

[eInclusion in]

Austria

Österreich



ICT & Ageing

Geographic Digital Divide

eAccessibility

eInclusion

Cultural Diversity

Inclusive eGovernment

Digital Literacy & Competences

Country Profile

History

Strategy

Legal Framework

Actors

Who's Who

Areas

The Future of eInclusion

What's Inside

Contents:

Country Profile	1
eInclusion History	3
eInclusion Strategy	6
eInclusion Legal Framework	9
eInclusion Actors.....	11
eInclusion Who's Who.....	13
eInclusion Areas.....	15
The Future of eInclusion	20

Disclaimer:

This document is not intended to be exhaustive. Its purpose is to give an overview of the general eInclusion status in Austria. Even though every care has been taken to ensure accuracy, the information herein should be treated as indicative and no responsibility for errors can be assumed. Neither the European Commission, nor any person acting on its behalf can be held responsible for the use that could be made of the information provided.

Country Profile

Basic data and indicators

Basic Data

Population (1 000): 8 355.3 inhabitants (2009)

GDP at market prices: 276 892.1 million Euro (2009)

GDP per inhabitant in PPS (Purchasing Power Standards, EU-27 = 100): 123.5 (2008)

GDP growth rate: -3.6 % (2009)

Inflation rate: 0.4 % (2009)

Unemployment rate: 4.8 % (2009)

Government debt/GDP: 66.5 % (2009)

Public balance (government deficit or surplus/GDP): -3.4 % (2009)

Source: Eurostat

Area: 83 870 km²

Capital city: Vienna

Official EU language: German

Currency: Euro

Source: Europa website

Information Society Indicators

Percentage of households with Internet access: 70 % (2009)

Percentage of households with broadband connection: 58 % (2009)

Percentage of individuals regularly using the Internet: 67 % (2009)

Percentage of individuals using the Internet for uploading self-created content: 8 % (2008)

Percentage of individuals using the Internet for reading online newspapers/magazines: 41 % (2009)

Percentage of Individuals using the Internet for finding information about goods and services: 54 % (2009)

Percentage of Individuals using the Internet for seeking health-related information: 36 % (2009)

Percentage of individuals using the Internet for looking for a job or sending a job application: 10 % (2009)

Percentage of individuals using the Internet for doing an online course: 1 % (2009)

Percentage of individuals using the Internet for seeking information with the purpose of learning: 24 % (2009)

Percentage of individuals using the Internet for interaction with public authorities: obtaining information 35.4 %, downloading forms 22.0 %, returning filled forms 12.0 % (2009)

Source: Eurostat

Editorial notice: Statistical indicators referenced in this section reflect those of Eurostat at the time the Edition is being prepared.

eInclusion History

Main developments and key milestones (in reverse chronological order)

For the latest developments, see: [ePractice news for eInclusion](#)

Recent News

February 2010

- ▶ On 9 February 2010, the '[Austrian Internet Declaration](#)' (*Österreichische Internetdeklaration*) was presented and handed over to the Federal Chancellor Werner Faymann, and Minister of Finance Josef Pröll by the leading representatives of the Austrian Internet industry. The 'Austrian Internet Declaration' is the result of the '[Internet Initiative Austria](#)' (*Internetoffensive Österreich*) which was initiated two years ago as a joint effort of the ICT stakeholders of Austria to develop elements for a **national ICT strategy**.

Throughout the drafting process of the strategy paper, numerous policy proposals were submitted, discussed in working groups, prioritised and evaluated. The experts identified 60 measures that Austria needs to adopt in order to strengthen its market position among the top ranking countries in the ICT sector.

The domestic ICT sector will invest more than €2 billion in the coming years, despite the current difficult economic situation, with the ICT companies making their contribution towards strengthening Austria's business location internationally. One of the most important prerequisites for building a knowledge society is the availability of high-performance ICT infrastructure. Investing in **broadband infrastructure** for the future is a considerable factor for economic recovery in the short term and for sustainable growth in the long term.

- ▶ On that same day, the Council of Ministers decided on the creation of the Centre of Excellence for the Internet Society (*Kompetenzzentrum Internetgesellschaft*). Its main purpose will be the prioritisation of measures based on the 'Austrian Internet Declaration'. The 'Austrian Internet Initiative' will be represented in Centre's Board of Directors having an advisory function.

News 2009 and before

2009

In *December 2009*, the mobile version of the **citizen card** was launched. This service was developed in the framework of 'Secure identity across borders linked' (STORK), a large scale pilot project on eID under the 'Competitiveness and Innovation Programme' (CIP). The service provided secure authentication and identification. Instead of a smartcard and reader only a mobile phone was required. A qualified electronic signature was generated online with the mobile phone and a secret password to be entered at the website being one and a TAN sent by SMS the second of two factors of the authentication system. No additional software was required. Thanks to the interface specification of the Security Layer, existing citizen card enabled applications could be easily extended to provide authentication by mobile citizen card. The user had to register his/her mobile phone when obtaining an electronic signature.

When accessing an application the user entered his/her phone number and the password into the login form and received a text message with a transaction code which was valid for five minutes. He/she then typed in the TAN and was granted access. In the background, the identity information of the person was read and an electronic signature was generated by the mobile citizen card service. The signature was a qualified signature conforming to the Austrian signature law and the EU Signature Directive. This service has been free of charge.

2008

- ▶ In *October 2008*, Austria launched 'the studi.gv.at' initiative to promote usage of **electronic services among students**. Within the framework of this initiative, students were able to activate the Citizen Card functionality on their e-Card for free. Thus, they were able to participate in a variety of online services for students already put in place. Students could furthermore receive a compatible e-card reading device – also free of charge. During the 'studi.gv.at' initiative, a group of tutors has been visiting all Austrian universities in order to distribute a total of 10 000 free e-card readers and help students activate their Citizen Card.
- ▶ In *June 2008*, the EC-funded project on 'Measuring Progress of eAccessibility in Europe' (MeAC) published a first series of [eAccessibility Country Profiles](#). They provided an overview of relevant policies and levels of eAccessibility actually achieved in nine EU Member States - including Austria - as well as the United States.
- ▶ On *3 March 2008*, the '[Internet Offensive Austria](#)' (*Internetoffensive Österreich*) was launched. This initiative was a joint effort of the ICT stakeholders of Austria to develop a **national ICT strategy**. A total of 400 experts, approximately 170 companies and organisations, more than 35 Chief Executive Officers (CEO) as well as executives of leading IT companies joined forces to create the 'Austrian Internet Declaration' as a basis for an ICT strategy for Austria.
- ▶ The Austrian legal eGovernment framework was [substantially revised](#) at the end of December 2007. Among other laws, the 'eGovernment Act', the 'Electronic Signature Act' and the 'General Law on Administration Processes' were amended. Some of the new provisions already came into force on *7 January 2008*. These provisions included those ones intended to promote usage of the eID concept **Citizen Card**, simplify usage of administrative signatures and facilitate the integration of the citizen card concept into private sector processes, with particular emphasis on the banking sector. The revised [ABC guide to eGovernment in Austria](#) incorporated all new facts.
- ▶ Since *January 2008*, Austrian health insurance and **eID cards** (eCards) used qualified electronic signatures. The signature function could be activated free of charge. Besides its role as an ID for administrative and social security purposes, the card could be used more easily for signing and encoding of information e.g. in electronic banking.

2007

- ▶ In *November 2007*, the '[HELP.gv.at](#)' portal, Austria's on-line guide to administrations, launched a [new section](#) for **young people**. The youth section had its own homepage and provided onward links to sites and downloads that were likely to interest young people. Four main subjects were covered: work, education and training, leisure and mobility, and rights and democracy. The site also had an interactive element. Young users could send in their reactions and suggestions anonymously.
- ▶ In *October 2007*, the Secretary of State Heidrun Silhavy [announced](#) the holding of a **Barrier-Free Day** in Austria on 26 November. Its motto has been 'On-line without Exception'. As the State secretary remarked, 'barrier-free access is a high priority for the Austrian administration and in particular for the Federal Chancery'.
- ▶ In *August 2007*, the final report of the 'barrier-free 2007' survey was published. Conducted between February and July 2007, the survey examined barrier-free status throughout the federal administration. On the basis of the international barrier-free standard WCAG 1.0 Level A, average compliance by Austrian federal sites was found to be 94 %. A dozen federal ministries assessed themselves in 68 fields. Self-evaluation at Level A was obligatory, but many of the participants also assessed their compliance with levels AA and AAA. Here, the results showed more than 75 % compliance with Level AA and more than 54 % with Level AAA.
- ▶ In *January 2007*, the [Federal Ministry for Transport, Innovation and Technology](#) (*Bundesministerium für Verkehr, Innovation und Technologie*, BMVIT) launched the 'Austrian Electronic Network' (AT:net) initiative. This initiative supported the introduction of innovative services, the implementation of research results and the further diffusion of broadband access.

2006

- ▶ In *December 2006*, the portal 'HELP.gv.at' was awarded in Berlin the BIENE 2006 in Gold for the best **barrier free** German language Information portal.
- ▶ In *November 2006*, the 'E-Government takes place' (*E-Government findet Stadt*) initiative was launched. Eight cities participated in the initiative to roll out solutions on local level. Among other services citizens could activate the **eSignature** functionality on their eHealth insurance card (eCard). This way the eCard advanced into a **Citizen Card** (*Bürgerkarte*), facilitating the electronic identification of the user which was a prerequisite for high quality public services.

2005

In *November 2005*, the electronic health insurance card (eCard) rollout throughout Austria was successfully completed. The eCard finally replaced the paper-based health-card voucher. Approximately eight million eCards were sent out. The eCard included the possibility to activate the Citizen Card function (free of charge) and could therefore be used, additionally, for eGovernment services.

2004

In *March 2004*, the Austrian **eGovernment Act** entered into force. The Act, which set the obligation for public bodies to be capable of full electronic transactional service delivery by 2008, provided a clear and solid legal basis for the country's eGovernment programme and initiatives. With respect to eInclusion the eGovernment Act required ensuring **barrier free access** to public websites for all. As from 1 January 2008 the design of such online services had to conform to international standards of accessibility.

2003

- ▶ In *May 2003*, the Federal Government launched an eGovernment Offensive, which set priorities for a rapid **development of eGovernment** in Austria and aimed to achieve a leading position in the European Union. The basis for achieving that aim was comprehensive support for and cooperation with the political decision-makers of the Federal Government, the provinces, local authorities, municipalities, social insurance bodies and the private sector.
- ▶ In *February 2003*, the first **Citizen Cards** (*Bürgerkarte*) were issued by the Austrian Computer Society (*Österreichische Computer Gesellschaft, OCG*) and a trust, in cooperation with the Federal Government's Chief Information Office. A fundamental component of the Austrian eGovernment-strategy, the Citizen Card was purposed to enable secure citizen access to electronic public services, and settlement of all routine procedures electronically.

1996

In *1996*, the **Final Report** of the Working Group of the Austrian Federal Government on the Information Society was published, providing valuable insights into the formulation of an Austrian approach to the Information Society.

1995

In *1995*, the Austrian's way into the Information Society initiative' (1995-1996) was launched. Under this initiative, the Federal Government set up an Information Society Working Group composed of more than 350 experts in the fields of state administration, business and science. The Group was tasked with identifying the opportunities and threats posed by the development of the Information Society in Austria and the best way to enter it.

eInclusion Strategy

Main strategic objectives and principles

i2010: Austria

In 2005, the European Commission launched a new policy framework, embracing all aspects of the information, communication and audiovisual sectors. This framework is called '[i2010 - A European information society for growth and employment](#)' and provides the broad policy guidelines for the emerging Information Society in the years up to 2010. The new 'i2010' strategy - also known as 'European Information Society 2010' - is a key element of the renewed Lisbon partnership for growth and jobs to make Europe a more competitive and dynamic knowledge-driven economy. It constitutes the successor to the previous '[eEurope 2005 - An information society for all](#)' initiative and focuses on the following three major priorities for Europe's Information Society and Media policies:

- ▶ completion of a Single European Information Space;
- ▶ strengthening Innovation and Investment in ICT Research;
- ▶ achieving an Inclusive European Information Society.

Austria sees great opportunities for a European variant of the **information society** in the European Commission's 'i2010' initiative. Within this structure, Member States have sufficient scope for negotiation in order to develop independent and concrete response strategies, according to each specific situation. Subsequently, in line with the three priorities of the 'i2010' initiative, general objectives and the most important implementation measures in the coming years in the initiative measures to be implemented in the areas of research and development, education, eInclusion, public administration (eGovernment) and health (eHealth) in Austria.

In particular with respect to eInclusion, the 'i2010' strategy focuses on achieving an Inclusive European Information Society that promotes growth and jobs in a manner that is consistent with sustainable development and that prioritises better public services and quality of life. Corresponding policy objectives at national level are described in the document '[i2010: Austria - Implementation of the i2010 initiative in Austria](#)':

- ▶ **ICT in Education and Further Education:** The objective is to equip all educational and further educational with broadband Internet connections, to set up portals with high-quality on demand content and to supply all Austrian schools with those portals.
- ▶ **Media Literacy:** The objective is to increase the future employability and job opportunities of children and youth through well-founded media literacy and e-literacy.
- ▶ **ICT and Women:** The objective is to develop innovative teaching and learning models for women with limited opportunities.
- ▶ **Adult Education:** The objective is to further optimise the whole Information system for adult education.
- ▶ **Ageing Population:** The objective is to push forward measures already under way for the elimination of inhibitions of older people in accessing ICT and to develop other associated information offers for seniors based on 'new media'.
- ▶ **eGovernment:** The objective is to widely use and combine basic eGovernment components developed in Austria in order to make the benefits even clearer to citizens, companies and the public administration and to seek and use synergies in the business sector. Furthermore, a virtual eGovernment resource network is to be established facilitating international information exchange and the expansion of interoperable solutions and as a result to significantly support access to interface specifications of the open Austrian eGovernment components.

- ▶ **Taking down Barriers:** The objective is to have all public service Websites available in versions accessible for the disabled.
- ▶ **Long-term Archiving:** The objective is to develop methods and solutions to integrate electronic documents in an archive system that enables secure access to and usability of authentic electronic original archived documents after several decades.
- ▶ **Identity Management:** The objective is to set up a European-wide approach to Identity Management, which can be used by business as well as public services.
- ▶ **Interoperable Communications:** The objective is to complete and push current developments further Architecture based on open standards and to secure compatibility with new technologies.
- ▶ **IT Security:** The objective is make communication between the public administration, citizens and companies throughout the EU as secure and trustworthy as possible and necessary while incorporating established basic elements and modules and as defined by the highest possible data protection standards.
- ▶ **eHealth:** The objective is to improve the services of the health system regarding availability and quality for public benefit. New ICT services shall shape the health system as a whole in a more efficient way.
- ▶ **Broadband coverage:** The objective is 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.

Austrian Principles regarding eInclusion

On the occasion of the 'ISPA-Internet Summit Austria 2008', the official Austrian Preparatory Conference for the e-Inclusion Ministerial Conference 2008 held under the motto 'Grabbing opportunities! - Internet for an integrative information society', the following **eInclusion principles** were formulated and presented to the public:

- I. **Availability:** Both in the cities and in rural areas, all citizens should have a reasonably priced broadband Internet connection at their disposal. Technical and social barriers must be prevented.
- II. **Openness and right to information:** The Internet should be open to all strata of and groups within the population. No one should be excluded from or hampered in accessing it because of his/her social, cultural, ethnic or geographic background or origin. Freedom of expression includes the freedom of speech and the freedom to receive and communicate messages or ideas, without interference from the public authorities and without regard to frontiers.
- III. **Usability:** Software and Internet content must be designed in such a way as to be neatly arranged, clear and easily comprehensible. This also includes compliance with the minimum standards of accessibility. It should be ensured that suitable training opportunities for the handling of the medium "Internet" (media skills) are made available to all age and social groups within the population.
- IV. **User protection and security:** User protection must be increased by augmenting legal certainty on the Inter-net. Safe communication and data transfer must be guaranteed by way of fixed standards.
- V. **Data protection:** As a matter of principle, every individual is entitled to dispose of his/her personal data at will. The conflict between the fundamental right to data protection and the necessary interference by the government, as, for instance, for the purposes of the prosecution of criminals, must be dealt with on the basis of the principle of proportionality.
- VI. **Inclusive eGovernment:** All eGovernment facilities must be adapted carefully to the needs and capacities of the customers. Services that are of particular importance to customers should be prioritised.

VII. Participation and co-determination (e-participation): The Internet should be more widely used as an interactive communication tool to include citizens in the democratic opinion-forming, planning and decision-making processes.

eInclusion Legal Framework

Main legal texts impacting on the development of eInclusion

eAccessibility Legislation

eGovernment Act (*E-Government-Gesetz*, E-GovG)

The 'eGovernment Act' became effective on 1 March 2004. It serves as the legal basis for the instruments used to provide a system of eGovernment and for closer cooperation between all authorities providing eGovernment services. The new mechanisms, such as the electronic signature, sector-specific personal identifiers or electronic service of documents, may also be used by the private sector. The most important principles are: freedom of choice between means of communication for submissions to the Public Administration; security for the purpose of improving legal protection by creating appropriate technical means such as the Citizen Card; **unhindered access** to information and services provided by the Public Administration for people with special needs by the end of 2007 by way of compliance with international standards governing web accessibility. The 'eGovernment Act' has been **lastly amended** at the end of 2007, and it is complemented by the 'Administrative Signature Regulation' (16 April 2004), the 'Sector Classification Regulation' (16 July 2004), the 'Source PIN Register Regulation' (3 March 2005) and the 'Supplementary Register Regulation' (2 August 2005), each of which defines in more detail some provisions of the 'eGovernment Act' and facilitates its implementation.

The 'eGovernment' Act requires ensuring **barrier free access** to public websites for all. In particular, web services of public administrations have to be designed and structured in compliance with international standards, including facilitating unhindered access for disabled persons. The law covers all public bodies at state, regional and municipal level. According to the act, all sites providing information and transaction services should comply with international accessibility standards (WAI level A). Development of software applications for eGovernment and digital signatures must also comply with accessibility criteria. Since January 1, 2008 the design of such online services has to be conforming to international standards of accessibility.

Disability Equality Legislation

Federal Constitutional Law (*Bundes-Verfassungsgesetz*, B-VG)

Article 7 of the Austrian Federal Constitutional Law establishes the principle of equality before the law and also contains a specific ban on discrimination of disabled persons: 'No one shall be discriminated against because of his/her disability. The Republic (federal regional and local authorities) commits itself to ensuring the **equal treatment** of disabled and non-disabled persons in all spheres of daily life.'

Federal Act on the Equal Treatment of Disabled Persons (*Bundesbehindertengleichstellungsgesetz*, BGStG)

The 'Federal Act on the Equal Treatment of Disabled Persons' came into force on 1 January 2006. Among other things, this act contains a **ban on discrimination**, establishes criteria for an evaluation of the reasonableness of demands and regulates the legal consequences of discrimination against disabled persons.

Disability Employment Act (*Behinderteneinstellungsgesetz*, BEinstG)

The 'Disability Employment Act' concerns working life (to ban discrimination).

eCommunications Legislation

Telecommunications Act (*Telekommunikationsgesetz 2003*; TKG 2003)

The 'Telecommunications Act' became effective on 20 August 2003. Hereby, the EU's regulatory framework on electronic communications was transposed into national law. The 'Telecommunications Act' encompasses all five relevant directives and will be amended in the next future by implementing the 'Data Retention' Directive.

The 'Telecommunications Act' introduces minimum quality standards that the provider must respect (benchmark values), defined by ordinance by the Federal Minister of Science and Transport. However, the standards refer only to construction and do not include a broader definition of barrier free access to telecom services and equipment.

eSignatures/eIdentity Legislation

Electronic Signature Act (*Signaturgesetz*; SigG)

The 'Electronic Signature Act' was passed by Parliament on 14 June 1999 and came into force on 1 January 2000, making Austria the first EU Member State to implement Directive [1999/93/EC](#) on a Community framework for electronic signatures. The Act legally recognizes **electronic signatures** satisfying certain security requirements and provides some evidential value to less secure electronic signatures. Furthermore, the law specifies requirements to enterprises issuing qualified certificates and defines the conditions for the acceptance of certificates of foreign origin. The act has been lastly [amended](#) at the end of 2007, within the frame of a revision of the eGovernment legal framework. It is complemented by the '[Austrian Signature Ordinance](#)' which has been new enacted on 7 January 2008. The conditions for the use of electronic signatures in the public sector, as well as for the use of Citizen Cards and sector-specific personal identifiers are regulated by the '[eGovernment Act](#)', which has been lastly amended on 1 January 2008.

eInclusion Actors

Main roles and responsibilities

National eInclusion

Policy/Strategy

The Federal Chancellery (*Bundeskanzleramt*)

The Federal Chancellery holds the political responsibility for the coordination of eInclusion policy objectives at federal level.

Coordination

The Federal Chancellery (*Bundeskanzleramt*)

The Federal Chancellery is responsible for the coordination of the classic cross section subject 'Information Society'. Within the Federal Chancellery, the Constitutional Service (*Verfassungsdienst*), **Department V/4** - Media Affairs and Coordination of the Information Society (*Medienangelegenheiten, Koordinierung der Informationsgesellschaft*) takes into account the goals set on the international (EU initiatives) and/or supranational level. The main focus of these coordination activities is on clearing, on determining the answers to the questions of WHO, WHAT, WHY and HOW. In doing so, it is of paramount importance to provide transparency for all interested parties and to exploit synergies. In this context, 'clearing' is understood as a synonym for concentration and intercommunication for the purpose of achieving the maximum possible optimization of information for the entire issue.

Advisory Board for Information Society (*Beirat für Informationsgesellschaft*)

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. The Advisory Board for Information Society is managed by the Department V/4.

Platform 'Digital Austria' (*Plattform Digitales Österreich*)

Digital Austria is the strategic eGovernment body and a major actor in matters of ICT in public sector. The platform ensures active participation of all levels of Government. It is composed of representatives of the Federal Government, regions, cities, municipalities, private and public sector bodies. The main tasks of the Platform are strategic decision-making, priority setting regarding the implementation of common eGovernment projects, their coordination and monitoring and the communication of these activities. The Platform is headed by the Chief Information Officer and supported by the ICT Strategy Unit based in the Federal Chancellery and a public relation officer. The Platform provides the operational umbrella for various task forces already active under the former ICT Board and eCooperation Board and specific thematic working groups. The participation to all these groups is open to representatives of all levels of government. The workload is shared between its members. The Platform Digital Austria strengthens the generated culture of cooperation and coordination between all stakeholders and guarantees a sustainable development of eGovernment in Austria through large-scale implementation of interoperable and secure solutions.

Centre of Excellence for the Internet Society (*Kompetenzzentrum Internetgesellschaft*)

The Federal Government's decision for the establishment of the Centre of Excellence for the Internet Society was [presented](#) in February 2010. The Centre will prioritise measures and activities of the Austrian ICT Policy on the basis of the [results](#) of the Austrian Internet Initiative.

The Centre of Excellence will have a Board of Directors composed of representatives of the Federal Chancellery of Austria (BKA) and three further Ministries ([Federal Ministry for Transport, Innovation and Technology](#) (*Bundesministerium für Verkehr, Innovation und Technologie*, BMVIT), [Federal Ministry of Finance](#) (*Bundesministerium für Finanzen*, BMF) and the [Federal Ministry of Economy, Family and Youth](#) (*Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft, Familie und Jugend*, BMWFJ)). The Austrian Internet Initiative will also be represented in the Board of Directors and will have an advisory function.

Every six months, a list of priorities will be adopted by the Council of Ministers, which will define responsibilities, a clear timetable and budgeting planning for the envisaged projects. Depending on the agenda, further representatives of relevant competent departments, as well as experts and stakeholders will be invited.

The overall objectives to be achieved are derived from the current government programme, which provides that Austria is able to position itself among the top three EU Member States with respect to ICT. This is to be achieved in particular through an accelerated development of relevant infrastructure.

Implementation

Federal Ministry of Transport, Innovation and Technology (*Bundesministerium für Verkehr, Innovation und Technologie, BMVIT*)

The Federal Ministry of Transport, Innovation and Technology is responsible for the implementation of the broadband strategy in Austria. In addition, the ministry also is accountable for the national implementation of the 'Ambient Assisted Living Joint Programme' (AAL) as well as for other relevant R&D measures and initiatives with regard to eInclusion.

Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection (*Bundesministerium für Arbeit, Soziales und Konsumentenschutz, BMAK*)

The Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection is responsible for elaborating and implementing eInclusion measures in Austria.

Individual Federal Ministries

Domestic initiatives and measures within the scope of the Information Society are implemented by the respective Federal Ministries within the scope of their responsibility.

eInclusion Who's Who

Main eInclusion decision-makers and executives

Ministers responsible for eInclusion



Josef Ostermayer
State Secretary for Media and Coordination at the Federal Chancellery

Contact details:
Federal Chancellery
Ballhausplatz 2
1014 Vienna
Austria
Tel.: +43 1 531 15 / 0
E-mail: josef.ostermayer@bka.gv.at
Source: <http://www.austria.gv.at/>



Rudolf Hundstorfer
Federal Minister for Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection

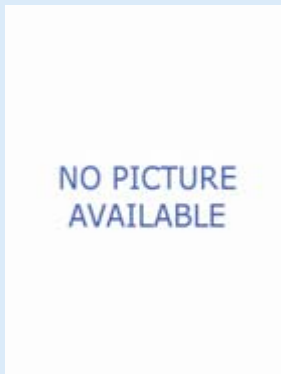
Contact details:
Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection
Stubenring 1
1010 Vienna
Austria
Tel: +43 1 711 00 / 0
E-Mail: post@bmask.gv.at
Source: <http://www.bmask.gv.at/>



Doris Bures
Federal Minister for Transport, Innovation and Technology

Contact details:
Federal Ministry of Transport, Innovation and Technology
Radetzky str. 2
1030 Vienna
Austria
Tel: +43 1 711 62 65 0
Contact: <http://www.bmvit.gv.at/en/service/contact/index.jsp>
Source: <http://www.bmvit.gv.at/>

eInclusion executives



Andreas Ulrich
Federal Chancellery
Head of Sub-Department (Coordination Information Society)
Austrian Representative in the i2010 eInclusion Subgroup

Contact Details:

Federal Chancellery - V/4/b
Ballhausplatz 2
1010 Wien
Austria
Tel: +43 1 53115 /2540
Email: andreas.ulrich@bka.gv.at
Source: <http://www.bka.gv.at/>

eInclusion Areas

Riga Declaration Priorities

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'.

Relevant surveys of 2010 showed that elderly people were interested in the Internet with about 55 % of the people over 60 using it (see: 'GfK Online Monitor 2010' survey). However, there is still a significant gap between older and younger generations in that respect, which should be bridged by putting in place appropriate initiatives.

Actions to support ICT& Ageing

Funding activities

The Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection (*Bundesministerium für Arbeit, Soziales und Konsumentenschutz*, BMASK) supports the development of **educational programmes** and the performance of training courses for elderly people to introduce them to computer skills and internet, especially at local level. The Major Austrian organisations representing the ageing population can receive funds to be spent on information measures in line with directives for general senior support. This includes information for seniors by expanding and operating Websites of seniors' organisations as well as PC and Internet training for elderly people.

'Seniorkom.at' initiative

The umbrella organisation of Austrian organisations for older people, the [Austrian Senior Citizens Council](#) (*Österreichischer Seniorenrat*), 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 familiarised with the computer and the Internet by means of various schooling programmes (trainings, Internet-Platform '[Seniorkom.at](#)').

'Seniorweb.at'

The Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection (BMASK) supports the '[Seniorweb.at](#)' website, an internet platform for the elderly, providing information about relevant projects and featuring an interactive event calendar.

Citizen Offices for Young and Older People

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. Within this framework, the 'Citizen Offices for Young and Older People' (*Bürgerbüros für JUNG und ALT*) offer **Internet training courses** for the elderly, to help them overcome their inhibitions in this field. The courses are held by IT professionals.

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

Austria's '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 Radio and Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (*Rundfunk und Telekom Regulierungs-GmbH, RTR-GmbH*) in close cooperation with the Federal Ministry of Transport, Innovation and Technology (*Bundesministerium für Verkehr, Innovation und Technologie, BMVIT*).
- ▶ 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.

eAccessibility

Status of eAccessibility

Main objective set in '**i2010: Austria**' in the field of **eAccessibility** is to have all public service websites available in barrier-free versions by 1 January 2008.

- ▶ Subsidies for electronic equipment for people with disabilities
- ▶ Information platforms (e.g. Hilfsmittelinfo.gv.at).

Actions towards eAccessibility

- ▶ The '*Servicezentrum ÖGS.barrierefrei*' (barrier-free in Sign Language) - an initiative by the Austrian National Association of the Deaf (*Österreichischer Gehörlosenbund, ÖGLB*) - 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.
- ▶ 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 eLiteracy);
- ▶ 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 to bring 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 aimed at increasing 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' were 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 by:

- ▶ equipping every school with a broadband Internet connection (already partly fulfilled);
- ▶ providing high quality online learning materials 'on demand' and free of barriers;
- ▶ providing all teachers with sufficient skills to carry out ICT assisted lessons and be ICT literate;
- ▶ setting up portals for the use of content and supply all Austrian schools with those portals;
- ▶ increasing 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;
- ▶ developing innovative teaching and learning models for women with limited opportunities;
- ▶ further optimising the whole Information system for adult education.

eInclusion and Cultural Diversity

Actions towards eInclusion 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 (*Bundeskanzleramt*).

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 eGovernment 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 Web Accessibility Initiative (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 '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 by 1 January 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 Centre: 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.

The Future of eInclusion

Research in Practice & Future Challenges

Research in Practice

National Projects

The Federal Ministry of Transport, Innovation and Technology has launched in cooperation with the [Austrian Research Promotion Agency](#) two programmes concerning eInclusion:

[Austrian electronic network \(AT:net\)](#)

The Austrian electronic network (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, eLearning, eInclusion, Trust and Safety, eGovernment and eHealth.

[New technologies for senior citizens \(Neue Technologien für Seniorinnen und Senioren, *benefit*\) and the Ambient Assisted Living \(AAL\) Joint Programme.](#)

The Ambient Assisted Living Joint Programme (AAL) is a European ICT-Programme for the period 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.

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

For the successful creation of new products and services, it is essential for the industry to build 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 *benefit* programme is aimed at stimulating research and development of innovative products (notably in the ICT sector) as well as technology based services, thus contributing to an increased quality of life of the end-users.

More precisely, 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 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;

In addition to the aforementioned programmes put in place, the Federal Ministry of Social Affairs and Consumer Protection commissioned a survey on suitable products and services for senior citizens.

Organisations to pursue research activities in practice

- ▶ **Institute of Technology Assessment**, (*Institut für Technikfolgen-Abschätzung; ITA*) of the Austrian Academy of Sciences (*Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften*), Strohgasse 45/5, 1030 Wien.
- ▶ **Institute of Integrated Studying** (*Institut 'integriert studieren'*) of the Vienna University of Technology (*Technische Universität (TU) Wien*), Favoritenstraße 11/029, A-1040 Wien: Supporting Independently Living Citizens (SILC – completed Dec.2003).
- ▶ **Institute of Integrated Studying** (*Institut 'integriert studieren'*) of the Johannes Kepler University Linz (*Johannes Kepler Universität (JKU) Linz*), Altenbergerstraße 69, 4040 Linz.
- ▶ **Centre of Integrated Studying** (*Zentrum 'integriert studieren'*) of the Karl-Franzens-University Graz (*Karl-Franzens-Universität Graz*), Universitätsplatz 3, 8010 Graz.
- ▶ **Centre for Sign Language and Communication of the Hearing Impaired** of the University of Klagenfurt (*Alpen-Adria-Universität Klagenfurt*), Universitätsstraße 65-67, 9020 Klagenfurt.

European Commission - eInclusion Practice

eInclusion practice (epractice.eu) is an information and exchange service for European professionals.

The eInclusion factsheets are one of the epractice.eu services. The factsheets present an overview of the eInclusion status and progress in the European countries.

The eInclusion factsheets are produced and updated once a year.

eInclusion practice is an initiative of the Directorate General for the Information Society and Media.

Contributor: Mr. Andreas Ulrich, Head of Sub-Department (Coordination Information Society) in the Federal Chancellery, Austrian Representative in the i2010 eInclusion Subgroup.

Production/Publishing: eInclusion Practice Editorial Team, EUROPEAN DYNAMICS S.A.

