

Extracts of the relevant paragraphs in the Work Programme of the Austrian Federal Government for the period 2013 – 2018

01 Growth and employment for Austria

G r o w t h (Page 8)

Objective:

A massive increase in employment with the goal of full employment through above average economic growth compared with the euro zone.

Development of the economy with innovations

Measures:

- Mobilize foundation assets for research, technology and innovation;
- Move up into the leading group of the most innovative research countries in Europe by taking a cue from FTI strategy;
- Launch a new innovation and investment campaign for more regional jobs to best utilize the resources of the European Fund for Regional Development (EU-EFRE);
- EU funding: optimize national processing in all phases, from submitting an application to accounting validation.

C o r p o r a t e f i n a n c i n g (Page 14)

Objective:

Ensure financing for businesses consistent with their needs, and strengthen the Austrian financial and capital market.

Challenges:

Expand and consolidate government guarantees for companies:

- Make more use of EU financial instruments;
- Enable SMEs and industry to more simply and affordably access liability of the Austria Wirtschaftsservice (AWS): with the new EU support period starting in 2014, guarantee and processing charges will be halved in accordance with certain aid provisions, the restriction on access to world markets will be abolished, the upper limit for individual guarantees will be raised, guarantees will be offered for SME bonds, there will be a greater preparedness to take risks (effectively achieve the risk policy

agreed annually), and more moderate use of personal collateral. The measures will be supported with budgetary cover;

- With the new EU support period, simplify support through uniform conditions in the allocation of federal guarantees for companies: suggestions from the working group in the Austrian Federal Ministry of Finance with the involvement of the ministries affected.

Agriculture/forestry: growth and employment in the countryside (Page 18)

Objective:

Boost economic performance and employment in rural areas

Measures:

- The European Social Fund (ESF), the European Fund for Regional Development (EFRE), and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) all contribute to the development of rural areas. The national partnership agreement stipulates that altogether 20 % of EAFRD funds should be used for pursuing the objectives of strengthening research, technological development and innovation (Goal 1), boosting the competitiveness of SMEs (Goal 3) [...].

The future of the rural areas (Page 20)

The living and economic locations in rural regions should be safeguarded and developed.

Objective:

Research and innovation campaign for rural areas

Challenges:

To make comprehensive use of European and national funding possibilities, interdepartmental ensures should be even better coordinated. A basic prerequisite for this is an overview and evaluation of the entire funding landscape for the rural areas. Fields of strength in the rural areas should also be developed through making them key focuses in research and innovation policy.

Measures:

- Focus research and innovation policy on the fields of strength of the rural areas, such as agriculture and forestry, food production, the wine industry, energy production, tourism, and new services (mobile services).

02 Making Austria fit for the future

Research and Innovation (Page 29f)

Objectives:

- Austria should aim to become one of Europe's leading and most innovative research countries by following the RTI (Research, Technology, Innovation) strategy;
- Bring about increased private research investment through targeted measures with a strong leveraging effect;
- By supporting basic research, application-oriented research and technological development, our society as a knowledge society should be strengthened, high-quality jobs should be created, and the quality of life of the Austrian people, economic and employment growth, and altogether the country's prosperity should be increased.

Challenges:

Ensure adequate public research funding for excellent basic research, applied research and technological development, safeguard knowledge transfer, and increase the proportion of private and international investment; create and improve career prospects for young people, boost efficiency in research structures, and cut red tape.

Measures:

- Promote excellence and talent: foster outstanding young researchers as well as individual talents and career paths through an additional 2,500 doctoral and post-doctoral positions (Austrian Science Fund/FWF, Austrian Academy of Sciences/ÖAW, Institute of Science and Technology Austria/ISTA) and develop the funding of both young researchers and young technicians in the business-related area (Austrian Research Promotion Agency/FFG). Implement an interdepartmental package of measures that already starts at kindergarten and school age to awaken young people's pleasure in innovating and to increase their interest in Mathematics, Informatics, the Natural Sciences and Technology (MINT) (e.g. each year 2,000 Children's University research placements, "Jugend Innovativ" or "Young People Innovate" campaign). Step up measures to stem the "brain drain" and to encourage the migration to Austria of highly qualified researchers; training and further training initiatives for R&D staff. Promote the dialogue between science and society. Raise the proportion of women in research;
- Innovative entrepreneurship: increase the number of enterprises actively involved in innovation through measures aimed at start-up companies; champion start-ups through appropriate support, funding and consultancy, etc. (e.g. venture capital); promote the relocation to Austria of R&D-intensive companies and the R&D HQs of international corporations; increase support for production and key technologies;

increase the networking of universities and institutes of applied science with a view to attracting research enterprises to relocate to them;

- Research for meeting social challenges: gear research to topics such as quality of life, energy, mobility, health, demographic change, to integrative, innovative and reflecting societies, and to service-provision as well as social innovations. Leverage the potentials of The Arts, Social Sciences and Cultural History. Establish “living labs” in conjunction with the latter disciplines as well as with institutions, companies, and consumers;
- Research infrastructure: renew and develop research infrastructure in a coordinated and needs-driven way for joint use by science and the economy as well as by international research bodies such as the European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures (ESFRI); utilize EU funds for co-financing;
- Boost top-flight research in the basic and applied field, and comprehensively support the innovation chain: comprehensively support the innovation chain from excellence-oriented basic research (raise its profile in the Austrian Academy of Sciences and universities) via applied RTI through to translation into marketable products and services. Increase cooperation between science and business (e.g. Comet, Bridge, Proof of Concept programme, Christian Doppler Research Association, Ludwig Boltzmann Society, knowledge-transfer centres, Austrian Cooperative Research; set up ten endowed professorships in important technology areas (Austrian Research Promotion Agency/FFG), and help SMEs and start-up companies develop new markets;
- Overall strategy for intellectual property: exploit the full potential of intellectual property by developing and implementing a national strategy for intellectual property involving all stakeholders and taking into account the entire bandwidth of intellectual property;
- Better establish Austria internationally as a science, research and innovation location: increase the flow of international and EU funds to Austria by improving the range of consultancy services; sustain the country’s branding internationally as a science and innovation location; increase researcher mobility and establish a lasting network of researchers who have a connection to Austria; market leading-edge Austrian technologies globally, and improve international scientific networking by signing science and technology agreements with strategically relevant target countries; plant offices of science and technology Austria (OSTA) and RTI attachés in priority countries.

Strengthen Austria as a research location and cut red tape:

- In the next five years, federal funding should be made available – subject to budgetary possibilities – to raise the research ratio;

- Enact a research funding law to increase long-term planning certainty for research institutions and companies;
- Strengthen the extra-budgetary basis for R&D through, e.g., setting up an irrevocable “Non-Profit-Making Foundation New” for the purposes of research, innovation and technology funded by the National Foundation for Research, Technology and Development, through the integrated planning and utilization of European funds (e.g. European Fund for Regional Development/EFRE, European Investment Bank/EIB), and through providing incentives for private R&D investment;
- Greatly simplify access to research funding – especially for SMEs; modernize research funding law (in particular the Austrian Research Organization Act/FOG, the Research and Technology Funding Act/FTFG, General Framework Directives/ARR); cut red tape regarding the processing of funding; establish a generally applicable regulation for funding overheads; make it easier to utilize the resources of the European Fund for Regional Development (EFRE) while ensuring legal certainty; avoid multiple audits; implement measures to optimize coordination between the EU, the Government, and the Länder regarding research funding and research institutes in Austria as a research base.

Secure energy supply for Austria (Page 31)

Objectives:

An efficient, affordable and socially acceptable energy system guarantees security of supply, prosperity, competitiveness and an environment worth living in; strengthen Austria’s trailblazing role by rigorously continuing the country’s anti-nuclear power station policy.

Measures:

Catalyze the energy system through innovation (Page 33)

- Mobilize companies’ energy research activities;
- Strengthen energy research within the framework of the Federal Government’s FTI strategy.

Protecting the environment and promoting sustainable growth (Page 33)

Objectives:

The Austrian Federal Government is committed to a long-term environmental policy. Acting in an ecosocial manner enables economic sustainability, improves quality of life, reduces pollution through harmful substances and noise, preserves biological diversity, develops

renewable energy, and increases energy as well as resource efficiency. The Government takes its global responsibility seriously by pursuing an ambitious climate and anti-nuclear power station policy, while the policy itself strengthens Austria as a business and employment location.

Measure:

- Biodiversity – support the Bioeconomy Research Initiative

03 Education, science, art and culture, women

Science (page 44f)

Objective:

Science and research shall be sustained long-term as primary pillars of Austria's overall development and potential.

Challenge:

Parameters and structural prerequisites must be arranged optimally, competitively and in a forward-looking way.

To achieve these goals, three projects have been developed for Austria. An overall strategy for universities and research in the country: bring about a climate of innovation, and enable Austria to be a world leader through the best teaching and studying conditions.

- Our positioning in international comparisons shall be raised through strengthening the tertiary sector and research, which means improving their budgetary parameters. Specific budgetary measures shall be taken to reach the goal of 2 % of GDP for tertiary educational institutions by 2020 (career measures, Medical Faculty Linz; incentives shall be created for more private investment);
- Further legal steps shall be implemented as planned for financing university places; an Austria-wide university development plan shall be drawn up; and the overall number of students admitted to university should not be lowered. Here, in the context of expanding the present capacity arrangement (currently five fields), additional posts for professors shall be created (up to 200 positions in terms of the present procedure) and their support conditions shall be improved;
- Overall university development is of great importance for Austria. Fundamental cornerstones of this development are quality, performance, upgrading the profile of universities, effective deployment of resources, the necessary infrastructure

measures (land use plan, infrastructure for major research), optimal permeability to, in and between tertiary educational institutions, quality-oriented governance (e.g. lean and efficient reporting, cost and performance accounting, qualitative impact), the quality of teaching and course guidance, and improving the latter. Development of the Austrian university plan and Higher Education Conference shall be continued, as also Teacher Training New;

- Excellence shall be fostered in Austria in the arts, social sciences, cultural history, and in the field of science and ethics;
- The Austrian Universities Act (UG): This shall be further developed with regard to planning certainty, current time limits and legislative simplifications, and taking into account certain evaluations (e.g. Section 124, Section 64 Para. 4, Section 66, etc.). Study law shall be amended (permeability, further education, study and examination area, more binding force in admission procedures);
- Concepts shall be drawn up in connection with problems of asymmetrical student mobility. The quota system or some suitable follow-up arrangement should be put on a permanent footing. A root-and-branch review is needed of the development and expansion of university places in medicine in Austria (also regarding post-doctoral training and the pursuit of a medical career);
- The extra time and cost of clinical training shall be re-regulated by the beginning of 2015, following the criteria of simplicity, uniformity and transparency. Here, key parameters should be a clear flat-rate calculation system, performance-related and responsible cooperation, exact cost and performance control (paying attention to reciprocal responsibility, staff development and infrastructure questions), the separate tasks of science and medical care, and possible cooperations between hospital operators and private medical universities.
- Our target: 50,000 places in institutes of applied science by 2018
- As part of a future plan for developing and funding Austria's institutes of applied science, the number of places at these institutes shall be increased to 50,000, while their funding rates shall also be increased;
- The range of opportunities and courses for young people graduating from the dual system and from the vocational school system shall be further developed, with the aim – among other things – of counting subject-related skills and qualifications more towards these courses.
- Package of opportunities, measures and services for students and young researchers in Austria
- The number of careers offices shall be increased and new career programmes shall be offered. The number of research centres for PhD and postdoctoral students as well as in doctoral colleges shall be increased; knowledge transfer centres shall be

set up. New career options or career models shall be worked out, and measures shall be taken regarding the advancement of women, gender-related issues, the compatibility of family and work, greater compatibility of work and study, and greater non-traditional access to study in the whole higher educational sector. Performance, responsibility and increased opportunities for highly qualified scientific staff to participate must be important parameters in the successful development of the tertiary sector;

- To strengthen the idea of Europe, the involvement of Austrian students and teachers in European mobility programmes (e.g. Erasmus) should be further stepped up;
- The Austrian National Union of Students Act (HSG) shall be evaluated or amended in consultation with stakeholders with regard to possible points of reform (questions of electoral law, management, and liability, etc.).