

In-house seminar on gender budgeting

Austria

2009-2014

In-house training on gender budgeting

Summary

Austria's federal ministries have been obliged to carry out gender budgeting since the revision of the constitution in 2009, but this provision does not apply to regional or local authorities. An in-house seminar on gender budgeting was developed, and has been delivered 19 times to a total of 350 participants in ministries, agencies, institutes, universities and the Austrian Parliament. It is expected to continue.

It is demand-oriented, practical and adaptable to the needs of different departments and authorities. It prepares administrators to implement outcome orientation, under which each ministry formulates up to five specific outcomes, including gender equality, along with indicators to measure them, in their institutional budgets.

It was delivered by two socialist gender trainers, which gave it as high level of credibility among participating institutions.

Gender budgeting an obligation

Since 2000, Austria's Council of Ministers has adopted five resolutions to mainstream gender into politics and administration. In 2002, the inter-ministerial working group on gender mainstreaming, established with the first resolution in 2000, recommended that gender training should be included in every stage of public administration education.

Consequently, the educational plans of six out of 13 ministries incorporate up to four hours of mandatory gender training for all staff entering the federal service, with further training offered at a later stage.

On 1 January 2009, as part of the federal budget reform, gender budgeting was anchored in the Federal Constitutional Act. The act stipulates that budgeting by federal, state and local authorities shall be carried out with a view to ensuring equality between women and men.

Training programme

Accordingly, an extensive training programme has been developed to support the implementation of gender budgeting as a part of gender mainstreaming. The in-house seminar on gender budgeting, in line with the European Pact for Gender Equality (2006-2010 and 2011-2020), is one element of this training programme. The seminar covers a key element of the federal budget reform which is the introduction of 'outcome orientation'. As of 1 January 2013, all ministries are obliged to formulate a maximum of five specific outcomes, including outcomes in the field of gender equality, in their institutional budgets. They are also required to provide measures for achieving the outcomes and to formulate indicators to measure their success.



The main objective of the in-house seminar is to support gender budgeting, which was established as a national target in the Federal Constitutional Act (2009). The seminar provides the participants with theoretical inputs and concrete examples from their field of work to enable them to formulate the specific gender equality outcomes, measures (or outputs) and indicators required by the federal budget reform. They are expected to develop gender equality understanding and competence and apply this knowledge to their work. They also learn how to develop equality outcomes, measures and indicators in the budgeting work of their ministry.

The seminars are addressed to policy-makers and administrators from the departments that are required to apply the new budgetary requirements (e.g. the head of department, the individual responsible for the department's budget, senior staff from the court of auditors and the financial department, the external expert consulting the departments on gender budgeting). So far, eight of the 12 ministries in Austria have been covered by the full, four-hour long training session. In addition, a shorter two-hour version of the workshop has been delivered in other institutions according to demand (e.g. agencies, institutes, universities and the Austrian Parliament). All in all, 350 participants have attended the 19 seminars.

At the federal level, the in-house seminar on gender budgeting is commissioned by the Minister for Women and Civil Service. One start-up training session per ministry is financed centrally. At the state and community level, the training is mainly financed from the local authorities' own financial resources.

The training is delivered by two gender trainers: Dr Vera Jauk, Head of Department Gender Equality Policies and Legal Matters at the Federal Ministry for Education and Women's Affairs, and Dr Silvia Kronberger, Head of the Institute for Social Learning and Political Education at the University of Teacher Education, Salzburg

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The Federal Academy of Public Administration now offers a course in Gender Mainstreaming and Budgeting. This course consists of 7 modules and includes for example the establishment of a common understanding of gender, the fundamental principles of gender mainstreaming as a framework on an organisational level and as a system and process competence. It gives insight into the traditional instruments and their application and is also a forum for sharing results and experiences with experts from all departments. The Gender Mainstreaming course has so far taken place twice and about 40 people have taken part in total. The next course will take place next year.

Practical application of gender budgeting

In its design, the seminar takes into account the different areas of knowledge that participants may have on the topic. Information is transferred through theoretical inputs, practical examples, case studies, group work and discussions. Above all, work focuses on the practical application of gender budgeting outcomes, outputs and indicators in the participants' respective fields of work.

The seminar is structured in the following way:

- It starts with an introduction about what gender mainstreaming is, followed by group work where each participant in the group can reflect on their own attitude towards and experience with gender mainstreaming.
- The introduction is followed by a theoretical part where the legal basis of gender budgeting is explained as well as the expectations from the ministries in this regard.
- During the last, practical part of the seminar, concrete examples and exercises adapted to the participants' (or the ministry's) field of activity are presented and tested. For

instance, if the participants are from the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management, the practical part of the seminar focuses on environmental topics. Accordingly, the participants' questions in this area are discussed during the workshop.

The seminar lasts approximately four hours and copies of the flipcharts used are sent to the participants afterwards for reference. The method of defining gender equality outcomes in the seminar consists of four steps, as described below:

1. **Analysis:** The first step involves awareness of any gender-specific issues and inequalities in the specific field of work of the participant in the seminar and analysis of their causes. The key question in this step is: What is the status quo?
2. **Definition of gender equality outcomes, outputs and indicators:** This step is about defining concrete and revisable gender equality outcomes, outputs, programmes or projects, which could lead to achieving the set objective, and indicators to measure success. The key questions in this step are: Where can we start? What do we want to achieve? How can we reach the goal? How can we measure success?
3. **Implementation:** This step is about the implementation of the defined measures, programmes and projects.
4. **Evaluation:** The final step is concerned with evaluating and documenting the results and progress in achieving gender equality outcomes based on the defined indicators. The key questions in this step are: Which measures had an effect? Which outcomes were achieved or not achieved? What were the challenges faced? What should be taken into account next time?

The training is considered to have fully met the requirements of the initial phase introducing gender budgeting in Austria. Depending on the later stages of this process, further developments of the course might be necessary.

Workshops and trainings on gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting are set to continue and will be supported by a project database. Furthermore, in its most recent resolution of 2011, the government commits itself to give all staff training and information to strengthen their competencies on equal opportunities. This decision was based on results of the 2010 evaluation of 10 years of gender mainstreaming at federal level, which showed that gender mainstreaming should be enhanced specifically in staffing policy, training and organisational development.¹ In line with the evaluation, strategies (e.g. gender budgeting or gender mainstreaming in the legal process) and methods (e.g. monitoring and reporting) were considered as important tools to foster gender equality in all aspects of life.

Innovation

The seminar has innovated in the gender mainstreaming policy framework in Austria by providing the first in-depth training for the practical implementation of a legal obligation in different areas of public administration work. The following results and outcomes of the training have been identified:

- The participants developed gender competences including the ability to integrate the gender perspective into their daily work. They acquired basic knowledge on gender mainstreaming and the process of gender budgeting, and understood the subject and how it relates to their area of work more comprehensively through practical assignments during the training.

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Zehn Jahre Gender Mainstreaming in der Bundesverwaltung (2010):
https://www.bmbf.gv.at/frauen/gender/studie_10jahregmbundesverwal_26198.pdf?4dz8a1

- Overall, the training facilitated the process of gender budgeting in Austria by showing the participating officials how to apply it in practice in their respective fields of work and by helping them to develop the key competences required by the process: to define concrete gender equality outcomes, measures and indicators.
- It is expected that the quality of the gender equality outcomes will increase, i.e. the objectives set out will be more profound and concrete, and measures and indicators will be more meaningful. The participating officials may use the gender equality outcomes which were developed in the seminar, though including one of these outcomes in the final budget of the institution must be approved at the relevant decision-making level.

The concept of demand-oriented training in relation to the practical elements of the seminar is the key success factor. The reason for this is twofold: 1) the content of the training can be easily adapted to the specific requirements of the participants' group, and 2) practical training, supervised by gender experts, enhances the staff's performance in their daily work.

High status

As the seminar was implemented in the context of a federal law reform, this practical training is a sustainable way of improving gender competences and their public policy effects. The supervision of participants' work by gender experts improves the performance of staff in their daily work.

Some seminar participants felt that the coordination of the training by a high-level organisation and its delivery by external experts helped to building acceptance of gender budgeting among representatives of their local authority.

The voluntary nature of the training and the difference in the approaches of ministries and local authorities to gender mainstreaming are the main obstacles to its success. Whilst at the federal level the legislation obligates the ministries to develop concrete gender equality outcomes as part of their budgets, the *Länder* and communities are not legally bound to do so (though they can implement gender budgeting if they wish). The low priority of gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting, especially at the *Land* and community level is one of the main risk factors. In some local authorities, this is due to insufficient in-house gender competence. Solutions which have been applied to reduce these risks include promoting gender mainstreaming and awareness-raising through the seminars and other means, such as newsletters or a website.

Continued demand at federal level

The in-house seminar on gender budgeting is the first training on the practical implementation of a legal obligation in different remits of the federal authorities' work. The demand-oriented, practical nature of the training, which can be adapted to different policy areas and different levels of government, has emerged as both a strategic capacity-building and methodological recommendation.

Since the current seminar provides basic knowledge about gender budgeting, it is envisaged that more in-depth training could be provided in the ministries depending on the further requirements of the gender budgeting process. Currently, there is an ongoing demand for this type of training, particularly at the federal level where the ministries are required to regularly evaluate and adapt their gender budgeting and equality goals. All budget areas should be gender balanced in the future. In its current form, parts of the seminar can also be included in train-the-trainer and gender competence training courses.

Although taking part in the seminar remains voluntary, the ministries in Austria were legally obliged to implement gender budgeting by 2013 and the majority of them have already taken part in the training. On the other hand, the *Länder* and communities are not yet legally bound

to implement gender budgeting. To encourage seminar participation at these two levels, the importance of gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting is being promoted by the training coordinator among local authorities. Best practice examples from the training at the federal level could facilitate the development of gender budgeting in the *Länder* and communities.

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Further information:

Interministerial Working Group on Gender Mainstreaming/Budgeting (IMAG GMB): <http://www.imag-gendermainstreaming.at/>

Seminar flyer: http://www.imag-gendermainstreaming.at/cms/imag/attachments/1/0/5/CH0136/CMS1293460758117/inhouse_seminar_gender_budgeting.pdf

Gender budgeting pilot project: <http://www.graz.at/cms/beitrag/10190615/4548790>

https://www.oeffentlicherdienst.gv.at/vab_dokumente/2014/ML_500.pdf in German.

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