



WORICA

Women inclusion and empowerment
through collage art

WORICA

National Gender Equality and Inclusion Report

Austria

Prepared by ÖJAB

February 2026

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About this report

Women inclusion and empowerment through collage art.

This national report was prepared by **ÖJAB** as part of **WORICA – Women inclusion and empowerment through collage art**, an Erasmus+ adult-education partnership (project 2025-1-SE01-KA220-ADU-000350853) bringing together Folkuniversitetet (Sweden), Brûlant·e·s (France), CEIPES ETS (Italy), Fractals – Art Education (Spain), ÖJAB (Austria) and SOFFA – Social Fashion Factory (Greece).

Six national reports – one for each partner country – map the legal and policy framework for gender equality, women’s rights and protection mechanisms, social inclusion measures, key indicators, main challenges, a national glossary, a practical “how-to” guide and useful resources. Together they form the evidence base of the **WORICA EU Gender Equality Handbook** and inform the Collage Art and Inclusion Learning Programme and the Women Empowerment Shows.

The information reflects the situation in **Austria** at the date of completion (February 2026). Laws, services and contact details change; readers are encouraged to verify current information with the authorities and organisations listed in the Useful Resources section. In an emergency, always contact the national emergency services.

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Introduction and Guidelines

Purpose of the Document

This national report is part of the **EU Gender Equality Handbook Development** within the WORICA project. Its main goal is to collect and harmonize information on national policies, legislation, and practices related to gender equality, women's rights (especially labour market rights), and social inclusion across partner countries, in this case from Austria. The compiled reports will serve as the foundation for the EU Gender Equality Handbook, which will include practical guides and "how-to" sections to empower women in addressing challenges and accessing resources.

Disclaimer

For research purpose, paid accounts of the AI Large Language Models Perplexity and Claude have been used to help create this report. All LLM research results have been carefully reviewed, adapted, rewritten and paraphrased, so the authors claim ownership over the written text and hallucinations are avoided.

1. General Information

Organisation: ÖJAB, Austria

Date of Completion: 09.02.2026

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2. National Legal and Policy Framework

Key Laws

Federal Constitutional Act (Bundes-Verfassungsgesetz, B-VG)

The original version of the Austrian constitution (1920) established equality before the law and prohibited sex-based privilege. Article 7 states: "*All citizens are equal before the law. Privileges based on birth, **gender**, status, class or creed are excluded (...)*". Throughout the years, article 7 underwent several amendments to strengthen the constitutional basis for reaching genuine equality between women and men. Article 7 contains now two more paragraphs, whereby the first one promotes the commitment of the federal entities to reach quality between women and men, and the second one is very specific refers to the gender of a title holder: "(2) *The Federal Government, the Länder (A/N: Federal States) and the municipalities are committed to the effective equality of men and women. Measures to promote the effective equality of women*

and men, in particular by eliminating existing inequalities, are permissible.”(...) “(3) Official titles may be used in a form that expresses the gender of the office holder. The same applies to titles, academic degrees and professional designations.”

Links:

- Legal source (original version 1920): <https://alex.onb.ac.at/cgi-content/alex?aid=bgb&datum=1930&page=36&size=45>
- Legal source (current version): <https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=bundesnormen&Gesetzesnummer=10000138>
- Legal source (amendment Art. 7): <https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/eli/bgbl/1930/1/A7/NOR40045877>

Equal Treatment Act (Gleichbehandlungsgesetz, GIBG) and Federal Equal Treatment Act (Bundes-Gleichbehandlungsgesetz, B-GIBG)

The Equal Treatment Act applies in any case to all employees who have a private-law employment contract, whereas the Federal Equal Treatment Act applies to all civil servants and employees of public authorities and state-affiliated companies. Both laws prohibit direct and indirect discrimination based on sex, ethnic origin, religion/belief, age, and sexual orientation. They cover respective issues regarding employment establishment, termination, pay and working conditions as well as gender-neutral job advertisements. A specific legal requirement of the Federal Equal Treatment Act is its provision on the promotion of women in areas of underrepresentation within federal bodies and Austria's public universities. In 2008, there was a substantial amendment of the Equal Treatment Act. The financial compensation for hiring discrimination increased from one to two months' salary and damages for gender-based harassment were raised from €400 to €720. The amendment also clarified that anti-discrimination protection covers probationary periods as well and it extended legal protection to colleagues who support complainants. Another noteworthy amendment was adapted in 2014 that led to more wage transparency by mandating all companies with more than 150 employees to produce biennial income reports detailing wages by gender.

Links:

- Legal source (current version) Equal Treatment Act: <https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=Bundesnormen&Gesetzesnummer=20003395>
- Legal source (current version) Federal Equal Treatment Act: <https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=Bundesnormen&Gesetzesnummer=10008858>
- Information (GER) on 2008 amendment: <https://www.derstandard.at/story/1220459739885/hintergrund-was-das-neue-gleichbehandlungsgesetz-ermoeeglicht>

Act on Equality for Women and Men on Supervisory Boards

Since 2018, this law stipulates that at least 30% of supervisory board members must be women or men, provided that (a) the company is listed on the stock exchange or has more than 1,000 employees; (b) the supervisory board consists of at least six members (capital representation); and (c) the company employs at least 20% women and 20% men.

Links:

- Information on Women in leadership positions in Austria in English: https://www.bmfwf.gv.at/en/women-and-equality/gender_equality_in_the_labour_market/women-in-leadership-positions.html and <https://www.frauenfuehren.at/rechtliches/gleichstellungsgesetz-von-frauen-und-maennern-im-aufsichtsrat.html>
- Legal source (current version): <https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/eli/bgbl/l/2017/104/20170726>

Protection Against Violence Act (Gewaltschutzgesetz)

This act created the statutory prerequisites for fast and efficient protection of victims of domestic violence. It established the "*Whoever hits must leave*" principle and authorises police to impose barring orders against perpetrators. It also created the network of Violence Protection Centres/ Intervention Centres. The law also includes internationally proven means of violence prevention like the so-called high-risk case conferences (MARAC) which were introduced in 2011, discontinued in 2017 due to political criticism, then re-introduced in 2019.

Links:

- Information on domestic violence protection in Austria in English: <https://www.bmfwf.gv.at/en/women-and-equality/violence-against-women/domestic-violence.html#:~:text=The%20%22Protection%20Against%20Violence%20Act,of%20victim%20of%20domestic%20violence.>
- GREVIO (Council of Europe experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence) report on Austria 2014: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/istanbul-convention/austria>
- Short movie on Protection Centres (in German): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tS-tkvZYwMI>
- Legal source (current version): <https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=Bundesnormen&Gesetzesnummer=20008528>

Policy Frameworks

Gender Mainstreaming Strategy 2000

Austria established gender mainstreaming efforts in 2000 through an interministerial working group, later extended by mandatory criteria across all federal ministries (2011) as well as for legislation, funding programmes and public procurement and gender budgeting requirements. This framework has strengthened institutional mechanisms and improved women's representation but is mainly limited to progress in public sector initiatives.

Links:

- Ministerial report Remarking the 25th anniversary of the Austrian government's gender mainstreaming strategy and the Interministerial Working Group on Gender Mainstreaming (IMAG GMB) in Austrian: <https://share.google/om5nwt4ZjOIhR9CrF>
- More information by the European Institute for Gender Equality: <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/countries/austria>

NAP Gender Equality in the Labour Market 2001–2003

The NAP contained 55 measures across four pillars: (1) Diversifying education and career choices, (2) Increasing labour market opportunities, (3) More women in leadership positions, (4) Reducing the gender pay gap. Even though the NAP expired years ago, many measures led to existing follow-up regulations (for instance, measure 46 on mandatory income reports to reduce gender pay gap or measure 34 regarding a fixed share for each gender on supervisory boards to increase women in leadership positions).

Link: NAP in English: <https://share.google/8HN4by6zGTL1k1cxq>

NAP on Combating Human Trafficking 2024–2027

This NAP is Austria's seventh, human-rights-based framework to fight all forms of trafficking through 103 measures on coordination, prevention, victim protection, prosecution, and monitoring. It strengthens early identification (standardised indicators), specialised victim support (including for children), labour-exploitation measures and data/evidence. The plan was approved by the Council of Ministers in March 2024, is currently being implemented. GRETA confirms that implementation has started but no comprehensive outcome evaluation is yet available.

Links:

- NAP in German: https://www.bmeia.gv.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Zentrale/Aussenpolitik/Menschenrechte/NAP_2024.pdf
- Information on NAP in English: <https://www.bmeia.gv.at/en/european-foreign-policy/human-rights/combating-trafficking-in-human-beings>
- GRETA Evaluation Report Austria 2025: <https://rm.coe.int/rapport-d-evaluation-du-greta-sur-la-mise-en-oeuvre-de-la-convention-d/1680b4b26a>

NAP to Combat Violence against Women and Girls 2025–2029

This NAP is Austria's cross-ministerial strategy to prevent and combat violence against women and girls, grounded in the Istanbul Convention, the new EU directive on violence against women, GREVIO, Austria's Court of Audit recommendations and the government programme. It bundles over eight thematic fields (1. Non-violence from childhood to higher education; 2. Non-violent work and economic independence; 3. A non-violent world – in private and public spaces;; 4. Non-violent participation – digital and media; 5. Non-violence in art, culture and sport; 6. Non-violence through prevention; 7. Non-violence through early detection in healthcare and physical self-determination; 8. Non-violence through consideration of particular vulnerability) with concrete, budget-backed measures to improve prevention, early detection, victim support and prosecution, developed through a participatory process involving 250+ experts. The NAP was presented on 26th of November 2025, a national coordination mechanism and initial monitoring structures have been set up to steer early execution.

Links:

- NAP in German: https://www.bmfwf.gv.at/frauen-und-gleichstellung/nap_gegen_gewalt_an_frauen.html
- Government newsletter update: <https://services.bundeskanzleramt.gv.at/newsletter/bka-medien-newsletter/innenpolitik/bka-medieninformation-26-11-2025.html>

Competent Authorities and Equality Bodies

Minister for Women's Affairs, Federal Ministry for Women's Affairs and Division III: Women's Affairs and Equality within the Federal Chancellery

The basis for the women's affairs minister was established in November 1979 when Johanna Dohnal became State Secretariat for General Women's Affairs within the Federal Chancellery. 11 years later, she was appointed as Austria's first Women's Minister of the newly established Ministry of Women's Affairs in 1991 and served until 1995. During that time, several initiatives to enhance women protection (e.g. criminalisation of marital rape) and more gender equality in labour related issues (e.g. introduction parental leave for fathers) were introduced. Additionally, within the Federal Chancellery, a governmental body for gender equality policy was established in 1997 as "Division Women's Affairs".

Since Dohnal, several women but also some men have served in different ministerial set-ups as Women's Minister (usually combined with other ministerial responsibilities like youth and family affairs). Since 3 March 2025, Eva-Maria Holzleitner (SPÖ) serves as Federal Minister for Women, Science and Research in the current coalition. The repeated relocation of women's affairs between ministries and the current merger of women's equality and science portfolios is debated ambivalently. Holzleitner's priorities include, inter alia, combating violence against women, pay transparency legislation and strengthening women's health policy (e.g. tax exemption for hygiene products and contraceptives).

The "Division III: Women's Affairs and Equality within the Federal Chancellery", formerly part of the Federal Chancellery, is now integrated into the Women's Ministry. Next to the Section Leader it is divided in 6 sub-division with a total staff of appr. 60 persons (Subdivisions: 1. Strategy, Fundamental Issues and Knowledge Management; 2. Women's Project Funding, Administrative Management; 3. Equal Treatment in the Private Sector and Federal Service; 4. Violence Prevention and Protection Against Violence; 5. Women's Service, Budget and Parliamentary Affairs; 6. Socio-Economic Equality, International and EU Affairs).

Link: Government brochure on equality between women and men in Austria – Milestones, successes and challenges (in German): <https://share.google/0qWO1ikpvWFEAsxwD>

Ombudsman for Equal Treatment (Gleichbehandlungsanwaltschaft)

The independent national equality body providing free and confidential advice to persons experiencing discrimination based on gender, ethnicity, religion, age, or sexual orientation in employment and beyond. It can intervene with employers, support settlement negotiations, and represent complainants before the Equal Treatment Commission.

Link and hotline: Free hotline: 0800 206 119; gleichbehandlungsanwaltschaft.gv.at

Equal Treatment Commission (Gleichbehandlungskommission)

Comprises three Senates examining discrimination cases: Senate I covers gender discrimination in employment, Senate II addresses discrimination based on ethnicity, religion, age, and sexual orientation in employment, and Senate III deals with discrimination in access to other public goods and services. The Commission issues non-binding expert opinions on whether discrimination has occurred and recommends remedial measures; it cannot award compensation directly.

Link: <https://www.bundeskanzleramt.gv.at>

Inter-ministerial Working Group for Gender Mainstreaming (IMAG GMB)

Established in 2000, this interministerial body coordinates gender mainstreaming across all federal ministries and supreme federal bodies.

Link: <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/countries/austria>

Violence Protection Centres/Intervention Centres (Gewaltschutzzentren)

There are around 35 centres in Austria (minimum one per state) providing legally mandated, publicly funded support for victims of domestic violence. Police are required to notify the respective centre automatically after issuing a barring order, and the centre proactively contacts victims within 24 hours to offer safety planning, legal advice, and psychosocial support free of charge.

Link: <https://www.gewaltschutzzentrum.at>

Austrian Integration Fund (Österreichischer Integrationsfonds, ÖIF)

A foundation of the Republic supporting the integration of refugees and migrants through German courses, values orientation, counselling, and labour market integration programmes, with integration centres in all nine provinces.

Link: <https://www.integrationsfonds.at>

Public Employment Service (Arbeitsmarktservice, AMS)

Austria's federal institution responsible for labour market services, operating a dedicated Women's Programme (Frauenprogramm) that offers career orientation, re-entry support after parental leave, and vocational training.

Link: <https://www.ams.at>

National Referral Mechanism for Human Trafficking Victims

Austria's referral mechanism identifies and supports victims of human trafficking through coordination between police, judicial authorities, and specialised service providers within the framework of the Task Force on Combating Human Trafficking. Two designated intervention

centres provide gender-specific support: **LEFÖ-IBF** offers services for female victims and **MEN VIA** for male victims.

Link: <https://www.bmeia.gv.at/en/european-foreign-policy/human-rights/combating-trafficking-in-human-beings>

3. Women's Rights and Protection Mechanisms

Austria provides a comprehensive legal framework protecting women's rights in employment and against violence. The **Equal Treatment Act (Gleichbehandlungsgesetz, GIBG)** prohibits direct and indirect discrimination based on sex, ethnicity, religion, age, and sexual orientation in the private sector, covering all aspects from hiring to dismissal. Discrimination against women on grounds of pregnancy or maternity constitutes direct gender discrimination. The **Maternity Protection Act (Mutterschutzgesetz)** guarantees an absolute work prohibition eight weeks before and after birth, during which women receive maternity allowance equivalent to their average net income. Dismissal protection extends from notification of pregnancy until four months after birth. Parents are entitled to parental leave (Karenz) until the child's second birthday. Austria's childcare benefit system includes **incentives for shared parental leave**, such as mandatory partner months and bonus payments linked to an approximately equal division of childcare between both parents, depending on the chosen childcare benefit model.

For redress mechanisms, the **Ombud for Equal Treatment (Gleichbehandlungsanwaltschaft)** serves as the independent national equality body, offering free and confidential advice, documentation of discrimination cases, and support in settlement negotiations or proceedings before the **Equal Treatment Commission (www.gleichbehandlungsanwaltschaft.gv.at)**. The Commission examines discrimination cases and issues expert opinions, though it cannot award compensation—this remains with the Labour and Social Courts. The **Chamber of Labour (Arbeiterkammer)** provides free legal representation before Labour Courts for its approximately four million members, covering all employees in Austria. In Vienna, the **waff (Vienna Employment Promotion Fund, Wiener ArbeitnehmerInnen Förderungsfonds)** offers targeted support programmes for women, including career counselling, training subsidies, and the 2025-launched "Frauenstiftung" supporting unemployed women without vocational qualifications.

Protection against violence rests on the **Protection Against Violence Act (Gewaltschutzgesetz)**, establishing the principle that perpetrators—not victims—must leave the home. Police can issue immediate barring orders, and **Violence Protection Centres (Gewaltschutzzentren)** in all nine provinces of Austria are automatically notified to proactively contact victims within 24 hours, offering safety planning, legal advice, and psychosocial support free of charge. The national **Women's Helpline Against Violence** operates 24/7, anonymously, and in multiple languages. Austria has 29 women's shelters providing safe accommodation, coordinated by the Association of Austrian Autonomous Women's Shelters.

Specialist services exist for victims of trafficking (LEFÖ-IBF) and forced marriage (Orient Express).

Despite this robust infrastructure, gaps persist: the gender pay gap remains among the highest in the EU (18.3 % in 2023 according to Statistik Austria), penalties for discriminating employers are rarely imposed, and support services for migrant women face chronic underfunding and language barriers.

4. Social Inclusion Measures

Austria's integration policy centres on language acquisition, labour market entry, and values orientation. The Federal Chancellery's Department for Integration funds projects in five key areas, including women's empowerment within migrant communities. In 2024, the Federal Chancellery funded 148 integration projects with a budget of €22.41 million (European Commission, 2024).

Policies for Vulnerable Women: The Public Employment Service (AMS) operates a dedicated Women's Programme (Frauenprogramm) offering career orientation, re-entry support after parental leave, and vocational training. The UN-award-winning "Competence Check for Women" (Kompetenzcheck für Frauen), implemented by ABZAUSTRIA and BFi Vienna between 2016 and 2020, supported refugee women in identifying professional skills, developing career goals, and accessing work placements (Bundeskanzleramt, n.d.). Another programme, ABZStartraum Wien für Frauen (funded until May 2026), continues this work with particular focus on preventing overqualification among refugee women (ABZAUSTRIA, n.d.). The Austrian Integration Fund (ÖIF) organises career platforms in partnership with major employers and provides counselling across all nine provinces.

Available Support Services: Training and education services include AMS-funded German courses, the "Level-Up Adult Education" programme for adults with low basic skills, and the waff Frauenstiftung (Women's Foundation) for unemployed women without vocational qualifications. Psychosocial support is provided by organisations such as Diakonie Refugee Services, Caritas, and the Diakonie's AMIKE phone counselling line for migrants in distressing situations.

Childcare remains a structural barrier: in 2024, only 30.2% of children under three participated in formal childcare (EU average: 39.3%), with Austria investing €4.5 billion to create 50,000 additional kindergarten places by 2030, among other measures (European Commission, 2025).

Critical Gaps: The Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights (2022) noted that reception conditions vary between provinces and called for significant budget increases for violence prevention and support services. Two-thirds of people granted asylum or subsidiary protection granted protection in 2024 had literacy needs, posing integration challenges (ÖIF, 2024). Migrant women face compounded disadvantages through limited German proficiency, unrecognised qualifications, and insufficient childcare availability, particularly outside Vienna.

5. Key Indicators and Data

Austria demonstrates a moderately strong position on gender equality within the European context. The overall labour force participation rate stood at approximately 60.6% in 2024, with women at 51.6% compared to 65.8% for men (Statistik Austria 2). The female employment rate reached around 71%, placing Austria above the EU average (EIGE, 2024). In the Gender Equality Index 2024 published by the European Institute for Gender Equality, Austria scored 71.7 out of 100 points, ranking 11th among EU member states and slightly exceeding the EU average of 70.0 points. The country performs particularly well in the domains of money, scoring 87.8 points, and health, with 91.0 points (EIGE, 2024). Women now constitute approximately 47% of Austria's workforce, and around 41% of seats in the national parliament are held by women, indicating notable progress toward political representation (EIGE, 2024).

6. Main Challenges

The gender pay gap constitutes one of Austria's most pressing challenges. At 18.3% in 2023, the unadjusted pay gap significantly exceeds the EU average of 12.0%, placing Austria among the member states with the widest wage disparities (European Commission, 2024). Even when controlling for identical qualifications and positions, an adjusted gap of 6.3% persists, indicating that discriminatory mechanisms extend beyond occupational segregation alone. Compounding this issue is the prevalence of part-time work among women, with every second working-age woman employed on a part-time basis, predominantly due to childcare and eldercare responsibilities (AMS, 2024). This pattern not only reduces lifetime earnings but also diminishes pension entitlements and career advancement opportunities.

The underrepresentation of women in positions of power represents another critical deficit. Austria scores merely 57.1 points in the power domain of the Gender Equality Index, reflecting women's marginalisation in leadership, management, and decision-making roles (EIGE, 2024). Although women comprise 47% of the workforce and hold approximately 41% of parliamentary seats, their presence in executive and board-level positions remains disproportionately low. Furthermore, the unequal distribution of unpaid care work perpetuates these inequalities, with women dedicating 18.3% of their time to unpaid domestic and care tasks compared to only 9.3% for men (Bundeskanzleramt, 2023).

From an intersectional perspective, multiple marginalised groups face compounded disadvantages. Migrant women are disproportionately concentrated in essential but poorly remunerated sectors such as cleaning, catering, and care work, and must work approximately 90 additional days annually to match the average male income. The overqualification gap between migrant women and native workers in Austria ranks among the highest in Europe. Women with disabilities experience even more severe exclusion, with only 12.1% in employment compared to 18.4% of disabled men, and 24% facing risks of poverty or social exclusion. LGBTIQ+ individuals, particularly trans persons, report unemployment rates of around 9% versus 4% in the general population, with over one-third having been denied

employment due to their gender identity and 20% experiencing workplace discrimination within the past year (FRA, 2024).

7. National Glossary

Gleichstellung = Equality: Equal rights and equal participation of all genders in all areas of society.

Gleichbehandlung = Equal treatment: Prohibition of discrimination on the basis of gender, ethnicity, religion, age, or sexual orientation.

Gleichbehandlungsgesetz (GlBG) = Equal Treatment Act: Federal law prohibiting discrimination in the private sector.

Gleichbehandlungsanwaltschaft (GAW) = Ombud for Equal Treatment: Independent state institution that provides free advice and support to victims of discrimination.

Gleichbehandlungskommission = Equal Treatment Commission: Tripartite commission that examines cases of discrimination and issues non-binding opinions

Gewaltschutzgesetz = Protection Against Violence Act: Law protecting against domestic violence, which provides for police restraining orders and the establishment of violence protection centers.

Gewaltschutzzentren = Violence Protection Centers: institutions that offer victims of domestic violence free counseling, safety planning, and psychosocial support.

Mutterschutzgesetz = Maternity Protection Act: Law protecting working mothers, which provides for an absolute ban on employment eight weeks before and after childbirth, as well as protection against dismissal.

Karenz = Parental leave: Can be taken until the child's second birthday; the job remains protected during parental leave.

Kinderbetreuungsgeld = Childcare benefit: Financial benefit for parents during parental leave, with various payment models and incentives for sharing childcare responsibilities between partners.

Gender Mainstreaming (English term used): Strategie zur systematischen Berücksichtigung der Gleichstellung von Frauen und Männern in allen politischen Konzepten und Maßnahmen.

Gender Budgeting (English term used): Constitutional obligation to analyse and consider the impact of public budgets on gender equality (since 2009 in the Federal Constitutional Law, implemented from 2013).

Einkommensunterschied = Income gap/ Gender Pay Gap: Difference in average gross hourly earnings between women and men, in Austria 18.3% in 2023 (unadjusted).

Diskriminierung = Discrimination: Unequal treatment of a person on the basis of a legally protected characteristic; can be direct or indirect.

(Sexuelle) Belästigung = (Sexual) harassment: Unwanted behaviour that violates dignity in connection with a protected characteristic.

Betretungsverbot = **Restraining/ Barring order**: Police order requiring the perpetrator to leave the home and its immediate surroundings; basis of the Protection Against Violence Act .

Verfahrenshilfe = **Legal aid**: State support for people who cannot afford the costs of legal proceedings.

Arbeiterkammer (AK) = **Chamber of Labour**: Legal representation of interests for around four million employees in Austria; offers, among other things, free legal advice and representation before labor courts.

Arbeitsmarktservice (AMS) = **Public Employment Service**: Nationwide institution for labor market services; offers job placement, career counseling, and specific programs for women.

Frauenhaus / Frauenhäuser = **Women's shelters**: Safe houses for women affected by violence and their children; 29 women's shelters throughout Austria.

8. Draft Practical Guide ('How-To'): The 5-steps-approach

1. Step 1: Recognise Discrimination

You may experience discrimination at work based on:

- Gender
- **Ethnic origin/racism**
- **Religion or belief**
- Age
- **Sexual orientation (LGBTQIA+)**
- **Parental status**
- **Care or nursing responsibilities**

Discrimination can occur through harassment, unequal treatment in hiring, promotion, pay, working conditions, or dismissal.

1. Step 2: Document Everything

Collect evidence immediately:

- **Write down dates, times, and locations of incidents**
- **Record what was said or done (be specific)**
- If discrimination is ongoing (e.g. repeated harassment), keep a detailed diary

- Gather any written evidence (emails, messages, job postings, performance reviews)

Identify witnesses:

- Note names, addresses, and phone numbers of people who witnessed the discrimination
- **Ask them if they would be willing to provide statements later**
 1. Step 3: Contact the Ombud for Equal Treatment (Gleichbehandlungsanwaltschaft - GAW)

Free and confidential support:

- **The GAW provides legal advice and support at no cost**
- Contact them for a personal or telephone consultation
- Offices located in: Vienna, Graz, Linz, Innsbruck, and Klagenfurt

Contact details:

- Website: www.gleichbehandlungsanwaltschaft.gv.at
- Contact page: www.gleichbehandlungsanwaltschaft.gv.at/ueber-die-webseite/kontakt.html
- 1. Step 4: Choose Your Course of Action

You have several options:

Option A: Report the Incident (No Further Action Required)

- Report discrimination anonymously via: www.gleichbehandlungsanwaltschaft.gv.at/unser-angebot/vorfall-melden.html
- This helps document patterns and advocate for stronger legal protections
- **No commitment to pursue legal action**

Option B: File a Complaint with the Equal Treatment Commission (Gleichbehandlungskommission)

- **Free, non-public procedure**
- The Commission examines whether discrimination under the Equal Treatment Act occurred
- **Issues a legally non-binding assessment with recommendations**
- **Can be used as evidence in court proceedings**
- Does not award compensation, but can be pursued alongside or before court action

- **You can file alone or with GAW support**

Option C: File a Court Claim

- For discrimination covered by the Equal Treatment Act, you may claim:
 - **Compensation for financial loss**
 - **Compensation for violation of dignity (non-material damages)**
 - **Restoration of non-discriminatory conditions**
- Minimum compensation for harassment/sexual harassment: €1,000
- Must be filed at the competent Labour and Social Court or District Court
- Note: Court proceedings involve costs

Option D: Report Discriminatory Job Postings

- Any applicant or the GAW can initiate administrative penalty proceedings
- **Non-gender-neutral job advertisements are illegal**
- **Administrative fines up to €360**
- 1. Step 5: Understand Your Employer's Obligations - Employers have a duty of care:
 - **Must take appropriate action to stop harassment/discrimination**
 - **Must protect employees from further incidents**
 - **Can be held liable for damages if they fail to act**
 - Useful resource: GAW Harassment Guide (PDF):
www.gleichbehandlungsanwaltschaft.gv.at/dam/jcr:738074f7-45cf-4f72-bd4c-6a120688ab0d/231128_Broschuere_Belaestigung_A5_BF.pdf

9. Useful Resources

- **Federal Chancellery – Section for Women, Family, and Equality:** Federal policy on women and gender equality, strategies, legislative initiatives, coordination of programmes against violence against women
 - <https://www.bundeskanzleramt.gv.at>, Minoritenplatz 8, 1010 Vienna; Tel: +43 1 53115-0; online contact form
- **Equality Ombudsperson (Gleichbehandlungsanwaltschaft):** Independent advisory body for discrimination based on gender, ethnicity, religion, age, or sexual orientation in work and daily life
 - <https://www.gleichbehandlungsanwaltschaft.gv.at>, Leopold-Moses-Gasse 4/1/2, 1020 Vienna; Tel: 0800 206 119 (counselling), +43 1 532 02 44 (general); Email: office@gaw.gv.at

- **National Coordination Office "Violence against Women":** Federal coordination of measures against violence against women, monitoring of international obligations (e.g. Istanbul Convention)
 - <https://www.coordination-vaw.gv.at>, Minoritenplatz 3, 1010 Vienna; Tel: +43 1 531 15-63 2440; Email: contact@coordination-vaw.gv.at
- **City of Vienna – Women's Service (MA 57):** Women's and equality policy in Vienna, counselling, projects, funding, awareness campaigns
 - <https://www.wien.gv.at> (search "MA 57"), Friedrich-Schmidt-Platz 3, 1082 Vienna
- **Klagsverband (Litigation Association):** NGO network for strategic litigation, legal advice for discrimination victims (gender, disability, origin, sexual orientation), advocacy for improved equality legislation
 - <https://www.klagsverband.at>, Email: office@klagsverband.at
- **LEFÖ – Counselling for Migrant Women:** Support for migrant women (including trafficking victims), counselling on work, rights, violence, health; feminist, intersectional approach
 - <https://www.lefoe.at>, Contact via website
- **Women's Helpline & Women's Shelters:** Protection and counselling for women and children affected by violence
 - <https://www.aof.at>, Nationwide helpline: 0800 222 555 (24h); Vienna Women's Shelters: +43 (0)5 77 22; Vienna Women's Emergency Line: +43 (0)1 71 719
- **TransX – Association for Transgender Persons:** Advocacy and support for trans and non-binary persons, counselling, self-help groups, political
 - <https://www.transx.at>, Email: info@transx.at
- **Chamber of Labour (Arbeiterkammer):** Counselling, studies, and legal representation in equality cases concerning labour law and gender-related discrimination
 - <https://www.arbeiterkammer.at>, Regional offices throughout Austria

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