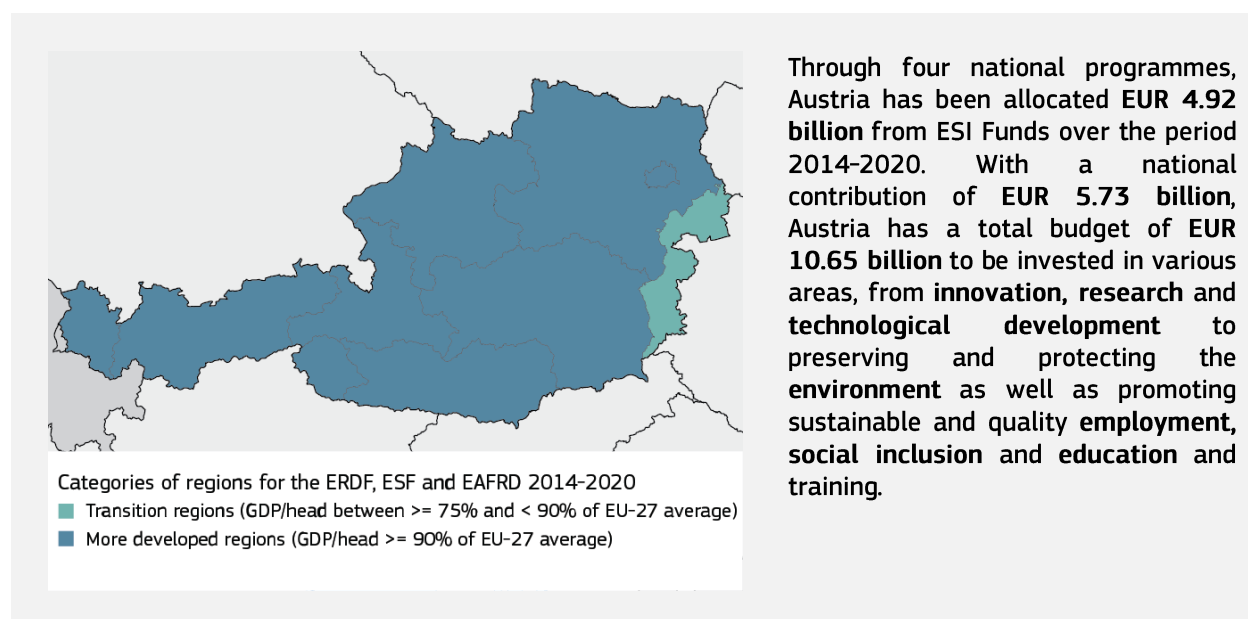


## EUROPEAN STRUCTURAL AND INVESTMENT FUNDS<sup>1</sup>



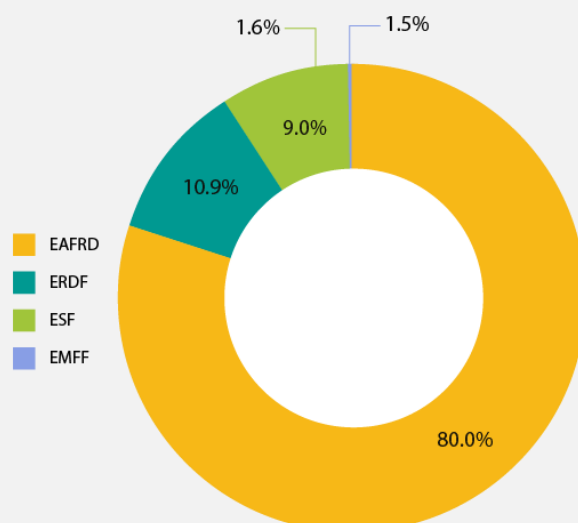
### AUSTRIA

With a budget of EUR 454 billion for 2014-2020, the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESI Funds) are the European Union's main investment policy tool. The ESI Funds combine five Funds: European Regional Development Fund (ERDF); European Social Fund (ESF); Cohesion Fund (CF); European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD); and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF).



### ESI FUNDS BUDGET FOR AUSTRIA (2014-2020)<sup>2</sup>

- EUR 3.94 billion through the EAFRD
- EUR 536 million through the ERDF
- EUR 442 million through the ESF
- EUR 7 million through the EMFF



<sup>1</sup> Data included in this factsheet have been extracted from the ESIF Open Data platform which is accessible online at <https://cohesiondata.ec.europa.eu/>. Data on target achievements are based on officially agreed common indicators or, for the ESF, programme specific indicators (reference date for data: November 2015).

<sup>2</sup> Only those Member States with a gross national income (GNI) per inhabitant of less than 90 % of the EU average benefit from the Cohesion Fund. As such, Austria is not eligible to benefit from the CF.

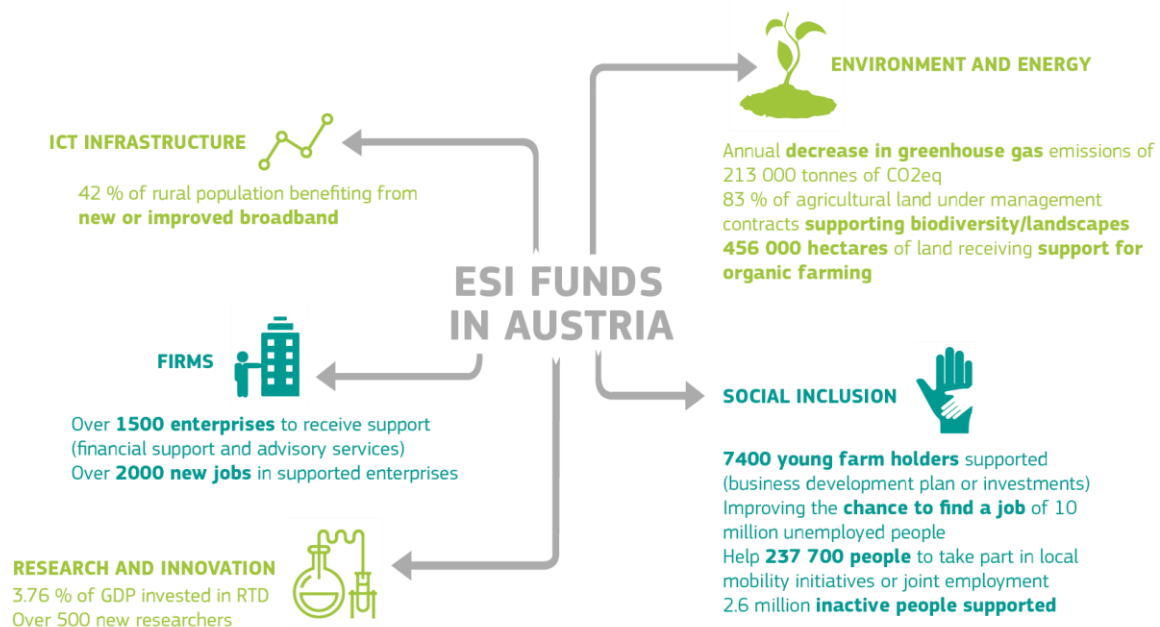
## MAIN PRIORITIES

### ESI FUNDS IN AUSTRIA WILL:

- Promote **innovation**, research and **technological development**.
- Invest in **competitiveness of SMEs**, focusing on farming, industry, services and aquaculture. ESIF funding will contribute to new start-ups, in particular in innovative and knowledge-intensive sectors, and support annual growth in the number of SMEs.
- Help Austria achieve its targets of improved or **new broadband infrastructure** for inhabitants in rural areas, and invest in the restructuring and modernisation of **farms**.
- Support **reductions in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions** in all sectors of the economy. This will involve boosting companies' renewable energy use, helping firms to increase resource efficiency and funding local and regional CO<sub>2</sub> reduction strategies.
- Invest in **climate change adaptation**, risk prevention and risk management in rural areas, as well as preserving and protecting the **environment** and promoting **resource efficiency** in rural areas.
- Help Austria to restore, preserve and strengthen its **biodiversity** and **agricultural and forestry systems** with a high conservation value.
- Make **fisheries** and aquaculture more sustainable, improving **aquatic ecosystems** and aquatic biodiversity, and increasing the country's annual **aquaculture production**.
- Support sustainable and quality **employment** and **labour mobility**, through targeted investments in selected urban and rural areas and improvements in the employability of older workers, women, young people (particularly those from a **migrant background**) and other social groups at risk of social exclusion.
- Promote social inclusion, **combat poverty** and anti-discrimination; this is mainly intended to support **young people** and social groups from a **migrant background** (including Roma).
- Invest in **education, training and vocational training** for skills and lifelong learning, in particular to improve educational outcomes for **young disadvantaged people** and support lifelong learning and vocational training in **agriculture** and forestry.

### TARGETS

The funds are designed to support Austria's **socio-economic development**. The expected results (**targets**) give an overall view of where Austria should be on key parameters by 2020.



## HOW WILL AUSTRIA ACHIEVE THE EXPECTED RESULTS?

Austria will work towards the efficient spending of the EU Funds, based on a multidimensional approach.

### FULFILLING PRECONDITIONS FOR THE EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT USE OF ESI FUNDS

To ensure that ESI Funds are used efficiently and focus on results, the Commission has set some preconditions when allocating ESI Funds to the Member States.

The main purpose of these conditions, also called 'ex-ante conditionalities', is to help all Member States and their regions to tackle issues that past experience has shown to be particularly relevant to the efficient implementation of the Funds. These principles could be linked, for example, to implementation of EU legislation, the financing of strategic EU projects, or administrative evaluation and institutional capacity.

These *ex-ante* conditionalities cover most investment areas: improvements to regional research and innovation (R&I) strategies as well as strategic plans linked to environmental protection, energy resources, transport, socio-economic inclusion, health services, education and training.

### ENCOURAGING THE USE OF FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS AND TERRITORIAL TOOLS

The HighTechFund Linz in Upper Austria will provide venture capital to young technology-oriented enterprises in their seed/start-up phase and to companies that are expanding.

### SIMPLIFICATION FOR BENEFICIARIES

Managing authorities for the ESI Funds have made arrangements to reduce the administrative burden for beneficiaries and authorities. These include consolidating certain functions (e.g. reducing the number of intermediate bodies) and revising national eligibility rules or streamlining processes (e.g. electronic fund management, or 'e-cohesion').

## SUCCESS STORIES: EXAMPLES OF PROJECTS USING 2007-2013 ESI FUNDS

### KLEINSTE FABRIK DER WELT' (SMALLEST FACTORY IN THE WORLD)

Thanks to the use of innovative environmental technologies, the Weissenseer timber construction company produces high-quality passive houses – from its own high-quality passive house. Originally a traditional carpenter, Weissenseer has recently specialised in the production of wooden passive houses, which is now almost 90 % of the company's activity. The 'Smallest factory in the world' project created a novel production process: a new production line, manufactured according to passive house standards, which has streamlined and automatised the construction of passive houses.

Total investment: EUR 3 779 000

EU budget contribution to the project from ERDF: EUR 377 900

More information: <http://europa.eu/!qP66nF>

### GRAZ-JOBS MIGRA

In the Austrian city of Graz, six organisations which promote employment came together to offer better opportunities to the long-term unemployed, asylum seekers and immigrants. Participants follow a three-step procedure, starting with training in the eight different areas they choose. In the next step, participants are given work placements in companies where they can evaluate their suitability with the areas they have chosen. The final step is a temporary job of up to 12 months, in which they can demonstrate their new skills.

Total budget: EUR 1 000 500

EU budget contribution to the project from ESF: EUR 460 230

More information: <http://europa.eu/!nd89Nm>

## WALDVIERTLER KARPFFEN LABEL FOR CARP

The label 'Waldviertler Karpfen' ('Carp from the Waldviertel region') sets production standards for large-scale, high-quality carp farming using natural methods, to which 14 producers from the region now adhere. The producers received funding under the Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance (FIGF) (2000-2006) and the European Fisheries Fund (EFF) (2007-2013) for processing and marketing. Marketing measures included events during the fishing season and leaflets on production standards and recipes, as well as active cooperation with local restaurants, earning the region the title of 'Genussregion' ('culinary region') in 2005. Today, 80 % of regional production is produced according to these standards, and the label is becoming increasingly popular both in the retail trade and with consumers.

## MONITORING AGRI-ENVIRONMENT RESULTS

In 2007, a country-wide network of farmers was set up to observe and count the plants that are sensitive to over-cultivation and/or over-fertilisation. Through this project, farmers learned the effects of (over)cultivation on the plants. In 2009, agricultural colleges and their students joined the observation process, and in 2010 the monitoring was extended to some animals. Monitoring makes farmers more aware of conservation and biodiversity as they can observe the direct relationship between them. Farmers now view their pastures from a new perspective, pay more attention to them, and feel more responsible for the preservation of species. Showing a commitment to nature conservation helps improve the farmer's status within society.

Total budget: EUR 500 000

EU budget contribution to the project from EAFRD: EUR 240 000

More information: <http://www.biodiversitaetsmonitoring.at/>

## FIND OUT MORE ABOUT ESI FUNDS IN AUSTRIA

- ESI Funds: <http://ec.europa.eu/esif>
- ESI Funds Open Data Platform: <https://cohesiondata.ec.europa.eu/countries/AT>
- ERDF: [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/en/atlas/austria](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/atlas/austria)
- ESF: <http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=370&langId=en>
- EAFRD: [http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/rural-development-2014-2020/country-files/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/rural-development-2014-2020/country-files/index_en.htm)
- EMFF: [http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp/emff/country-files/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp/emff/country-files/index_en.htm)
- The EU Representation in Austria: <http://ec.europa.eu/austria/>
- EU project examples: [http://ec.europa.eu/budget/euprojects/search-projects/list\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/budget/euprojects/search-projects/list_en)
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