

TERRITORIAL ORGANIZATION

Austria is a federal republic. Its subnational structure is two-tiered and made up of 9 autonomous states (*Bundesländer, Länder*) and 2 098 municipalities (*Gemeinden*) governed by elected councils. The capital Vienna is both a municipality and a federal state.¹



Unless otherwise indicated, all the information in this profile is taken from the previously published Voluntary National Review (VNR).²

1. NATIONAL STRATEGIES FOR SDG IMPLEMENTATION

In 2016, the Austrian Council of Ministers advised all federal ministries to incorporate the SDGs in all relevant strategies and programmes, as well as to draw up corresponding action plans. The SDGs are anchored in **nation wide strategy documents** and federal ministries are implementing the SDGs within their respective sectoral competences. The **Government Programme 2020-2024** is the base to coordinate the implementation of the Agenda 2030 with the systemic involvement of civil society, scientific community and business.

1.1 NATIONAL COORDINATION MECHANISMS

The **Inter-Ministerial Working Group on the 2030 Agenda (IMAG)** focuses on general coordination and on dialogue with relevant actors, including federal states, the Austrian Association of Cities and Towns, the Austrian Association of Municipalities, social partners, civil society, business and the scientific community. The coordination with federal states is assured through the NHK-K, the conference of sustainability coordinators for the Austrian federal states and the Austrian federal government, which merged in 2019 with **federal states' SDG Focal Points**. The Working Group coordinates the implementation of the 2030 Agenda among the federal states and the federal government as well as the preparation of reports from the federal states for joint national reporting.

1.2 VNR ELABORATION PROCESS

The Austrian Council of Ministers set up an **Inter-Ministerial Task Force** under the joint chairmanship of the Federal Chancellery and the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs to coordinate the reporting at the federal level. Within the Task Force, representatives of the federal states, the Austrian Association of Cities and Towns, the Austrian Association of Municipalities, social partners, business, civil society and the scientific community were consulted through "editorial groups". Over 40 organizations were involved in consultation rounds, and more than 320 responses were collected.

1.3 MONITORING

Progress in SDG implementation was measured on the basis of independent data in the **2020 National Indicator Report**. Since 2017, Statistics Austria has produced national indicator tables every year. Around 200 indicators incorporate information from federal ministries, the Environment Agency Austria, the Austrian Development Agency, the Austrian National Public Health Institute, the federal states, the Austrian Association of Cities and Towns, and the Austrian Association of Municipalities.³

1. See: https://www.sng-wofi.org/reports/SNGWOFI_2019_report_country_profiles_DEC2019_UPDATES.pdf

2. See: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26511VNR_2020_Austria_Report_English.pdf (2020)

3. However, the Association of Cities and Towns consider that there are no initiatives to develop local indicators (GTF Survey 2020).

2. LRGs INVOLVEMENT IN SDG LOCALIZATION

The **Inter-Ministerial Working Group on the 2030 Agenda (IMAG)** promotes the exchange of information and experience with the regional and local levels. The Association of Cities and Towns, nevertheless, considered that they do not participate and that they have only ad hoc consultations with the federal government, asking to enhance coordination across levels of government.⁴ The former ministry responsible for sustainability joined with the Austrian Association of Cities and Towns, the Austrian Association of Municipalities, and Upper Austria to stage the first conference for networking the local actors. The conference will be held annually to deal with specific local and municipal policy challenges associated with the 2030 Agenda. As part of this event, awards will be given out to local role models. The nine federal states of Austria are taking varied strategic approaches to implementing the 2030 Agenda. Some of them refer to the SDGs in their strategy documents.

The **Austrian Association of Cities and Towns** and the **Austrian Association of Municipalities** participated in the Task Force in charge of drafting the 2020 VNR.

2.1 LRGs PARTICIPATION

► In the VNR process



Comments: LRG participated in conferences and consultations (GTF Survey 2020).

► In national coordination mechanisms for SDG implementation



Comments: Ad hoc consultations of LRGs (GTF Survey 2020).

This assessment is based on the information collected in the VNR and in the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments' annual survey on the localization of the SDGs.

2.2 VNR REFERENCES

There are subsections in the 2020 VNR on federal states and cities, towns and municipalities as part of the presentation of the different actors involved in the governance of SDG implementation (see VNR, 2020, p. 20-21). It states that "cities, towns and municipalities form the strong, citizen-centred backbone of Austria" and that "the 2030 Agenda is implemented at the level of the federal states, cities, towns and municipalities in a cooperative process involving the Sectorial Departments in the federal state governments, social partners and stakeholders from business, the scientific community and civil society".

2.3 SPECIFIC PROJECTS AND CASES

► The **Austrian Association of Cities and Towns** and the **Austrian Association of Municipalities** have drawn up the model resolution '2030 Agenda for Cities, Towns and Municipalities' in collaboration with the Federal Ministry for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology. In this declaration, cities, towns and municipalities commit to pursuing sustainable development, to supporting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and to acting in accordance with SDG 11 to evolve into sustainable cities and communities. Attention is focused on awareness-raising measures and activities. The Austrian Association of Cities and Towns also issued a guideline to implement the SDGs at local level. It lays out numerous examples and ideas on how the 2030 Agenda can be achieved locally.

► The **BundLänder-Netzwerk**, a network between the federal government and federal states for implementing regional and local sustainability strategies, is currently responsible for more than 500 Local Agenda 21 processes in municipalities and regions.

► In 2016, the state government of **Styria** was the first to adopt a resolution on the 2030 Agenda.

► **Vienna** adopted in 2019 the "Smart City Wien Framework Strategy 2019-2050, Vienna's strategy for Sustainable Development" and developed sustainable economic growth and climate action through the initiative OekoBusiness Vienna – Doing Business for the Greater Good.

4. Answer of the Association of Cities and Towns to the GTF Survey in 2021.

► The regional development action plan 'Raumbild Vorarlberg 2030', the 'Climate and Energy Strategy SALZBURG 2050' and the 'Smart City Wien Framework Strategy 2019–2050', 'Leben mit Zukunft' in Tyrol, 'Zukunft durch Beteiligung' in **Upper Austria** are also mentioned.

► For Upper Austrian municipalities, '**GemeindeNavi Agenda 2030**' was developed as a tool for participatory self-evaluation and future planning to help to implement the SDGs.

► To achieve sustainable cities, towns and municipalities, the Federal State of **Carinthia** has been teaming up with partner institutions since 2018 to implement the Climate Change Adaptation Model Regions Programme (KLAR!). Seven Carinthian regions with nearly 140,000 inhabitants are already involved.

2.4 VOLUNTARY SUBNATIONAL AND/OR LOCAL REVIEWS (VSRs / VLRs)

Not applicable.

2.5 MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION

Austria follows an impact-oriented management of public administration model, where planning is done in the form of yearly budget targets, with performance indicators to assess the success of the measures. At municipal and regional level, the **Climate and Energy Fund** has initiated the Climate and Energy Model Regions Programme, which supports regions in making best use of their local renewable energy resources, exploiting energy-saving potentials and operating sustainably. So far, more than 4,000 successful projects have been supported in different areas, including renewable energy, energy efficiency, sustainable mobility and awareness raising. There are currently 91 Climate and Energy Model Regions in Austria. With the SDG Model **Styria**, an instrument is now available for continually improving strategic alignment and reconciliation with the impact goals while implementing a reporting system for the 2030 Agenda at the same time.⁵

3. RELEVANT INFORMATION

General comments: The 2020 VNR focuses on three areas that are particularly relevant to Austria and "require accelerated action": 1) Digitalization, 2) Women, youth and 'leaving no one behind', 3) Climate action and adaptation to climate change. The VNR presents many success stories and flagship initiatives to illustrate SDG implementation in Austria and provide possible solutions to existing challenges. An SDG website focusing on the success stories and flagship initiatives was created.

3.1 WOMEN PARTICIPATION

No reference.

3.2 COVID 19

As the 2020 VNR presents the SDG implementation status at early March 2020, the analysis carried out by Statistics Austria does not reflect the impact of the pandemic or measures related to the COVID-19 crisis.

⁵ The Styrian model and process of integrating the SDGs into the departmental budgets began with an SDG interdepartmental working group. This working group met to conduct workshops and exchange information with other ministerial departments. One of the goals was to link the Styrian impact goals with the SDGs. Instead of linking the Styrian impact goals with the broader 17 SDGs, the government departments drew links to the 169 sub-goals.

4. SDG INDICATORS⁶

5.5.1. (b) Proportion of seats held by women (%) in local governments		24.6 (2020)
6.1.1. Proportion of population using safely managed drinking water services (%)	Urban	-
	Rural	-
6.2.1. (a) Proportion of population using safely managed sanitation services (%)	Urban	100 (2020)
	Rural	99 (2020)
11.1.1. Proportion of population living in slums, informal settlements or inadequate housing (%)		-
11.6.1. Proportion of municipal solid waste collected and managed (%)		100 (2015, Vienna)
11.6.2. Air pollution – annual means of particulate matter in cities (population weighted)		12.1 (2016)
11.b.2. Proportion of local governments that have adopted local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national strategies (%)		40.6 (2018)

6. The data used for this table come from the UN SDG Indicators Database. See: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/UNSDG/IndDatabasePage>.
More information on the country's progress towards the SDGs here: <https://country-profiles.unstatshub.org/aut>