

Gender Report in the Fields of Art and Culture 2017-2021

**Executive Summary
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Women*¹ are disadvantaged individually, structurally, and economically because of their gender – also in Austria.^{2 3} Individually, they bear the brunt of care and reproductive work.⁴ Structurally, women* are often denied management positions and equal pay despite having higher qualifications. The gender pay gap in Austria is one of the highest among European countries.⁵ Despite numerous political, administrative, and social policies, women* in Austria are still not fully equal to men* in 2024. They are disadvantaged in many ways in their professional and private lives – including in the fields of art and culture.

In view of legal obligations (Federal Equal Treatment Act, Gender Mainstreaming Strategy since 2000, Article 13 (3) of the Federal Constitutional Act on Gender Budgeting, etc.), and in an effort to assess the working conditions of women* in art and culture on the basis of current and verifiable data, a unanimous decision of all parties in the Austrian National Council for a Gender Report in the Fields of Art and Culture was adopted in 2020 by, with the proviso that it should be published every five years in order to take stock of gender equality over time.

The OGM Institute was commissioned by the Federal Ministry for Arts, Culture, the Civil Service and Sport (BMKÖS) to prepare this report, following a Europe-wide call for tenders, in cooperation with Petra Unger.

The survey examined the quantitative distribution of genders in the professional, institutional, and publicly funded art and culture sector in Austria in 2017-2021 and presented sector-specific key figures.

The data featured in the study is made up of the following components:

- Own data collected from more than 900 institutions with information on 17,000 employees, 2,800 managers, and 2,300 supervisory bodies (giving rise to a very large sample, response rates far exceeding expectations)
- Evaluations of the federal and *länder* funding reports
- Anonymized wage and income tax as well as labor market data

1 The study uses gender-sensitive/neutral spelling in the German original. For details on spelling, see section 3 of the report. In order to counteract outdated gender stereotypes and not to discriminate against trans and inter persons, the gender asterisk/star is used where appropriate (women*, men*), also in the English translation.

2 Shadow reports on the UN Women's Rights Convention CEDAW 2018: <https://www.klagsverband.at/politik/schattenberichte>, last accessed: 26 July 2024

3 EU Gender Equality Index: <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-equality-index/2023/country/AT>

4 Statistics Austria, Time Use Survey 2021/ 2022. Publication 12/2023: <https://www.statistik.at/services/tools/services/publikationen/detail/1735>, Last accessed: 26 July 2024

5 WU Vienna: <https://www.wu.ac.at/en/the-university/news-and-events/news/details-news/detail/austrias-gender-pay-gap-is-among-the-worst-in-europe>, Last accessed: 26 July 2024

The focus of the surveys was on the quantitative distribution of genders (m/f/x) and the analysis of structures (e.g. human resources, salaries, executives, visibility, supervisory bodies). Furthermore, the gender-specific distribution of awards, scholarships, and grants to individual artists and the gender-specific composition of advisory boards and juries were examined.

The following items were excluded from the survey:

- Volunteer work, activities in informal and non-subsidized categories
- Artistic and cultural content
- Aspects such as stereotyping, abuse of power, or sexual orientation
- Detailed sector-specific analyses

Gender Distribution in the Professional, Funded, and Institutional Art and Culture Sector 2017-2021

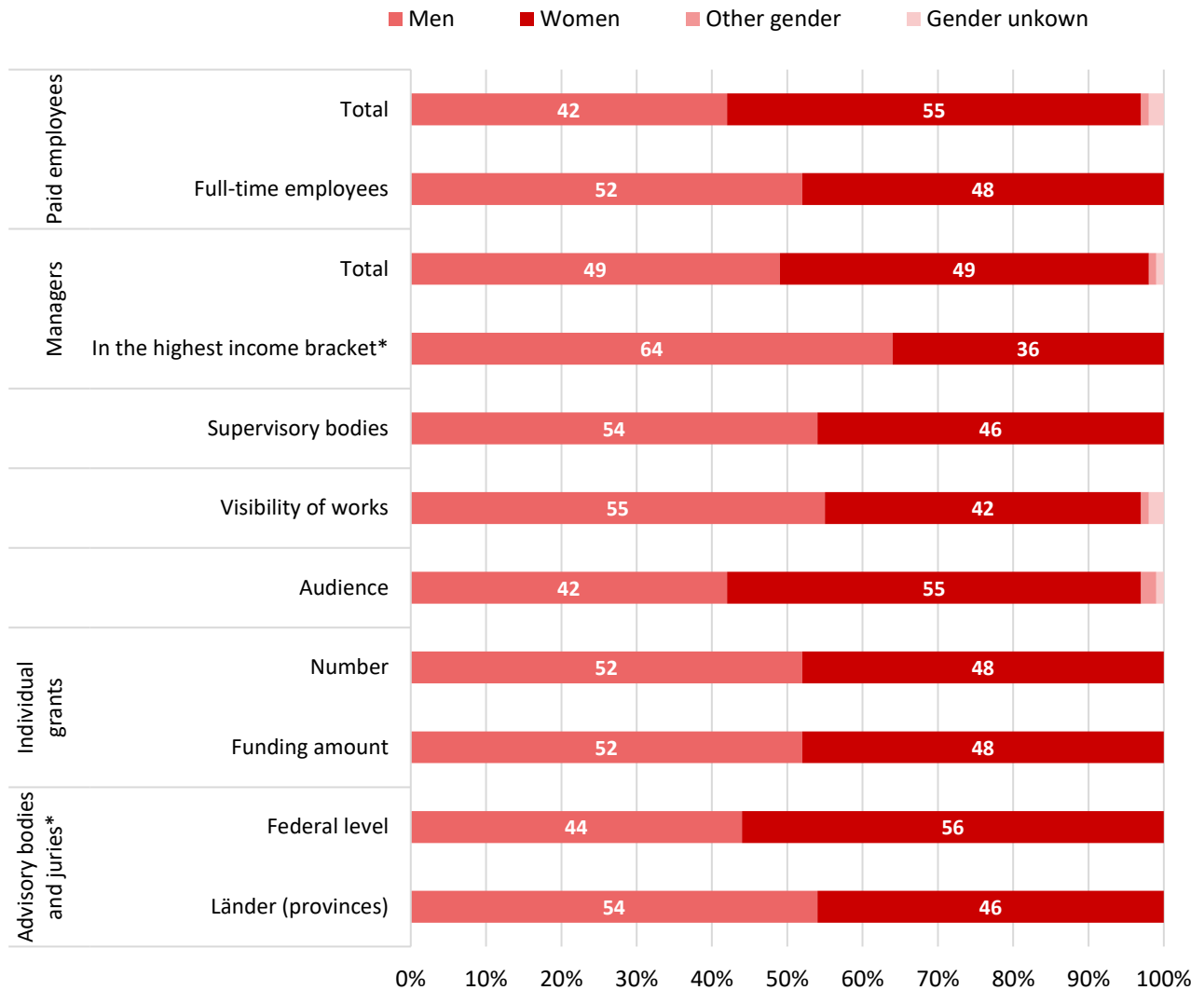


Figure 1: Gender distribution in the professional, funded, and institutional art and culture sector 2017-2021

Source: OGM / own survey and assessment of federal and *länder*-level cultural funding reports

Note: Indicators marked with * can only be shown for men and women on account of the data available.

Illustrative example: In 2017-2021, 42% of paid employees were men, 55% were women, and the remaining 3% were of a different gender or their gender was unknown.

Paid Employees

In the period under review, 42% of paid employees were male and 55% female. Even though women made up the majority of paid employees in the art and culture sector, their formal employment was often associated with poorer social security. As in other sectors, women constituted the vast majority of part-time employees, quasi-freelancers, and interns. They were also more frequently employed in smaller institutions compared to men. This imbalance exists despite the higher formal qualification level of female employees.

18% of employed women who had worked in the art and culture sector in 2017 switched to another sector by 2021, compared to only 13% of employed men. The fluctuation rate of employees in the art and culture sector is therefore significantly higher for women, while this cannot be observed across all sectors.

Executives/Managers

In the entire art and culture sector in Austria in 2017-2021, there were as many male as female executives/managers (49% each; those of non-binary gender were statistically insignificant). However, measured in terms of the distribution of all paid employees (42% vs. 55%), men were more likely than women to attain managerial positions.

The higher the budget of the institution and the better paid the position, the higher the proportion of men at management level. In the highest income bracket, the proportion of men was almost two thirds.

Women in executive-level positions were mainly deputies as well as artistic managers or curators. On average, female managers were considerably younger than their male colleagues and formally better educated.

Supervisory Bodies in Institutions

Compared to management-level positions, the supervisory bodies in institutions (e.g. boards of trustees, supervisory boards, or non-executive association boards) were more male-dominated (54%), and non-binary persons played a statistically very minor role there. Male-dominated bodies are used more frequently for supervision, monitoring, and control.

The male predominance in supervisory bodies was particularly evident in rural areas, in music, in institutions with substantial budgets, and wherever the management team was also predominantly male.

Visibility of Artists and Cultural Workers

Visibility is of utmost importance for artists in any discipline. It not only determines artists' popularity, but also how often they are hired, their commercial success, or the extent to which their artistic achievements are recognized by way of awards, scholarships, or prizes. Enhanced and regular visibility also means they can – symbolically speaking – capitalize on the acknowledgement offered by society, both now and in the future, i.e. their creative and artistic achievements may well outlive them and go down in cultural history. Even if a high level of recognition does not always go hand in hand with economic success, visibility is highly relevant for artists and creatives.

In Austria between 2017 and 2021, the gender-specific visibility and visualization of artists and cultural practitioners as authors of creative works was strongly dependent on the given sector. This report can only provide a cursory overview. More detailed sectoral studies will be required in the future.

In the field of literature, there was a balanced ratio of men and women, both in publishing and readings. In museums and music, works by male artists were in the majority. In the realm of music, male artists were overrepresented not only in historical, but also in contemporary works. Across all categories, the average visibility score was 55% for works by men and 42% for works by women.

Audience

Audience surveys are only carried out at a quarter of all art and cultural institutions in Austria that are regularly visited by the public. In the 2017-2021 period, the gender distribution of the audience was surveyed at least once. Audience data is therefore not very conclusive.

Where data was available, 42% of the audience was found to be male and 55% female. When data was collected, it was usually only in binary form. There were only slight differences according to genre.

Direct/Individual Grants

In the period under review (2017 to 2021), more than 20,000 direct grants (individual grants, prizes, scholarships, purchases of works), amounting to a total of EUR 85 million, were paid out in Austria by the federal government and the *länder*. Of these, 52% went to men and 48% to women (both in terms of individual grants and the amount of funding), with the distribution becoming more equal over the years.

Slightly more women were directly supported by the federal government and slightly more men by the *länder*. There are major differences by sector. Once again, music proves to be a male domain.

Composition of Advisory Boards and Juries

Advisory boards and juries of the federal and *länder* governments (e.g. for granting funding or awarding prizes) had relatively equal gender representation in Austria from 2017 to 2021. Inequalities were observed among the regional authorities: While the majority of advisory board members at federal level were women (56%), at *länder* level they were predominantly men (54%).

Average Salaries and Incomes

Women employed in the art and culture sector in Austria were paid 37.0% less on average than their male colleagues in 2017-2021. The high proportion of female university graduates is not reflected in adequate pay. The gender pay gap was particularly large in the performing arts, but smaller in film.

The income disadvantage for women working full-time, all-year-round in the art and culture sector was 18.7%, which is significantly higher than the average for all sectors (14.1%).

The majority of employees in the art and culture sector are (also) self-employed. For a complete analysis of income patterns, earnings from self-employment must therefore be included as well. In 2017-2021, self-employed women in the art and culture sector were paid on average 36.5% less than their male colleagues.

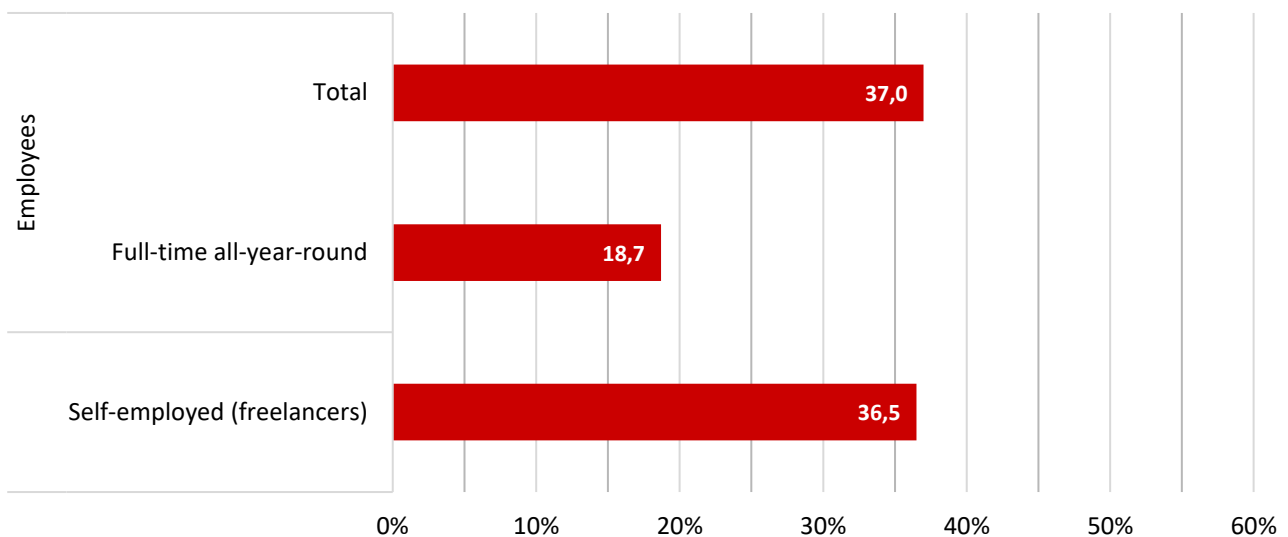


Figure 2: Income disadvantage of women compared to men in the art and culture sector 2017-2021 in percent

Source: OGM / assessment of wage and income tax data

Note: The BMKÖS Fair Pay process did not start until after the period under review.

Illustrative example: In 2017-2021, employed women in the art and culture sector received on average 37.0% less pay than employed men.

Austrian authorities have had a fair-pay strategy in place since 2022. For example, the BMKÖS has since provided earmarked funding for fair pay in the art and culture sector. Fair-pay grants are not applied for/awarded on a gender-specific basis, but are explicitly available within the applying organizations primarily for those fees and/or salaries that have a high fair pay gap (often implicitly a gender pay gap).

Non-binary Persons

Persons who are neither male nor female (non-binary) accounted for 3% of paid employees, 2% of managers, and 0.5% of supervisory board members in professional art and cultural institutions in Austria in 2017-2021. 3% of visitors were found to be neither male nor female. 3% of the works could be assigned to non-binary artists. Non-binary persons in leadership positions were found almost exclusively in smaller institutions. Information on direct/individual grants as well as advisory board and jury compositions can only be broken down by men and women, due to available data.

Institutional Awareness

As the survey data shows, there is sometimes little awareness of gender equality within the institutions. Although a gender-specific imbalance in the art and culture sector is generally recognized, one's own institution is often seen as unaffected by it. Even in larger institutions, personal data is usually collected only in a binary or not gender-specific manner. Tangible measures to enhance and ensure gender equality, such as in-house income reports or policies to empower women, only exist in a minority of institutions. However, this is more often the case when the management is predominantly female. Gender awareness is therefore increasingly found among female executives.

Heterogeneity of the Art and Culture Sector

The art and culture sector is characterized by substantial heterogeneity. Very different structures exist depending on the subsector (and also within subsectors). The gender-specific distribution of, and opportunities for, artists and cultural workers is completely different in large, prestigious cultural institutions than in small associations. Here, the boundary between professional and voluntary, sometimes unpaid work is often blurred. There are also major differences between institutions, independent artists' groupings/collectives, and freelancers.

It is worth noting that it is often only a detailed account that yields decisive findings with regard to gender distribution, while generic data collected in broad brushstrokes across subsectors and categories sometimes has a rather leveling effect.

Key Findings

The gender distribution in professional and funded art and cultural institutions was generally not equitable in 2017-2021. While women were in the majority among paid employees and the public, men were predominant in managerial positions (especially in the highest income brackets), supervisory bodies, as well as in terms of visibility of artworks and direct/individual grants.

The income of women—both self-employed and employed—was on average 37% lower than that of their male colleagues. In terms of full-time, year-round employees, the income disadvantage facing women in the cultural sector was considerably greater than for all other sectors.

In most institutions, there is rather little awareness of the necessity to bolster gender equality also in-house.

Within the art and culture sector, there is an extremely high degree of heterogeneity among individual institutions and genres.

The more budget an institution has, the higher the proportion of men.

The music sector proves to be particularly male-dominated.

Key Recommendations

For larger art and cultural institutions, it is recommended to implement women's empowerment and gender mainstreaming strategies; for executives (especially men), training in gender literacy and diversity management is highly advisable.

In smaller cultural associations, existing efforts to combat precarious employment should be supported. It is recommended that the interministerial working groups on improving the social situation of artists, which were active from 2009 to 2013, be reinstated.

Since *länder* reports on arts and culture funding lack comparability, standardizing these reports with a focus on making gender relations visible (expanding the binary perspective and adding intersectionality) is recommended.

The next gender report should be produced when deemed appropriate in the future, and be accompanied by more detailed subsectoral studies in parallel. Large, representative institutions receiving substantial public funding should be examined in detail.