

Ensuring a society for all ages:
Promoting quality of life and active ageing

National Report Austria

**3rd review and appraisal of the implementation of the
Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing 2002
2012 – 2016**

Authors: Dr.ⁱⁿ Erika Winkler and Dr. Hannes Spreitzer

Ageing, Population and Volunteering Policies Unit
Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection
1010 Vienna, Stubenring 1

National Focal Point on Ageing: Dr.ⁱⁿ Erika Winkler

PART I

Executive Summary: Priority goals during the period under review and in the future

Austrian active ageing policy is mainstreamed under the Federal Plan for Senior Citizens “Age and Future” (“Alter und Zukunft”) which was adopted by the federal government and parliament in 2012 and is based on the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA) and the UNECE Regional Implementation Strategy of Berlin 2002 (RIS). The 14 fields of action of the Federal Plan for Senior Citizens are in line with the four policy goals of the 2012 Vienna Ministerial Declaration; they are pillars of equal significance of Austrian ageing policy.

A breakdown of the three most important commitments out of ten, based on the quality and quantity of the measures implemented in the period under review and planned for the next period 2016 – 2021 results in the ranking below (see also Conclusions and Priorities for the Future, page 25). The equivalents in brackets relate to commitments which are directly linked with each other in implementation. For example, labour market policy measures are inseparably linked with mainstreaming ageing and non-discrimination on grounds of age; at the same time, they are the best safeguards for maintaining social protection with income-centred financing. Measures to support ageing in place also serve to improve quality of life, independence and dignity as well as a positive attitude toward ageing. Lifelong learning is the best foundation for participation and social inclusion.

Ranking of the 3 most important commitments, based on measures implemented

2012 – 2016 and 2016 – 2021

Commitments	2012 - 2016	2016 - 2021
1. Mainstreaming Ageing	(1) (2) (3)	(1) (2) (3)
2. Inclusion and Participation	3	3
3. Economic Growth		(1)
4. Social Protection	(1)	(1)
5. Labour Market	1	1
6. Lifelong Learning	(3)	(3)
7. Quality of Life, Independence, Health	2	2
8. Gender Equality	(1) (2) (3)	(1) (2) (3)
9. Support of Ageing in Place	(2)	(2)
10. Regional Cooperation	1-10	1 - 10

(The equivalents in brackets relate to commitments inseparably linked with each other in implementation.)

1. The national situation regarding ageing

1.1. Demographic indicators

The share of older persons above 65 years of age in the total population was 18.5% in 2014. The total fertility rate was 1.4. Mean life expectancy at birth 78.9 years for man and 83.7 years for women. The average age was 42.3 years. For further demographic indicators, please refer to the Annex.

1.2. Quantitative social and economic indicators

According to data from the Austrian Institute of Economic Research (WIFO), domestic consumption has again been contributing strongly to economic growth in 2016. Apart from increased private household incomes due to tax reform, spending on refugees also results in a clear boost in demand in the years 2016 and 2017. GDP is expected to see growth at a rate of +1.7% in both years, which is significantly stronger growth than in previous years (see table in the Annex).

1.3. Brief description of the social, economic and political Situation

The 2015 study “The Social Consequences of the Crisis” examines the repercussions of the worldwide financial and economic crisis on the social situation in Austria.

Unemployment has risen markedly even though Austria is still among the countries in Europe where the labour market situation is most favourable. Older workers have been particularly affected by unemployment. At the same time, employment increased.

In 2014 an annual average 319,000 person were registered as jobless. The trend continued in 2015: at the end of August 2015 the number of registered unemployed persons was slightly above 327,000. In 2010 unemployment among those aged 25 to 54 grew markedly; ever since, older workers between 55 and 64 years of age are increasingly affected.

Since the beginning of the crisis, the number of long-term unemployed persons more than doubled. Persons between 55 and 64 years of age (in particular women) and between 15 and 24 years of age were specially affected.

The crisis disrupted the continuous rise in corporate and investment income, leading to a slight increase in the wage ratio. In Austria, working poverty is counteracted by welfare benefits. Without transfer payments from public spending, 44% of the Austrian population would be at risk of poverty. Thanks to pensions and other welfare benefits, the at-risk-of-poverty rate in Austria is down to 14% (comparable data for the year 2015). The number of those receiving a means-tested minimum income increased by roughly 28% to 284.374 persons between 2012 and 2015 (source: Statistics of the federal Laender regarding means-tested minimum income 2012-2015; STATISTIK AUSTRIA).

The welfare state is a tried-and-tested, effective “trouble-shooter” in times of crisis: Austria is among the few countries in Europe where poverty is not on the rise. Unemployment benefits were not cut so that they strengthened purchasing power and had a stabilizing effect. Revenue from taxes and social security contributions were largely maintained at a stable level, thus safeguarding viable funding of the welfare state. In Austria, investments into labour-market programmes play an important part in the fight against the social consequences of the crisis.

2. Methodology

2.1. Quantitative information on more recent studies

For more recent studies, please refer to the Bibliography in the Annex.

2.2. Qualitative bottom-up approach and involvement of stakeholders

2015 saw the start of the evaluation of the Federal Plan for Senior Citizens, which had been drawn up with considerable contributions of Austrian senior citizen organizations and adopted by the federal government and parliament in 2012. All major stakeholders were invited to report on implementation, and these reports also form the basis of the Austrian National Report on the implementation of MIPAA/RIS: the invitation was extended to all federal ministries, the senior citizen representatives of the Laender, the Austrian Association of Municipalities, the Austrian Association of Cities and Towns as well as all Austrian senior citizen organizations. All institutions which submitted reports are listed in the Annex.

PART II

1. National actions and progress in the implementation of MIPAA/RIS

1.1. Longer working life is encouraged and ability to work is maintained by

In the current legislative period (2013 - 2018), the Austrian federal government stepped up their efforts to improve the labour market situation of older workers.

(a) Promoting and supporting healthy life styles and well being in work

Efforts for early awareness-raising about “work and health” are promoted, and so are preventive health programmes. Since 2010, “fit2work” has been in place as a low-threshold counselling programme to avoid (long-term) sick leaves and early withdrawal from the working life for reasons of health. Since 2013 “fit2work” is being rolled out in all Laender. With the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection as the lead institution, the nine ‘Sozialministeriumservice-Centers’ in the Laender, the social security institutions, the social partners, the public employment service (AMS), the labour inspectorates and other federal ministries cooperate in the program. The goals of “fit2work” are as follows:

- sustainable improvement of workers’ ability to work,
- help for self-help by creating an integration team and establishing early-warning systems in businesses,
- increased productivity and efficiency due to fewer sick leaves and periods of absence,
- preventing the early withdrawal of workers from gainful employment,
- long-term inclusion of workers with health problems or disabilities in business operations,
- information and awareness-raising to prevent illness and promoting health in the workplace.

The “fit2work” project covers consulting to business operations and individuals.

“fit2work” Business Consulting

All consulting activities in the framework of “fit2work”, the program geared to occupational (re-) integration management, are based on an analysis of the original situation; business operations are then given advice as to how they can initiate, take and coordinate suitable steps. From 2014 to 2020, measures under the “fit2work” consulting programme for business operations **are** co-funded by the “European Social Fund” (ESF). The target group covers enterprises which in particular employ workers above the age of 45.

“fit2work” business consulting is specifically addressed at enterprises which

- are looking for proactive measures to reduce health-related risks in the workplace,
- found the “fit2work” consulting program because of a relevant case in the enterprise,
- wish to anchor measures to maintain the ability to work and occupational re-integration preventatively in their company structure,
- are interested in occupational integration management.

“fit2work” Consulting to Individuals

The target group is comprised of individuals who need information about health in work. The “fit2work” consultants will support them in preventing or solving work-related health problems. “fit2work” consulting may help avoid job loss, unemployment, early retirement and associated loss of income, and re-establish or maintain the ability to work. Concepts for a return to gainful employments are identified by individuals and consultants together.

Amongst other things, the “fit2work” project for the (re-)integration of older workers in gainful employment deals with the ability to work, psychological stress and mental health. The project is rounded off by additional services to “fit2work” clients rendered by psychotherapists and clinical psychologists.

Keeping people healthy in employment requires age-appropriate workplaces. An amendment to the Austrian Health and Safety at Work Act (ASchG, 2013) reinforces the protection of mental health in the workplace by more attention to excessive psychological stress at work in job evaluations because early withdrawal from the labour market is primarily due to psychological reasons. Since 2013, the project “Invalidity in Transition II” (“Invalidität im Wandel II”) has focused on identifying problem-solving strategies for the prevention of work-related mental illnesses.

The federal guideline “Motivation Consulting for Business Operations” (IBB, 2015-2017) governs consulting services of the public employment services for companies which i.a. include age-appropriate working environments to assist businesses in the search for suitable workers and the adjustment of their workforce. Together with the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, the Austrian Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection is engaged in the “Healthy Workplaces for All Ages” campaign.

Examples of good practices in the implementation of promoting health at work are a central component of consulting for business operations offered under the “fit2work” programme:

The implementation of measures to promote health at work within the Vienna Social Fund (FSW) includes assistance in returning to the labour market as well as support to sports activities for senior citizens.

The Austrian Federal Railways (ÖBB) put campaigns for promoting health at work in place in which they focused on nutrition, exercise and mental health. Another focus is on the reintegration of employees who fell ill or had accidents, giving them new perspectives for the future. The “Work and Age” project creates better framework conditions: upskilling makes it easier to work in new contexts- An in-company part-time work model for older workers applying in addition to the statutory model of part-time work accounts for further flexibility for the older workforce.

The insurance fund for railway and mining workers (Salzburg) reported the introduction of training in companies and health targets on the level of business operations.

Under the umbrella of the funding campaign “Businesses Support Working Environments” the Land of Salzburg supported projects pursued by business operations that i.a. focused on “age-appropriate working conditions”, “in-company health promotion” and “work-life balance”.

(b) Achieving higher employment rates of older men and women through appropriate incentives

Business operations are increasingly given incentives to continue employing or hiring older workers with a view to creating jobs for older persons. People must be given the occupational skills enabling them to work longer in good health:

- Under the promotion of qualifications, the public employment service has specific offers for older jobseekers because obsolete skills can make it more difficult to place them.
- Various forms of fostering employment are to increase the job opportunities of older persons (e.g. an expansion of the secondary labour market, target-group specific consulting and support institutions, “perspectives planning”).
- Support models whereby appropriate workers are trained for specific jobs or the specific workforce needs of a company; e.g. by job-matching skills training, or by using work foundations as a suitable instrument.

Together with the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Federal Chancellery ran an information campaign about the 50+ Employment Initiative. This employment initiative involves funding made available by the public employment service AMS to promote the hiring of older workers. In 2016 the funds for workers above the age of 50 were increased from 150 to 250 million EUR.

The Austria-wide AMS campaign “Einstellungssache 50+”¹ raises awareness for the potential of workers in the 50+ age group and does away with prejudice. The campaign shows that workers above the age of 50, with their wealth of experience, their willingness and ability to learn and perform, and their wide range of skills, are important sources of know-how for Austrian businesses.

Tying in with this, the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection published a brochure on the professional development and continuing education of 50+ workers (“Berufliche Entwicklung und Weiterbildung von ArbeitnehmerInnen 50+”).

The introduction of a bonus-malus-system for older workers is controversial. Such a system would aim at raising the employment rates of those above 55 years of age. As from 2018, businesses with more than 25 workers have to pay twice termination charge when giving notice of termination (at present EUR 118) if they employ fewer older workers than the line of business does on average. However, this provision is only enforced if the target levels enshrined in legislation – an employment rate of 73.6% for men aged between 55 and 59, 33.1% for men aged 60 to 64 and of 60.1% for women between 55 and 59 years of age – are not reached by the cut-off date 30 June 2017. The incentive to companies which reach or exceed the industry average is a 0.1% reduction of the employer’s contribution to the Family Burdens Equalization Fund.

To raise awareness for the problem, the statutory representations of interest are advised to consult the companies which do not reach the industry rate identified by the Main Association of Austrian Social Insurance Institutions. Since 2016, businesses are for the first time informed about the share of workers above the age of 55 in the context of the economy at large, their industry and their business (‘awareness-raising in respect of the bonus-malus arrangement’). Telecommunications, film and television production, veterinarians and aviation have the lowest employment rates of older workers.

A labour market offensive for persons with health limitations and older workers was launched under the Stability Pact of 2012. Since 2011, persons who have completed rehabilitation under statutory social security have been entitled to unemployment benefits for a longer period (up to 78 weeks), irrespective of their age.

¹ This title involves a pun on the German word “Einstellung”, which means both “attitude” and “hiring”.

On the level of the federal Laender (e.g. in Burgenland), service law was amended for municipal workers; originally, it was not possible to join the municipal service for people above the age of 40. This age limit has been abolished.

In Carinthia, the “Unruhestand” (“Staying restless”) project supports jobseekers aged 50+ and the “Meaningful work instead of waiting for retirement” project (“Sinnvolle Arbeit statt warten auf die Pension”) brings career-breakers with a low income and non-profit organizations together.

(c) Developing evidence-based labour market policies

Motivation consulting offered by the public employment service is free of charge, supporting business operations in matters of organizational development regarding the following issues:

- vocational training of workers,
- managing the needs of an ageing workforce,
- equal opportunities for women and men in the business,
- safeguarding jobs in times of capacity fluctuations and managing diversity in the business,
- integration of labour-market policy target groups.

Since 2010, the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection has conferred the NESTOR^{GOLD} seal of quality upon enterprises and organizations which are pioneers in intergenerational age-management. The NESTOR^{GOLD} seal of quality helps enterprises/organizations to bring the work potential of their workforce to fruition in an optimum way and at the same time to keep workers healthy and motivated, which also strengthens the enterprise’s competitive edge.

To be awarded the NESTOR^{GOLD} seal of quality, enterprises must undergo a four-stage process supporting the creation of age-appropriate structures, management and culture. The stage NESTOR^{GOLD} BEWEGT provides guidance in self-evaluation and helps getting started with intergenerational age-management.

The NESTOR^{GOLD} process is assisted by external specialists in the field of life-phase oriented work design, helping build in-company know-how. The process is completed when the seal of quality is ceremonially awarded by the Minister of Social Affairs. The next ceremony will take place in November 2016.

Moreover, the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection organizes the NESTOR^{GOLD} networking dialogues twice a year; it brings together the enterprises/organizations seeking an exchange of opinions about intergenerational age-management. For more information on the NESTOR^{GOLD} seal of quality, please visit the website www.nestorgold.at.

(d) Making the transition to retirement more flexible and providing incentives for staying longer in the workforce

See information in paragraphs a) and b).

(e) Carrying out pension reforms to adapt to demographic changes

The present regular statutory retirement age is 65 for men and 60 for women. As from 2024, the retirement age for women will be adjusted to the retirement age for men in semi-annual steps; such legislation requires a two-third majority in parliament.

Since 1 January 2014, pensions are exclusively calculated under the new pension account regime. Everyone who was born on or after 1 January 1955 for whom at least one insured month has accrued

by 31 December 2004 receives an initial credit. All insured months up until the end of 2013 are transferred to the new pension account.

Part-time pensions (in force since 1 January 2016) are modelled along the same lines as part-time work for older workers; they are gender-neutral but presently can only be applied to men due to the transition rules in pension law. The most significant differences between part-time pension and part-time work for older workers are as follows: in case of part-time pension, the added cost arising to employers is fully covered (50% of the expenditure is covered in case of part-time work for older workers) and the working time block model cannot be applied. Older workers are entitled to part-time work and part-time pension for a combined total of 5 years.

Measures under the Social Law Amendment Act (SRÄG) 2012 and the introduction of the rehabilitation benefit associated with it have done much to relieve the burden on the public pension system. Since 2013, an instrument called “interface coordination” is applied when workers covered by social insurance are about to lose their entitlement to sickness benefit; the health insurance institution is obliged to report the end of the period of eligibility 6 weeks ahead of time and the pension insurance institution is obliged to review such cases within 6 weeks. In this context, competence centres have been created; these are in charge of examining medical, occupation- and labour-market related aspects of these cases.

In the course of reforming the invalidity pension system workers with impaired health may make a new start in employment since 2014: the right to retire on grounds of invalidity (a term applied to blue-collar workers) and incapacity to work (the equivalent term for white-collar workers) under statutory pension insurance was changed for those born on or after 1 January 1964. Persons who are temporarily incapacitated for at least six months, are entitled to the necessary and purposeful rehabilitation. Instead of a temporary pension they will in the future be paid what is called rehabilitation benefit or retraining benefit if they take part in necessary and purposeful rehabilitation.

Since 1 January 2015 persons above the age of 59 are also considered to be incapacitated if they are unable to work in the type of job they have worked in for at least 10 years out of the past 15 years (framework period) due to illness or infirmity. Reasonable changes in the type of job are considered feasible. The age limit for eligibility for such type of protection will be raised to 60 as from 1 January 2017.

Instead of withdrawal from gainful employment, the focus is now on returning to work with new occupational qualifications based on medical and occupational rehabilitation. In simple terms, this means that the insured person is only eligible for early retirement if medical or occupational rehabilitation is not possible. The age limit for pension eligibility in this context is raised to 60 in stages.

The number of persons retiring under the new invalidity pension regime has dropped dramatically. In 2015 the average age of retirement under this regime (all pension insurance institutions) was 61.3 years for men and 59.2 years for women (see table in the Annex). The de facto retirement age rose by 1.8 years, from 58.4 years in 2012 to 60.2 years in 2015.

(f) Promoting the role of older workers as transmitters of knowledge and experience

It was reported that the past three Nestor^{GOLD} networking dialogues revolved around the themes of “effective intergenerational exchange of experience” as well as “continuing education and training for older workers – age-appropriate didactics” and “4 generations in enterprises and organizations – how they think, work and want to be managed”.

The Land of Lower Austria organized a seminar on the proper use of resources and how to benefit from long-standing professional experience; the event took place in May 2012 and was addressed at people working for the administration of the Land.

In Carinthia 43 businesses have joined the age-management project “Generations in the Working Life”. This network offers advice, workshops and exchanges of experiences as it supports enterprises which seek to maintain and improve the performance capabilities of their workers and ensure successful intergenerational cooperation; best practice enterprises are awarded a prize. Through the project “Genius – Mastering Apprenticeships with Mentoring” the Land of Carinthia assists young people as they get started in the working life. Older managerial experienced persons support young people as volunteer mentors when the latter are looking for an apprenticeship vacancy or a starting point in gainful employment.

1. 2. Participation, non-discrimination and social inclusion of older persons are promoted by

a) *Reducing material deprivation, poverty and social exclusion*

In Austria, the target group of the Europe 2020 Strategy according to the EU-SILC 2015 definition comprises 1,551,000 persons or 18% of the population. These are concerned by at least one of the following risks: poverty risk (18% of the population), considerable material deprivation (4% of the population) or living in households with a very low or no income intensity (8% of those under 60 years of age).

Retired men are relatively well protected from the risk of poverty – only 11% are affected. The risk of poverty is slightly higher for women, the rate being 14%. Women living alone are exposed to a somewhat higher risk of poverty (25% who have no pension, 18% who receive a pension).

The Austrian federal government aims to reduce the number of persons at risk of poverty or social exclusion according to the above definition by at least 235,000 persons by 2020. Development has so far shown a positive tendency: The number of persons at risk of poverty or exclusion dropped by 148,000 persons between 2008 and 2015.

In principle, the “equalization supplement” is to ensure that every person receiving a pension who is residing in Austria legally has a minimum income above the poverty threshold. The family and income situation is taken into consideration in this context. If the total income composed of gross pension, other net income and entitlements to alimony, if any, does not reach the reference level, the equalization supplement is due to cover the balance. In 2015, the reference level for pension recipients living alone was EUR 872.31, and if spouses or registered partners lived in a common household, it was EUR 1,307.89.

The Laender of Upper Austria and Vorarlberg have reported various measures of fostering women and self-empowerment to contribute in particular to raising women’s salaries as these are still roughly 20% lower than those of men. The City of Vienna has founded “Ester”, a day centre for homeless women.

b) *Taking measures to combat discrimination*

In its report for the period 2012-2013, the federal Equal Treatment Advocacy, which is responsible for the enforcement of non-discrimination in the workplace on grounds of gender, disability, age,

ethnicity and sexual orientation reported that 205 cases of discrimination on grounds of age were closed successfully in 2012, the number of related cases in 2013 was 159. In percentages, this spells roughly 18% of all cases in 2012 and about 14% of all complaints in 2013.

The Equal Treatment Advocacy's overview report on activities for 2012/13, which also contains proposals ("Tätigkeit und Vorschläge der Gleichbehandlungsanwaltschaft im Überblick 2012/13") says that the Equal Treatment Act does not offer protection from discrimination on grounds of age in all respects but only at work. The shortcomings of present legislation can e.g. clearly be seen in health care where older persons are disadvantaged whilst having to note that incidents are not currently defined as discrimination and thus remain unsanctioned.

c) Empowering people to realize their potential for physical, mental and social wellbeing throughout the life course

The foundations for empowering people to realize their potential and participate in society are laid in everyone's school days. Therefore, recent reforms aim at guaranteeing every young person education up to the age of 18. Those who only completed compulsory education are affected by unemployment three times as much as other and are at risk of being disadvantaged throughout their lives.

Under the Austrian Lifelong Learning Strategy 2020, the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection is acting to implement Line of Action 9 "Enrichment of the quality of life via education in the post-employment phase", pursuing goals for more participation in education in later life, quality assurance, information, advice and low-threshold offers close to home, and in particular intergenerational projects and activities involving new communication technologies. For year, the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection has thus been actively involved in fundamental research (e.g. post-employment educational counselling, methodologies and didactics for older persons, senior citizens and the digital world), has organized meetings and workshops (in cooperation with the Federal Institute for Adult Education), created brochures, films and publications and supported educational programmes and projects (e.g. the Academy on Monday, which involves a series of lectures with discussions, broadcast live from the venue in Graz to six places in three Laender).

Based on the policy for the promotion of continuing education (Vorarlberg) and the "LLL Strategy 2011-2015" (Styria), the Laender report on pilot projects to building regional structures and offers close to home. This result in projects such as "LIMA – Quality of Life in Later Life" (Styria), "SelbA" – Independence in Later Life (Upper Austria), training courses for tablet computer use (Vorarlberg), "Aktion Dialog", free Internet courses (Upper Austria) for senior citizens, the model project "Mitten im Leben – auch im Alter lebendig und selbstbestimmt" ("Both feet on the ground – vital and self-determined in later life") in cooperation with the Catholic Education Service (Carinthia). The Tyrol has to date created 30 so-called computerias, meeting points where secondary school students offer Internet courses to senior citizens. In this context, a survey on "Lifelong Learning - An Opportunity for All of Us" was done in 2014. In Carinthia there are projects for intergenerational ICT courses known as "4everyoung" as well as "Grandma's surfing, Grandpa's googling".

The educational counselling project for the 50+/60++ age groups called "Promoting education and participation" has been working according to the dictum "staying intellectually fit throughout life" (Styria). Lower Austria has been organizing "University active plus" and "Senior citizens active plus" courses, the latter are done in cooperation with the Czech Republic. The Laender of Salzburg and Vienna have senior citizen universities, Vorarlberg has the so-called Monday Forum, an interdisciplinary university-based series of events for senior citizens. The adult education centres, libraries and day centres of Vienna offer numerous educational programmes for senior citizens.

Specific intergenerational education projects will be dealt with in 1.4.

d) Ensuring lifelong access to various forms of high quality education and training

For the years 2015 – 2020 the Ministry for Transport, Innovation and Technology embarked on a “broadband campaign”, making available a total of one billion euro for investment into ultrafast broadband Internet access across Austria, which will then be available almost nationwide. The purpose is to overcome the urban-rural digital divide and to ensure digital inclusion, in particular for the benefit of senior citizens.

The Federal Chancellery’s project “Seniorkom.at – connecting generations” supports free courses which facilitate Internet use by older persons. The issue of e-government was a special focus of the project. With the help of the platform www.help.gv.at, senior citizens were trained to deal with “virtual administration”. Funding was also granted to the publication of an information brochure “i@online for senior citizens (target group 50+)”; apart from ICT/e-business applications, it also focused on e-government/e-health.

The public employment services has created a specific range of continuing education offers for older persons as obsolete qualifications are major obstacles to job placement.

The Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection carried out surveys on ICT and older persons (e.g. to action to be taken for senior citizens in the digital age, or on smartphone, tablet etc. use) and published a brochure with information and tips for senior citizens regarding safe Internet use as well as a manual for teachers of senior citizen Internet courses. Quality assurance was ensured by means of a train-the-trainers course.

e) Facilitating participation of older persons, particularly woman, in political, economic, cultural and social life

The federal plan for senior citizens was adopted at federal level in 2012; it comprises an extensive package of measures to support the political, economic, cultural and social participation of older persons. Organizations of senior citizens have contributed to shaping senior citizen policy via the Federal Senior Citizens’ Advisory Council. In 2012 the 3rd UNECE Ministerial Conference on Ageing took place in Vienna; prior to it, NGOs organized their own NGO Forum, also contributing to the conference itself.

Styria reported the successful implementation of the “Charter for Living Together in Diversity” adopted in 2011, which aims at equal rights for all as they participate in society, and of measures in implementation of the “Styrian Women’s and Gender Equality Strategy 2020”. The 10 advisory centres for women and girls are also used by women aged 55+. Health promotion projects such as “Healthy Community” (Salzburg), museum days, senior citizens’ drama groups etc. are directly addressed at older persons. The Tyrol Future Day of 2016 is also dedicated to issues of senior citizens.

“SENaktiv” is a fair organized in the Tyrol every year; in 2015 it was devoted to “Digital Modernity”, the 18th survey on “a digital world for the old and young – fit for the information age”. In Carinthia the platform “Active Ageing in Carinthia” was formed in 2012; it is now part of the annual calendar of events.

f) Facilitating participation of older persons, particularly woman, in decision-making processes at all levels

The Austrian Senior Citizens’ Council is the umbrella organization of senior citizens’ organizations, and just like the Austrian National Youth Council, it is on a par with the representations of interest of workers, employers and farmers. Delegates of the senior citizens’ organizations cooperate in legislative work through the Federal Senior Citizens’ Advisory Council and the advisory councils at the level of the Laender.

In Vorarlberg the number of citizens’ councils is rising; they seek to include the population in local decision-making processes, and the creation of senior citizens’ councils at a local level is supported.

The Austrian senior citizens' organizations have found that little significant progress has been made in the area of co-determination in the past few years. They feel that retirees do not have a say in the advisory boards of health insurance fund self-administration even though they pay one third of contributions. There is no real recognition of the "intergenerational social partners" by the representations of interest of workers, employers and farmers; retiree representatives are not invited to join the annual talks of the social partners or the labour market summit in spite of the fact that the Senior Citizens' Council represents the interests of women above the age of 55 and men above the age of 60. In general, the number of older delegates to bodies of political representation at federal and regional level is clearly lower than corresponds to the percentage of older persons in the population.

g) Combating ageism

The Austrian Senior Citizens' Council has found that despite of the conferral of the "Senior Citizen Rose", a media award for specially fine reporting on older persons and of the "Senior Citizen Nettle", which is awarded for particularly discriminatory presentations of older people, even major media often continue to perpetuate the obsolete and prejudice-ridden image of older persons.

This is why, in 2013, the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection i.a. organized a series of films on positive images of ageing under the motto "Seeing Age" and the expert conference "Images of Ageing – Real Life instead of Stereotypes" to mark the International Day of Older. In 2015 the Ministry showed the European exhibition "How to get to 100 – and enjoy it" at the Vienna University of Economics and Business to foster a positive attitude towards ageing in young and old people alike.

In the Laender, travelling exhibitions such as "How young is old? Life into Years" and panel discussions about how the media affect our view of old age (Upper Austria) are organized. In Styria the project and travelling exhibition "ALTERnative Schönheit" ("alternative beauty", a title involving a play on the German word for age) aims at giving more visibility to older women in public whilst countering against age(ing) stereotyping and raising awareness for the diversity of this target group. The training course for multipliers "Pretty Old" addresses woman who want to get involved in improving the social climate for older persons, in particular women, and to acquire the skills to do so more effectively. In Vienna, diversity is mainstreamed in the way brochures and media reports present life. Carinthia also offers training for multipliers in the model project "Both feet on the ground – vital and self-determined in later life".

Between January 2013 and December 2014 the Land of Lower Austria implemented a project under the umbrella of the European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) programme: "Interregional cooperation to foster active ageing in communities, society and business in the pilot regions Schneebergland, Keszthely and Hévíz" including active participation of older persons. The project goals were to contribute to a positive view of ageing by the population, to improved quality of life due to better inclusion in the social and cultural environment, strengthening mutual awareness in the old and the young, and preparing communities and businesses for future demographic developments.

h) Promoting easy access of young and older persons to information and education

In September 2015 the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection showed the international exhibition "How to get to 100 – and enjoy it"; in particular, secondary schools were invited to send entire classes.

During 2012, the European Year of Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations, the school subject "Education for democratic citizenship" focused on older persons and intergenerational solidarity. The school subject is interdisciplinary in nature and deals with human rights issues from various perspectives on an ongoing basis.

i) Improving the collection and sharing of data, statistics and qualitative information

The Republic of Austria takes part in the following research activities:

- Social spending according to ESSOSS. For analysis purposes, data can be broken down for persons of working age and retirement age.
- EU-SILC.
- MORE YEARS, BETTER LIVES: Austria takes part in the Joint Programming Initiative “More Years, Better Lives – The Potential and Challenges of Demographic Change”. A fast track activity was implemented as a first step in 2013. In the Data Mapping Project European and national data sources covering demographic change and the gaps in existing data were investigated. The European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research was involved in the project on the part of Austria. The main objective of the fast track activity 2014 “Understanding employment participation of older workers: Creating a knowledge base for future labour market challenges” was to take stock and draw up an integrated analysis and representation of the current status of research and information about gainful employment and retirement behaviour of older workers in Austria. In 2015 the first call in respect of „ “Extended Working Life and its Interaction with Health, Wellbeing and beyond” was launched. A total of roughly 8 million euro in funding was available. Eleven countries participated in the call. Statistik Austria is contributing to the project Fair ACTIVE AGEing Europe (FACTAGE).
- SORESI - a web-based micro-simulation model whereby the impact of certain reforms on the Austrian population, including fiscal consequences, may be identified – broken down according to age groups, if required.

Information about further studies on quality of life well into old age, ageing with dementia as well as protection from violence for older persons can be found in the bibliography in the Annex and in item 3a).

j) Taking into account the diverse needs of a growing number of older persons among ethnic minorities and migrants

In 2013 the SHARE final report “Gekommen, um zu bleiben: Konturen von alternden Migrantinnen und Migranten in Österreich” (“They came to stay: outlines of ageing migrants in Austria”) was published; the report focused on the 50+ age group. The media service on new Austrians, an institution of the social partners addressed at journalists, summarized the outcomes for migrants aged 65+ as follows: Whilst in 2013, about one fifth of Austrian was above the age of 65, only 6% of migrants were of retirement age. Migrants retire later and their assessment of their state of health is worse than that of persons without a migrant background. Senior citizens with a migrant background are less satisfied with their lives but the majority of older migrants feels at home in Austria. Only 17% wish to return to their country of origin.

Representatives of the visiting service of the City of Vienna visit older migrants to identify their living environment and situation. In Vorarlberg the magazine “daSein – Zeitschrift für Betreuung und Pflege”, a special publication for nursing and care, devotes a multi-lingual issue to “Migration & Age”, supporting communication among care and nursing institutions. When it was first published in 2014, a kick-off event was organized to disseminate information and foster networking. Moreover, key objectives and strategies for culturally sensitive work with older persons were identified, involving actors in integration and the nursing and care network; the project title was “Ageing hand in hand – Elele yaslanmak”.

Many health institutions have interpreters to assist in counselling migrants in their native languages.

1.3. Dignity, health and independence in older age are promoted and safeguarded by

(a) Safeguarding the dignity of older persons, particularly those with disabilities

The care allowance serves to cover (in seven categories) additional expenditure due to care needs so as to safeguard basic care. It is meant to improve the situation for people in need of care who wish to remain independent as far as possible and live a self-determined needs-oriented life of their own. At present, roughly 455,000 persons are entitled to care allowance, 64% of them are women.

Based on the allocation of responsibilities within the state, nursing and care for old persons are exclusively a matter of the Laender. In the context of long-term care, the federal level makes a major contribution to the costs of safeguarding and expanding related services via the Long-Term Care Fund (in addition to the funds paid to the Laender via the distribution of revenues between the federal, regional and local levels). Since the care allowance was introduced in 1993 measures to develop long-term care provision have been taken on an ongoing basis. Under the 2012 revision of the Long-Term Care Benefit Act, lawmaking and law enforcement powers have been transferred from the Laender to the federal government, thus pooling responsibilities for long-term care at the federal level. The Laender's previous long-term care benefit acts were repealed on 31 December 2011. This means a reduction in the number of decision makers from over 300 to seven in 2013.

In 2012 care allowance was raised by 2% across all seven levels. Due to this valorization, recipients get an average added EUR 111,- of care allowance per year.

The National Quality Certificate (NQC) for old age and nursing homes in Austria was set up as a nationwide uniform sector-specific outside evaluation procedure for the assessment of the quality of services provided by old age and nursing homes in Austria. Homes meeting the criteria defined for the NQC – such as the introduction of a quality management system recognized by the NQZ and an ascertainable and proven self-assessment process - may apply for certification on a voluntary basis. The certificate is only conferred on homes which go beyond their statutory obligations as they seek to improve the quality of their services for the benefit of optimum individual quality of life for their residents and care staff. The strong demand for certification reflects the smooth functioning of this positive incentive system. On January 1st 2013 the funding of the preparation and implementation of the certification was enshrined in the Federal Senior Citizens Law.

At the conference "Ageing with Dignity. Without Discrimination and Violence" organized by the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection in Vienna in 2014, experts looked at what ageing with dignity means, how current values and attitudes towards older persons affect the way in which we deal with them, and how it can be ensured that different life designs and contexts of meaning can be taken into account even if older persons need support, assistance and care.

The folder "Identifying Violence. Older Persons in Institutions" was published in 2012; the "Guide to Preventing Violence in Care Organizations" was developed in 2013/2014. In 2015/2016 multipliers were trained. Senior citizens' organizations were involved in the organization of two series of interdisciplinary workshops in all Laender titled: "Identifying violence against older persons and taking proper action". In 2015 the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection published the study "Protection against Violence for Older Persons. Interviews with experts about options and obstacles in the implementation of legislation in Austria".

The Land of Lower Austria produced a folder with information about the most important anti-discrimination provisions and offers of the Anti-Discrimination Office. In 2015 the government of the Land of Tyrol organized a survey of the regional parliament on the prevention of violence. It also marked the launch of a new violence prevention campaign of the Land of Tyrol, which offers continuing education and training for nursing staff in cooperation with South Tyrol.

(b) Strengthening measures of health promotion, care and protection

The current health promotion strategy of the Ministry of Health (2013 to 2016) identified ten health objectives as a framework. The declared goal is to improve health irrespective of living conditions, income or age. The framework objectives come to bear wherever a positive impact can be achieved on the maintenance and development of health in the population. This is why they focus on the factors with a decisive effect on health, such as education, working situation, social security and environmental impacts. Especially goal No 1 stresses the high importance of active ageing and health through disease prevention and health promotion over the lifecourse.

The 2013 National Action Plan on Physical Activity (Federal Ministry of Defence and Sport, and Federal Ministry of Health) contains a special section on older persons, but other objectives of the plan also have an impact on this group, e.g.:

- Motivating institutions and organizations to come up with physical activity and training for older persons,
- Training/providing coaches specialized in working with older persons and
- Motivating sports-clubs to open their doors to older persons (moving away from an alignment towards competitive athletes).

Since 2012, nutritional recommendations for older persons have been part of the National Nutrition Action Plan (Federal Ministry of Health). The brochure "Eating right if you are 65 or older – it's easy" was published in 2015; the booklet also contains recipes.

The Advisory Council for Geriatrics of the Federal Ministry of Health and Women brings together selected experts from all over Austria who deal with complex issues of geriatric medicine. The topics they focus on run the gamut from health promotion/preventive health to care, including hospices and palliative care.

A major part of very old persons is concerned by polypharmacy (i.e. they are prescribed more than five different substances). The higher the number of medications, the greater is the risk of interactions and undesired side effects, which can have a negative impact on functionality and quality of life. Roughly 13% take ten or more medications regularly. In nursing homes, medication rates are above average, slightly more than half of the persons residing there take fewer than ten different medications. It is also striking that psychotropic substances are administered with relative frequency there. This is why the study on very old persons also looks into the issue of medication tolerance in older and particularly in very old persons. The first positive step in this context is the preparation of lists covering medication which is potentially inadequate for older persons.

In cooperation with the Office of the Styrian Government, the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection organized the expert workshop "Health is Ageless. Empowerment, Equal Opportunities and Quality Assurance". Lifelong learning projects were supported by funding in the Laender.

The Federal Ministry of Defence and Sport reported information events on preventing cardiovascular disease (general information, physical activity, nutrition, adaptation to change and stress management, quitting smoking, hidden sugar, "Tension and Trauma Releasing Exercises").

Since January 2013 health promotion and preventive health care is enshrined in the Act governing health and accident insurance for civil servants.

The Insurance Institutions for Public Service Wage and Salary Earners (BVA) carried out the health promotion project for senior citizens titled “Fit, healthy and well-balanced”. BVA Vienna also published brochures on nutrition and spine health.

The health insurance fund for trade and industry (SVA) initiated the programme “Self-employed and Healthy – My Health Targets”: Once patients have reached their personal health targets (blood pressure, weight, exercise, tobacco and alcohol consumption), their deductibles for visits to physicians and dentists are reduced from 20% to 10%. Well person screenings were adjusted to stages of life (mammographies from the age of 40, colonoscopies from the age of 50 and greater emphasis on vision and hearing from the age of 65). Moreover, SVA organizes health weeks for senior citizens and activity camps for the 55+ age group in sports hotels and spas. In 2013 the SVA Headquarters hosted the event “Fit and Active Retirees”.

The government of the Land of Vorarlberg supports the “Minimed Studies” of regular lectures on topics including health in older age. These free lectures are for laypersons. The Kuppenberg region in Vorarlberg is running “65 plus”, a project seeking to address health-relevant issues for people aged 65 and older. “Sicheres Vorarlberg”, a non-profit organization for accident prevention, is a co-funder of the “Otago” project for the prevention of falls in old age.

Since 2012 Salzburg University has a specific range of programmes for older persons (“Uni 55-PLUS”). It is unique in Austria as regards the scope and consideration to the specific needs of participants. More than 400 courses for full-time students are accessible to senior students. Moreover, some lectures are reserved for Uni 55-PLUS students exclusively.

The City of Vienna reported the following activities:

- Publication of brochures (advice for every-day life with dementia; safety in the home, tips to prevent accidents in older age; aids and appliances facilitating life)
- Information event on specific topics at counselling centres for nursing and care as well as day centres for senior citizens
- Health promotion (motor exercise parks, activity parks)
- “Exercise and Ageing in Vienna”, a health promotion initiative
- “Senior Citizen Month”, an initiative of the Senior Citizens’ Office of Vienna: roughly 1,000 events on topics including fitness and health, mental fitness, nursing and care, safety and security, carefree housing, volunteering, art and culture.

The Land of Styria organized a conference on strength in older age and ageing (“Pathways to mental health”), the “Forum Age/ing Graz 2015” presented results of interdisciplinary gerontology research in a series of lectures.

Every spring, the Land of Lower Austria offers a total of free exercise units (a total of eight) for senior citizens. In the Land of Upper Austria various institutions support the project “Independence in Old Age”.

The Land of Carinthia participates in the communication platform “Health promotes employment”, organizing lectures, courses and seminars on health, nutrition, activity and exercises as well as art and creativity.

(c) Giving special attention to preventive measures, early diagnosis and to the treatment, care and social protection of persons with Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias

According to current estimates, about 1.5% of the Austrian population (115,000 – 130,000 persons) are suffering from a form of dementia. From the perspective of nursing and care, dementia is a specially important issue because most people with dementias are cared for by relatives at home in a

variety of care settings; in spite of the enormous burden and the progressive course of dementias, carers hardly seek professional help. As women generally live longer than men, the risk of dementia is markedly higher for women. In Austria, 74% of persons above the age of 60 suffering from impairment by dementia are women. In the age group of those 85-89 the number of annual new dementia cases is twice as high in women than in men.

Gesundheit Österreich GesmbH is a national research and planning institute for health care; it was commissioned by the Ministries of Health and of Social Affairs to prepare a Dementia Strategy on the basis of the Austrian Dementia Report 2014. In this process all relevant stakeholders – the federal level, the Länder, social security institutions, professionals and experts, persons concerned and the public at large – were included in a cross-sectoral approach. The final report was presented to the public in December 2015.

The National Dementia Strategy “Living Well with Dementia” contains seven objectives - (with a total of 21 recommendations for action) which are to improve the situations of persons suffering from dementia and their families and friends:

- ensuring participation and self-determination for those concerned,
- building a broad and target-group specific information base,
- strengthening knowledge and skills,
- creating an uniform framework,
- ensuring and designing appropriate care,
- expanding coordination and cooperation centred on those concerned,
- assuring and improving quality through research.

A participatory approach and the intensive involvement of Austria’s most important stakeholders were significant principles underlying the development of the strategy. Cooperation continues via the “Dementia Strategy Platform” to follow through with the implementation of the recommendations for action (<http://www.demenzstrategie.at/>).

Communication with dementia patients comes with special demands for carers. Dementia is a disease in which loss of communication skills is one of the clinical symptoms. Only few carers have been trained in assisting people with dementia, which often gives rise to insecurity, helplessness and a feeling of being overextended. Practical instructions can be found in brochures on “women and men with dementia” and “gender sensitivity in dealing with people with dementia”. They encourage carers to get involved with and better understand the world of people with dementia. The target groups are health and social workers, volunteers and family caregivers.

http://www.bmgf.gv.at/home/Gesundheit/Krankheiten/Demenz/Handlungsanleitungen_fuer_den_Umgang_mit_Menschen_mit_Demenz

In Upper Austria, an integrated system of care for persons with dementia is being developed, encompassing dementia counselling centres, special forms of care in senior citizens’ and nursing homes as well as in day centres. Moreover, two flat sharing units with mobile carers, each for 10 persons with dementia have been created in public housing estates and a special unit for six immobilized persons with serious or very serious dementia was opened in a senior citizens’ home.

The City of Vienna has semi-institutional care in place (day centres for senior citizens) and reports the publication of brochures dealing with legal issues (adult guardians, powers of representation, durable powers of attorney, medical advance directives).

The focus of the year 2015 in “Healthy Community”, the health promotion project in the Land of Salzburg was on older persons as a target group. The project “Healthy Neighbourhoods” seeks to reach out to socio-economically underprivileged older persons, offering them opportunities to improve their agency and self-determination.

The insurance institution for miners and railway workers (VAEB) in Salzburg has carried out a project on preventing falls which aims at self-determination and maintaining independence. The target group is insured parties between the ages of 50 and 70 and beyond as the risk of falls rises rapidly above the age of 70. VAEB also reported the “Diabetes mellitus Health Dialogue”, an instrument strengthening secondary prevention, which uses a remote monitoring system developed by the Austrian Institute of Technology to follow the state of health of patients in every-day life – the average age of participants is 59.

(d) Respecting self-determination and dignity as core values through the end of life

For the current legislative period, the federal government set itself the goal of developing joint funding to hospice care from the federal, regional and local budgets. For this purpose, a parliamentary commission of inquiry was created to deal with specific measures to ensure dignity at the end of life. On 15 December 2015 the government decided to implement the recommendations of the commission and established a hospice and palliative care forum headed by a board appointed for five years, which is to represent the forum in external relations. Since 2013 financing from the Long-term Care Fund (see 3h) may be used for mobile hospice and palliative care for adults and children. Hospice and palliative care in nursing homes is supported.

In 2014 the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection organized the conference “Ageing with Dignity. Without Discrimination and Violence” in Vienna, supporting quality assurance in voluntary grief counselling. Moreover, wave 2 of the Austrian Interdisciplinary Study of the Oldest Old was commissioned.

The Land of Lower Austria supported the expansion of in-patient hospices (raising the number of places from 36 to 78), day hospices and mobile hospice and palliative teams. Furthermore, criteria for nursing the seriously ill were developed (2013/2014) and a definition for the most advanced nursing places was devised.

In Upper Austria, the first in-patient hospice was opened for 5 terminally ill patients in 2016; this will be expanded to 10 places in the final stage. In the past few years, mobile hospice and palliative teams have been expanded progressively so that each care region has one mobile team.

The Land of Vorarlberg reported the geriatric programme 2011 was completed in 2012; it comprises key ideas for geriatric care in Vorarlberg (health promotion and preventive health care, out-patient care, in-patient acute and long-term care, follow-up treatment and rehabilitation, social work and care, staffing and resources).

In this context, the City of Vienna mentioned the re-organization of counselling centres for nursing and care run by the Vienna Social Fund.

(e) Ensuring older persons the highest possible level of health in cases of disasters

From 2014 to 2016 the Austrian Red Cross and partners carried out the EU project PrepAGE: Enhancing disaster management preparedness for the older population in the European Union. The project aimed to identify measures as to how the needs and strengths of older persons can be better taken into account.

(f) Facilitating access to age-appropriate, affordable and effective high-quality goods and services

In 2012 and 2014 age-friendly communities which are specially committed to older citizens were honoured. Since 2004, prizes are awarded to four categories of communities broken down according to size. The jury may also confer a special prize to a community of their choice. The “Senior Friendly Community” competition is run in cooperation between the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Austrian Pensioners’ Association and Volkshilfe Österreich.

The Austrian Association for Transport (VCÖ) has carried out several state-funded projects on mobility and older persons, such as:

- “Ensuring older persons’ mobility in the region”
- “Mobility needs of older persons in the city”
- “Daily routes of older persons”
- “Societal change and older persons’ mobility needs” (VCÖ Mobility Award 2015)
- “Accessibility and social justice” (VCÖ Mobility Award 2016) and mobility propositions for older persons (VCÖ World Café)

Following the example of Styria, Carinthia will now also organize a project whereby flat sharing is offered to students rent-free, against assistance to the resident senior citizens.

(g) Developing innovative methods and technologies for reliable, affordable and safe support and care of older persons at home

Since 2008, the Ministry of Transport, Innovation and Technology has been funding projects under the programme “Benefit in ICT of the Future” (a programme to develop ICT-based products and services for older persons). Since 2012 the focus has been on Smart Homes – Smart Services. So far, four regions (central Burgenland, Innsbruck/Tyrol, Salzburg and Graz) have been chosen for testing purposes; age-appropriate technologies and services are to be implemented and examined in at least 100 households. The essential feature is that end users will be involved in all phases of the project and that the needs of residents and carers will be the point of departure.

In the past few years, the following challenges were addressed in calls of the AAL (Active and Assisted Living) programme:

- Care of the Future – An Ageing society faces an increasing need for care, how will ICT contribute to sustainable solutions?
- Living Actively and independently at home - Support more older adults to live longer in their homes with the contribution of ICT based solutions
- Living well with dementia – The contribution of ICT to integrated solutions for enabling the wellbeing of people living with dementia and their communities

The Land of Lower Austria commissioned the study “Senior Citizens’ Acceptance of Ambient Assisted Living Products” and subsidized the equipment of residential units with an electronic assistance system. Evaluation showed that AAL technologies concerning personal safety (electricity circuits/water supply being shut off when the resident leaves the flat, kitchen range control and movement-sensitive lighting) met with a very high rate of acceptance by residents. Another AAL function, the so-called “Homebutler” (a “TV set” with extra applications) was found to be problematic in terms of acceptance.

(h) Ensuring ‘Ageing in place’

For the years 2011 - 2016 a total of 1.335 billion euro are made available from the financial means of Long-Term Care Fund. Another 700 million euro are to be made available for the scheduled extension of the Long-Term Care Fund to 2017 and 2018 under the work programme of the federal government for the years 2013 – 2018. The extension of mobile services, technologies for supporting care at home, strengthening extra- and intramural hospice and palliative care as well as the implementation of the Dementia Strategy were highlights of the period of review.

Persons in need of nursing are eligible for funding from the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection for 24-hour care. 60% of related spending is covered from the federal budget, the Laender contribute 40%. However, the general requirements for live-in care must be met.

To assure the quality of home care, roughly 20,000 visits are paid to the homes of care allowance recipients. Graduate nursing specialists examine the specific care situation on the basis of a standardized report. This aims at providing information as may be missing by means of practice-oriented advice so as to contribute to an improvement of care quality. Since 2015 home visits may also be paid at request.

The website www.pflegedaheim.at provides targeted information to persons in need of care and family carers. Moreover, the website of the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection https://www.sozialministerium.at/site/Pension_Pflege/Pflege_und_Betreuung/ contains everything to population needs to know about care allowance, care leave benefit, live-in care, senior citizens' and nursing homes, dementia, insurance-related and financial matters. In 2016 new rules were enacted in respect of training: there are three categories, nurses assistants, qualified nursing assistants (trained at nursing training colleges) and nursing specialists with higher qualifications (trained at universities for applied science). Moreover, a public register for the health care occupations was introduced. The brochure on safety at home ("Preventing accidents in your own four walls") was reprinted. In the amendment to the Trade Act, a legal distinction was introduced between those acting as intermediaries for live-in carers (24-hour carers) and those providing the services of 24-hours care themselves; agencies organizing live-in care are now attributed to a category of trade separate from actual service providers. The Federal Ministry of Science, Research and Economy issued a regulation governing the code of conduct and rules of practice in 2016. The purpose is to ensure better comparability and transparency in the range of services as well as improved quality in the rendering of agency services.

The Laender have reported a wide range of activities in this field. In Vorarlberg a care management network was created for organizing nursing and care across communities (extramural, semi-institutional, intramural, case management). Case management is used if several service providers need to be coordinated, if the situation is complex and can no longer be mastered by the person concerned on his/her own or if there is a risk that family members are overtaxed.

In Upper Austria short-term care in senior citizens' and nursing homes was redefined as lasting a maximum of 3 months (instead of 6 weeks), the expansion of day centres was adopted and coordination in matters of nursing and care was introduced area-wide. The City of Vienna reported the expansion of extramural nursing and care (priority of extramural care over intramural care), semi-institutional offers (senior citizens' day centres run by the Vienna Social Fund) and nursing homes. In the Land of Salzburg guidelines for the construction, furnishing and operation of nursing homes based on shared housing models and of day centres were adopted.

The Land of Burgenland funded an exchange for nursing home places, the project "Assisted Living Plus" and the expansion of day centres for senior citizens. The latter are addressed to persons who are no longer able to master every-day life on their own. Semi-institutional care, i.e. day centres, is a type of care in its own right and a link between home care and admission to a nursing home. The expansion of these services is also in keeping with the declared objective to prefer extramural to intramural care. As admission to a nursing home is only possible when a person has reached level 4 out of 7 levels of the long-term care allowance, "Assisted Living Plus" was established – these are accessibly designed residential estates in the close vicinity of nursing homes. The exchange for nursing home places helps people find vacancies in nursing homes in Burgenland.

In Lower Austria, the expansion of mobile care and nursing homes is based on a regular report on the situation of older persons ("Altersalmanach") which uses demographic and household data to identify the specific need for care in the districts of the Land. Moreover, studies have been commissioned (on live-in care and nursing in transition – in terms of qualifications and types of care); instructional videos were produced to support family carers (in particular for the prevention of falls and providing care to persons with dementia).

(i) Promoting architectural alterations and innovative housing design

Financial support to housing construction is a matter of the federal Laender. For example, Vienna grants means-tested funding for conversions for the purpose of creating accessibly designed residential space; special age-appropriate housing projects, including intergenerational housing projects, are also eligible for financial support.

(j) Supporting self-help arrangements of older persons

“Selbsthilfe Österreich” is a coalition of diverse self-help groups which received financial support for the purpose of creating a structure for itself; like self-help groups of family carers also receive state funding.

(k) Ensuring a continuum of affordable, high-quality care

See (i) and other items above.

(l) Recognizing and improving the situation of informal and formal carers

See (m)

(m) Recognizing and supporting family carers, mostly women

With the Labour Law Amendment Act (ARÄG) 2013 care leave/part-time care leave with a legal entitlement to a care leave benefit was introduced for close relatives. This aims to facilitate a work-care balance to (re)organize the situation. The care leave benefit² is the same in amount as the unemployment benefit, including family supplements, if any. Payment is foreseen for a period between 1 and 3 months. It comes with social security (health and pension insurance) that is free of charge, severance pay entitlements remain unchanged and the period for prospective entitlement to unemployment benefits is extended so that carers are not disadvantaged in this respect. Likewise, those using the option of family hospice leave (which has existed since 2002) are entitled to care leave benefit in addition to a possible supplement under family hospice leave hardship equalization.

The Paid Leave Act (UrlG) stipulates that the care leave which biological parents /step parents in so-called patchwork families are entitled to is being extended. Care for a family member in the last three years of life by close relatives is now considered in the context of probate proceedings.

The funding model of the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection provides for financial support if a person is at least entitled to the long-term care allowance of level 3, 24-hour care is needed and such care conforms at least to the provisions of the Home Care Act (HbG). Close relatives who have primarily ensured care for a person in need of assistance and are unable to do so for a certain period of time (e.g. due to leave or illness) may receive financial support for the cost of a substitute.

Since 2012 the Land of Vorarlberg has granted a supplement to the long-term care allowance in case of extramural care if the person in need of care receives care allowance at level 5, 6 or 7, provided that no funding for 24-hour care is claimed. The introduction of tandem groups as meeting points for relatives of people with dementia, and groups of family carers are also financially supported in Vorarlberg.

² The close relative in need of care has to receive long-term care allowance of at least level 3 (if this person suffers from dementia or is a minor, level 1 is sufficient).

Upper Austria has adopted guidelines for services in support of family carers. The offer is mainly addressed to those providing care to relatives who could also be in intramural care. This service is also meant for caregivers of persons with dementia.

Upper Austria also supports the project “Meeting Point for Family Carers” and recreational stays for nursing and caregiving relatives. The City of Vienna organized information events for family carers. Burgenland offers care counselling in the home and care information as well as a dementia care on a daily basis.

The VAEB insurance fund finances preventive intramural weeks for family carers. The SVA insurance fund provides financial support for family carers and parent-child spa stays for parents attending to children in need of care once a year.

1.4. Intergenerational solidarity is maintained and enhanced by

a) Promoting and strengthening multigenerational dialogue

Promoting and strengthening the intergenerational dialogue is a matter of volunteer work in Austria (see also c). The Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection supports the organization of annual volunteer fairs in Vienna, Linz, Graz and Innsbruck; these are also attended by older persons, who are getting increasingly interested. Moreover, the following brochures were published: “Encounters of Generations. A Manual for Intergenerational Projects in Austria” and “How to initiate projects successfully” for senior citizens who want to get involved in a spirit of self-determination”. The Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection commissioned the study “Intergenerational Quality of Life. Diversity between Urban and Rural Contexts”. The model project on intergenerational learning “MDU-Meine-Deine = Unsere Lebenswelt” (“Mine+Yours = Our Living Environment”) was commended by the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection as a good practice project, just like the intergenerational educational project “Vita activa” about knowledge creation, multiplication and learning. The documentary video study on intergenerational learning titled “Voneinander-Miteinander-Übereinander Lernen” (“Learning from, with and about each other”) reflects educational processes and learning settings in which different generations learn from, with and about each other.

In 2012 the Land of Styria organized the expert meeting “Young.Old.Together” and “Tour of Generations” – an awareness-raising campaign on intergenerational coexistence. This formed the basis of the funding programmes “Learning and living in a multigenerational context” which has so far spawned 12 projects. The project “treff.generationen” was developed and implemented in and with six Styrian regions in a participatory process. It is a programme of actions and educational initiatives specific to locations, all based on the principles of intergenerational learning – “learning from, with and about each other”.

The Land of Salzburg continued the projects “Generational Village” and “Ageing in Good Company” in cooperation with Salzburger Bildungswerk, an adult education organization, and the community development institution “Gemeindeentwicklung Salzburg”. Projects on new media brought together the old and the young. By now, the Tyrol boasts 30 “Computerias” which are new platforms for interested senior citizens introduced to new media by secondary school students; these locations are also places of learning and physical activity, centres for information and networking in the context of volunteering, and often enough intergenerational meeting points. The health promotion project “Healthy Community” also reaches out to all generations. In Vorarlberg all generations works in museums and run “story-telling cafés”.

Upper Austria announced the awarding of a social prize, the “OÖ Generations Prize 2015” in the course of a symposium organized by the Forum for Intergenerational Dialogue. The project “Making the best of things – Ageing” in Carinthia fosters understanding and acceptance of lifestyles among generations by regular meetings with children and youth. The project is part of the “Healthy Community” programme, with nursery schools, schools, senior citizens’ homes and senior citizens’ organizations participating. “Linking Generations” is a volunteer companionship programme in which secondary school students visit the residents of senior citizens’ homes and engage in the drama project “Generations Together”. The diocese of Gurk runs an intergenerational residential estate whose name translates as “living spaces for young and old”.

b) Improving cooperation between youth organisations and older persons.

2015 marked the year in which the status of the Austrian Senior Citizens’ Council and the Austrian Youth Council as social partners had been enshrined in legislation for 15 years. On that occasion, the two councils organised the parliamentary enquête “15 Years of Intergenerational Social Partners” at the invitation of the President of the National Council and with the support of the Federal President. Delegates of the Youth Council have observer status in the meetings of the Austrian Federal Senior Citizens’ Advisory Council, a forum for talks and advisory body in the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection which was created on the basis of the Austrian Senior Citizens’ Act.

c) Recognizing the value of and fostering the joint volunteering of people of all ages.

In 2015 the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection published the second volunteer report, the “Report on the Situation and Perspectives of the Commitment to Volunteering in Austria”, with young and older persons being a specific focus. On the whole, the report emphasises the importance of volunteering in Austria and expresses appreciation and gratitude to all age groups. In total, 46% of Austrians engage in volunteer work. In this context, it turns out that at roughly 40%, the age group of those aged 15-29 and those aged 50–59 account for the largest share; 21% of youth and 19% of older persons are formally active in neighbourhood help whereas 19%/22% respectively are informally engaged in assisting neighbours. Even the shares of those aged 60-69 (30%) and those aged 70+ (23%) who are formal and/or informal volunteers are far from negligible.

The adoption of Federal Act on the promotion of voluntary commitment in 2012 decisively boosted the value of volunteering. A legal basis was thus given to special types of voluntary commitment (the voluntary social year, environmental year, social, memorial and peace service abroad, European Voluntary Service and - since 2016 – the voluntary integration year for those who have been granted asylum in Austria) as well as to measures to support volunteering, the Austrian Volunteer Council, the volunteer passport and volunteering certificate, the Internet platform www.freiwilligenweb.at and the regular report on volunteering.

The Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection supports model projects, including “Book Launch: Reading links generations”, “SLIC – Sustainable Learning in Communities. Appreciating the Skills and Experiences of Older Persons”, a workshop for older persons translating as “Life Experience Seeking Commitment: Finding Voluntary Activities for Myself”, the European exchange of good practices in hospice companionship and quality assurance in voluntary grief counselling; moreover, the ministry developed the outlook “Perspectives: Lifelong Learning and Voluntary Commitment”.

In 2012 the Land of Upper Austria commissioned a regional think-tank (Zukunftsakademie) to prepare a study on volunteering by older persons in Upper Austria; since 2010, the project “Volunteering in Senior Citizens’ and Nursing Homes” (which includes a handbook and training for voluntary companionship) has been carried out with growing success rates; half of the costs are covered by the Land of Upper Austria.

On International Volunteer Day, the Land of Lower Austria arranges information events in all retirement and nursing homes of the region, providing further details on volunteering through the

folder “Voluntary Work in Lower Austrian Asylums”. Since 2010 the Landesakademie, an educational institution of the Land, has trained as many as 341 social coordinators. These are volunteers who serve as hubs of information and networking as well as contacts at community level; they can give older persons the feeling that they are an important and valuable part of society.

The Land of Styria has a funding programme known as “Learning and Living in a Multigenerational Context” seeking the long-term involvement of volunteers, in particular older persons who are young at heart. Projects dealing with family mentoring, care for sick children in the home, or the “workshop of generations”, which uses the vocational experiences of older persons, have been translated into reality. The Land of Vorarlberg founded “senior citizen exchanges” to bring together older persons. The City of Vienna has a platform called “Volunteering for Vienna” (“Vienna’s Helpers”), advertising it in particular during “Senior Citizens Month”.

In Carinthia, the model project “Old and Young Looking After Each Other” introduced the concept of intergenerational dialogue to work with senior citizens. The project “Making the best of things in ageing - Encounters of Generations” serve to provide meeting places and to foster creative cooperation between young and old in the community. The hospital of Klagenfurt brings together nursery school and geriatric clinic in intergenerational cooperation for educational work with the young and the old.

d) Designing and implementing education campaigns for the general public

During 2012, the European Year of Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations, the school subject “Education for democratic citizenship”, which is interdisciplinary in nature, focused on older persons and intergenerational solidarity throughout Austria.

In 2015 the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection showed the international exhibition “How to get to 100 – and enjoy it” and related panel discussion, inviting secondary-school classes, older people and the media alike. The topic of ageing, both individually and demographically, has meanwhile been given more coverage by radio, television and printed media.

e) Considering that solidarity between generations also means adequate and sustainable social protection of older persons

According to the Social Report 2013-2014 and based on ESSOS (the European System of Integrated Social Protection Statistics) 45% of welfare spending is used in the context of ageing, 25% on public health care, 9% on family benefits, 7% on invalidity-related benefits and 6% on benefits to survivors or labour-market related benefits. In percentage, welfare spending for older persons grew strongest from 1995 to 2013. The increase in health and unemployment spending is roughly equivalent to the average general increase in welfare spending. Expenditure for survivors, families and invalidity rose below average.

This shift in social spending between the age groups corresponds roughly the rise in the share of older and the decline in the share of younger persons in the total population. Thus, the welfare system as such has responded flexibly to the ageing trend in society.

f) Developing and implementing socially responsible, financially sound and sustainable strategies

Spending on regular retirement pensions (including invalidity pensions for persons above 60/65) has risen disproportionately, in particular due to demographic change. By contrast, the fact that annual statutory pension adjustments were moderate had a cost-mitigating effect. While spending on early retirement pensions continued to increase markedly until 2000, this trend has stopped since 2000 due to pension reforms. In 2013, spending on early retirement pensions adjusted for inflation was lower than in the year 2000.

In spite of the strong increase in the number of persons over the age of 80, spending on long-term care allowance has only risen moderately. For 20 years, the expansion of extramural and intramural

care for older persons has been intensified markedly, yet less than 5% of welfare expenditure in this context goes to older persons.

Commitment 10 – Regional Cooperation

Since 2010 Austria has held the chair of the UNECE Working Group on Ageing and has been reporting on the group's activities to the UN Commission for Social Development. Austria has also taken part in exchange with the NGOs for older persons, and has attended international and regional events of the Member States as well as the meetings of the NGO Committees on Ageing in Vienna. The country also contributes to the UNECE Task Force on Ageing-Related Statistics and the Open Ended Working Group on the Rights of Older Persons and has been actively joining European conferences as an opinion-maker.

2. Conclusions and Priorities for the Future

Policy goal 1 “Longer working life is encouraged and ability to work is maintained”: In the period under review this was in the centre of policies for older persons – Commitment 1: Mainstreaming Ageing, Commitment 5: Labour Market and Commitment 8: Gender Equality. Under the Europe 2020 Strategy and the “Council Conclusions on Active Ageing” of 2010 Austria is taking measures to support enterprises in introducing age management strategies; increasing the employment rate of older persons by improved working conditions, investments into lifelong learning, removal of obstacles to employment, such as discrimination; improving older persons’ access to education, information and ICT, and developing common principles for active ageing. In this context, with the help of information campaigns and other means, awareness was raised among enterprises and social partners for demographic developments and the growing number of older workers, and especially since 2015 well-funded measures have been launched to drive employment. This goal will continue to be of crucial importance in the future, in combination with Commitment 3: Economic Growth.

Policy goal 2 “Participation, non-discrimination and social inclusion of older persons“: Thanks to the Federal Senior Citizens’ Act 1998/2000, the interests of older persons are represented by a strong body, the Senior Citizens’ Council, which serves as an umbrella for senior citizens’ organisations; their representation is enshrined in legislation and fostered by the state. In 2015, the organisations of youth and senior citizens celebrated together the 15th anniversary of their status as “intergenerational social partners”.

However, equal rights and participation of older persons in political, societal, cultural and economic life will continue to be an essential, central objective of Austrian social policy and a priority. Older persons should be given the space and opportunities which corresponds to the diversity of their lives and enables them to take part in the knowledge-based society. Equal access of older persons to diverse and high-quality learning is a fundamental requirement for participation. In keeping with the Austrian Federal Plan for Senior Citizens and the Austrian Strategy for Lifelong Learning 2020, the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection is seeking to achieve the goal “Enrichment of the quality of life via education in the post-employment phase”, by taking appropriate measures to increase participation in continuing education, to assure the quality of programmes, create counselling facilities for the post-employment phase and a low-threshold, close-to-home educational infrastructure to ensure and enable participation of older persons.

Policy goal 3 “Dignity, health and independence in older age“: Measures to improve the quality of informal and institutional care is a priority objective – Commitment 7: Quality of Life, Independence and Health, as well as Commitment 9: Support to Ageing in Place. The Reform of the Long Time Care Allowance Act in 2012 centralized lawmaking and implementation responsibilities and expanded related services via the Long-Term Care Fund. The extension of mobile services, technologies for supporting care at home, strengthening extra- and intramural hospice and palliative care was well as the implementation of the Dementia Strategy were highlights of the period of review. Enshrining the “National Quality Certificate for Senior Citizens’ and Nursing Homes” in the Federal Senior Citizens’ Act 2013 strengthened the rights of older persons as consumers, which is a decisive contribution to safeguarding and improving quality of institutional care in Austria. The first Study of the Oldest Old in 2015 started the process of regular evaluation of the health status and social situation of very old persons, more work is done to foster the inclusion and self-determination of this group, actively involving those concerned. A second study to cover more Laender is scheduled for 2017. The implementation of a comprehensive dementia strategy continues to be a priority under Commitment 9: Support to Ageing in Place, in conjunction with Commitment 8: Gender Equality. The needs of older persons in the health care system will play a central role in the implementation of the health care framework – Commitment 7: Quality of Life, Independence and Health.

Policy Goal 4 “Intergenerational solidarity“: Here, Commitment 1: Mainstreaming Ageing and Commitment 4: Social Protection and the adjustment of welfare systems to demographic change

were in the foreground. In the period under review, numerous awareness-raising measures and projects aiming at intergenerational solidarity were implemented at the level of the Laender and the federal level so as to reflect a positive image of older age. Commitment 4: Social Protection has resulted in a well-balanced adjustment of welfare systems to demographic change and will continue to be an important task of future work in combination with Commitment 1: Mainstreaming Ageing.

Annex

Table 1: Socio-economic Situation in Austria 2012 – 15 and Outlook for 2016/17

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
	YOY change in %					
Gross domestic product						
Real	+ 0.8	+ 0.3	+ 0.4	+ 0.8	+ 1.7	+ 1.7
Nominal	+ 2.7	+ 1.8	+ 2.0	+ 2.7	+ 3.6	+ 3.4
Production of goods, real	+ 2.2	- 0.4	+ 1.1	+ 1.2	+ 2.6	+ 2.8
Trade, real	- 1.6	- 0.2	- 0.5	+ 1.7	+ 3.2	+ 3.5
Private consumer spending, real	+ 0.6	+ 0.1	+ 0.0	+ 0.4	+ 1.7	+ 1.7
Gross investment in fixed assets, real	+ 1.3	- 0.3	- 0.2	+ 0.9	+ 1.8	+ 2.1
Plant and equipment	+ 0.7	- 0.1	+ 1.3	+ 2.6	+ 2.8	+ 2.7
Buildings	+ 2.2	- 2.1	- 1.0	- 1.0	+ 0.8	+ 1.3
Other fixed assets	+ 0.2	+ 4.1	- 0.7	+ 2.3	+ 2.5	+ 2.7
Exports of goods (Data from Statistik Austria)						
Real	+ 0.5	+ 2.9	+ 2.7	+ 2.5	+ 4.0	+ 4.4
Nominal	+ 1.5	+ 1.8	+ 1.8	+ 3.0	+ 4.5	+ 5.1
Imports (Data from Statistik Austria)						
Real	- 0.9	- 0.1	+ 1.0	+ 3.2	+ 3.5	+ 4.2
Nominal	+ 0.7	- 1.0	- 0.7	+ 1.8	+ 3.9	+ 5.1
Balance of current transactions	bill. + 4.73	+ 6.30	+ 6.49	+ 10.23	+ 11.72	+ 12.49
	in % of GDP + 1.5	+ 1.9	+ 2.0	+ 3.0	+ 3.3	+ 3.4
Secondary market yield	in % 2.4	2.0	1.5	0.8	0.9	1.2
Consumer prices	+ 2.4	+ 2.0	+ 1.7	+ 0.9	+ 1.5	+ 1.7
Employment rate	Eurostat					
In % of working age population	4.9	5.4	5.6	5.7	6.1	6.3
In % of persons gainfully employed	7.0	7.6	8.4	9.1	9.7	10.2
Employed persons (excl. self-employed)	+ 1.4	+ 0.6	+ 0.7	+ 0.9	+ 1.0	+ 1.0
Government deficit/surplus (Maastricht definition)	in % of GDP - 2.2	- 1.3	- 2.7	- 1.6	- 1.9	- 1.7

Source: Austrian Economic Research Institute, Forecast for 2016 and 2017: Consumer spending to increase economic growth in Austria, Presse release 15 December 2015

Table 2:

**Average age of new retirees under the statutory pension system
1970 to 2014**

Year	Direct pensions ¹⁾		Invalidity/ incapacity- pensions ²⁾		Old-age pensions ²⁾ ³⁾		Regular old-age pensions ²⁾		Early retirement pensions	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
1970	61.9	60.4	56.6	56.6	64.2	61.5	.	.	.	.
1980	59.2	58.3	53.9	55.1	62.5	59.5	.	.	.	.
1990	58.3	57.5	53.9	52.4	62.1	59.7	.	.	.	.
2000	58.5	56.8	51.8	49.2	60.5	58.3	66.7	61.4	59.7	56.2
2010	59.1	57.1	53.5	50.1	62.6	59.3	65.9	61.1	61.5	57.2
2011	59.2	57.3	53.7	50.1	62.7	59.4	66.0	61.1	61.5	57.3
2012	59.4	57.4	53.8	50.3	62.9	59.3	65.8	61.0	61.7	57.3
2013	59.6	57.5	53.5	49.7	62.8	59.2	65.8	61.1	61.6	57.2
2014	60.8	58.6	55.7	52.8	63.2	59.8	65.8	61.1	61.9	57.7
2015	61.3	59.2	56.0	52.8	63.6	60.2				

Source: Main Association of Austrian Social Security Institutions. Drawn up on 15 September 2015.

1) Invalidity/incapacity pensions and old-age pensions.

2) As from 2011 invalidity pensions and pensions on account of incapacity to work or exercise one's occupation are all subsumed under regular old-age pensions if retirees are 60/65 years of age or older.

3) Regular old-age pensions (retirement at the age of 60/65 respectively) early retirement pensions.

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1. The following organisations contributed to this Report:

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- Amt der Kärntner Landesregierung, Abteilung 4 – Unterabteilung Generationen, Senioren und ältere Beschäftigte
- Amt der Niederösterreichischen Landesregierung, Abt. Allgemeine Förderung und Stiftungsverwaltung
- Amt der Oberösterreichischen Landesregierung, Direktion Soziales und Gesundheit
- Amt der Salzburger Landesregierung, Abteilung 2 Kultur, Bildung und Gesellschaft, Referat für Jugend, Generationen und Integration
- Amt der Steiermärkischen Landesregierung, Referat Familie, Erwachsenenbildung und Frauen
- Amt der Tiroler Landesregierung, Abteilung JUFF für Familien, Frauen, Integration, Jugend und SeniorInnen, Fachbereich SeniorInnen
- Amt der Vorarlberger Landesregierung, Abteilung Iva - Gesellschaft, Soziales und Integration, Fachbereich Senioren und Pflegevorsorge
- Amt der Wiener Landesregierung, Fonds Soziales Wien, SeniorInnenbüro der Stadt Wien
- Arbeitskreis für Vorsorgemedizin Salzburg (AVOS)
- Bundeskanzleramt (BKA)
- Bundesministerium für Arbeit, Soziales und Konsumentenschutz, Abteilung V/A/6, Grundsatzangelegenheiten der SeniorInnen-, Bevölkerungs- und Freiwilligenpolitik
- Bundesministerium für Arbeit, Soziales und Konsumentenschutz, Abteilung V/B/4, Grundlagen- und Forschungsangelegenheiten
- Bundesministerium für Arbeit, Soziales und Konsumentenschutz, Abteilung VI/A/2, Angelegenheiten der Arbeitsmarktpolitik an der Schnittstelle Beschäftigung, Gesundheit und Alterssicherung
- Bundesministerium für Arbeit, Soziales und Konsumentenschutz, Sektion IV, Pflegevorsorge, Behinderten-, Versorgungs- und Sozialhilfeangelegenheiten
- Bundesministerium für Gesundheit und Frauen, Abt. III/2, Nicht übertragbare Erkrankungen (Non communicable Diseases), Psychische Gesundheit und Altersmedizin
- Bundesministerium für Landesverteidigung und Sport (BMLVS)
- Bundesministerium für Verkehr, Innovation und Technologie (BMVIT)
- Bundesversicherungsanstalt (BVA) Wien
- Die Grünen SeniorInnen
- Gemeindeentwicklung im Salzburger Bildungswerk, („Salzburger Bildungswerk“)
- Österreichischer Seniorenbund
- Paracelsus Medizinische Privatuniversität Salzburg
- Salzburger Gebietskrankenkassa, (SGKK)
- Sozialversicherungsanstalt der Gewerblichen Wirtschaft, (SVA)
- Uni 55-PLUS (SeniorInnen-Universität; Stabstelle der Paris Lodron Universität Salzburg)
- Versicherungsanstalt für Eisenbahnen und Bergbau Salzburg, (VAEB)