



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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Summary of the Partnership Agreement with Austria 2014-2020

Overall information

The Partnership Agreement (PA) covers four European Structural and Investment Funds ("ESIF"): the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the European Social Fund (ESF), the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF).

The PA focusses in particular on the following thematic objectives:

- Preserving and protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency (26% of ESI-Funds, EAFRD and ERDF)
- Promoting climate change adaptation, risk prevention and management (26% of ESI-Funds, exclusively EAFRD)
- Enhancing innovation and the competitiveness of SMEs and of the agricultural sector (16.5% of ESI-Funds, EAFRD and ERDF)
- Promoting social inclusion, combating poverty and any discrimination (11% of ESI-Funds, in particular from the EAFRD and the ESF).

Other thematic objectives will be supported by the ERDF and the ESF, while the EMFF allocation of EUR 7 million will be focussed on investments that should increase the competitiveness of the aquaculture sector.

As the EAFRD contributes to 80% of total ESI-Funds in Austria, the relative weight of the fund and of the thematic objectives under which the EAFRD operates is high.

The main investment priorities of the EAFRD are the restructuring of farms, the setting-up of young farmers, innovation in the business environment of small and medium-sized enterprises and the promotion of producer groups in the processing and marketing fields, thus enhancing the competitiveness of the agricultural sector. Another major investment priority is targeted towards resource efficiency and CO² reduction by supporting the production of renewable energies, promoting organic farming and agricultural-environmental schemes and preserving environmentally-sensitive areas (e.g. mountain areas). Focus is finally laid on the development of rural areas aiming at the creation of jobs; here the LEADER approach proved to be a promising instrument.

The ERDF will invest in research and technological development and innovation, by promoting smart specialisation with a strong focus on small and medium-sized enterprises. Particular attention will also be put on competitiveness of enterprises in production and specialised and innovative services. A contribution to CO² reduction shall be achieved by increasing energy efficiency and the use of renewable energies in enterprises and the support of RTDI activities in these areas. Finally, the ERDF will be used to strengthen integrated urban development in selected areas (such as Vienna).

Another focus of ESIF support will be put on investment in human capital by the ESF under the thematic objective "Investing in education, training and vocational training for

skills and lifelong learning" and for "Strengthening research, technological development and innovation" by the ERDF. The ESF will also support active ageing and gender equality on the labour market under the thematic objective 'Promoting sustainable and quality employment and labour mobility.

Finally, ESI-Funds will support the shift towards a low-carbon economy in all sectors (by the ERDF and EAFRD), and promote "sustainable and quality employment and labour mobility" by all funds.

In total, Austria has chosen to co-finance investments within 9 thematic objectives defined in the regulations. Details on thematic objectives and allocations by fund are presented in **Table 1**.

Expected results

Investments co-financed by ESI-Funds aim at addressing challenges in agriculture and aquaculture, in industry and on the labour market. ESI-Funds will support Austria in achieving its national targets of Europe 2020, in particular:

- RTDI expenditure in relation to GDP is to increase from 2.84 (2012) to 3.76% (2020) with a focus on private spending. However, the impact of ESI-Funds (233 million €) will be very small given the share (between 5 and 6%) of total expenditure for RTDI in Austria.
- ESI-Funds will contribute to a CO² reduction (from -12.7% in 2012 to -16% in 2020) and to improved energy efficiency and lower energy consumption (-7.16 million tons by 2020).
- ESI-Funds are to help to increase the employment rate (to 77-78%), reduce the early school leaving rate (to 9,5%) and to reduce the number of people at risk of poverty or exclusion by 235,000 persons by 2020, as funds will be used to promote employment, foster social inclusion and invest in education, training and lifelong learning.

Budget and financial allocations

Austria will receive 4,923 million EUR from ESI-Funds (whereof 3,938 million from the EAFRD alone) and 257 million EUR for European Territorial Cooperation.

The concentration of funds on a limited number of priorities is one of the main principles of the reformed cohesion policy. In Austria, thematic concentration on Thematic Objectives 1, 3 and 4 attains 91% for the ERDF, which is well above the minimum of 80% for more-developed regions set in the regulation. In the only transitional region, Burgenland, concentration attains even 96%.

The ESF share amounts to 45.2% of the total ERDF and ESF contribution and is above the required minimum share of 43.5%. ESF funds are concentrated on the investment priorities related to equality between women and men, active and healthy ageing, and active inclusion, reducing and preventing early school leaving, and enhancing equal access to lifelong learning.

26.8 million EUR (5% of the ERDF allocation) will be invested in integrated sustainable urban development actions mainly to be implemented in Vienna. A small share of ERDF will be reserved for CLLD in Tirol.

An amount of 1,595 million EUR (32.4% of the total ESIF allocation) will be invested to support climate related investments, which exceeds the required 20% share.

For the ERDF, indicative regional allocations to each of the Bundesländer have been determined by Austria, while for the EAFRD, ESF and EMFF, the respective allocations are in principle Austrian-wide without a pre-determined regional allocation, with the

exception however for the transitional region Burgenland and for the ESF investment priority on social inclusion.

Programme architecture

Cohesion policy will be delivered by four operational programmes (OPs), one for each fund. As compared to 2007-2013, a reduction from nine to one ERDF programme, and from two to one ESF programme, has been achieved. The EAFRD and the EMFF contributions will be delivered by one national programme as before.

Following the reduction of the number of ERDF programmes, which takes place in the framework of the Austrian ERDF Reform Agenda, the number of managing authorities will diminish by eight, as there will be no regional programmes (one for each Bundesland) any more.

Table 1:

Thematisches Ziel	EFRE	ESF	KF	ELER	EMFF	Insgesamt
01. Stärkung von Forschung, technologischer Entwicklung und Innovation	198.191.103,00	0,00	0,00	35.419.381,00	0,00	233.610.484,00
02. Verbesserung der Barrierefreiheit sowie der Nutzung und Qualität von IKT	0,00	0,00	0,00	26.691.499,00	0,00	26.691.499,00
03. Stärkung der Wettbewerbsfähigkeit von KMU, des Agrarsektors (beim ELER) und des Fischerei- und Aquakultursektors (beim EMFF)	171.169.983,00	0,00	0,00	622.211.927,00	6.738.500,00	800.120.410,00
04. Förderung der Bestrebungen zur Verringerung der CO2-Emissionen in allen Branchen der Wirtschaft	116.707.712,00	0,00	0,00	89.835.514,00		206.543.226,00
05. Förderung der Anpassung an den Klimawandel sowie der Risikoprävention und des Risikomanagements	0,00	0,00	0,00	1.289.820.131,00	0,00	1.289.820.131,00
06. Erhaltung und Schutz der Umwelt sowie Förderung der Ressourceneffizienz	7.000.000,00	0,00	0,00	1.290.694.815,00		1.297.694.815,00
07. Förderung von Nachhaltigkeit im Verkehr und Beseitigung von Engpässen in wichtigen Netzinfrastrukturen	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00
08. Förderung nachhaltiger und hochwertiger Beschäftigung und Unterstützung der Mobilität der Arbeitskräfte	12.500.000,00	68.403.473,00	0,00	43.894.505,00	0,00	124.797.978,00
Thematisches Ziel	EFRE	ESF	KF	ELER	EMFF	Insgesamt
09. Förderung der sozialen Inklusion, Bekämpfung von Armut und jeglicher Diskriminierung	9.244.000,00	136.442.139,00	0,00	382.672.814,00	0,00	528.358.953,00
10. Investitionen in Bildung, Ausbildung und Berufsbildung für Kompetenzen und lebenslanges Lernen	0,00	211.448.374,00	0,00	42.138.770,00	0,00	253.587.144,00
11. Verbesserung der institutionellen Kapazitäten von öffentlichen Behörden und Interessenträgern und der effizienten öffentlichen Verwaltung	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00
Technische Hilfe	21.449.281,00	25.793.367,00	0,00	114.172.641,00	226.500,00	161.641.789,00
Insgesamt	536.262.079,00	442.087.353,00	0,00	3.937.551.997,00	6.965.000,00	4.922.866.429,00