

ABZ*AUSTRIA

AN INTRODUCTION

Over 25 years ago, five women followed their vision of gender equality and established [abz.vienna](#). More than two decades later, some 170 employees continue the founding idea of the social business. Now renamed **ABZ*AUSTRIA**, the non-profit organization promotes the work (**Arbeit**), education (**Bildung**) and future (**Zukunft**) of women in Austria and aims at shaping the conditions for women on the labour market. We are innovators in gender equality policy.

In a world of constant change – be it demographic, technological, economic, ecological or social – we have to take a closer look at how this transformation affects people. While developments like the digitization will have a severe impact on the entire working world, they also mark the beginning of a new era: A change in **value systems**, in social and corporate **structures** and a chance to enable gender equality and diversity. **ABZ*AUSTRIA** is **made for equal opportunities and gender equality**.

Gender Equality in Austria

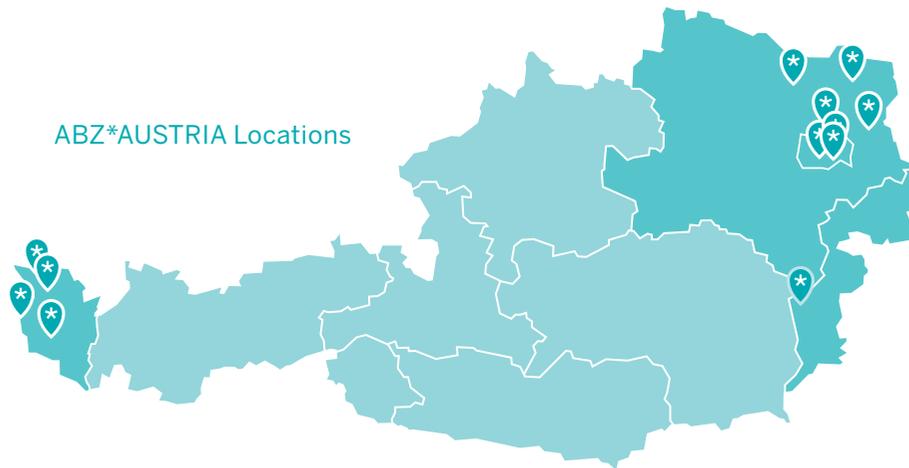
Austria has made considerable progress in gender equality over the past decades: Women hold the majority of university degrees, their employment rate has increased remarkably, and the legal situation has changed for their benefit. However, to achieve a society in which women and men have equal opportunities, we still have a long way to go. Due to **horizontal segregation**, a lot of women still work in traditionally female industries and professions which are generally low-paid and offer less development opportunities. Furthermore, the glass ceiling impedes women in achieving **leadership positions**. The **gender pay gap** – currently 20.1% in Austria – not only causes women to have lower incomes but

also impacts their unemployment benefits and pensions. In addition, women still do most of the **unpaid work**, including child care, housekeeping and the care for relatives, which adds to their daily workload and reduces their chances for full-time employment.

How we work

To find effective solutions for these challenges, we work closely **together with the private sector and decision-makers in policy, science, and social partnership**, while at the same time providing education, training and counselling for women. Through our contributions and our 25 years of experience, we change social discourses and shape future innovations. To create **added value both for women and the economy**, we enable women to secure their own livelihood through a variety of programs, and develop products and services for companies, their managers and employees.

Our social profit organization is entirely funded through **project assignments**. Our funding authorities are manifold and range from the public employment service, municipal governments, federal ministries, the European Commission and European Social Fund to social partners, private companies and individuals. While our head office is located in **Vienna**, we also have locations in four other Austrian **provinces**. Furthermore, we are part of many **networks** and associations throughout Austria and Europe and are always interested in cooperating on an international level. To provide insight into the whole range of our work, the following pages will introduce our **six fields of competence**. If you would like to learn more, please visit our website or social media channels or contact us directly.



OUR FIELDS OF COMPETENCE



Gender Mainstreaming and Diversity Management

Gender mainstreaming is an essential means to assess how **structures and processes in policy, business and society** affect women and men differently. In addition, diversity management values employee differences based on gender, age, ethnic origin, ability, sexual orientation, religion etc. and implements measures to use their diversity to create added value for all. As cross-cutting issues, gender mainstreaming and diversity management play an important role in all of ABZ*AUSTRIA's activities – in our programs, our collaborations with private sector

companies, our public relations, and in our contributions to policy and research. Furthermore, we have made a significant contribution to the development of **quality standards** and **practical application** of gender mainstreaming and diversity management strategies in Austria.

We offer **consulting, training and workshops** for companies that want to make use of their employees' diverse competences and regard diversity as a crucial factor for their present and future competitiveness.



Reconciling Career. Family. Private Life

While the challenge of reconciling job, family and private life was considered an issue of working mothers for a long time, there has been a slow shift in public discourse in recent years.

Today, questions of how to maintain a healthy work-life-balance are asked by both **women and men** of all age groups. Reconciliation is a **matter of management**. Thus, companies are required to establish **structures and cultures** that allow for their employees (and managers) to combine their career with childcare, education, the care for relatives or volunteer work. Major levers to improve employees' work-life-balance are **flexible working models** and the **active management of parental leaves**. ABZ*AUSTRIA has developed a digital tool called **RoadMap** that

allows companies to manage parental (and other) leaves efficiently and to promote an easy comeback after a leave of absence. The RoadMap offers guidelines, check-lists and forms for both (human resource) managers and employees, making the planning and implementation of leaves of absence easier. The online tool covers comprehensive information on parental and paternal leaves as well as **educational and care leaves**. Furthermore, we offer workshops, consulting, lectures, and support to companies that want to improve their employees' work-life-balance, to increase job satisfaction and company image.

ABZ*AUSTRIA not only advises private sector companies, public authorities, universities, and non-profit organizations on the management of leaves, but also serves as a **role model** in this field.



Work. Youth. Age

Today, more generations than ever are simultaneously active on the labour market. This leads to a variety of challenges for enterprises. In order to meet their demand for qualified workers, companies have to develop corporate strategies that **cater to the needs** and requirements of employees of **different age-groups**. Implementing working conditions that enable a work-life-balance and developing a successful **employer branding strategy** is crucial in the competition for **qualified workers**. ABZ*AUSTRIA helps companies implement age management strategies and strives to decrease dis-

crimination of people from different generations – especially those of girls and women. Strengthening the employability of older and younger women is our goal.

This not only helps them gain a foothold on the labour market, but also increases the company's performance and **competitiveness**. Measures such as **generational tandems**, where knowledge is transferred from older employees to younger ones, or flexible working time models to prevent sick leaves or fluctuation are helpful tools to systematically implement age management in business.



Lifelong Learning

Although women hold the majority of secondary and tertiary degrees in Austria, it is also mainly women whose highest completed level of education is compulsory schooling. Furthermore, fewer women take part in **further training** and **professional development**. This leads to a large number of women who are low-skilled and are more likely to be unemployed, work in atypical forms of employment or in poorly paid sectors. Lifelong learning increases the **employability** of women and enables **professional reorientation**. Through our training and education programs, we provide women with key skills to (re) enter the labour market and to work in a global information society. We **empower** them to learn inde-

pendently and encourage them to be self-confident and self-motivated. As a result of digitization, learning methods and tools are changing rapidly. **Online tools** and new media reduce access barriers for women because they can be used at any time and from any location. ABZ*AUSTRIA uses **game-based learning**, digital counselling, e-learning, webinars, digital pin-boards and blogs as new formats in addition to other learning methods.

Our goal in this field of competence is to support women in their professional reorientation and to open new perspectives and possibilities for them. One way to do so is to encourage them to choose a **non-traditional profession**, for example in **technology**.



Work. Migration. Integration

Through the (forced) migration movements of recent years, Austria has become a host country for people of different national, cultural, linguistic, and religious backgrounds and with a wide range of education and work experience. Their inclusion into Austrian society as well as their integration into the labour market has been aggravated by structural and language barriers.

Having offered a variety of programs for both migrant and refugee women for many years, we know about the challenges they often face. Our aim is to **reduce the structural barriers** for migrants and support them individually. Thus, we offer a range of support services for women, from a first orientation on the Austrian labour market and counselling

in their **native language** to the **examination of their qualifications** as well as job and internship placements. Through our services, they are prepared for (re)entering the labour market, which not only increases their chances for a sustainable professional integration but also allows them to secure their own livelihoods. As the number of companies that recognize the **benefits of cultural diversity** within their workforce increases, there is a growing need for corporate structures and cultures that actively integrate migrant and refugee employees.

In order to support businesses in their attempt to employ migrant women, we offer consulting throughout the recruiting and on-boarding process and provide them with the necessary tools to successfully integrate them into their teams.



New Work. Digitization. Innovation

Within the next years, digitization, automation and robotization will have an impact not only on the industrial sector but on the entire working world. This is changing the demands for both employers and employees. As the need for routine activities decreases and the demand for highly qualified workers rises, the importance of continuing education and professional development cannot be stressed enough.

In making sure that both women and men benefit from this transformation equally, it is essential that **women are equal designers of digitization** and have the opportunity to acquire the necessary skills to claim their space on a constantly changing labour market. In order to achieve a new world of work

that promotes gender equality, we have to increase women's **digital literacy** on the one hand and develop innovative, flexible working models on the other.

Another important lever is to implement **new forms of leadership** such as **top sharing** or **part-time management**, which makes leadership positions more attractive for qualified junior staff and persons with care responsibilities. With years of experience in this field, ABZ*AUSTRIA supports companies in the planning and realization of **innovative management concepts** and flexible working models. We also advise individuals (executive coaching) and couples (tandem coaching) who want to apply for a top sharing position.



Manuela Vollmann (left), Daniela Schallert (right)

All ABZ*AUSTRIA products and services are checked for their sustainable impact on gender equality. Our programs are developed through an integrated, multi-professional and target group-oriented approach and follow the vision of equal opportunities on the labour market and in education.

If you would like to learn more about our products and programs, if you are looking to collaborate with us or have questions about gender equality in Austria, please contact us directly or visit our website for more information.



www.abzaustria.at



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MADE FOR
EQUAL
OPPORTUNITIES
AND
GENDER
EQUALITY

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