

Austria's Voluntary National Review – Main Messages

- For decades, Austria has been implementing sustainable development principles in ecological, social and economic dimensions.
- Sustainable development is a constitutional state goal.
- Austria promotes competitiveness and innovation while safeguarding the diversity of natural resources, ecosystem services and social progress.
- Austria has successfully implemented numerous SDGs and continues this commitment.

Governance

- Following the mainstreaming approach, all Federal Ministries have been integrating the SDGs in their strategies and programmes since 2016 and have been devising corresponding action plans and measures.
- The inter-ministerial working-group on the 2030 Agenda (IMAG) handles the general coordination and communication of essential measures in implementing SDGs.
- SDGs are anchored in nationwide Austrian strategy documents: Climate and Energy Strategy, Three-Year-Programme on Development Policy, Health Targets, Youth Strategy, and Foreign Trade Strategy. SDGs-References are also included in federal states'-strategies.
- Following a multi-stakeholder approach, representatives of federal states, cities, municipalities, social partners, stakeholders from civil society, business and scientific community are interacting with IMAG and committed to SDG-implementation.
- Austria's activities in the EU, International Organisations (IO) and in projects of Development Cooperation serve SDG-implementation.
- As seat of several IOs, we promote sustainable development.

The Government Programme 2020–2024 further strengthens a targeted coordination in implementing the 2030 Agenda by systematically involving relevant stakeholders.

Digitalisation

Digitalisation is an Austrian priority, also in implementing the 2030 Agenda:

- In order to allow the partake of everyone, expansion and promotion of broadband and 5G, digital skills and applications, digitalisation in the health sector and in citizen-orientated public services;
- Use of digitalisation to cut resources and energy consumption and reduce CO₂-emissions;

- Holistic approach for sustainable use of digital transformation, e.g. smart cities;
- Use of digitalisation in communication and management of crises and pandemics.

Austria will strengthen digital governance drawing on all stakeholders' knowledge to enable digital technologies being used in all SDG-areas.

Women, young people and "Leaving no one behind"

Austria's well-developed social and health-care system is key in combating poverty and social exclusion, ensuring high-quality health-care to everybody, including disadvantaged and highly vulnerable groups.

- Targeted measures improve the living conditions of, among others, persons with disabilities, older persons, young people and children.

Along with strengthening primary healthcare, promoting women's health and assuring quality care, Austria will put special emphasis on fighting poverty among children, women and older persons.

Involvement of young people in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda is key:

- Extension of voting rights to 16-year-olds opened up democratic participation to young people.
- Youth empowerment is central in decision-making and participatory processes regarding SDGs and in implementing the Austrian Youth Strategy.

Equality of women and men is a prerequisite for the successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda:

- Vital to systematically integrate a gender-specific perspective into the implementation of all 17 goals;
- As a cross-cutting issue, gender equality builds on the commitment of actors from all fields and on cooperation with NGOs and civil society;
- Challenges include eliminating gender stereotypes, closing the gender pay gap, promoting women in leading positions, expanding childcare services, especially in rural areas, fighting violence against women, and integration.

Climate action

Austria aims to achieve climate neutrality by 2040. To this end, we are determined to:

- implement an eco-social tax reform;
- draw up a mobility-master-plan for 2030;
- introduce an affordable, nationwide annual pass for public transport;
- present a plan for phasing-out oil, coal and fossil natural gas for room heating and
- massively increase renewable energy.

At EU-level, Austria supports carbon border adjustments and the earliest possible phasing-out of financing and subsidising fossil infrastructures.

Austria advocates the decarbonisation of energy systems without nuclear power, the latter not being a viable option for combatting climate change.

Indicators measuring advances in achieving SDGs since 2017

SDGs have seen positive developments:

- Concerning nutrition and food production, a high percentage of land being organically farmed makes Austria an EU leader in this regard;
- A rising educational level and an above EU average in lifelong learning;
- Renewable energy accounts for one third of total energy consumption (as of 2018). The ratio of CO₂-emissions by industry and gross value added declined in 2010-2017;
- Austria ranking among the top countries in digital public services.

However, significant challenges remain and action is needed in several areas, such as

- women performing considerably more unpaid work than men and a substantial, although narrowing, gender pay gap still persisting;
- energy consumption, greenhouse gas emissions from traffic and land use having risen (2010-2018).