

Recommendation regarding Gender Mainstreaming

The promotion of women in research and technology development and gender mainstreaming (GM) are complementary strategies which the Austrian Council believes can help achieve equal opportunities for women and men. As part of the efforts to promote women, the Austrian Council created the inter-ministerial initiative fFORTE and has recommended that it receive funds from the Action Programmes (for details see: www.ratfte.at). Although there is a legal obligation to implement gender mainstreaming, application in practical terms is sometimes sluggish.

On 15 December 2003, the Council for Research and Technology Development therefore recommended the establishment of an inter-ministerial working group on gender mainstreaming within the framework of RTD promotion. This working group should draw up proposals for measures to ensure the gender equality of RTD promotion measures. This should ensure the optimal use of existing knowledge and the creation and development of joint quality standards. Representatives from the BMBWK, BMWA und BMVIT and the secretariat of the Austrian Council participated in the group.

The inter-ministerial working group noted that the ministries had already established a good basis with their previous gender mainstreaming activities. Building upon this experience, the working group compiled an expandable collection of suitable documents. This contained guidelines and instructions on the basis of which programme managers at the ministries and funding agencies can design their promotion measures so that they conform to the requirements of the gender mainstreaming recommendation. There are currently instructions regarding the gender equal use of language and gender equal organisation of events, but above all, detailed explanations of how gender can be included in the content and structure of the programmes even at the planning stage.

This collection can be expanded and also easily adapted to meet future requirements; it is still overseen by the inter-ministerial working group. At its meeting on 22 February the Austrian Council approved the catalogue and recommended the implementation of the proposed approach.