

Contribution to the Focus chapter of the Fundamental Rights Report 2022: Social rights and equality in light of the recovery from the COVID- 19 pandemic.

Austria

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**Contractor: European Training and Research Centre for
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Authors: Wanda Tiefenbacher, Markus Möstl (reviewer)

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1 Measures implemented to foster social rights and equal treatment in the recovery from the pandemic

<p>Name of the measure in English</p>	<p>Making primary care more attractive: National roll-out of “early aid” for socially disadvantaged pregnant women, their young children and families</p>
<p>Name of the measure in the national language(s)</p>	<p>Attraktivierung der Primärversorgung: Nationaler Roll-Out der „Frühen Hilfen“ für sozialbenachteiligte Schwangere, ihre Kleinkinder und Familien</p>
<p>Reference document for the measure</p> <p><i>Include an url, where available</i></p>	<p>Austria, Federal Ministry of Finance, Austrian Recovery and Resilience Plan 2020-2026 (Österreichischer Aufbau- und Resilienzplan 2020-2026), April 2021, Vienna.</p> <p>and</p> <p>Austria, Federal Ministry of Finance, Annex to the Austrian Recovery and Resilience Plan 2020-2026 (Anhang zum Österreichischen Aufbau- und Resilienzplan 2020-2026), 30 April 2021, Vienna.</p>
<p>Social rights covered by the measure</p> <p><i>Delete as appropriate</i></p> <p><i>Multiple answers possible, but preference should be given to measures that apply to one discrete right</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the rights of the child (Article 24)
<p>Population group(s) covered by the measure</p> <p><i>Delete as appropriate</i></p> <p><i>Multiple answers possible, but preference should be given to</i></p>	<p>Always highlight if and how the measure takes into account intersectionalities between different population groups. Add a short description of how this is the case here.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children and youth; - Individuals from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds (e.g., recipients of minimum income benefits, marginalised Roma communities and Travellers): families

<p>measures that apply to discrete population groups</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Women in situations of vulnerability (e.g., Roma women, migrant women, older women, women with disabilities): disadvantaged women with children <p>Explanation: The measure explicitly targets women, their children and families in vulnerable situations (especially social and/or socio-economic vulnerabilities) during the period of pregnancy up to the child's third year of age.</p>
<p>Summary description of how the measure applies to the population group(s)</p>	<p>The measure serves to provide "early aid" ("<i>Frühe Hilfe</i>") to disadvantaged women, their children and families during the period of pregnancy up to the child's third year of age. The goal is to provide needs-based assistance on an individual basis to promote early childhood development and to further health and social equity. An analysis of four case studies on the effects of "early aid" in Austria conducted in the context of the Recovery and Resilience Strategy shows an increase in families' available resources (e.g. through increased social networks, self-esteem, family climate, parenting skills or health literacy), as well as a reduction of stressors (e.g. stress, fear of the future, financial hardship, psychosocial stress, social isolation) of (expectant) parents. "Early aid" also supports the (re)employment of mothers in particular by providing assistance with the search for suitable childcare. These groundwork conditions help realize the rights of the child.</p>
<p>Summary description of how the measure will impact (positively or negatively) social rights and equal treatment in the recovery</p>	<p>The measure will have a positive impact on recovery in Austria. The measure has previously been discussed, however during the pandemic, the need of the target group in question has increased. The pre-evaluation showed that an investment in "early aid" measures has a very high return on investment and leads to long-term cost savings due to the preventive effect of the measure (i.e. strengthening resources and reducing stress factors – thereby fostering and ensuring children's well-being and development particularly in disadvantaged families who are likely to experience strains related to health and financial aspects),</p> <p>The Austrian Strategy identifies six dimensions of success: this measure is anticipated to have positive effects on gender equality, economic/institutional/social resilience, the realization of the European Pillar of Social Rights, and fostering social and territorial cohesion and convergence.</p>

Summary description of the extent to which the measure foresees the provision of enabling social services	<p>Public/private cooperation: The federal provinces (<i>Bundesländer</i>) and districts (<i>“Bezirke”</i> – Austrian sub-regional administrative unit) are tasked with identifying and commissioning “early aid” to provide the services. Political representatives in the provinces, together with representatives from social insurance (<i>“Sozialversicherung”</i>), publish a call for applications. The commissioned networks work in close cooperation with the National Early Aid Centre (<i>“Nationales Zentrum Frühe Hilfen”</i>) to ensure that the quality standards are the same across all districts. The financing for the measure is negotiated by the Federal State, the provinces and the social insurance carrier.</p>
Entity or organisation responsible to implement the measure	<p>“Early Aid networks” (<i>“Frühe Hilfe Netzwerke”</i>) commissioned by the federal provinces in cooperation with the districts.</p>
Duration of the measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identification and entrustment of suitable implementing agencies in the districts (Q4, 2022); - Evaluation in Q3, 2024; - Regional services meeting the respective demands are in place in all Austrian districts (Q3, 2024).
Budget allocated to implement the measure	<p>15 million Euros</p>
Summary description of how any foreseen impact assessment of the measure will be carried out	<p>No information on concrete impact assessment of this measure is available in the Austrian Strategy Document.</p> <p>However, the above-mentioned timeline specified for the measure corresponds to the indicators set by the European Commission for issuing the non-repayable financial support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - identification and entrustment of implementation bodies by Q4, 2022 - at least 75% of envisaged national rollout completed, all districts covered by Q3, 2023 - full operationalisation and national rollout by Q3, 2024

Table 1.b

Name of the measure in English	Reform to further develop care provision: Investment for the implementation of Community Nursing
Name of the measure in the national language(s)	Reform zur Weiterentwicklung der Pflegevorsorge: Investition in die Umsetzung von Community Nursing
Reference document for the measure Include an url, where available	Austria, Federal Ministry of Finance, Austrian Recovery and Resilience Plan 2020-2026 (Österreichischer Aufbau- und Resilienzplan 2020-2026), April 2021, Vienna. and Austria, Federal Ministry of Finance, Annex to the Austrian Recovery and Resilience Plan 2020-2026 (Anhang zum Österreichischen Aufbau- und Resilienzplan 2020-2026), 30 April 2021, Vienna.
Social rights covered by the measure Delete as appropriate Multiple answers possible, but preference should be given to measures that apply to one discrete right	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - right of access to preventive health care and to benefit from medical treatment (Article 35)
Population group(s) covered by the measure Delete as appropriate Multiple answers possible, but preference should be given to measures that apply to discrete population groups	<p>Always highlight if and how the measure takes into account intersectionalities between different population groups. Add a short description of how this is the case here.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Older people; - People in need of care (homecare or in residential settings); - Persons with disabilities; <p>Explanation: The measure targets all people with high likelihood of requiring increased healthcare, including expected or existing long-term care due to old age or disability. The measure targets elderly people living at home with expected or existing need for information, advice, care and/or support in care and health matters, as well as carers/caregiving relatives</p>

	and people over 75 years of age before the onset of possible need for care (preventive home visits)
Summary description of how the measure applies to the population group(s)	Community Nurses (CN) shall be installed close to communities with high requirements for healthcare and act as contact persons for the coordination of therapies and social services as well as play a role in the field of prevention. The goal is to meet the unmet needs of the population, improve over-all well-being, strengthen health literacy (i.e. the ability to make informed health-decisions based on the provision of information and access to services), and thus ensure that elderly persons can stay in their own homes for as long as possible by strengthening the self-help of those affected and their relatives and friends. The measure ensures needs-oriented, low-threshold and accessible health services close to home, helps relieve carers/caregiving relatives, and bridges the gap in information, support and counselling, in particular of vulnerable groups.
Summary description of how the measure will impact (positively or negatively) social rights and equal treatment in the recovery	<p>The implementation of Community Nursing improves the sustainability and resilience of the system of care provision in Austria. The measure helps close the gap between the health and social sectors, which operate differently across the nine federal provinces (<i>Bundesländer</i>). It works towards the impeding staff shortage in care professions (prognoses show lack of 76.000 healthcare workers by 2030).</p> <p>The Austrian Strategy identifies six dimensions of success: this measure is anticipated to have positive effects on gender equality, growth and the creation of workplaces, the creation of new workplaces, economic/institutional/social resilience, as well as the realization of the European Pillar of Social Rights.</p>
Summary description of the extent to which the measure foresees the provision of enabling social services	Public/private cooperation: Local and regional authorities responsible for healthcare operate the CN pilot scheme in cooperation with healthcare professionals, who are commissioned for the duration of the measure. In addition, the national research and planning institute in health care and competence centre for health promotion ("Gesundheit Österreich GmbH", GÖG), is commissioned by the Federal Ministry of Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection (<i>Bundesministerium für Soziales, Gesundheit, Pflege und Konsumentenschutz</i>) to collect (unspecified) data on the regional level (i.e. the level of the provinces) and to evaluate it to make it usable for evidence-based expansions and developments of the measure.

Entity or organisation responsible to implement the measure	Community nurses are qualified health care and nursing professionals with at least two years of professional experience. They can be recruited by local authorities (e.g. cities or municipalities) or by providers of nursing and care services, including primary care units.
Duration of the measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pilot with small cohort in Q3 2021 - call for tenders for regional pilot projects in Q3 2021 (total: 150 Community Nurses to be recruited) - implementation until mid-2024 - Project ends after evaluation in December 2024
Budget allocated to implement the measure	54,2 million Euros
Summary description of how any foreseen impact assessment of the measure will be carried out	<p>The "Gesundheit Österreich GmbH" provides ongoing support and monitoring throughout the implementation of the measure. In addition, the project structure is cyclical, foreseeing annual interim evaluations and data-based improvements based on the data collected.</p> <p>An important interim evaluation takes place in Q4 2022 to adjust the pilot projects. This ensures that changes can be made in good time, and the financial resources are used efficiently and in a targeted manner.</p> <p>The above-mentioned timeline specified for the measure corresponds to the indicators set by the European Commission for issuing the non-repayable financial support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - beginning of pilot project "Community Nurses" in Q3, 2021 with 50 CN - interim evaluation report and recommendations by Q4, 2022 - at least 150 CN active at national level by Q4, 2024

Table 1.c

Name of the measure in English	Resilience through reforms: Labour market: One-stop store for people capable of working and expansion of activating assistance
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Name of the measure in the national language(s)	Resilienz durch Reformen: Arbeitsmarkt: One-Stop-Shop für Erwerbsfähige und Ausbau der aktivierenden Hilfe
Reference document for the measure <i>Include an url, where available</i>	Austria, Federal Ministry of Finance, Austrian Recovery and Resilience Plan 2020-2026 (Österreichischer Aufbau- und Resilienzplan 2020-2026), April 2021, Vienna. and Austria, Federal Ministry of Finance, Annex to the Austrian Recovery and Resilience Plan 2020-2026 (Anhang zum Österreichischen Aufbau- und Resilienzplan 2020-2026), 30 April 2021, Vienna.
Social rights covered by the measure <i>Delete as appropriate</i> <i>Multiple answers possible, but preference should be given to measures that apply to one discrete right</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - right to social security and social assistance (Article 34)
Population group(s) covered by the measure <i>Delete as appropriate</i> <i>Multiple answers possible, but preference should be given to measures that apply to discrete population groups</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individuals from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds (e.g., recipients of minimum income benefits, marginalised Roma communities and Travellers): low-skilled persons, persons in long-term unemployment, vulnerable groups - People with a migrant background (e.g., asylum seekers, refugees, non-EU born people, migrants born in other EU countries): persons with migrant background - Persons with disabilities; - Other: people with health limitations, people with prolonged absence from the labour market <p>Explanation: the measure targets long term unemployed people with difficulties in re-integrating into the labour market, who are recipients of Social Aid ("Sozialhilfe"). The Public Employment Service (Arbeitsmarktservice) defines long-term unemployed people as those</p>

	having been out of work for over 365 days ¹ .This encompasses: people over 50, people with health limitations, people with disabilities, people with little formal education or formal education that is not applicable to the job, and people with prolonged absence from the labour market (due to caregiving or caretaking obligations, illness or unemployment), persons with migration background and/or vulnerable persons.
Summary description of how the measure applies to the population group(s)	The goal of the One-Stop-Shop is to support 40.000 long-term unemployed persons currently receiving Social Aid (<i>„Sozialhilfe“</i>) and to reintegrate them into the labour market by improving access to education and training. The measure seeks to assist persons with “with barriers to placement and inclusion” (<i>„Vermittlungs- und Inklusionshindernissen“</i>) by providing support in overcoming obstacles to placement (whether they be due to health, family, economic or other reasons such as lack of knowledge). It also facilitates access to the services provided by various institutions (health insurance, rehabilitation, pension insurance, federal social security office, various provincial institutions such as family counselling centres or care institutions, education directorates, social welfare agencies, etc.) to ensure and support access in a coordinated manner. This helps reintegrate the target group into the labour market.
Summary description of how the measure will impact (positively or negatively) social rights and equal treatment in the recovery	<p>The One-Stop-Shop positively impacts recovery in that it seeks to mitigate the negative effects of the pandemic on the labour market (in relation people in long-term unemployment) and to strengthen the economy and rebuilding efforts. The measure addresses that labour market integration is a complex subject but states that the pandemic has exacerbated existing problems among the target group, also leading to a significant increase of people in long-term unemployment.</p> <p>The Austrian Strategy identifies six dimensions of success: this measure is anticipated to have positive effects on all of them: gender equality, growth and the creation of new workplaces, economic/institutional/social cohesion, the realization of the European Pillar of Social Rights, mitigating the effects of the pandemic, and fostering social and territorial cohesion and convergence.</p>

¹ Austria, Public Employment Service Austria (2021), [website on terminology](#).

Summary description of the extent to which the measure foresees the provision of enabling social services	The measure as a whole can be conceived as a new social service pertaining to the labour market, made available to long-time unemployed persons facing multiple obstacles to education and training.
Entity or organisation responsible to implement the measure	It is generally stated that “many administrative units” (“ <i>viele Verwaltungsstellen</i> ”) must cooperate to realize this measure for the persons affected. It is not specified which units, although the document mentions negotiations with social partners and federal provinces (<i>Bundesländer</i>) in the timeline.
Duration of the measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Concept development, negotiations with social partners and federal provinces (Q3, 2021) - One-Stop-Shop shall be operational by Q1 2022
Budget allocated to implement the measure	No information is available on the chapter “Resilience through reforms” in which the One-Stop-Shop is included, as all measures pertain to legal reforms. This means that the One-Stop-Shop itself is part of a bigger package of key legal reforms that are anticipated to make Austria resilient in the years to come. No concrete implementation steps are provided.
Summary description of how any foreseen impact assessment of the measure will be carried out	<p>No information on concrete impact assessment of this measure is available in the Austrian Strategy Document. However, the above-mentioned timeline specified for the measure corresponds to the indicators set by the European Commission for issuing the non-repayable financial support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - concept development on operationalisation and transmission to the European Commission by Q3, 2021 - operational One-Stop-Shop by Q1, 2022 already offering services to the unemployed

2 Tools or mechanisms to monitor the effectiveness of national schemes to foster social rights and equal treatment in the recovery from the pandemic

Name of the monitoring tool or mechanism in English	Internal evaluation pursuant to § 18 of the Federal Budget Act 2013 (<i>BHG 2013</i>)
Name of the monitoring tool or mechanism in the national language(s)	Interne Evaluierung gemäß § 18 BHG 2013 (<i>Bundeshaushaltsgesetz 2013</i>)
Reference document for the monitoring tool or mechanism <i>Include an url, where available</i>	Austria, Federal Ministry of Finance, Austrian Recovery and Resilience Plan 2020-2026 (Österreichischer Aufbau- und Resilienzplan 2020-2026), April 2021, Vienna. and European Commission, Proposal for a Council Implementing Decision on the approval of the recovery and resilience plan for Austria , 2021/0162(NLE), 21 June 2021, Brussels.

<p>Organisation(s) involved in the monitoring tool or mechanism</p> <p><i>Delete as appropriate</i></p> <p><i>Multiple answers possible</i></p>	<p>Federal Ministry of Finance (<i>Bundesministerium für Finanzen</i>).</p> <p>No national body with a human rights remit are involved in the monitoring process.</p>
<p>Summary description of how these organisation(s) are involved in the monitoring tool or mechanism</p>	<p>The Austrian Strategy merely prescribes an internal evaluation pursuant to § 18 of the Federal Budget Act 2013, which must be carried out within a reasonable period. This evaluation shall show:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. whether the intended success and the measures envisaged to achieve it continue to be in line with the objectives pursued 2. whether and to what extent the objectives are being achieved and the impact of the measures; 3. what the actual financial impact on the federal budget is. <p>§ 18 of the Federal Budget Act, pursuant to which the internal review mechanism takes place, states that each head of a budget-managing unit ("<i>haushaltsführende Stelle</i>") shall evaluate the implementation of a program or project. Details on the concrete</p>

	<p>dimensions of impact assessment, the method for evaluation and the evaluation shall be clarified in a separate regulation.²</p>
<p>Summary description of the functioning of the tool or mechanism used to monitor the effectiveness of schemes adopted to foster social rights and equal treatment in the recovery</p>	<p>For the relevant measures outlined in the Austrian strategy, separate milestones, timelines and indicators are defined. These constitute the overall monitoring and evaluation mechanism, according to the evaluation undertaken by the European Commission.</p> <p>The European Commission states “The overall implementation of the Austrian plan should be monitored by the Austrian Ministry of Finance. Appropriate arrangements have been put in place setting out how other Ministries and agencies should be in charge of the implementation, monitoring and reporting of the measures under their responsibility. The milestones and targets of the Austrian plan constitute an appropriate system for monitoring the plan’s implementation.”³</p> <p>Within the Austrian Strategy, six dimensions of crucial impact are defined for each measure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gender equality - Growth potential and creation of jobs - Economic/institutional/social resilience - Implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights - Mitigation of the economic and social effects of the crisis - Social and territorial cohesion and convergence

² Austria, Federal Budget Act 2013 ([Bundeshaushaltsgesetz 2013](#)), Federal Law Journal I No. 139/2009.

³ European Commission, [Proposal for a Council Implementing Decision on the approval of the recovery and resilience plan for Austria](#), 2021/0162(NLE), 21 June 2021, Brussels.

	<p>The document contains an elaborate table listing the impact to be expected of each measure (neutral, positive, very positive). No concrete information is given about <i>how</i> each measure will cater specifically to each dimension.</p>
<p>Summary description of the obligations, standards and benchmarks against which the effectiveness will be evaluated</p>	<p>The indicators and milestones according to which the internal evaluation by the Ministry of Finance takes place are anchored in the indicators for non-repayable financial support set by the European Commission. The indicators are translated into milestones and a specific timeline for each proposed measure.</p> <p>The European Commission evaluates the whole Austrian Strategy, including its monitoring and evaluation strategies, as being in accordance with the realization of the European Pillar of Social Rights.</p>
<p>Summary description of what the tool or mechanism foresees when non-compliance with obligations and standards is identified, with a particular emphasis on enforcement and remedial action</p>	<p>No information is available on any internal sanctioning mechanisms foreseen by the Ministry of Finance. In effect, non-compliance with the milestones and timelines set within the Austrian strategy will lead to the loss of non-repayable financial support by the European Union.</p>