

Austria

New directives aimed at incorporating the SDGs into the programmes of all ministries helps to strengthen the commitment to policy coherence across the government. In January 2016 the Austrian Council of Ministers instructed all ministries to integrate the SDGs into their relevant programmes and strategies, and to develop new action plans for coherent implementation of the 2030 Agenda where necessary. Thus, line ministries share responsibility for achieving the SDGs in their respective areas. *Outline 2016 - Contributions to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by the Austrian Federal Ministries*, published in March 2017, is evidence of political commitment and outlines national responsibilities and policy processes for SDG implementation. The relevance of policy coherence is thus systematically recognised in SDG implementation, albeit with a particular focus on the international level. An explicit commitment to PCSD is also articulated in the current Three Year Programme on Austrian Development Policy 2016-2018. An even stronger commitment will be incorporated in the next Three Year Programme 2019-2021.

A newly installed interministerial working group takes domestic and international objectives related to the SDGs into consideration to identify potential trade-offs. An interministerial working group co-chaired by the Federal Chancellery and Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been established to co-ordinate activities through information sharing and supports implementation of the SDGs as well as their promotion within society. SDG focal points from all ministries participate in its regular meetings, exchange information on different policy objectives and are thus able to identify trade-offs and synergies. At these meetings, the international perspective of PCSD is addressed. The Austrian Development Agency's (ADA) work is guided by seven principles (Ownership; Do-no-harm; Equity, equality and non-discrimination; Participation and inclusion; Accountability and transparency; Empowerment; and Sustainability) to foster coherent policies and avoid unintended negative effects.

Table 3.1. Institutional mechanisms for PCSD in Austria

Building Block	Austria
Political commitment	Under the Federal Act on Development Cooperation of 2003, PCSD is a legal obligation at both national and international levels. In January 2016, the federal government instructed all ministries to incorporate the principles of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs into their relevant strategies and programmes and to elaborate action plans. Commitment to PCSD is expressed in the Three Year Programme on Austrian Development Policy 2016-2018.
Policy integration	The decision-making process for integrating the SDGs into international policies is supported at policy level through the Advisory Board for Development Policy and dialogue with CSOs and the parliament, and at operational level through interministerial working groups, evaluations and selective thematic platforms. The instruction by the Council of Ministers to integrate SDGs into the programmes of ministries provides the incentive to exchange information and objectives among the SDG focal points in ministries, thus allowing for the identification of trade-offs and synergies. Cross-cutting issues of development co-operation (gender and environment) must be mainstreamed in programming, planning and monitoring processes as well as in policy dialogues at various levels.
Intergenerational timeframe	Intergenerational time frames are integrated, where applicable, into new national policies and strategies. The obligation of all ministries to integrate the SDGs into their relevant programmes and strategies is not affected by the electoral cycle.
Policy effects	Potential policy effects are assessed on an ongoing basis in the different working groups and through regular evaluations of the existing interministerial common strategic guidelines.
Co-ordination	An interministerial working group consisting of SDG focal points from all ministries and co-chaired by the Federal Chancellery and the MFA co-ordinates SDG implementation, presents progress reports and aims at information sharing. All ministries are part of the interministerial working group, which takes into consideration both domestic and international objectives related to the implementation of the SDGs. For international policies in selected areas the department responsible for the Three Year

	Programme is also responsible for PCSD.
Local involvement	The liaison office of the Länder (Austria's regions) has been integrated into correspondence and working groups in preparation of the Three Year Programmes 2016-2018 and 2019-2021, currently being finalised. Under the auspices of the MFA, annual meetings are organised between government representatives of the Länder, cities and municipalities for information exchange and to help align actions undertaken at different levels of government for achieving the SDGs. The MFA is also striving to reach the local population through multiple events organised as part of public relations efforts.
Stakeholder participation	Main national policy frameworks and strategies rely on well-established multi-stakeholder advisory groups and a broad consultative process. Ministries, other governmental entities and institutions, civil society, the private sector, academia, political parties and interest groups (such as The Federation of Austrian Industries – IV and the Austrian Economic Chamber - WKÖ) took part in developing the Three Year Programme 2019-2021. SDG Watch Austria, a civil society platform to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Austria, went online in September 2017.
Monitoring and reporting	The interministerial working group will prepare periodic progress reports to monitor national SDG implementation. Statistic Austria has developed a first national set of SDG indicators but does not provide national indicators for SDG17.14. The Austrian Development Agency (ADA) is responsible for effective monitoring and control while instructing their field offices to ensure that local co-operation is based on equal partnership.

Source: OECD (2018), "Country profiles: Institutional mechanisms for policy coherence", in *Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development 2018: Towards Sustainable and Resilient Societies*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264301061-6-en>.