



AUSTRIA

Promoting gender equality through support mechanisms improving work-life balance for jobseekers

THREE DIFFERENT BUILDING BLOCKS ALL AIMED AT LABOUR MARKET RELATED NEEDS OF WOMEN, INCLUDING VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATION AS WELL AS THE ENCOURAGEMENT TO GET BACK TO WORK AND TO FIND JOBS IN NON-TRADITIONAL BRANCHES.

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Gender imbalances in the labour market have increased together with the heavy impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Austrian economy and its labour market. Since some economic sectors which are particularly important for female employment, such as tourism and gastronomy, completely collapsed during the COVID-19 pandemic, the crisis has had a severe impact on women. Chances of getting back to the labour market have decreased.

The following challenges have been identified:

- ▶ Increasing qualification needs related to complex digital skills.
- ▶ Vocational training needs to be re-arranged.
- ▶ Encouragement to engage in formal or higher education (reorientation) is necessary (especially for women without any benefits from PES).
- ▶ Women are even more burdened with unpaid carework and a lack of childcare facilities, especially in the Austrian countryside.
- ▶ Many female-led micro-entities are affected by the crisis and have no access to the Austrian social security system due to lack of previous employment.
- ▶ Gender stereotypes are complicating the access of female customers to proper information about women in technical professions – so there is a lot of education and learning necessary beyond what PES counsellors can offer and afford.
- ▶ Lessons learned from this phenomenon suggest that each local AMS office provides an expert for women labour market issues, so access to beneficial information is guaranteed.
- ▶ Vocational centres for women (which have been established nationwide) are providing a wide range of services with the goal of higher qualification. The programme includes support measures, vocational orientation, technical-manual prequalification, vocational training in non-traditional professions.

Name of the PES

Arbeitsmarktservice (AMS)

Scope of measure
(a pilot project or a national reform)

Further development of targeted support and ALMPs supporting the reintegration of women in the labour market at the national level. The aim is to bring women to jobs with living wages and to fight vertical and horizontal segregation in the labour market.

When was the practice implemented?

- ▶ Re-entering professional life [WE]: started in the mid-90s.
- ▶ Women in handcraft and technique [FIT]: started in 2006.
- ▶ Vocational centres for women [FBZ]: started in 2010 as a regional pilot project and rolled out subsequently.

What was the driver for introducing the practice? Was it internal or external?

External: The situation of women in the Austrian labour market is characterised by a persistent imbalance of possibilities and resources, such as precarious/atypical working conditions due to part-time work and underpaid jobs, rising unemployment after parental leave, and the burden of unpaid care work. Several governments decided to target this issue. Therefore, the last government convention addressed the fight against segregation.

Internal driver: as the Austrian PES has a very developed system to evaluate facts and figures (data warehouse DWH) it is easy to evaluate measures and progress in this field. And as progress in this field is not very convincing, this remains the internal driver.

Which organisation was involved in its implementation?

- ▶ AMS
- ▶ Counselling centres for women
- ▶ Employers

Which groups were targeted by the practice?	Women who want to re-enter into employment (special focus on women who took a career break due to childcare). Young, elderly and migrant women.
What were the practice's main objectives?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Counteracting horizontal and vertical labour market segregation. ▶ Counteracting women's precarious working conditions. ▶ Facilitating re-entry into the labour market.
What activities were carried out?	<p>1. Measures for supporting the re-entry of women into employment: Appointment of an expert for supporting measures aimed at the re-entry of women into employment in every local AMS office of the PES, establishment of a training programme focusing on vocational orientation, development of career perspectives, options for reconciling family and work, potential analyses, internships and qualification.</p> <p>2. Measures supporting jobs for women in handicrafts and technical occupations: Encouragement and support of women to enter non-traditional branches, such as crafts and technical professions, including vocational orientation, technical-manual prequalification, vocational training in non-traditional professions.</p> <p>3. Establishment of specific vocational centres for women: Establishment of special vocational centres for women providing services such as individual coaching, career guidance, analyses of individual potentials, information on vocational training and employment opportunities, development of vocational skills, cooperation with employers and institutions providing active measures for women, internships etc.</p>
What resources and other relevant organisational aspects were involved?	Financial resources: 50% of the total AMS budget (until 2019) is dedicated to supporting women. 60 mil. Euro for special labour market measures for women as described above. A dedicated unit 'labour market for women' in the federal office and a structure of experts for women labour market issues in the regional offices.
What were the source(s) of funding?	PES Austria (ALMP budget for women)
What were the outputs of the practice: people reached and products?	<p>The number of participants is increasing every year, in 2019 the following numbers were reached:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Re-entering professional life [WE]: 5,111 participants ▶ Women in handcraft and technique [FiT]: 1,273 participants ▶ Vocational centres for women [FBZ]: 11,966 participants
What outcomes have been identified?	One outcome is that the shortage of skilled workers could be decreased this way.
What are the lessons learnt and success factors?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Top-down management (executives) ▶ Professional qualifications on gender equality for all employees (basic education, further education) ▶ Introducing in all spheres of activity / work processes (main processes) ▶ Obligatory requirements for partners ▶ Controlling of all activities and measures.



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