

# Austria

## About



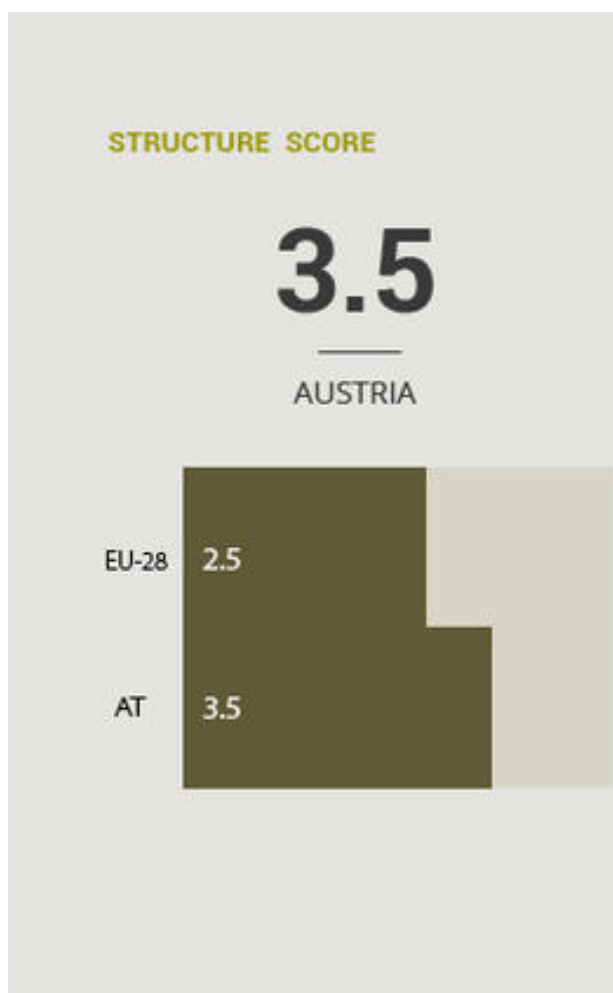
The principle of equality is embedded in the Federal Constitutional Law under Article 7, which states that ‘all nationals are equal before the law’ and excludes any privileges based upon sex – among others. In 1998, an amendment to this Article provided the constitutional basis for the implementation of gender mainstreaming, by introducing the responsibility for all level of authorities (Federation, Länder and municipalities) to implement measures apt to achieve de-facto equality of men and women.

The earliest government action on GM dates back to a cabinet Decision in 2000, that established the Inter-ministerial Working Group for Gender Mainstreaming (IMAG GMB) for the purpose of implementing gender mainstreaming at the federal level, as a horizontal strategy that involves all Ministries. The latest Decision, dated 2011, focuses on establishing gender mainstreaming criteria among all ministries and departments as well as in legislation, funding programmes and public procurement.

Gender mainstreaming has been very successfully implemented in the areas of gender budgeting, a principle entrenched in Art. 13 of the Constitution since 2009, and gender-neutral language.

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## Structures



**Federal level:** The governmental body responsible for gender equality at the federal level is the Federal Minister for Education and Women's Affairs, within the Austrian Federal Chancellery. The structure in charge of gender mainstreaming is the Department for Gender Equality policies and legal matters within the Directorate for Women and Equality. However, all ministries are responsible for accomplishing gender-mainstreaming objectives on the basis of five Resolutions of the Council

of Ministers, which regulate the implementation of gender mainstreaming at federal level. Gender-mainstreaming working groups have been activated in many ministries. Since its establishment in 2000, the Inter-ministerial Working Group for Gender Mainstreaming (IMAG GMB) has played a crucial role in leading, monitoring and supervising the process of implementing gender mainstreaming at federal level.

Furthermore, dedicated offices are in place in several provincial governments to supervise the gender-mainstreaming process at the local level.

**States level:** Austria is a parliamentary representative democracy and a federal republic that is divided into nine states. For each of the nine states, a department for women's affairs and/or gender equality has been created:

- Office of the Provincial Government of Vorarlberg, Women's Department
- Office of the Provincial Government of Tyrol, Department of Women and Equality
- Office of the Provincial Government of Salzburg, staff unit for Equal opportunity, Anti-Discrimination and Advancement of Women
- Office of the Provincial Government of Styria, specialist Department of Society and Diversity, Department of Society and Generation
- Office of the Provincial Government of Carinthia, Department of Women and Equal Treatment
- Office of the Provincial Government of Upper Austria, Directorate Steering Committee, Department Steering Committee/ Women's Department
- Office of the Provincial Government of Lower Austria, Women's Department
- Office of the Provincial Government of Burgenland, Department of Women's Issue
- City of Vienna, Municipal Department 57, Advancement of Women and Coordination of Women's Issue

The relationship between the national and regional level is managed through an annual steering meeting that brings together public officials from both levels. In addition, the national Interministerial Working Group for Gender Mainstreaming supports regional authorities through the systematic organisation of capacity-building initiatives (seminars, workshops and training) about topical issues such as gender budgeting, gender mainstreaming and legislation or regulatory impact assessments and their implications for gender equality at regional level. This interministerial working group has also published different guidelines (covering diverse topics such as gender in research, gender-neutral language, gender budgeting, and integration of gender mainstreaming in legislation) that provide in-depth and practical information along with advice for

the states.

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## Laws and policies

The national foundations for the implementation of gender mainstreaming are articulated within Article 7 of the Federal Constitutional Law and in five subsequent cabinet decisions taken between 2000 and 2011 by the Council of Ministers (2000, 2002, 2004, 2008, 2011). These decisions established the IMAG GMB (2000); approved the implementation of a long-term work programme for gender mainstreaming (2002); and set out the requirements for a targeted implementation of gender mainstreaming at federal level (2008). In particular, latest more recent decision in 2011 affirmed the application of two separate guidelines, one on drafting laws/regulations and the other on budget-related legislation. It also called for the provision of sex-disaggregated statistics in federal government reports, studies and publications as well as for reinforced information and training, and inclusion of civil servants in gender-mainstreaming projects.

Sex-disaggregated data is used by the Federal Minister for Education and Women's Affairs to produce an annual Gender Index that provides an overall understanding of gender differences and inequalities, and how they are structured.

Gender budgeting was enshrined as a goal in the federal constitution in 2007. With the introduction of effect-oriented budget management, the strategy of gender budgeting plays a central role, as every ministry is obliged to link its budgeting to the definition of outcome targets – including a gender-equality target.

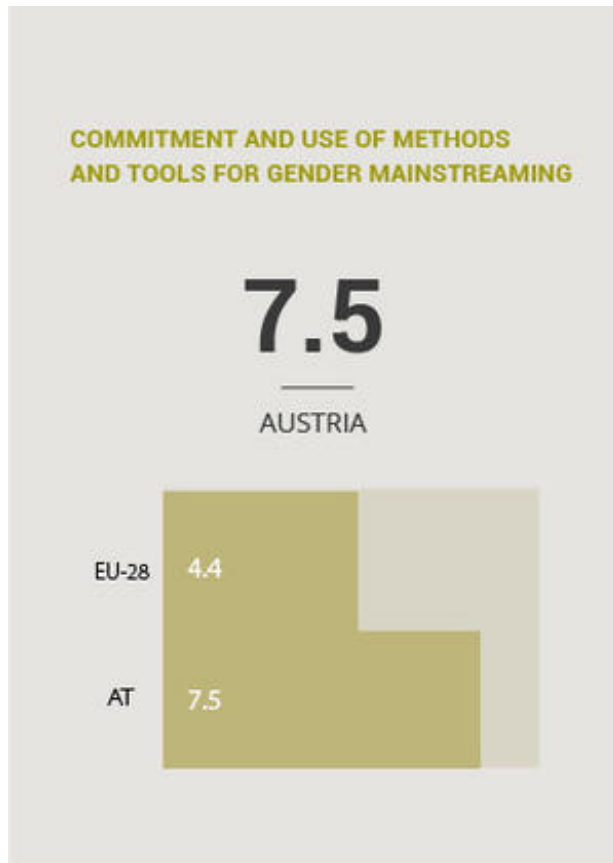
The states are not mere administrative divisions but have some legislative authority distinct from the federal government, e.g. in matters of culture, social care, primary education, youth and nature protection, hunting, building, transport planning and zoning ordinances. At the state level, all nine states have passed resolutions for implementing gender mainstreaming.

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## Methods and tools



Several methods are being deployed at national level, such as gender budgeting, gender analysis, gender impact assessment, capacity-building and stakeholder consultations, among others. Several regions are deploying gender-mainstreaming methods. The methods most commonly used are capacity-building, gender budgeting, research and generation of knowledge, monitoring and sex-disaggregated statistics.

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## Good practices

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