

Austria – ANED Country profile

The information contained in this summary was compiled by the Academic Network of European Disability experts (ANED) in March 2009.

Academic networks and resources

There are no established networks for disability research in Austria but some initiatives at Universities that focus on certain disability issues:

[Institute for Inclusive Studies](#) at the University of Linz

[Research Center for Sign Language and the Communication of People with Hearing Impairments](#) at the University of Klagenfurt

[Research Unit for Special Needs and Inclusive Education](#) at the University of Vienna

[Institute for Inclusive Education](#) at the College for Education in Linz

[Department for Social and Inclusive Education](#)

There is a research focus on Inclusive Education and Disability Studies at the University of Innsbruck (Homepage under construction).

[Bidok](#) is a virtual library with free access to more than 1200 full text articles dealing with disability issues, and a focus on inclusion.

There is a bi-monthly academic research journal, [Behinderte Menschen](#), with a focus on people with disabilities

Policy and enforcement bodies

The key national bodies with responsibility for disability law and policy implementation include:

[The Attorneyship for Persons with Disabilities](#) of the Federal Ministry of Social Affairs and Consumer Protection is responsible for supporting people to enforce the federal law for equal rights for people with disabilities

The [Federal Social Offices](#) are mainly responsible for disability laws concerning people with disabilities at the workplace and for supporting people to enforce the federal law for equal rights for people with disabilities.

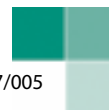
Both Agencies are government organisations.

Organisations of disabled people

The national organisation representing disabled people at the European level (European Disability Forum) is:

ÖAR – [Österreichische Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Rehabilitation](#) (Austrian National Council of Disabled Persons) includes 78 partner organisations representing approximately 400,000 disabled people.

Other significant national organisations of disabled people include:



[Austrian National Association of the Deaf](#)
[Austrian Federation Of The Blind And Partially Sighted](#)

[Independent Living Austria \(Selbstbestimmt Leben Österreich, SLIÖ\)](#) is an umbrella organisation for independent living organisations and individuals.

National law and strategy

Austria has ratified the [United Nations Convention](#) and the [Optional Protocol](#).

Important national laws, policies and strategies concerning disabled people include:

[The Federal Law for Long Term Care Benefit](#)

[The Guidelines for Personal Assistance in the Workplace](#)

In 2005 the National Council adopted new disability equality policies, including the [Federal Disability Equality Act](#) and amendments to the Disability Employment Act and the Federal Disability Act. The Federal Disability Equality Act prohibits discrimination and includes measures for protection of disabled people and their families.

Facts and figures

Data on population indicate that:

In a [2007 microcensus survey](#), 20,5% of people living in private households in Austria reported a limiting illness or disability lasting for more than six months (20,8% female, 20,2% male).

Long term impairments are strongly related to age - aged under 20 years: 4,5% female; 6,2 male - aged 20 to 60 years: 14,7% female; 16,3% male - aged over 60 years: 48,5% female; 48,3% male.

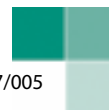
13% of the Austrian population report a physical / mobility impairment, 3,9% a visual impairment, 2,5% a hearing impairment, 0,8 % communication disorder, 1,0% learning difficulties, 7% a mental health disorder, 7% problems caused by other impairments and 7% multiple impairments.

People living in institutions (e.g. homes for the elderly, sheltered housing) are not included in this survey.

Source: [Microcensus Survey on People with Impairments](#). Available in German

Data on employment indicate that:

Against the general trend towards a decrease in unemployment in 2006, the unemployment rate of people with disabilities was still on the increase. 5,9% of people with long term impairments (6,5% female, 5,4% male) were unemployed compared to 3,8% of those without impairments. ([Report on the State of People with Disabilities](#), Federal Ministry for Social Affairs and Consumer Protection, 2008, in German) The employment rate of people with impairments was 58,5% (54,4% female; 70,2% male) compared to 77,8% of those without impairment (61,9% female; 85,7% male).



Data on education indicate that:

In the school year 2006/2007, just over 50% of children with special educational needs were integrated in regular schools in all of Austria. There are striking differences between the 9 different provinces and generally special schools are still well established. ([Report on the State of People with Disabilities](#), Federal Ministry for Social Affairs and Consumer Protection, 2008, in German)

The [microcensus data](#) from 2007 indicate differences between disabled and non-disabled people regarding their highest level of education: Disabled men and women are more likely to have a lower qualification than non-disabled men and women. E.g. the highest level of education for people aged 20 to under 60 is: Compulsory school 17.7% men, 32.5 % women compared to 10.8 % and 17.7 % for non-disabled men and women; Apprenticeship 67.7% men and 51.9% women compared to 57.8% and 49.1% for nondisabled men and women; A-Level / University degree 14.6% men and 15.7% women compared to 31.4 % and 33.3% for nondisabled men and women.

Data on accessibility indicate that:

The microcensus data indicate that people with permanent impairments experience accessibility problems in different spheres of life:

Problems in Public Transport: 39.1% of people with mobility impairments, 42% of people with visual impairments and 43% of people with hearing impairments

Problems with access to public buildings: 32.1% of people with mobility impairments, 38,4 % of people with visual impairments and 34.9% of people with hearing impairments

Problems with access to leisure activities: 67.3% of people with mobility impairments, 60.1% of people with visual impairments and 56% of people with hearing impairments

([Report on the State of People with Disabilities](#) published by the Federal Ministry for Social Affairs and Consumer Protection, 2008, in German)

[Data from the MeAC accessibility survey](#) (2007) showed that:

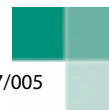
2 out of 6 selected public websites and none of the selected commercial websites passed the accessibility evaluation

The main emergency number was not accessible by text phone,

The main public television national language channels provided some TV programs with subtitling (26%) some with signing (0.25%) and some audio description.

Neither of the commercial TV channels provided national language programs with subtitling or signing.

Neither of the two main banks had installed talking ATMs



Data on poverty and incomes indicate that:

Men and women with disabilities tend to have a lower income compared to men and women without disabilities; women earn significantly less than men.

The monthly gross income for disabled people aged 16-64 is:

Less than €1,000: 19% men and 30% women compared to 8% nondisabled men and 29% women

€1,000-2,000: 38% men and 52% women compared to 38% nondisabled men and 52% women

More than €2000: 43% men and 18% women compared to 54% nondisabled men and 23% women.

The risk of poverty is twice as high among disabled people compared to non-disabled people and the risk of poverty for disabled women is higher than for disabled men. 11% of disabled people live in manifest poverty compared to 4% of nondisabled people. [Microcensus Survey on People with Impairments](#), in German)

Data on attitudes indicate that:

The [2007 Special Eurobarometer on Discrimination in Europe](#) showed that 42% of people knew someone who was disabled (compared to 55% EU average) and 75% acknowledged that being disabled tended to be disadvantage in society (EU average 79%).

Disability discrimination was viewed as widespread by 52% (EU average 53%); 34% thought that disability discrimination was more widespread than five years ago. 34% thought that not enough was being done to combat discrimination in general in France (EU average 51%).

75% thought that more disabled people should be in the workplace (EU average 77%) and 85% thought specific measures on equal opportunities were needed in this field.

Data on public spending indicate that:

We do not currently have data on public spending on disability

Social protection

Key features of the national system include (including adapted items from the [MISSOC](#) database December 2008):

Disability benefits

The Austrian system of social security is characterised by a mixture of centralised and decentralised elements, with social insurance based and universal benefits as well as employment issues at federal level.

Welfare payments are funded through contributions from insured persons, employers and taxes. There is a compulsory social insurance scheme for employees.



Earnings-related pensions depend on contributions and the duration of affiliation (MISSOC, 2008).

Increased Family Allowance: In 2007 69.131 children received this benefit of € 138,30 per month.

Invalidity related Pensions: In 2005 expenditure on invalidity-related pensions for people under the age of retirement amounted to roughly EUR 4 billion. This corresponds to 6% of all social welfare benefits and 1.6% of GDP. ([Social protection in Austria](#) (2008)).

In December 2007, 440.780 people received an invalidity-related pension. The average monthly invalidity pension was € 863 (€ 589 female; € 1.049.- male) ([Report on the State of People with Disabilities](#) published by the Federal Ministry for Social Affairs and Consumer Protection, 2008, in German)

Rehabilitation and re-training

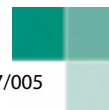
Apart from cash benefits, the social insurance institutions, the Public Employment Service, the Federal Ministry of Social Affairs and Consumer Protection (primarily via the Federal Social Office) as well as the Provinces and their local authorities offer medical, social and occupational rehabilitation and support in the context of employment as well as other spheres of life. There are currently no overall data available concerning all kind of rehabilitation measures for people with disabilities in Austria, but here are two examples:

The accident insurance institution makes an important contribution to the rehabilitation of persons who are affected by occupational accidents or diseases. Measures serve to provide treatment and re-integrate those concerned into working life. In 2006 EUR 343 million and EUR 71 million respectively were spent on these purposes. ([Social protection in Austria](#) (2008)).

The federal government started an additional programme in 2001 to improve the situation of disabled people on the labour market. Central to the measures is their integration or reintegration into the labour market. In 2007, € 153 Mio. were spent in the framework of this programme. A total of 52 009 people with disabilities thus received benefits in kind. ([Report on the State of People with Disabilities](#) published by the Federal Ministry for Social Affairs and Consumer Protection, 2008. Available in German).

Preferential employment and quotas

To promote the integration of disabled people into the world of work, companies with at least 25 employees are obliged to take on at least one disabled person per 25 employees. If this quota is not fulfilled by a company, a contribution of €213 per month (2008) for each job not occupied has to be paid to a specially established state fund (equalisation tax fund). The money in this fund is earmarked for the financing of



services which directly benefit disabled people or is granted to those employers who employ disabled people. In recent years an annual sum of around E 80 million was spent in this way. Of the approx. 92,551 private-sector jobs which should have been taken up by disabled people in 2006, about 65% of the quota was fulfilled. This quote has been constant for the last years.

Long-term support and care

Most of the social services for disabled people are regional responsibilities of the nine Austrian provinces and their local authorities in cities and villages. Many federal laws and laws of the provinces deal with issues that are relevant for people with disabilities.

Long-term care benefit: all people in need of care and nursing can receive cash benefits depending on their care requirements and regardless of their financial situation, through long term care benefit.

In Dec. 2007, 12,510 children and young people aged 0 to 20 (5,178 female; 7,332 male) received long term care benefit. A total of 62,145 people (29 015 female; 33,130 male) aged 21 to 60 received long term care benefit (own calculation) Depending on individual support needs, there are seven levels of long-term care benefit that range between €154.20 (more than 50 monthly hours of care needs) and €1,655.80 (more than 180 monthly hours of care needs). ([Report on the State of People with Disabilities](#) published by the Federal Ministry for Social Affairs and Consumer Protection, 2008, in German).

Additional information

Useful sources of more detailed information about the situation of disabled people, and the policies and support available, include:

Homepage of [Bizeps](#), Center for Independent Living in Vienna (German)

A [summary of assistance to disabled people in the Austrian social system](#) was published in English by the Federal Ministry of Social Security, Generations and Consumer Protection (2005), although it is uncritical of the actual situation.