

# Austrian Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development Austrian Stra for Education for Sustainable Development

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Strategy for  
Education for  
Sustainable  
Development**

**Short version**

**Imprint:**

**Published by:**

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**Layout:** skibar grafikdesign

**Printing:** printed in house

Vienna, December 2008

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## **Austrian Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development**

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The present Austrian Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development was tabled by the Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture, the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management and the Federal Ministry of Science and Research and passed by the Austrian Council of Ministers on November 12, 2008.

# 1 Overview

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## 1.1 Sustainability as a Global Goal

The UN World Summits in Rio de Janeiro (1992) and Johannesburg (2002) made the need for sustainable development as a shared global challenge clear. Today, the international community of states understands sustainable development as a process of shaping society in a manner that will safeguard the quality of life of the current generation without taking away the ability of coming generations to mould their own future. Ultimately, the goal is fairness between generations, nations and cultures.

## 1.2 Sustainability Requires Education

The UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014) plays an important role in the global implementation of this challenge, for to achieve sustainable development it becomes necessary to understand the integrated nature of the economic, social and ecological aspects involved. Only on this basis can we begin to develop future-capable forms of living and economic activity; and education for sustainable development is therefore both a prerequisite for and integral component of sustainable development.

## 1.3 Strategic Fields of Action

The UNESCO guidelines for implementing the UN Decade have been enacted by the UN General Assembly and define the following strategic fields of action for nation states:

- Equality between women and men
- Health promotion
- Environmental protection
- Rural development
- Peace and human security
- Sustainable consumption
- Cultural diversity
- Sustainable urban development

The strategic framework covering education for sustainable development within the European region was officially established in 2005, upon passage of the UN Economic Commission for Europe's (UNECE) Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development.

## 1.4 Austria's International Role

Austria is actively committed to the process of education for sustainable development. In 2006, while holding the EU Presidency, Austria launched a highly regarded initiative in the form of an EU expert conference. Furthermore, within the scope of European Union education initiatives, Austria is a regular participant in the exchange of both experiences and theoretical models that support the UN Decade. Austria's contributions are thus helping to establish education for sustainable development on both a national and European level.

## 1.5 Education for Sustainability in Austria

The goals set forth for the UN Decade in Austria will be implemented in accordance with the framework of the Austrian Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development. In turn, key foundations for their implementation have already been defined within the Austrian Strategy for Sustainable Development (in the section “Overriding Goal 4: Education and Research Create Solutions”). With respect to developing a national education strategy for sustainable development, a comprehensive consultation process was launched in 2005. This process includes informing actors about the goals and focal points of the UN Decade, as well as examining what avenues of access are available to the actors with respect to the related subject matter, with the aim being to develop common goals and initiatives that serve the purpose of the UN Decade.

## 1.6 Elements of the Austrian Strategy

The Austrian Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development aims to support a transformation of awareness toward sustainability among teachers and learners alike, and also to interlink the actors. The strategy thus comprises the following relevant elements:

- Establishment within the education system
- Partnerships and networks
- Competence development among teachers
- Research and innovation
- Scenario development
- Monitoring and evaluation

## 1.7 Organization and Implementation

Leading the effort to organize and implement the UN Decade in Austria are the dedicated resources and structures set in place by the Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture (BMUKK) and Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management (BMLFUW); and the Federal Ministry of Science and Research (BWF) is accompanying the effort with research and training support. A dedicated board of experts (Kuratorium Bildung für nachhaltige Entwicklung) will provide decision-making support with respect to the implementation of programs and measures. In addition, the Austrian Agency for Education for Sustainable Development (“Dekadenbüro”) has been established based on existing institutions and resources to help accelerate operational implementation of the goals. The active cooperation of actors will be promoted throughout the entire process, e.g., via expert round tables and the creation of a special education alliance for sustainable development (Allianz Bildung für nachhaltige Entwicklung).

## 1.8 Milestones of the Austrian Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development

A clearly defined time frame with corresponding milestones has been established for implementing the Austrian Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development (ASESD).

Date	Milestone
Spring 2008	The Dekadenbüro (Austrian Agency for ESD) commences operations
Spring 2008	Assessment of ESD status using UNECE indicators
July 2008	Initial program of activities launched by the Dekadenbüro
October 2008	Dekadenbüro website goes online
Spring 2009	Designation of the board of experts by the project leading departments
2009	Initial cross-sector program of activities launched by the board of experts; Establishment of an alliance
2009	Initial progress report to the Austrian Federal Government; Evaluation and continued development of the ASESD (follow-on reports 2011, 2013)
2009	Dedicated “Year of Action” for ESD (formal and non-formal education, Lifelong Learning Strategy, and more)
2011	Second status assessment (UNECE indicators); Second progress report to the Federal Government regarding implementation results
2011	Evaluation; Second cross-sector program of activities by the board of experts
2014	Third status assessment (UNECE indicators); Third progress report to the Federal Government, incl. second evaluation
2014	Final national report to the Federal Government – “UN Decade for Education for Sustainable Development 2005–2014”; Follow-on activities



**Bildung für  
nachhaltige  
Entwicklung** 2005-2014  
Die UN-Dekade - Das Büro

## **Dekadenbüro**

**(Austrian Agency for Education for Sustainable Development)**

- A platform for actors
- Facilitation of cooperation opportunities
- Implementation of events
- Propagation of experiences and ideas

**[www.bildungsdekade.at](http://www.bildungsdekade.at)**

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