

Austria



Country Profile

Information Society Indicators

- Percentage of households having internet access to the Internet at home, [2008: 69%](#)
- Percentage of households with a broadband connection, [2008: 55%](#)
- Percentage of individuals (55-74 years old) using the Internet at least once a week, 2007: 32%
- Percentage of individuals (55-74 years old) having ordered/bought goods and services for private use over the Internet in the last 3 months, 2007: 11%
- Percentage of individuals (55-74 years old) using the internet for interacting with public authorities, 2007: Obtaining information 12 %, downloading official forms 8.9%, returning filled forms 6.1%

Source: Statistics Austria, 2007 (further Information:

http://www.statistik.gv.at/web_en/statistics/information_society/index.html)

e-Inclusion History

- mid '90s: working party Information society (stakeholders from science, business and administration) topics: legal framework, telecommunication, economic and social policy, science, skills, new media, health, public administration, citizens)
- Domestic initiatives and measures within the scope of the Information Society are implemented by the respective Federal Ministries within their responsibility, while the classic cross section matter "Information Society" requires coordination which is attended to by the Constitutional Service of the Federal Chancellery, Section V/4. Exchange of information and experience regarding all relevant issues is organized on a regular and continuous basis among representatives of the Federal Ministries, the statutory bodies of interest groups representing business and consumers, as well as among internet providers, etc., in the Advisory Board for Information Society (<http://www.bka.gv.at/big>) especially created for this purpose.
- ICT-Task-Force
- Internet-offensive (<http://www.internetoffensive.at/>)

e-Inclusion Strategy

It includes:

- policies for accessibility
- policies for ICT for ageing
- expansion of Broadband
 - [98% broadband coverage by the end of 2007.](#)
 - To accelerate high-speed access and the introduction of qualitative and innovative services and applications and thus increase use and penetration while closing the digital divide.
 - To contribute to an increase in innovation in the ICT sector.
- policies to enhance competencies & skills
- Public services

Important policies in place

- i2010: Austria: It lays down the main goals and the most important i2010 initiative measures to be implemented in the areas of research and development, education, **e-Inclusion**, public administration (e-Government) and health (e-Health) in Austria.

e-Inclusion Legal Framework

Law in practice

- E-Government Act requires ensuring barrier free access to public websites for all. Since January 1, 2008 the design of such online services has to be conforming to international standards of accessibility.
- Federal Disability Equality Act (Bundes-Behindertengleichstellungsgesetz): prohibits discrimination for reasons of disability in public administration and consumer affairs, including non-accessible websites (checks on reasonability + mediation = crucial)
- Disability Employment Act (Behinderteneinstellungsgesetz) concerning working life (to ban discrimination)

Research in Practice

- The federal Ministry of transport, innovation and technology (BMVIT) has launched in cooperation with the Austrian Research Promotion Agency (<http://www.ffg.at/content.php?cid=22>) two programmes concerning e-Inclusion:

- ❖ **Austrian electronic network** ([AT.net](#))

- ❖ **New technologies for senior citizens** ([benefit](#)) - and AAL

AT.net is continuing the broadband-initiative and encourages the market-access of ICT-solutions. The topics are mainly dealing with new forms of accessibility, e-Learning, e-Inclusion, trust and safety, e-Government und e-Health.

In order to support a national implementation of the Ambient Assisted Living Joint Programme (AAL), the Federal Ministry for Transport, Innovation and Technology has designed a mission orientated R&D Programme in the field of "Technology (in particular ICT) and Elderly People".

The programme (2007-2013) aims are:

- ✓ to extend the time people can live in their preferred environment by increasing their autonomy, self-confidence and mobility,
- ✓ to support maintaining health and functional capability of the elderly individuals,
- ✓ to promote a better and healthier lifestyle for individuals at risk,
- ✓ to enhance the security, to prevent social isolation and to support maintaining the multifunctional network around the individual
- ✓ to support carers, families and care organisations,
- ✓ to increase the efficiency and productivity of used resources in the ageing societies.

To create successful new products and services, it is essential to industry build an in-depth knowledge about the need of elderly people. Fostering interdisciplinary cooperation between researchers, developers, user interface designers, sociologists, psychologists, ethicists, etc. will be a key to success in this market segment.

The **Ambient Assisted Living Joint Programme** is a european ICT-Programm (from 2008 – 2013), concerning products and services, to enhance the quality of life of older people and to extend the time people can live in their preferred environment.

- The Federal Ministry of Social Affairs and Consumer Protection commissioned a survey on **suitable products and services for senior citizens...**

The following organisations pursue research activities in practice:

- [Austrian Academy of Sciences, Institute of Technology Assessment \(ITA\), Strohgasse 45/5, 1030 Wien,](#)

<http://www.oeaw.ac.at/ita/>

- Institut 'integriert studieren', Vienna University of Technology, Favoritenstraße 11/029, A-1040 Wien, <http://www.is.tuwien.ac.at/>: Supporting Independently Living Citizens (SILC – completed Dec. 2003)
- Institut Integriert Studieren, Johannes Kepler University Linz, Altenbergerstraße 69, 4040 Linz, <http://www.integriert-studieren.jku.at/>
- Zentrum "integriert studieren", Karl-Franzens-University Graz, Universitätsplatz 3, 8010 Graz, <http://zis.uni-graz.at/>
- Center for Sign Language and Communication of the Hearing Impaired of the University of Klagenfurt, Universitätsstraße 65-67, 9020 Klagenfurt, <http://www.uni-klu.ac.at/fzgs/>

e-Inclusion Actors

- The Federal Ministry of Transport, Innovation and Technology: Responsible for the implementation of the broadband strategy in Austria, and for the eTen programme and one of its projects called Digital integration (Mr. Alfred Ruzicka, Federal Ministry of Transport, Innovation and Technology, alfred.ruzicka@bka.gv.at)
- The Federal Ministry of Social Security and Consumer Protection in matters of coordinating the EInclusion strategy in Austria (Mr. Hannes Spreitzer, Federal Ministry of Social Security and Consumer Protection, hannes.spreitzer@bmsk.gv.at)
- The Federal Cancellery in matters of coordinating Information Society issues (Mr. Andreas Ulrich, Federal Cancellery, andreas.ulrich@bka.gv.at)
- The strategic e-government body, the platform Digital:Austria, in matters of ICT in public sector. The platform involves administrative representatives of federal, land and community level (Mr. Peter Kustor, Federal Cancellery, peter.kustor@bka.gv.at).

e-Inclusion Who is Who

- e-Inclusion sub group contact:
- Mr. Hannes Spreitzer, Ministry of Social Affairs & Consumer Protection, V/4 (hannes.spreitzer@bmsk.gv.at)

⇒ Mr. Andreas Ulrich, Federal Cancellery - Legal Service Media Affairs & Coordination Information Society, V/4 (andreas.ulrich@bka.gv.at)

e.Inclusion Progress by Riga Areas

ICT & Ageing

• Status in ICT & Ageing

- One of the objectives listed regarding the ageing population in i2010: Austria is to push forward measures already under way for elimination of inhibitions of older people in accessing ICT and to develop other associated information offers for seniors based on "new media".

• Actions to support ICT& Ageing

- In accordance with the increase of quality of life as set out in the i2010 initiative (specifically ICT solutions), there will be increased opportunities for [basic](#) internet training for seniors.
- The Major Austrian organizations representing the ageing population can receive funds to be spent on information measure in line with directives for general senior support. This includes information for seniors by expanding and operating Websites of seniors' organizations as well as PC and Internet

training for elderly people. www.seniorenrat.at

- The umbrella organisation of the Austrian organisation for older people, the Austrian Senior Citizen's Council, started the initiative "Seniorkom.at" in cooperation with Telekom Austria. The aims of the project are to raise the awareness about the digital divide among politicians, representatives of the economy, as well as among young people, to enhance the dialogue and the understanding between different generations, to facilitate access to the Internet for older people by providing a series of programmes. 20,000 elderly people in Austria have been familiarized with the computer and the Internet by means of various schooling programmes (trainings, Internet-Platform www.seniorkom.at).

Geographic digital divide

• Status of Common access to electronic content and services

For a long time now, Austria has been facing up to the problem of the so-called "digital divides". In this context, parameters such as income, origin and education are considered in connection with the capability/hindrance of equal opportunity.

Main objectives in this area are:

- To accelerate speed-up access and the introduction of qualitative and innovative services and applications and thus increase use and penetration while closing the digital divide.
- To contribute to an increase in innovation in the ICT sector.

• Actions to support Common access to electronic content and services

Austrians Broadband strategy contains the following elements:

- Tax concessions [from 2003 to year-end 2004](#) with a view to promoting broadband penetration (expense of a new individual broadband subscription inclusive monthly basic fee with a maximum cap for current use is tax deductible);
- Specific incentive scheme for broadband connection of areas not covered so far ("white spots"). [Full coverage of broadband availability is to become a reality in order to create access to modern services;](#)
- [Specific incentive scheme for the deployment of broadband applications and services in public interest to foster the use of broadband internet and stimulate infrastructure investments;](#)
- Stimulation of „digital competence" of private citizens through actions of the regulatory authority RTR GmbH in close cooperation with the Federal Ministry of Transport, Innovation and Technology;
- changeover of all head offices of Federal Administrations to the electronic file processing, i.e. completely electronic administration procedures;

All contacts with administrative authorities are possible in electronic form.

e-Accessibility

• Status of e-Accessibility

- Main objective set in i2010 Austria in the field of e-Accessibility is to have all public service websites available in barrier-free versions since 1 January 2008.
- Subsidies for electronic equipment for people with disabilities.
- Information platforms (e.g. [Handynet](#), parents, elderly).

• Actions towards e-Accessibility

- The "Servicezentrum ÖGS.barrierefrei" (barrier-free in Sign Language) - an initiative by the Austrian National Association of the Deaf - developed a tool ("videotext.web") to access written text, signed text and voice on webpages simultaneously by providing a dubbed sign language video that is synchronised with the written text. For most Deaf people only signed information means access to full information. www.oegsbarrierefrei.at
- Measures for the elimination of inhibitions of older people to access ICT.
- IT-Training (e.g. ECDL) for jobless people or people with disabilities.
- Internet training by pupils for elderly people. www.seniorkom.at
- Offering other associated information for elderly people based on "new media".

Digital Literacy and Competences

• Status on Digital Literacy and Competences

- Main objectives set in i2010 Austria in relation to raising literacy and competences are as follows;
- Broadband Internet connection for every school,
- High quality online learning materials "on demand" and free of barriers,
- Portals for content supply to all Austrian schools,
- Future employability and job opportunities of children and youth (through media-literacy and e-literacy),
- Optimise the whole Information system for adult education,
- Awareness building measures.

• Actions towards stimulating Digital Literacy and Competences

eFit Strategy:

- In 2000, the "eFit Strategy" was developed, which brings together schools, further education in universities and technical universities, life-long education and culture, in several initiatives on the spread of ICT skills and increase of ICT literacy as part of the Lisbon Process objectives.
- In 2005, eFit entered its next phase called eFit2. It aims to increase the sustainability of the projects under way and ensuring the necessary technical infrastructural and pedagogical conditions for the establishment of new media and changed learning cultures in the Austrian educational system.
- The main objectives of eFit2 are to both spread knowledge gained from pilot projects throughout Europe and also to create the corresponding conditions (such as broadband) so that all SMEs and their employees can benefit.
- Other objectives can be listed as follows:
 - to equip every school with a broadband Internet connection (already partly fulfilled),
 - to provide high quality online learning materials "on demand" and free of barriers,
 - for all teachers to have sufficient skills to carry out ICT assisted lessons in a teaching methods respect and to be ICT literate,
 - to set up portals for the use of content and supply all Austrian schools with those portals,
 - to increase the future employability and job opportunities of children and youth through well-founded media literacy and e-literacy, and as a result contributing to a society with high economic productivity,
 - to develop innovative teaching and learning models for women with limited opportunities,
 - to further optimize the whole Information system for adult education.

e-Inclusion and Cultural Diversity

• Status on e-Inclusion and Cultural Diversity

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• Actions towards e-Inclusion and Cultural Diversity

- Some of the official websites (ministries, municipalities) provide relevant information on living aspects in Austria in languages of the foreign workers / immigrants.
- [Many of the associations of the six indigenous ethnic groups have their own websites, mostly bilingual in their own language and in german. The configuration and the operation of these websites is sponsored by the Federal Chancellery.](#)

Inclusive eGovernment

• Status on inclusive eGovernment

- eGovernment addresses 'all citizens, independent of their income, their personal capabilities or life situation'. Consequently, accessibility is one of the principles Austria's e-government strategy is based on. Accessibility is defined as ensuring that all electronic services provided by public authorities are available to all without discrimination. Several initiatives have been taken to ensure that eGovernment

becomes more and more user-friendly, an important first step to make eGovernment appealing.

- Already in 2002 the Austrian eGovernment actors agreed to demand compliance with level A of the WAI guidelines in the long term. Therefore, in recent years, in order to meet their 2008 aim to provide barrier free access to public websites, many websites have worked to reach level A.
- The access to websites of the administration and to its services is also promoted by additional access channels. The Austrian government cooperated with [the private sector](#) to set up public internet access points (PIAP) and WLAN hotspots from which the websites of administrations, i.e. which belong to the domain .gv.at, can be accessed free of charge. Another channel of access to the eServices of public administrations is via public officials acting as proxies (intermediaries).
- Austria has already done much in the field of electronic documents as an important factor for inclusiveness: authentic electronic documents are delivered electronically for those who wish so. The so-called official electronic signature is defined by law and guarantees legal certainty. Thus disabled/ blind/ people, people who cannot leave their homes [or live remotely](#); can take advantage from electronic documents.
- The central governmental portal, www.help.gv.at, complies with level AAA of the WAI guidelines. It provides a 'one-stop-shop' for citizens and businesses unifying all services provided by the public administration. All internet sites of the public administration must be compatible with the WAI [WCAG](#) guidelines ([at least](#) Level A) by January 1, 2008, to ensure that these sites become accessible to the widest range of persons possible. HELP.gv.at received in 2006 in Berlin the BIENE Award in GOLD (one of the best accessible websites in German language)
- The Austrian eGovernment strategy also includes the Styleguide 2.0 for online forms. This is a standard layout for all eGovernment forms to facilitate navigation for users and sets minimum requirements, such as conformity with Level A of the WAI guidelines.

• **Actions towards inclusive eGovernment**

- [Mandates - relatives, care persons, professionals helping out with access when needed](#)
- [Service Center: *Help.gv.at*, where citizen can get direct help with their digital administrative proceedings](#)
- [Citizen setting and remembering their context in the personalised *my.help* portal](#)
- [Ensuring that information stays with any given sector by using sector specific identifiers](#)
- [Citizen card without extra cost for all](#)

Challenges

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