

# **THE AUSTRIAN NAP 2001 FROM A GENDER PERSPECTIVE**

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*ANNEX*

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The subject of this report is the evaluation of the gender dimension of the Austrian NAPs 1998-2001, with a special emphasis on the NAP 2001.

The first section deals with *“the employment context, the employment targets and the gender equality deficit”*. The section on the one hand shows that women have particularly benefited from the favourable labour-market trends of recent years, evidenced by both a rising female employment rate and a decline in female unemployment. On the other hand, however, the same period has seen an increase of gender-specific inequalities on the labour market with regard to both contract segregation and the pay gap. Despite these developments, the NAP 2001 neither contains measures to raise job quality nor active measures to reduce the gender pay gap. In addition, the current NAP no longer defines the increase of female employment as an overall objective.

Section 2, *“Summary of the development of gender equality/gender mainstreaming within the NAPs 1998-2001”*, undertakes the attempt to give an overview of the main developments within the NAPs and to outline the responses both to the new guidelines and to the Council’s Recommendations. A direct assessment of the development of gender equality/gender mainstreaming was, however, much hampered by the significant differences in structure and organisation between the individual NAPs. While NAP 2000 was already largely designed as an implementation report, the present NAP more or less is an implementation report, which does not however necessarily refer back to measures and policies of previous NAPs. It much rather seems to somewhat indiscriminately assemble those national policies and measures which might be seen to relate to the issues of the employment guidelines. At the same time, evaluation shows that the NAP 2001 does not respond adequately to either the employment guidelines or the Council’s Recommendation, both in terms of the issues it deals with and the small number of measures and guidelines it contains. As delineated in section 3, *“Response to the horizontal objectives”*, the horizontal objectives are only dealt with in the introductory chapters of NAP 2001 and are hardly taken into account for the individual guidelines. Two points are particularly remarkable in this context: firstly, with regard to the Lisbon targets, the NAP 2001 only states that Austria already more or less reached these targets in 1999. Secondly, contrary to Austrian tradition the social partners are increasingly confined to their role as partners in collective agreement negotiations.

Section 4 on *“Gender mainstreaming/monitoring and evaluation”* argues that the gender mainstreaming approach and the setting of gender-specific targets, which were most extensively developed in NAP 1999, have been – with few exceptions – abandoned in NAP 2001. Even within the gender-mainstreaming guideline itself, the current NAP only proposes women-specific measures. Gender-specific statistics, targets and indicators are only found in connection with active labour market policy and qualifying measures implemented either by Austria’s Public Employment Service (AMS) or with the ESF framework. It is also in this context that the paradoxical development of

“institutional mechanisms for gender mainstreaming” has to be seen. Here the breakup of the Ministry of Women’s Affairs and the weakening of the inter-departmental working group on gender mainstreaming are offset by the establishment of a “Gender-Mainstreaming coordinating unit within the ESF framework (Objective 3)”. The creation of this institution has been chosen as good-practice example for section 6. The change in government of February 2000 also brought about changes in the area of monitoring and evaluation.

The accompanying assessment of the implementation of the NAPs 1998/1999 – with gender mainstreaming and equal opportunities as one of the ten evaluation points – was temporarily discontinued. Only in April 2001, the Minister of Economic Affairs and Labour issued an invitation to tender for a similar evaluation project.

A continuing favourable development – in terms of quantity at least – can be reported on the share of women participating in qualifying and active labour market policy measures, with a further rise in the female share in 2000. A detailed analysis, however, indicates some shortcomings in terms of quality.

As outlined in section 5 on “*Gender equality*”, in the NAP 2001 a great number of the measures and policies to facilitate reconciliation of work and family life and thus the reduction of gender gaps have either been discontinued or are no longer mentioned. Thus there are no plans to extend childcare facilities despite a considerable shortage of childcare places in Austria and against definite employment guideline recommendations. According to the ÖVP/FPÖ government, reconciliation of work and family life is to be improved by the introduction of a “childcare benefit”. This new scheme however encourages women to take extended career breaks, thus aggravating rather than relieving the problem of reconciliation.

Measures and policies for the reduction of gender segregation of the labour market as well as employment and unemployment gaps have also seen significant cuts in NAP 2001. Apart from qualifying measures and an information and counselling programme for returners to the labour market, the report only lists occasional women-specific programmes and projects, without however giving any details.

The last section attempts to identify and outline “*Future prospects, future priorities and good practice*”. Due to the negative developments in the gender mainstreaming and gender equality policies of the NAPs of 2000 and – in particular – 2001, a return to the standards of NAP 1999 in terms of both quantity and quality would already constitute considerable progress. This would however require another reversal of priorities within the labour market and social policies towards reestablishing a general equal opportunity policy.

Table 1: Summary table – List of measures NAP 2001

|                                    | Title of measures<br>(discontinued in brackets)   | Date of measure |                                    |   | Reason for relevance to gender equality             |                                  |                             |  |
|------------------------------------|---|-----------------|------------------------------------|---|---|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
|                                    |   | New for 2001    | 2000 measure<br>now<br>implemented | Earlier<br>measure now<br>yielding<br>results | Gender<br>impact taken<br>into account<br>in design | Gender<br>monitoring/<br>targets | Aims to close<br>gender gap | Should assist<br>gender<br>mainstreaming |
| <b>Employability<br/>pillar</b>    |   |                 |                                    |   |   |                                  |                             |  |
| Measures for the<br>unemployed     | New Start for the long-term unemployed – at least in the form of a specific <i>AMS</i> supervision plan   |                 |                                    | +   |   | +                                |                             |  |
|                                    | “Safety net” for young people   |                 |                                    | +   | +   |                                  |                             |  |
|                                    | Increase of the number of unemployed persons participating in active labour market policy measures (with gender-specific targets)                       |                 |                                    |   |   | +                                |                             |  |
| Measures for<br>inactive/returners |   |                 |                                    |   |   |                                  |                             |  |
| Tax and benefit<br>policies        |   |                 |                                    |   |   |                                  |                             |  |
| Active ageing                      | Declaration: “The <i>AMS</i> aims to gradually reduce existing gender-specific disadvantages for older female workers as opposed to older male workers” | +               |                                    |   |   |                                  | +                           |  |
| Lifelong learning                  | Doubling the number of ICT apprentices  | +               |                                    |   | +   |                                  | +                           |  |
|                                    | ICT education programmes for women within the <i>EQUAL</i> programme  | +               |                                    |   |   |                                  | +                           |  |
|                                    | Education programmes for girls and women and technology   |                 |                                    | +   |   |                                  | +                           |  |
|                                    | Women’s IT Summer School 2002   | +               |                                    |   |   |                                  | +                           |  |
| Job matching/<br>bottlenecks       | TEKnowa – training institute for women ( <i>AMS</i> )   |                 |                                    | +   |   |                                  | +                           |  |
|                                    | <i>Brain Card</i> campaign – hands-on training in the IT sector ( <i>AMS</i> )  |                 |                                    | +   | +   | +                                |                             |  |
|                                    | Elektra – vocational training for girls in the electricity, metal-working and environmental fields ( <i>AMS</i> )                                       | +               |                                    |   |   |                                  | +                           |  |

|   |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|--|---|---|---|---|---|
|   | Two innovative projects for women in the areas of EDP, clerical work, sales and IT in Vorarlberg ( <i>AMS</i> )   | + |  |   |   |   | + |   |
|   | High-quality IT training for unemployed girls and girls seeking apprenticeships in Vienna ( <i>AMS</i> )  | + |  |   |   |   | + |   |
|   | <i>Federation of Austrian Industry</i> initiative for girls and women in technology, in cooperation with <i>AMS</i> and the Federal Ministry for Education, Science and Culture | + |  |   |   |   | + |   |
| Discrimination/<br>social exclusion     | (Appreciation of the issue of discrimination against disabled women)  |   |  |   | + |   |   |   |
|   | (Special emphasis on the integration of disabled women when setting new measures)   |   |  |   | + |   |   |   |
| <b>Entrepreneurship pillar</b>          |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |   |
| Business start up                       | UNIUN 2001 – business start-up qualification for university graduates and students: 50% quota for women   | + |  |   | + | + | + |   |
|   | (Promotion of business start-ups by women)  |   |  |   |   |   | + |   |
| Knowledge society                       |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |   |
| Regional and local action               | Integration of gender-mainstreaming experts in TEP bodies   |   |  | + |   |   |   | + |
| Tax reforms for employment and training |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |   |
| <b>Adaptability pillar</b>              |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |   |
| Working time                            | Abolishment of ban on women's night work  |   |  | + |   |   | + |   |
| Flexibility and security                |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |   |
| Lifelong learning                       | (Facilitation of access to adult education programmes for disadvantaged persons and in underprovided areas)   |   |  |   | + |   | + |   |
|   | (Skills training measures for women within adult education programmes - especially technology training)   |   |  |   |   |   | + |   |

|                                   |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| <b>Equal opportunities pillar</b> |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |   |
| Gender mainstreaming              | Adoption of a gender-mainstreaming approach by the AMS in planning and implementing labour market policy measures   |   |  | + | + | + |   |   |
|                                   | AMS-Data-Warehouse  |   |  | + |   | + |   | + |
|                                   | Extension of gender mainstreaming approach by the AMS to all relevant norms, directives for drawing up guidelines and working programmes, catalogue of services offered, etc.                               | + |  |   |   | + |   | + |
|                                   | AMS target directive: 50% quota for women on expenditure on active labour-market policy measures  |   |  | + |   | + | + |   |
|                                   | Establishment of a gender-mainstreaming co-ordination office within ESF (objective 3)   |   |  | + |   |   |   | + |
|                                   | Appointment of GM officers in all Federal Ministries  |   |  | + |   |   |   | + |
|                                   | Mentoring Programme at the University of Vienna for the promotion of female researchers/academics   | + |  |   |   |   | + |   |
|                                   | Staff development programme at the University of Graz   | + |  |   |   |   | + |   |
|                                   | (Creation of suitable instruments and methods for gender-related data-collection systems and procedures for the federal computing centre, social insurance carriers and the public work accident insurance) |   |  |   |   | + |   | + |
| Employment and unemployment gaps  | Promotion of qualification of workers by the ESF: 50% quota for women   |   |  | + |   | + | + |   |
|                                   | <i>Federation of Austrian Industry</i> campaign to increase female employment   | + |  |   |   |   | + |   |
|                                   | Specific services, information and counselling for women returners also during maternity leave  |   |  | + | + |   | + |   |
|                                   | (Offer special education and training programmes for women on educational leave - especially when this follows on maternity leave)  |   |  |   |   |   | + |   |
|                                   | (Part-time work and part-time parental leave benefits: improve the legal framework)   |   |  |   |   |   | + |   |
|                                   | (Measures for lone parents)   |   |  |   |   |   | + |   |



|                                   |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |  |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|---|--|---|---|---|--|
| Desegregation/<br>positive action | Austrian women and technology project<br>(Österreichisches Frauentechologieprojekt)   | + |   |  |   |   | + |  |
|                                   | Further develop and ensure continued employment of women following completed apprenticeships, especially in non-traditional segments                                  | + |   |  |   |   | + |  |
|                                   | AMS labour-market policy programme for women  | + |   |  |   |   | + |  |
|                                   | Projects aiming to boost the share of women in technical schools and institutions   | + |   |  |   |   | + |  |
|                                   | (Guidelines issued by the Federal Minister for Women's Affairs for considering a company's promotion measures for women when commissioning public works and projects) |   |   |  |   |   | + |  |
|                                   | (Foster in-house gender equality programmes)  |   |   |  |   |   | + |  |
|                                   | (Expand counselling centres for young women and projects advocating non-traditional, proactive occupations)   |   |   |  |   |   | + |  |
|                                   | (Subsidise employers who take specific measures suited to promote equal treatment)  |   |   |  |   |   | + |  |
|                                   | (Step up targeted apprenticeship subsidy programmes to reduce gender-specific segregation)  |   |   |  |   | + | + |  |
| Pay                               | Research project "Non-discriminatory work evaluation and work organisation"   |   | + |  | + |   | + |  |
|                                   | Establishment of two regional offices of the ombud for equal employment opportunities   |   | + |  |   |   | + |  |
|                                   | (Launch information campaign on the issue of pay gaps between women and men)  |   |   |  |   |   | + |  |
|                                   | (Offer counselling to employers to promote in-house skills training of women and gender equality within companies)  |   |   |  |   |   | + |  |
| Leave arrangements                | Replacement of parental leave benefit by a childcare benefit  | + |   |  | + |   |   |  |

|                          |   |  |  |   |   |  |   |  |
|--------------------------|---|--|--|---|---|--|---|--|
| Family friendly policies | Continuation of "Family Life & Work Audit" project  |  |  | + |   |  | + |  |
|                          | Continuation of awards for best-practice models under a national competition for the 'family-friendliest firm'                              |  |  | + |   |  | + |  |
|                          | (Encourage a corporate philosophy and culture in which childcare and paternity leave form an integral part)                                 |  |  |   |   |  | + |  |
|                          | (Managing E-Quality: train executives for gender equality oriented management - especially with regard to reconciling work and family life) |  |  |   |   |  | + |  |
| Care provision           | (Expansion of childcare facilities, especially for small children)  |  |  |   |   |  | + |  |
|                          | (Tailored childcare options to the special needs of jobless and/or job-seeking women)   |  |  |   | + |  | + |  |

Table 2: Summary of the response to the Council Recommendation

|      | <b>Recommendation</b>  | <b>Responses</b>  |
|------|--|---|
| 2000 | - Pursue a comprehensive strategy to narrow the gender gap in employment, inter alia, by putting in place measures which facilitate the reconciliation of work and family life                                   | - A range of policies proposed, many of which focus on advice and information. More specific measures include educational programmes for those on maternity leave, measures for lone parents, part-time work and part-time parental leave, expanding childcare, providing childcare for job seekers, targeted apprenticeship programmes to reduce segregation and establish co-ordination offices for equal opportunities in each ministry (now that the Ministry for Women has been closed)  |
| 2001 | - Pursue a comprehensive strategy to narrow the still significant gender gap in employment, for instance through measures that help reduce the pay gap and facilitate the reconciliation of work and family life | - The few measures proposed are predominantly put in very vague terms and refer to measures for returners and girls who have completed an apprenticeship, the replacement of parental benefit by a new “childcare benefit” scheme and targeted qualifying programmes. Additional measures include a research project on “Non-discriminatory work evaluation and work organisation”, an information campaign by the Federation of Austrian Industry on the increase of female employment, the development of a “women’s programme” for the AMS as well as projects in the areas of women/girls and technology/ICT. |

## **1. THE EMPLOYMENT CONTEXT, THE EMPLOYMENT TARGETS AND THE GENDER EQUALITY DEFICIT**

### **1.1. Context under which gender equality policy is operating**

As far as the political context in Austria is concerned, the concerns voiced in last year's report have unfortunately been confirmed (cf. Pastner 2000). Social partner participation in social policy decisions has been drastically curtailed; Austria's Chambers of Labour have been subject to frequent attacks by the far-right populist FPÖ; the cutbacks planned for the social security sector have largely been implemented. Despite continuing demands for more flexible employment contracts, many of these new social protection measures put those at a disadvantage who are engaged in atypical work, and predominantly affecting women (cf. Mairhuber 2001).

With regard to socio-economic framework conditions, GDP growth in Austria slowed to 2.3% while productivity growth slowed to 0.7%.

Positive labour market trends continued however: employment grew by 1% in 1999, raising total employment up to 68.2%. Austria thus practically met Lisbon total employment targets of 70% even though total full-time equivalent (FTE) employment only amounted to 63% (EC 2000:155).

According to national data, the number of those in paid employment rose by a further 0.8% in 2000, an increase largely attributable to female employment figures (+1.7%) (cf. BMWA 2001).

Unemployment fell to 3.8% in 1999; a further decrease to 3.3% is expected for 2000. All age groups benefited from this trend, which was more significant among young people and older workers than in the 25-49 age group. Nonetheless, unemployment among the 50+ age group remains particularly high in Austria.

In 1999, Austria's long-term unemployment was among the lowest in the EU. According to national data, it will see a further significant decrease in 2000. Again, figures fell more significantly for women than for men (cf. BMWA 2001).

Average earnings rose by 2.9% in 1998 and 2.8% in 1999 while average real earning increased by 2.0% and 2.2% in 1998 and 1999 respectively (EC 2001:102).

### **1.2. Employment opportunities for women, employment targets and gender gaps**

In 1999, total female employment saw an increase of 1.2%. In the service sector, female employment rose by as much as 2.3%. Total female employment reached 59.7% and thus almost met the Lisbon female employment target of 60%. If, however, part-time work is taken into account, the situation looks rather different: the female FTE employment rate dropped to as low as 49.9% (cf. EC 2001:96). In the same period, male

employment increased by only 0.9% but male FTE employment saw a rise to 76.1% (cf. EC 2001:96). That means that in 1999 the gender gap widened further, amounting to 17%-points in relation to the employment rate and as much as 26.2%-points in relation to FTE employment (cf. European Labour Force Survey 1997-1999).

A closer look at the different age groups reveals that the Lisbon female employment target for women aged between 20 and 49 was already met and exceeded in 1999. In this context, highest employment rates were reached by women of the 24 to 29 age group (1999: 78.07%). These apparently very positive results would look rather different, however, if female FTE employment were taken into account. In the 30-49 age group, the gender gap is quite substantial at 18%-points: in this group men show the highest employment rate but at the same time it is the period in which many women take career breaks in order to look after their children (cf. Leitner/Wroblewski 2000a:21f). Nevertheless, at 67.3%, employment of women aged between 20 and 50 with children under 7 was relatively high in 1999 and exceeded the Lisbon female employment target. Comparison with the relevant figures available for childless women, however, reveals how seriously childcare impedes female labour force participation (see Table 4). Employment of childless men aged between 20 and 50, on the other hand, is lower (1999: 89.8%) than that of men with children below the age of 7 (1999: 94.3%).

Employment among women between 50 and 59 did see an increase to 41.4% in 1999 but was nowhere close to achieving Lisbon targets. At almost 30%-points, the gender gap was most substantial in this age group (see Table 4), an age group where unemployment in general is rather high in Austria.

As far as education levels are concerned, figures show that well educated women exceeded the Lisbon female employment target as early as 1999 with an employment rate of 85.7%. At 8.7%-points, this age group also revealed the narrowest gender gap. Less well-educated women, on the other hand, were a long way from meeting the employment target with an employment rate of 46.8%. Here, the gender gap amounted to 15.3%-points (see Table 4).

Gender-specific labour market segregation is still rather pronounced but has gone down slightly in recent years. Between 1994 and 1998, the job segregation index fell from 1.20 to 1.14 and the segregation index for sectors of the economy decreased from 1.01 to 0.98. The segregation index for sectors of the economy underlines the concentration of female labour market participation in the service sector (cf. Leitner/Wroblewski 2000a:33f).

Part-time work increased further in 1999. According to national data, a total of 15.4% of those in paid employment had part-time jobs, 87% of them women. Just under a third (32%) of women in paid employment worked part-time, among female blue-collar workers the figure amounted to as much as 37%. In this context, women were subject to a further, rather worrying, trend: while the number of women working part-time rose by 106.000 between 1994 and 1999, the number of women in full-time employment decreased by 42.000 (cf. Wörister 2001a:3).

In 2000, the number of marginal employed<sup>1</sup> rose by a further 3.9%. In total, 10% of women and 3.5% of men were engaged in marginal employment. This form of employment is particularly prevalent among women of child-caring age. 72% of all persons on low income are women (cf. Wörister 2001a:3).

According to international data, the share of women engaged in involuntary part-time work in Austria amounted to only 13.8% (cf. European Labour Force Survey 1997-1999). Apart from the problematic nature of the term “voluntary” in a society that still expects women to take on a major part of family care responsibilities, national data reveal that in 1999 approx. 18% - 20% of women currently working part-time would prefer to work longer hours (cf. Statistik Österreich 2001:22).

In contrast to part-time and marginal employment, temporary employment decreased slightly in 1999 (7.5%). This drop is to be attributed exclusively to labour market trends for men as temporary employment among women rose slightly. The gender gap here was very narrow, amounting to 0.5%-points (see Table 5).

Official unemployment<sup>2</sup> fell more significantly for women than for men, the gender gap lessening steadily from 1.7%- to 1.4%-points between 1997 and 1999. In 2000, official female unemployment decreased more significantly than its equivalent among men (cf. BMWA 2001). Nevertheless, female official unemployment remains above male official unemployment. Similarly, the number of those who would like to have a job though not actively looking for work amounts to 12.2% for women and 10.5% for men (cf. Statistik Österreich 2001:23).

The gender-specific pay gap, which, by EU standards, is very high in Austria at any rate, became even more distinct in the past years. Whereas female average income still amounted to 68.3% of average income among men in 1996, it dropped to 67.1% by 1999. As Austria’s social security system is heavily income-based, this gap in income is further reinforced by differences in the amounts of various social security benefits (see Table 6). Moreover, pay gaps are relatively small in early working life but continually widen later on: in the 35-39 age group, women only earn 61.8% of male average income (see Figure 1). It is also evident that in the past years, the gender-specific income gap was most significant in the 25-39 age bracket, i.e. the age at which many women cut back working hours in order to look after their children (cf. Gregoritsch et al. 2000).

### ***1.3. Gaps in the preconditions for gender equality in the labour market***

Although Austria now has a female Vice Chancellor for the first time in its history, the concerns voiced in last year’s report have been confirmed: “equal opportunity policy has been replaced by a family policy which is oriented towards traditional gender-specific role models” (Pastner 2000). The issue of female workforce participation is no longer seen in the context of reducing discrimination and improving gender equality but rather

<sup>1</sup> Part-time work with a monthly income below ATS 3.977 (2000) and reduced social security protection (cf. Pastner 2000).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the problem of “hidden” unemployment in Austria: Leitner/Wroblewski 2000a:27f.

in the light of extended career breaks and family issues (cf. Rosenberger 2001:419). The abolishment of parental leave benefit may serve as an example here. From 2002, this social insurance benefit is to be replaced by a so-called “childcare benefit”, which will be paid to all mothers (and fathers) who devote themselves to the care of young children regardless of previous paid employment. This childcare benefit is no social insurance benefit but a universal family benefit, to be paid entirely through the family fund. This childcare benefit is to be claimed by one parent for a maximum of 30 months; the period of notice, however, does not exceed 24 months. Women are thus encouraged to take extended career breaks with all the negative consequences these may have.

What is more, despite “limited progress in providing more and better childcare facilities” (EC 2000:157), according to the minister in charge, a further development of childcare facilities in Austria is not planned for.

#### **1.4. *Need for action on equal opportunities***

In view of the changes in priorities within the labour and social policies as described above, it is most of all necessary to revert to an equal opportunities policy. This involves changes in current political discourse as well as the implementation of concrete measures to improve conditions for the reconciliation of work and family for both women and men. This not only requires the extension of care facilities but also measures concerning the increased participation of men in care work.

With regard to equal opportunities on the labour market, measures are necessary which improve the quality of female occupation and help to reduce gender gaps. In correspondence with the above, this mainly concerns measures concerning gender-specific pay gaps<sup>3</sup> (cf. EOC 2001) as well as measures to lessen incipient gender-specific contract segregation (in particular with regard to marginal employment).

The promotion and in particular the provision of social and legal security for flexible employment arrangements – including the right to a temporary reduction of working hours for childcare reasons – could both improve conditions for the reconciliation of work and family and help to limit negative gender-specific segregation tendencies.

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<sup>3</sup> This includes social security measures that contribute to adapting benefits to individual needs and to securing individual livelihood.

## **2. SUMMARY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF GENDER EQUALITY/ GENDER MAINSTREAMING WITHIN THE NAPS 1998-2001**

### **2.1. Response to the new employment guidelines**

In general, it has to be pointed out that the NAP 2001 is closer to an implementation report rather than an action plan. It includes and describes a number of policies and measures implemented or adopted in 2000, without however providing direct reference to the NAPs of 1998, 1999 and 2000. Much rather, the NAP presents itself as a rather haphazard list and/or account of those national policies and measures which might be related to the issues of the employment guidelines. The significantly inferior quality of NAP 2001 is also evident in the report structure: the structure for individual guidelines adopted in the 1998/1999 reports - "Current situation", "National aims – Indicators – budgetary implications", "Previous measures" "Planned measures" has been completely relinquished. These have now been replaced by a rather vague and general description for each guideline, occasionally including a brief account of reforms and individual projects. There is hardly any direct reference to the continuation of earlier policies and measures. New policies and measures are referred to only in rather vague terms, in many cases do not address structural issues and are predominantly declarations of intent (no targets, no budgetary implications). The few concrete policies and measures listed largely refer to AMS (Austria's Public Employment Service) and ESF directives and programmes.

National targets (as called for in the employment guidelines) are only set for GL 1 (tackling long-term unemployment). In this context, the lack of plans for a further extension of childcare facilities in GL 18 is particularly serious. Lisbon targets are only brought up in the national employment context in the introduction, with special emphasis given to the fact that Austria already more or less achieved these targets in 1999. The aim of increasing the quality of jobs is not taken into consideration.

In contrast to NAP 1999, the NAP 2001 only sets gender-specific targets with regard to tackling long-term unemployment (GL 1) as well as qualifying and active labour market policy measures (GL 16 and 17). The gender mainstreaming approach, which Austria already adopted in NAP 1998, has been almost completely abandoned, the only two exceptions being long-term unemployment and TEP bodies. Women only come up in the general descriptions for the guidelines as well as in employment statistics. This is particularly problematic with regard to GL 7 (Combating discrimination and promoting social inclusion), GL 10 (New opportunities for employment in the knowledge-based society and in the service sector) and GL 15 (Supporting adaptability in enterprises as a component of lifelong learning) as it is predominantly women who are affected by social exclusion, who are employed in the service sector and who are still at a disadvantage as far as in-company training is concerned. In other areas of pillars I and II women-specific measures are only mentioned sporadically.



Horizontal objectives A-D have been moved to the very beginning of the NAP 2001. Here too the emphasis is on general descriptions of the situation and declarations of intent (e.g. horizontal objectives B – lifelong learning). The section on horizontal objectives D (policy mix) directly refers to individual policies or measures from the ensuing guidelines. There is no mention at all of horizontal objective E (common indicator). Within the individual employment guidelines (GL 1-18), references to horizontal objectives A-D are infrequent.

There is little response to the individual new employment guidelines. As already mentioned, there is hardly any gender mainstreaming approach and few national targets have been set. In addition, policies or measures of relevance for gender equality have not been included in all relevant sections (see Table 1). Although the Recommendations address the gender-specific pay gap issue, the NAP 2001 does not provide specific measures to reduce the pay gap. Neither does it offer policies or measures to ensure that women can benefit positively from flexible forms of work organisation and measures to reduce the negative impact of tax and benefit systems.

What is more, the NAP 2001 includes a number of “gender-neutral” measures and reforms, which, however, can be expected to have a particularly negative impact on women and will serve to widen existing gender gaps (e.g. the pensions reform of 2000 in GL 3, or the reform of the unemployment insurance scheme in GL 2) (see NAP 2001:8ff).

In addition to the already mentioned inferior quality of the measures offered in the NAP 2001, it has to be said that in terms of the development of policies or measures of relevance for gender equality a number of measures, especially under pillar IV, from the previous NAP have been discontinued or their continuation is not mentioned in the NAP 2001.

**Table 3: Summary Table – Main developments within the NAPs 1998-2001**

|   | <b>1998</b>  | <b>1999</b>   | <b>2000</b>  | <b>2001</b>  |
|---|--|---|--|--|
| Institutional Mechanisms for gender mainstreaming                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The principle of gender mainstreaming with regard to equal opportunities is defined as an objective in the introductory chapter “The Overall Employment Strategy of the Austrian Federal Government”.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The creation and expansion of suitable unbureaucratic structures designed to accompany and implement the process of gender mainstreaming is announced.</li> <li>- Establishment of an inter-departmental working-group on gender mainstreaming by the former Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Substantial changes of structures and procedures of the inter-departmental working group on gender mainstreaming due to the new political situation.</li> <li>- Establishment of a gender mainstreaming co-ordination office within ESF.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Re-establishment of the inter-departmental working-group on gender mainstreaming by the Federal Ministry of Social Security and Generations (due to the changed responsibilities of Austrian ministries).</li> <li>- Appointment of gender mainstreaming officers in all Austrian federal ministries.</li> </ul>  |
| Gender evaluation or monitoring of policies/setting of gender targets | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Accompanying assessment of the implementation of the NAP in 1998 with gender mainstreaming and equal opportunities as one of the ten evaluation-points (commissioned by the former Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs together with the Ministry for Economic Affairs)</li> <li>- Evaluation of several gender-specific policies (commissioned by the former Federal Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs).</li> <li>- Gender-specific targets are set for numerous measures under pillar I; but also with respect to business</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continuation of accompanying evaluation process.</li> <li>- At the same time, the evaluation of gender-specific impact of measures based on appropriate data collection and processing within the framework of the Austrian government’s annual equal opportunities report is announced.</li> <li>- In the Implementation Report 1999 gender mainstreaming is treated as the first of four horizontal topical areas.</li> <li>- The gender-specific targets of NAP 1998 are taken over and in</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Despite being announced in the government programme of the new Federal government in February 2000, the accompanying evaluation process is not continued.</li> <li>- Gender mainstreaming is not included as horizontal-topical in the section “Implementation of NAP 1999”.</li> <li>- Gender specific targets from NAP 1999 are largely discontinued. Continuation restricted to long-term unemployment and active labour market policies (GL 1-3) and with regard to qualifying measures (GL 19).</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- At present, invitation to tender for the “Evaluation of national implementation of the Luxembourg process” with equal opportunities as one of the ten evaluation points (call for tender by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Labour).</li> <li>- Gender-specific targets limited to long-term unemployment (GL 1), qualification (GL 9, 16) and active labour market policy measures (GL 17).</li> <li>- Lisbon targets only come up in the national employment context, with special emphasis on the fact that these targets were already</li> </ul> |

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|  | start-ups (GL 9) and active labour market policy measures (GL 16).  | some cases there are even gender-specific budgetary implications (GL3 and 6).<br>Additional gender-specific targets are set for other areas (GL 12, 13 and 20).  |   | more or less met in 1999. No additional targets – including targets for childcare facilities – are set.   |
| Attention to gender issues in the first three pillars      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Gender-specific aspects are taken into account mainly in the areas active labour market policy and qualification (pillar I).</li> <li>- The gender perspective is hardly considered in the measures for developing entrepreneurship (pillar II) and is not taken into account for the policies to improve adaptability of employers and employees (pillar III).</li> <li>- Women are not mentioned in “Measures for older workers” (Annex 3) while the gender gap is ignored.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continuation and consolidation of the gender mainstreaming approach under pillar I, resulting in an in-depth analysis of the current situation as well as stronger targeting.</li> <li>- The gender perspective is included in various aspects of pillar II but is still not taken into account in pillar III.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The section “Implementation of NAP 1999” continues to emphasise a gender perspective.</li> <li>- In “The New Initiatives of the NAP 2000”, women and/or a gender perspective have disappeared from pillars I and II with the exception of qualifying measures for adults.</li> <li>- Otherwise, new policy priorities only mention women in the context of “Labour-market situation for women”.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- With one exception (long-term unemployment), the gender mainstreaming approach has completely disappeared from pillar I.</li> <li>- Gender mainstreaming under pillar II is only mentioned in the context of the “involvement of gender mainstreaming experts in TEP bodies”.</li> <li>- In addition, only isolated women-specific measures are included (pillar I and II).</li> </ul> |
| Development of equal opportunities measures in pillar four | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Easier reconciliation of work and family responsibilities is defined as a central factor for raising female employment.</li> <li>- Measures predominantly refer to people on parental leave and returners.</li> <li>- The NAP acknowledges the shortage of childcare facilities and announces the – if only gradual - extension of such facilities.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In order to guarantee equal opportunities on the labour market, two “parallel strategies” are explicitly mentioned: women-specific measures and a gender mainstreaming approach. Thereby the definition of gender mainstreaming adopted by the European Council in 1998 was taken over.</li> <li>- In addition to the continuation and consolidation of the 1998</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A “strategy to narrow the gender gap” directly responds to the Recommendations and tackles the issues of reconciliation of work and family life, reduction of gender segregation on the labour market as well as the gender-specific pay gap.</li> <li>- However, the listed measures stress counselling, information campaigns and voluntariness.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A gender mainstreaming approach is now only adopted in GL 16 (gender mainstreaming).</li> <li>- The few new measures listed in GL 17 use a women-specific approach.</li> <li>- The explicit continuation of earlier measures only refers to active labour market policy and qualifying measures in the areas of AMS and ESF.</li> </ul>  |

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|  |  | <p>measures, the main emphasis is on both active labour market policy measures (qualifying measures), and in a further extension of childcare facilities.</p> <p>- Furthermore, the necessity of male participation in care work is stressed repeatedly.</p> | <p>- In addition, most of the measures are direct women-specific measures and not mainstreaming measures.</p> | <p>- Despite Lisbon targets, the increase of female employment is not explicitly defined as an overall target.</p> <p>- No further expansion of childcare facilities has been planned for! Instead, reconciliation of work and family life is to be achieved by longer employment breaks (by mothers)!</p> |
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## 2.2. *Response to the Recommendation*

Although NAP 2000 proposed some policies and measures in response to the “Recommendation on narrowing the gender gap”, last year’s report by Pastner (2000:13) already stated that

*“There is too much emphasis on motivational measures, on counselling, information campaigns, and voluntariness. (...) The measures for reducing the segregation also don’t seem to go beyond individual selective programmes with low widespread impact. In addition, most of the measures are direct women-specific measures and not mainstreaming measures in the sense of an integration of the gender aspect in all processes and areas of (employment) policy....”*

It has to be noted that a number of the measures and policies proposed in the NAP 2000 have not been implemented. Thus, for instance, the measures for lone parents, the measures regarding part-time work and part-time parental leave and the expansion of childcare facilities.

In the NAP 2001, the “Recommendation on narrowing the gender gap” is implicitly addressed in GL 17 and 18, but predominantly in the form of an implementation report. There are very few new measures and the few measures taken over from NAP 2000 refer to AMS and ESF policies.

The small number of measures mentioned in GL 17 are not only put in very vague terms but, similar to NAP 2000, also adopt a women-specific rather than gender-mainstreaming approach. Only for the “promotion of qualification of workers by the ESF” and “expenditure on active labour-market policy measures by the AMS” a 50% quota for women has been set (see Table 1).

As far as the pay gap is concerned, NAP 2001 rather casually states that:

*“With regard to income from paid employment, the gender gap has widened.”*  
(NAP 2001:25)

Nevertheless, the only measure proposed to reduce the pay gap is a research project on “Non-discriminatory work evaluation and work organisation”.

With regard to facilitating reconciliation of work and family life, NAP 2001 does not make any provisions for a further extension of childcare facilities, although the need for further childcare places in Austria is as pressing as ever.

In addition, the introduction of a “childcare benefit” is presented as a means to improve the reconciliation of work and family although this measure is bound to have the opposite effect (see above). These measures will also result in a change for the worse for those eligible for part-time parental leave benefit.

Summing up, it has to be stated that NAP 2001 cannot be said to adequately respond to the recommendations.

### 3. **RESPONSE TO THE HORIZONTAL OBJECTIVES**

#### 3.1. **Horizontal objective A (Lisbon employment targets)**

The NAP 2001 only mentions the Lisbon employment targets in the “National employment context (Horizontal objective A)” stating that these targets were already more or less met in 1999. There is no differentiation according to age, education, region, sectors or parenthood. Neither does it take into consideration part-time work and the FTE employment rate, which would paint a rather different picture – especially with regard to women (see above).

The increase of female employment is not explicitly stated as an overall aim. The only reference to the issue (under GL 17) deals with an information campaign on “the increase of female employment”, launched by the Federation of Austrian Industry in March 2001 (see NAP 2001: 26).

Although women can be found in atypical employment much more frequently than men and despite the fact that the recent positive labour market developments have largely been due to precarious employment, the aim of increasing the quality of jobs has not been given any consideration.

Although the female employment rate among women between 50 and 59 at 41.4% (1999) is still far from complying with Lisbon targets and although the gender gap for this age group is significant (just under 30 percentage points), the NAP rather casually states with regard to “older” workers:

*“In particular, inequalities between older men and older women ought to be reduced.”*  
(NAP 2001:2)

What is more, the NAP 2001 does not state what exactly these gender inequalities are or how they can be reduced.

#### 3.2. **Horizontal objective B (Lifelong learning)**

With regard to horizontal objective B, the introductory section of NAP 2001 defines “the aim of lifelong learning as a central focus of education policy” of the ÖVP/FPÖ government programme (see NAP 2001:4). This education policy programme has still to be drawn up and filled with concrete measures. The “consultation process on lifelong learning” planned for in this context is to involve Austria’s federal provinces and communities as well as the social partners. The special programme is to promote “lifelong learning in general as well as the extension of adult and further education” (NAP 2001:4).

Women are not mentioned at all in the context of this programme. Neither is there an obvious gender mainstreaming approach. At present, no predictions can be made on in

how far the measures of this programme will be available to those not in the labour market or in atypical employment.

Furthermore, horizontal objective B is integrated in GL 4 (qualification for the new labour market in the context of lifelong learning) and GL 5 (E-Learning for all citizens internet and multimedia resources for schools). The women-specific measures listed here mainly refer to measures for girls/women and technology and to ICT training and education programmes (see Table 1).

In GL 15 horizontal objective B is mentioned only in the heading! While no new measures are included, a kind of implementation report refers to educational leave and educational leave benefit, introduced in 1998, without mentioning the cutbacks—especially for women—decided on in 2000.<sup>4</sup>

### **3.3. *Horizontal objective C (Partnership with social partners)***

The introductory chapters of NAP 2001 refer to the success of measures and policies in the past as well as to the “long tradition of involvement of the social partners, which is even required by law”. However, as has been mentioned above, in fact, social-partners participation in social policy decision-making has been drastically curtailed since the formation of the ÖVP/FPÖ government in February 2000. Thus, rather than the development of a comprehensive partnership with the social partners, the opposite trend is becoming increasingly evident. Social partners are gradually pushed back further into their role as partners in collective agreement negotiations.

Within the employment guidelines, the social partners are only mentioned in the “Social Partners Guideline” (GL 13) and GL 15. GL 13 bears some resemblance to an implementation report. Only individual collective agreements are referred to, for which special working time guidelines have been agreed on. Women are only mentioned in the context of an exemption from the ban on night work for women in the collective agreements for the leather-producing industry as well as in the areas of printing and media technology (see NAP 2001:22).

### **3.4. *Horizontal objective D (Policy mix)***

This so-called “overview of the policy mix” within the national employment context neither clarifies what exactly the policy mix involves nor does it outline how policy initiatives under different guidelines are structured in order to reach long-term goals. Women are only directly mentioned in the context of “a number of measures aiming at increasing the share of women in technological professions” (NAP 2001:2).

Gender mainstreaming is only dealt with in the following sentence:

*“The gender mainstreaming strategy is being pursued by the ministries.”* (NAP 2001:2)

<sup>4</sup> As of January 1, 2001, educational leave benefit cannot be claimed for the period immediately following parental leave (cf. Mairhuber 2001:6).

In contrast to earlier NAPs, a gender mainstreaming approach is only adopted in employment guidelines GL 1, GL 11 (regional and local employment initiatives) and GL 16 (gender mainstreaming). GL 11 only mentions gender mainstreaming in the context of the “involvement of gender mainstreaming experts in TEP bodies” (Cf. NAP 2001:21).

As far as the regional dimension is concerned, the NAP 2001 mainly refers to TEPs, defining “women and older people” as a special target group (see NAP 2001:21). In this context, TEPs might contribute to reduce the current gender equality deficits. The overview on the development of TEPs in 2000, however does not directly mention women (see NAP 2001: Annex to GL 11, A38).

### 3.5. *Horizontal objective E (Indicators/benchmarks and good practice)*

A development of common indicators in order to evaluate the progress under all four pillars is not evident in NAP 2000. Compared to previous NAPs, it uses significantly fewer indicators and does not include any good-practice examples. Under pillars I-III, gender-specific indicators concerning “flow rates”, “participation rates” and “subsidy cases/subsidised persons” are only applied in GL 1, GL 3 (Active Ageing), GL 4 and GL 7.<sup>5</sup>

Under pillar IV, the NAP 2001 states that “within the framework of the AMS-owned DATA Warehouse the gender-specific differentiation of all data analyses is ensured” (NAP 2001:24). Under GL 17, two indicators are used to measure the objective “Raising women’s labour market opportunities through skills training”: “women entering employment following skills training” and “women having completed training courses lasting more than 3 months”. Unfortunately, no comparative figures for men are given in this context. In addition, there are gender-specific figures on the “Distribution of subsidy cases/of subsidised persons in AMS measures” (see NAP 2001:24f).

While the previous NAP still included the “Creation of suitable instruments and methods for gender-related data-collection systems and procedures for the federal computing centre, social insurance carriers and the public work accident insurance”, this measure is no longer mentioned in NAP 2001.

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<sup>5</sup> NAP 2001 does not offer a gender-specific representation of the development of long-term unemployment, unemployment rates according to age and among the disabled (see NAP 2001, Annex, A10, A11, A33).



## 4. *GENDER MAINSTREAMING, MONITORING AND EVALUATION*

The significant differences in structure of the individual NAPs (see also Pastner 2000:10) do not actually allow for a comprehensive comparative evaluation and assessment. It is particularly hard to evaluate the progress in implementation, as the NAPs 2000/2001 resemble implementation reports in form but in fact hardly provide any continuity with previous NAPs. In many cases, they seem to rather haphazardly incorporate all those national policies and measures which might be seen to relate to the issues of the employment guidelines. They do not, however, refer back to measures and national targets explicitly stated in earlier NAPs.

With regard to the development and changes in policies and measures, targets and indicators, a comparison between NAP 1999 and NAP 2001 is particularly interesting: whereas NAP 1999 achieved the highest gender mainstreaming/gender equality standards to date, NAP 2001 represents an all-time low in this respect.

### 4.1. *Gender mainstreaming, including monitoring, evaluation and gender targets*

The gender mainstreaming approach, which Austria already adopted in NAP 1998 and further developed in NAP 1999<sup>6</sup>, already saw some restrictions in NAP 2000 and has been completely abandoned in NAP 2001, the only three exceptions being GL 1, GL 11 and the gender mainstreaming guideline. Continuity is most evident in GL 1, where the issues of GL 1 to 3 of previous NAPs have been taken over. The indicators used are gender-specific throughout, with one exception: the target quota for persons benefiting from active labour market measures is gender neutral in NAP 2001 (see NAP 2001:8). This section also includes the only indicators to measure progress in gender equality (see gender-specific out-put indicators).

In GL 11, gender mainstreaming is only brought up in the context of a proposal “to integrate gender-mainstreaming experts in the TEP bodies” and the claim that “women and older people represent a special target group” (NAP 2001:21).

“Business start-ups by women” are no longer mentioned in NAP 2001, as is the indicator “number of business start-ups by women” (cf. NAP 1999:26f).

Compared with NAP 1999, the gender-mainstreaming approach has been completely abandoned in: GL 4 (lifelong learning), GL 7 (discrimination/inclusion), GL 9 (Business start-ups) and GL 10 (knowledge-based society). The indicator “gender-specific

<sup>6</sup> In the NAP 1999 the definition of gender mainstreaming adopted by the European Council in 1998 was taken over and in the Implementation Report 1999 gender mainstreaming is finally treated as the first of four horizontal topical areas (see Pastner 2000: 9). Nevertheless, evaluators of the NAPs 1998/1999 critically remarked that “the tracking of mainstreaming in a systemic fashion, as intended by the definition, has not been successful” (Leitner/Wroblewski 2000:5).

breakdown of data on raising the share of service sector workers” thus is also no longer included (see NAP 1999:30).

In contrast to the NAP 1999, the gender-mainstreaming guideline of the NAP 2001 almost exclusively deals with implemented policies and measures. The small number of planned measures included are exclusively women-specific. The gender-specific targets and indicators still included refer to active labour market policy and qualifying measures by the *AMS* or *EFS* (Objective 3). The “creation of suitable instruments and methods for gender-related data-collection systems and procedures for the federal computing centre, social insurance carriers and the public work accident insurance” included in NAP 2000 is no longer mentioned in NAP 2001. Instead, the NAP 2001 announces an “Extension of the gender mainstreaming approach by the *AMS* to all relevant norms, directives for drawing up guidelines and working programmes, catalogue of services offered, etc” (NAP 2001:24).

The situation regarding “the developments in institutional mechanisms for gender mainstreaming” is rather paradoxical: on the one hand, the change in government in February 2000 led to the dissolution of the previous Ministry of Women’s Affairs and the weakening of the inter-departmental working group on gender mainstreaming. On the other hand, in accordance with measures planned in the NAPs 1999/2000, gender-mainstreaming experts were appointed in all ministries and a gender-mainstreaming coordinating unit was established within the *ESF* framework (Objective 3). This national coordinating unit is designed to support those involved in labour-market policy in implementing gender mainstreaming (for more details, see: good-practice example in section 6.2.).

The change in government in 2000 also brought about considerable changes with regard to monitoring and evaluation. The accompanying assessment of the implementation of the NAPs 1998/1999 – with gender mainstreaming and equal opportunities as one of the ten evaluation points – was discontinued in 2000, as were all further evaluations of gender-specific policies within the NAP 2000. The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Labour did not invite tenders for an “evaluation of the national implementation of the Luxembourg process” with equal opportunities as one of the ten evaluation-points until April 2001 (see Table 3).

Similar developments are evident in the context of gender-specific targeting: Whereas gender-specific targets increased both in numbers and in quality between 1998 and 1999, in the NAPs 2000/2001 they have been limited to the areas of long-term unemployment, active labour-market policy measures and qualifying measures (see Table 3). NAP 2001 mentions the Lisbon female employment target only in the “national employment context”, stating that Austria already more or less met these targets in 1999 (see NAP 2001:3). In addition, the NAP 2001 claims that “the targets set in NAP 1998 continue to remain valid”, without however defining these targets. Strikingly, NAP 2001 does not address NAP 1999 targets such as the reduction of unemployment among both men and women to 3.5% until 2002 and the raise of female participation in employment to the participation levels of men (see NAP 1999:38).

What is more, despite “limited progress in providing more and better childcare facilities” (EC 2000:157), no further extension of childcare facilities has been planned for; no national targets have been set in this context.

In terms of implementing gender mainstreaming and/or an equal opportunity policy, the Austrian public employment service *AMS* continues to take on a central role (see Pastner 2000:8). In NAP 2001, descriptions, measures and policies retaining a gender-specific perspective are all directly connected with either *AMS* or *ESF*. Thus all remaining gender-specific targets of NAP 2001 are laid down in the guidelines and long-term programmes of *AMS* and *ESF*.

#### 4.2. *Employability*

The number of women integrated in active labour-market policy measures has seen an upward trend in the past few years, which continued in 2000. The share of women in active labour market policy measures stood at 50.4% in 1998, already exceeding the fraction of women registered as unemployed (45.6%). In 2000 the female share of participants in active labour market policy measures rose to 55.3%, while their share in registered unemployment dropped to 44.27%. Furthermore, the female share of participants in qualifying measures rose to 54.75% in 2000 (see: BMAGS/BMwA 1999:41, NAP 2001:25). A detailed analysis (see Leitner/Wroblewski 2000:56ff), however, indicates some shortcomings in terms of quality:

*“Thus, women are underrepresented in intensive qualification measures, and when being selecting for training measures those women are discriminated against who are in need of promotion most urgently. In addition, it cannot be controlled yet, whether the training leads to stable employment.”* (Pastner 2000:18)

Between 1998 and 2000, the average female share in expenditure on measures that can be attributed to either women or men declined from 50.55% to 49.8% (see: BMAGS/BMwA 1999:41, NAP 2001:24).

Although the NAP 2001 retains the proposal to “increase of the number of unemployed persons in active labour-market policy measures”, no gender-specific target is mentioned for 2002 (NAP 2001:8).

The “safety net” to ensure adequate training for young people introduced in 1998 still involves more women than men (participants in training courses 2000: 933 women and 781 men) (NAP 2001:7). With regard to the reduction of the flow into long-term unemployment, young people have already beaten the targets for 2000 (women: 4.7% and men: 4.3%) while adults have come close (see NAP 2001:6f).

“Active ageing” is only addressed in the NAP 2001 in GL 3 as follows:

*“The AMS aims to gradually reduce existing gender-specific disadvantages for older female workers as opposed to older male workers.”* (NAP 2001:10)

The NAP 2001 neither states what these disadvantages are nor how they can be reduced. What is more, the gender-neutral wording of the pensions and unemployment insurance

reforms launched by the ÖVP/FPÖ government last year is bound to have a particular negative impact on women and to widen existing gender gaps (see Mairhuber 2001).

Policies and measures to “develop skills for the new labour market in the context of lifelong learning” (GL 4 and 5) include occasional, predominantly women-specific measures aimed at facilitating women’s and girls’ access to training and education programmes in the technology, ICT and IT sectors (see Table 1). However, no details on the quality or implementation of individual programmes and measures are given. Only the proposed measure to “double the number of ICT apprentices to 5000” specifies that it is designed to “encourage girls to take up apprenticeships in technical trades” (see NAP 2001:10).

The policies and measures to “develop job matching and combat emerging bottlenecks” (GL6) are mainly women-specific training and qualifying measures in IT, EDP and in the electricity, metal-working and environmental fields offered by the AMS. Regional aspects are given special consideration here. In 2000, 50% of the participants in an IT training project in Upper Austria were women (see NAP 2001: Annex: A6).

With regard to GL 7 (combating discrimination and social exclusion), comparison between the NAPs of 1999 and NAP 2001 yields two negative aspects: NAP 2001 does not mention either the particular problem of multiple disadvantages “such as disabled women or female members of ethnic minorities” or “special financial incentives for women within the various funding instruments” (NAP 1999:23f).

In addition, the NAP 2001 lacks special measures of relevance for gender equality for “inactives or returners” as well as in the areas of “tax and benefit policies” and “policies on combating discrimination and social exclusion” (see Table 1).

### **4.3. Entrepreneurship**

In GL 9 regarding gender-specific measures for business start-ups, the NAP 2001 does no longer include the proposals to “establish new and upgrade existing advice centres targeted on potential female entrepreneurs” (NAP 1998/99) and to “foster business start-ups by women” (NAP 2000:16). The only project retained is UNIUN 2001, which carries on the 1999 EU project designed to qualify university graduates and students to start up their own businesses. In accordance with ESF directives, at least 50% of the available places are to be especially reserved for women (see NAP 2001:19).

In the contexts of “opportunities for employment in the knowledge-based society and in the service sector” (GL 10) and “tax reforms for employment and training” (GL 12),

women are not mentioned at all; neither are there any measures of relevance for gender equality (see NAP 2001:19f).<sup>7</sup>

Gender mainstreaming with regard to “Regional and local action for employment” is limited to the “integration of gender mainstreaming experts in the TEP bodies” and the claim that “women and older people represent a special target group” (NAP 2001:21).

#### **4.4. Adaptability**

In the context of “working time”, women are only brought up in connection with the ban on night work. NAP 2001 states the exemption from the ban on night work for women in the collective agreements for the leather-producing industry as well as in the areas of printing and media technology. The only future strategy proposed is to legally abolish the ban on night work for women until the end of 2001 (see NAP 2001:22), a measure already decided on some years ago, in the course of Austria’s EU integration.

Furthermore, the NAP 2001 does not comply with the emphasis made in the employment guidelines which calls for member states “to ensure that women are able to benefit positively from flexible forms of work organisation, on a voluntary basis without loss of job quality”. Quite on the contrary, many of the new social protection measures decided on by the ÖVP/FPÖ government in the past year put those at a disadvantage who are engaged in atypical work and predominantly affect women (cf. Mairhuber 2001).

With regard to “supporting adaptability in enterprises as a component of lifelong learning” (GL 15), women are not mentioned at all, while concrete policies and measures from earlier NAPs have been discontinued (see Table 1). Furthermore, the NAP 2001 presents educational leave (and educational leave benefit), a measure introduced in 1998, in the form of an implementation report, without, though, mentioning the cutbacks introduced in 2000: as of January 1, 2001, educational leave benefit cannot be claimed for the period immediately following parental leave. This reform of the educational leave benefit almost exclusively affects women. In June 2000, more than 3,000 of the 3,400 claimants of educational leave benefits were women. (cf. Mairhuber 2001:6).

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<sup>7</sup> It should be added here that the section on GL 10 is extremely brief, proposes hardly any concrete measures and does not include any medium or long-term future policy. This is all the more surprising since it contradicts common Lisbon targets: “The Lisbon European Council on 23 and 24 March 2000 set a new strategic goal for the European Union to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion.” (EC 2001:1)

## 5. GENDER EQUALITY

### 5.1. Gender equality measures

It has already been mentioned above that in the NAP 2001 the setting of gender-specific targets has been largely discontinued. In contrast to earlier NAPs, the promotion of female employment is no longer explicitly defined as an objective. The only measure in this context is a major information campaign on the “Increase of female employment” launched by the Federation of Austrian Industry in March 2001. (NAP 2001:26). Relying on the fact that Austria has already reached the Stockholm targets set by the European Council (increase of female employment to 67% until 2003) (see NAP 2001:3), the NAP 2001 does not offer any concrete policies to increase the “quality of jobs”. It does so despite the fact that the upswing in female employment of recent years must be largely attributed to the increase in atypical and precarious employment and although female total employment (taking part-time work into account) only amounted to 49.5% in 1999 (see above). In addition, the NAP 2001 only lists occasional measures taken over from previous NAPs, once again predominantly qualifying measures within ESF (Objective 3) as well as a special returners’ programme offered by the AMS (see Table 1). Other measures from earlier NAPs, supporting reconciliation of work and family life and thus the reduction of gender gaps, are no longer mentioned. These measures include “special education and training programmes for women on educational leave – especially when this follows on maternity leave” and “the improvement of the legal framework of part-time work and part-time parental leave”. In this context, it is important to note that the educational leave reform of 2000 did away with the option to claim educational leave benefit directly after maternity leave while the legal framework of part-time parental leave will see a significant change for the worse when parental leave is replaced by the new “childcare benefit” scheme. The introduction of the “childcare benefit” will both undermine dismissal protection and drastically curtail options for earning money “on the side” when claiming part-time parental leave. The latter, especially, is bound to further discourage men from sharing childcare work with their partners (see BAK 2001). The measures for lone parents announced in NAP 2000 have not been implemented. Quite on the contrary, lone parents will be faced with substantial financial cutbacks after the introduction of the “childcare benefit” (see BAK 2001:2).

Also in terms of the reduction of gender segregation on the labour market – an issue dealt with in GL 17 -, the NAP 2001 does not offer more than a few policies and measures (see Table 1). What is more, the “most relevant” policies in this context, an AMS labour-market policy programme for women and projects to boost the share of female students at technical schools and institutions are listed but not commented on. Other concrete measures for the advancement of women, such as, for instance, “foster in-house gender equality programmes” and “subsidise employers who take specific measures suited to promote equal treatment” have been discontinued, as have been so-called “family-friendly policies” (see Table 1).

The inadequate response in NAP 2001 to gender employment gaps is all the more problematic as the NAP thus fails to comply with the Council's Recommendations. Incidentally, the same is true for the gender pay gap, which in Austria has even widened in recent years. The NAP 2001 does acknowledge this unfavourable development (see NAP 2001:25) but does not propose any measures that could help to reduce the pay gap, apart from a research project on "Non-discriminatory work evaluation and work organisation". The establishment of two regional offices of the "ombud for equal employment opportunities" is certainly positive as it improves women's chances to defend themselves against discrimination on the labour-market but it is no active measure to reduce the gender pay gap.

Although around 30.000 additional childcare places were created in Austria in 1998 and 1999, Austria still falls short of a considerable number of childcare places. According to a 1995 survey, Austria is short of around 107.000 childcare places, even after subtracting recently created facilities while existing facilities frequently do not meet the requirements of working parents (e.g. opening hours) (see Leitner/Wroblewski 2000:68ff). Despite this, and in spite of the fact that the employment guidelines explicitly require the "setting [of] a national target, in accordance with the national situation, for increasing the availability of care services for children and other dependants", the NAP 2001 does not even consider a further extension of childcare facilities. According to the ÖVP/FPÖ government, reconciliation of work and family life is to be facilitated by the already mentioned "childcare benefit" scheme, which is to replace parental leave. The government talks about "the freedom to choose", implying parents' choice between looking after their children themselves and using childcare facilities. The implementation of this "freedom of choice" is doubtful for two reasons: firstly, mothers even now face considerable difficulties on the labour market due to "limited mobility"; secondly, the necessary basis for more "choice", an extension of childcare facilities, is not planned for.

Furthermore, it is to be noted that despite the ÖVP/FPÖ government's "family-friendly rhetoric", the NAP 2001 does not contain any new "family-friendly policies" but limits itself to taking over some measures and policies from earlier NAPs (see Table 1).

## **5.2. *Priority attached to gender equality***

The progress made in this context in the NAPs 1998/1999 has not only slowed to a halt but is now facing serious decline. The NAP 2000 already showed evident that policies and measures regarding gender equality are only being implemented if they are directly linked to AMS or ESF and if they deal with active labour market policy or qualifying measures. Although some of these policies and measures have been taken over in NAP 2001, both the gender-mainstreaming approach and women-specific measures have been very much cut back on, and gender equality is no longer really an issue. This development has to be seen in the light of the already mentioned changes in political discourse. As Sieglinde Rosenberger (2001:419) has it, Austria is facing a development where despite a continuous increase in female participation in employment and a gradual establishment of a "dual bread-winner model", the issue of female employment

is no longer seen in the context of reducing discrimination and improving gender equality but rather in the light of extended career breaks and family issues.



## **6. FUTURE PROSPECTS, FUTURE PRIORITIES AND GOOD PRACTICE**

### **6.1. Overall assessment and future prospects/priorities**

It has already been mentioned that the Austrian NAP 2001 does not constitute any progress. Equally it does not seem to offer any future prospects or future priorities regarding gender equality. As the NAP 2001 is close to an implementation report in form, actual national targets and future measures are rare. These measures are largely qualifying and active labour market policy measures taken over from earlier NAPs. In contrast to previous NAPs, especially NAP 1999, only these two areas of the present NAP adopt a gender-specific approach and set gender-specific targets. In addition, most statistics are not broken down by gender and measures which take the gender impact into account have been replaced by occasional women-specific measures and policies. The same is true for the responses to the Council's Recommendations. The fact that the Recommendations for 2000 and 2001 refer to the same issues allows the conclusion that either the Recommendations of 2000 were not adequately responded to or that the measures of NAP 2000 have not been adequately implemented. In view of the small number of measures and policies in response to the Recommendations included in the NAP 2001 and bearing in mind the negative developments regarding gender equality measures and policies in general, future recommendations are likely to once again refer to such issues as "significant gender gap in employment" and adequate "measures that help to reduce the pay gap and facilitate the reconciliation of work and family life". A badly needed measure in this context is the extension of childcare facilities in Austria, a measure that despite the Lisbon target is not part of NAP 2001.

The "measures and policies on equal opportunities" mentioned at the beginning of this report will certainly become particularly important in future, especially in view of the NAP 2001. A first step towards a return to a policy of equal opportunities could be the reestablishment of the standards – in quantity as well as in quality – of NAP 1999. In addition to that, it would require the further development of the gender mainstreaming approach, especially with regard to pillars I and II, an increase in gender-specific targeting and the use of gender-specific indicators to measure the progress in gender equality. Concrete policies and measures are needed for the following issues: unemployment among older women, problems for returners and de-qualification among returners/inactives (increasingly pressing with the onset of longer career breaks due the introduction of the "childcare benefit"); discontinuity of women's careers - especially due to unpaid care work within the family; decline in full-time jobs which are fully secured under labour and social law, offset by a rise in precarious employment.

In view of the European Union's new strategic goal "to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world", it would be necessary, especially for the areas of GL 4, 5, 10 and 15, to devise a gender-specific method of problem analysis and use it to develop measures and policies which take the gender impact into

account. Austria will only be in a position to meet the set target if it makes optimum use of its female human resources and if women are not once again primarily treated as “potential mothers and housewives”.

## 6.2. *Identification of good practice*

One of the few positive exceptions in the recent development of gender mainstreaming in Austria was the establishment of a gender-mainstreaming coordinating unit last year. Operating nationwide, the unit’s primary task is to support those involved in labour-market policy in implementing gender mainstreaming within the ESF framework. For this purpose, the coordinating unit has launched a Gender Mainstreaming website ([www.gem.or.at](http://www.gem.or.at)). It also offers consultations and gender-mainstreaming seminars and has developed a “ToolBox Gender Mainstreaming” (GeM-ToolBox), which offers guidelines for gender mainstreaming:

*“The GeM-ToolBox is directed at all those involved in the development, selection, implementation and evaluation of labour-market policy projects. It contains guidelines for people working in different areas of ESF implementation. For funding institutions, project-hosts and Territorial Employment Pacts, it offers “guideline packages”, which taken together cover all levels of gender-mainstreaming implementation.” (Bergmann/Pimminger 2001)*

In addition, the ToolBox provides a general introduction to the topic, offering helpful background information on the difference between the gender-mainstreaming approach and women-specific policies and measures. It also supplies arguments in favour of gender mainstreaming as well as a brief overview on gender-specific inequalities on the labour market and existing gender gaps (for more details, see: [www.gem.or.at](http://www.gem.or.at)).

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## ANNEX

**Table 4: Employment rate of....(%)**

|   | 1998  | 1999  | gender gap 1999 | Lisbon gap 1999 |
|---|-------|-------|-----------------|-----------------|
| women between 20-24                           | 70.54 | 67.81 | -5.08           | -7.81           |
| women between 25-29                           | 76.42 | 78.07 | -7.59           | -18.07          |
| women between 30-39                           | 73.81 | 73.91 | -18.58          | -13.91          |
| women between 40-49                           | 71.32 | 73.47 | -17.04          | -13.47          |
| women between 50-59                           | 40.04 | 41.41 | -29.85          | 18.59           |
| women between 60-64                           | 7.78  | 8.84  | -5.87           | 51.16           |
| low educated women                            |       | 46.8  | -15.5           | 13.2            |
| medium educated women                         |       | 70.1  | -15.3           | -10.1           |
| high educated women                           |       | 85.7  | -8.7            | -25.7           |
| women <sup>1</sup> without children           | 78.4  | 79.9  |                 |                 |
| women <sup>2</sup> with children <sup>3</sup> | 66.6  | 67.3  |                 |                 |

Source: European Labour Force Survey 1997-1999

<sup>1</sup> Aged between 20 and 50

<sup>2</sup> Aged between 20 and 50

<sup>3</sup> Under 7 years

**Table 5: Employed in fixed term contracts (%)**

|       | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 |
|-------|------|------|------|
| total | 7.8  | 7.8  | 7.5  |
| men   | 7.3  | 8.0  | 7.3  |
| women | 8.4  | 7.7  | 7.8  |

Source: EC 2001

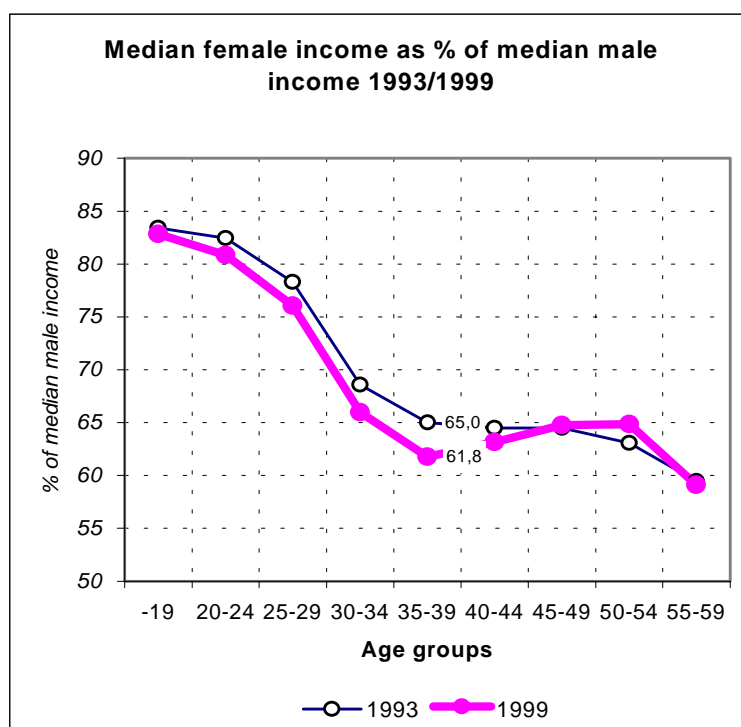
Table 6: Female income as % of male income (1996-1999)<sup>1</sup>

|                              | 1996  | 1997  | 1998  | 1999  |
|------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| payment                      | 68.3% | 67.7% | 67.2% | 67.1% |
| pension benefit <sup>2</sup> | 55.2% | 53.8% | 52.9% | 50.0% |
| unemployment benefit         | 74.6% | 75.2% | 74.6% | 74.0% |

Source: AK Wien/Wörter März 2001

<sup>1</sup> Median income of employees without civil servants.

<sup>2</sup> Median first-time old-age and invalidity pensions including equalisation supplement.

Figure 1: Median female income as % of median male income (1993/1999)<sup>1</sup>

Source: Hauptverband der Sozialversicherungsträger, AK Wien

<sup>1</sup> Median income of employees without civil servants.