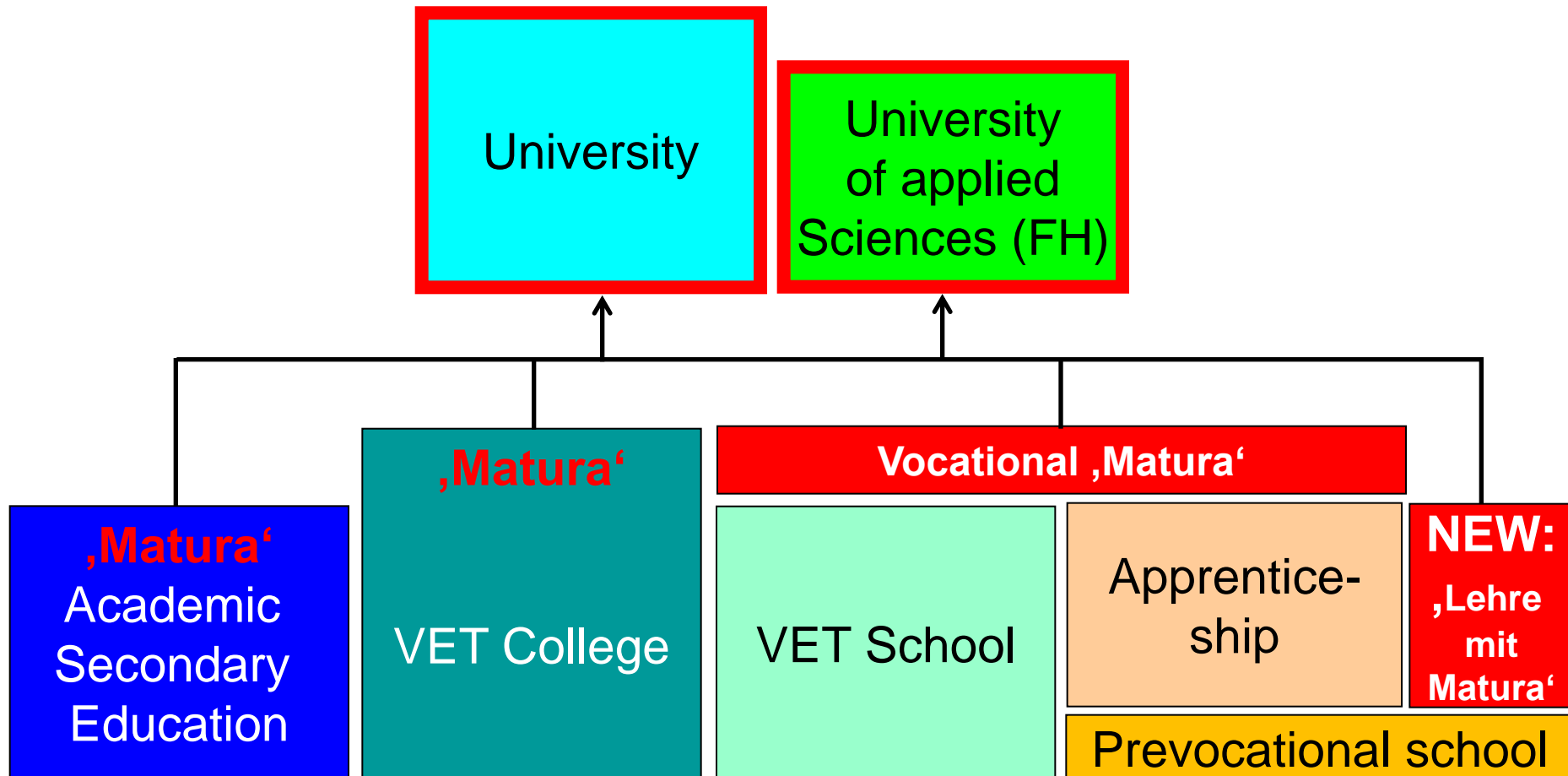
15 September 2011

Agenda

- Overview of the system: structure and governance
- ‚Collective skills system‘, research question
- Theory, method, findings
- Conclusions

Skill Formation in Austria

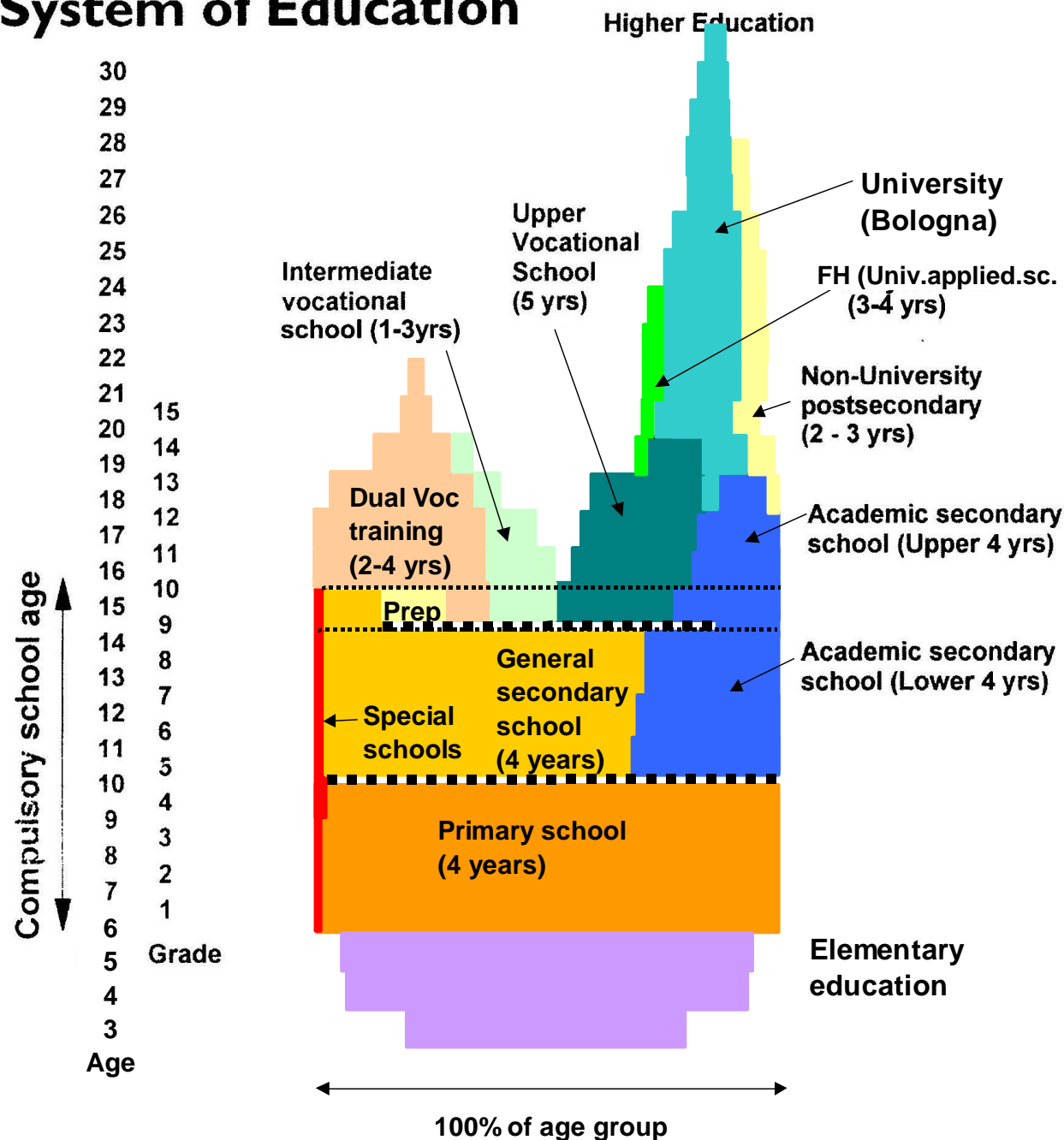
Major Organizational Forms



System of Education

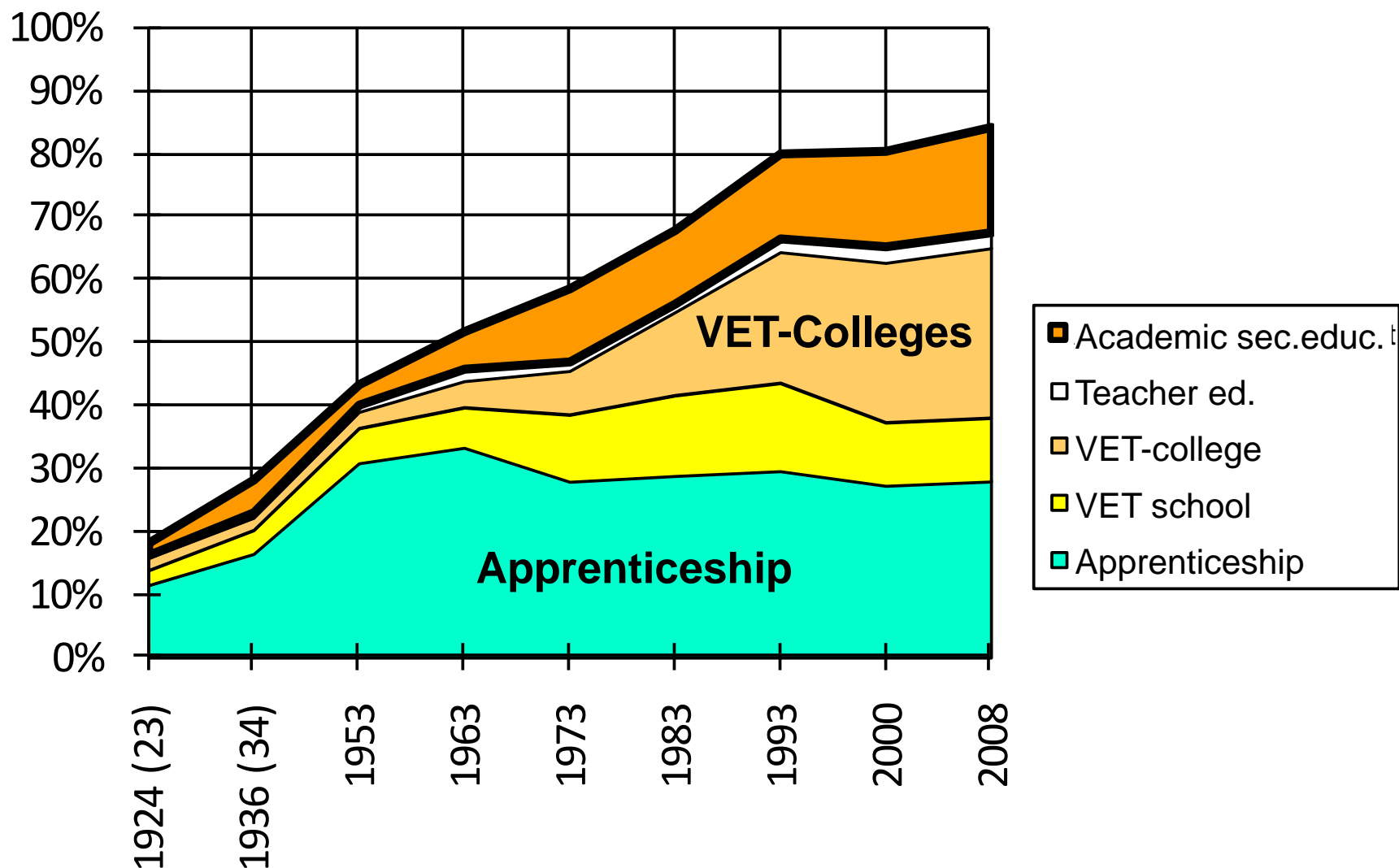


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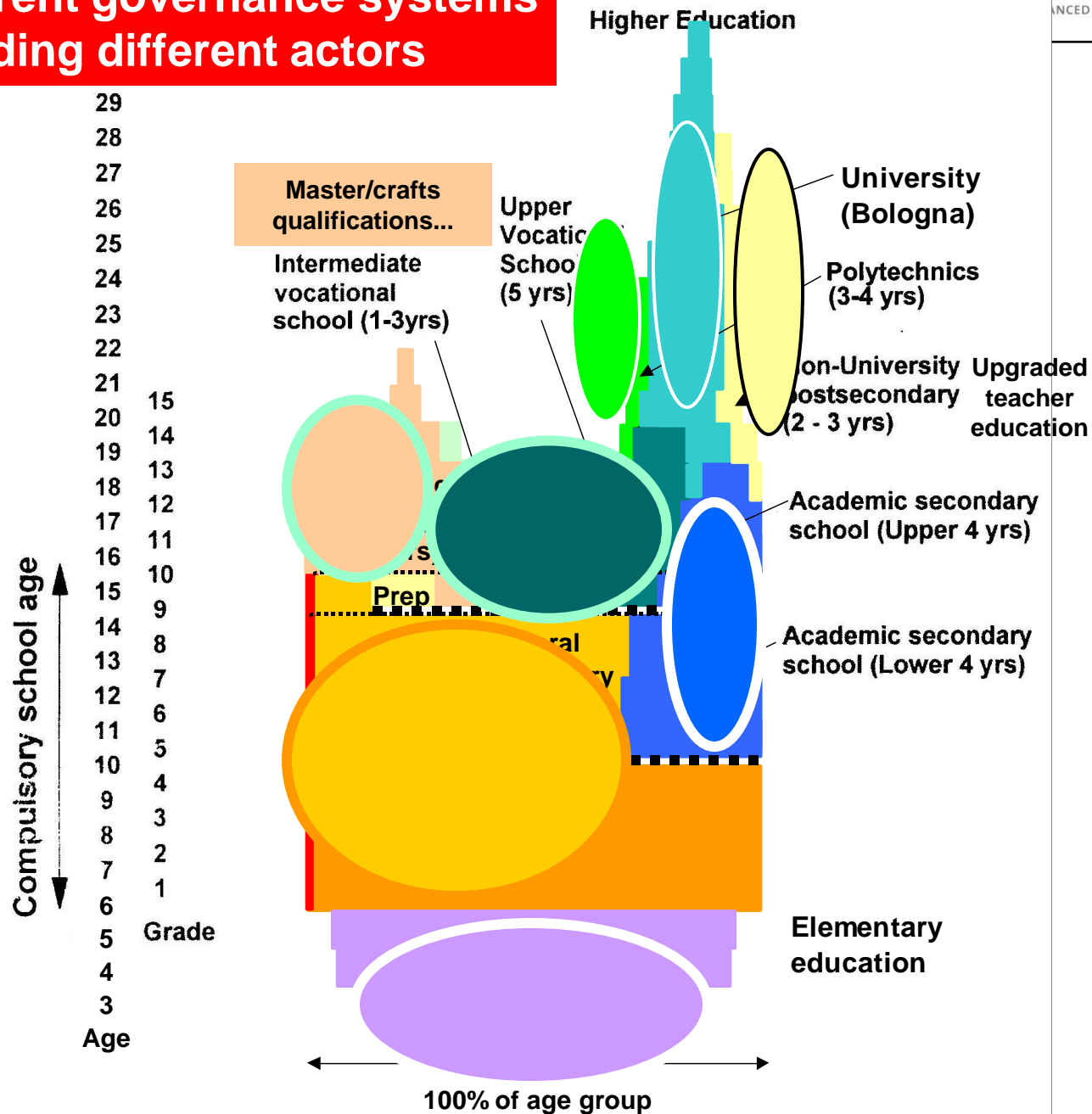


Crossectional
distribution of a cohort
(approx)

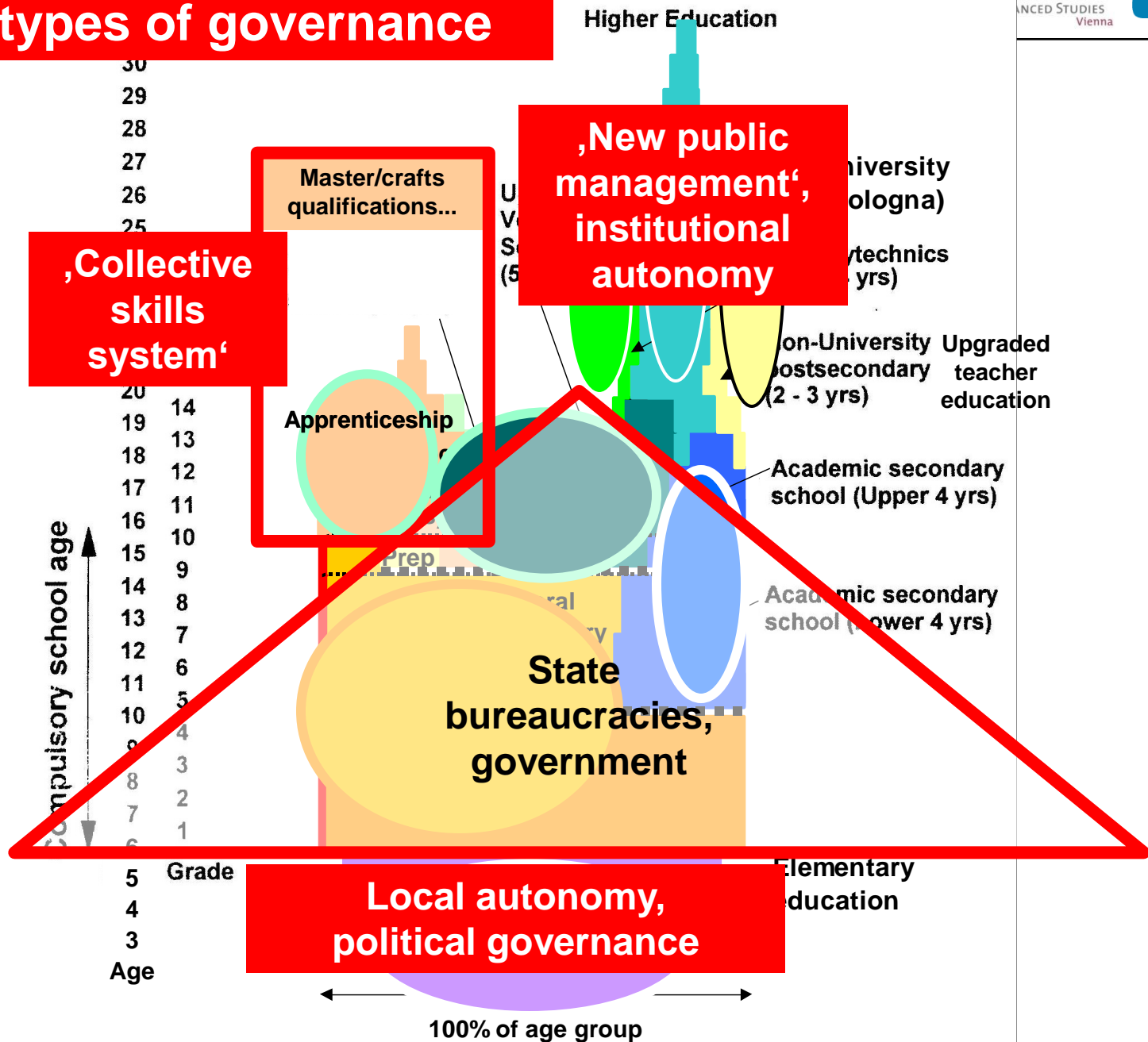
Enrolment at upper secondary level related to 15-19yrs population in Austria 1924-2008



~ Eight different governance systems including different actors



~ Four types of governance



‘Collective Skills Systems’

‘The main characteristic of the vocational training systems of these countries is that they are **collectively organized**, because **firms**, **intermediary associations**, and the **state** cooperate in the process of skill formation in initial vocational training. In particular, this means that,

- first, **firms are strongly involved** in financing and administering workplace-based training;
- second, **intermediary associations** play an important role in the administration and reform of these systems;
- third, the systems provide **portable, certified occupational skills**; and
- fourth, training takes place not only in schools but also in companies, usually in the form of dual **apprenticeship training**.’

*The Political Economy of Collective Skill Formation.
Edited by Marius R.Busemeyer and Christine Trampusch,
Oxford Univ.Press, forthcoming 2011, p.4*

Research Question

From an historical-institutionalist perspective, which factors have most shaped the development of the distinctive VET system in Austria?

Argument

Austria's specific development — the institutionalization of both strong dual apprenticeship & school-based VET — has been influenced strongly by:

- Long-term historical co-existence of both apprenticeship system and full-time school-based training system
- Austrian small state corporatism

Theory: Small State Corporatism

- ‘Social Partnership’ at national level

Voluntary and informal coordination between interest groups,
state bureaucracies, and political parties

- ‘Centralized Federalism’ (Austria-specific)

Obstacle to change

→ ...overall great adaptability to survive in rapidly changing environment, i.e. internal rigidity can nevertheless lead to external flexibility.

(see Katzenstein 1984, 2003)

Gradual Institutional Change: Modes

- System has changed significantly without having been planned by someone in this way

- **Institutional change by**
 - **layering:**


Introduction of new rules on top of existing ones, which may eventually crowd out or supplant old institutional logic
 - **drift:**

Changes in environment result in altered scope, meaning, or function of an institutional logic (Mahoney & Thelen 2010)

Method & Data

- Process-tracing
- Data sources:
 - Secondary literature & document analysis
 - Aggregate statistics
 - Expert interviews with key stakeholders (n = 13), March 2010

Key Processes



19 th C. – late 1960s	Separate institutionalization of both apprenticeship & school-based VET
1970s – mid-1990s	Expansion of VET Colleges <i>(Layering)</i>
1970s – late 1990s	Marginalization of dual apprenticeship <i>(Drift)</i>
Late 1990s – present	Reforms of apprenticeship <i>(Layering to avoid drift)</i>
1994	Late intro of FHs

Crucial Factors

- Shift towards service-based and 'knowledge' economy in the context of globalized markets
- EU context (accession in 1995)
- Privatization of large-scale industries & economy dominated by SMEs
- Corporatist governance of apprenticeship system & partisan politics in school-based VET
- Educational choices of individuals seeking to optimize career chances

Conclusions

Path-dependent patterns of gradual institutional change in the Austrian VET system has been strongly and continuously influenced by

- Small state corporatism (*macro level*)
- Relationship between apprenticeship system and school-based VET, especially by the expansion of VET Colleges as a hybrid organizational form (*meso level*) at the boundary between vocational and higher education.

Lukas Graf, Lorenz Lassnigg, and Justin J.W. Powell (*forthcoming 2011*), Austrian Corporatism and Institutional Change in the Relationship between Apprenticeship Training and School-Based VET, in *The Political Economy of Collective Skill Formation. Edited by Marius R. Busemeyer and Christine Trampusch, Oxford Univ.Press., p.150-178.*