

Austrian EU Action Plan:

[to be adopted by the Austrian Federal Government]

***Strengthening Austria's RTI Players – Actively Benefitting from Europe
– Advancing towards the Group of Innovation Leaders***

Version of Working Group 7b (Europe)
of 11 July 2013

Introduction

In order to substantiate the RTI Strategy of the Austrian Federal Government as adopted on 8 March 2011, a Task Force was set up with the objective of developing proposals for measures for further implementing the Strategy by summer 2013. Several inter-ministerial Working Groups support the Task Force. Working Group 7b “Austria and the European Research and Innovation Area 2020” has the task of formulating an EU Action Plan. This EU Action Plan includes on the one hand the positions Austria should support with regard to European RTI policy, and on the other hand measures which Austria should take forward, in order to be as well prepared and adjusted as possible with regard to these current developments in the field of European RTI policy.

The Working Group started by carrying out an assessment of the Austrian innovation system (i.e. its relative strengths and weaknesses) against the background of the Innovation Union Scoreboard, which is explicitly mentioned as a benchmark in the RTI Strategy. This analysis had to take into account to what extent the IUS is capable of depicting the actual strengths and weaknesses of the Austrian innovation system. It also had to consider against this background to what extent the IUS indicators had to be interpreted further or had to be embedded into further findings. Ultimately, this step served to consolidate the guiding objective defined by the RTI Strategy of advancing towards the group of Innovation Leaders in Europe. In July 2012, the findings of this stage were summarised in a first report to the Task Force, also considering the outcome of the first Stakeholder Workshop of WG 7b of 28 June 2012. A comparative description of RTI policy measures of other countries from the group of Innovation Leaders complemented this European perspective and provided inspiration for the development of measures in Austria.

The second step was that the Working Group began to develop suggestions for possible measures which should contribute to taking Austria forward on its path towards becoming an Innovation Leader. These proposed measures have to fulfil a number of requirements:

1. They have to be part of the mandate of WG 7b, i.e. they have to address the European policy dimension. Due to the variety of RTI policy initiatives at EU level, close interaction with several other Working Groups is important in this context.
2. The proposed measures should be “future-proof”, i.e. they should
 - a. Consider general trends and developments in research and innovation as well as in RTI policy – with a special focus on general trends in the EU;
 - b. Consider potential changes of the Austrian fundamental position towards EU RTI policy; as well as
 - c. Consider or anticipate emerging core initiatives at EU level.

Accordingly, the Working Group focussed on some important areas for action which are either very important at EU level or are particularly relevant as national areas for action with regard to interfaces with the EU. The Working Group selected four areas for action from the ones originally considered, then examined them more closely during the 2nd Stakeholder Workshop on 15 November 2012 and developed first indications for concrete proposed measures. In this context, it had to be taken into consideration that the proposed measures in the different fields should interact coherently and be

oriented towards an overall concept accordingly. This overall concept should be developed as a **national EU Action Plan**. The outcome of the workshop, the overall concept that had been developed and further consultations on potential areas for action provided the background against which the Working Group identified six core priority areas as the main elements of the Action Plan.

Objectives of the RTI Strategy and Their Relevance to the EU Action Plan

The core objective of the RTI Strategy consists of enabling Austria to become part of the group of Innovation Leaders. Even if the IUS remains the key benchmark, this objective still has to be seen against the backdrop of a critical assessment of the indicators used, and if appropriate, other - also qualitative - dimensions have to be added.

This general objective of the RTI Strategy needs to be translated and specified with a view to the EU Action Plan, i.e. with regard to the general positioning Austria aims at towards European RTI policy. For this purpose, several **scenarios** were discussed during the stakeholder process of WG 7b. A “business-as-usual” scenario, essentially oriented towards continuing the current policy of using European RTI programmes as well as accompanying new initiatives with constructive criticism, was compared to scenarios aiming at deepening European cooperation, strengthening global orientation and strengthening Austrian players.

There was a strong consensus that the “business-as-usual” scenario would not suffice for reaching the position of Innovation Leader. Furthermore, the other three scenarios are to be regarded not as opposites, but as elements of a promising lead scenario complementary to each other. In this lead scenario, Austria can achieve a more intensive integration into the European Research Area and better positioning on the global level on the basis of a policy aimed at strengthening Austrian players. It is only by combining these three components that it appears to be possible for Austria to become an Innovation Leader. This argument is eventually reflected in the **lead scenario** “Strengthening Austrian Players Facilitates Successful Europeanisation of the Research and Innovation System”, which emerged from the stakeholder process.

Lead Scenario “Strengthening Austrian Players Facilitates Successful Europeanisation”

On the basis of high-performance and visible national research and innovation players, it is possible for Austria to position itself visibly and to participate successfully in European initiatives. Austrian RTI players can only participate successfully in the new multilateral and European RTI initiatives because they are embedded in a strong research landscape at home.

The fact that Austria is strongly embedded in the European Research Area offers a variety of opportunities for further strengthening the competence base of national R&D players, and subsequently for building economic development potential and for meeting societal challenges. Already today Austria as a small country benefits to a large extent from its intensive international links in Europe and world-wide, a fact which is proved e.g. by co-publications, in particular with some neighbouring countries.

At the same time, the fact that Austria is embedded in the European Research Area offers new opportunities for being able to act as a European player together with other EU players “globally”, or for being attractive as a research partner for third countries respectively. From an Austrian perspective,

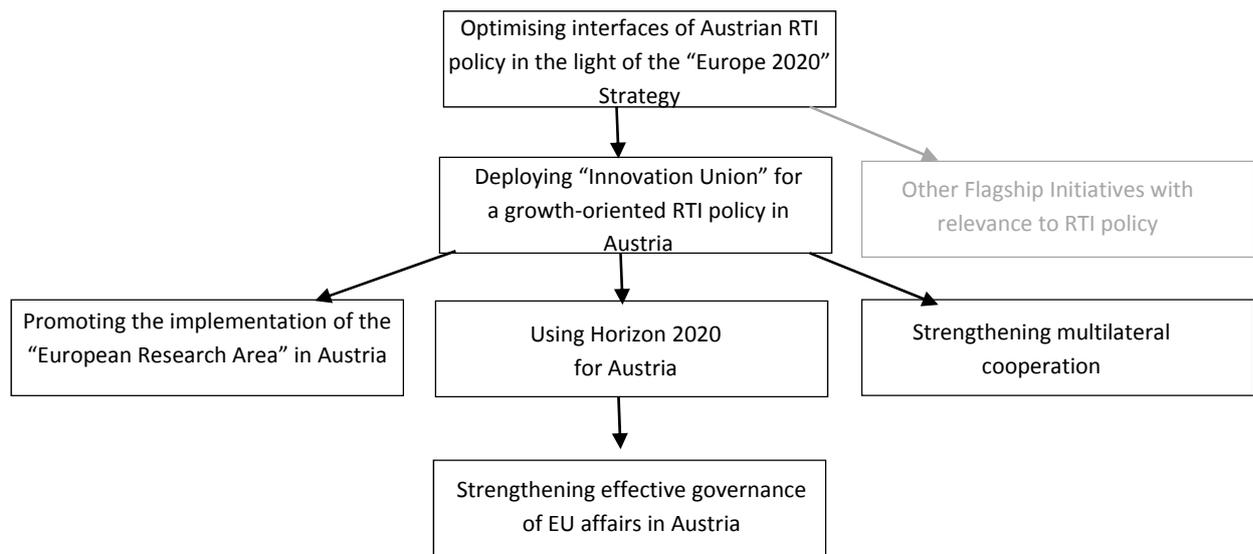
those third countries are particularly interesting which either currently play a leading role in science and technology (i.e. the US in particular), or whose R&D efforts (R&D expenditure, patents, scientific publications) are experiencing strong growth (in particular China, India, Brazil).

Priority Areas in the National EU Action Plan

The Action Plan now comprises *six priority areas*, five of which relate directly to the core EU agendas relevant to RTI policy (see Figure 1). The Europe 2020 Strategy provides the most comprehensive framework for European RTI policy. In terms of Europe 2020, the interfaces between research and innovation policy on the one hand and various sectoral policy fields on the other hand are particularly in the foreground with regard to this component of the EU Action Plan. The Flagship Initiative “Innovation Union” is of paramount importance for RTI policy. It should be implemented in Austria in such a way as to create new stimuli for growth by improving the conditions and the measures stimulating innovation. In addition, other Flagship Initiatives also address aspects which are relevant to RTI policy. Within the framework of “Innovation Union”, three EU initiatives aiming at research provide important key components for the Austrian Action Plan. Horizon 2020 should be used even more effectively than it has been up to now for strengthening the Austrian research scene. In addition to the financial incentives provided by Horizon 2020, multilateral cooperation in research in Europe should also be promoted. While some initiatives for strengthening multilateral cooperation are embedded in Horizon 2020, others depend exclusively on the initiative of the member states. Austria hopes that implementing the European Research Area will lead to further improvement of European cooperation and of the use of synergy potential in Europe. Implementing ERA requires a series of measures in order to facilitate the realisation of the “internal market for knowledge”. Together with these five priority areas, it is also necessary to establish a more effective governance system for dealing with the EU agendas in Austria.

The six priority areas proposed here are closely linked in many places with topics dealt with by other working groups of the RTI Task Force. This is not surprising, given the fact that European policy influences large parts of national RTI policy by now. When selecting the six priority areas, WG 7b has therefore very consciously oriented itself on the core initiatives and programmes of the EU with regard to which Austria has to define its positions and potential complementary measures. In this context, it was paramount that the measures proposed within the framework of the EU Action Plan could provide a clear added value regarding the goal of the RTI Strategy of becoming an Innovation Leader.

Figure 1: Overview of the Priority Areas of the EU Action Plan



Thus Europe 2020 defines important interfaces between RTI policy and other sectoral policy fields where RTI agendas have become an essential component. Research and innovation are not only expected to contribute to traditional economic and industry-policy agendas (cf. Flagship Initiative “Industrial Policy”), but also to labour market policy agendas (cf. Flagship Initiatives “An Agenda for New Skills and Jobs” and “Youth on the Move”) and sectoral policy agendas (cf. Flagship Initiatives “Digital Agenda” and “Resource-efficient Europe”). Accordingly, the claim to being an Innovation Leader is increasingly also linked to playing a leading role with regard to these different thrusts of RTI policy; this is a requirement which Austria also has to face.

Pursuing the agendas defined in the Flagship Initiative “**Innovation Union**” is in Austria’s very own interest, in order to improve the conditions and incentives for innovation. Accordingly, the measures proposed in the EU Action Plan largely coincide with those of “Innovation Union”, with a special focus being on some of Austria’s well-known weaknesses.

The EU agendas concerning the **European Research Area** primarily provide facilitations and simplifications for the RTI players active in Europe, i.e. for organisations and individuals dealing with research, technological development and innovation. The EU Action Plan in particular provides measures which make Austria stand out against other EU countries by improving the conditions for the best talents and the most innovative enterprises, for instance with regard to available infrastructure, access conditions for researchers and enterprises, or by simplifying and standardising application procedures for R&I funding. It is also in the interest of the RTI players already located in Austria, who increasingly want to use opportunities in other countries, to push for these forms of opening-up and standardisation in the European Research Area.

Intensifying **multilateral cooperation** is an important aspect. It can take place on different levels and can relate to certain geographical areas, but can also serve the joint or harmonised management of thematic programmes. However, this still requires a learning process regarding the most suitable modalities, e.g. with regard to mutual opening-up or joint management of national programmes. Similar to Horizon 2020, this is therefore not just about the (financial) dimension of jointly using research competences and funding offers, but it is also an issue of national profiling in Europe. Last but not least, new forms of multilateral cooperation can open up new international cooperation options which a small country like Austria by itself can only use to a limited extent.

While **Horizon 2020** may be the most important European RTI policy measure financially, it would be misleading to reduce its importance for Austria to just the financial dimension. The measures listed in the respective priority area of the EU Action Plan accordingly aim at using the thematic results of Horizon 2020 as effectively as possible for developing an Austrian RTI profile, and for facilitating synergies with national measures.

The diversification of instruments at EU level and the intensification of multilateral coordination require respective coordination and preparation processes at national level. In order to be able to use the extended spectrum of possibilities in terms of the Austrian RTI Strategy, a **more effective governance of EU agendas** is required. In addition to strengthening strategic intelligence for the benefit of Austrian RTI players, this also means improving the national mechanisms of policy coordination, in order to be able to react to the greater requirements at EU level in a well-coordinated manner.

Major RTI Challenges for Austria

1. The International RTI Context

In view of the current economic conditions and the rather uncertain prospects, most OECD countries can expect a relatively weak growth of R&D expenditure, in particular of the enterprise sector, in the coming years. In particular in the case of those countries most affected by the crisis (e.g. some Southern and Eastern European countries), innovation activity and economic growth cannot be expected to recover speedily. In those countries where framework conditions were relatively consolidated before the crisis and where economic growth has remained relatively stable (e.g. in the Northern European countries and in Germany, Austria), research and innovation activity could however pick up again a little earlier. Nonetheless, the development in the OECD countries overall is characterised by great uncertainties.

By contrast, fast growing economies, China in particular, have succeeded in significantly increasing their R&D expenditure in recent years. R&D expenditure of Chinese enterprises, for instance, rose by 26% in 2009. This also meant that China's share in world-wide R&D expenditure, which had already increased from 5% to 9% between 2002 and 2007, rose further to 12% by 2009. Thus during the crisis, this already existing trend accelerated. At the same time, other emerging economies such as India and Brazil began to give innovation activities a more important position on their political agenda. The importance of these countries, but also of other - particularly Asian - emerging economies in the global research scene can be expected to increase further.

This increase in importance of China and other emerging economies takes place at the expense of the OECD countries. So far, Austria has succeeded, as one of only few OECD countries, to keep its share in world-wide R&D expenditure stable. At the same time, Austria's share in the R&D expenditure of the EU 27 as well as of the OECD has risen significantly. Overall, this continuous shift in importance of global innovation activity towards non-OECD countries, and towards China in particular, is the most important global trend in research and innovation in the coming years. This global shift in importance is a major challenge for RTI policy in Austria and in the EU.

A further important trend is the increasingly global production of knowledge. This can be seen, amongst other things, from a strong increase in international co-publications (in particular in the

natural sciences), but also from the increasingly important role of international mobility of researchers. Being attractive for “globally mobile human capital” (brain circulation versus brain gain/drain) is a major and growing challenge for international innovation systems in this context.

Closely related to this fact is the trend towards international institutionalisation in the field of science (space, astronomy, energy research, etc.)¹. Knowledge production is thus globalised at the level of individual research projects as well as at a personal and an institutional level. The shift in importance towards the non-OECD countries on the global level again presents a particular challenge in this context, as international networking of Austrian and European players in general currently strongly focusses on other European countries and North America.

The increasing establishment of international R&D location networks is a further important development in this context. This does not only mean R&D departments following production which has already been relocated. It also means ensuring access to new knowledge and technology hubs on the one hand, and adapting existing products to the local requirements of growth markets on site on the other. This relocation of R&D institutions to countries with fast-growing markets and innovation systems is continuing. Both the interaction between such global R&D location networks on the basis of division of labour and the value chains connected with them are becoming more and more complex.

In addition to the globalisation of knowledge production, the globalisation of markets is also continuing. In such globalised markets, competitive pressure of those countries which can offer at significantly more favourable cost relations is increasing. For countries like Austria with a relatively high wage level, this means that it is necessary to use R&D and innovation to offer products and services on the global market which stand out by their high degree of knowledge intensity and innovation. In order to remain competitive compared to emerging economies, it is mandatory to further increase the quality of exports, in particular in the medium technology sector.

A further major global trend is the flexibilisation and opening-up of innovation and research processes: An increasing part of these processes can be described by the terms “open innovation” and “open research”. This means “being open for knowledge of others”, “producing knowledge jointly” and “sharing knowledge with others”, with the internet and ‘social media’ providing the corresponding infrastructure. The relevance of open innovation/open research depends on the sector; however, the general trend is towards an increase in importance across all areas.

These trends define the general framework within which Austrian RTI policy moves and towards which it has to position itself.

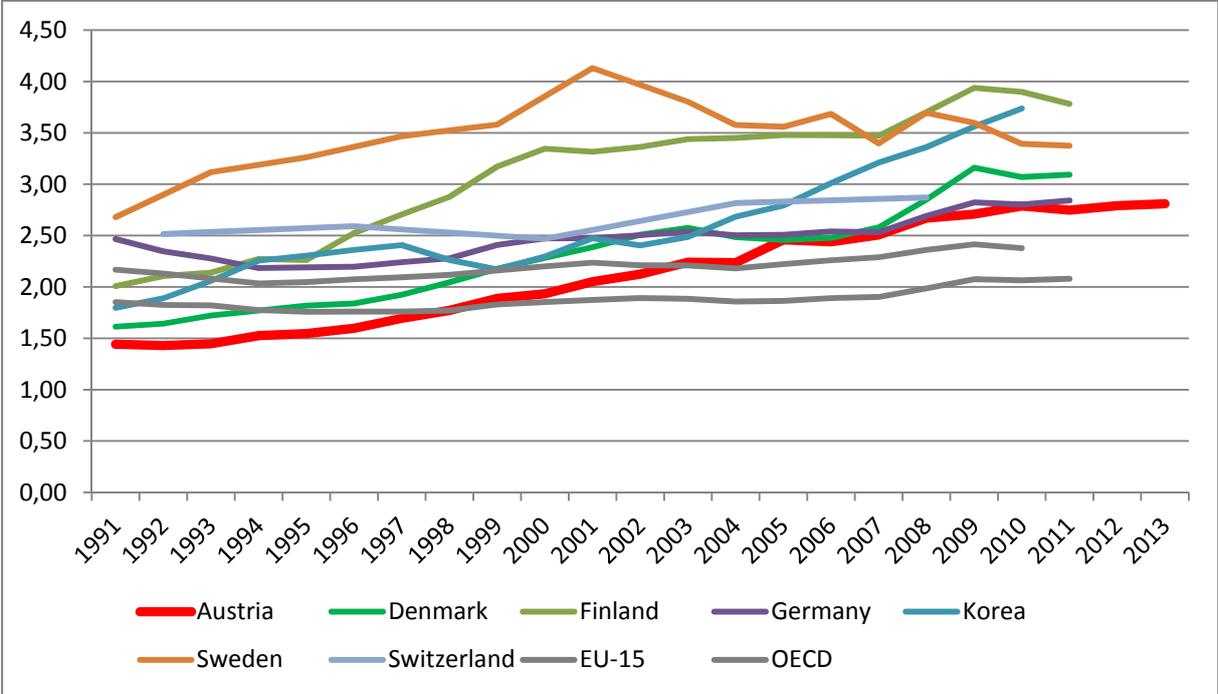
2. Austria and the Innovation Leaders – a Critical Comparison

One of the core targets of the Austrian RTI Strategy is the **development of the R&D quota** (see Figure 2). The RTI Strategy indicates 3.76% as the target for the year 2020 in this context. The Innovation Leaders of the EU-27, Switzerland and Korea were used as comparable countries for Austria’s position with regard to this indicator. Austria’s catching-up process with regard to the R&D quota is remarkable compared to those countries with the highest quotas in the early 1990s, namely Sweden, Germany and Switzerland. Today Austria’s research quota is close to Germany’s (2011: 2.84 %) and is already nearly

¹ See for instance the examples in OECD (2012): Meeting Global Challenges through Better Governance. International Co-operation in Science, Technology and Innovation. Paris.

at the same level as Switzerland's (2008: 2.87 %). Austria has also been able to catch up significantly compared to Sweden (2011: 3.37 %). In addition, it is worth noting that since the outbreak of the financial and economic crisis in the year 2008/2009, the research quota has tended to stagnate, or partly even decrease, in all countries considered here, with the exception of Korea.

Figure 2: Development of the R&D Quota in Austria and Selected Comparable Countries



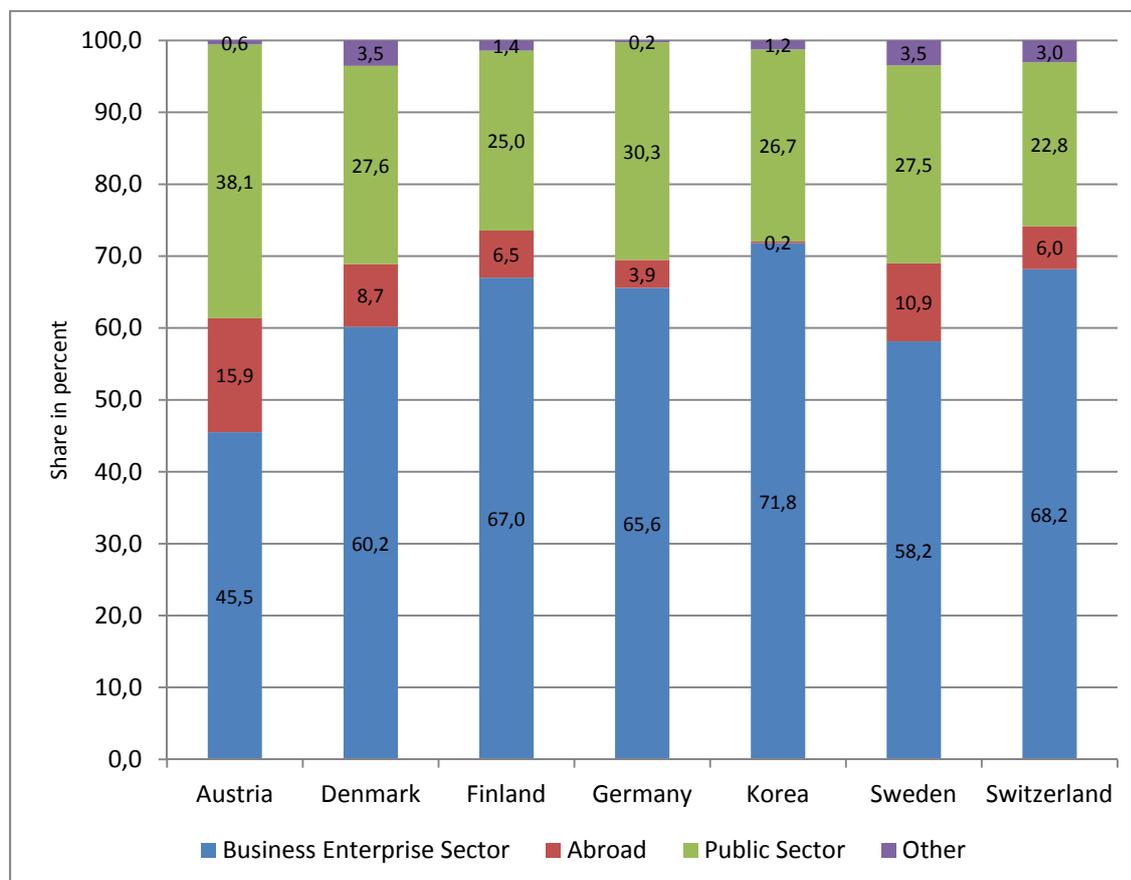
Source: OECD, Main Science and Technology Indicators

In view of the objectives of the RTI Strategy, attention therefore has to be paid to the growth dynamics of the R&D quota returning to a path which makes it possible for Austria to advance towards the group of the Innovation Leaders.

Another target explicitly defined in the Federal Government's RTI Strategy concerns the **funding structure of research and development expenditure**. In this respect, Austria aims at two thirds being financed by the private sector (enterprise sector plus financing from abroad, which essentially comprises financing by Austrian subsidiaries connected with foreign enterprises) and one third by the public sector by 2020 (this objective has also been laid down as a benchmark at EU level). Figure 3 shows the funding structure according to individual funding sources. This figure shows that Austria does not achieve the two thirds share of private R&D funding; however, the private sector together with R&D funding from abroad, which is largely of private origin, accounts for 61% of R&D funding in Austria. The front runners with regard to the share of the private sector are Switzerland, Finland and Korea, where this share amounts to more than 70%. In Germany, Sweden and Denmark it is also only slightly below the 70% threshold. The considerable weight of the foreign sector with a share of nearly 16% is particularly remarkable in the case of Austria. This is due to Austria's intensive international links on the one hand, and to a large share of Austrian enterprises with foreign owners on the other (Gassler and Nones, 2008).

Given the larger shares of enterprises in the comparable Innovation Leader countries, supporting the business enterprise sector remains an important pillar of the RTI Strategy.

Figure 3: Funding Structure of Research and Development by International Comparison, 2011

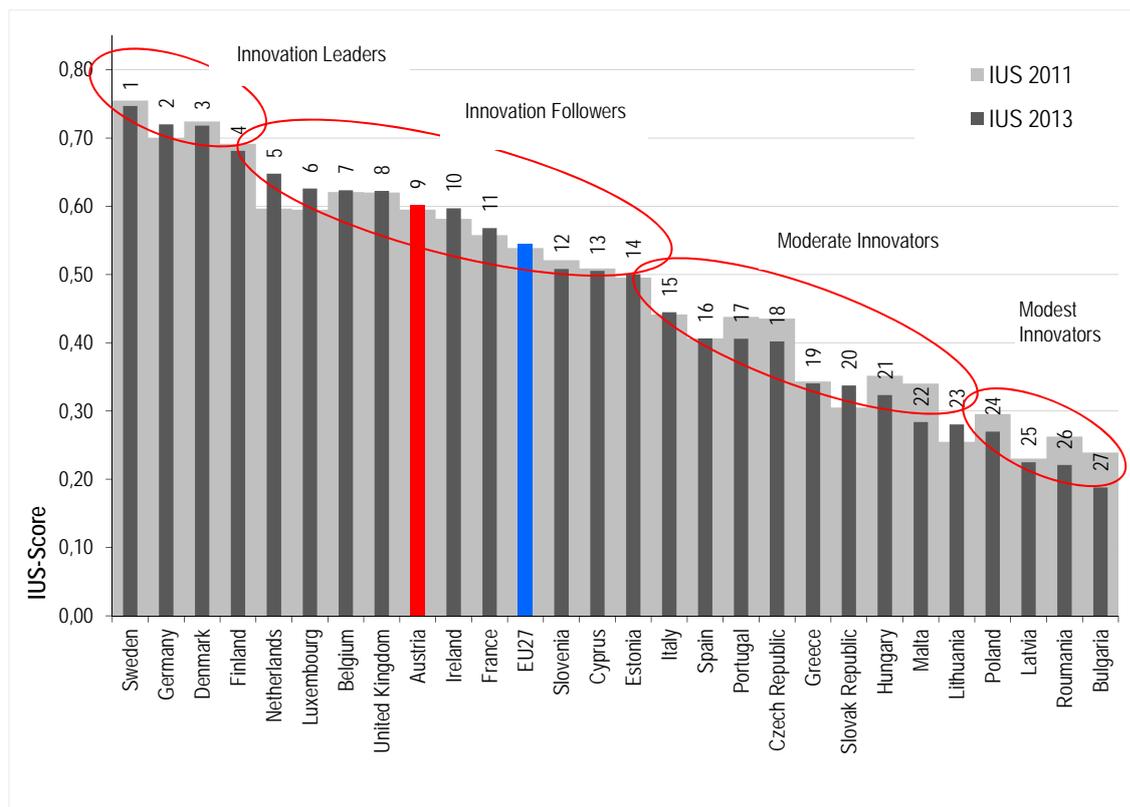


Note: For Germany and Korea, the values given refer to the year 2010, for Switzerland to 2008

Source: OECD, Main Science and Technology Indicators

The **Innovation Union Scoreboard (IUS)** constitutes an important reference framework for Austrian RTI policy, not least because this synthetic innovation indicator is the basis on which a country ranking is established which draws a lot of attention. In the current ranking (IUS 2013), Austria is in 9th place (after being in 8th place in last year's IUS 2011 and 7th place in IUS 2010), thus ranking among the group of the "Innovation Followers" (Figure 4). Austria's being part of this group has remained quite stable over time, the shifting of rankings within this subgroup when comparing individual years should therefore not be weighed too heavily, since the absolute differences of the overall indicator within this subgroup are very low, and the measurement uncertainties are sometimes considerable. Focussing RTI policy discussions on short-term changes in rankings therefore does not make sense.

Figure 4: Austria's Position in IUS 2013 and Compared with IUS 2011



Note: The nomenclature of the IUS has changed: As of 2013, the year of the IUS refers to the year of publication; before, it referred to the year t-1 of the year of publication t

Source: IUS 2013

The individual indicators confirm the pattern of Austria's strengths and weaknesses already seen in earlier reports of the IUS and its predecessor EIS (see Figure 5); however, these strengths and weaknesses have to be critically discussed within their context and are not yet in themselves indications of any RTI policy requirements for action:

- As in recent years, Austria has comparatively lower values in tertiary education, in the availability of venture capital, in licence and patent revenue, and in knowledge-intensive service exports.
 - One of Austria's core weaknesses in the IUS, namely the availability of venture capital which is clearly below average, is an impediment mainly in the early growth phases of enterprises; however, this is also partly compensated for by public funding of R&D in enterprises, which is high by international comparison.
 - It cannot be concluded from the share of knowledge-intensive service exports in the total of service exports, which is below average in Austria, that there is a general weakness of Austria's competitiveness in the knowledge-intensive service sector. Austria has a large market share and correspondingly high revenue from international tourism. These tourism exports *ceteris paribus* increase the denominator (service exports total) for calculating this indicator. In fact, Austrian exports of knowledge-intensive services have developed quite dynamically in recent years and in absolute figures are now at the level of revenue from international tourism (OeNB, 2009). In addition, this indicator has to be questioned in particular against the background of the

financial and economic crisis: Part of the knowledge-intensive service exports are financial services. Thus also countries with a pronounced specialisation in financial market services (among them e.g. the United Kingdom, Luxembourg, but also Cyprus) are clearly ahead of Austria with regard to this indicator. Especially in view of the most recent events, however, it has to be questioned whether a good position concerning this indicator also actually indicates a particularly well-positioned innovation system.

- The indicator of licence and patent revenue from abroad is also controversial as far as the quality of its content for characterising innovation systems is concerned. A large part of international cash flows with regard to patents and licences is carried out by intracompany transactions, which do not necessarily reflect the “real” innovation achievements but are carried out e.g. due to tax considerations. Many large enterprises “park” their patent rights in countries with favourable tax conditions and thus earn the revenue based on them in these respective countries accordingly. However, this does not allow any immediate conclusions regarding the innovation performance of these countries.
- The share of individuals with a tertiary education or equivalent in the group of 30-to-34-year-olds requires particular consideration. With regard to this target of the Heads of State and Government within the framework of the Europe 2020 Strategy, Austria’s 36.8% share is above the EU-27 average, but is still below the level of the Innovation Leaders and Innovation Followers.² When restricting the group to those with a completed tertiary education, at 24% Austria has a significantly lower proportion than the average for both Innovation Leaders and Innovation Followers (over 40% in each case); the EU average is 35%. Development of this indicator over time in Austria also displays a very moderate dynamic: Between 2001 and 2011, the share in Austria rose from 21 to 24%, whereas the average for the Innovation Followers rose from 29 to 42% (and from 33 to 41%, for the Innovation Leaders). The reason for this different expression of this indicator (“or equivalent”) is the classification practice of graduates from higher vocational education in the ISCED 1997.³ Once the ISCED 2011 has been implemented, these differences in classification will disappear. The share of 20-to-24-year-olds who have at least a higher secondary-level education, however, is very high in Austria.
- Austria’s particularly pronounced **strengths** are to be found in scientific publications, in R&D expenditure of enterprises, as well as in the various indicators referring to intellectual property (patents, trademarks, designs). The structure of the innovation expenditure of enterprises with a strong emphasis on R&D expenditure of enterprises, as well as the good performance with regard to indicators concerning intellectual property point towards a modern, research-based innovation system where enterprises continuously create new knowledge via research and

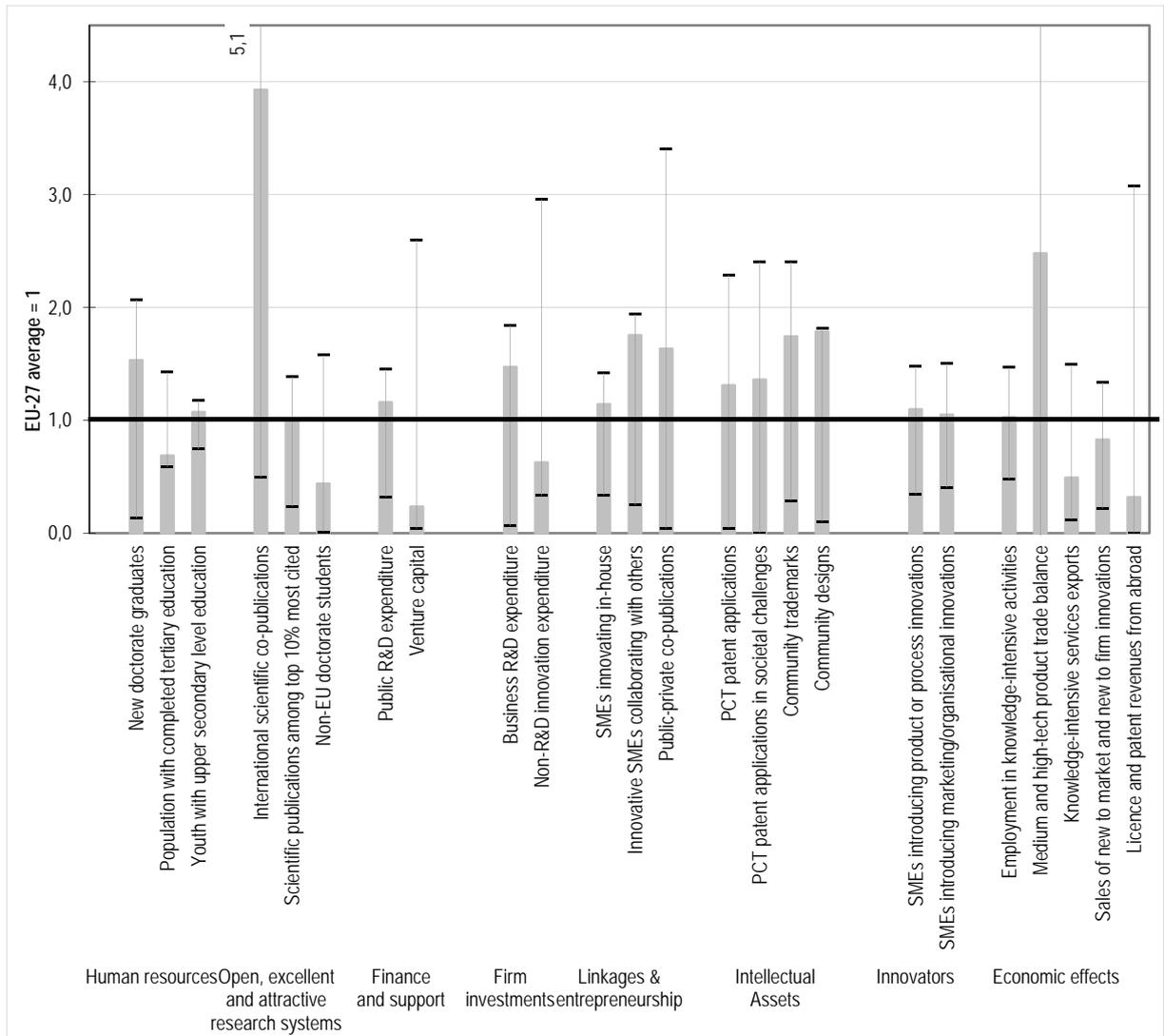
² For this, see Education and Training Monitor 2012 of the European Commission, p. 21 http://ec.europa.eu/education/news/rethinking/sw373_en.pdf

³ In terms of comparability, there is a problem in that the higher professional-education school leaving examination is classified as completion of ISCED level 4a after attending a five-year main course at a technical college, business academy, etc., while the special forms of professional-education schools (graduate schools, advanced training courses, schools for professionals), which offer qualifications which are comparable to the dedicated 5-year main courses, come under the category ISCED 5b and are allocated to tertiary education. This is based on the logic that blocks of education courses – following each other sequentially and in a hierarchical manner – represent the classification principle for ISCED.

development expenditure and put this knowledge on the market in the form of new products and new services respectively.

- The indicators taken over from the **Community Innovation Survey (CIS)** show noticeable jumps in the case of Austria over time; these are mainly due to changed framework conditions for the design of this survey and the way it is carried out. Nonetheless the differences to the EU average in this respect are relatively small.

Figure 5: Results of IUS 2013 at Individual Indicator Level: Austria versus Minimum/Maximum of the EU-27



Source: InnoMetrics. Presentation by JOANNEUM RESEARCH.

RTI Policy Strategies by Comparison – Lessons Learned from the Answers of the Innovation Leaders

Against the background of the target of positioning Austria among the Innovation Leaders, some essential conclusions from the current research, technology and innovation policy strategies of some selected leading countries (the Innovation Leaders of the EU-27 plus Switzerland and Korea) are drawn below. These conclusions are based on the corresponding analyses of relevant strategy documents of

the countries mentioned (see Working Document for the EU Action Plan). Despite the fact that the RTI strategies of the Innovation Leaders considered naturally differ with regard to their national preconditions and development paths, it is still possible to point out some common elements which are important for the Austrian RTI Strategy:

- Firstly, in nearly all considered countries, it turns out that RTI policy is based on a broad concept of innovation and does not (any longer) define innovation performance of a country primarily via its R&D intensities (despite the fact that these are still considered to be an important factor), but via the interaction of policy fields such as e.g. education policy, location policy, industrial policy, labour market policy, and migration policy.
- Secondly, the policy approach of a 'new mission orientation' has clearly gathered momentum. This approach combines the so-called 'grand societal challenges' with the objectives of technological and economic competitiveness (e.g. in the 'Green Growth Strategies').
- Furthermore, in all Innovation Leader countries (with the exception of Switzerland), there is a broad mixture of RTI policy measures, each of which ties in with the national policy traditions perceived respectively: Thus, for instance, support for RTI of enterprises exists to greatly differing degrees and is carried out with very different instruments (some countries do not have any tax incentives, for instance).
- Finally, the reference to international developments and international integration has become stronger – for instance with regard to the issue of the attractiveness of locations as objectives of R&D-related FDI, or for attracting highly qualified labour. Nonetheless, in most Innovation Leader countries, the 'national perspective' of RTI policy still dominates RTI policy.

Measures According to Priorities

The measures developed by the ministries with regard to the respective priority areas are listed below. In addition, the European policy context is also illustrated, important target groups are mentioned, and an assessment of expected effects is given.

Measures of the Federal Government which are related to each other are marked at the end of the respective measure by indicating the number of the related measure in parentheses. This should illustrate the mutual influence and networking between the measures.

Priority 1: Using HORIZON 2020 for Austria

- **Context**

The new EU Research Framework Programme (“HORIZON 2020”) will facilitate the funding of science, research and innovation in the years 2014 – 2020 along three large areas: (1) Excellent Science, (2) Industrial Leadership and (3) Societal Challenges.

HORIZON 2020 is specifically characterised by the close links aimed at between research funding and measures for strengthening innovation performance, up to the introduction of new products on the market; the orientation of research issues on the grand challenges of society; the increasing delegation of research topics to self-organising RTI platforms in Europe; finally, and as a consequence, the necessary orientation on long-term, strategic, programme-type, quasi-institutional networks which have great influence on the allocation of funding under HORIZON 2020.

Austria will endeavour to take all measures required in order to continue the successful path of Austrian participation in the EU Research Framework Programmes, also under altered framework conditions.

The Federal Government proposes to take the following measures:

- 1 Funding excellent basic research by expanding Austrian ERC participation; supporting applicants and their host institutions when competing for funds from the European Research Council (ERC), in order to fulfil Austria’s potential with regard to acquiring ERC Grants and to increase Austria’s success in the ERC funding lines further: Funding internationally competitive research conditions: creating location-related framework conditions which are attractive to top-level research by international comparison (e.g. comprehensive information and services: providing housing, kindergartens, job opportunities for partners); providing funds for information and advisory services by the FFG – Austrian Research Promotion Agency and the FWF – Austrian Science Fund; continuing the analytic-strategic monitoring by the Austrian ERC Monitoring Group. *(related to measures 22, 23, 24, 53, 62)*
- 2 Using the risk financing instruments co-funded by the EU (in particular in Horizon 2020, but also CoSME, etc.) in the best possible manner, by continuing/deepening cooperation of

- national players with the EIB/EIF, by interlinking instruments co-funded nationally (in particular at aws) and by the EU (both with regard to credit-based/guarantee-based and with regard to equity capital-based instruments), as well as raising awareness for these opportunities specifically in the Austrian enterprise sector (in particular by aws and FFG). At the same time improving/intensifying the interface between FFG and aws, in order to offer optimal solutions to enterprises along the entire innovation chain.
- 3 Enhancing participation in multinational initiatives in the field of the Grand Societal Challenges in H2020: ERA-NET and ERA-NET+, JPIs, Art. 185, JTIs/JUs, EIPs, SET Plan, Smart Cities Initiative and KICs of the EIT, by ensuring funding, strategy development and complementary national activities, such as for example setting up national technology platforms. *(related to measures 5, 6, 9, 10, 33, 35, 36, 37, 38, 45, 67)*
 - 4 Ensuring participation of Austrian players (RTI and industry) in the LEIT priority of pillar II (Key Enabling Technologies - KETs) in H2020: Ensuring national co-funding, providing targeted support within the framework of the FFG-EIP support structures, promoting further competence development, establishing and continuing targeted complementary national programmes by analysing previous experience at European and at national level, establishing complementary Austrian pilot programmes in the field of the KETs. Investigating better links of Austrian COMET and other cluster initiatives to Horizon 2020. The best possible representation of Austrian interests in the respective programmes and bodies is also an objective. *(related to measure 64)*
 - 5 Enhancing the participation of Austrian industry in the large industry-led European RTI initiatives, above all in the PPPs and the JTIs. *(related to measures 3, 10, 36, 45, 67)*
 - 6 Ensuring the participation of Austrian players (RTI, industry and end-users) in the research priorities dealing with the Grand Societal Challenges in H2020: Targeted support within the framework of the FFG/EIP support structures, competence development, targeted complementary national programmes. *(related to measures 3, 6, 9, 10, 33, 35, 36, 45, 62, 67)*
 - 7 Promoting networking and cooperation of Austrian research groups in the technology fields prioritised by H2020 with European counterparts for developing and preparing project proposals within the framework of “FET proactive” or FET Flagships. Supporting competence development and the building of partnerships. This issue will also be supported by the FFG’s *Thementeams* (thematic teams) and within the framework of the EIP contract. *(related to measure 62)*
 - 8 Continuing, and expanding respectively, the participation of industry, in particular of SMEs, in Horizon 2020 (including promoting cooperation with universities, research institutions, universities of applied sciences and large enterprises), as well as using SME-specific instruments in the best possible manner; applying a broad concept of advice, so that the SMEs are “guided” towards the instrument best suited for them (SME-specific instrument in Horizon 2020, Eurostars-2, EUREKA, national funding). *(related to measures 33, 39, 62)*
 - 9 Linking interministerial priorities (climate change, resources, quality of living and demographic change) systematically with the societal challenges in HORIZON 2020. *(related to measures 3, 6, 10, 27, 33, 35, 36, 38, 46, 67)*

- 10 Making national funding programmes available complementing the topics in H2020. These national programmes should entail improved participation of Austrian representatives in H2020 by funding the building of competence. *(related to measures 3, 6, 9, 27, 33, 35, 36, 45, 67)*
- 11 Consolidating existing Austrian participations in ESFRI projects and securing them in the long term; further participation in ESFRI and international research infrastructures, as well as coordinated building and expanding of e-research infrastructures according to national needs and possibilities, while taking the European and international development into account. *(related to measures 25, 55)*
- 12 Promoting active participation in the priority activities regarding innovation-oriented public procurement in H2020 by identifying and activating Austrian target groups and by providing targeted support. *(related to measures 46, 62)*
- 13 Further developing European Foresight activities carried out within the context of H2020 and the European Research and Innovation Area, and using them strategically.
- 14 Developing cooperation structures with the Austrian Federal Provinces with a view to using the Structural Funds for implementing Austrian RTI priorities in the field of the Grand Societal Challenges and for innovations. *(related to measures 51, 70)*

The following RTI players in Austria are asked to take the following measures:

- 15 ***Austrian Research Promotion Agency:*** FFG providing intensified strategic advice to Austrian participants in European funding initiatives (e.g. “Core Customer Concept”, “ERA Dialogues”).
- 16 ***Austrian Research Promotion Agency, Austrian Science Fund:*** Renewing the cooperation agreement between FWF (Austrian Science Fund) and FFG (Austrian Research Promotion Agency) for supporting ERC applicants.
- 17 ***Universities, universities of applied sciences, Austrian Academy of Sciences:*** Expanding their research service units with the objective of improving knowledge about the funding management of EU projects within their respective institutions.
- 18 ***Universities, science-oriented non-university institutions:*** Taking the specific importance of the ERC into consideration for their own institution, as well as laying it down accordingly in their development plans and research strategies, with special consideration of the effects on their integration in international research structures and networks of excellence by (further) developing their internationalisation strategies; recognising ERC grants as proofs of qualification for obtaining tenure.
- 19 ***Industrial enterprises:*** Building up and participating in industry-led cooperations and forms of organisation, such as e.g. public-private partnerships for cooperation between industry, research, the European Commission and the Member States. Representing Austrian interests in these platforms.

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| 20 | <i>Austria Wirtschaftsservice:</i> Increased use of aws funding instruments, in particular in the field of technology implementation and introduction on the market, by intensifying EU co-funding which has already existed for many years, with guarantees, loans and equity capital, but also by intensifying advisory services in the field of innovation protection and innovation marketing. |
| 21 | <i>Public sector customers (“end-users”) such as federal ministries:</i> Creating suitable organisational structures for facilitating participation in H2020 projects, in particular specially suitable regulations for flows of funds, so that EU funds are directly available to the participating part of the organisation (unit, directorate etc.). |

- **Effects Expected Through Implementation of Measures**

By means of the measures proposed, Austrian participation should be expanded in those areas of HORIZON 2020 which have a special effect on the achievement of the objectives of the Austrian RTI Strategy (group of “Innovation Leaders”): (1) in the highly competitive field of excellence of the ERC, (2) in the area of future technology fields (FETs) which is important to industry, (3) in key industrial technologies (KETs), (4) in the grand societal challenges, (5) through a coherent development of RTI infrastructures, (6) through the best possible participation of SMEs in international activities, as well as (7) through the best possible use of the European risk financing instruments by Austrian RTDI players, in particular by enterprises.

According to the example of successful models in Austria (e.g. ICT, security research), the national research programmes, which have been developed largely independently so far, should be adapted to the FET topics of HORIZON 2020 in selected fields. This measure will expand the funding portfolio in the interest of the Austrian RTI players. At the same time, the quality of domestic research performance is increased as a consequence of systematically integrating Austrian researchers into European competition.

The three interministerial priorities of the RTI Strategy should actively use the symmetrical funding offers of HORIZON 2020, thus not only ensuring increased financial returns, but also important know-how flowing into Austria with regard to overcoming the societal challenges.

The intended effects are in accordance with those of the *Wirkungsorientierten Haushaltsführung* (outcome-oriented budget management) of the Federal State.

Priority 2: Promoting the Implementation of the “European Research Area” in Austria

• Context

In the year 2000, the European Commission introduced the concept for creating a “European Research Area” where knowledge production and use of knowledge should be carried out freely without any national barriers. The European Commission likes to use the term European “internal market for knowledge” for this purpose.

The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (“Lisbon Treaty”) adopts the objective of a European Research Area in which there is freedom of movement for researchers and where scientific findings and technologies can be exchanged freely (Article 179 (1)). Thus the “European Research Area” is regulated in primary law, and Austria also has to implement it.

The measures proposed are oriented mainly along the main “problem areas” which have been identified at European level in recent years: (1) effective national RTI systems, (2) labour market for researchers, (3) research infrastructures, (4) diversity and gender, (5) access to knowledge. The issue of cross-country cooperation is dealt with under Priority 3 on multilateral cooperation.

The Federal Government proposes to take the following measures:

- 22 Open labour market for researchers: Improving and creating excellent framework conditions for research staff as well as sustainable recruitment of next-generation employees at an early stage (open, transparent and competitive job offers as well as recruitment of research personnel; researchers’ careers – “European Framework for Research Careers”; attractive careers and working conditions for researchers; recognition of international mobility for appointments abroad; EURAXESS network; doctoral training / innovative doctoral programmes – “Principles for Innovative Doctoral Training”; pension and social security situation). *(related to measures 1, 23, 24, 53)*
- 23 Increasing the effectiveness of the Austrian RTI system: Increasing the share of public funding awarded competitively to the average level of the EU’s “Innovation Leader” states. *(related to measures 1, 22, 24, 53)*
- 24 Flat rate for overheads by the FWF – Austrian Science Fund to the amount of 20% (also in International Programmes, women’s programmes, Special Research Areas etc.). Investigating with further agencies (FFG – Austrian Research Promotion Agency, CDG – Christian Doppler Society, aws – Austria Business Service, OeAD - Austrian agency for international mobility and cooperation in science, education and research, etc.) if there are any regulations regarding overheads which disadvantage international cooperation projects. *(related to measures 1, 22, 23, 53)*
- 25 RTI infrastructures are an essential prerequisite for top-level research in science and industry. The nationally required further developments of RTI infrastructure are promoted and funded

under consideration of university and non-university development plans as well as on the basis of the new State Aid Framework. With regard to easier access and mutual opening-up as well as optimal use of RTI infrastructures, pilot projects should be carried out. (*related to measures 11, 55*)

- 26 Supporting cultural change in favour of diversity and gender-equitable RTI funding in Austria, in accordance with the European developments within the framework of the “Helsinki Group” (specific research programmes, studies and impact analyses, participation of the federal ministries responsible for RTI in the “Helsinki Group”, “First Mover Awards” for new approaches in science and industry; further development of strategies and instruments).
- 27 When designing the programmes of new RTI initiatives in Austria, compatibility with EU funding criteria (HORIZON 2020) will be aimed at as far as possible and appropriate. Funding rules will be harmonised nationally as far as possible. (*related to measures 9, 10, 33, 35, 36, 38, 67*)
- 28 Expanding project evaluation with participation of independent international experts for all Austrian RTI initiatives with public funds from a total programme volume of € 1 million upwards.
- 29 Increasing the effectiveness of the Austrian RTI system: Evaluating the quality of publicly funded RTI institutions according to internationally acknowledged standards as a basis for the allocation of future funds, insofar as this is not being done already.
- 30 Having the Austrian RTI system in the European Research Area evaluated by the EU, as well as by the OECD with regard to global competition.

The following RTI players in Austria are asked to take the following measures:

- 31 **Agencies, universities, universities of applied sciences, non-university institutions:** Expanding publishing by research institutions as well as research funding organisations in terms of “open access” (e.g. within the framework of European networks, cooperation with relevant publishers).
- 32 **Agencies, universities, universities of applied sciences, non-university institutions:** Pooling experiences with regard to creating excellent framework conditions for research staff as well as targeted training measures for their own staff, in order to strengthen their competences regarding the framework conditions of research and innovation (diversity and gender; research management; knowledge transfer; creation of international networks).

- **Effects Expected Through Implementation of Measures**

The different measures for implementing the “European Research Area” in Austria will contribute to increasing Austria’s attractiveness as an RTI location, as well as to improving the comparability of the Austrian funding system with other “Innovation Leaders”.

Currently existing negative incentives with regard to international RTI projects will be removed step by step. At the same time, a long-term cultural change will be initiated which should contribute to

individuals within the Austrian RTI system being able to develop their specific abilities, regardless of their gender, their age, their sexual orientation, their physical and mental abilities, their religion and weltanschauung, their ethnic origin or the colour of their skin. This, in turn, will increase the attractiveness of Austria as an RTI location in global competition for the best talents.

Priority 3: Strengthening Multilateral Cooperation

- **Context**

One of the most important barriers between the member states concerns the low level of cross-border cooperation in regional programmes and joint initiatives. The successful implementation of the “European Research Area” will not least be measured against the degree of openness and compatibility to which the national programmes of the member states and those of the European Union will develop.

Bilateral and multilateral cooperation within the EU create the basis for cooperations beyond the borders of Europe and help to establish Austria as a global RTI partner. One precondition for the successful development of this priority is standardising the regulations for international cooperation and expanding the corresponding instruments massively.

The Federal Government proposes to take the following measures:

- 33 Promoting cross-country programme cooperation (Joint Programming, ERA-NETs, EUREKA, COST etc.): Providing funds for joint and harmonised calls, strategy development with a view to Austrian requirements, developing joint RTI agendas with European partner countries, participating in the international harmonisation of funding regulations, participating in international exchange of information, expanding the corresponding management structures of the FFG – Austrian Research Promotion Agency. *(related to measures 3, 6, 8, 9, 10, 27, 35, 36, 38, 39, 45, 62, 67)*
- 34 Easier access to national programmes for European and international participants, according to the model of the “Innovation Leaders” in Europe, in those fields where this is of strategic importance for Austria. Simplifying funding and management conditions in order to make cross-border programme cooperation easier. Reciprocally, opening-up of the programmes of partner countries is a target. *(related to measure 67)*
- 35 Establishing and expanding national RTI programmes with a view to strengthening participation in Joint Programming Initiatives significantly. *(related to measures 3, 6, 9, 10, 27, 33, 36, 38, 45, 67)*
- 36 Optimising the participation modalities for all cross-border programme cooperations of the EU (e.g. Joint Programming, ERA-NET, European Innovation Partnerships, EIT-KICs, measures

according to Art. 185 and 187 TFEU, etc.) from a legal and an organisational perspective, while taking the efforts for harmonising the funding regulations of national, cross-border and EU programmes within the ERA into account. *(related to measures 3, 5, 6, 9, 10, 27, 33, 35, 37, 38, 45, 62, 67)*

37 Targeted support for KICs, insofar as there are desirable spill-over effects into the Austrian RTI system. *(related to measures 3, 36, 67)*

38 Looking into carrying out a pilot project for estimating the risks and benefits of common funding pots (“real common pot”) of several member states in a selected RTI field. *(related to measures 3, 9, 27, 33, 35, 36, 45, 67)*

39 Focussing and strengthening the role of EUREKA in the context of the European Research Area, both in the European context by being actively involved in shaping the developments within EUREKA, and on the national level, in order to optimise Austrian participation further, against the background of the ERA. This concerns the three main EUREKA instruments: a) Individual projects: demand-oriented approach (e.g. with selected partner countries) as well as targeted closing of gaps (with regard to time/topics etc.) within the framework of ERA instruments, by EUREKA; b) Eurostars: continuing and further strengthening this instrument which is specially oriented towards “research-intensive SMEs”, c) further strategic development of Austrian participation in EUREKA cluster projects. *(related to measures 8, 33)*

40 Using the EU actively as Austria’s bridge to the most important global RTI regions, by way of HORIZON 2020, SFIC, and specific measures of RTI Task Force Working Group 7a. *(related to measures 41, 47)*

41 Strengthening multinational cooperation with countries which are leaders in relevant thematic fields, including innovative non-EU countries associated to the Framework Programme (e.g. Switzerland, Norway, Israel). *(related to measures 40, 47, 67)*

42 Targeted cooperation with the EU neighbouring regions in Central, Eastern and Southern Europe, in particular through Austria’s active participation in the “Danube Region Strategy” of the European Union (“*Danube Region Research and Innovation Fund*”).

The following RTI players in Austria are asked to take the following measures:

43 **Universities, universities of applied sciences:** (Further) developing the internationalisation strategies of the Austrian universities within the framework of the performance agreements 2013 – 2015 as well as of the universities of applied sciences within the framework of the development and funding plan 2013 – 2016.

44 **Agencies:** (Further) developing their internationalisation strategies and cross-border programme cooperations.

- **Effects Expected Through Implementation of Measures**

The Austrian RTI programmes, which have so far been primarily oriented towards national needs, will be internationally interconnected through networking processes as well as processes regarding the harmonisation of programme design and funding regulations. The Austrian programme landscape will change in such a way as to make it easier to fund excellent researchers from other EU states in Austria. At the same time, the interconnection of Austrian programmes with other member states will open up a broad field of cooperation opportunities to Austrian RTI players which has not been accessible to them up to now.

Due to standardised regulations, the diverse access routes to multilateral programmes in Europe will be more customer-friendly and easier to use from an administrative point of view. For a relatively small RTI system such as Austria's, consciously opening-up and networking with other states creates economies of scale regarding funding volume, competition and the pool of researchers who are associated with Austria.

On the level of RTI players, a strategic approach to international networking makes it possible to strengthen the respective organisations according to their priorities.

Priority 4: Deploying “Innovation Union” for a Growth-oriented RTI Policy in Austria

- **Context**

With its Flagship Initiative “Innovation Union”, the European Union is heading for an innovation-based process of planning RTI instruments, measures and resources in Europe. This is about putting new knowledge, with all its facets, at the service of an intelligent, sustainable and integrated growth strategy (“Europe 2020 Strategy”).

The “Innovation Union” consists of 32 “commitments” covering a broad range of measures. Their common denominator is to provide new drive to the spluttering economic engine of Europe through research, technology and innovation.

The Federal Government proposes to take the following measures:

- 45 Active participation of Austria in selected “European Innovation Partnerships”. *(related to measures 3, 5, 6, 9, 10, 33, 35, 36, 38, 56, 67)*
- 46 Using the “Innovative Public Procurement” instrument in HORIZON 2020, which is completely new (to the Research Framework Programme), for stimulating innovation-oriented public procurement. *(related to measures 12, 62)*
- 47 With a view to international competition regarding innovation leadership, the European research perspective should be linked with the perspective of industry. The EU should pull its weight for supporting European industry within the framework of its external economic

relations policy. This should take place, amongst others, in connection with Austria's representation at the Council Competitiveness. (*related to measures 40, 41*)

48 Using the potential of creative industries as drivers of innovation ("transformative power of creative industries").

49 Investigating the impact of the introduction of the Community patent on the Austrian RTI system.

The following RTI players in Austria are asked to take the following measures:

50 ***Social and economic partners:*** Carrying out an assessment of the "Innovation Union" by the Austrian social and economic partners, as well as submitting corresponding recommendations to the RTI Task Force of the Federal Government.

- **Effects Expected Through Implementation of Measures**

By means of the proposed measures, the potential of the "Innovation Union" for Austria is explored and exploited to the best possible extent. Most of the initiatives under this priority have been initiated at European level, and the better Austria uses the opportunities provided by these initiatives for its own RTI system, the more favourable the economic policy environment will develop, in particular for Austrian enterprises.

Active use of the funding instruments can build upon the long-standing cooperation of the aws with the EIF and the EIB when handling counter-guarantees, and lately when co-funding the aws Business Angels Fund. In preparation of co-funding of funds from HORIZON 2020, the aws has already been able to gain first experiences in the pilot phase of the RSI (Risk Sharing Initiative) and has been able to provide corresponding input already for the preparation of the programme. The programme cooperations to be developed in this respect will first and foremost aim at the implementation of research results and their introduction on the market.

Priority 5: Optimising Interfaces of Austrian RTI Policy in the Light of the "Europe 2020" Strategy

- **Context**

The "Europe 2020 Strategy" is the EU's answer to the fact that Europe's position on global markets has been weakened sustainably, as a consequence of the financial and economic crisis which has dampened the growth perspectives in the member states since the year 2008.

This European Strategy uses seven Flagship Initiatives, with the one regarding the “Innovation Union” being at the heart of RTI policy. Nonetheless, the other six Flagships also concern aspects which should be considered when taking an overall perspective of the role of the “Europe 2020 Strategy” in Austria. These six “Flagship Initiatives” are the following:

“Europe 2020” Flagship Initiative “An Agenda for New Skills and Jobs” (aspects relevant to RTI: ERASMUS for Young Entrepreneurs; teacher training in entrepreneurship; knowledge alliances bringing together business and education/training institutions)

“Europe 2020” Flagship Initiative “European Platform against Poverty” (aspects relevant to RTI: promoting evidence-based social innovation; Innovation Partnership on “Active and Healthy Ageing”)

“Europe 2020” Flagship Initiative “Digital Agenda for Europe” (aspects relevant to RTI: ICT-specific funding measures)

“Europa 2020” Flagship Initiative “Youth on the Move” (aspects relevant to RTI: reforms of higher education; benchmarking (university ranking system); promotion of entrepreneurship)

“Europa 2020” Flagship Initiative “Resource Efficient Europe” (aspects relevant to RTI: sector-specific scenarios and funding measures)

“Europa 2020” Flagship Initiative “An Industrial Policy for the Globalisation Era” (aspects relevant to RTI: many groups of measures already covered elsewhere: State Aid rules; standard-setting; Key Enabling Technologies; Knowledge Alliances; cluster policy; Smart Specialisation; STEM education ...)

The Federal Government proposes to take the following measures:

- 51 Together with the Federal Provinces: Creating research and innovation-friendly framework conditions and standardised administrative practices in the field of the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESI) all over Austria, in particular by harmonising and simplifying national and regional funding regulations (funding rates, forms, rules for statements of account, as well as support), in order to achieve a purposeful, extensive and synergetic use of European funds from HORIZON 2020 and the ESI Funds. (related to measures 14, 62, 70)
- 52 Modernising higher education and making it more international by means of measures for supporting the mobility of students and staff in higher education institutions, as well as by setting up and expanding cross-country cooperations and knowledge alliances (amongst others through programmes managed by OeAD GmbH (Austrian agency for international mobility and cooperation in science, education and research)).
- 53 Increasing funding of excellence by the FWF – Austrian Science Fund, as an element of higher education reform (strengthening the awarding of research funds on a competitive basis in the science system). (related to measures 1, 22, 23, 24)
- 54 Social innovation – expanding the technological understanding of innovation by social innovation as an area for action where social practices for dealing with the grand societal challenges such as new methods of fighting poverty, new working environment models or participatory decision-making processes are developed.

- 55 Investments in the creation and enlargement of e-research infrastructures in order to facilitate top-level performance in basic and applied research. *(related to measures 11, 25)*
- 56 Examining the setting-up of a national RTI initiative in the field of raw materials on the issues of securing supplies of raw materials, critical raw materials, efficiency strategies and recycling. *(related to measure 45)*
- 57 Promoting the targeted participation of relevant RTI players in European standardisation initiatives, in order to represent the interests of Austrian industry in the development of common norms and standards.

The following RTI players in Austria are asked to take the following measures:

- 58 **Federal Provinces:** Developing multi-annual regional location strategies for intelligent specialisation (RIS3) in every Federal Province – closely coordinated with the higher education institutions and other leading knowledge and innovation institutions as well as the regional clusters. This includes coordination with the strategic priorities set by the Federal Government and the other Federal Provinces, as a precondition for being awarded European Structural and Investment funds for research and innovation.
- 59 **Austrian Council for Research and Technology Development:** Examining the need for action with regard to the potential of the “Europe 2020” Strategy as well as any documents derived from it, with regard to their potential impact on the Austrian innovation system, as well as drawing up recommendations, if appropriate.

- **Effects Expected Through Implementation of Measures**

This priority makes research, technology and innovation advance into important areas of life of society and makes them being used as an integral part of policies which so far have been designed largely independently of RTI players and measures. By means of the targeted implementation of these measures, Austria will succeed in making social innovations contribute to reducing poverty in Austria. Targeted interventions in key areas will make an active contribution to strengthening the industrial base in Austria. The RTI Initiative on raw materials, which aims at preventing existing and future shortages of raw materials as well as contributing to resource and energy efficiency, plays a particular role in this context. Innovations along the entire raw materials value chain will make an essential contribution to covering the basic needs of a modern, resource-friendly society and for the competitiveness of industry.

Funding e-infrastructures will create one of the preconditions for excellence in the field of basic and applied research, and consequently of industrial development.

Universities will contribute to the objectives of the “Europe 2020” Strategy in Austria by actively promoting the international networking of their students, teachers and researchers, by means of which they can improve their results in university benchmarking in the long term.

Priority 6: Strengthening Effective Governance of EU Affairs in Austria

- **Context**

Neither the Austrian nor the European RTI system can be governed centrally. The times of sovereign decision-making monopolies are in the past. Hierarchical pronouncements and the delegation of responsibility to a few “master minds” have been replaced by a multiplicity of knowledge nodes in mutual relation with each other and interacting in partly-autonomous processes. The centre and the periphery change according to the point of view and the needs of the observing individual or organisation.

At the same time, public authorities are required to transform the great complexity of the European diversity of policies, programmes, initiatives and networks into comprehensible information. They have to provide decision-making support and orientational knowledge, to open fora for dialogue and cooperation, and to legitimise the articulation of interests in the form of democratic processes.

The Federal Government proposes to take the following measures:

- 60 Creating an “ERA Observatory” (consisting of an interministerial steering committee as well as an expert advisory body) for holistic governance of Austria’s role in European RTI policy. *(related to measures 62, 65, 66, 67, 68)*
- 61 Creating a web-based “Help Desk” for EU issues for RTI players in Austria. *(related to measure 66)*
- 62 Securing Austria’s position as a net recipient in HORIZON 2020, above all by a targeted adaptation of the national advisory and support structures. *(related to measures 1, 6, 7, 8, 12, 33, 36, 51, 63, 64, 65)*
- 63 Implementing thematic expert groups for the programme areas of HORIZON 2020 in Austria, where a close coordination between the advisory services of the National Contact Points and the strategic projects of the ministries is ensured, with the groups being led by the Programme Delegates. *(related to measures 62, 64)*
- 64 Supporting the Austrian Programme Delegates in the strategic connection of national and European RTI initiatives in HORIZON 2020 (e.g. strategic networking analyses, platform for exchange of experiences, web tools). *(related to measures 4, 62, 63, 66)*
- 65 Further developing the “EU Performance Monitoring” in the light of the evaluation of “PROVISO RP7”. *(related to measures 60, 62)*

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| 66 | Further developing the “era.gv.at” website into an “ERA Portal Austria”, focussing on information, communication, analysis and networking with EU RTI policy. <i>(related to measures 60, 62)</i> |
| 67 | Establishing suitable inter-ministerial governance mechanisms in connection with multilateral programmes in the European Research Area. <i>(related to measures 3, 5, 6, 9, 10, 27, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 41, 45)</i> |
| 68 | Developing a simplified, effective and complementary reporting system for all commissioning contracts of the Federal State with relevance to Europe, with the objective of being able to get a quick overview of Austria’s course in the European Research Area by means of qualitative and quantitative indicators (“Cockpit” governance). <i>(related to measure 60)</i> |
| 69 | Examining the establishment of an EU office in Brussels, in order to strengthen information, communication and networking as well as the institutional representation of the Austrian RTI players’ interests. |
| 70 | Further developing the cooperation between the Federal State and the Federal Provinces when coordinating common priorities in science, research and innovation, in particular when implementing the RTI Strategy and Austria’s objectives within the framework of the Europe 2020 Strategy, as well as when setting investment priorities. <i>(related to measures 14, 51)</i> |

The following RTI players in Austria are asked to take the following measures:

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| 71 | Austrian Research Promotion Agency: Supporting the responsible ministries in advice, support and networking within the framework of the European RTI instruments and policy processes (HORIZON 2020, ERA, Innovation Union, Europe 2020 Strategy). |
| 72 | All RTI players: Further networking with related bodies and networks at European level. |

- **Effects Expected Through Implementation of Measures**

This priority will further optimise the interaction between the ministries responsible for RTI and will ensure that their specific competence and experience is used interministerially. The interaction between the different measures creates the preconditions for gaining a timely overview of the manifold measures in HORIZON 2020, the European Research Area, the Innovation Union as well as within the framework of the “Europe 2020” Strategy, and for developing well-coordinated recommendations for action.

From the perspective of researchers, the measures proposed improve transparency and the level of information regarding European research policy. Furthermore, an orderly process is created for dealing with complaints and issues in connection with possible undesirable developments in the EU context, which helps to develop the Austrian RTI system further in terms of a learning organisation.

Outlook

The EU Action Plan applies to the period from 2013 to 2020 and – provided the Federal Government adopts it – will be implemented by the responsible ministries as well as by the relevant RTI players in Austria. The ministries responsible will define the measures to be taken within their sphere of responsibility with regard to time and budget and will provide details with regard to the content of these measures.

Working Group 7b will take over the monitoring of the EU Action Plan. In the year 2016, an independent evaluation should assess the status of the implementation of the Action Plan as well as the process of the RTI ministries accompanying its implementation. The evaluation should also draw up recommendations with regard to the remaining duration of the Action Plan.