



How's Life? 2013

MEASURING WELL-BEING

Country Snapshot Austria



OECD
Better Life
Initiative

For more information and questions:

www.oecd.org/howslife

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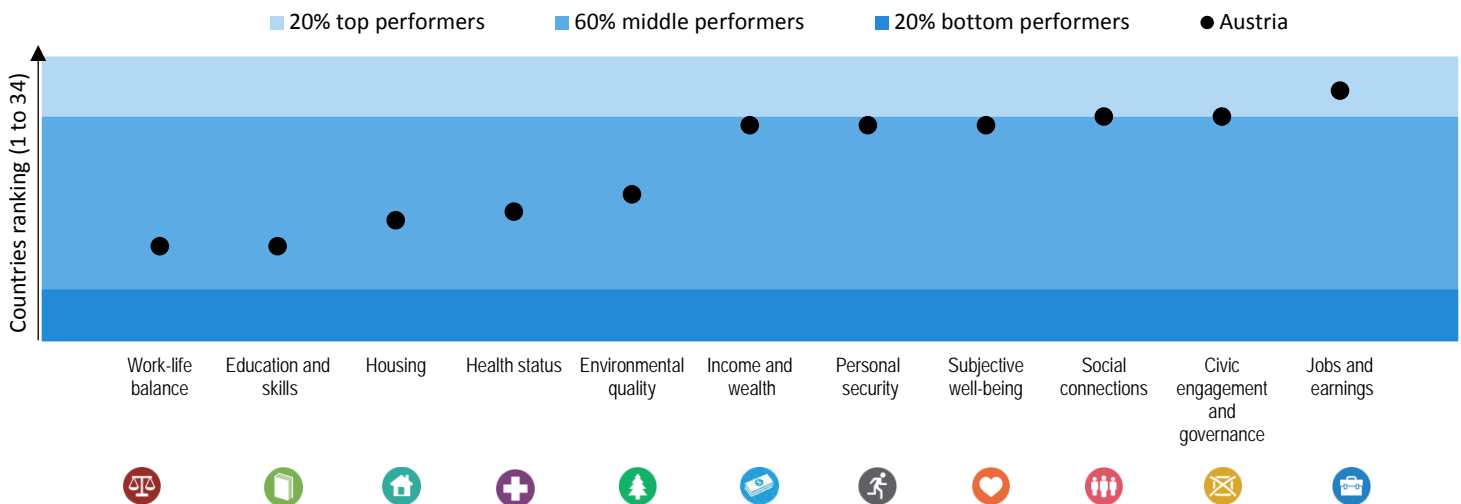
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HOW'S LIFE IN AUSTRIA IN 2013?

Compared with other OECD countries, **Austria** performs well in many of the 11 dimensions that the OECD considers as essential to a good life (income and wealth; jobs and earnings; housing conditions; health status; work-life balance; education and skills; social connections; civic engagement and governance; environmental quality; personal security and subjective well-being – See back page for more details). **Austria** ranks above the OECD average in the dimensions of jobs and earnings, civic engagement, social connections, subjective well-being, personal security, income and wealth and environmental quality. It ranks close to the average in health status and housing, but below average in education and skills and work-life balance.

Figure 1 - How does Austria compare?
Austria's well-being compared with other OECD countries, 2013



WELL-BEING DURING THE CRISIS

How's Life? shows that the **average Austrian household** has not been only marginally affected by the crisis, which in other OECD countries has been particularly visible when looking at household income, jobs, life satisfaction and civic engagement.

From 2007 to 2011, Austria recorded a cumulative decline in real **household disposable income** of around 1%, while in the Euro area income dropped on average by 2% over the same period, with the largest decline occurring in 2011. Market income inequality (before taxes and transfers) remained unchanged between 2007 and 2010 while it increased by 1.2% on average in the OECD.

In the OECD countries most severely hit by the crisis, the largest impact of the crisis on people's well-being have come through lower employment and deteriorating labour market conditions. In contrast to the general trend, the **employment rate** increased by 1 percentage point in Austria while the long-term unemployment rate remained stable between 2007 and 2012.

In the OECD as a whole, the poor employment situation had a major impact on **life satisfaction**. Conversely, the percentage of **Austrian** people declaring being very satisfied with their lives increased from 67% to 76% from 2007 to 2012, while this percentage dropped in the countries most affected by the crisis.

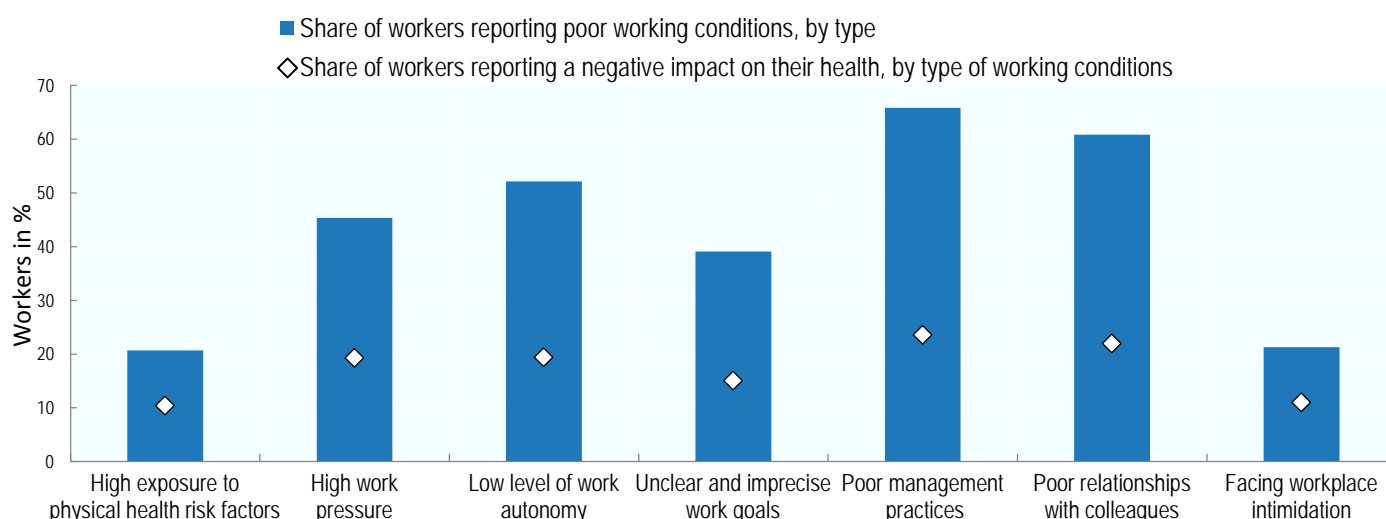
In the OECD countries most severely hit by the crisis, people's **trust in institutions** and in the way democracy works has also declined during the crisis. Conversely, the percentage of **Austrian** people reporting that they trust the government increased from 26% to 32% between 2008 and 2012.

Over the same period, **new forms of solidarity and engagement** have emerged in the countries most impacted by the crisis. In contrast to the general trend, the percentage of people reporting having helped someone and having volunteered their time decreased by 2 percentage points between 2008 and 2012 in **Austria**.

WELL-BEING IN THE WORKPLACE

People spend most of their daily life at work and work for a significant part of their life. Hence, the kind of jobs they have matters a great deal for their well-being. Job quality covers many different aspects, from work content to control over decisions, to interactions with colleagues, support from managers, as well as more traditional aspects such as earnings and job security. In 2010, **21% of Austrian workers reported being in a poor working environment**, a share slightly above the average in European countries. Low job quality impairs the physical and mental health of workers.

Figure 2 - Working conditions and impact on Austrian workers' health, 2010



Source: OECD calculations on the European Working Conditions Survey

GENDER DIFFERENCES IN WELL-BEING

Gender gaps in well-being, typically in favour of men, have declined in most OECD countries, including in **Austria**. Despite these gains, **Austrian women** are still less likely than men to have a paid job or be elected to Parliament, and more likely to be over-represented among poor households or to feel insecure when walking alone at night.

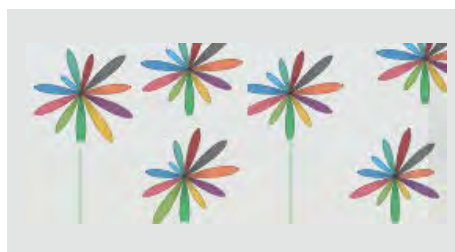
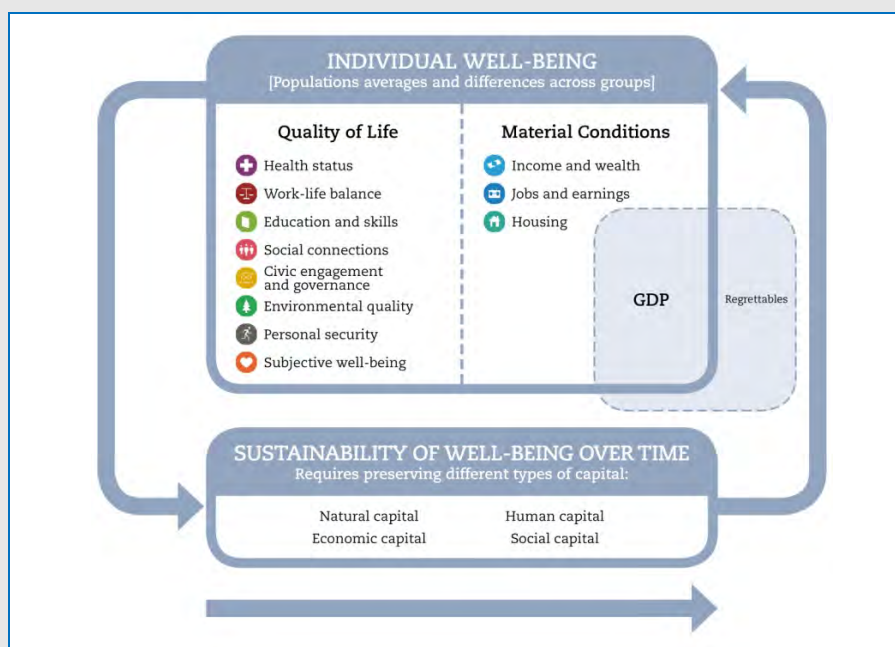
HOW DO MEN AND WOMEN PERFORM IN AUSTRIA?			AND IN THE OECD?	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
Women and men throughout their lifetime				
Health status				
Life expectancy at birth (years)	84	78	83	77
Share of people in good/very good health conditions	67%	72%	67%	72%
Education and skills				
Tertiary degrees awarded (all fields)	53%	47%	58%	42%
Women and men in paid and unpaid work				
Jobs and earnings				
Employment rates (tertiary educated individuals)	81%	89%	79%	88%
Wage gap between men and women	-	+19%	-	+16%
Share of poor single-adult households	39%	23%	37%	30%
Work-Life balance				
Number of hours dedicated to household tasks (per week)	-	-	32	21
Women and men in society				
Civic Engagement and governance				
Share of seats in national parliament	28%	72%	27%	73%
Personal security				
Share of people feeling safe when walking alone at night	75%	90%	61%	79%
Subjective well-being				
Levels of life satisfaction on a 0 to 10 scale	7.5	7.3	6.7	6.6

HOW TO MEASURE BETTER LIVES?

What matters most when it comes to people's well-being? The OECD *Better Life Initiative* assesses individual and societal progress by looking not only at the functioning of the economic system but also at the diverse experiences and living conditions of people. The OECD conceptual framework for defining and measuring well-being distinguishes between current and future well-being. Current well-being is measured in terms of outcomes and their distribution across the population achieved in the two broad domains: material living conditions (i.e. income and wealth; jobs and earnings; housing conditions) and quality of life (i.e. health status; work-life balance; education and skills; social connections; civic engagement and governance; environmental quality; personal security; and subjective well-being).

SUSTAINING WELL-BEING OVER-TIME

How can we be sure that steps taken to improve well-being today do not undermine the well-being of people in the future? To assess the sustainability of well-being over time, the OECD focuses on four different types of resources (or "capitals") that can be measured today, and that matter for the well-being of future generations: economic, natural, human and social capital.



THE BETTER LIFE INDEX

What matters to you in life? Create and share your *Better Life Index*. The *Better Life Index* is an **interactive tool** that uses the information from *How's Life?* and allows you to measure and compare well-being across countries according to **your own priorities**. Go to www.oecdbetterlifeindex.org



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