

OECD-Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises

Annual Report 2011 / 2012

on the activities of the

Austrian National Contact Point for the

OECD-Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises

Vienna - Austria, May 2012

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

In line with its commitments as a member of the OECD and an adherent to the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, Austria has set up a National Contact Point (NCP) "*to further the effectiveness of the Guidelines (...)*".

A. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE CHOICE OF STRUCTURE OF THE AUSTRIAN NCP

Following the 2011 update of the Guidelines a wide consultation process on the future organization of the Austrian NCP involving all relevant institutions, social partners and stakeholders was launched. As a result of this process, a new unit was created within the Federal Ministry of Economy, Family and Youth (BMWFJ) and took over the functions of the Austrian NCP on March 1st 2012.

In addition, the former NCP Advisory Committee was reorganized. The new NCP Steering Committee is chaired by a senior official of the BMWFJ and includes representatives of the Federal Chancellery, the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection, the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs, the Federal Ministry of Finance, the Austrian Federal Chamber of Labour, the Austrian Trade Union Federation, the Federation of Austrian Industries, the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber, the Austrian Chamber of Agriculture, an Austrian-based member organization of OECD Watch as well as one external expert in the field of extrajudicial dispute resolution. It held its constituting session on May 3rd 2012.

Both the Austrian NCP and the NCP Steering Committee were given new terms of reference ("Geschäftsordnung"), which are available at the NCP's website www.oecd-leitsaetze.at. English versions are under preparation.

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PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE BASE OF DEALING WITH A BROAD RANGE OF ISSUES COVERED BY THE GUIDELINES IN AN IMPARTIAL MANNER WHILE MAINTAINING AN ADEQUATE LEVEL OF ACCOUNTABILITY

The Austrian NCP is located at the Directorate General for Foreign Trade Policy and European Integration of the BMWFJ. Being an official unit of the ministry, all laws and regulations providing for the impartiality, accountability and liability of members of the Austrian civil service apply.

DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF COOPERATION WITH RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS (E.G. WORKER ORGANIZATIONS, INTERESTED PARTIES AND THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY)

Through the creation of the NCP Steering Committee the involvement of all relevant stakeholders is ensured. The Steering Committee's task is to assist and advice the NCP.

RELATIONS WITH OECD PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

The Austrian NCP has established Guidelines-related contacts with the International Labour Organization, the European Commission and participated in United Nations' activities on CSR, Human and Business Rights.

HUMAN AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES OF THE AUSTRIAN NCP

The Austrian NCP currently consists of one person. As a unit of BMWFJ it has full access to the ministry's infrastructure and support functions. Provisions for the necessary financial resources have been included in the ministry's budget. For promotional activities the Austrian NPC co-operates with a number of partner institutions.

B. INFORMATION AND PROMOTION

WEBSITE AND AVAILABLE DOCUMENTS

The Austrian NCP's website is www.oecd-leitsaetze.at. It provides German and English versions of the Guidelines and basic information regarding the Guidelines and the Austrian NCP. An update and upgrade is under way.

English and German printed versions of the Guidelines are available free of charge. An information brochure is being prepared.

REPORTING ACTIVITIES

According to the new terms of reference the Austrian NCP is reporting on its activities to the Steering Committee on a regular basis. The Steering Committee is "evaluating the activities of the Austrian NCP in particular regarding their conformity with the terms of reference and with the core criteria laid out in the Procedural Guidance".

AWARENESS RAISING, NETWORKING AND COOPERATION WITH OTHER STAKEHOLDERS (E.G. INDIVIDUALS, BUSINESS COMMUNITY; UNIONS, FEDERATIONS, GOVERNMENT ENTITIES AND NGOs)

The Austrian NCP maintains regular contacts with relevant stakeholders, in particular those represented in the Steering Committee, and cooperates with them in awareness raising activities such as publications, workshops, etc.. Efforts to deepen and broaden these efforts are underway.

CONFERENCES, MEETINGS AND SEMINARS TO PROMOTE THE GUIDELINES

The update of the Guidelines was a major topic of the 2011 Austrian CSR Day on September 20th 2011. Besides, the updated Guidelines were presented in a number of presentations/seminars/workshops.

Good working relationships have been established with the German and Swiss NCP. The first formal meeting of the three NCPs took place in Vienna on September 30th 2011; a second one is under preparation.

A two-day international workshop on mediation aspects is planned, in cooperation with the Dutch NCP, for the second half of 2012.

ENQUIRIES

In the reporting period no enquiries that went beyond requests for free copies of the Guidelines have been received.

C. IMPLEMENTATION IN SPECIFIC INSTANCES

GENERAL INFORMATION ON NCP PROCEDURES

The terms of reference of the Austrian NCP, available at the NCP's website, include detailed procedural guidance for how to handle specific instances and the involvement of the Steering Committee.

SPECIFIC INSTANCES DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD

In the reporting period no specific instances were raised.

D. WEAK GOVERNANCE ZONES AND CONFLICT-AFFECTED AND HIGH RISK AREAS

The website of the Austrian NCP provides links to the Risk Awareness Tool for Multinational Enterprises in Weak Governance Zones and the Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Chains of Minerals from Conflict-Affected and High Risk Areas.