Employment of Persons with Disabilities in the Austrian Federal Civil Service

Susanna Rihs
Federal Ministry for the Civil Service and Sport
Goals and Benefits

- Implementation of the UN Disability Rights Convention
- Social policy goal of integrating persons with disabilities into the labour market
- Civil Service as a role model for employment
- Persons with disabilities as an important enrichment of a country’s workforce
- Positive impact on the general working climate through active engagement with diversity
UN Disability Rights Convention

The purpose of the present Convention is to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity.

(UN Disability Rights Convention, Article 1 - Purpose)

States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to work, on an equal basis with others [...] in a labour market and work environment that is open, inclusive and accessible to persons with disabilities.

(UN Disability Rights Convention, Article 27 - Work and Employment)
Austrian Policy on Inclusion and Non-Discrimination

- Non-discrimination clause within the Austrian Federal Constitution
- Ratification of UN Convention on Disability Rights
- National Action Plan on Disability 2012-2020
  - Long-term strategy for the implementation of the UN Convention on Disability Rights
- Government Program 2017-2022
  - Focus on the integration of people with disabilities in the labour market
Legislation on Equal Treatment

- Federal Disability Act
  - Regulations for support, benefits and subsidies
  - Disability Ombudsperson
  - Monitoring Committee regarding UN Convention.

- Federal Act on Equal Treatment for People with Disabilities (“Disability Equality Act”)
  - Protection against discrimination

- Disability Employment Act
  - Quota system
  - Disabled persons representatives

Learn more: Overview of the horizontal issue of disability in Austria
Support for Employers and Employees

- Occupational Assistance Services (Netzwerk Berufliche Assistenz, NEBA)
  - provided by Ministry of Social Affairs
  - Vocational assistance – intensive personal preparation, advice and guidance
  - Job coaching – direct and individual support at the workplace

- Technical work aids

- Personal assistance in the workplace
  - e.g. hands-on support during work/training, accompaniment on the way from home to work

- Mobility support
Quota System

- Applies for employers with 25 or more employees
- One disabled person (level of disability of at least 50%) for every 25 employees
- Persons, whose employment is particularly encouraged, are counted double:
  - blind people or wheelchair users
  - disabled persons receiving special support under the age of 19 or for the duration of training
  - disabled persons receiving special support over the age of 55 (or 50 with a level of disability of at least 70%)
- Compensatory levy
Employment in the Federal Civil Service

- Austrian Federal Civil Service meets quota
- Report on the numbers of employment
  - Twice a year to council of ministers; accessible to the public
  - Overall number of staff in the ministries with a degree of disability of at least 50% as well as of 70% and more + development in relation to last year and first report 2007
- Eased regulations for employment (disability degree of 70% or more)
  - No obligation for binding a permanent post
- Extended holiday entitlement
  - 16 up to 40 additional hours/year (dependent on degree of disability)
Coordination Office „Bundessache.at“

- Funding by Ministry for Social Affairs
- Support in the recruitment and employment of people with disabilities within the Federal Civil Service
  - Screening of given job offers within the Federal Civil Service and clarification of the job profile/requirements
  - Scouting for potential applicants in cooperation with local special services for distinctive disabilities
  - Assessment of required framework conditions for applicants (technical aids, personal assistance at the workplace, job coaching, …)
  - Support for Employer (clarification of open questions concerning individual applicants, communication with special services, preparation of the workplace, …)
Experiences from within the Austrian Civil Service

- Employment of persons with disabilities in a wide range of occupational areas and qualification levels
- Accessibility and appropriate equipment of the workplace is generally given to all persons concerned
- Good preparation and design of the job entry phase, involving the superiors as well as colleagues, is considered essential
- Low-threshold availability of contact persons as important factor
Breaking down Barriers in Education and Training

- Diversity and accessibility as important concern of the Federal Academy of Public Administration
- Adjustments or support according to prior information in the registration form
  - e.g. wheelchair access, sufficient space for accompanying person, sign language interpreter or companion/guide dog
- Contribution to sign interpreting costs
  - 50% up to three days per year and person
- Seminars on awareness and implementation of legal standards regarding barrier free accessibility
Workshops

- 11/10/2018: Legal and organisational regulations to promote the integration of persons with disabilities in the Civil Service
  - Exchange and discussion of various legal approaches in different public administrations
  - Supportive organisational provisions to increase the employment of persons with disabilities

- 12/10/2018: Initiatives and Practical Examples for the Integration at the Workplace
  - Presentation "Employment of deaf, severely visually impaired or blind people" (Federal Ministry of the Interior)
  - Exchange and discussion of good practices
Key Questions

- What is the legal and/or organisational approach in your public administration to increase the employment of persons with disabilities?
- What kind of experience do you have regarding employment of disabled persons within the Civil Service?
- Are there initiatives and/or good practices?

We are looking forward to an informative exchange of approaches and experiences in the workshops!
Thank you for your attention!

Susanna Rihs
Federal Ministry for the Civil Service and Sport
Phone: +43 1 71606-667138
Email: susanna.rihs@bmoeds.gv.at