

Austria

Österreich



eGovernment
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- Country Profile
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European Commission

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Disclaimer:

This document is not intended to be exhaustive. Its purpose is to give an overview of the general e-government situation in Austria. Although every care has been taken to ensure accuracy, the information herein should be treated as indicative and no responsibility for errors can be taken. Neither the European Commission nor any person acting on its behalf is responsible for the use that could be made of the information provided.

Country Profile

Basic Data Indicators

Basic data.....

Population (1.000): 8.265,9 inhabitants (2006)

GDP at market prices: 245.102,8 million Euros (2005)

GDP per inhabitant in PPS (purchasing Power Standards, EU-25=100): 123,2 (2005)

GDP growth rate: 1,8% (2005)

Inflation rate: 2,1% (2005)

Unemployment rate: 4,8% (2006)

Government debt/GDP: 63,4% (2005)

Public balance (government deficit or surplus/GDP): -1,5% (2005)

Source: [Numerical data provided by Eurostat](#)

Area: 83.858 km²

Capital city: Vienna

EU Official Languages: German

Currency: Euro

Source: [Europa website](#)

Political Structure.....

Austria is a **Federal Republic**. Legislative and executive powers are divided between the Federal Parliament resp. Government and the nine Provincial Parliaments resp. Governments (Länder).

At federal level, legislative power is held by a bicameral [Federal Parliament](#) (National Council and Federal Council). The [National Council](#) (Nationalrat) has 183 members who are elected for a legislation period of four years by proportional representation of the parties. The [Federal Council](#) (Bundesrat) has 62 members who are elected by each of the provincial parliaments. The number of seats for each of the nine

Länder depends on their population (e.g. Lower Austria having the highest population holds most of the seats, i.e. 12 seats). The Federal Council reviews legislation passed by the National Council and can delay but, generally, not veto its enactment. However, there are exceptions, like in the event competences of the Länder shall be curtailed.

Executive power is held by the Federal Government, led by the [Federal Chancellor](#), answerable to the National Council. The Head of State is the [Federal President](#) who is elected by popular vote for a six-year term. The Federal Presidency has a mainly ceremonial role and normally acts on the advice of the Government. The President convenes and concludes

parliamentary sessions and under certain conditions can dissolve Parliament. The President chooses the Federal Chancellor usually from the leading party in the National Council. The Vice-Chancellor and Federal Ministers are chosen by the President on the advice of the Chancellor.

The [Austrian Federal Constitution](#) was adopted on 1 October 1920, revised in 1929, and reinstated on 1 May 1945.

Austria became a member of the European Union on 1 January 1995.

Current Head of State: President Dr. Heinz Fischer (since April 2004)

Current Head of Government: Chancellor Dr. Alfred Gusenbauer (since January 2007)

Information Society indicators.....

Percentage of households with Internet access: 52% (2006)

Percentage of enterprises with Internet access: 94% (2004)

Percentage of individuals using the Internet at least once a week: 55% (2006)

Percentage of households with a broadband connection: 33% (2006)

Percentage of enterprises with a broadband connection: 69% (2006)

Percentage of individuals having purchased/ordered online in the last three months: 23% (2006)

Percentage of enterprises having received orders online within the previous year: 23% (2006)

Percentage of individuals using the Internet for interacting with public authorities:

obtaining information 28%, downloading forms 22,2%, returning filled forms 12,1% (2006)

Percentage of enterprises using the Internet for interacting with public authorities:

obtaining information 56%, downloading forms 76%, returning filled forms 54% (2006)

Source: [Eurostat](#)

eGovernment History

Main developments and key milestones (in reverse chronological order)

For the latest developments, see: [eGovernment News - Austria](#)



January 2007.....

The Federal Ministry for Transport, Innovation and Technology launched the initiative austrian electronic network (AT:net). It supports the introduction of innovative services, the implementation of research results and the further diffusion of broadband access.

December 2006.....

In Berlin HELP.gv.at was awarded the BIENE 2006 in Gold for the best barrier free German language Information portal.

November 2006.....

At the World congress for electronic Identification Technologies in Milano, Prof. Reinhard Posch, Austrian Federal CIO and Mastermind behind the Austrian

concept Citizen Card, received the "ID Community Award" for his achievement in the field of eID.

Launch of the "[E-Government findet Stadt](#)" initiative. Eight cities participate in the initiative to roll out eGovernment solutions on local level. Among other services citizens can activate the eSignature functionality on their eHealth insurance card (eCard). This way the eCard advances into a [Citizen Card](#) (Bürgerkarte), facilitating the electronic identification of the user which is a prerequisite for high quality public services.

September 2006.....

- ▶ Austrian police is conducting a one-year trial of mobile computers for both car and foot patrols, as a fast means of accessing databases. "Flatbook" computers for motorised officers and pocket PCs for those pounding the beat on foot will give them **direct access to "wanted" lists** and other files in accordance with applicable law. Presented by the – then - Minister of the Interior, Liese Prokop, at the beginning of September, the pilot project will involve police forces in all parts of Austria. Tests have already begun in the Tirol region.
- ▶ On the 14 September 2006, the Austrian [eCard](#) system was used for the 100 millionth time, proving the high acceptance and contentment among millions of Austrian patients. Up to date, approximately nine million eCard have been sent out.

July 2006.....

Austria began issuing its first **ePassports** on 16 June 2006. All new passports issued since that date, with the exception of emergency passports and children's

passports (up to age 12), will contain an electronic chip with a facial scan and information about the holder.

June 2006.....

- ▶ The Austrian Ministry for Transport is planning to launch the test phase of the **EU-wide emergency call system** – eCall – in Austria in the coming months. It is hoped that the new system will help improve security on Austrian roads and significantly reduce mortality related to road traffic accidents.
- ▶ Due to the large-scale eGovernment Offensive of the Federal Government, Austria has finished first in the **annual eGovernment benchmarking survey** published by the European Commission. 95% of basic public services are at the transaction stage and 83% are fully available online.

May 2006.....

The Austrian government has recently presented its **new electronic passport** which will be available to Austrian citizens as from this summer. No date has been fixed yet, but issuing of the new document will start before 31 August 2006.

April 2006.....

- ▶ The Austrian state corporation responsible for managing the country's roads and motorways, [ASFINAG](#), has invited interested companies to set up a **test wireless local-area network (WLAN)** in the area around Klagenfurt. The WLAN is intended to provide wireless internet access for motorway users, heralding a new era in 'mobile' services.
- ▶ Moving house requires a filing cabinet of forms to be filled out, letters, faxes and e-mails to everything from the town hall and power utilities to the newspaper deliverer. A new Austrian initiative, still in evaluation mode, hopes to take the chore out of changing abode. The [Federal Computing Centre of Austria](#) is evaluating a service that

will enable citizens to circulate their new addresses with just one mouse click.

February 2006.....

Hosted by the Austrian Chamber of Commerce in Vienna, '**E-Day**' is now an established annual occurrence and the country's most important event on the theme of electronic communication for business and government. This year's edition is expected to attract over 5.000 visitors, including EU Commissioner for the Information Society, Viviane Reding, who will open the event.

November 2005.....

The **eCard** (electronic health insurance card) rollout throughout Austria was successfully completed and has finally replaced the paper-based healthcard voucher. Approximately eight million eCards have been sent out. The eCard includes the possibility to activate the Citizen Card function (free of charge) and may therefore be used, additionally, for eGovernment services.

September 2005.....

The European Commission has recently launched infringement procedures against Austria and Germany for failure to properly implement the [EU data protection directive](#) adopted in October 1995. All EU Member States have now transposed **Directive 95/46/EC** of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 1995 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, often referred to as the 'data protection directive'. However, according to the Commission, Germany and Austria have implemented the legislation in a way that does not guarantee the independence of their data protection authorities. This is in breach of article 28 of the directive, which requires that data protection bodies be completely independent from government.

August 2005.....

A report recently published by the [Austrian Court of Audit](#) criticises the management of the [eCard project](#), Austria's future health insurance smart card. The eCard, which countrywide distribution is expected to start shortly, will replace Austria's current paper-based healthcare vouchers and will eliminate the need to issue and process an annual volume of more than 40 million vouchers. The chip card will contain administrative data such as the holder's name, title, date of birth, and social insurance number. It will also be prepared for a digital signature function, so that authorised holders will be able to use it for electronic transactions with government authorities.

July 2005.....

A regulation on creation and use of the **Address Register** (*Adressregister*) is published in the Austrian official journal. The Register will centralise spatial addresses in a uniform manner, helping deliver a range of eGovernment services and applications (e.g. geo-located m-government services) and improve the delivery of other services (e.g. emergency and security services).

January 2005.....

- ▶ Austria becomes the first country in the world to offer citizens the possibility to integrate an **electronic signature in bank cards**. Following an agreement between the Ministry of Finance and bank card issuer Europay, a Citizen Card function can be included in all Maestro bank cards issued in Austria. The optional function – a digital signature stored in the bank card's microchip – allows citizens to use their Maestro card to identify themselves and securely transact online. This new functionality, which is aimed at increasing the uptake of eGovernment services, could ultimately be extended to the 6.7 million bank cards in circulation in the country.
- ▶ The completion of the government-wide **electronic record system** ([ELAK](#)) marks a key milestone of the Austrian eGovernment

programme, leading to significant improvement in service delivery at federal level. The electronic record system is introduced in each of the 12 federal Ministries, enabling a total of 8.000 desktops to operate exclusively with digital documents and information. The electronic record is the original document; printouts are regarded only as copies. The digital handling of administrative procedures allows simultaneous processing, more efficient workflow, standardised working methods and cost savings in hardware procurement. The benefits for citizens and enterprises are faster administrative procedures and the widespread delivery of electronic documents.

December 2004.....

Launch of a pilot of the Austrian **electronic health insurance card** (dubbed '[eCard](#)') in the region of Burgenland. The eCard is meant to replace Austria's paper-based healthcare vouchers and to eliminate the need to issue and process an annual volume of more than 40 million vouchers. The chip card will contain administrative data such as the holder's name, title, date of birth, and social insurance number. It will also be prepared for a digital signature function, so that authorised holders will be able to use it for electronic transactions with government authorities. Countrywide rollout is due to start in 2005.

September 2004.....

Launch of [Kommunalnet](#), a **web-based platform** providing Austrian municipalities with access to eGovernment tools and products. The main objective of the service is to provide municipalities with access to affordable and standardised eGovernment tools, while fostering cooperation between local, regional and federal authorities and encouraging the spread of best practices.

May 2004.....

The Austrian Government launches an **official electronic delivery service** ([Zustelldienst](#)), designed

to enable administrative procedures to be conducted by citizens from the application stage to delivery on the Internet. The service allows public administrations and citizens to exchange e-mails with the guarantee that messages are effectively sent and received. It provides users with official acknowledgements of receipt, and registered e-mail delivered through the system has legal status. In order to subscribe to the service, users need to have a digital signature. The system is compatible both with the Citizen Card and with the mobile Citizen Card as realised in the context of the A1 SIGNATUR. According to the Government, the Official e-mail service will gradually replace all paper-based correspondence sent by public authorities to citizens.

April 2004.....

Mobile telecommunications operator *Mobilkom Austria* launches [A1 SIGNATUR](#), a **mobile identification service for eGovernment**. This service allows the identification/authentication of eGovernment customers via mobile phone, and enables Austrian citizens to digitally sign documents and securely transact with government without having to possess a Citizen Card or a software-based digital signature.

March 2004.....

The Austrian [eGovernment Act](#) enters into force. The Act, which sets the obligation for public bodies to be capable of full electronic transactional service delivery by 2008, provides a clear and solid legal basis for the country's eGovernment programme and initiatives. It covers all electronic communications, procedures and proceedings within all layers of government. Among other things, it sets the legal basis for the use of the Citizen Card, electronic signatures, sector-specific personal identifiers, electronic payments and electronic service delivery. It also provides for closer cooperation between all authorities providing eGovernment services.

January 2004.....

- ▶ The short-term goal of the eGovernment Offensive – achieving a place in the **EU's top 5 eGovernment leaders** – is reached, as Austria is ranked no. 4 in the annual eGovernment benchmarking survey published by the European Commission.
- ▶ Austria becomes the first European country to implement fully **electronic law making**. As a result of the e-Law Project (Projekt e-Recht) initiated in 1999 and officially launched in 2001, a completely electronic process has been set up for creating legislation, from initial drafts to the final passing and publication of laws. The system implemented provides for a continuous and secure electronic workflow for law-making – from first drafts, draft bills, consultations, amendments to the final passing of the legally binding version and its secure and authentic publication in the Austrian Federal Law Gazette, using electronic signature. Since 1/1/2004, the legally-binding Austrian Federal Law Gazette is only published electronically on the [Legal Information System of the Republic of Austria \(RIS\)](#), a computer-assisted information system on Austrian law, which is coordinated and operated by the Federal Chancellery.

May 2003.....

The Federal Government launches an **eGovernment Offensive**, which sets priorities for a rapid development of eGovernment in Austria and aims to achieve a leading position in the European Union. The basis for achieving that aim is comprehensive support for and cooperation with the political decision-makers of the Federal Government, the provinces, local authorities, municipalities, social insurance bodies and the private sector. An **eGovernment Platform** is set up under the chairmanship of the Federal Chancellor, in order to increase leadership and institutional cooperation. It is supported by an eCooperation Board, composed of all ministries, regions, association of regional and local authorities, and interest groups. The Board is headed by the Executive Secretary for eGovernment, who regularly reports to the Federal Chancellor and the Vice-Chancellor on the state of

implementation and the progress made. In order to promote dialogue between the administration and the private sector, a Private-Sector Platform is also set up to provide businesses with an opportunity to obtain regular information on ongoing eGovernment activities and on the technical procedures and the standards followed. All the proposed projects are summarised in a catalogue of services that lays down a specific roadmap for the implementation of eGovernment in Austria by the end of 2005.

February 2003.....

- ▶ The first **Citizen Cards** ([Bürgerkarte](#)) are issued by the Austrian Computer Society (*Österreichische Computer Gesellschaft, OCG*) and a trust, in cooperation with the Federal Government's Chief Information Office. A fundamental component of the Austrian eGovernment-strategy, the Citizen Card is meant to enable secure citizen access to electronic public services, and settlement of all routine procedures electronically. It is a fully functional smart card embedded with an electronic signature and a digital certificate. In electronic communication with the administration, natural persons are identified on the basis of a sector-specific personal identifier. A 'sourcePIN' derived from the ZMR number and stored in heavily encrypted form in the Citizen Card serves as the basis for the generation of these sector-specific personal identifiers.
- ▶ Launch of the **eGovernment Conformance Logo** ([Gütesiegel](#)). This logo is meant to enable citizens to recognize immediately whether an IT product, web page or internet application corresponds to national strategies and guidelines on eGovernment. It is granted to those authorities, organisations and businesses, which fulfil certain technical criteria, e.g. criteria for smart cards, transactional Internet service, etc. The scheme is expected to result in more secure and reliable eGovernment services for citizens.

January 2003.....

The Austrian Government awards a contract for the development and implementation of an "Electronic File System" (*Elektronischer Akt*, or [ELAK](#)), designed to enable internal government communications to be carried out electronically. Combining a document management system with a workflow system, workgroup applications and an archive, ELAK enables administrative units to electronically record, save, find and re-work information, thereby supporting the transfer of paper files to electronic files for all inter-ministerial processes at federal level. A core element of the Austrian eGovernment strategy, it is due to be used in all sectors of the federal administration and to substantially boost productivity while supporting service improvement. Worth approximately 40 million Euros, the development contract makes ELAK the largest single eGovernment project in Austria.

March 2002.....

The **Central Register of Residents** ([Zentrale Melderegister, ZMR](#)) starts operating. The ZMR is a central database of all persons registered as residents in Austria. A ZMR number is allocated to all persons registered in the Central Register of Residents as an unmistakable identifier.

January 2002.....

- ▶ Publication of the **personal data structure**, the first XML specification drawn up jointly by the federal, regional and local authorities. The personal data record serves to describe persons uniquely and is used in all eGovernment processes concerning persons.
- ▶ The cooperation between the federal, regional and local authorities is enshrined in an [eGovernment Convention](#). All partners declare their willingness to implement a uniform system of eGovernment interfaces and basic functions.

June 2001.....

- ▶ On the basis of recommendations made by the Task Force e-Austria in e-Europe, the Council of Ministers adopts the **IT strategy of the Federal Government**. An **ICT Board** is set up for coordinating the ICT planning activities of the Federal Government and establishes structured cooperation with the regional and local authorities. An **ICT Strategy Unit** (or [Chief Information Office](#)) is established to create, together with the Federal Ministries, regional and local authorities, maximum synergy in the implementation of eGovernment by way of efficient organisation and comprehensive cooperation. The Unit is managed by a Federal Chief Information Officer, together with a Federal Executive Secretary for E-Government. Its areas of responsibility comprise project organisation, international affairs, technology, standards, public relations and administration. Its staff are largely provided by the Federal Ministries.
- ▶ The Federal Government adopts a **Decision on Electronic Law-Making**. The initiative, dubbed 'e-Law Project (Projekt e-Recht)', aims to facilitate and speed-up Austrian law-making by implementing a completely electronic process for creating legislation, from initial drafts to the final passing and publication of laws. The eLaw project can be characterised as a change from paper documents to electronic documents in law-making, with storage and retrieval centralised in a data warehouse. The objectives of the project are as follows: continuous electronic support of legislation; reduction of mistakes by elimination of duplicates; recycling of data; easier administration of different versions of documents; implementation of a uniform layout; support for the legislative bodies; official and authentic publication in an electronic Federal Law Gazette online. The full implementation of e-Law, including the authentic publication of law in an electronic Federal Law Gazette online, is planned for 1 January 2004.

February 2001.....

An **eGovernment Working Group of the federal, regional and local authorities** is established to foster cooperation across all layers of government. Two sub-groups, a technical one and a legal one, are set-up.

2000 and before.....

- ▶ In 2000, the conference of directors of regional authorities adopts a resolution by which the states decide to intensify co-operation and information exchange in order to advance eGovernment across the whole country.
- ▶ Launch of the **eAustria in eEurope** initiative. This initiative aims to improve the framework conditions for the diffusion of new technologies within the economy and society. All ministries are requested to review and reformulate their policies in order to reach the targets of the eEurope 2002 action plan until the end of the legislature (2003). It also sets the target of being able to provide all administrative procedures in electronic form by the end of 2005.
- ▶ In 1998, an [IT-Cooperation Agreement](#) between the Federal State and the Regions (Länder) was signed. The agreement will later be extended to municipalities.
- ▶ In 1997, the pilot version of the [HELP](#) portal was launched. HELP is designed to guide citizens through official procedures, so they can prepare and complete them quickly and without difficulties. HELP is tailored to citizen's needs, being designed around different 'life situations' like birth, marriage, passports, death, rather than around administrative structures.
- ▶ In response to the Information Society Report, the Government publishes an '**Information Society Action Plan**' (*Aktionsplan für Informationsgesellschaft*), whose preparation was coordinated by the Federal Chancellery. The measure adopted include the definition of a legal framework for the Information Society, the development of government e-procurement, the

implementation of new public information services, government R&D programmes, business promotion programmes and awareness and information services. The Plan does not set targets or deadlines for completing the overall agenda, although some are defined for individual projects and initiatives. The Action Plan will be updated in 1998.

- ▶ In 1996, the [Report of the Working Group of the Austrian Government on the Information Society](#), '**The Federal Information Society Report: an Austrian Strategy and Action Plan**', was published. This report provides the Federal Government with valuable insights into the formulation of an Austrian approach to the Information Society. It outlines fundamental

objectives, formulates terms of reference for strategic decision-making, lists urgent measures to be implemented and highlights priority steps.

- ▶ In 1995, the **Austrian's way into the Information Society initiative** (1995-1996) was launched. Under this initiative, the Federal Government sets up an 'Information Society Working Group' composed of more than 350 experts in the fields of state administration, business and science. The Group is tasked with identifying the opportunities and threats posed by the development of the Information Society in Austria and the best way to enter it.

eGovernment Strategy

Main strategic objectives and principles

The eGovernment status quo in Austria

At the EU summits in Feira and Lisbon, the EU Member States agreed to make all major services of the administration available on the Internet by the end of 2005. Implementation is based upon national strategies and subject to on-going benchmarking by the European Commission.

A key factor in the development of eGovernment is a simple design of the services offered, so that users can transact business with public authorities rapidly and conveniently via the Internet. Applications have to pay added attention to the mobility of society and offer appropriate services, making it possible to use specific services of the administration via mobile terminal equipment.

In the past Austria has taken decisive action to implement the eGovernment project swiftly and efficiently. In May 2003, the Austrian Federal Government launched an eGovernment initiative to coordinate all eGovernment activities in Austria. Two cross-departmental coordination bodies (E-Government Platform and E-Cooperation Board) were set up. At the same time, stock was taken of all on-going activities and a roadmap was agreed.

Entering into force on 1 March 2004, the E-Government Act was a milestone achievement. Austria was one of the first EU Member States to adopt comprehensive legislation on eGovernment. As security and trust are critical factors in eGovernment and eCommerce, Austria uses the same standards and tools for both areas (Citizen Card function, electronic signature, electronic payment). This is a major contribution to securing Austria's position as a business location.

In September 2005 a new organisational structure was implemented that takes into account future challenges like sustainability, international cooperation and ongoing innovation. The federal ICT strategy, the

coordination procedures and the formulation process of resulting tasks have been stabilized.

The basic elements of the structure specified in 2001 were retained although the different committees that existed before were brought together more closely. The tasks specified by the ICT board and the e-Cooperation Board have been consolidated and are carried out in the context of the ICT strategy as before. The obligations of the two boards are coordinated by the ICT strategy platform. The joint presidency of these bodies by the federal CIO ensures a coordinated approach with no overlapping.

This strategy has proven successful: In the annual benchmarking of 20 basic eGovernment services Austria steadily moved up to a leading position, improving its overall ranking from 11 in 2003 to 4 in 2004. After being runner-up in 2005, Austria achieved first place in the 2006 survey.

The strategy is also in keeping with the objectives of the action plan for electronic public services launched by the European Commission in April 2006. Establishing eID as a key enabler and advancing the inclusion with innovative public services, are among the priorities of the Austrian strategy.

Source: [Official Government website of Austria](#) – (author Mr. Martin Spitzenberger)

Extracts from the [ABC Guide to eGovernment in Austria](#) (January 2006)

Vision.....

Interoperable system architectures, secure automated transactions, technology-neutral developments, structured and standardised process models, cost awareness, integration of existing methods and procedures, network and information security and change management are the characteristic features of a modern and efficient administration. The outmoded

fragmented administrative structure is replaced by a cooperative administration model.

eGovernment in the information age gives rise to a new kind of relationship between citizens and the authorities. New means of communication and technologies offer users free and open access to the virtual world of public institutions. Public administration is shedding its bureaucratic character and transforming into an efficient, service-orientated provider of services.

Applicants for services become customers enjoying the best possible service. User-friendly procedures, transparent processes, quality-orientated service and proximity to citizens are the essential features of a modern administration. Requests by citizens and business are to be conducted interactively by way of an uncomplicated and time-saving dialogue. Administrative decisions and documents are delivered electronically. Electronic signatures and encryption mechanisms ensure data security, data integrity and data protection.

eGovernment gives citizens the chance to participate directly in opinion-forming and decision-making processes. Public discussion forums and Internet chat rooms can be used to intensify the dialogue between citizens and the bodies responsible for political decision-making. In the future, the virtual world will make it easier to involve citizens early in the legislative process.

Objectives.....

In order to have smoothly functioning, partially automated procedures, the underlying processes must be designed jointly. Current transactional processes must be analysed and – where necessary – remodelled.

Close cooperation between the authorities at all levels leads not only to increases in quality but also to valuable synergies. Sharing infrastructures, distributing the workload and costs arising from the structuring of processes and co-ordinating the development of modules for technical procedures all help to avoid duplication and partial solutions.

The new cooperative approach has already been adopted in large sections of administration beyond the area of electronic data processing. In order to become a consolidated culture of administration, this approach must be supported by administrative staff. Staff must therefore have the opportunity to become involved in the restructuring of procedural processes and the introduction of new technologies from the very beginning.

In the long term, we will continuously be confronted with new technical concepts. In order to ensure that development in eGovernment does not remain static, it must be possible to make appropriate use of these concepts. Strategic considerations must take account of change management from the very beginning in order to remain forward looking. Particularly in the field of security, not only new developments but also additional and stricter requirements are to be anticipated.

Adaptable technologies require continuous training of administrative staff. The management and transfer of knowledge are central components of a modern system of administration. The future will, above all, bring a broader range of applications making it possible to participate actively in the administrative process. In order to prepare for this challenge, the skills of administrative staff must be generally increased in the field of IT and eGovernment. Plans for the outsourcing of operative tasks and increased involvement in strategy and structural changes must go hand-in-hand with a marked increase in social and technical skills.

Principles.....

The Austrian eGovernment strategy is based on some important principles:

▶ **Proximity to citizens**

The administration must be at the service of citizens and not vice versa. Online services must be easy to locate.

▶ **Convenience through efficiency**

Citizens expect greater convenience from online procedures: No need to go to an office, no restrictive office hours, no waiting, no being sent from one authority to the next, but rather straightforward processes, intelligent forms which are easier to complete, responsible handling of data and speedy completion of requests. In order to meet these expectations, public administration must optimise processes by automating them and making use of process models.

▶ **Confidence and security**

Electronic contact with public administration must be just as secure as the conventional visit to an office. In the electronic world, the identification and authentication of persons is ensured by sector-specific personal identifiers (ssPINs) and electronic signatures. The secure exchange of information and transfer of data is guaranteed by defined security standards.

▶ **Transparency**

The success of technical solutions and their acceptance among users is dependant on the involvement of all relevant groups in their development. It is particularly important that the private sector and the administration cooperate in advance so that implementation can be endorsed by all. Transparent processes provide the basis for cooperation.

▶ **Accessibility**

Services provided by the public authorities must be available to all without discrimination. This also applies to the new electronic administration system. eGovernment is to be available to all social classes and groups. Technical and social barriers must be removed. The adoption of the Web Accessibility Guidelines is an attempt to counteract the risk of exclusion. Greater availability of public terminals should in future facilitate the access to eGovernment in Austria. Whether it is the Federal Government, the provinces, municipalities or local authorities, all are called upon to make an increased effort to achieve this aim.

▶ **Usability**

The range of electronic services offered must be structured in an easily comprehensible, clear and

straightforward manner. A standard layout for forms and portal structure – arranged according to personal circumstances – facilitates clarity, navigation and usability.

▶ **Data protection**

Citizens place a high degree of confidence in the Austrian administration with regard to data protection. The use of new technologies in administration allows that confidence to be extended to electronic administrative systems also. The use of the electronic signature for the purpose of authenticating users, and the use of encryption mechanisms guarantees that the currently high standard of data protection is maintained. ssPINs, the mechanism developed specially for the purpose of identification conforming to data protection standards, ensures that only authorised persons within the administration can obtain access to personal data, as has been the case to date.

▶ **Cooperation**

Smoothly running eGovernment can be achieved only by comprehensive cooperation between all levels of the administration. Existing applications and infrastructures must be shared in order to achieve the desired aim of organisational, financial and administrative efficiency. Cooperation between public bodies is based on the fundamental approach of making interfaces openly accessible and basic functions available free of charge.

▶ **Sustainability**

The modular structure facilitates change management, which permits continuous further development. Open eGovernment contributes to improving competitiveness and thus to safeguarding Austria's position as a location for business. The strategic coordination of the ICT sector within the administration is of fundamental importance in that regard.

▶ **Interoperability**

Systems must be able to communicate with each other. Therefore, eGovernment conventions designed to govern implementation are being drawn up on the basis of internationally accepted standards and open interfaces.

► **Technological neutrality**

Information and communication technologies are being developed rapidly. eGovernment solutions must therefore be open to new technologies. No particular technology has preference and dependency on monopolies must be avoided. The use of information and communication technologies makes it possible to organise public administration in accordance with these principles. The range of electronic services offered represents an alternative to the traditional office, and is available 24 hours a day. Citizens can choose freely between the two forms of dealing with administrative procedures. Open eGovernment, accessible to all members of the public, tries to avoid the risks of digital exclusion.

Cooperative Processes.....

Since the ICT Board took up its activities, great importance has been placed on cooperation between the Federal Government, the provinces, municipalities and local authorities. The publication of decisions on the website <http://www.cio.gv.at/> ensures compliance with the principle of transparency. A renewed web offering is currently in progress, thus a new website will be published shortly.

The [reference server](#) set up by the provinces acts as a platform for communication between all levels of administration on which proposals for working methods and concepts, contributions to discussion and conventions decided between the Federal Government and the provinces, are published.

Administrative tasks are for the most part performed by the provinces, regional councils, municipalities and local authorities. Without basic coordination, the highly federal nature of the Austrian state would, in the long term, lead to differing approaches. Citizens and the private sector would, however, have little

understanding for such differences. Joint and coordinated action is therefore a principle ensuring the effective implementation of eGovernment.

In order to profit from synergies, IT activities at both provincial and Federal level are coordinated in various working groups and priorities are set jointly. Working groups focusing on specific needs act together with the ICT board to support the coordinating activities. This means that concepts and projects are agreed before decisions are adopted across all levels of administration. In this way, differences of opinion on an expert level can be avoided.

International Cooperation.....

As described before, it is a vital part of the eGovernment strategy to develop and propagate interoperable solutions that take the Austrian approach as an international example. Austrian strategies will be presented at a European level and in various different international forums where they raise great interest.

Austria's leading role in the fields of identity management is expected to be consolidated by an even stronger commitment on a European level. The emphasis is on identity management and interoperability, and also the fields of approval of electronic documents and long-term storage. These topics were introduced more intensively into the European agenda by the Austrian Presidency of the European Union in 2006.

eGovernment Legal Framework

Main legal texts impacting on the development of eGovernment

eGovernment legislation.....

eGovernment Act (became effective on 1 March 2004)

The eGovernment Act (*E-Government-Gesetz; E-GovG*) serves as the legal basis for the instruments used to provide a system of eGovernment and for closer cooperation between all authorities providing eGovernment services. The new mechanisms, such as the electronic signature, sector-specific personal identifiers or electronic service of documents, may also be used by the private sector. The most important principles are: freedom of choice between means of communication for submissions to the public administration; security for the purpose of improving legal protection by creating appropriate technical means such as the Citizen Card; unhindered access to information and services provided by the public administration for people with special needs by the end of 2007 by way of compliance with international standards governing web accessibility. The eGovernment Act has been complemented by the Administrative Signature Regulation (16 April 2004), the Sector Classification Regulation (16 July 2004), the SourcePIN Register Regulation (3 March 2005) and the Supplementary Register Regulation (2 August 2005), each of which defines in more detail some provisions of the eGovernment Act and facilitates its implementation.

Freedom of Information legislation.....

Constitutional Law on Access to Information (became effective on 1 January 1988)

The Constitutional Law on Access to Information (*Auskunftspflichtgesetz*) is a Freedom of Information law that contains provisions on access to public information for the federal and regional levels. It stipulates a general right of access and obliges federal authorities to answer questions regarding their areas

of responsibility, in so far as this does not conflict with a legal obligation to maintain secrecy. However, it does not permit citizens to access documents, just to receive answers from the government on the content of information. On the basis of the provisions of this constitutional Law, the 9 Austrian Länder have enacted laws that place similar obligations on their authorities.

Data Protection/Privacy legislation.....

Data Protection Act 2000 (became effective on 1 April 2005)

In implementation of the Directive on Data Protection 95/46/EC, the Austrian Data Protection Act 2000 (*Datenschutzgesetz 2000; DSG 2000, Federal Law Gazette I No. 165/1999*) provides for a fundamental right to privacy with respect to the processing of personal data which entails the right to information, rectification of incorrect data and erasure of unlawfully processed data. It regulates the pre-conditions for the lawful use and transfer of data, including mandatory notification and registration obligations with the Data Protection Commission. It finally provides for judicial remedy in case of breach of its provisions. It lays down the respective procedures before the Data Protection Commission and civil courts as well as penal and administrative sanctions for its infringement.

eCommerce legislation.....

eCommerce Act (became effective on 1 January 2002)

The eCommerce Act (*eCommerce Gesetz; ECG*) implements Directive 2000/31/EC on electronic commerce. The Act deals with certain aspects of information society services, e.g., commercial online-services. According to the Act, such information society services are – *inter alia* – online-distribution, online-information, online-advertisement, access

services and search engines. The Act is therefore applicable to virtually all services provided on the Internet. It sets the principles of freedom of service provision (the provision of information services does not require specific licences or permissions) and of country of origin (service providers merely have to satisfy the legal requirements for the provision of those services of their home country, i.e., the country in which the providers conduct their business operation), and provides for certain information obligations of providers of information society services for the benefit of their (potential) customers.

eCommunications legislation.....

[Telecommunications Act](#) (became effective on 20 August 2003)

Hereby, the EU's regulatory framework on electronic communications was transposed into national law. The Telecommunications Act (*Telekommunikationsgesetz 2003, TKG 2003*) encompasses all five relevant directives and will be amended in the next future by implementing the Data Retention Directive.

eSignatures/eIdentity legislation.....

[Electronic Signature Act](#) (became effective on 1 January 2000)

The Electronic Signature Act (*Signaturgesetz; SigG*) was passed by Parliament on 14 June 1999 and came into force on 1 January 2000, making Austria the first EU Member State to implement Directive [1999/93/EC](#) on a Community framework for electronic signatures. The Act legally recognizes electronic signatures satisfying certain security requirements and provides some evidential value to less secure electronic signatures. It is complemented by the [Electronic Signature Regulation](#) which has been lastly [amended](#)

on 1 January 2005 (Federal Law Gazette part II No. 527/2004). The conditions for the use of electronic signatures in the public sector, as well as for the use of Citizen Cards and sector-specific personal identifiers are regulated by the [E-Government Act](#).

eProcurement legislation.....

[Federal Procurement Act 2006](#) (became effective on 1 February 2006)

The Federal Procurement Act 2006 (*Bundesvergabegesetz 2006; BVergG*), which entered into force on 31 February 2006, replaced the Federal Procurement Act 2002 and repeals the eProcurement Regulation 2004. The new Federal Procurement Act 2006 finally transposed all the EU public procurement directives, including their provisions regarding e-procurement, into national law.

Re-use of Public Sector Information.....

[Re-use of Information Act \(19 November 2005\)](#)

The Directive 2003/98/EC on reusing public sector information, which was adopted by the Council of Ministers on 5 July 2005, has been transposed into national law at federal level through the Re-use of Information Act (*Informationsweiterverwendungsgesetz; IWG*).

In order to achieve the complete transposition of the PSI Directive, pertinent legislation also needs to be passed in all of the nine Austrian *Länder*. On January 2007 laws at regional level were adopted in the *Länder* of Vienna, Upper Austria, Carinthia and Vorarlberg.

eGovernment Actors

Main roles and responsibilities for eGovernment development



National eGovernment.....

Policy/Strategy

The responsibility for Austria's eGovernment strategy/policy lies directly with the State Secretary [Heidrun Silhavy](#), who was entrusted with this task by the Federal Chancellor Dr. Alfred Gusenbauer, supported by various bodies with a broader involvement of all relevant actors and by certain administrative units within the Federal Chancellery, such as the ICT Center responsible for the coordination of all federal Ministries.

Coordination

1. [Platform 'Digital Austria'](#)

After the successful implementation of the 'eGovernment Offensive' launched 2003 by the Federal Government, the coordination structure for eGovernment has been consolidated in autumn 2005 with the establishment of the Platform 'Digital Austria'. The Platform pools together the former [E-Government Platform](#) set up in 2003 as part of the 'eGovernment Offensive' and the [ICT Board](#) created in 2001. 'Digital Austria' is a strategic Platform that ensures the active

participation of all levels of Government. It is composed of representatives of the federal government, regions, cities, municipalities, private and public sector bodies. The main tasks of the Platform are strategic decision-making, priority setting regarding the implementation of common eGovernment projects, their coordination and monitoring and the communication of these activities. The Platform is headed by the Chief Information Officer and supported by the ICT Strategy Unit based in the Federal Chancellery and a public relation officer. The Platform provides the operational umbrella for various task forces already active under the former ICT Board and eCooperation Board and specific thematic working groups. The participation to all these groups is open to representatives of all levels of government. The workload is shared between its members. The Platform 'Digital Austria' strengthens the generated culture of cooperation and coordination between all stakeholders and guarantees a sustainable development of eGovernment in Austria through large-scale implementation of interoperable and secure solutions.

2. **Federal Chief Information Officer**

The Federal Chief Information Officer was appointed by the Federal Government in 2001. He advises the Federal Government at strategic and technical level, supports the formulation of its eGovernment policies, chairs the Platform 'Digital Austria' and promotes Austrian eGovernment solutions in the European and international arena. He regularly reports to the competent State Secretary on ongoing activities.

3. **ICT Strategy Unit**

After the implementation of the main elements of the eGovernment strategy the Operative Unit that had originally been created to support the Chief Information Officer and the former ICT Board for

the development of Austrian eGovernment has been integrated in the ICT department of the Federal Chancellery in autumn 2005. The Unit is responsible at federal level for legal and organisational issues of eGovernment, coordination of technical infrastructure, programme and project management, budget controlling and procurement, and international issues in the area of eGovernment and security.

Implementation

1. Federal Chief Information Officer

The Federal Chief Information Officer, appointed by the Federal Government, is responsible for the management of the Platform 'Digital Austria'. He regularly reports to the competent State Secretary on ongoing activities.

2. Federal Data Processing Centre

A state-owned company, the Federal Data Processing Centre (*Bundesrechenzentrum – BRZ*) operates a number of government-wide eGovernment systems, including the HELP eGovernment portal.

3. Federal Ministries

The overall coordination of ICT and eGovernment policies and activities lies within the competence of the Federal Chancellery. The different ministries and agencies assume responsibility for their own projects. The major ministries involved in large-scale projects are the Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs and Labour, the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, the Federal Ministry of Finance, the Federal Ministry of Justice, the Federal Ministry of Transport, Innovation and Technology.

Support

1. ICT Strategy Unit

The ICT Strategy Unit supports the Platform 'Digital Austria' at legal and organisational level, represents Austrian positions at European and international level, coordinates the federal ICT

infrastructure and is responsible for the management of ICT projects and programmes.

2. E-Government Innovation Centre (EGIZ)

The E-Government Innovation Centre (*E-Government Innovations Zentrum, EGIZ*) was founded in autumn 2005 as part of a consolidation of the bodies in charge of ICT and eGovernment. EGIZ is a group of researchers that investigates innovative technologies and solutions for eGovernment. With this cooperation both groups (the EGIZ for research, the ICT Strategy Unit for implementation) can put their core focus on their respective duties. In addition, it makes possible a closer collaboration between research and application. The EGIZ represents a platform and network for research activities in respect to eGovernment solutions.

3. Federal Data Processing Centre

The Federal Data Processing Centre is one of the main providers of IT services to federal departments and administrations, including technical support and hosting. It has also developed an Application Service Provider (ASP) service for its government customers.

Audit/Assurance

Court of Audit

The Austrian Court of Audit (*Rechnungshof*) is an organ of Parliament, which has financial independence. The Court's jurisdiction extends to the Federal Government, regional and local governments, as well as to all bodies controlled or substantially funded by these.

Data Protection

Data Protection Commission

The role of the Data Protection Commission (*Datenschutzkommission – DSK*) is to safeguard data protection in accordance with the regulations of the Data Protection Act 2000 (*Datenschutzgesetz 2000*). It shares this role with the Data Protection Council. The Commission has the power to make rulings on matters

of data protection, and rules on all requests for information.

Other

1. [Secure Information Technology Centre](#)

Founded in May 1999 by the Austrian Ministry of Finance, the Austrian National Bank, and the technical University of Graz, the Austrian Secure Information Technology Centre (A-SIT) is an independent non-profit association which mission is the development of expertise in the area of technical information security to serve authorities, economy and citizens. Specific issues addressed include the introduction of the Citizen's Card (Bürgerkarte), the evaluation of cryptographic methods and eGovernment security aspects.

2. [Federal Economic Chamber](#)

The Austrian Chambers of Commerce issue their members with signature cards suitable for use as Citizen Cards, implement online services for businesses, and maintain the commerce registers.

3. [Federation of Austrian Social Security Institutions](#)

The Federation of Austrian Social Security Institutions was in charge of the implementation of the electronic health insurance card ([eCard](#)) during the year 2006. The eCard has replaced an annual volume of more than 40 million paper-based healthcare vouchers. It contains administrative data such as the holder's name, title, date of birth, and social insurance number. It is also prepared for a digital signature function, so that authorised holders are able to use it for electronic transactions with government authorities.

4. [Austrian Computer Society](#)

The OCG has set up in 2001 a [Forum eGovernment](#), which brings together representatives of public administration, industry and academia, and provides an independent platform for the discussion and exchange of experience in eGovernment and eDemocracy. The OCG also issues to its members signature cards suitable for use as Citizen Cards.

Regional & Local eGovernment.....

Strategy

Platform 'Digital Austria'

Senior representatives of the regional and local governments participate in the Platform 'Digital Austria', which is responsible for devising integrated eGovernment strategies headed by the Federal Chief Information Officer. The platform coordinates the federal ICT board consisting of the Chief Information Officers of the federal ministries and the eCooperation Board consisting of the competent representatives of the provinces, municipalities and chamber organisations. The objectives and roadmaps adopted by the Platform are thus also valid for regional and local governments. These orientations are then translated or included into regional and local strategies, for which regional States (Länder) and Municipal Governments are responsible.

Coordination

1. Platform 'Digital Austria'

The Platform 'Digital Austria', set up in 2005, supports the elaboration, monitoring and implementation of the road map for horizontal eGovernment projects involving all layers of government (federal, regional, local). Its tasks include allocating responsibility for the preparation of implementation projects, and monitoring current work and implementation projects of participating organisations.

2. [eGovernment Working Group of the federal, regional and local authorities](#)

In order to provide a uniform system of eGovernment, intensive cooperation across all levels of administration is required. Such cooperation is guaranteed by the cooperation with the Platform 'Digital Austria' which operates as umbrella for all working groups open for representatives of the federal, regional and local authorities. The open participation enables Federal administration, regions, the Austrian Association of Cities and Towns and the Austrian Association of Municipalities to develop joint solutions for legal,

technical and organisational issues. The required transparency is ensured by a common information and communication platform.

Implementation

Regional and Municipal Governments

Responsibility for implementation lies with individual State (*Länder*) and Municipal Governments.

Support

1. [Austrian Association of Cities and Towns](#)

The Austrian Association of Cities and Towns (*Österreichischer Städtebund*) represent the interests of large municipalities in Austria. It has 248 members among the total of 2,359 local authorities in Austria, representing approximately 55% of the total population of the country. It has set up some 30 technical committees to explore innovative measures and programmes adopted by

the towns and communities, develop statements regarding new legislation and discuss the implementation of new policies. eGovernment is currently one of its main focus.

2. [Austrian Association of Municipalities](#)

The Austrian Association of Municipalities (*Österreichischer Gemeindebund*) is the legal representation of the interests of smaller and medium-sized municipalities in Austria. 2,346 municipalities are members of the association.

Audit/Assurance

[Court of Audit](#)

The Austrian Court of Audit (*Rechnungshof*) is an organ of Parliament, which has financial independence. The Court's jurisdiction extends to the Federal Government, regional and local governments, as well as to all bodies controlled or substantially funded by these.

eGovernment Who's Who

Main eGovernment decision-makers and executives

Minister responsible for eGovernment.....

Name: Heidrun Silhavy

Job title: State Secretary in the Federal Chancellery

Picture:



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Source: [Austrian Federal Chancellery](#)

Head of eGovernment (Coordination and implementation).....

Name: Univ.-Prof. DI Dr. Reinhard Posch

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Picture:



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Source: [Austrian Federal Chancellery](#)

Other eGovernment executives.....

Name: Ing. Roland Ledinger

Job title: Managing Director, Platform 'Digital Austria'; Department Director ICT Strategy Unit

Picture:



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Source: [Austrian Federal Chancellery](#)

Name: Christian Rupp

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Source: [Austrian Federal Chancellery](#)

eGovernment Infrastructure

Main eGovernment infrastructure components



Portal.....

[Help.gv.at](http://help.gv.at)

HELP is an Internet portal designed to guide citizens through administrative procedures, so as to be able to prepare and complete them quickly and without difficulties. HELP is tailored to citizen's needs, being designed around different 'life situations' like birth, marriage, passports, death, rather than around administrative structures. HELP provides Austrian citizens and residents with a single point of entry to detailed information about public services and administrative procedures, organised around approximately 200 life events. Launched in 1997 as a guide to Austrian authorities, offices and institutions, HELP.gv.at has been continuously enhanced to become one of the leading eGovernment portals in Europe. An online forum enables citizens to submit enquiries or suggestions, and a special service is provided for some specific groups (entrepreneurs, people with disabilities, foreigners living and working in Austria, etc.). Beyond providing information, the portal also enables citizens to download official administrative forms and to conduct an increasing number of procedures online. A service called 'Official Procedures Online' ([Amtsweg on-line](#)) has been

developed, enabling the delivery of interactive and transactional services. HELP.gv.at is continuously developed further into a transactional portal interconnected with regional and local government systems. HELP was awarded an eEurope Award for eGovernment in 2003 and the BIENE 2006 in Gold for the best barrier free German language information portal.

[Portal Group](#)

The portal group is a link-up of administrative portals and the basic infrastructure for the authentication and authorisation of public sector employees when accessing restricted online resources. By implementing the Portal Group Protocol the user management of shared eGovernment applications can be radically simplified, providing single sign for users. The operators of portals of the federal administration are obliged to implement the Portal Group Agreement (PVV), building a web of trust. Participating organisations can use their own local user administrations for managing access to external eGovernment applications. The application operators therefore do not need to administrate the user rights of external users. According to the eGovernment strategy all new eGovernment applications have to be web applications implementing the standards of the Portal Group Protocol based on HTTP or SOAP.

Network.....

[Corporate Network Austria \(CNA\)](#)

The Corporate Network Austria (CNA) is a high-speed and high safety public Austria-wide area data network that is operated by the Federal Data Processing Centre. It connects all federal government departments and agencies, social security agencies, and the nine regional authorities. The regions have their own networks connected to the CNA.

eIdentification.....

Citizen Card

A fundamental component of the Austrian eGovernment-strategy, the Citizen Card (*Bürgerkarte*) is a smart card embedded with an electronic signature and a digital certificate, which enables citizens to securely access electronic public services and complete administrative procedures electronically. The originality of the Austrian eID concept is that there is not just one single type of Citizen Card. In principle, any card which makes it possible to sign electronically in a secure form and to store personal data is suitable for use as a Citizen Card. Thus, membership cards issued by certain entities (e.g. the Federal Economic Chamber, etc.) or even some bank cards can include Citizen Card functionality. In addition, the Citizen Card concept also applies to mobile phones, enabling Austrian citizens to electronically sign documents and securely transact with government by using a mobile phone. The Citizen Card is thus not dependent on a particular form of technology, and it is entirely up to the citizen to choose the technology he/she prefers to use in order to identify himself or herself electronically. Regardless of whether a chip card, mobile phone or USB equipment is used, the chosen medium has to meet certain security requirements essential for a Citizen Card (electronic signature, identification and data memory). An implementation of the Citizen Card concept can be found on the national health insurance card (eCard) which thereby can be used for secure communication with the public administration. In electronic communication with the administration, natural persons are identified on the basis of sector-specific personal identifiers. A 'source PIN' is derived from the person's unique identification number (ZMR number as stored in the Central Register of Residents) by way of an encryption process and stored on the Citizen Card in an electronically signed form. This source PIN serves as the basis for generating sector-specific personal identifiers. A person's source PIN can be controlled only by the legitimate holder of the Citizen Card, and cannot be stored directly in applications. The application of two encryption processes (encryption of the ZMR number in the source PIN and derivation of the sector-specific

personal identifier from the source PIN) guarantees a high level of data protection.

eProcurement infrastructure.....

Since 2006, all federal officials must, in compliance with legal regulations, present their public bids on www.lieferanzeiger.at. This public information and the accompanying documents required for bidding will be presented at no additional cost on the Internet at www.wienerzeitung.at/lieferanzeiger. Interested economic parties (potential bidders) can download and register this data and be automatically updated on developments related to the applicable procurement procedures. In addition, collected public information from the party issuing the bids will be, after a specific volume of procurement (and in accordance with EU guidelines), automatically sent in an XML format to the official European gazette for public information. This information will then be processed and publicly distributed throughout Europe.

Other.....

Austrian Federal Computing Centre (Bundes Rechenzentrum; BRZ)

The BRZ - Austrian Federal Computing Centre is owned and managerial led by the Austrian government, represented by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Finance. With over 900 solution experts, BRZ focuses among other things on the development and operation of eGovernment solutions for all aspects of public administration. To this end it runs Austria's largest computing centre for public administration. The BRZ equips 1.200 locations all over Austria with infrastructure, serves approximately 56.000 users and deploys successfully more than 320 IT-processes.

Electronic File System (ELAK)

The Electronic File system was introduced in order to replace paper based filing and archiving in all Austrian ministries. The project was started in September 2001 and completed in January 2005. Since then ELAK is being used by some 8.500 users. An electronic file is

created for every written request requiring an answer and every internal work of possible further interest. In this way, every procedure can be audited anytime by viewing the file. The electronic file system at federal level means that many procedures can now be conducted more speedily. The use of the electronic file system supports the processing of more complex procedures which cannot be carried out wholly by automated means. Thereby reaction and processing time can be reduced. With ELAK inter-administrative transactions can be processed using just one medium. Several provincial administrations also introduced similar electronic file systems with about 40.000 users all over Austria.

Electronic Delivery Service

The Austrian Government has launched in 2004 an **official electronic delivery service** (*Zustelldienst*), designed to enable administrative procedures to be conducted by citizens from the application stage to delivery via internet. The service allows public administrations and citizens to exchange messages with the guarantee that messages are effectively sent and received. It provides users with official acknowledgements of receipt, and registered mails delivered by the system have legal status. In order to subscribe to the service, any user needs to have a digital signature. The system is compatible with the Citizen Card and thus also with the mobile Citizen Card as realised in the context of the A1 SIGNATUR. . The official electronic delivery service is meant to gradually replace all paper-based notifications from public authorities to citizens and businesses. The specification of the Delivery Service has recently been extended and now includes the option to generate paper based deliveries e.g. by automated printing. This provides a single interface for the administration but alternative means of delivery for citizens and businesses.

ePayment

The "Studiengesellschaft für Zusammenarbeit im Zahlungsverkehr", **STUZZA** for short, is a co-operation platform founded by Austria's largest banks in 1991. Its cooperation with the ICT staff unit and federal state representatives resulted in the **EPS2** specification

(eps e-payment standard -Version 2) published in 2004. This specification guarantees a comprehensive standard, dealing with online payment transactions. This standard facilitates direct payment through utilization of the various online banking systems. Credit card and mobile phones based payments are supported as well. The EPS2 protocol is designed to provide a simple and secure solution while maintaining maximum compatibility with international standards.

Email services in public administration

E-mail is an important means of communication in the public administration area. Several guidelines have been developed to ensure the uniform usage of this medium by public administration authorities. These guidelines form the **email policy** which regulates technical and organizational aspects of the electronic data exchange. The current version of the policy is version 2.0.2. Moreover, the trustworthiness of emails sent by public authorities should be ensured. To that end, emails should be electronically signed whenever possible. The hereby needed **email certificates** have been developed by the ICT staff unit "Guidelines".

Time stamping Service

In many situations in eGovernment, as well as in general business, it is necessary that electronic documents should be associated with a specific timestamp, which, for instance, specifies when a document has been created or when it has been delivered. The **Federal Office of Metrology and Surveying** (Bundesamt für Eich- und Vermessungswesen) implemented a pilot time stamp service on 1.1.2004. This service creates time stamps as specified in the **RFC 3161** protocol.

Directory Services

The eGovernment strategy of the federal government intends to achieve a comprehensive representation of all public administration procedures in electronic form. This includes the transactions between the government and the citizens (G2C), as well as internal transactions between public authorities themselves (G2G). Within the frame of these procedures the

responsibilities and the rights of persons, as well as of organizational units constitute important parameters. The directory service makes this information electronically available in a standardized manner and enables accessing it through well defined application interfaces. In the future, the directory service should become for eGovernment as important as the DNS service is for the internet. Following a decision by the ICT board (2001) the Federal Ministry of the Interior has been ordered to take leadership over the working

group "Directory service" and adopt the corresponding service [specification](#). Based upon this specification, a pilot project has been launched in the year 2002 delivering important [results](#). In this project a directory service presenting information from two different departments has been implemented, along with an end user [application](#) ("Address book of the public administration") which should access this information.

eGovernment Services for Citizens

Availability and sophistication of eServices for Citizens

The information in this section is based on the common list of 20 basic public services (12 for citizens, 8 for businesses) adopted by the Council of the EU in March 2001, and on the methodology used to assess their level of online availability and sophistication in the eEurope benchmarking exercises (see: [eGovernment indicators for benchmarking eEurope](#)).

The 12 services for citizens are as follows:

1. Income Tax Declaration
2. Job Searches by labour Offices
3. Social Security Contributions
4. Personal Documents
5. Car Registration
6. Application for Building Permission
7. Declaration to the Police
8. Public Libraries
9. Certificates (birth, marriage) Request and Delivery
10. Enrolment in Higher Education
11. Announcement of moving (change of address)
12. Health-related services (e.g. appointments for hospitals)

For each service, the sophistication stage reached is indicated, with reference to the maximum stage possible for the service.

- ▶ Stage 1 - Information: online information about public services
- ▶ Stage 2 - Interaction: downloading of forms
- ▶ Stage 3 - Two-way interaction: processing of forms, including authentication
- ▶ Stage 4 - Transaction: full case handling, decision and delivery (payment)

1. Income taxes (declaration, notification of assessment)

Responsibility:	Central Government (Federation), Federal Ministry of Finance
Website:	https://finanzonline.bmf.gv.at/
Sophistication stage:	4/4
Description:	FINANZOnline enables electronic filing of tax returns. Since February 2003 the service has become fully transactional.

2. Job search services by labour offices

Responsibility:	Central Government (Federation), Labour Market Service (Arbeitsmarktservice - AMS)
Website:	http://www.ams.or.at/
Sophistication stage:	4/4
Description:	AMS provides a set of services for both job-seekers and employers, included an e-Job Room establishing direct contact between candidates and enterprises.

3. Social security benefits

a. Unemployment benefits

Responsibility:	Central Government (Federation), Labour Market Service (Arbeitsmarktservice - AMS)
Website:	http://www.ams.or.at/
Sophistication stage:	4/4
Description:	Information and forms to download.

b. Family allowances

Responsibility:	Central Government (Federation), Federal Ministry of Finance
Website:	https://finanzonline.bmf.gv.at/
Sophistication stage:	4/4
Description:	The Family Allowances Fund (<i>Familienlastenausgleichsfonds</i>), financed from employers' contributions and general tax revenues, is responsible for providing family benefits including, in particular, child benefit (<i>Familienbeihilfe</i>). This is mainly paid out by the tax offices, for all children below the age of majority and also for children up to the age of 26 who are in full-time education or training. The amount increases with the age of the child and, as a result of recently introduced tax allowances, the number of children in the family. Since January 2005 the family allowance request (Beih 1) can be submitted to the tax office electronically through the FINANZOnline service.

c. Medical costs (reimbursement or direct settlement)

Responsibility:	This service is not relevant for Austria.
Website:	N/A
Sophistication stage:	N/A
Description:	Costs for medical treatment and medicine are usually covered by obligatory health insurance and there is usually no need for citizens to ask for any reimbursement. Pharmacies settle up the costs for medicine with the social security institutions using electronic standard procedures. The Austrian Social Security introduced the smart health insurance card (eCard), being already used by over 9.000.000 patients on September 2006.

d. Student grants

Responsibility:	Central Government (Federation), Federal Ministry for Education, Science and Culture
Website:	http://www.stipendium.at/
Sophistication stage:	4/4
Description:	Fully functional student grants application system.

4. Personal documents (passport and driving licence)

a. Passport

Responsibility: Central Government (Federation) / Local Government (Municipalities)

Website: <http://www.help.gv.at/Content.Node/2/Seite.020000.html>

Sophistication stage: 2/3

Description: Information and forms to download on the federal public services portal Help.gv.at. The current procedure to get a passport is very efficient and does not take more than 30 minutes. Applicants are legally required to sign personally the passport, and a visit in person to the competent administration (municipality) is therefore necessary, where delivery is immediate. The introduction of an online request service would force citizens to spend more time than now for the procedure and therefore mean a deterioration of service. The Austrian Government considers the current system as very efficient and has no intention to introduce an electronic passport application system.

b. Driving license

Responsibility: This service is not relevant for Austria

Website: N/A

Sophistication stage: N/A

Description: With the new drivers license register citizens do not have to do the application for a license themselves anymore. It is now handled by the driving schools. The license is automatically issued when the driving school confirms in the online register that a customer has successfully passed the driving test. The citizen receives his driving license smartcard one week after the driving test by mail.

5. Car registration (new, used and imported cars)

Responsibility: This service is not relevant for Austria

Website: N/A

Sophistication stage: N/A

Description: Car registration is now handled directly by insurance companies and therefore does not constitute a direct service for citizens. [Information](#) about this process is nevertheless provided on the federal portal Help.gv.at.

6. Application for building/planning permission

Responsibility:	Regional Government (States), Local Government (Municipalities)
Website:	http://www.help.gv.at/Content.Node/226/Seite.2260000.html
Sophistication stage:	2/4
Description:	The federal public services portal Help.gv.at provides information about building permissions, and has links to regional downloadable forms. Some regional governments have introduced online application systems, such as the Land of Salzburg.

7. Declaration to the police (e.g. in case of theft)

Responsibility:	Central Government (Federation), Federal Police
Website:	http://www.polizei.gv.at/
Sophistication stage:	2/3
Description:	Information and a printable download form is available. Declarations regarding child pornography, environmental crimes and neo-Nazi activities can be transmitted via e-mail to the competent investigation authorities (www.bmi.gv.at).

8. Public libraries (availability of catalogues and search tools)

Responsibility:	Central/Regional/Local Government, Austrian Association of Libraries
Website:	http://www.bibliotheken.at/
Sophistication stage:	4/4
Description:	Online searchable catalogue for all Austrian public libraries. Project supported by the Federal Ministry for Education, Science and Culture.

9. Certificates (birth, marriage): request and delivery

Responsibility: Local Government (Municipalities)

Website: N/A

Sophistication stage: 3/3

Description: Austrian citizens were until recently requested to provide proof of certain information, such as birth or marriage certificates, for conducting certain administrative procedures. Since the establishment of the Central Register of Residents ([Zentrales Melderegister – ZMR](#)), this is no longer required. When a person registers with it, the competent authority verifies the accuracy of the existing personal and nationality data by inspection of the relevant documents (standard documents) and then informs the Central Register of Residents that the information is accurate. Even where no registration procedure is being conducted, a person may request that the accuracy of the information be noted, provided he or she proves accuracy by presenting the relevant documents. Thus, certain information need no longer be presented by the person concerned but can, with the person's consent, be directly requested by the public authority from the Central Register of Residents. Alternatively, the person may also present an electronically signed confirmation of registration issued by the Central Register of Residents.

10. Enrolment in higher education/university

Responsibility: Universities and Colleges of Higher Education

Website: N/A

Sophistication stage: 4/4

Description: The Federal eGovernment portal [Help.gv.at](#) provides information on enrolment in Higher Education. This enrolment is managed by individual higher education institutions themselves: [Universities](#) and [Colleges of Higher Education](#). Some of these institutions have developed online enrolment systems (e.g. [University of Vienna](#)).

11. Announcement of moving (change of address)

Responsibility:	Central Government (Federation) / Local Government (Municipalities)
Website:	http://www.statistik.at/adress-gwr-online/start.shtml
Sophistication stage:	3/3
Description:	The federal portal provides information on moving and change of address notification and related forms to download. Austrian residents are required by law to notify their change of address to their municipalities of residence. Address information is then recorded in the Central Register of Residents (<i>Zentrales Melderegister – ZMR</i>), and in the Register of Addresses (Adressregister). Established instituted in 2004, the Register of Addresses is maintained by the Federal Agency for Weights, Measures and Surveys (<i>Bundesamt für Eich- und Vermessungswesen</i>) as a specific register forming part of the land database. It contains geo-coded information about buildings and properties (district, town, street, reference number, cadastre district, property number, etc.). Each plot of land is allocated an address code and each building an address number. The address data is provided by the local authorities upon registration of a citizen's address or change of address. Notification is given via an online application made available free of charge by the Federal Statistics Institution (<i>Statistik Austria</i>). An up-to-date and complete database of addresses is thus available for eGovernment purposes.

12. Health related services (interactive advice on the availability of services in different hospitals; appointments for hospitals)

Responsibility:	N/A
Website:	N/A
Sophistication stage:	N/A
Description:	This service is not relevant for Austria. Hospital-appointments are managed directly by the different hospitals across the country. Information on health-related services is provided on the website of the Ministry of Health and Women as well as on the websites of the different State governments (Länder).

Source: Sophistication ratings quoted in *"Online Availability of Public Services: How Is Europe Progressing?"*, Web Based Survey on Electronic Public Services, by Capgemini, funded by the European Commission, June 2006.

eGovernment Services for Businesses

Availability and sophistication of eServices for Businesses

The information in this section is based on the common list of 20 basic public services (12 for citizens, 8 for businesses) adopted by the Council of the EU in March 2001, and on the methodology used to assess their level of online availability and sophistication in the eEurope benchmarking exercises (see: [eGovernment indicators for benchmarking eEurope](#)).

The 8 services for businesses are as follows:

1. Social security contributions for employees
2. Corporation Tax: declaration, notification
3. VAT: declaration, notification
4. Registration of a new company
5. Submission of data to statistical offices
6. Customs declaration
7. Environment-related permits
8. Public procurement

For each service, the sophistication stage reached is indicated, with reference to the maximum stage possible for the service.

- ▶ Stage 1 - Information: online information about public services
- ▶ Stage 2 - Interaction: downloading of forms
- ▶ Stage 3 - Two-way interaction: processing of forms, including authentication
- ▶ Stage 4 - Transaction: full case handling, decision and delivery (payment)

1. Social contribution for employees

Responsibility:	Social Security Institutions
Website:	http://www.elda.at/
Sophistication stage:	4/4
Description:	ELDA (Electronic Data Exchange with the Austrian Social Security Institutions - <i>ELektronischer DAtenaustausch mit den Österreichischen Sozialversicherungsträgern</i>) is a country-wide project from social security institutions to enable businesses to transmit social security-relevant data electronically. The service is fully transactional. Data submitted to the ELDA pooling system is distributed to the responsible regional institutions on a daily basis.

2. Corporation tax: declaration, notification

Responsibility:	Central Government (Federation), Federal Ministry of Finance
Website:	https://finanzonline.bmf.gv.at/
Sophistication stage:	4/4
Description:	FINANZOnline enables electronic declaration of corporation tax.

3. VAT: declaration, notification

Responsibility:	Central Government (Federation), Federal Ministry of Finance
Website:	https://finanzonline.bmf.gv.at/
Sophistication stage:	4/4
Description:	FINANZOnline enables electronic filing of VAT (Umsatzsteuer - USt).

4. Registration of a new company

Responsibility:	Regional Government (States)
Website:	http://www.help.gv.at/Content.Node/130/Seite.1300000.html
Sophistication stage:	4/4
Description:	The Federal portal for Businesses (Help-Business.gv.at) provides general information on business registration procedures and links to related forms. Business registration in Austria is the responsibility of regional governments (and is in some regions handled by Chambers of Commerce). Online registration services are provided in some regions, such as Vienna (Wiener Gewerberegister).

5. Submission of data to statistical offices

Responsibility:	Central Government (Federation), Federal Statistics Institution
Website:	http://www.statistik.at/
Sophistication stage:	3/3
Description:	Businesses and public authorities are able to transmit statistical data electronically. Registration for identification is necessary.

6. Customs declarations

Responsibility:	Central Government (Federation), Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs and Labour
Website:	http://www.pawa.bmwa.gv.at/
Sophistication stage:	4/4
Description:	As part of its "Paperless Foreign Trade Administration" initiative (Papierlose Aussenhandelsadministration - PAWA), the Austrian Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Labour (BMWA) offers companies to obtain import licenses and and submit customs declaration over the Internet.

7. Environment-related permits (incl. reporting)

Responsibility:	Central Government (Federation), Federal Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Resources
Websites:	http://www.help-business.gv.at/52/Seite.520000-17154.html
Sophistication stage:	4/4
Description:	Austrian IT infrastructure for the EU-ETS for annual reporting of the emissions, including verification by independent (third-party) verifiers. Submission, handling and verification of Reports is done fully electronically.

8. Public procurement

Responsibility:	Central Government (Federation), Federal Procurement Ltd.
Website:	https://www.e-shop.gv.at/e%2Dshop/
Sophistication stage:	4/4
Description:	E-shop is a fully functional web-based e-procurement platform developed by state-owned company Federal Procurement Ltd. (<i>Bundesbeschaffung GmbH - BBG</i>). It is still in a pilot phase and will be made available to public sector organisations in ASP mode (Application Service Provider). It will enable them to purchase goods and services from a catalogue of pre-selected suppliers. The pilot testing of online tenders has started in June 2003, and electronic submission with an official form is now possible. Public tenders are advertised on Auftrag.at , a private-owned e-tendering website.

Source: Sophistication ratings quoted in "[Online Availability of Public Services: How Is Europe Progressing?](#)", Web Based Survey on Electronic Public Services, by Capgemini, funded by the European Commission, June 2006.

European Commission - IDABC eGovernment Observatory

The eGovernment Observatory is an information tool on eGovernment developments across Europe. It provides decision-makers and professionals with information resources and insight into strategies, initiatives and projects in Europe and beyond.

The eGovernment Observatory is an IDABC project. IDABC is the European Commission programme that promotes the delivery of e-government services in the EU

The eGovernment factsheets are one of the observatory services. They present an overview of the eGovernment situation and progress in European countries. The factsheets are updated every six months.

<http://ec.europa.eu/idabc/egovo>

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