

COUNTRY	Austria
<p>How many OPs are there in your Member State?</p> <p>Do they have very different provisions in terms of partnership?</p>	<p>With the exception of Burgenland, all Austrian regions are eligible under the regional competitiveness and employment objective (Burgenland is a phasing-out region and implements one ESF and one ERDF programme). Thus, nine OPs are devised under this objective (8 regional programmes co-funded by ERDF and one programme co-funded by ESF for all regions except Burgenland). To sum up, under those two objectives 11 OPs are implemented in Austria 2007-2013 in total.</p> <p>The provisions in terms of "partnership" vary within the OPs. The Austrian OP for Employment 2007-2013 (co-funded by ESF) places strong emphasis on partnerships, especially in respect to TEPs (Territorial Employment Pacts), within the following priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o <u>Priority 5:</u> In order to support employment policy objectives through improved coordination at regional and local levels, TEPs are promoted by the OP. To support the implementation of TEPs, the costs in particular of the operative structures of the pacts are subsidized under priority 5, with co-financing being provided by the ESF with 46% and 54% by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Economics and Labour. o <u>Priority 3b:</u> For reaching the goals set up in priority 3b (integration of persons distant from the labour market), the TEPs play an additional important role: they serve as beneficiaries for priority 3b, develop and co-fund projects at regional/sub-regional/local level to reach out those on the margins of the labour market and bringing them into the mainstream. o <u>All priorities:</u> Finally, the TEPs assist in implementing the OP through improved coordination at regional and local levels in all priorities. o <u>Technical support on the national level</u> - Co-ordination Unit of the Territorial Employment Pacts: The Co-ordination Unit supports the various projects carried out by the Austrian Employment Pacts and its partner institutions by means of information exchange, strategic co-ordination and joint activities
<p>Does partnership have a geographical focus in your Member State's OP(s)?</p> <p>If so, national, regional, sub-regional e.g. county, district, group of municipalities, municipality, etc.?</p>	<p>Territorial Employment Pacts are established in all nine Austrian Federal Provinces. Additionally, some TEPs have been set up at sub-regional and local level (NUTS III).</p>
<p>Is partnership linked to specific thematic issues / objectives (incl. possible targeting of specific groups / links with policy) in the OP(s)?</p>	<p>On regional/sub-regional/local level, the TEPs link labour market and employment policy with other policies, such as social policy, economic policy, regional development, etc.</p>
<p>Please specify further what is understood as “partnership” in the OP(s) in your Member State?</p> <p>(See Note 1)</p>	<p>TEPs are contracted regional partnerships to better link employment policy with other policies in order to improve the employment situation on regional and local level. In co-operating as partners, the specific aims are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o to increase effectiveness and efficiency in the use of resources; o to improve the quality of support given to certain target groups; o to secure and create jobs; o to obtain funding for the regions and

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o to preserve in a sustainable manner the region as a place to live. <p>The partnerships develop regional strategies with respect to employment policies. They identify local and regional problems, develop ideas and strategies in order to improve the labour market situation and implement measures according to their objectives. All partners are involved in conceiving, agreeing upon and implementing a mostly annual TEP-work programme.</p> <p>The TEPs' measures are funded by financial contributions of the contracting partners, which amounted to approx. EUR 700,000,000 in 2006. For the regional and local co-ordination of each TEP additional funding of approx. EUR 200,000 p.a. is applied for within the OP for Employment, priority 5 (see above).</p> <p>TEPs lead to positive results in terms of improving co-operation and partnership working, as well as the implementation of policy measures. The Austrian evaluation of TEPs (2003) showed that the alliances have increased the efficiency and effectiveness of the regional approach to active labour market policy, supporting the integration of unemployed persons into the labour market and raising employability. In addition, the partnership approach indirectly affected the way a number of policies are carried out in the regions. Mainstreaming equal opportunities in the design of policies is recorded as additional result achieved by the TEPs.</p> <p>The TEPs use a huge variety of different measures and instruments to address and solve regional and local problems. Instruments include, for example, "Arbeitsstiftungen", qualification and training measures, promotion of social enterprises, counselling facilities, business start-ups and other innovative projects.</p>
<p>What requirements are there for partnerships to become formally established in your OP(s)?</p> <p>(e.g. they need to: write a declaration with intent to work together, prepare a more detailed partnership agreement detailing tasks/roles, launch a call for tenders to acquire partners through contracts or join up in a separate legal entity)</p>	<p>In order to be eligible for priority 5 and 3b (OP for Employment) regional TEP partners are obliged to formally sign a contract between each other, agree upon a joint working programme and develop rules of procedures.</p> <p>A TEP is a comprehensive partnership of regions and communities including at least the following institutions as pact partners (obligatory):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o the Public Employment Service (AMS); o the Provincial Government (or sub-regional, local authorities), and o the Social Partners (both sides of industry). <p>All other relevant actors (e.g. Federal Offices of Social Affairs, local employment initiatives, gender mainstreaming experts, regional development associations, training institutions, other stakeholders and representations of interests) should be included into pact activities.</p>
<p>What specific questions regarding partnership are asked in (previous/current) ESF application forms?</p>	<p>The application form (priority 5) requests the following information from the TEPs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o regional (core) function and the TEP's role as well as the role of their regional co-ordination unit; o cooperation structures and fora indicating the decision making bodies, procedures of decision making, etc.; o core problems observed in the region, the regional strategy deriving from the analyses, the objectives set and the joint working programme (the 'coherence' between problems observed, regional strategy and objectives has to be proved); o planned activities for ensuring further development and sustainability of the partnership; o expected joined TEP-budget (listing the contributions of each partner); o appropriate means applied for under priority 5; and

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o brief descriptions of measures implemented by the TEP (and applied for under priority 5).
<p>Types of organisations typically involved in partnership (e.g. social partners, NGOs, companies, academia, etc.) in the OP(s)</p>	<p>Provincial Governments, Regional Labour Market Services, Federal Office of Social Affairs, Economic Chamber, Chamber of Labour, Federation of Trade Unions, Federation of Industry, Association of Municipalities, Provincial Chamber of Agriculture, Provincial School Board, gender mainstreaming experts, representatives of employees, representatives of employers, representatives of regional Non-Profit-Organisations, Regional Management Associations.</p>
<p>If partnerships are embedded within existing national, regional or local structures, how are these different levels linked to each other and how does this facilitate mainstreaming in the OP(s)?</p> <p>(See Note 2)</p>	<p>Though the TEPs contribute to a better aligning of objectives between local, sub-regional, regional, national and international level, multi-level governance processes across sectors <u>and</u> levels are not yet very well established. Still, many activities are in place in order to contribute to improved multi-level governance, such as e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o A ‘TEP mainstreaming process’ is established on national level in order to better integrate the partnerships into specific policy frames (e.g. STRAT.at, ERDF-programmes, etc.) o The Co-ordination Unit together with the TEPs developed a national consolidation process, so-called “STEPS”, in 2004, focussing on co-operative learning by analysing the governance-systems of the pacts. o In 2006, a nation-wide consultation process for the integration of elderly into the labour market (including all levels and sectors) took place based upon the ‘TEPs-Green paper for elderly’. o During 2007-2013, the Austrian Co-ordination Unit will implement activities enabling for a better exchange of know-how between, in particular, the various TEP-levels and the national level (e.g. “Themen-TEP-talks”, “3b Schnittstellen-Kolloquium”).
<p>How do the choices of the OP(s) in terms of partnership address the EC regulation?</p> <p>(See Note 3)</p>	<p>The OP for Employment promotes partnerships to a great extent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Since the establishment and implementation of TEPs in Austria primarily was a ‘top-down’ initiative in 1999-2000, the policy frame for TEPs is clearly defined. However, the partnerships decide autonomously on their content of work (e.g. each pact can best make use of regional strengths, adopt to local conditions, etc.). Consequently, the Austrian TEPs, which are seen as new governance models, vary in terms of strategies established and measures implemented, all reflecting their specific regional backgrounds. o In Austria, it was observed that stable funding structures are key to operating successful partnerships. Since the partnership structures are funded by the ESF (see above), the Austrian TEPs continuously developed further (e.g. implement gender mainstreaming, promote and fund innovative projects, etc.). o This favourable development assists to better address and solve problems at the interface of policies, such as between social policy and labour market policy. In 2007-2013, the TEPs will pay a stronger attention to the integration of persons distant from the labour market. o Finally, the TEPs receive advice via the national Coordination Unit of TEPs, ensuring the exchange of know-how between the partnerships (‘TEP network’), assisting in monitoring and evaluation of the partnerships and making PR. o Gender Equality and Gender Mainstreaming are horizontal goals of the OP for Employment (at least 50 % of the target group should be women and at least 50 % of the budget should be applied for women).
<p>Are there major differences with how partnership was organised in the past</p>	<p>The TEPs were already established und funded by the ESF during the Structural fund period 2000-2006. However, extra funding for a specific priority, such is the case in 2007-2013, was not provided.</p>

<p>OP(s)? Why was the choice made to change? Did EQUAL have influence on this choice and, if yes, how?</p>	<p>During the implementation of EQUAL in Austria, a strong wish was expressed by the federal state: the Community Initiative EQUAL should benefit from the TEPs. By integrating TEP actors into EQUAL Development Partnerships (DP) topics relevant to EQUAL were better be linked to labour market and educational policies. Additionally, the transfer of knowledge and methods between the actors was enhanced. In total, the TEPs supported the establishment of 44 DPs during the first and second round of EQUAL.</p>
<p>What are the strong points of the way the OP(s) organise(s) partnership?</p>	<p>The partnership model assists for a better use of synergies between programmes, especially on regional level (Länder level). It enables for cooperation between financiers on strategic programme level and helps to establish a common ground between actors responsible for labour market policy (labour market service, provincial governments, etc.).</p>
<p>What are the drawbacks of the way the OP(s) organise(s) partnership?</p>	<p>The model's disadvantage is the often missing (direct) contact to the local level in order to e.g. better include civil society's concerns. In addition, TEPs play a minor role in relation to democracy given that mainly financiers, social partners and other (mostly) official organisations are part of the decision-making committees.</p>
<p>What measures, if any, are being taken to build on the strong points and reduce the drawbacks in the OP(s)?</p>	<p>Since the TEPs will implement innovative projects in the field of social inclusion 2007-2013 (priority 3b), the TEPs are on their way to even become stronger partners in linking policies on regional and local level.</p>
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Notes

Note 1

- o function of partnership within the OP: ranging from implementation of activities on the ground (e.g. through projects) to high level strategic decision making (e.g. in monitoring committee etc.)
- o stability of partnership: ranging from supporting ad hoc, task oriented partnerships to permanent, institutionalised partnerships
- o importance of ESF funding for partnership: highly dependent to small influence
- o mainly cross-sector partnerships or within a sector
- o mainly cross-(sub)regional partnerships or within a (sub)region
- o highly formalised (e.g. legally binding agreements) to informal
- o etc.....

Note 2

Mainstreaming refers here to vertical mainstreaming where lessons learnt and good practice need to be taken up by higher levels of the organisational or political system.

Note 3

Art. 3: promoting partnerships, pacts and initiatives through networking of relevant stakeholders, such as the social partners and non-governmental organisations, at the transnational, national, regional and local levels in order to mobilise for reforms in the field of employment and labour market inclusiveness.

Art. 5:

1. The ESF shall promote good governance and partnership. Its support shall be designed and implemented at the appropriate territorial level taking into account the national, regional and local level according to the institutional arrangements specific to each Member State.
2. The Member States shall ensure the involvement of the social partners and adequate consultation and participation of other stakeholders, at the appropriate territorial level, in the preparation, implementation and monitoring of ESF support.
3. The managing authority of each operational programme shall encourage adequate participation of the social partners in actions funded under Article 3. Under the Convergence objective, an appropriate amount of ESF resources shall be allocated to capacity-building, which shall include training, networking measures, strengthening the social dialogue and activities jointly undertaken by the social partners, in particular as regards adaptability of workers and enterprises referred to in Article 3(1)(a).
4. The managing authority of each operational programme shall encourage adequate participation and access by nongovernmental organisations to the funded activities, notably in the domains of social inclusion, gender equality and equal opportunities.