Gender mainstreaming in surveys: Austria

This is the Austrian contribution to the comparative analytical report on gender mainstreaming in surveys, coordinated via questionnaire by Anne-Marie Nicot from ANACT, France, and Irene Houtman from TNO, the Netherlands, for the European Working Conditions Observatory (EWCO). This report has not been subjected to the standard Foundation editorial procedures.

Q1. Who is responsible for administering national surveys in your country?
In Austria, Statistik Austria (Statistics Austria) is the main organisation that is responsible for national surveys. They carry out the Mikrozensus survey, which provides data on employment.

Is there a special unit in this institute dealing with gender statistics?
The former Austrian Central Statistical Office was separated from Government Services by the Bundesstatistikgesetz 2000 (Federal Statistics Act). Now called Statistik Austria, it is an independent non-profit-making federal institution under public law and is responsible for performing scientific services in the area of federal statistics.

This separation included a new organisational structure. Before 2000, gender issues were part of the social report unit. Now there are two projects called ‘Frauenfragen national’ (women’s issues national) and ‘Frauenfragen international’ (women’s issues international) in the unit of ‘Social Statistics and Education’, which belongs to the directorate of ‘Population Statistics’.

The women’s issues projects are responsible for gender statistics. However, it is important to know that the understanding of gender statistics is limited to the collection of data by sex. Gender statistics according to a wider definition does not yet take place in Austria, even though it is slowly beginning to assume relevance (outside Statistics Austria).

Please expand on the types of topics covered by this questionnaire/these questionnaires, and mention the year it started as a national survey, and whether this survey is a yearly exercise, every second year or has another periodicity.

The Mikrozensus survey started in March 1968 and is carried out on a quarterly basis. The survey focuses on topics such as population, qualification, education, professional position and working time.

Each Mikrozensus survey includes a special survey (Sonderprogramm). In the first special survey of each year, the Labour Force Survey (Arbeitskräfteerhebung) is conducted. It started in 1995. The topics covered by this survey range from employment, working time, preferred working time, unemployment, job search to education and second jobs.

Working conditions in terms of quality of work have also been the subject of a special survey of the Mikrozensus survey. Its topics encompass environmental and occupational burdens as well as illness and diseases. It was carried out in 1985, 1994 and 1999. According to Statistics Austria, it is not planned to conduct this survey again.

Another special survey is called ‘Housekeeping, Childcare and Care’. It was conducted in 1995 and 2002. The survey deals with issues such as unpaid work, childcare, housekeeping, reasons for part-time work, reasons against employment and care.

Due to the Federal Statistics Act 2000, the women’s issues projects conduct surveys on behalf of clients. It is worth mentioning that they do not collect data themselves, but analyse existing
data. At the time of the questionnaire, they are carrying out a study on behalf of the Ministry for Women’s Affairs. This survey is called ‘Gendered Disparities’ (Geschlechtsspezifische Disparitäten) and was conducted before in 2002. While the first survey covered issues such as demographic structures, education, employment, income, standard of living, health, leisure time and division of labour, the present survey is smaller in scale and does not include topics such as leisure time or school education. The women’s issues projects have good prospects of repeating this study in two years’ time.

Q2. In what way has the national survey(s) or questionnaire(s) on quality of working life (and health or employment) changed over the last decade(s)?
Which questions have been added, and which have been deleted in order to make the surveys more gender sensitive, and have any questions or topics changed (if so, in what way)?

In 2004, the Mikrozensus survey changed following a Council regulation. Its questionnaire now meets the requirements of the Labour Force Survey set by Eurostat and replaces the special Labour Force Survey.

Concerning the other special surveys of the Mikrozensus, the survey on working conditions changed between 1994 and 1999 insofar as no questions on health were in the 1999 survey. The survey on housekeeping, childcare and care also changed between 1995 and 2002. In the survey of 2002, issues on care were part of the questionnaire and some questions concerning childcare were changed. The Labour Force survey has not changed since 1995.

Do you think that the survey(s) or questionnaire(s) have become more gender sensitive due to these changes?

Only the changes of the special survey on housekeeping, childcare and care can be related to gender sensitivity. Childcare has been related to part-time and full-time employment of women. Furthermore, care responsibilities for elderly people were not taken into account in the earlier survey.

According to the women’s issues projects, the Mikrozensus and its special surveys have not become more gender sensitive as gender has been taken into account in the process of data collection for a long time in Austria. This means that the question asking for the sex of the interviewee has always been part of the Mikrozensus questionnaire.

Q3. Please outline the way gender statistics are being produced and mainstreamed.
Who are the ‘users’ (e.g. policymakers or ministries, research institutions, gender issues advocates, etc)?

Ministries, the media, scientists, students, institutions and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are the users of (gendered) statistics. Above all, the evaluators of gender mainstreaming measures and projects are in strong need of gendered statistics.

How are they involved in the production process of gender statistics? Are their needs collected in a systematic way?

Due to the fact that Statistics Austria understands gender statistics as collecting data by sex, there is no process of producing gender statistics.

However, the questions of the questionnaires are discussed in special task forces within Statistics Austria. Representatives of ministries, the social partners and other institutions attend those meetings. No one from the women’s issues projects attends them as data are already collected according to sex. Thus, if representatives of ministries, social partners and other institutions do not insist on a gender sensitive formulation of questions, gender sensitivity will not be considered.

Are there any guidelines on how to produce engendered statistics?
There are no guidelines.

Are there any formal procedures to assess statistics produced with a gender perspective?
There are no formal procedures.

*Are there specific publications dealing with gender that present and interpret topical data on women and men in a form suitable for a wide range of non-technical users?*

The above-mentioned survey report ‘Gendered Disparities’ (2002) is a statistical analysis of gender issues. It consists of two parts. The first part is a summary of the main findings while the second part provides tables on the issues in question. The topics covered range from demographic structures, education, employment, income, standard of living and health to leisure time and division of labour. It is very comprehensive but also has a suitable form for non-technical users.

*Is there a publication on working conditions or quality of work and employment issues that takes into account gender issues?*

The ‘Gendered Disparities’ survey also deals with employment, income, division of labour and standard of living.

*Are statistics on individuals collected and presented or reported by gender?*

In Austria, data are collected by sex. However, not all of these data are analysed and reported. However, there is the possibility to pay for special surveys if one wants data not presented by conventional surveys.

*What strategies have been put in place in order to produce, present and disseminate gender sensitive statistics?*

As gender statistics is understood as collecting data by sex and this is already the case in Austria, there are no strategies towards gender sensitive statistics within Statistics Austria. However, one of the main focuses of the Gender Mainstreaming Resolution of the Council of Ministers (Gender Mainstreaming Ministerratsbeschluss) of 2004 is the collection, analysis and representation of data by sex (see Q6).

**Q4. What development(s) or causes may have been responsible for these changes in national statistics on quality of work and health in employment?**

You are asked to comment briefly on major driving forces related to: 1) demographic changes, ageing of the work force; 2) the economy, such as recession; 3) legislative changes (acts or regulations that came into force); or 4) technical developments that have raised awareness of gender sensitive issues in your country.

The adjustment of the Mikrozensus survey to the Eurostat Labour Force Survey was enforced by Council regulation.

The decision to include or exclude topics such as health depends on other surveys that have already dealt with the topic in question.

The reason for the changes in the ‘Housekeeping, Childcare and Care’ survey are because these issues are now recognised as being relevant.

**Q5. Can you provide (quantitative) information on gender sensitive indicators and their effects/outcomes?**

You are asked to indicate which gender sensitive indicators are implemented in the national survey(s), and to provide this quantitative information for the workforce as a whole, as well as for both men and women.

The following questions refer to the special surveys ‘Labour Force Survey’ and ‘Housekeeping, Childcare and Care’ of the Mikrozensus survey. The special survey on working conditions does not include any gender sensitive questions.

*Areas which these indicators may refer to are:*

- gender specific working conditions, or gender specific ‘female’ or ‘male’ job characteristics (aesthetic, emotional demands) as identified by horizontal segregation, and/or female/health conditions, discrimination issues;
• gender pay gap;
There are no gender sensitive indicators on any of the above areas.
• gender specific time preferences, working times or working time arrangements;
Special Survey ‘Labour Force Survey’:
Do you work in:
  - full-time employment
  - part-time employment
If you work in part-time employment, is this because of:
  - School or occupational education
  - Illness
  - Care of children or adults
  - Other family reasons
  - Do not want full-time employment
  - Did not find appropriate full-time employment

For unemployed persons: What kind of work are you looking for?
  - Self-employed
  - Employed, only full-time
  - Employed, full-time, but part-time possible
  - Employed part-time, but full-time possible
  - Employed, only part-time

Preferred weekly working time?
  - At least 12 hours
  - Less than 12 hours

For employed persons:
Would you prefer higher weekly working time?
  - No
  - Yes, by secondary employment
  - Yes, by another job with more working hours
  - Yes, by more hours in current job
  - Yes, no matter how

Would you prefer lower weekly working time, despite loss of income?
  - Yes
  - No

What would be your preferred weekly working time?
  - In hours …..

• care, work–family balance/work home interference, based on family information, caring responsibilities of workers and, possibly, availability of care infrastructure;
• or more generally unpaid work, and different attitudes/roles for men and women towards work and/or preferences;

For unemployed persons:
Question referring to former employment: reason for resignation?
Personal and family circumstances
Illness or invalidity
School or occupational education
Other reasons

For unemployed persons: social position before looking for a job
Employed
In education
Parental leave
Military
Homemaker
Other

Persons who are not looking for a new job: Why are you not looking for a job?
Illness/Disease or invalidity
Personal or family circumstances
School or occupational education
Found a new job and waiting to start working
Retired
Believe that there is no suitable job

Persons who are not looking for a new job: Would you like to be employed?
Yes
No

2. Special survey ‘Housekeeping, Childcare and Care’
Are you taking/Do you take care of relatives and friends who have long-lasting health problems?
Yes
No

Are you taking/Do you take care of
One person
Two or more persons

Does this person live
In your apartment
In another apartment in this building
Somewhere else

Is this person your
Husband/wife
Mother
Mother-in-law
Father
Father-in-law
Child
Other relative
Friend

How many hours per week do you spend on care work
Up to half an hour
Half an hour to one hour
More, ....., hours

What kind of care?
Help with personal tasks (washing, feeding, etc)
Help with transport and errands (doctor, administrative tasks)
Other help

Do you keep the household?
Alone
Together with somebody else
Don’t keep the household

Time spent on housework per week
Up to half an hour
Half an hour to one hour
More, ....., hours

Help comes from
Husband/wife
Daughter
Son
Mother(-in-law)
Father(-in-law)

Other relatives
People who do not belong to the family
Paid home help

Do you take care of your children?
Yes, alone
Yes, together with somebody
Rarely or never

Time spent on childcare per week
Up to half an hour
Half an hour to one hour
More, ....., hours

Help comes from
Husband/wife
Sister of the child
Brother of the child
Mother(-in-law)
Father(-in-law)

Other relatives
People who do not belong to the family
Paid home help

Does child go to professional day care at least one hour per week?
Yes
No
If not, why not?
  Day care does not have free capacity
  Too expensive
  Day care is too far away
  Opening hours are not convenient
  Day care does not correspond to expectations
  Other
How many days per week does the child go to day care?
How many hours does the child stay there?
Is the day care open at lunchtime?
How much does it cost?
  Is lunch included?
Do you wish for different opening hours?
  No
  Earlier in the morning
  Open in the afternoon
  Close later in the afternoon
  Open at noon
  Open on Saturdays
  Open during holidays
  Other
Besides opening hours, are you content with the day care?
  Yes,
  No, too expensive
  No, not content with quality
  No, too far away
Who looks after day care during holidays?
  In another day care
  By relatives
  By parents
  By paid help
Is there a possibility that friends or relatives could take care of the child at short notice (daytime, evening, night, Saturday, Sunday)?
  Always
  Sometimes
  No
  Child stays alone

Persons who are not employed or work part-time:
Would a better day care facility influence your employment situation?
  No, I do not take care of children
  Yes, I would work part time
  Yes, I would work full time
No, I would not work
Would better care facilities for those in need of care influence your employment situation?
No, I do not take care of elderly people
Yes, I would work part time
Yes, I would work full time
No, I would not work

- other (complex) indicators that may be present.

There are no other indicators that may be presented.

**Comment on gaps you identify in the survey(s) concerning its gender sensitivity.**

There are no gender sensitive indicators in most areas stated above. Moreover, the indicators I listed above are not real gender sensitive indicators as defined and understood in the questionnaire briefing. In order to consider the different socio-economic realities faced by women and men, the questions need to be formulated in a completely different way. Most questions illustrated above do not fulfil this requirement. Especially questions that provide the answer ‘family reasons’ do not reveal the different realities of the lives of women and men. The formulation of the questions still seems to be ‘gender neutral’.

This has to be viewed in the context that gender statistics is understood as collecting data by sex and this approach does not seem to go far enough to speak of gender sensitive indicators in Austria.

This problem also leads to your request on quantitative information of the questions stated above. It seems to be impossible to provide such data. First of all, there are no gender sensitive indicators. Secondly, it would only be possible to provide results disaggregated by sex. That would simply mean copying the tables of the reports written by Statistics Austria.

**Q6. Can you, in a more qualitative way, reflect on the quality of employment of men and women, and the political, societal or other discussion on the degree of, or need for gender mainstreaming in general in your country.**

**Is it an issue at all, or maybe even a topical issue?**

Two institutions are worth mentioning: the inter-ministerial task force on gender mainstreaming and the Coordination Unit for Gender Mainstreaming within the ESF.

The aim of the inter-ministerial task force on gender mainstreaming (IMAG GM) is to establish a basis for implementing a gender mainstreaming strategy at federal level. Its tasks are to support and monitor the process of implementation, to exchange information and best practice examples, to develop criteria for the implementation of a gender mainstreaming strategy and to monitor and evaluate projects, measures and laws with regard to gender mainstreaming objectives. All Austrian ministries, representatives of the Constitutional Court (Verfassungsgerichtshof), the Administrative Court (Verwaltungsgerichtshof), the Union of Public Services, the Court of Auditors and the Austrian Ombudsman Board are members of the IMAG GM.

The Gender Mainstreaming Resolution of the Council of Ministers of 2004 focuses on gender budgeting, the establishment of a gender mainstreaming task force in each Austrian Ministry, the implementation of two gender mainstreaming projects per Ministry (one has to be in the field of personnel policy), the planning of a Cross Mentoring Project and the examination of laws and regulations with regard to gender-related effects. Additionally, there is the obligation to analyse and present data by sex when they are collected by a ministry or by a contractor. Whether this obligation will consider gender statistics or will remain at the level of data disaggregated by sex remains to be seen.

The Coordination Unit for Gender Mainstreaming within the ESF was established by the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Labour within the framework of the Objective 3-Programme. The GeM Coordination Unit focuses on gender mainstreaming and equal...
opportunities in the labour market. Its website is a platform and information forum. It informs about the latest news and upcoming events on gender mainstreaming. It also provides a database that covers a wide range of material on gender mainstreaming and equal opportunities in the labour market. Additionally, they publish the ‘GeM-Infoletter’ twice a year and organise ‘GeM-Round Tables’ for all who are involved in the implementation of the ESF and the TEPs in order to create a framework for the exchange of experiences and the further development of the implementation of gender mainstreaming. One of the upcoming round tables will focus on the development of gender sensitive indicators. The GeM Coordination Unit also provides a ‘GeM-ToolBox’ and a ‘GeM-UserGuide’, which contain guidelines for the implementation of gender mainstreaming.

Although these two institutions exist, gender mainstreaming has in general not too much relevance in Austria. The main problem is that gender mainstreaming is enacted by the European Union. Therefore, women’s issues no longer come from the bottom up, but gender mainstreaming comes from the top down. This paradigm shift results in two problems. First, gender mainstreaming rarely exceeds EU directives. In cases where it goes beyond the directives of the EU, this depends on the dedication of the person responsible for gender mainstreaming. Secondly, although there is an obligation to have a gender mainstreaming representative, their knowledge on gender and gender mainstreaming might be less than complete. Thus, there is the danger of using the terms in an insubstantial way. Associated with that problem is that gender mainstreaming does not lead to a change within the organisation, but any issue relating to gender mainstreaming is shifted to the person responsible for it. Nevertheless, gender mainstreaming is performed in a successful way in those areas targeted by EU directives.

Do the potential users of the gender statistics show any interest in learning about gender issues relating to quality of working life and employment, and are needs formulated on this topic? If so, what are these needs?

Certainly, there is an interest in gender issues related to quality of working life and employment. The fact that the ‘Gendered Disparities’ survey is now being conducted for the second time can be interpreted as such. In this respect, it is important to know that, having commissioned the survey, the Ministry of Women’s Affairs determines the content of the study. The results belong to the ministry and it is in their hands to publish them.

Q7. Can any lessons be learned from the gender mainstreaming in surveys within your country for European level?

Gender statistics in Austria means to collect data by sex. A production process of gender statistics as proposing in the questionnaire briefing does not yet take place. Additionally, there does not seem to be a need for gender statistics that go beyond the conventional collection of data by sex within Statistics Austria. Thus, interest in and need for gender statistics seem to be still emerging. Therefore, it seems that little can be learned from Austria in this regard.