

Styrian Women's and Gender Equality Strategy 2020

Styria on the path towards more fairness and gender equality



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The Styrian State Government considers gender equality a joint responsibility and a central element for the achievement and maintenance of social justice.

The Women's and Gender Equality Strategy 2020 defines the goals for the coming years and describes visions reaching beyond this time horizon. With this, it provides an operational framework for the future women's and gender equality policy pursued by the State of Styria. Within its sphere of action and in collaboration with the Styrian regions and the Austrian Federal Government, the State Government intends to gradually come closer to realizing these visions.

In coordination with the Styrian State Government, the seven regional delegates commit to the goals of equality among the genders and, within the scope of their capabilities and fields of action, will contribute to the implementation of the Women's and Gender Equality Strategy 2020.

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Concerted action in the right direction

1. Challenges and approaches

During the course of a process which lasted several months and Participation of 700 included events in all regions of Styria, multipliers, researchers and practitioners in the area of gender equality as well as counselling of girls, women and men, representatives of the social partners, business and industry representatives, as well as the members of the Styrian Partnership for Integration were consulted regarding relevant issues in the area of women's and gender equality policy and, they were asked to contribute to central issues related to the promotion of women and gender equality efforts. More than 700 individuals participated in 21 events, contributing their experience and expertise and participating in the discussion regarding the relevance of the individual issues.

individuals contributing their expertise and experience

The practitioners and experts were questioned according to the guidelines of the concept of "spheres of life", which is also put to practice in the Styrian Charter for Living Together in Diversity. The spheres of life or living environments mentioned in the Charter were expanded to include the gender equality perspective, for example by providing a more differentiated discussion of the term "work": it quickly became evident how important it is to talk about paid and unpaid work, the distribution of gainful employment, household chores and care work, as well as the according social and monetary recognition.

Gender equality in all spheres of life

From the many suggestions contributed during the course of the participation process, the topics relevant to Styria gradually emerged. In this strategy paper, they are summarised according to attitudes and basic principles, visions and mission statements as well as six strategic fields of action, providing an orientation guideline for the Styrian women's and gender equality policy over the years to come.

Some of the issues and fields of action formulated are topics which the State of Styria and the Styrian State Government cannot tackle alone. It will be important to coordinate action with the Federal Government, the regional decision-makers, as well as existing EU strategies. For each of the six topics, the strategy paper therefore includes fields of action on both state and federal level.

Collaboration of federal, state and local governments

Sustainable developments

The Styrian Women's and Gender Equality Strategy 2020 is Societal focused on sustainable long-term developments and formulates basic logic the according relevant steps to be taken over the next few years. In certain strategic areas, simultaneous action on different levels is important. If, for example, the basic logic of existing patterns prevents equality, such as is the case regarding the uneven distribution of paid and unpaid work or the disparity in the assessment of male-dominated production activities and female-dominated service activities, then it is not enough to introduce measures which achieve equal distribution and participation among women and men on the foundation of the current basic logic. In the medium and long term, the existing basic logic must be further developed or modified with the aim of providing equality-oriented alternatives.

Issues relating to women's and gender equality policy are crosscutting political topics. To a large extent, they are related to economic and employment policy, social and health policy, education and science policy, as well as family policy. This strategy paper describes the overarching common goals for areas of politics in Styria regarding the specific equality objectives formulated by all departments of the Styrian State Government within its budget law 2015. Social partnership is also highly relevant to issues relating to women's and gender equality policy. The better the coordination is between the actions of the societal stakeholders, the more effective the Women's and gender equality policy is,.

Cross-cutting topic and coordinated action

2. Attitudes and basic principles

The goal of equality will be reached when gender-based discrimination is eliminated and prevented, when an equal participation of the genders in all their diversity is ensured and actually exists regarding all social positions, resources and spheres of influence, and when role pressure no longer attaches stereotypical expectations, attributions and images to individual gender lifestyles.

Anti-discrimination, participation and lifestyles

Legal equality of treatment is the first important step in reaching this goal.

Furthermore, factual equality is attainable only if both the issue Social rights and of social justice is broached and social images and traditions are traditions challenged. In order to institute equality, it requires more than measures related to women's issues (which, of course, continue to be very important) - it is also necessary to achieve a socially equitable distribution of resources and a cultural recognition of all individuals, regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity or nationality (cf. Charter for Living Together in Diversity, passed by the Styrian State Government on 14 April 2011 and by the Styrian Parliament on 21 June 2011).

This so-called intersectional approach to women's and gender equality policy therefore focuses not only on the category of Gender, education, "gender", but also on the relationship of gender with other factors such as the socio-economic situation, ethnicity, disabilities or age, as gender-based disadvantages are amplified in combination with other factors.

income, ethnicity, age and disabilities

In addition to this, the individual gender groups must be considered from a diversified perspective: equality not only refers to a compensation of the disadvantages faced by women in comparison to men. It is also necessary to identify cases in which men are discriminated against by other men and women are discriminated against by other women and to introduce suitable compensatory measures.

Gender equality also means having an open political debate about the fact that outside of the traditional gender roles, there are numerous different forms of femininity and masculinity, which all need to receive equal legal and social recognition.

A look at unequal circumstances

The social distribution of economic, social and cultural capital, i.e. of assets, income, relationships, status and knowledge, is organised hierarchically on the basis of origin, ethnicity and gender. Individuals are assigned certain characteristics, lifestyles and social positions because of their gender.

Gender and hierarchies

During the course of the development of the Styrian Women's Gender-specific and Gender Equality Strategy 2020, the participants mainly division of labour discussed these unequal circumstances in relationship to the topics of work and compatibility: in order to perform so-called care work (care or educational activities, household chores), there are no gender-specific skills. Any individual is capable of and willing to perform care work, irrespective of their gender. It is an essential element for social survival and therefore must be performed equally by women and men and should be made possible and appreciated equally for men and women. In order to achieve this shared responsibility for socially important tasks under inclusion of all, a long-term goal of women's and gender equality policy is a change to the current gender-specific division of labour.

Gender relationships can be changed

There are social groups which have an interest in an unequal division of power with an eye to their own benefit. One of the objectives of women's and gender equality policy therefore is to time and again identify hierarchical conditions, to critically investigate them regarding their causes and functions and to provide political momentum in order to balance out unequal distribution and to contribute to fairness (gender equity) in living together.

Compensation of unequal distribution

3. Political responsibility

People living in Styria have different, individual conceptions of life. Political decisions influence these conceptions of life. Family law and the tax system, for example, make a statement as to which lifestyles are more or less desirable from a political point of view. Social and integration policy influences the possibilities offered to individuals to participate in different social areas. Economic and labour-market related policy provisions determine which areas are expanded, promoted or regulated for whom, and to what extent this is done. Education and science policy influences in

Possibilities for political control

which areas and in what form knowledge is transmitted and generated. The endowment and the opportunities for action of different areas of society are controlled through the deployment of public resources and the public subsidy system.

Apart from legal and fiscal framework conditions and the deployment of public funds, individual lifestyles are shaped by role expectations in particular. Through public and private speech, as well as through symbols and actions, gender stereotypes are created and maintained (doing-gender). In the same manner, role expectations can also be extended and modified through public and private speech. Political equality efforts therefore also aim at having Styrian policy-makers participate in creating extended gender roles through their words as well as their actions.

Language, symbols and behaviour

The extent of freedom of choice

True freedom of choice only exists if the social framework Freedom of choice conditions are free from discrimination. As long as structural as a goal framework conditions and social traditions favour or discriminate against individuals because of their gender, politics must take countermeasures and develop mechanisms which ensure that true freedom of choice is provided.

4. Vision and mission statement

- Styria is a state in which all individuals can live safely in a self-determined manner, irrespective of their gender.
- Irrespective of their gender, all individuals in Styria have equal access to services to the public and are economically independent.
- In Styria, all individuals, irrespective of their gender, participate equally in socially relevant functions, i.e. in gainful employment, household chores, educational activities and care work, the formation of political opinions, as well as civil societal and voluntary activities. Irrespective of their gender, all individuals have equal opportunities to participate in education, cultural life and leisure activities.

- In Styria, diversified gender roles, extended concepts of masculinity and femininity, as well as different personal and family-related lifestyles are accepted. Girls and boys, women and men confidently live up to their own individual strengths. Girls and women have expanded their self-conception to include increased scientific and technical skills, as well as competitive behaviour, while boys and men have integrated social and communicative skills as well as relationship-oriented behaviour into their self-image.
- In Styria, the political decision-makers collaborate with the social partners, interest groups, the Styrian entrepreneurs and the organised civil society to promote gender equality in all spheres of Styrian life.
- In Styria, the scope of options for action open to the genders is extended, and the gender relationships are balanced. This is the foundation for interpersonal fairness and social justice, and an essential contributor to democratic political stability, respect for human rights and social peace.

In order to come closer to this vision over the coming years by means of controlling political measures, the following six strategic fields of action are defined:

- Economic independence and reduction of income differentials
- Reconciliation of family and working life for women and men
- Participation, co-determination and representation of women
- Prevention of and protection from violence
- Elimination of gender stereotypes and expansion of the range of options
- Access to public services and housing

5. Economic independence and reduction of income differentials

Vision

Styria is a state where there are no gender-specific wage differentials. All individuals have gainful employment providing a living wage, and are secured in the case of limited working capacity, occupational disability or unemployment.

In Styria, the necessary political framework conditions and measures are in place in order to ensure that paid and unpaid labour is distributed equally between women and men, and that socially important functions in all areas of the economy receive equal recognition, thereby contributing to innovation, sustainable value creation and prosperity.

In order to achieve this, Styria offers extensive public educational and care facilities, and there are working life models, minimum wage provisions and social security benefits on an Austrian and EU-wide level, which, depending on the individual phase of life, offer women and men the possibility of periods of part-time work as well as dependent or independent gainful employment providing a living wage.

Strategic fields of action

- · Participation of women in gainful employment
- Women in professional and managerial positions
- Gender-specific division of labour
 - o Evaluation of industries in which most employees are female
 - o Evaluation of activities which are predominantly carried out by women
- Income differentials between the genders (gender pay gap)
- Gender segregation in the choice of schools, courses of studies, professions and continued education
- Models for gainful employment

Political fields of action on a state level

- Increase the labour force participation of women in Styria with the objective of enabling economic independence
- Coordinate political action for the further development of the compatibility of gainful employment and family for both women and men
- Increase the income transparency in Styria in coordination with Styrian companies and social partners, with the goal of reducing the gender-specific income differentials and achieving a workplace evaluation free of discrimination
- Promote the public debate on the consequences of gender-specific societal and private division of labour (e.g. for occupational biography, old-age pension, risk of poverty, cohabitation)
- Support gender equality orientation in the choice of professions, schools, courses of studies and continued education
- Discuss possibilities for flexible organisation of working time with companies and social partners in order to improve the compatibility of work and family for women and men

Political fields of action on a federal level

- Achieve involvement of all occupational groups and industries with collective agreements, together with the social partners
- Expand social security for entrepreneurs, in particular for one-person businesses, together with the social partners
- Further develop income transparency, introduce and enforce sanctions for non-compliance and thereby contribute to the implementation of the legislative principles of "equal pay for equal work" and "equal pay for work of equivalent value"
- Promote training for educators oriented towards gender equality and thereby create the basis for an easier elimination of role expectations and a factual expansion of the opportunity set for the choice of schools, courses of studies, continued education and professions for all, irrespective of gender
- Continue the development of working time models, taking into consideration different phases of life, in order to improve the compatibility of working and family life for women and men
- Further develop the practice of recognizing qualifications acquired abroad in order to allow for adequate employment opportunities for women

6. Reconciliation of family and working life for women and men

Vision

Styria is a state in which all individuals perform care work (for children and dependent persons in need of care), educational activities and household work equally and in accordance with their current phases of life and in return receive recognition, support and security – irrespective of their gender and the type of family unit they live in. Women increasingly pursue gainful employment, while men increasingly take on care, educational and household work. For this, there is a sufficient offering of demand-oriented public educational and care facilities and support structures, as well as support by employers in performing these care activities.

Strategic fields of action

- Gender-specific division of labour
 Distribution of gainful employment and care work between women and men
- Offerings of (public, private and corporate) educational and care facilities for children, as well as care models for persons in need of care
- Working conditions and quality assurance within the educational and care facilities

Political fields of action on a state level

- Promote public debate regarding an equal participation of men and women in family care activities
- Advocate paternity leave and "dad month" in public debates and support men in availing themselves of these opportunities
- Sensitize men towards gainful employment in care-oriented and educational occupations and support this choice of profession
- Expand regional educational and care facilities (public, corporate or in private-public partnership) for children and persons in need of care, and further develop and offer care models for persons in need of care
- Increase the demand orientation of educational and care-related offerings
- Coordinate the approaches regarding the issue of compatibility of working and family life for women and men between the different political departments

Further improve the working conditions and quality assurance at the Styrian educational and care facilities

Political fields of action on a federal level

- Further develop parental leave models towards more equally shared parenting responsibilities and advocate an according European parental leave model within the EU, in order to allow for a quick and flexible re-entry into gainful employment by women and men
- Critically debate and in coordination with the social partners increase the limits for additional income during parental leave
- Develop models for joint childcare by parents "around and after birth" and firmly embed these for all types of families
- Ensure equal legal and financial treatment of different forms of families and partnerships and increasingly push for structural and non-cash benefits in addition to monetary support for families
- Increase the valuation of child care periods in the calculation of pensions
- Develop and pass a federal framework law for elementary educational facilities
- Further expand forms of all-day schools
- Develop and pass as binding an expansion and financing plan for all educational institutions, from elementary educational facilities to universities
- Develop a financing model to ensure demand-oriented provision of care services

7. Participation, co-determination and representation of women

Vision

Styria is a state in which all individuals, irrespective of their gender, can equally participate in public debate, get involved in interest groups, assume entrepreneurial responsibility and pursue activities furthering the common interest. The according decision-making and process-shaping power is equally distributed between the genders, and the division of labour is such that it ensures that anybody, irrespective of their gender, can reconcile gainful employment with care work and public participation. The cooperation of women and men regarding the issue of gender equality is a matter of course.

Strategic fields of action

- Equal representation of the genders in decision-making bodies and leadership positions
- Gender equality perspective in political decisions
 - o Consideration of the life realities of the genders in political decisions
 - o Consideration of the consequences of decisions on the genders
- Knowledge and competence regarding gender equality issues among the decision-makers

Political fields of action on a state level

- Further expand quota systems with the goal of eliminating structural disadvantages (e.g. because of stereotypical role expectations) for the gender under-represented in the respective areas (industry, organisation, level of hierarchy)
- Increasingly adapt political participation structures in Styria to the current life realities of women and persons with care responsibilities
- Expand possibilities for the co-determination of women in organisations in coordination with the Styrian companies and social partners
- Ensure a targeted pursuit of the gender equality orientation embedded in the budget law
- Further develop a gender equality-oriented allocation of resources within all departments
- Support the development of competencies regarding gender equality issues within departments and communities

Political fields of action on a federal level

- Further expand quota systems in all areas
- Increasingly adapt political participation structures to the current life realities of women and persons with care responsibilities
- Further expand and implement gender mainstreaming
- Further develop and transmit knowledge and expertise regarding gender equality among political decision-makers and public-sector employees

8. Prevention of and protection from violence

Vision

Styria is a state in which all individuals receive recognition irrespective of their gender, their appearance, their origin, their sexual orientation or their medical condition, and thereby enjoy a stronger protection from encroachment and acts of violence of any type. For this, recognition by public institutions, politicians, the legal system, in media, civil society and companies is ensured, and publicly identifying and standing up against sexism and domestic violence as well as violence within an individual's social environment, the public sphere and institutions is a matter of course. Violence is recognized as an expression of societal power relations, and framework conditions which prevent structural violence are in place.

Strategic fields of action

- Legal and factual recognition of all individuals, irrespective of their gender, appearance or lifestyle
- Ensuring public visibility of the genders through language, symbols and images
- Clear public stance against sexism
- Measures aimed at protecting all individuals from physical, psychological and structural violence
- Support for persons who have become victims of violent acts
- Anti-violence measures for violent individuals

Political fields of action on a state level

- Publicly stand up for the acceptance of the diversity of lifestyles and sexual orientations
- Lead a critical public debate about ideals of beauty and body manipulation
- Eliminate gender role stereotypes through exemplary public speaking
- Publicly stand up against sexism and violence
- Increasingly sensitize the public as well as affected occupational areas regarding the issue of sexism
- Intensify the cooperation between politics, courts, police, youth welfare, social institutions, health facilities and counselling facilities in Styria
- Contribute to the protection and the reinforcement of the assistance to victims and increase prevention measures
- Increase anti-violence measures for violent individuals and expand the offerings available in this area in coordination with the courts

Political fields of action on a federal level

- Legally secure the acceptance of the diversity of lifestyles and sexual orientations
- Ensure psychosocial and legal counselling of victims and develop a demandoriented funding practise
- Offer sufficient free treatment opportunities for victims
- Expand the available anti-violence measures for violent individuals

9. Elimination of gender stereotypes and expansion of the range of options

Vision

Styria is a state in which all individuals can live up to their potential in all areas, irrespective of their gender. In this respect, the children's right to an education oriented towards gender equality is taken into consideration from the very beginning. They can demonstrate and contribute their strengths and potential within the education system and obtain a wide range of skills, irrespective of their gender. The education which is oriented towards gender equality, and the working method employed by educators ensure individualized encouragement. In order to expand the range of options available to the genders, all individuals are oriented towards expanded gender roles and behavioural expectations when speaking and acting in public.

Strategic fields of action

- Recognition of diverse lifestyles and forms of families
- Gender-sensitive language, symbols and images
- Research and education regarding gender equality and gender justice
- Education oriented towards gender equality, in particular in the area of elementary education
- Elimination of the segregation of genders in the choice of schools, courses of studies, professions and continued education

Political fields of action on a state level

- Follow and consistently apply the "Charter for Living Together in Diversity in Styria"
- Embed gender justice more firmly in the language, symbols and images used in political activities and public service
- Support the establishment of gender and diversity competence in public institutions
- Further extend the gender and diversity competence among political decision-makers and public servants

- Promote training for educators oriented towards gender equality, and thereby create the basis for an easier elimination of role expectations and a factual expansion of the opportunity set for the choice of schools, courses of studies, continued education and professions for any person, irrespective of their gender
- Support an orientation towards gender equality in counselling and education offerings as well as research projects
- Extend and support the collaboration of counselling centres regarding gender equality and other gender issues

Political fields of action on a federal level

- Promote the legal recognition of different lifestyles and family structures
- Consistently implement gender justice in the language, symbols and images used in political activities and public service
- Increase research funding for research aimed at gender equality
- Embed contents focused on gender equality and gender research in the training and continued education of educators
- Further extend the gender and diversity competence among political decision-makers and public servants

10. Access to public services and housing

Vision

Styria is a state in which public services that are particularly important with respect to everyday life (such as healthcare, social services and public transport, as well as affordable housing) are ensured equally for all individuals. As long as there is an unequal division of wealth and gainful employment between the genders and as long as women are subject to a greater risk of poverty than men, government institutions promote access for women, thereby achieving a structural balance.

Strategic fields of action

- Mobility of women
- Orientation of public services according to the current life realities of women
- Orientation towards gender equality for educational offerings, as well as healthcare and social services
- Gender medicine
- Provision of housing, in particular for women in economically difficult situations, in order to support independence

Political fields of action on a state level

- Develop and support innovative mobility models and offerings, in particular for women in rural areas
- Ensure targeted pursuit of the gender equality orientation embedded in the budget law
- Further develop the allocation of funding oriented towards gender equality
- Push forward an orientation towards gender equality regarding medical, legal, social and therapeutic services and educational offerings
- Create affordable housing space for women in precarious economic situations

Political fields of action on a federal level

- Increasingly align public transport services towards the current life realities of women
- Intensify the orientation towards gender equality in educational offerings
- Increase research regarding gender medicine and apply the insights gained in gender medicine within the healthcare system

11. Involved organisations

We would like to thank the representatives of the following 221 public institutions, companies and associations, all members of the State Parliament, members of the National Council, mayors and municipal council members involved in this process, as well as the numerous committed private individuals for their contributions and the constructive, critical and substantive discussions:

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Bildungshaus Schloss Retzhof des Landes Steiermark, Verein RosaLilaPantherInnen, Safrangarten DienstleistungsgmbH, Schaffer Research, Debtor Counselling Centre Styria, SZF Schulungszentrum Fohnsdorf, Sekem Energy GmbH, .siacus media, Social Welfare Office Graz, Verein Sozialprofil, Municipality of Judenburg, City of Graz, Der Standard, Steiermärkische KrankenanstaltengmbH, Office of the Styrian State Government, Departments A3, A4, A6, A7, A8, A9, A10, A11, A12, A13, A14 and A16, Styrian Bar Association (Rechtsanwaltskammer), Steirische Volkswirtschaftliche Gesellschaft, Verein SOMM, Regional Association of the Styrian Children's Groups, Compliance Officer of the State of Styria, Stony Brook University, City of Vienna, Stuhlhofer Mayr Design, Styria Media Group AG, Südsteiermark Tourismus, Suppan //Suppan, Tagesmütter Graz-Steiermark gBetriebsGmbH, Beratungsstelle Tara, Technical University of Berlin, Technical University of Graz, University of Bern, University of Linz, University of Vienna, Berufsgruppen-Vereinigung VAGA, Vincent Hotel, VMG Verein für Männer-Geschlechterthemen, voestalpine Edelstahl GmbH, Weiberhof - Frauenferien und Frauenbildungshof, Institut Weitblick, Wiener Städtische Versicherung AG, KinderbetreuungsGmbH. Wirtschaftskammer Österreich. WIKI Regionalstelle Voitsberg, the wolf e.U., Woman's Academy, zam Steiermark GmbH, ZAM Bruck-Mürzzuschlag, ZAM Alternative Fürstenfeld/Hartberg, ZAM Leibnitz/ Radkersburg, ZAM Liezen, ZAM Feldbach, ZAM Prisma Voitsberg, Zonta Club Feldbach, Plattform 20,000 Frauen.

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