

**Questionnaire to Governments on the Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the Outcome of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Special Session of the General Assembly (2000)**

**For preparation of regional review and appraisals in the context of the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in 2010**

**Response to the Questionnaire by Austria**  
*Reporting period: 2004 to 2009*

**PART ONE: SURVEY**

In gender equality policy the following measures proved particularly important for implementing the Beijing Platform for Action of 1995 in the reporting period:

**1. MAJOR STATUTORY CHANGES AND PROJECTS:**

**EQUAL TREATMENT LEGISLATION**

**Amendment to the Equal Treatment Act as well as to the Federal Act on the Equal Treatment Commission and the Ombud for Equal Treatment, Federal Law Gazette I no. 98/2008; Amendment to the Federal Equal Treatment Act, Federal Law Gazette I no. 97/2008.**

With the transposition of the EU Directive 2004/113/EC improvements to existing substantive law and some procedural provisions took effect. Minimum compensation for income discrimination has been doubled from one to two months' salary. With a view to raising the proportion of women in executive and managerial positions in the federal civil service, the Act on the Notification of Vacancies has been amended so as to heighten transparency (see explanations in Part Three).

**GENDER BUDGETING**

**Amendment to the Federal Constitution (B-VG)**

With the amendment to the Federal Constitution, Federal Law Gazette I no. 1/2008, which entered into force on January 1, 2009, the internationally established concept of gender budgeting and/or gender-responsive budgeting was enshrined in Article 13, para.3 of the Federal Constitution as a goal to be reached by the state ("The Federal Government, the Federal Provinces (Laender) and Local Authorities shall strive for de-facto equality of women and men in drawing up their budgets").

This goal set by the Austrian state forms part of the budget reform which will be implemented in two phases. In the second phase of this reform which will take effect in 2013 this goal is to be attained, i.e. the federal budget will have to be oriented towards the effects of the funds used under budget law. Pursuant to Article 51, para. 8 of the Federal Constitution, one of the goals to be taken into account in drawing up the federal budget is, in particular, to achieve de facto equality of women and men. (For further information, see Parts Three and Four).

**COMBATING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN**

**The Act Amending the Penal Code of 2006, Federal Law Gazette no.56/2006**, in Section 107, letter a, amongst other things, contains provisions for improved protection against persistent harassment (the "Anti-Stalking Act"). (For an extensive description see Part Two / Violence against Women.)

**The Amendment to the Code of Criminal Procedure (StPO-Novelle) of 2006, Federal Law Gazette I no.102/2006**

Pursuant to Section 49a, victims of violence, persons exposed to dangerous threats or at risk of infringement of their sexual integrity are entitled to psycho-social and legal support throughout court proceedings.

## **RECONCILIATION OF WORK AND FAMILY LIFE**

**The Federal Act Amending the Childcare Allowance Act, the Parental Leave Benefits Act and the General Social Insurance Act, Federal Law Gazette I, no. 76/2007:** The introduction of a variety of childcare allowance models as well as the raised ceiling on additional earnings form part of the new legal provisions.

With a view to promoting **the extension of childcare facilities**, the Federal Government and the Federal Provinces (Laender) entered into an **Agreement pursuant to Section 15a of the Federal Constitution**. In the period from 2008 to 2010, the Federal Government will invest a total of euro 45 million in the extension of childcare facilities primarily for children under the age of three so as to be able to meet current demand, and another euro 15 million in language tuition for young children. From now till 2010, the Federal Provinces will make available for this purpose funds up to euro 60 million.

With the **Amendment to the Work Contract Adjustment Act (AVRAG)** of 2006, Austrian legislation was changed with a view to taking into account the need for extended family hospice leave (“care for dying family members” and “care for extremely seriously ill children”), whilst at the same time adoptive and foster parents were also granted the right to extended family hospice leave in such cases. Thus parents are now also entitled to claim family hospice leave for the care of stepchildren and children of a common law partner.

## **SCIENCE AND RESEARCH**

**The University Act of 2002** took full legal effect on January 1, 2004. It contains a series of anti-discrimination and affirmative action instruments, such as working parties for equal treatment issues, the Arbitration Commission, co-ordination centres for women and gender research, and children’s offices. This Act imposes on autonomous universities the obligation to draw up plans for the advancement of women.

## **2. NATIONAL ACTION PLANS AND STRATEGIC WORKING PARTIES**

**The National Plan for Action against Trafficking in Human Beings:** In an effort to combat and, if possible, eliminate human trafficking, and especially trafficking in women, and to give effective support to victims in case of need, a National Action Plan (NAP) against Trafficking in Human Beings was adopted and implemented in March 2007. In order to be able to continue these efforts, another NAP is currently being prepared, which will, in all probability, be adopted in the first half of 2009.

**The National Action Plan for the Prevention and Elimination of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM):** Under the EU Daphne project entitled “Developing National Action Plans to Prevent and Eliminate Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) in the European Union”, the first such Action Plan was presented in its initial version to the Austrian Parliament on November 25, 2008. Five working parties dealing with the subjects of women and children’s rights, human rights, the media, denominations, and health are co-ordinated by African women’s organisations. The Action Plan will be published in book form in four languages (German, English, French and Arabic).

**The Action Plan of the Federal Ministry for Education, the Arts and Culture (2003-2006)** which was elaborated in co-operation with the Federal Provinces focuses on gender mainstreaming. The objective was primarily to raise the awareness of all actors in the field of education.

**The National Action Plan for the Implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution no.1325** (For more detailed information, see Part Two, 5.)

**The National Action Plan for Equality in the Labour Market:** In the government programme for the period 2008 to 2013, the coalition parties agreed to work out a **National Action Plan for Equality**. This plan is to be devised jointly with the social partners for a five-year period. (For more detailed information, see Part Four.)

**The inter-ministerial working party “Migrant Women”**, which was set up in 2007, was entrusted with the task of designing strategies for improving the situation of migrant women.

**The inter-ministerial working party “Protection against Violence”**, which was established in June 2007 and involves both NGOs and other experts, was mandated to elaborate proposals for the development of further legal instruments to combat and prevent violence. (For more detailed information, see Part Four.)

### 3. AFFIRMATIVE ACTION FOR WOMEN’S PROJECTS

The budget of the Federal Minister for Women earmarked for the subsidizing of women’s projects of NGOs and the **extension of counselling facilities for women** has been continuously raised from 2005 to 2008 (from euro 3,550,000 in 2005 to euro 4,655,000 in 2008). At present, the total number of counselling facilities for girls and women in Austria is approximately 70. Of these, five are emergency help lines and 41 **approved women’s service centres** which act as counselling facilities that meet the quality criteria and have the required funding, as published on the website of the Minister for Women. Since 2008, such women’s counselling facilities, which are recognised as service centres for women, have been awarded – as a framework – contracts covering several years.

In an effort to improve counselling services in regions in which to date not enough facilities of this kind had been available and in order to assure full coverage of such regions, **field services** were introduced in 2005. These units are affiliated with the recognised service centres for women and funded out of the budget for the subsidizing of women’s projects (a total of eight such field services operate in the Federal Provinces of Lower Austria, Salzburg, Tyrol and Vorarlberg).

### 4. ELIMINATION OF GENDER STEREOTYPES IN EDUCATION

Alongside co-operation with schools, universities and other educational institutions, for many years close ties have also been maintained with counselling centres for girls in designing **career-orientation measures for girls**. Such co-operation also exists with counselling centres for men and other associations dealing with gender-specific topics.

A study by Innsbruck University mandated by the BMUKK<sup>1</sup> analyses strategies for **widening the range of career options for young men**. The BMASK<sup>2</sup> conceived the Boys’ Day in 2008 which is now to be held annually on the same date as Girls’ Day. The BMUKK participated in the Boys’ Day organised by the BMASK on November 17, 2008 with the goal of extending gender roles of boys and contributing towards the prevention of violence.

According to the government programme for the current legislature, active fatherhood is to be promoted just as much as a modern concept of the roles of mothers and fathers as equal partners, and male teachers in kindergartens are to be employed on a broader scale.

Websites and teaching materials offer a lot of information and guidance for teachers, demonstrating how to organise work with boys in schools:

[http://www.schule.at/index.php?url=themen&top\\_id=4599](http://www.schule.at/index.php?url=themen&top_id=4599)

[www.gender.schule.at](http://www.gender.schule.at)

[www.bmukk.gv.at/gleichstellung-schule](http://www.bmukk.gv.at/gleichstellung-schule)

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<sup>1</sup> Federal Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture

<sup>2</sup> Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection

## 5. THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS – MDGs

Austria fully supports the MDGs. They are explicitly quoted in the annually revised **Three-Year Programme on Austrian Development Policy** as a point of reference of the Austrian Development Policy. The Austrian Development Policy works systematically on the implementation of the MDGs in close co-operation with multilateral development organizations and the partner countries. Austria supports the partner countries in building up ownership. Austria has repeatedly confirmed its intent to support the implementation of the MDGs in the framework of both the United Nations and the EU. It supports the EU-Agenda on Action for MDGs adopted in June 2008.

**Gender equality and empowerment of women (goal 3)** is an important focus of Austrian Development Co-operation. It is core to accelerating progress on all the other MDGs and is being considered as a cross-cutting issue. Moreover, Austria has advocated the inclusion of gender-responsive budgeting in the development process in Doha last December. National-level data is not available; Austria relies on the publications of the multilateral development organizations with regard to the monitoring of the implementation of MDG3. As gender perspectives and the concerns of women are seen as cross-cutting themes they are considered in all other MDGs.

### PART TWO: IMPLEMENTATION OF MEASURES IN THE 12 CRITICAL AREAS OF CONCERN STATED IN THE BEIJING PLATFORM FOR ACTION

#### WOMEN AND POVERTY

Empowering women of working age to acquire and hold jobs that will assure their livelihood constitutes the central approach to avoiding financial distress and poverty. As shown by the findings of SILC 2006, **gainful employment of mothers** reduces the risk of falling into poverty by nearly two thirds as compared to women who are not active in the labour market. Through a wider range of options with respect to **childcare allowance** mothers now have better chances to get reintegrated into the labour market. Stepped up efforts destined to expand the network of **facilities for the care of children and the elderly** constituted further measures to improve career opportunities for women. Over the past decade, the number of places in childcare facilities for children under the of age of three has been doubled. It is currently planned to increase the number of places in childcare facilities by one third in the period from 2008 to 2010.

Minimum wages, from which women benefit, in particular, were raised to euro 1,000 (paid 14 times a year). The options to change over from **part-time to full-time employment** as well as the introduction of overtime pay for part-time work in the form of bonuses for extra work performed have also been improved. Furthermore, the social insurance coverage for people in minimum employment has been extended.

With respect to pension insurance, the **standard rate for compensatory arrangements** has been successively adjusted to the threshold below which individuals are at risk of falling into poverty. Whereas this rate remained 13% below the threshold in 2000, it now falls only 5% short of it.

This series of measures affecting employment, family life and work as well as social insurance benefits has contributed to narrowing the gap between the percentages of women and men at risk of falling into poverty (2000: 14% women and 9% men; 2006: 13% women and 11% men were threatened by poverty).

#### Means-tested guaranteed minimum income

The Austrian Federal Government's new programme provides, amongst other things, for the introduction of **means-tested guaranteed minimum income** which is to mitigate, in particular, the extremely high risk for single mothers and fathers of falling into poverty.

## Old age pensions

The Austrian pension system which is centred on gainful employment does not offer women **adequate assurances of their livelihood in old age**. For married women who interrupt their careers, most frequently their livelihood in old age is assured only through their spouses or, after the death of the husband, through widows' pensions. It is a fundamental political objective to strive for a system that would give women an independent livelihood in old age. Approaches to solutions can be found both in the pension system itself and outside it (earned income, arrangements based on partnership, etc.) as well as in the application of gender mainstreaming as a legal obligation to achieve gender equality.

Especially over the past few years, considerable improvements have been introduced into the Austrian pension system:

Another step towards building up an independent pension system for women was taken with the introduction of a **voluntary "pension-splitting"** system that takes into account the childcare periods for women. Since January 1, 2005 the parent who spends less time on the upbringing of children and is gainfully employed can have up to 50% of his/her pension claims acquired through gainful employment transferred to the pension account of the parent mainly devoted to childcare.

A new assessment base for female pensions taking into account **periods of childcare** has been applied since January 1, 2005. For each child, a period of four years is now counted towards pension entitlements, assuming a monthly income of euro 1,350 which corresponds to the median income.

Under the Social Legislation Amendment Act (SRÄG) of 2007 an annual increase of this assessment base was also fixed in the form of an incremental rate (effective retroactively from the year 2006 onwards). Since that date, individuals now acquire a separate pension entitlement after a mere seven years in gainful employment if the eight remaining years required for pension entitlement are covered for instance through periods of childcare.

In view of the fact that nursing and care are primarily given at home, within the family and primarily by women, the Social Legislation Amendment Act of 2007 which took effect on July 1, 2007, resulted also in an improvement with regard to voluntary pension insurance schemes in that for the costs for caring for a close family member classified as belonging to care level 4 the state covers both the (fictitious) employer's social insurance contribution and 50% of the (fictitious) employee's contribution for a maximum period of 48 months. If such a close family member is classified as belonging to level 5, the state pays the entire sum.

## **EDUCATION AND TRAINING OF WOMEN**

The **FIT (Frauen in die Technik: Women into Technology)** project, whose target group is women aged 16 to 19, is carried out in co-operation with universities and colleges of higher professional education every year in six different locations. This project offers selective counselling, seeks to motivate young women to attend technological and scientific education and training courses and gives direct insights into these studies.

The **MUT (Mädchen und Technik: Girls and Technology)** project which is carried out by all of the nine Austrian Federal Provinces seeks to widen the range of occupations for girls in the age bracket 12 to 15 by heightening teachers' gender awareness and by integrating this topic into the structure of basic and advanced training courses of teachers.

The nationwide **IMST Gender Network** seeks to improve the quality of instruction in mathematics and the sciences with a view to narrowing the gender gap in these subjects, which continues to be wide in Austria. This network also runs the website LISE which addresses itself to girls in order to boost their self-assurance with regard to such topics as physics and technology.

The **"Gender Kompetenz-Schulen" ("GeKOSchulen")** (GeKo-gender competence schools) project constitutes one of the measures taken by the Ministry of Education in connection with its current gender mainstreaming strategy geared to schools as the central field of action. It is focused on imparting gender competence at schools and on a sustainable integration and dissemination of gender skills amongst teachers. In the first scholastic year

2007/08, when this project was launched, 24 selected schools throughout Austria participated. [http://www.bmukk.gv.at/schulen/unterricht/ba/gender\\_schule.xml](http://www.bmukk.gv.at/schulen/unterricht/ba/gender_schule.xml)

In adult education, projects offering fundamental education for migrant women and women in rural and urban areas with poor or no access to education receive special attention. The **project network “Learning Centres for Migrant Women”** aims at strengthening the learning and action capacity of migrant women, to build on existing qualifications and resources and to jointly build foundations for their political participation.

The **project network “Learn Forever”** seeks to offer nationwide to both disadvantaged women and to women who are not used to learning education options for the acquisition of key skills.

The project **“Perspektivo” of the Gesellschaft für Frauen und Qualifikation mbH** has received funding out of the budget for the subsidizing of women’s projects from the Minister for Women since 2007. The target group is women working in organisations who want to gain awareness of their career development opportunities.

## **WOMEN AND HEALTH**

During the Austrian EU Council Presidency in 2006, one of the **key health issues** was women’s health. In this context, attention was focused on the following women-specific syndromes: cardiovascular diseases, gender-specific consequences of smoking - lung cancer, osteoporosis, endometriosis, breast cancer and psychic health – depression in women. The **Second Austrian Report on Women’s Health of 2005** which was drawn up in accordance with the WHO’s Guidelines for Women’s Health Profiles served as a basis for this assessment.

Another important topic of Austria’s EU Council Presidency in 2006 was the further development and follow-up measures of the Beijing Platform for Action which contained indicators for assessing women’s health.

In the years 2004 and 2005, a wide variety of projects focused on women’s health was promoted. Amongst other institutions, the seven Women’s Health Centres currently existing in Austria as well as other facilities dealing with the topics violence, female genital mutilation and preventive health care for migrant women working in the sex industry have been given consideration for support by the Austrian Ministry of Health.

Under the subsidizing scheme of the Federal Ministry of Health, **female health** was defined as an **area requiring special promotion** in 2004. This focus on female health in all promotion efforts was once again defined for the year 2009.

In 2005, the **Guidelines for the Implementation of Gender Mainstreaming in Hospitals** were worked out (<http://www.frauen.bka.gv.at/DocView.axd?CobId=20838>).

It is the objective of this project to assure the sustainable integration of gender mainstreaming into the management mechanisms of hospitals, both with regard to the provision of services (gender-sensitive medical care and nursing) as well as human resources and organisational development.

## Health and Safety at Work

The reporting period saw a gradual change in the interpretation of the term “health and safety at work”, which represented a shift away from the commonly accepted, seemingly gender-neutral approach regarding the protection of employees which is oriented to the “average male employee” towards a differentiated and gender-sensitive understanding of safety and health protection at the workplace. The preventive and systematic approach in safety, health protection and health promotion at plant level of the **Health and Safety at Work Act (ASchG)** support this gender-sensitive interpretation of health and safety at work.

The following **publications** appear relevant to this issue (although they are only a selection of the host of documentations on this issue):

- The Guidelines for Hospital Care of the Elderly (“Hard Work – Made Easy”) of 2006 are to help enterprises in their efforts to implement the Health and Safety at Work Act (ASchG) and serve as an orientation aid in their systematic assessment of health hazards, in their efforts to minimise risks and to prevent strain on the health of staff involved in the care of the elderly. Gender aspects have been taken into account in all instances.
- The Austrian Guidelines for Safety and Health Management Systems (Ö-SGMS), addressing themselves primarily to small and medium-sized enterprises, give instructions for building up an efficient health and safety at work organisation at plant level and the selection of safety and health management systems. One important principle enshrined in the Ö-SGMS is non-discriminatory and equality-oriented safety and health management at plant level.
- Website documentation of the Labour Inspectorate with regard to the European Weeks of the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (OSHA) relate to gender issues and possible improvements of the working conditions of women with respect to the individual topics covered by information campaigns (2005 – gender aspects in orchestral music performances / noise reduction; 2007 – gender mainstreaming and muscular-skeletal disorders).

## **VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN**

Over the past few years, the protection of victims of domestic violence, sexual abuse and human trafficking - groups in which the majority of victims are women – has been further strengthened. In addition, numerous measures aiming at **awareness-raising** and greater prevention were taken.

The **Act Amending the Penal Code** which was adopted in **2006** introduced the following changes:

- Stalking was established in law as an act constituting a criminal offence in the form of persistent pursuit impairing the life of victims to a considerable extent (i.e. telephone terror attacks by the divorced spouse).
- Elimination of the privileged status of close family members in cases of dangerous threats.
- Elimination of the privileged status of the spouse in cases of forced marriage and definition of forced marriage as severe coercion.
- Suspension of the statutory period of limitation in cases of female genital mutilation of minors; the statutory period begins when the victim comes of age (18 years).

### Extension of victim protection

Since January 2006 victims of violence have been entitled to legal and psycho-social **support throughout criminal proceedings**.

In the reporting period, the number of **intervention centres / violence protection centres** helping victims of domestic violence was continuously increased and the funds made available annually were raised from euro 3,368,325 in 2005 to euro 5,630,740 in 2008. Within the same period, the number of cases also climbed sharply, from 10,119 in 2005 to 14,016 in 2008 (preliminary figures for 2008).

### Crime prevention

As of July 2006, the decree on guidelines for crime prevention entered into force. In accordance with this decree, nationwide “crime prevention officers” are to be specifically trained and deployed. Nationwide prevention programmes, such as: “Out – the Outsiders” and “Self-assertion and Self-defence for Children and Women” are focused on the prevention

of violence against women and children. The two-year basic training for police officers comprises a seminar entitled "Violence in the Private Sphere". In addition, the common curriculum "Police Intervention in Cases of Domestic Violence" was recently integrated into the syllabus of the basic police training course. Furthermore, external and in-house experts give lectures on gender and equal treatment subjects.

#### Raising Awareness and Public Relations Work

In the course of the European Council campaign "**Stop domestic violence against women**" special emphasis was placed on raising the awareness of the general public; in particular, the helpline for women (Austria-wide free, round-the-clock telephone service) was advertised on a broad basis.

**"Violence is not cool"**: Starting in 2007, the Ministry of Social Affairs concentrated on violence prevention, with special focus on boys and male youths, i.e. through the selective subsidizing of projects against male violence and close co-operation with men's counselling facilities. Co-operation with the NGO White Ribbon running the campaign "Men against Male Violence" and operating on the international scene, as well as with the Minister for Women, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Justice ("Joining Forces against Violence") is ongoing.

**Gender Days**: In 2007, several ministries launched the Gender Days. Against the background of violence prevention, boys and male youths are motivated and guided towards building up a positive male identity oriented to partnership.

For **coping with violence in schools**, methods for both prevention and intervention have been devised for pupils, parents and teachers. The initiative "Joining Forces against Violence" (see also [www.weisselfeder.at](http://www.weisselfeder.at)) seeks to raise awareness and create sensitivity so as to assure respectful and fair interactions amongst themselves. The brochure "**Gender-sensitive Options for Violence Prevention in Schools**" was reprinted and gives a survey of lectures and workshops devoted to violence in schools. On the issues of forced marriage and female genital mutilation, an initiative against **harmful traditional practices** was launched, which includes technical conferences, publications and the exhibition "Motive of the Crime: Honour" which was shown during the "Gender Days 2008" focused on the theme "Migration and Gender".

**Violence against elderly women**: A folder published under a mandate of the Ministry of Social Affairs demonstrates different forms of structural violence directed at the elderly, institutional violence and violence in the victim's immediate environs. In addition, a study was conducted which gives a survey of different forms of violence, the places where and the circumstances under which it occurs and shows options for the establishment of efficient counselling services.

#### **WOMEN AND ARMED CONFLICT**

In August 2007, the Austrian Government adopted a **National Plan for the Implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution No. 1325(2000)**, which calls for the involvement of women and the consideration of women's concerns in all phases of peace-building processes. The National Plan for Action provides for measures at the national, regional and international levels. The first report on the implementation of this Plan for Action was approved in October 2008.

#### **WOMEN AND THE ECONOMY**

Over the past few years, women have rapidly caught up with men with regard to their participation in the labour market, although their work participation rate continues to remain below that of men. In 2008, the number of actively employed women<sup>3</sup> averaged 1,487,707 which compares with 1,816,422 men. The **percentage of women accounts for 45%** of total

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<sup>3</sup> Yearly averages, excluding persons on parental leave, and persons in mandatory army or alternative service.

active employment in Austria. Since 2004, **female active employment** has risen by 126,853 individuals or 9.3% (men + 98,731 or 5.7%).

In 2008, the year's average number of **unemployed** amounted to 93,442 women and 118,811 men. Since 2004, female unemployment, in absolute terms, went down by 10,176 individuals or 9.8%, that of men by 21,451 or 15.3%. Thus, female unemployment declined less sharply than that of men both in absolute and relative terms. In comparison to EU figures, in Austria the total unemployment rate, and also that of women, ranks amongst the lowest.

**The employment rates** in Austria as compared to the EU: According to Eurostat the employment rate of women stood at 64.4% in 2007 (the ratio between women in gainful employment and the total female population aged 15 to 64). Thus the Lisbon goal of female employment rate (60% by the year 2010) has already been reached. It is a national goal to raise female employment even further by the year 2013.

The expansion of the gainful employment of women can primarily be attributed to the increase in **part-time working**. After a continuous rise over the past two decades, the number of part-time employees<sup>4</sup> now stands at approximately 785,900. The overwhelming majority of part-timers, i.e. some 85%, are women. In 2007, 666,500 women and 119,400 men were wage earners and salaried employees in part-time jobs (0-35 hours per week). In the period from 2004 – 2007, the number of women working part-time rose by 69,000 or 11.6%. Within the same period, the number of female full-time employees went up by 45,800 to 870,100, which corresponds to a 5.6% increase. (In the reference period, the number of men working part-time climbed by 24,200 or 25.42%, that of men in full-time employment by 73,200 or 4.41%.) In 2007, the rate of female employees working part-time amounted to 43.4%, that of men to 6.4%. As compared to the EU Member States as a whole, the part-time employment rate of women is above, and that of men below the average.

The **income gap between women and men** continues to be wide. The mean gross annual incomes of women working full time all year round remained 22% below those of men<sup>5</sup> in 2007.

Austrian labour market policies are oriented to the objectives of the European Employment Strategy. The National Reform Programme focuses clearly on **narrowing the gender wage gap**. The strategic approach to reducing the gender-specific wage differential comprises measures that guarantee equal access of men and women to all workplaces and improve the framework conditions that allow both women and men to reconcile work and family obligations. Hence the goal is to counteract the segmentation of the labour market. The establishment of a permanent **monitoring mechanism** for the gender-specific wage gap constitutes a prerequisite for the success of this strategy. For this purpose, a set of relevant indicators was elaborated in 2008 and is currently updated.

The Public Employment Service (AMS) pursues gender equality in all areas as its binding strategy. In accordance with its goals, at least 50% of all gender-specific attributable funds required in active labour market policy must be spent on women (in 2008 such funds totalled approximately euro 425 million). In 2008, as in previous years, the high level of upskilling programmes was maintained with 128,000 women undergoing such training for the first time. In 2008, women accounted for 51.6% of the total number of individuals who participated in **upskilling programmes**. Thanks to the co-operation with specific counselling services, women are offered support schemes tailored to their needs (in 2008, women accounted for 58% of participants in such schemes). Assistance given to women during their reintegration into the labour market constitutes another focal point. This assistance is available in the form of the programme "**Support for Re-entry**", plus especially qualified counsellors in all regional offices of the AMS, and special information events. The new options with respect to

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<sup>4</sup> Statistik Austria, labour force survey, labour force concept, excluding persons on parental leave, in mandatory army or alternative service, and gainfully employed persons living in institutions.

<sup>5</sup> General Income Report of the Austrian Court of Audit, 2008, table 26, page 61.

childcare allowances are also conducive to the re-integration of women into the labour market.

The successful AMS programme “**Women in Crafts and Technology**” is being continued. Projects implemented under the inter-ministerial “**ffORTE**” initiative (jointly launched by the BMUKK<sup>6</sup>, the BMWF<sup>7</sup>, the BMWFJ<sup>8</sup> and the BMVIT<sup>9</sup>) designed to promote women in research and technology and support female scientists and engineers were further stepped up and placed on a broader basis (2007- 2009: funds exceeding euro 2,500,000 were invested in these projects). (Link: <http://www.fforte.at>).

The fundamental reform of the promotion of **in-company apprenticeship training** initiated in 2008 introduced inter alia the promotion of quality. Here, one of the criteria is uniform access of young women and young men to the different apprenticed trades. For this purpose an annual budget of euro 5 million has been made available. A **more flexible scheme of childcare allowances** introduced in January 2008 as well as the **extension and improvement of childcare facilities** are to create framework conditions under which women enjoy greater freedom in shaping career breaks in accordance with their individual needs and fathers have more opportunities to engage in childcare and interrupt their careers.

For the integration of **persons with special needs** into the labour market, the Federal Welfare Office (Bundessozialamt) supports measures addressed, in principle, to all handicapped individuals, whilst women in general represent a further target group that requires special attention.

As of January 1, 2008, **educational leave**, which constitutes an important instrument for upskilling the labour force, was made more attractive through the introduction of greater flexibility with regard to the timing of such leave and the increase of further training benefits to the level of (fictitious) unemployment benefits.

The legal provisions defining **the right to part-time work (“parents’ part-time working”)** which took effect on July 1, 2004, were evaluated in the period from October 2006 to September 2007.

With a view to promoting pro-family attitudes in the business world, a series of measures was devised, such as the audit “berufundfamilie” (“Job and Family”), “The Most Pro-Women and Family-Friendly Employer” etc. These measures have proven very effective and are to be continued.

**The Amendment to the Regulation Governing Bans on Employment and Employment Restrictions for Female Employees**, Federal Law Gazette II no.279/2008, modified the Regulation Governing Bans on Employment and Employment Restrictions for Female Employees, Federal Law Gazette II no. 356/2001: The ban on employment of women in underground mining has been lifted and will no longer apply as from April 3, 2009. This modification became necessary as a result of the European Court of Justice ruling of February 1, 2005, C-203/03, according to which this ban is in contradiction to Article 14, para.1, letter a, of the Directive 2006/54/EC. The ban on the employment of women in underground mining operations, however, continues to apply to female employees falling under the Maternity Protection Act.

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<sup>6</sup> Federal Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture

<sup>7</sup> Federal Ministry of Science and Research

<sup>8</sup> Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs, Family and Youth

<sup>9</sup> Federal Ministry of Transport, Innovation and Technology

## WOMEN IN POWER AND DECISION-MAKING

**Mentoring** is intended to help women to get ahead in their jobs and to better hold their own in male-dominated spheres of work and at male-dominated hierarchical levels. Since 1998, mentoring programmes have been organised by the BMASK<sup>10</sup>.

Mention should be made of the following initiatives of the Minister for Women:

- 2004-2006 the Women-Business-Mentoring Programme
- Since 2005, Cross-Mentoring in the Federal Administration
- 2006/2007 Cross-Mentoring in the Private Sector
- 2006 Mentoring.net – the Club of Mentors and Mentees
- 2007-2008 Event series “frauen.kompetenz.netz” (The mentoring activities above were bundled, further elaborated and re-organised in the “frauen.kompetenz.netz”).

The mentoring brochures “Mehr Chancen. Mehr Zukunft. Mentoring und Netzwerke – von Frauen für Frauen“ (More Opportunities. Better Future. Mentoring and Networks – by Women for Women“), “Begleitunterlagen durch das Mentoring-Jahr“ (Documentation Accompanying you through the Mentoring Year) plus an evaluation of the project were published (downloads under <http://www.frauen.bka.gv.at/site/5647/default.aspx>). In 2006, the BMASK elaborated further the Guide “Mentoring – eine Strategie zur Frauenförderung im öffentlichen Dienst” (Mentoring – a Strategy for the Advancement of Women in Public Service).

2006 also saw the publication of the **study “Frauen in Führungspositionen in Österreich”** (Women in Managerial Positions in Austria). The goal of this study was to compile a statistical analysis of the Austrian employment structure broken down by gender and the position of women at managerial levels in Austrian companies as well as to take stock of measures adopted by enterprises for the advancement of women, flexible working hours and reconciliation of work and family obligations.

### The share of women at universities

The share of female professors rose from 15% in 2005 to 16% in 2008, and the share of university lecturers (Dozenten) went up from 18% to 19% in the reporting period.

The BMWF<sup>11</sup> has adopted a programmatic approach supported by a specific policy mix, to assure sustainable advancement of women in science and research. The **fForte Programme** deserves special mention, as it represents a scheme of interventions oriented towards sustainability, along the entire educational and professional trajectory of women in science, research and technology.

With a view to promoting equal opportunities in research and technology, the Ministry of Economic Affairs initiated the programme “**w-fForte-Laura Bassi Centres of Expertise**” which will promote six technical-scientific research institutions headed by female scientists and serving as interfaces to industry. The programme will cover a seven-year period (2009 to 2016/17). This project pursues the following goals: promoting young female scientists in research and technology and their careers; heightening the visibility of excellent research achievements of women; drawing attention to innovative research management; disseminating findings for the design of gender-sensitive programmes; heightening gender-competence within the research, technology and innovation community.

## HUMAN RIGHTS OF WOMEN

Since 1978, **human rights education** in Austrian schools has been formally integrated into the educational principle “political education”. In accordance with this principle, political education and human rights education constitute a fundamental element of teaching in all

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<sup>10</sup> Federal Ministry of Labour, Science and Consumer Protection

<sup>11</sup> Federal Ministry of Science and Research

subjects, all grades and types of schools. Furthermore, in all school types from the 9<sup>th</sup> grade onwards, the subject “human rights” is addressed by all teaching materials in the compulsory subject “political education” – mostly in combination with the subjects history, legal studies, economics, etc. (For information on human rights education see:

[www.politik-lernen.at/goto/polis/details/menschenrechtsbildung\\_basisinformationen/](http://www.politik-lernen.at/goto/polis/details/menschenrechtsbildung_basisinformationen/)).

In Austria, political education is defined as a mandatory subject in syllabuses from the 8<sup>th</sup> grade onwards. Since 1978, the decree “Political Education in Schools” on which the **educational principle of political education** rests has been integrated into the Austrian school system.

**Zentrum polis** acts as a pedagogical service institution for Austrian schools providing information on the topics of political education, human rights education, education for sustainable development and consumer education. Equality between women and men and gender fairness constitute a central issue.

The 2007 **Action Days Political Education** which were devoted to the topic “Gender Equality – Gender Fairness” were one of the Austrian contributions to the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All.

## **WOMEN AND THE MEDIA**

One part of the book “Der Journalistenreport – Österreichs Medien und ihre Macher” (Journalists’ Report – Austria’s Media and the Professionals behind the Scenes) was a special evaluation entitled “**Journalistinnen in Österreich**” (Female Journalists in Austria) which was mandated by the Minister for Women in 2007.

(<http://www.frauen.bka.gv.at/site/5461/default.aspx#a9>)

Today already 42% of all Austrian journalists are women. Thus the proportion of women amongst media workers has risen sharply over the past decade (in 1999 roughly one third of all journalists were women) and is thus higher in Austria than in Germany, Switzerland and the USA.

Despite this positive picture, significant gender-specific differences demonstrate that female journalists do not enjoy equal status with their male colleagues, for example female journalists earn less than their male colleagues and are more frequently part-timers than the latter. In addition, differences still exist with regard to the subjects they cover which today are still very much in line with stereotyped roles (female journalists predominate in life-style reporting and are scarcely present in sports programmes).

The seminar “**Wer hat im Journalismus die Hosen an?**” (Who wears the trousers in journalism?) in 2008 served, on the one hand, as a platform for the provision of information to, and networking of female journalists, while affording female journalists and media workers an opportunity for a direct exchange of views with the competent Federal Minister.

## **THE GIRL CHILD**

**Girls’ Day in the Federal Civil Service** which takes place every third Thursday in April in the federal departments and units as of 2006. Since then, girls aged 10 to 16 have had an opportunity to get an insight into the widened range of occupations and professions - beyond traditional role stereotypes - they can choose from. Today girls still tend to opt frequently for “typically female” occupations.

Hence 50% of Austria’s gainfully employed girls and young women are working in just three service areas: in trade and retailing, in the health and social services sector, and in restaurants and catering enterprises. The Girls’ Day in the Federal Civil Service offers girls a chance to acquaint themselves with new training options in future-oriented, non-traditional occupations and professions and gain practical insights into the world of work and work processes in public administration. Link: [www.girlsday-austria.at](http://www.girlsday-austria.at)

Youth policy measures:

- Advancement of gender-sensitive work with young people
- Promotion of the practical implementation of gender mainstreaming in youth work
- Support to girls in the selection of (atypical) occupations through informal measures in out-of-school work with young people
- Putting gender-specific information on and for young people on a broader basis
- Intensifying gender-specific prevention efforts

The **Fifth Report on the State of Youth** in Austria deals with gender-specific subject areas. On the one hand, the implementation of the “gender mainstreaming” approach was evaluated, and on the other hand “gender mainstreaming” approaches used in out-of-school work with young people in Austria were assessed. On the basis of the findings of these evaluations, a **set of measures** was devised which will assure the exchange of experts’ views and considerations as well as a further elaboration of approaches to the implementation of gender mainstreaming and gender-sensitive approaches to work with young people outside school.

#### Youth Budget

Under the Federal Act for the Advancement of Young People **gender-sensitive youth projects** are specifically subsidized, and youth promotion projects carried out in accordance with this Act are evaluated. Since 2005, youth organisations receiving subsidies falling into the above categories are required to fill in questionnaires on the gender-specific use of the options offered. This serves as a tool for assuring a gender-balanced participation in the out-of-school youth projects.

For further information on girl-relevant measures see Part Two/2, Two/4, Two/6 and Two/9.

### **PART THREE: INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS, STRUCTURES AND MEASURES**

With the change in government in 2007 and 2008 a **Minister for Women attached to the Federal Chancellery** was appointed with co-ordinating functions, as had been the case in the period from 1991 to 1999. The Minister for Women and Public Service was sworn in on December 18, 2008 and performs a variety of tasks, such as the co-ordination of all matters relating to women and equality policies, gender mainstreaming, equality of women in the labour market, the Equal Treatment Commission, the Ombud for Equal Treatment, the Federal Equal Treatment Commission and the Inter-Ministerial Working Party for Equality Issues (IMAG).

**Numerous projects and women’s organisations and facilities** are funded out of the budget of the Minister for Women, such as, for example, the network of counselling centres for women and girls, the intervention centres/violence protection centres, and the association for the promotion of quality assurance in facilities serving women.

Under the Federal Equal Treatment Act (Bundesgleichbehandlungsgesetz, B-GBG), every ministry has to adopt a plan for the promotion of women. This plan must indicate how an existing underrepresentation or disadvantaged status of women in particular service groups can be eliminated, specifying the period within which this can be achieved, the human resources required, organisational changes to be made, as well as basic and further education programmes to be carried out.

Furthermore, every ministry has to appoint an **Equal Treatment Officer** for a term of five years. The equal treatment officers have to deal with all issues concerning the equal treatment of women and men, the advancement of women and equal treatment of all individuals irrespective of ethnic origin, religion or belief, age or sexual orientation.

In every ministry a **Working Party for Equality Issues** has to be set up. All equal treatment officers are members of these Working Parties.

In every government unit with a minimum of five employees, the chairperson of the Working Party for Equality Issues may appoint a female staff member as a **contact woman (authorised women's liaison officers)**. These contacts or officers have to handle the queries, requests, complaints, reported cases, and suggestions of individual staff members of their unit as well as advise and support them.

The Equal Treatment Commissions were established for the purpose of reviewing and identifying potential violations of the equal treatment rule. Depending on whether a private enterprise or the Federal Government is the employer, competence rests either with the **Equal Treatment Commission for the Private Sector (GBK)** or the **Federal Equal Treatment Commission (B-GBK)**. Separate equal treatment commissions exist for Provincial and local authorities.

The **GBK** is attached to the Federal Chancellery and consists of three senates. The Equal Treatment Commission carries out investigations of individual cases and issues expert opinions. Senate One is competent for equal treatment of women and men in the labour market. Senate Two bears responsibility for equal treatment of individuals irrespective of their ethnic origin, religion or belief, age or sexual orientation in the workplace. Senate Three is responsible for equal treatment irrespective of ethnic origin in other spheres of life, as well as for equal treatment of women and men with regard to the access to and supply of goods and services.

The **B-GBK** is also attached to the Federal Chancellery and consists of two senates. It constitutes a special administrative unit of the federal civil service, which can be addressed in cases of discrimination that have occurred in an employment or training relationship with the Federal Government. Senate One is responsible for the equal treatment of women and men in federal service; it draws up expert opinions on the issue of whether or not the equal treatment rule and/or the provisions governing the advancement of women have been violated. Senate Two has jurisdiction over equal treatment irrespective of ethnic origin, religion or belief, age or sexual orientation in federal service.

For the sake of a higher degree of transparency, decisions of the Senates of the Equal Treatment Commissions are published in extenso, in anonymised form, on the homepage of the Federal Chancellery and in the Federal Legal Information System (RIS) and can be accessed free of charge.

Provinces: Equal Treatment Officers, contact women (authorised women's liaison officers) and Equal Treatment Commissions exist not only at the federal level, but also in the Federal Provinces.

### **Ombud for Equal Treatment (National Equality Body for the Private Sector)**

Since entry into force of the Amendment to the Equal Treatment Act, Federal Law Gazette I no.66/2004, on July 1, 2004, the Ombud for Equal Treatment has been entrusted with the task of supporting and counselling all individuals who feel discriminated against on any of the grounds set forth in EU law. Exempted from this rule is discrimination based on disability since distinct statutory provisions apply to it and relevant institutions have been established to deal with such cases.

The organisation of the Ombud for Equal Treatment consists of three parts which act independently of one another within the framework of their statutory powers and are responsible for different spheres:

- The **Ombudsperson for Equal Treatment of women and men in the world of work**. She also performs co-ordination tasks with regard to statutory powers.
- The **Ombudsperson person for Equal Treatment in the Workplace irrespective of ethnic origin, religion or belief, age or sexual orientation (Anti-Discrimination)** and

- **The Ombudsperson for Equal Treatment irrespective of ethnic origin in other spheres (Anti-Racism), and, since August 1, 2008, additionally for equal treatment of women and men in their access to, and supply with, goods and services.**

**Regional branches** for the areas anti-discrimination and anti-racism, which were provided for by the amendment of 2004, have not yet been established. The perception amongst the general public of the Ombud for Equal Treatment has also changed dramatically.

As a result of the intensive, and partly highly controversial, debates about the fundamental transformation of the Equal Treatment Act, requests for information about the new statutory provisions, which luckily have levelled off in the meantime, soared at the Ombud for Equal Treatment. At the same time, the way in which outsiders perceive the Ombud as a counselling facility has changed drastically. An institution which had hitherto borne responsibility for equal treatment of women and men (and, given the much more frequent discrimination of women, primarily serving women) had to entirely redefine its position as a comprehensive **anti-discrimination body**. This re-orientation has now been completed.

At every **university**, a **Working Party for Equality Issues** is to be established and entrusted with the task of combating discrimination on the grounds of gender by university units or staff as well as counselling and supporting university staff and units with regard to equality between women and men and the advancement of women. The Working Parties for equality issues also deal with discrimination on account of ethnic origin, religion or belief, age or sexual orientation.

In many administrative departments and units as well as in Provincial authorities **non-discriminatory language** is continuously promoted on the basis of internal directives.

#### **AMENDMENTS TO EQUAL TREATMENT LEGISLATION**

The **Federal Equal Treatment Act** was thoroughly amended in 2004. Discrimination on account of ethnic origin, religion or belief, age or sexual orientation has been added to the list of unlawful acts.

In **2008**, another amendment was made which resulted in the following modifications: The **rule of non-discriminatory language** imposes the obligation for the use of both the female and male forms of nouns, and for gender-neutral wording in advertisements of employment openings and in all correspondence relating to human resources matters in public service. However, in letters addressed to individuals, the relevant gender form has to be used. The provision governing **multiple discrimination** is of particular relevance: in future, multiple discrimination must be taken into account when assessing the amount of compensation due for any damages from detrimental effects shown to have been suffered by a victim of discrimination.

As a result of the **changes in the composition of Commissions and Senates** responsible for decisions affecting human resources, the specific job experience of women should be given adequate consideration in such Commissions. Hence employers (the ministries etc.) will be required in future to nominate at least one woman having a voting right. [This, of course, in no way impairs the right of the chairperson of the Working Party for Equality Issues or any officer named by her/him to participate in commission meetings in an advisory capacity.] Furthermore, the amendment clearly stipulates that protection against discrimination will continue to exist also in the event of a **fixed-term contract** not being extended or **of expiry of a probationary period**.

One essential element of the 2008 amendment is, however, the **right of choice**, according to which an individual exposed to a discriminatory termination of employment may either contest such dismissal or accept it. Should the individual accept the termination of employment she/he remains entitled to claim compensation for both material and immaterial damage.

The **new Equal Treatment Act** (adopted in the course of the transposition of the EU Anti-Discrimination Directives 2000/43/EC and 2000/78/EC as well as the amended Equal Treatment Directive 2002/73/EC) took effect on July 1, 2004. Under this Act, no one may be exposed to direct or indirect discrimination on account of her/his gender, ethnic origin, religion or belief, age or sexual orientation in employment or in any other sphere of work. No one may be discriminated against on the ground of her/his ethnic origin in some spheres outside the workplace.

On August 1, 2008, the **Second Amendment to the Equal Treatment Act and the Act on the Equal Treatment Commission and the Ombud for Equal Treatment** entered into force. The Amendment serves primarily the purpose of transposing Directive 2004/113/EC implementing the principle of equal treatment between men and women in the access to and supply of goods and services. The Directive aims at combating gender-specific discrimination in this area. It applies to all individuals furnishing goods and services which are available to the general public irrespective of the individual concerned. The media and the education sector are exempted from this rule.

Special arrangements for contracts covering insurance and related services have been provided for in the Insurance Legislation Amendment Act of 2006, Federal Law Gazette I no.95, 2006.

With the Amendment to the Equal Treatment Act and the GBK/GAW Act all other provisions of the Directive have been transposed into national law. This was primarily achieved through the extension of the Equal Treatment Act and all other discrimination cases to fall within the scope of the Directive. In addition to the transposition of the Directive, substantive and procedural law provisions were also modified in order to improve the set of instruments that can be applied to enforcing the equal treatment principle. With regard to discrimination on the ground of gender, the Amendment contains the following elements:

- Upon commencement of employment, the claim for minimum damages was raised from one monthly salary to two.
- The minimum claim for damages in case of harassment was increased from euro 400 to euro 720.
- Protection against discrimination does not end upon the termination of employment, even if a fixed-term work contract is not extended or the probationary period has ended.
- In cases of discriminatory termination of employment, the victim has the option of either contesting the dismissal or claiming damages.
- In assessing the amount of compensation for interference with an individual's integrity possible multiple discrimination must be taken into account.

In order to ensure more efficient enforcement of the Equal Treatment Act, proceedings handled by the Equal Treatment Commission were also improved: a period has been fixed within which the findings of the Equal Treatment Commission must be issued and served on the claimant, and all decisions of the Equal Treatment Commission must be published on the website of the Federal Chancellery.

## **GENDER MAINSTREAMING/GENDER BUDGETING**

Alongside the Inter-Ministerial Working Party for Gender Mainstreaming, working groups exist in the different ministries. Numerous follow-up measures were also adopted, such as training seminars on gender mainstreaming for public administration staff as well as publications and guidelines (i.e. 2007: "Guidelines for Gender Mainstreaming in Law Making", and the publication "Working Aid for Gender Budgeting in the Public Administration").

With the **Cabinet Decision of March 9, 2004**, gender budgeting was initiated, i.e. taking into account the gender perspective in budget policy decisions of all ministries. An Inter-

Ministerial Working Group for Gender Budgeting was set up; as a rule it is convened jointly with the Inter-Ministerial Working Group for Gender Mainstreaming (IMAG GMB) in order to achieve synergies.

In 2005, the technical conference “**Development of a Strategy for Gender-Sensitive Budgeting**” which was to act as a kick-off for future co-operation in the implementation of gender budgeting at federal, Province and community levels, was thus held for the first time creating an Austria-wide network of all stakeholders operating in this field.

With the **Cabinet Decision of March 5, 2008**, the federal government committed itself to gender-responsive budget planning and structuring and to the use of the “Guidelines for Gender Mainstreaming in Law-Making” as well as of the concept “Working Aid for Gender Budgeting in the Public Administration”. In the **instructions**, which are given separately for the individual ministries, the “Working Aid for the Federal Finance Act” devotes a special section to the “gender aspects of the budget”. Practically-oriented supporting material was elaborated to help ministries to structure and describe the pilot projects they are required to carry out from 2009 onwards in accordance with uniform criteria.

A tool box for gender budgeting was devised which can be accessed via the website of the Inter-Ministerial Working Party under [www.imag-gendermainstreaming.at](http://www.imag-gendermainstreaming.at). For information on National Action Plans and strategic working groups, see Part One.

#### **PART FOUR: REMAINING CHALLENGES**

In accordance with the government programme for the legislative period 2008 – 2013, the government parties agreed to prepare a **National Action Plan for Equality**. This plan is to be conceived jointly with the social partners to cover a **five year period**. Annual reports will serve as evaluation and planning instruments for the Federal Government. The responsibility for the co-ordination of the National Action Plan rests with the Minister for Women, with a series of measures being developed for the priority areas of equality of women at work, safeguarding opportunities for women in the labour market, closing the pay gap between women and men, and advancement of women in leading positions. An inter-ministerial working group entrusted with the preparation of the Action Plan will also define the indicators to be applied to every priority area.

#### **MIGRANT WOMEN**

With a view to developing policies for integrating women of all minority groups living under precarious circumstances into society and the labour market, thus promoting de facto equality of all women, an analysis was made of the structure of the immigrant population from a gender-specific perspective. The findings were published in the **Report on Migrant Women** in 2007. The descriptions of the frequently problematic life situations of migrant women contained in this Report are to serve as basic information for future political action. The conclusions have led to the following projects:

- Under the current government programme, assisted **emergency housing is to be made available to victims of forced marriage**.
- The **qualifications and skills of migrants** are to be **promoted** through trainers with inter-cultural competences.
- The opportunities of migrant women in the labour market are to be ensured through:
  - o Special attention to the particular needs of women from migration backgrounds, specifically with regard to the identification of their skills.
  - o Extension of the network of women's counselling centres with a view to closing regional gaps in coverage, with special emphasis on women from migrant backgrounds.

- Support to, and empowerment of, women from migrant backgrounds especially through language training and upskilling courses as well as intensified counselling.

### **PENSION LAW**

The government programme indicates that for women who have to reconcile their work with the upbringing of their children, this double burden should, during the first seven years after the birth of a child, be taken more strongly into account in pension law.

The government programme also provides for further improvements with regard to social insurance coverage of care-givers. With a view to counteracting disadvantages under pension law, periods of up to ten years, during which a child with special needs lives in a household, will be retroactively counted towards pension entitlements.

The present government parties also intend to improve social insurance cover for family members dispensing care to or nursing other family members through an arrangement under which the state pays all pension insurance contributions for such persons for an unlimited period of time, provided that the patient is classified as belonging to care level 3 or above.

### **IMPLEMENTATION OF GENDER BUDGETING**

The goal of de facto equality of women and men as defined by the Austrian state in the Federal Constitution is to be reached step by step. In this spirit, from 2009 onwards pilot projects on gender budgeting are to be carried out by all ministries.

The contributions of the individual ministries described below serve as examples:

The Federal Chancellery launched a project which integrates the gender budgeting philosophy into the federal human resources plan which constitutes the central staff management tool. Attention is focused on a fair distribution of top-ranking positions in federal service under income regulations between women and men. Furthermore, an income distribution in line with gender equity is to be achieved as well. Ongoing annual controlling will be used for this purpose.

Starting with the 2009 budget, **a part of the human resources plan concerns the gender-specific tasks**. Under this plan it will be possible to define quantifiable goals until 2013, goal attainment will be continuously monitored year by year, and a final assessment will be made in 2013.

At present, gender budgeting projects are underway in all divisions of the BMASK. Over the past two years, gender budgeting was applied in the execution of the following projects: health promotion in line with gender needs, training of managerial staff and upskilling programmes for people with special needs.

In 2009, the BMUKK is carrying out **pilot projects** in two of its divisions, which will constitute the basis for learning about gender budgeting throughout an entire ministry from now onwards.

### **PROTECTION AGAINST VIOLENCE: THE SECOND ACT ON THE PROTECTION AGAINST VIOLENCE**

In collaboration with NGOs and other experts, an inter-ministerial working group which was set up in June 2007 elaborated major **improvements to the Federal Act on the Protection against Violence within the Family**. In the meantime, the bill has been submitted to Parliament and will probably be adopted in the first half of 2009. Alongside improvements to the existing set of instruments allowing the eviction of a perpetrator from the home and a ban on establishing contacts with the victim, victim protection in cases of stalking is also to be strengthened. In addition, a new criminal offence, i.e. "continued use of violence" is to be defined in law. By defining this conduct as a criminal offence, due account is taken of the permanent fear and encroachments to which a victim is exposed in a lengthy violent relationship, as well as of the associated experience of injustice.

## **CRIME PREVENTION**

### 1. Prevention of Youth Violence

In the criminal police work of the competent authorities, the role of young people will be given ample consideration under the strategy agreements of the Federal Criminal Office. The competent strategy team for the first time in 2007 devoted special attention to **crimes perpetrated by young people** in developing its strategic approaches, and countered this phenomenon by a wide range of measures that are still being applied today. In addition, officers of all Federal Provinces are integrated as contacts into training measures.

Projects which are currently in their elaboration or execution phase ("**Self-assertion and Self-defence of Children and Women**") are to be extended further and realized on the basis of uniform quality standards. In addition, some projects are being developed in certain Federal Provinces which address such topical phenomena as violent videos on mobile phones ("happy slapping") and the glorification of violence on the internet.

Furthermore, at the primary prevention level, a broadly based prevention campaign is to be prepared on the subject "Violence in Soccer" and will be carried out in co-operation with the Austrian Federal Soccer League and soccer clubs.

### 2. Victim Protection

Enactment of the Second Act for the Protection against Violence, and adjustment to the new legislation to be dealt with at the ministerial level:

- Preparation of a set of guidelines and recommended measures for violence prevention officers
- Drafting a modified ministerial decree
- Extended training options in response to statutory changes

### 3. Networking

- Intensification of national co-operation schemes ("hand in hand")
- Stepping up international co-operation, especially with the European Network for Crime Prevention

## **THE AUSTRIAN STRATEGY FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK 2007-2012 WITH DUE REGARD FOR GENDER ISSUES**

In line with the EU Common Strategy for Health and Safety at Work covering the period 2002 to 2006 the increased number of women in gainful employment must be reflected by health and safety at work legislation in accordance with the changes in the labour market and in society. The new Community Strategy for 2007 to 2012 (Council Resolution of June 19, 2007, 10244/07) pursues the goal of reducing accidents at work by 25% by the year 2012. Existing and new risks are to be more profoundly analysed, with gender-specific aspects requiring appropriate attention, especially with regard to psycho-social disorders, diseases of the muscular-skeletal system, exposure to hazardous substances, fertility risks due to new technologies (nanotechnology, for example) and risks resulting from new forms of work organisation, as well as health protection and safety management at the workplace. Alongside other factors, equal opportunities and a family-friendly organisation of work are necessary in order to bring down the number of accidents occurring at work, to improve the quality of workplaces and boost labour productivity. In the EU Member States, national health and safety at work strategies were developed in co-operation with all relevant stakeholders in order to ensure safety and health protection at workplaces. The projects envisaged by the Austrian strategy for health and safety at work for the period from 2007 to 2012 will also have to take account of gender issues.