

**How Is Vienna ‘Gender Mainstreaming’?**

By

Soós Viktória

Submitted to

Central European University  
Department of Gender Studies

Supervisor: Meghan Simpson

Budapest, Hungary

2008

## **I. Abstract**

This thesis analyzes local level policy implementation of gender mainstreaming by investigating into gender equality policies, programs and projects of Vienna City Hall. After a theoretical overview and a review of the existing literature that is often rather skeptical about this strategy, the thesis tries to define success criteria or “ingredients” for effective gender mainstreaming implementation on the local level. As Vienna City Hall’s gender equality policies, projects and programs have an international reputation as being “best practices,” the author performed field research in this municipality, conducting semi-structured interviews with key players related to this issue.

Among the results of this research, one can read a detailed discussion of the Viennese “twin-track” strategy, and the “ideal” gender mainstreaming implementation pattern.

## **II. Acknowledgement**

I would like to thank Benkovics Balázs for his help and support in this project.

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## 1. Introduction

The various schools of feminist thought differ greatly in their visions and theoretical approaches; still, most of them emphasize social justice and gender equality as aims. Ideas about how these aims should be realized through certain social activities, such as policymaking, networking, and so on, diverge once again. The topic of gender equality appears not only among activists, but also on the level of national and supranational organizations, such as the European Union or the United Nations. Here, strong emphasis is put on policy design and policy implementation. As one of the most frequently mentioned and officially accepted policy tools organizations can adopt to achieve gender equality is gender mainstreaming<sup>1</sup>, my aim in this thesis is to look at the implementation of gender mainstreaming on the local (i.e. municipal) level, and to identify necessary “ingredients” for success. In order to do this, I have chosen to examine the gender mainstreaming process in Vienna City Hall, as a “best practice”<sup>2</sup> in gender mainstreaming.

## 2. Methodology

In this thesis, I look at the gender mainstreaming approach of Vienna City Hall and discuss the different projects and implementation processes along with the theoretical background of gender mainstreaming and implementation theory. I have chosen to look at the implementation of gender mainstreaming at the local level, as this level has a crucial role in

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<sup>1</sup> Porter, Fenella and Caroline Sweetman. “Editorial”. *Mainstreaming Gender in Development: A Critical Review*. Oxford: Oxfam (2005), 3

<sup>2</sup> When I use the term “best practice” in quotation marks I acknowledge the argumentation of Sabine Steinbacher that the term best practice can imply that it is “the best of all, it is finished and perfect”, thus it can be misleading. The gender trainer organization ImContext, Based in Vienna, uses rather the term “good practice”. However, as most documentations use the term “best practice”, I thought the best is if I do not change this term, but indicate Steinbacher’s criticism with quotation marks.

policymaking and particularly in policy implementation. According to Ingrid Pincus, "research is limited when it comes to the implementation of gender equality policy in local authorities"<sup>3</sup>

My primary aim was to investigate this level and conduct research in the municipality of Vienna. The city of Vienna has been heralded as a "best practice" in gender mainstreaming, as I will show; how it achieved this title deserves attention. Besides discussing general gender mainstreaming strategies, I will bring gender-sensitive planning and especially gender budgeting in focus and investigate their implementation with detail. Following the lead of feminist researchers,<sup>4</sup> I regard gender budgeting and gender-sensitive planning as very important tools for gender mainstreaming. Also, drawing from theory and my own fieldwork, I aim to contribute to the very scarce literature on local-level gender budgeting and gender planning implementation.

The thesis is divided into two parts. To begin, in the following sections of this chapter, I conduct a literature review, discussing theories relevant to this study. I provide an overview on gender mainstreaming, gender budgeting and local implementation theories. Then, I present findings of my field research. I draw heavily from interviews I conducted with the key players in the field of gender mainstreaming and gender mainstreaming implementation in local development.<sup>5</sup> The Viennese data consists of interviews with project leaders, heads and representatives of gender-related offices, programs and projects run by the City Hall, and also interviews with "outsiders", i.e. those who are not employees of the local level administration but do have a stake in the gender mainstreaming process, such as gender experts, and representatives of NGOs, researchers. The chance to talk to "outsiders" broadened my view of how gender mainstreaming activities of Vienna City Hall are seen and evaluated,

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<sup>3</sup> Pincus, Ingrid. *The Politics of Gender Equality Policy*. Örebro Studies in Political Science 5, Örebro, 2002, 20.

<sup>4</sup> Elson, Diane. "Integrating Gender Issues into National Budgetary Policies and Procedures: Some Policy Options." *Journal of International Development* 10. 1998, 929-941 and others...

<sup>5</sup> The list of interviewees can be found in the Appendix.

which is very important in order to have a more detailed picture about the efficiency of local policy implementation.

All the interviews I conducted were done in a semi-structured manner. My experience is that in this way much more is conveyed during the interview compared to a strictly structured one. Many new insights and new directions were brought up that further helped my research, and I was able to explore these during the course of interviews. My fieldwork and interviews in the second part of the thesis are supplemented by my analysis of relevant literature – namely publications, documentation and brochures of the local projects, programs and offices I have visited.

This research is interdisciplinary, drawing on the theoretical background on both gender studies and public policy. Given the fact that some of the projects I am going to discuss are current, I see my thesis as a timely contribution to the relevant literature and practice of gender mainstreaming.

### **3. Theoretical Background**

#### ***3.1 Gender Mainstreaming: An Overview***

The importance of gender mainstreaming is obvious if we take into consideration that it is adopted as a priority gender equality policy tool by the European Union (EU), the Council of Europe (COE) and the United Nations (UN) - major international organizations that can be counted as shaping forces of today's global political scene. The concept of gender mainstreaming was first adopted by the UN Commission on the Status of Women already in

1985, and after this, it infiltrated into the policy documentation of many supranational organizations, such as the EU.<sup>6</sup>

The EU – like many political organizations on an international, national and local levels – define gender mainstreaming according to the UN’s definition, which is as follows:<sup>7</sup>

Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women’s as well as men’s concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality.<sup>8</sup>

A similar definition provided by the Council of Europe, which is also used by the City Hall of Vienna is as follows:

Gender mainstreaming consists of the (re)organization, improvement, development and evaluation of political processes and aims to incorporate the gender perspective into all political concepts at all levels and stages by all political actors involved.<sup>9</sup>

One of the core concepts here is the concept of gender equality. In her writing on *Multiple Meanings of Gender Equality*,<sup>10</sup> Mieke Verloo distinguishes between three “types” of gender equalities, and in order, these types correspond to the evolution of gender policies in the European Union.<sup>11</sup> These types are: equality as sameness (characterized by the discourse of equal opportunities, “affirming difference from the male norm” (that is, the introduction of positive actions) and transformation, that is, “transforming all established norms and standards

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<sup>6</sup> Council of Europe. Gender Mainstreaming. Conceptual framework, methodology and presentation of good practices. Directorate General of Human Rights, Strasbourg, 2004, 11

<sup>7</sup> Moser, Caroline. “Has Gender Mainstreaming Failed? A comment on International Development Agency Experiences in the South”. *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, Volume 7, Issue 4, December 2005, 17

<sup>8</sup> Porter and Sweetman. “Editorial”. *Mainstreaming Gender in Development: A Critical Review*. Oxford: Oxfam (2005) 2-10, 5

<sup>9</sup> *An Introduction to Gender Mainstreaming*. Office for the Promotion and Co-ordination of Women’s Issues, Vienna, 2001, 3.

<sup>10</sup> Verloo, Mieke. *Multiple Meanings of Gender Equality: A Critical Frame Analysis of Gender Policies in Europe*, CEU Press, Budapest, 2007., 32

<sup>11</sup> Pető, Andrea, Ian Manners. “The European Union and the Value of Gender Equality” *Values and Principles in European Union Foreign Policy*, Routledge, London, 2006, 97-113., 100

of what is/should be female and male.”<sup>12</sup> Literature also refers to these three types as “inclusion”, “reversal”, and “displacement.”<sup>13</sup>

As reflected in the above-mentioned policy documentations and definitions, gender mainstreaming belongs to the third category, or type of gender equality, as it is considered to be capable of transforming the policy systems and the gender norms “at all levels.”<sup>14</sup> Its transformative potential is to be realized through the use of certain mainstreaming tools, such as “steps”, checklists, gender impact assessment,<sup>15</sup> evaluation sheets and constant monitoring of the outcomes.

One of the widely-used methods for developing a gender mainstreaming approach as a strategy to achieve gender equality (and social justice?) is the “six-step model”, created by Karin Tondorf<sup>16</sup>. This model gives decision-makers ideas of how to “do” gender mainstreaming and describes the gender mainstreaming process from the definition of goals till the control of success and evaluation<sup>17</sup>. Many sources – on the Internet and in the libraries – offer similar step-by-step guidelines. However, these guidelines are very general. According to Sabine Steinbacher, founder and gender expert of a Viennese consultancy and training organization, ImKontext<sup>18</sup>, if decision-makers lack sufficient theoretical knowledge, the guidelines will not bear fruit.

It is also important to mention that gender mainstreaming should not be regarded as the (primary) goal. Rather, it is a strategy and a process, “one way to reach the goal of gender

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<sup>12</sup> *Multiple Meanings of Gender Equality*

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> ibid

<sup>15</sup> Gender Impact Assessment, (GIA): “assessment of the impact on gender relations of any policy proposals” in: *An Introduction to Gender Mainstreaming*. Office for the Promotion and Co-ordination of Women’s Issues, Vienna, 2001, 54.

<sup>16</sup> *An Introduction to Gender Mainstreaming*, 36

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*, 38.

<sup>18</sup> Im Kontext Institut für Organisationsberatung Gesellschaftsforschung Supervision and Coaching, Consultancy for social development – offers trainings for companies and public services, such as Vienna City Hall [www.imkontext.at](http://www.imkontext.at) – interview on 06.05.08, Vienna

equality.”<sup>19</sup> Further, I contend, the most effective gender equality policy is “twin-track,” referring to the idea that gender mainstreaming in itself is not enough to reach equality. The twin-track strategy consists of gender mainstreaming *and* promoting women’s issues, organizing women-specific projects and programs. According to a publication of the Viennese Women’s Office<sup>20</sup> on gender mainstreaming, a twin-track can be developed through “complementary strategies aimed at providing equality of opportunities for women and men in order to achieve real gender equality”<sup>21</sup> (see Table 1.)

**Table 1: The Twin-track Strategy<sup>22</sup>**

<b>A specific gender equality policy...</b>	<b>Gender mainstreaming ...</b>
... aims to eliminate existing inequalities;	... aims to eliminate conditions and structures which result in inequalities;
... provides short-term measures to reduce such inequalities;	... has long-term and less direct effects than specific gender equality policies;
... devises political strategies with regard to issues not covered by other policy areas.	... devises strategies for all policy areas.

### **3.2 The "Failure" of Gender Mainstreaming?**

What does “real gender equality” mean? It often remains an open question, even though in policy documentations the term seems to be self-evident. According to Mieke Verloo,<sup>23</sup> policy texts and decision makers often mix the above mentioned three types of gender equality (inclusion, reversal, displacement). Thus, it is often unclear which type of gender equality is the goal to achieve. How one sets the frameworks ultimately defines the results. In the literature on gender mainstreaming, besides the optimistic vision of gender mainstreaming as capable of transforming the gender-biased systems, we can find a lot of

<sup>19</sup> *An Introduction to Gender Mainstreaming*. Office for the Promotion and Co-ordination of Women’s Issues, Vienna, 2001., 9

<sup>20</sup> Will be dealt with more details later

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid*, 13

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid*, 12

<sup>23</sup> *Multiple Meaning of Gender Equality*

criticism, doubt and suspicion as well. Some experts even go as far as to state that gender mainstreaming has "failed."<sup>24</sup>

As giving one example for such criticism, the notion of failure can be tracked in one of the reports of the Council of Europe. According to the Directorate General of Human Rights, although all major policy documentation on gender equality urge the member states to implement gender mainstreaming, the progress is disappointingly slow and that "gender mainstreaming became in many instances an exercise in checklists"<sup>25</sup> In this way, the transformative ideas of gender mainstreaming have been boiled down to procedures...

Echoing this disappointment, as I mentioned previously, a large part of the literature discusses the failure of gender mainstreaming as a policy tool in overcoming existing gender biases within organizations. In the following, I will attend to the the main issues brought up in the discussion. The question is: whether the reason for the unfulfilled expectations lies within the structure of this policy tool or in the unwillingness to implement it in the national and international (i.e. the synergistic EU and UN) contexts? In other words: is it gender mainstreaming to "blame"? Should we throw it away and design a new policy tool to foster gender equality or should the ways of implementation be modified? Although in this thesis I will argue that gender mainstreaming can be used to achieve the goals of gender equality and "best practices" do exist (but only if certain conditions are met and certain policy implementation structures are followed), it is worthwhile to look at the literature that criticizes this approach.

Besides the already discussed lack of conceptual clarity (i.e. the policy documents are not clear about what they mean on the concepts "gender equality" and "gender mainstreaming"), Suzette Mitchell lists other reasons behind the failure of gender mainstreaming. These are: the possibility that gender mainstreaming strategies may alienate

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<sup>24</sup> Mitchell, Suzette. "What lies at the heart of the failure of gender mainstreaming: The strategy or the implementation?" *Development Bulletin*, no.64, 2004, 8-10.

<sup>25</sup>*Gender Mainstreaming. Conceptual framework, methodology and presentation of good practices.*, 13

and sideline earlier women-specific work,<sup>26</sup> lack of identified measurable outcomes and also the consistent dearth of financial resources.<sup>27</sup> Therefore, Mitchell argues, gender mainstreaming remains mostly on a rhetorical level: although it is enshrined in major EU policy documents, it is not *implemented* as a strategy.

Taking into consideration all these hindrances and obstacles, one may pose the question, what might follow or supplement gender mainstreaming in reaching goals of gender equality? As Aruna Rao puts it: "Is there life after gender mainstreaming?"<sup>28</sup> Rao lists several factors that are necessary for the transformation of the existing hierarchical gender norms. As a first step, she argues that "we need to disaggregate the range of strategies and activities that are dumped in the gender mainstreaming bag (such as policy reform, advocacy, capacity building, analytical frameworks, programme development, monitoring systems) and analyse their gains and their failures".<sup>29</sup> Then she follows that the organizational change needs to go beyond the rhetorical policy adoption and gender-awareness raising is needed among the staff. The organization "doing" gender mainstreaming has to transform itself as well, and this failed to happen in the case of UN and the EU.<sup>30</sup>

Rao argues further, that four factors have to be changed in order for the transformative potential of gender mainstreaming to manifest. These are: political access,<sup>31</sup> accountability systems,<sup>32</sup> cultural systems,<sup>33</sup> and cognitive structures.<sup>34</sup> She concludes that without the change of these, any transformative strategies will not work. Although the existing

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<sup>26</sup> meaning that instead of the above discussed twin-track, gender mainstreaming becomes „the” tool, and instead of being complementary, it substitutes earlier women-specific work.

<sup>27</sup> Mitchell, Suzette. "What lies at the heart of the failure of gender mainstreaming: The strategy or the implementation?" *Development Bulletin*, no.64, pp. 8-10., 2004, 9.

<sup>28</sup> Rao, Aruna and David Kelleher. "Is There Life After Gender Mainstreaming?" *Gender and Development Vol. 13*, No. 2, July, 2005

<sup>29</sup> "Is There Life After Gender Mainstreaming?", 15

<sup>30</sup> Mitchell, Suzette. "What lies at the heart of the failure of gender mainstreaming: The strategy or the implementation?" *Development Bulletin*, no.64, pp. 8-10., 2004

<sup>31</sup> There should be systems or actors who can put women's perspectives and interests on the agenda

<sup>32</sup> The organizational resources have to be examined from a gender perspective (e.g. gender budgeting)

<sup>33</sup> The work/family life, paid/unpaid work gender division should be changed

<sup>34</sup> Work itself is seen within gender-biased norms and understanding, and this should be changed as well.

literature is quite doubtful on the "success" of gender mainstreaming, still, I would like to argue that "best practices" do exist, which appear to be generating tangible changes; perhaps we should examine these a bit before we dump the whole strategy as a "failure". In the following, I will discuss a relatively new<sup>35</sup> gender mainstreaming tool, namely gender budgeting followed by investigation into local gender mainstreaming implementation patterns.

### **3.3 Gender Budgeting**

Even the most critical writings on gender mainstreaming do not deny the fact that on the rhetorical level the strategy is there in almost all of the international and national documentations on gender equality. However, it takes gender expertise and political will, themes that emerged repeatedly in my fieldwork, to use this strategy on all levels and types of decisionmaking processes. In some cases, the gender perspective is easier to see – for example, in social services it is difficult to deny the fact that women are more vulnerable to unemployment. However, there are other fields where gender-blindness stubbornly persists.

One of these fields is the budgeting process, which is relevant to this project as it is a key component of local policy making, and also, because of engendering budgets is a rather new and rarely used policy approach. According to the report of the Council of Europe, "Public budgets normally take into account only the monetary economy."<sup>36</sup> The consequences of this are easy to see: "as a result, unpaid care and services are excluded from the macro-economic framework of state budgets"<sup>37</sup>. Feminist economists call this gender-blind approach

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<sup>35</sup> New in the sense that it gender budgeting is only implemented in a few European countries yet, for instance, the Viennese gender budgeting process started only in 2006

<sup>36</sup> „Gender budgeting - Final report of the Group of specialists on gender budgeting (EG-S-GB)” Directorate General of Human Rights. Strasbourg, 2005, 11

<sup>37</sup> Ibid

to public budgets as "false economy"<sup>38</sup>. This "false economy" puts women into a disadvantaged situation, as many studies show. For instance, in the case of Austria in 2002 the national tax system was revised from the gender perspective. One conclusion of the research titled "Is the Austrian tax system indeed gender neutral?"<sup>39</sup> was the following: because of the gender-blindness of the system, men pay 14,8% of their income on social insurance, while women pay 16,1%<sup>40</sup>. Such examples show how women are put into disadvantaged position through the practices of the "neutral" budgeting system.

According to Elisabeth Villagomez, studies, such as the above mentioned Austrian research have triggered a growing recognition that

macroeconomic policy plays an important role in the outcomes affecting living standards and economic opportunities for the population in general and women in particular is behind the economic rationale for introducing a gender perspective into budgets.... Increasing the possibilities for those who experience inequalities to have access to resources and opportunities has, consequently, positive economic effects<sup>41</sup>.

As a result of the recognition of the gender-biased nature of budgeting, watchgroups were formed in civil societies in many parts of the world who ventured to monitor the national budgeting systems. The first such project was done in Australia as early as 1984. The first European example comes from Great Britain from 1989, where experts from universities and NGOs formed the "British Women's Budget Group" in 1989<sup>42</sup>. However, even though more than two decades have passed, gender budgeting is still largely seen as a "new" strategy.

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<sup>38</sup> "Opinion on Gender Budgeting". European Commission's Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, 2003. [http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/gender\\_equality/framework/opinion\\_on\\_gender\\_budgeting\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/gender_equality/framework/opinion_on_gender_budgeting_en.pdf) (last visited: 04.06.08), 11

<sup>39</sup> "Ist das österreichische Steuersystem tatsächlich "geschlechtsneutral"?"

<sup>40</sup> Gender Budgeting 2004. Wege zur geschlechtergerechten Verteilung öffentlicher Gelder und Leistungen. MA 57, Wien 2005., 16

<sup>41</sup> Villagomez, Elisabeth. „Gender Responsive Budgets: issues, good practices and policy options” presentation at Regional Symposium on Mainstreaming Gender into Economic Policies. 28-30 January 2004, Geneva <http://www.unece.org/oes/gender/documents/gender.2004.grb.pdf?OpenAgent&DS=ENERGY/GE.1/2001/1&Lang=E> (last accessed: 08.06.08)

<sup>42</sup> Gender budgeting - Final report 11

According to the Council of Europe, gender budgeting<sup>43</sup> is a complementary tool for and an "integral part" of gender mainstreaming. As the report on gender budgeting concedes, "public budgets are not merely economic tools", but they also "summarize policies in monetary terms and express political priorities. Budgets, therefore, are not gender-neutral"<sup>44</sup>. According to the definition of the Council of Europe, "gender budgeting is an application of gender mainstreaming in the budgetary process. It means a gender-based assessment of budgets, incorporating a gender perspective at all levels of the budgetary process and restructuring revenues and expenditures in order to promote gender equality"<sup>45</sup>. As Luisella Pavan-Woolfe, Director of the Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities of the European Commission summarizes:

So why is gender budgeting important? For the same reasons for which gender mainstreaming is essential. Gender mainstreaming creates better policies because it gives policy makers more comprehensive analysis on which to base their judgement and decisions. Similarly, our common resources are spent more efficiently when the gender-related aspects of living conditions, needs and preferences are taken into account. Incorporating gender analysis at all stages and levels of the budgetary process is also good for transparency and accountability.<sup>46</sup>

In other words, gender budgeting does not necessitate a separate budget "for women", rather, it encompasses the entire budget of an organization, project or program – just as the policy tool of gender mainstreaming is meant to encompass the entire policy cycle done by the decision-making and administrative bodies. In this respect, the earlier titles of "women's budgeting" and "budget statements for women" can be seen as outdated, as the concept of gender budgeting is integrative and emphasizes all genders. It is not a separate budgeting

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<sup>43</sup> Also known as "women's budgeting", "budget statements for women", "gender responsive budgeting", "gender-sensitive budgeting"

<sup>44</sup> "Gender budgeting - Final report of the Group of specialists on gender budgeting (EG-S-GB)" Directorate General of Human Rights. Strasbourg, 2005, 16

<sup>45</sup> Ibid, 11

<sup>46</sup> Luisella Pavan-Woolfe. "Gender budgeting in the European Union and in the EU policies "European Commission, 2007, 2.

process to take into consideration the needs of women, which could be easily sidelined and isolated from the rest, mostly gender-biased budgeting procedures.<sup>47</sup>

The gender perspective – according to the Council of Europe – should be taken into consideration at all phases of the budget cycle, from planning to evaluation<sup>48</sup>. Not only the expenditures, but also the revenues should be carefully examined in order to make gender budgeting successful. However, due to the complexity of examining the revenues, most examples I have found for gender budgeting analyze only the expenditures. In these cases, the most often revised budgeting areas were: health care and social expenditure. Similar to other gender mainstreaming strategies, gender budgeting can also take place on many levels from supranational organizations down to local level budgeting processes (i.e. municipal budgets)

There are also some positive "side-effects" of gender budgeting, namely: gender equality, accountability, transparency and participation of civil society in the budgeting process, efficiency and effectiveness and lastly, good governance.<sup>49</sup> Reading this list in the gender budgeting report of the European Council, the idea looks a bit utopian: no wonder, therefore, that there is skepticism and resistance to gender budgeting on the part of bureaucracies.<sup>50</sup> Studies have shown that, in many cases, budgeting processes at different levels of public policymaking are not transparent and consultation with experts and "outsiders" (members of the civil society, NGOs, etc.) are few and far between. Gender budgeting has also been depicted as a burden taking into consideration the gender perspective in all phases of the process gives more work to already frustrated, underpaid and overloaded administrative staff<sup>51</sup>. Just as in the case of gender mainstreaming generally, here too, many resistances should be eliminated for successful implementation. However, the positive aspects of doing gender budgeting are clear: transparency in the budgeting procedure, better targeting

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<sup>47</sup> As has happened in many initiatives within organizations "for women."

<sup>48</sup> Ibid, 14

<sup>49</sup> Ibid, 13

<sup>50</sup> Andrea Hlavac interview 05.05.08

<sup>51</sup> Andrea Hlavac interview on 05.05.08.

of funds and services, awareness raising, taking into consideration the gender perspective and the opinion of NGOs, better communication between public administration and the civil society, all in all, a more just society<sup>52</sup>.

In summary, from the literature overview related to gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting, the following "ingredients" are essential for successful implementation of gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting: political will, accountability, human and financial resources, Coordination, transparency, partnership, cooperation and as a first and most basic step: gender disaggregated data<sup>53</sup>. Timing, "gender knowledge" and adequate techniques (capacities to use certain tools such as gender impact assessment, or the previously mentioned 6 steps model) are also important. Key players are the following: government, parliament, bureaucrats, researchers, experts, international organizations, NGOs. Finally, these ingredients must mix with consensus among stakeholders about the values of gender mainstreaming. In the following I will link the theoretical literature on gender mainstreaming to implementation theory and then to practice: to my research results.

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<sup>52</sup> *Gender Budgeting – Final report, 16*

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid. 14*

## **3.4 Local-level Implementation: Theories, Patterns, Actors**

### **3.4.1 Policy Analysis And Its Relation To Implementation Research**

Policy analysis is a large field of study investigating into basically three broad areas and phases of policy making. These are policy formation, policy implementation and policy output<sup>54</sup>. In this thesis I will focus on the second phase: on implementation. The first reason for this is the obvious length constraints of this thesis. The second reason for this is that in my experience, and according to the literature review, forming policies requires less political will than implementing them, and is often done only to meet international and national requirements<sup>55</sup>. As was seen in the criticisms of gender mainstreaming, policies often stuck at the rhetorical level, thus, for our purposes to find effective gender mainstreaming practices it is more important to look at implementation.

In order to analyze what is happening with supranational<sup>56</sup> gender equality principles on local level, I will turn to the basic theories, notions and models of conventional implementation research. In doing so, I follow a line of inquiry that emerged in the 1970s when researchers tried to find reasons for the lack of social change and the meager results of social reform programs and policy aims<sup>57</sup>. The gap between policy objectives and results visible, driving researchers to the realization that the previous view on policy making and implementing was overly technical-administrative and required modification. Focus was put on actors, players, active and passive involvement in the policy making process, and also, on so far unresearched, hidden agendas and resistance of participants. Broadly speaking, the result of this new type of implementation research was the development of three

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<sup>54</sup> Pincus, Ingrid: *The politics of Gender Equality Policy*. Örebro Studies, Örebro, 2002., 52.

<sup>55</sup> E.g. EU requirements

<sup>56</sup> By „supranational” I mean the principles, documentations, guidelines, manifestos and recommendations of inter- and transactional organizations (like the European Union and United Nations) and networks (such as Council of European Municipalities and Regions, etc.) in which the countries I deal with have a membership

<sup>57</sup> Pincus 2002, 5

implementation models, which are referred to as top-down, bottom-up models and a third type that “attempts to draw on the strengths and weaknesses of the other two<sup>58</sup>”

### 3.4.2 Implementation Models

Models, as we know, can never completely describe actual policy processes, however, they do give us an overview that helps us analyze local situations and conditions. Therefore, in my analysis of local implementation of gender equality policies (with focus on gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting in Vienna City Hall), I will make use of the three models of conventional implementation research. In the following, I will briefly describe these three models.

According to Pincus, in the case of top-down model, the “departure point is government policy and measures (...) Public administration and local government agencies are viewed as the instruments of the legislative part of the government”.<sup>59</sup> In practice, a top-down model means that initiatives are started within public administration, and not from civil society<sup>60</sup>. The advocates of the second model, the bottom-up are “are criticizing top-down because it suggests that the decision-making and control rests at upper level”<sup>61</sup>. The emphasis here is put on informal networks, NGOs and civil society, and change starts from here, influencing the decision makers. Bottom-up means “investigating and analyzing the actions and interactions of various groups of professionals who work directly with people at the service level of public organizations in for example health-care, education and social work. The results of these actors’ decisions and actions can then be compared with government policy objectives<sup>62</sup>” The third model is a synthesis of the two already described above. It

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid, 54

<sup>59</sup> Ibid, 54

<sup>60</sup> I recognize that the lines between public administration and civil society are not always clear-cut, as well as the problematic implications for a “top” / public administration and “bottom”/civil society dichotomy. I present the models here merely as a convention.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid, 54

<sup>62</sup> Ibid, 56

stresses the importance of both top-down and both bottom-up processes, both the agency of the civil society and that of the decision makers.

All my interviewees in Vienna stressed the importance and the effectiveness of this third model, where policy changes and suggestions start from the bottom-level (NGOs, academics) and this bottom-up process is complemented by a top-down approach when political will is born in the local governance due to the awareness the bottom-up process created. Without the awareness, political will is insufficient, because the “political atmosphere” will not be ripe enough to have wide-ranging implementation and support in the bureaucracy. Without political will the bottom-up process is futile – there will be a monologue from the part of NGOs and academics instead of a vivid dialogue with the bureaucrats and decision-making bodies. The “ingredients” for successful gender mainstreaming will be dealt with and illustrated in the chapter on Viennese gender mainstreaming practices.

For our purpose it is important to set up a framework to approach and evaluate the gender equality policy implementation patterns found in my field research in Vienna. In order to do this, I will rely on the above mentioned theoretical background on implementation models, and also, on the expertise and experience of my interviewees: the gender experts in Vienna. Combining these different knowledge types (theoretical and practical knowledge) I will get to the “ideal”, or most effective implementation pattern<sup>63</sup> of gender mainstreaming. In other words, I will investigate into “how Vienna is doing gender mainstreaming” and why is gender mainstreaming successful in Vienna City Hall.

### **3.4.3 The "Ideal Way" Of 'Doing' Gender Mainstreaming Implementation**

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<sup>63</sup> Thought to be most effective by the relevant theoretical literature and the gender experts working on local level gender equality policy implementation in Vienna.

According to the first head of the Viennese Women's Office<sup>64</sup> (MA57 Department), now head of the Coordination Office for Planning and Construction Geared to the Requirements of Daily Life and Specific Needs of Women, Eva Kail, the "ideal way" of doing local gender equality policy implementation starts with a well-written study prepared by gender experts or sociologists. This was the case in the beginning an initiative in Vienna on sensitive park planning.<sup>65</sup> Here, the policy implementation process was the following: first, a research was conducted by two sociologists about a local level gender equality problem. The knowledge created in the study was channeled into the municipality through a conference. The municipality – based on the results of the study – organized a pilot project to test possible solutions to the problem presented by the academics. Then, results of the pilot project were analyzed and the tested solutions resulted in the wide-ranging implementation of gender-sensitive park planning in Vienna. The process entailed the development of new guidelines for park planning: gender-sensitive park planning is mainstreamed into the Planning Department of Vienna. Also, this Viennese practice – among other Viennese projects – was listed as a "best practice" by UN-Habitat,<sup>66</sup> thus, the local knowledge got channeled into the international and supranational think tanks. Thus, a local experiment has had an international multiplying effect, as researchers, planners from all over Europe started to study the Viennese example. This means possible local level implementation of gender-sensitive park-planning in other European cities.

The reason why this type of implementation has such a strong multiplier effect is that an example, or "best practice" of local level implementation always means practical guidelines, and thorough knowledge of local constraints and opportunities (i.e. context). As a result, it can be adapted to other localities much easier than very broad and general guidelines,

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<sup>64</sup> Official name: Promotion and Co-ordination of Women's Issues, however it often gets referred in short as "Women's Office"

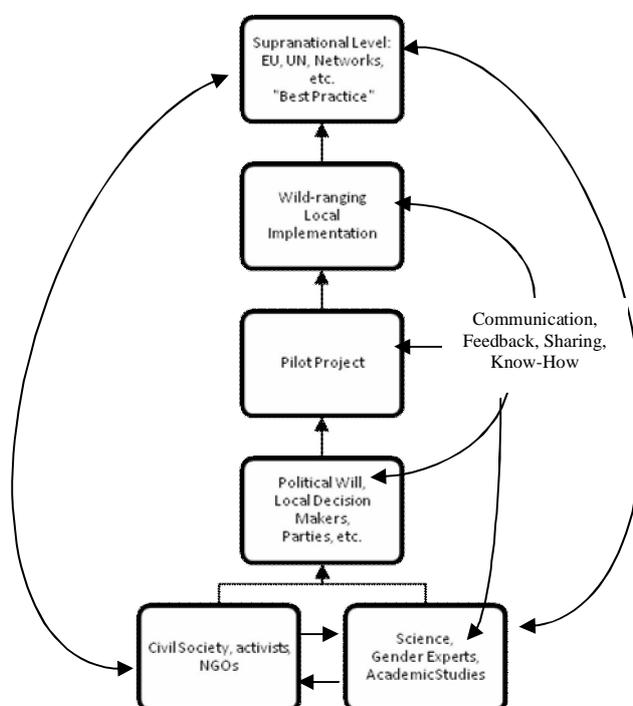
<sup>65</sup> More details will be given about gender-sensitive park planning in Chapter 5

<sup>66</sup> <http://www.bestpractices.at/main.php?page=programme/un/database&lang=en> (last accessed: 08.06.08)

they are more “thought-provoking”. Supranational studies and guidelines often lack practical advice, therefore networking among municipalities and local decision makers, NGOs and academics is a key here.

According to the international documentations on gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting that cite Vienna as a “best practice” (European Council 2005), looking at Vienna’s diverse gender equality policies, projects and practices, and acknowledging the more than 20 years’ long gender equality policy implementation experience and knowledge, I will use the model Eva Kail described as a “best practice” model, or at least, a model that can be taken as a good example to follow. In the following I will call this the “ideal pattern”. The structure of this pattern can be seen on Table2 below.

**Table 2: The “ideal” implementation pattern”**



### 3.4.4 Actors And Models

As mentioned, the key players the documentations<sup>67</sup> and actors<sup>68</sup> regarded to be important in local-level policy implementation are: local (and supranational) NGOs, researchers, local (and supranational) networks, academics (sociologists), politicians (political will), administrations (preferably femocrats<sup>69</sup>). The roles of these actors can be summarized as we can see in the following table:

**Table 3: Roles of different actors in local level implementation of gender equality policies**

Actors	Level	Study, analysis	Awareness-raising	Policy making	Pilot project	Wide-ranging implementation
<b>Supranational organizations, networks, NGOs, academics, etc.</b>	Supranational	International examples, best practices, guidelines, recommendations, analysis, principles, comparison	International awareness raising campaigns, Equal year, etc.	General guidelines, recommendations	Gathering best practices, giving ideas to what kind of pilot projects can there be	Gathering best practices, providing ideas
<b>Local government</b>	Local	Communication with NGOs and/or academics	Organizing local events, supporting local events	Adapting the general guidelines to local specificities – communicating with NGOs	Launching pilot projects	Wide-ranging local implementation, policy making,
<b>NGOs</b>	Local	Communication with academics	Organizing local events,	Being “on the field”, communicating	Working together with local	Giving feedback, cooperation

<sup>67</sup> European Committee’s documentation on gender mainstreaming,

<sup>68</sup> Ursula Bauer, gender mainstreaming project, Vienna, Eva Kail, Andrea Hlavac, etc.

<sup>69</sup> Femocrats: bureaucrats with gender awareness, i.e. feminist bureaucrats. All of my interviewees called themselves overtly feminists.

		and/or supranational networks	networking	ng with local government, channeling the experiences into local policy making	government in implemen ting pilot projects, or launching pilot project	
<b>academics</b>	Local	analyzing local situations, overview of international literature	Studying the output of local events, comparis on with int'l examples, networking	Analyzing policies, comparisons, providing “best practices”, etc.	Writing study of pilot project, analyzing, etc.	Analyzing, giving feedback

Following the above described “ideal” pattern, which is a synthesis of a bottom-up and top-down process, in the next chapters I will give local examples for the “ideal” pattern in Vienna. Naturally, it is not my intention to say that all gender equality projects in Austria or Vienna follow the “ideal” implementation pattern, however, I claim that the success of the Viennese gender equality policy evolution lies in the fact that all “ingredients” are there to establish this pattern<sup>70</sup>.

<sup>70</sup> On this there was full agreement among all of my interviewees in Vienna

## 4. Gender Mainstreaming and Gender Budgeting in Austrian Local Development

In this chapter I will offer a brief overview and historical background on gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting in Austrian local development. My focus will be on the steps taken so far in the direction of implementing gender budgeting in local development (i.e. in municipalities). Besides mentioning the achievements my aim is also to present some shortcomings and problems that have to be faced in Austria in order to have more effectively working gender mainstreaming strategies.

### 4.1 Gender Mainstreaming in Austrian Local Development

Based on various international and European action plans and on the Amsterdam Treaty, Austria has obligated itself to implement gender mainstreaming strategy both politically and legally.<sup>71</sup> Nationally the policy is anchored in Article 7 of the Federal Constitution, plus in three resolutions from the Council of Ministers. Land Parliament and Governments have also made such resolutions creating a legal basis for the strategy in federal lands as well. The EU Structural Funds can be seen as a very important catalyst for gender mainstreaming implementation, given that the gender mainstreaming approach is made explicit in all structural funds programs, and “the leading role in practical implementation was taken up both on the European level and in Austria by the labour market policy”.<sup>72</sup> In employment policy the approach was included in the National Action Plan for Employment, which supports the horizontal implementation for gender mainstreaming – just as the European Social Fund requires.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> *Gender Budgeting in Practice*. Kardinála Berana, Plzen, 2007, 66.

<sup>72</sup> *ibid*

<sup>73</sup> *ibid*

Achieving equality between women and men regarding employment is one of the tasks of the inter-ministerial “task force” on gender mainstreaming (IMAG GM).<sup>74</sup> Among others, the aim of IMAG GM is to implement gender mainstreaming strategy at the federal level government, to support and monitor the procedure, to share best practices and information and also to develop adequate criteria along the way. IMAG GM consists of representatives of the Constitutional Court, the Administrative Court, the Union of Public Services, the Court of Auditors and the Austrian Ombudsman Board<sup>75</sup>.

One of the already mentioned resolutions made by the Austrian Council of Ministers (Gender Mainstreaming Resolution 2004) calls for the necessity of gender budgeting, creating a task force related to gender mainstreaming in each Austrian Ministry, two mainstreaming projects per Ministry, plus the establishment of a Cross Mentoring Project, and also the revising of laws and regulations from the gender perspective. According to the gender mainstreaming survey on Austria written by a project group of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions,

although these (...) 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.<sup>76</sup>

The Survey goes on by explaining a very typical set-up that I have already discussed when doing the literature overview in the theoretical chapter. The first problem is that gender mainstreaming “rarely exceeds EU directives”<sup>77</sup> – often staying at the rhetorical level only, and also, when it does, gender expertise is needed. However, gender expertise is generally

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<sup>74</sup> Homepage: <http://www.imag-gendermainstreaming.at/cms/imag/content.htm?channel=CH0561&doc=CMS1207148809938> (last accessed: 06.06.08)

<sup>75</sup> “Gender Mainstreaming in surveys: Austria” European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, [http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/ewco/reports/TN0608TR02/TN0608TR02\\_5.htm](http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/ewco/reports/TN0608TR02/TN0608TR02_5.htm) , 8 (last accessed: 06.06.08)

<sup>76</sup> Ibid, 9

<sup>77</sup> ibid

missing from decision-making and administrative bodies that are supposed to carry out mainstreaming tasks. So even when there is an obligation to have someone responsible for such tasks, knowledge, know-how is most probably missing. The consequences are easy to see: the inclusion of gender mainstreaming in the policy documentations remains a rhetorical device used to pay “lip service” to the EU.

## **4.2 Municipal Budgeting System And Gender Budgeting In Austria**

Gender budgeting is currently being brought into focus step by step in Austria. First of all, for the current EU Structural Fund period that is to last till 2013, gender budgeting is one of the priority task in the Operation Programmes for the Employment. The Austrian budget law underwent a major reform recently, and the law is “planned to amend the targets and introduce administrative management aimed at consequences. (...) Within the framework of the concentration on consequences de facto equality of women and men has to be taken into account”.<sup>78</sup> This means that the gender perspective has to be taken into account in all phases of budgeting by the public administration. However, according to Margit Schratzenstaller, researcher of the Austrian Institute for Economic Research<sup>79</sup>, and a participant for a recent project on gender budgeting in Upper Austria named GenderAlp!, gender budgeting knowledge is almost completely missing on the part of public administration in Austria, meaning, that either intensive trainings are needed, or the initiative will be unsuccessful<sup>80</sup>.

Gender budgeting in Austria does not have a long history: the first steps and initiatives – just as in Australia or in Great Britain – were taken by the civil society. In 2000, a working team was set up under the title “BEIGEWUM”. The group consisted of sociologists, economists and members of the civil society (NGO representatives). Their aim was to bring the topic of gender budgeting into public discussion and to raise awareness on the part of

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<sup>78</sup> *Gender Budgeting in Practice*, 66

<sup>79</sup> Österreichischen Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung, [www.wifo.ac.at](http://www.wifo.ac.at), last accessed on 06.06.08.

<sup>80</sup> Interview, conducted on 13.05.08.

public administration and decision making bodies. In order to reach their goal, this “pioneer” group published the first substantial documents on the issue of gender budgeting, not only dealing with the theoretical level but also giving practical guidelines and know-how on the issue. The first publication titled “Women doing budgets: state finances from the gender perspective”<sup>81</sup> opened up the debate and was followed by more intensive work, conferences and more publications.<sup>82</sup>

The first “official” step on the federal level was the publication of the already mentioned study “Is the Austrian tax system gender-neutral?”. Although many gender experts did not find the study satisfactory and well detailed enough, still, it can be regarded as a first sign of political will on the part of the public administration – this time, on the part of the Federal Ministry of Finance.<sup>83</sup> The above mentioned Inter-ministerial Working Group for Gender Mainstreaming, IMAG GM established the first group on gender budgeting in 2004. This group offered help for all ministries so that they will be able to include the gender perspective into their budgeting process. IMAG gave advice on the selection of budget items to analyze from this perspective in order to carry out the 2006 budget.

Since these first steps were taken, many new gender budgeting projects and initiatives have started in Austria. There are also examples for international cooperation in the field of gender budgeting. One of this is the GenderAlp! project<sup>84</sup> in which twelve towns and regions from different countries worked together on the topic “Gender Budgeting, Gender Planning and Gender Mainstreaming in administration”. During the project a lot of research was done on this issue, useful toolboxes were created for municipalities interested in gender budgeting, sharing of experience and knowledge started among the participants. However, as

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<sup>81</sup> „Frauen macht Budgets, Staatsfinanzen aus der Geschlechterperspektive”

<sup>82</sup> *Gender Budgeting 2004. Wege zur geschlechtergerechten Verteilung öffentlicher Gelder und Leistungen*. MA 57, Wien 2005., 14

<sup>83</sup> Ibid, 16

<sup>84</sup> <http://www.genderalp.com/home.php3> (last accessed: 06.06.08)

GenderAlp!'s aim was mainly research, it is unsure whether the toolboxes and methods created during the project will be implemented in the participant town's administration.

## 5. Gender Mainstreaming And Gender Budgeting In Vienna

### 5.1 "Vienna is different" – Vienna As A Municipality And A Federal Province In One

Before moving on to discuss gender equality projects, programs and departments in Vienna City Hall, it is necessary to summarize Vienna's special position and situation within the broader Austrian context. It is special because Vienna is a city (the largest municipality in Austria with 1.6 million inhabitants) and a federal province in one. This entails that the city has a double function, just as the Mayor of the city is one of the 9 federal governors at the same time. In Austria the administrative, decision-making functions and the business affairs of a municipality are done by the municipal office, which is the administrative and executive office of the municipality. However, in cities with their own statute, such as Vienna, this office is called the "Magistrat", that is, the municipal directorate.<sup>85</sup>

Vienna as a municipality consists of 23 municipal districts. Due to processes of administration decentralization, each of them have their own district parliaments and certain rights for deciding certain issues. Their competencies are among others: administration of budget funds, participation right, right to be heard and the right to obtain information. The district budgets are provided from the municipal budget. According to the official website of Vienna City Hall<sup>86</sup> the funds that go to the districts' budgets amount "to no more than 1.6 percent of the city's overall budget, it should be noted, that districts are only required to cover the operating expenses for the tasks delegated to them and are not responsible for personnel

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<http://www.wieninternational.at/en/node/2695?SESS88d3916a5a538ac67daaf1cded7e82f4=bd32dd7a6f7d31d58f36b5f135fd95dd> (last accessed: 07.05.08)

<sup>86</sup> <http://www.wien.gv.at/> (last accessed: 06.06.08)

costs of municipal staff employed to carry out these tasks.”<sup>87</sup> The districts decide on allocation of funds in the following cases: "maintenance of day-care homes and schools, construction and maintenance of main and side streets, planning, construction and maintenance of parks and green areas, construction and maintenance of playgrounds, maintenance of municipal office buildings, maintenance of market areas not built on, out-of-school child and youth care, cultural matters at district level.”<sup>88</sup> This is important for our research because it can be seen that in order to have overall gender-sensitivity in the city of Vienna, in order to have gender-equality policies and projects, in order to take the gender perspective in consideration, close cooperation is needed between the City Hall and the districts of Vienna.<sup>89</sup>

## **5.2 Vienna as “best practice”**

“Vienna is special”, “Vienna sees it differently,”<sup>90</sup> “Vienna is one of the most women-friendly cities in the world”<sup>91</sup> – this is what those who are working on gender equality issues in Vienna City Hall claim. The projects running in Vienna are internationally seen as “best practices” – among others, the Council of Europe gives a summary about Viennese gender budgeting in its publication on the issue,<sup>92</sup> the UN-Habitat lists the Frauen-Werk-Stadt<sup>93</sup> among the “Best Practices for Human Settlement,”<sup>94</sup> and we can find the Viennese gender-sensitive park planning among the “Best Practice Database in Improving the Living Environment”, also at

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> For a detailed map of the structure of Vienna City Hall, please consult:

<http://www.wien.gv.at/english/politics/translation/pdf/organigramm-2008-englisch.pdf> (last accessed: 07.06.08)

<sup>90</sup> Slogan of the gender mainstreaming project of Vienna City Hall.

<sup>91</sup> Quote from Renate Brauner, Vice-Mayor and Vice-Governor Executive City Councillor of Finance, Economic Affairs and Public Utilities, previous Executive City Councillor for Integration, Women’s Issues, Consumer Protection and Personnel. In: *Making Women Visible – 10 Years – Women’s Office of the City of Vienna (MA57)*

<sup>92</sup> *Gender Budgeting. Final report of the group of specialists on gender budgeting.* Council of Europe, 2005.

<sup>93</sup> More words about this project later

<sup>94</sup> <http://www.unesco.org/most/bpwomen.htm>

UN-Habitat.<sup>95</sup> Vienna gets mentioned as being “best practice” at least 10 times in the booklet “The Town of Equality,” published by the Council of European Municipalities and Regions – a network where local decision makers can exchange ideas and experiences<sup>96</sup>. Gender experts working in the City Hall, like Eva Kail, Ursula Bauer and Andrea Hlavac gets invited from all around Europe to share their knowledge on gender issues, such as budgeting, mainstreaming, city planning.

In the following, I will examine the reasons for the obviously positive international reputation gender equality programs and projects in Vienna receive. I will investigate why Vienna City Hall’s gender equality approach is seen as a best practice. In order to do this, I will rely on the publications and brochures published by the City Hall and on the interviews I have conducted with the key players regarding gender equality within and also outside the public administration of the municipality.

### **5.3 The Viennese Twin-track**

As I have already discussed it in the first chapter, the adoption of a gender mainstreaming strategy is not enough in itself to bring good results regarding gender equality. What is more, the introduction of this “trendy” approach<sup>97</sup> can even pose a threat that earlier women-specific work is sidelined<sup>98</sup>. Although many NGOs were afraid<sup>99</sup> that this will happen in Vienna, this was not the case, and a successful twin-track strategy emerged. As seen on Table 1 in Chapter 3., twin-track strategy means that the gender mainstreaming approach and the promotion of women’s issues (i.e. programs and projects targeting only women) are used as complementary tools in order to achieve gender equality. In the following, I will discuss the

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<sup>95</sup> <http://www.bestpractices.org/bpbriefs/youth.html>

<sup>96</sup> <http://www.ccre.org/>

<sup>97</sup> Meaning that it is mentioned in most supranational organization’s policy documentations, therefore on the national levels there is an urge to have gender mainstreaming – many times as a substitution to the earlier women-specific programs

<sup>98</sup> As it happened in Hungary: Soós, Viktória, „Nőpolitika vs. Esélyegyenlőségi politika” <http://www.tusarok.org/rovatok/cikk.php?id=1690> (last accessed: 07.06.08)

<sup>99</sup> Interview with Meike Lauggas (05.05.08)

two tracks of this Viennese twin-track, starting with women-specific programs and projects, then moving on to gender mainstreaming activities done by the City Hall.

### 5.3.1 Women-specific Projects: The Activities Of The MA57 Department

Women-specific projects and programs are there for a long time within Vienna City Hall, however, it was only in 1992 a separate department was set up for women's issues. This department is the "Frauenbüro", or department MA57, although the official name is a bit longer: Office for the Promotion and the Coordination of Women's Issues.<sup>100</sup> According to the publication of MA57, *Making Women Visible*, the department owes its existence to the strong Austrian feminist movement that came into being in the early 1970s. According to the publication, "this new development outside existing institutions led to a women's movement within existing institutions and to the "feminisation" of institutions (e.g. policies for the advancement and equality of women, quota rules)."<sup>101</sup> Nowhere else in Austria can we find such big Women's Office regarding the staff and budget, both have increased significantly in the last decades, clearly showing that there is political will to strive for gender equality within Vienna City Hall. In 1992 the staff numbered nine colleagues, as of spring 2008, there were thirty-six of them, all professionals from various fields such as political science, law, sociology, social worker, pedagogy, science and academics.

According to the homepage of MA57, the office is responsible for the support of women and the coordination of women's equal opportunities. Also, the office strives for a just society where both men and women have equal opportunities in their private life and in terms of the job market.<sup>102</sup> In a bit more details, the office aims at women's empowerment, the

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<sup>100</sup> In the following, I will use the terms „MA57“, „Women's Office“ and „Office“ interchangeably.

<sup>101</sup> *Making Women Visible: 10 Years – Women's Office of the City of Vienna (MA57)*. MA57 – Frauenförderung und Koordination von Frauengelegenheiten, Vienna, 2002., 10

<sup>102</sup> „Die Frauenabteilung der Stadt Wien (MA 57) ist für Frauenförderung und Koordinierung von Frauenangelegenheiten zuständig. Sie setzt sich für eine geschlechtergerechte Gesellschaft ein, die Frauen und Männern gleiche Lebens- und Arbeitschancen bietet.“ <http://www.wien.gv.at/menschen/frauen/> (last accessed: 07.06.08)

elimination stereotypes about gender roles, the elimination of gender specific violence, achieving work-life balance, and active women's and gender equality politics in Vienna.<sup>103</sup> It is easy to see that their main focus is women from all ages and all kinds of life situations. In the following, I will give a brief summary of these activities.

One of the earliest step the Women's Office took was giving full support to the women's shelters of Vienna – to the “Wiener Frauenhauser”. These shelters were set up to give shelter for women who suffered domestic violence, to their children, and to help them to continue their lives. According to the representative of the Women's Office, Meike Lauggas, the support for “women's shelters is clearly a point where feminist theory comes into practice, or rather, where a feminist practice has a long history. A lot of research is missing on violence against women. The specialty of Vienna is that all women's shelters are fully funded by the municipality.”<sup>104</sup> As Meike Lauggas stated, in Austria there are altogether approximately 23 shelters, and five of these are in Vienna. Unlike shelters in Vienna, most are very vulnerable as they do not have any budgetary guarantees – “some have to apply every year for money and are in constant danger to close”. As Lauggas continued, “that is the normal European situation, We have nearly enough spaces – this is also very special.”<sup>105</sup>

Besides supporting the five women's shelter, Women's Office also gives support each year for NGOs. This is extremely important as, according to Meike Lauggas, “MA57 influences NGOs, NGOs influence MA57”, “but they need conditions to survive”. In other words: “We have to subsidize outside NGOs. They have to criticize us. It is a very important role in society – they have the freedom to think what should be done. It is our duty to fund them to give us new ideas”<sup>106</sup>. For the subsidies only Vienna-related women's NGOs can apply or organizations concerned with gender roles, and they can never receive 100% of their

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<sup>103</sup> *Die Frauenabteilung der Stadt Wien MA57. MA 57- Frauenförderung und Koordinierung von Frauenangelegenheiten*, Vienna, 2004, 5.

<sup>104</sup> Meike Lauggas interview (05.05.08)

<sup>105</sup> *ibid*

<sup>106</sup> *ibid*

cost. There are three different types of subsidies: short-term projects (single events), one-year long subsidy and certain NGOs can get invited for three-years contract subsidization. The last of these seems to be very important and effective for those organizations who receive it as they can plan long-term. For instance, in 2008 20 NGOs received three-year subsidies, nine received one year contracts and approx 40 single events will be funded by MA57. These applications have strict rules, NGOs have to prepare reports, and there is a “quality talk” with them once per year. Because of this cooperation between the Office and NGOs, Lauggas claims that “women’s NGOs are prospering”, the situation for NGOs is very favorable in Vienna, “there is no comparison.”<sup>107</sup>

A very successful initiative from the beginning was the hotline for women in crisis. The service that is called "Frauennotruf"<sup>108</sup> offered – and offers even today - advice and help 24-hours per day, one can also reach it through e-mail or chat. The service is free and anonymous, and deals with girls or women who became victims of domestic violence or sexual harrasment. The team behind it consists of psychologists, lawyers and social workers. They can help in finding the best solution, therapy and they also offer advice and support for the relatives, friends of the victim. Besides this hotline, there is a "Frauentelefon"<sup>109</sup> that offers also personal consultancy. Here one can get information about divorce, women’s rights, and also on which department to turn to, if the problem is not the field of the Women’s Office (e.g. questions on unemployment benefits or housing). As awareness raising should start from the very early years, the Office runs a "Madchentelefon"<sup>110</sup> as well: that is, a service for young girls. Here they can ask questions about and seek for help regarding violence, family troubles, school, love, sexuality, and job opportunities.

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<sup>107</sup> ibid

<sup>108</sup> „Women’s emergency line”

<sup>109</sup> „Women’s telephone”

<sup>110</sup> „Telephone for girls”

MA 57 launches pilot projects and supports scientific research each year, or gives support for topics that emerge from the civil society. Many cases of such cooperations have long lasting effects. A good example is the exhibition "Who owns public spaces? the daily life of women in cities" organized by Jutta Kleedorfer and Eva Kail, who later became the head of the Women's Office. The topic was followed-up by many other activities by the Women's Office and a few years later, in 1998, the Coordination Office for Planning and Construction Geared to the Requirements of Daily Life and the Specific Needs of Women was established<sup>111</sup>.

One of the aims of the office is the elimination of gender role stereotypes and gender-based discrimination. For instance, in the field of education there are many gender-specific differences. "Girls are under-represented in technical and science courses, 75 percent of female apprentices are concentrated in no more than ten occupations."<sup>112</sup> Therefore, the Women's Office organises projects that will encourage girls "to opt for unconventional careers and thus increase their career chances and their job satisfaction"<sup>113</sup>. One of such projects is the "Tochertag"<sup>114</sup>, which takes place every year in spring. On this day, visits are organized where girls are invited to see jobs and workplaces that are typically chosen by men. Another project aimed also at girls to encourage them to think about typically male-dominated jobs is the Jobs4girls<sup>115</sup> website, where information and role models are provided about certain professions. Also a job-related issue is the reconciliation of work and private life. The Office tries to give advice to companies with the guideline "7 steps for equality" and also conducts various researches in the field.

Gender-sensitive education is also among the goals of the Office, therefore it has launched a pilot project in Viennese kindergartens and elementary schools where teachers

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<sup>111</sup> The activities of this office will be dealt with more details later

<sup>112</sup> *Making Women Visible*, 32

<sup>113</sup> *ibid*

<sup>114</sup> „Daughters' Day"

<sup>115</sup> [www.jobs4girls.at](http://www.jobs4girls.at) (last accessed: 07.06.08)

were given gender-sensitive teaching material and education packages. As an experiment, traditional fairy tales were rewritten in a way that the heroes became women, and also, a songbook was created where women were depicted in active roles. In the kindergartens that participated in the project, separation between “girls’ corner” and “boys’ corner” was eliminated, so that both genders could try themselves in various game situations. As Ursula Bauer, previously colleague of the Women’s Office, now head of the gender mainstreaming project within the City Hall<sup>116</sup> stated, the education of parents necessarily belongs to the education of the children, therefore in the checkbook of the children teachers do not write anymore “Dear Mother”, but instead they use “Dear Parent”. “It is important that both parents feel responsible for their children. These steps may seem tiny for the outsiders but the change of gender stereotypes depend on exactly such tiny steps” – claims Ursula Bauer<sup>117</sup>. The results of the kindergarten pilot project were convincing: three years after the project girls and boys had more differentiated ideas about what they want to be in the future compared to average kindergartens. “Whereas in an average kindergarten boys wanted to be policemen, or bosses and girls dancers and hairdressers, in the experimental groups boys and girls dared to choose professions that are not typical for their gender”<sup>118</sup>

Networking is also one of the declared tasks of the Women’s Office. For many years, the Office supported MILENA network that became later Femcities<sup>119</sup>. The manifesto of Femcities is very promising<sup>120</sup>, among others, it is striving to be a “platform for the exchange of experiences and good practices of women- and gender related urban issues”, addressing “representatives of European municipal administrations dealing with equality issues”.

<sup>116</sup> More details about her role and the gender mainstreaming project later

<sup>117</sup> Soós Viktória. „Bécs másképp látja. Gender mainstreaming a városvezetésben” <http://www.tusarok.org/rovatok/cikk.php?id=1904> (last accessed: 07.06.08)

<sup>118</sup> ibid

<sup>119</sup> [www.femcities.at](http://www.femcities.at) (last accessed: 06.06.08)

<sup>120</sup> [www.femcities.at](http://www.femcities.at) (last accessed: 06.06.08)

Femcities sees itself as "European cities networking for gender equality"<sup>121</sup> After many years of cooperation, however, representative of femcities.at, Siegrun Herzog stated that the Office does not support the network anymore from 2008. Without proper funding, the network cannot function anymore, its website cannot be updated frequently, and no more conferences and workshops can be organized. "Funding depends on political will" – claimed Herzog<sup>122</sup> and stated that so femcities.at could not find an alternative way to support the network. Although one of the EU funds is available for city networks to apply, each city can be a member only in two kinds of network, and Vienna chose different networks and not femcities.at. These decisions put the existence of femcities into danger and uncertainty.

Besides the above mentioned activities, MA57 is also responsible for communicating the importance of gender equality and equal opportunities to the wider public. Since its foundation, many books, booklets and brochures were published, conferences and workshops were organized.

The representative of MA57, Meike Lauggas is in a special situation. Before joining the Office in 2007, she was an active participant in NGOs working on women's and gender issues. Therefore, she has a perspective of the Office not only as an insider but also as an outsider. She claims that while from the outside, in the eyes of the NGOs MA57 looks powerful – "they have all the money and they don't give it to us" – from the outside it is just another office within the huge machinery of the municipality. "We have a lot of rules of how it has to function, how a letter has to be written, which are the governmental obligations we have to follow. We have much less space to move and to decide that I have expected." – says Lauggas<sup>123</sup> Laugas describes:

This department has a very special place in the whole of this municipal government because it is nearly the only one that has a political attitude. All the others are merely administrative, but we also call to be an

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<sup>121</sup> ibid

<sup>122</sup> Siegrun Herzog interview on 04.05.08

<sup>123</sup> Meikke Lauggas interview (05.05.08)

administrative department but obviously we are not “just” an administrative department. And this is very strange for me – I have to do so much administration.<sup>124</sup>

Also, she adds, that despite of all the achievements, there are a lot more to do. As an example, she brings up that it is even impossible to abolish masculine language. She adds: "It's not a paradise here".

### 5.3.2 Gender Mainstreaming In Practice

After having discussed women-specific projects and programs, let us now have a look on the other side of the Viennese twin-track: on gender mainstreaming issues and policies.

According to former Executive City Councillor for Women's Issues, Renate Brauner,

Gender Mainstreaming is a definite policy approach in all areas such as urban planning, traffic and transport planning, housing promotion, labor market policies, health care, green space design, education policies (including day care as well as schools and universities), cultural policies, science and research strategies, design of public buildings, safety and security in public spaces.<sup>125</sup>

Since 2005, a project group (Gender Mainstreaming project) was formed within the City Hall, separate from MA57, with the task of carrying out gender mainstreaming within the municipal administrative body. The project's leader is Ursula Bauer, former colleague of the Women's Office. She claims that “Vienna wants to be a model for Austria.”<sup>126</sup> “Gender mainstreaming opens up new perceptions on day-to-day processes and existing structures and aims to guarantee quality assurance for products and services provided by Vienna City Administration”<sup>127</sup> The project is in a very favorable situation within the hierarchy, as Ursula Bauer is also working at the same time for the Chief Executive Office. The tasks of the project office are the following: “public relations and lobbying, establishing a coordination platform and a pool of experts, developing evaluation methods, training, evaluating and analyzing

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<sup>124</sup> *ibid*

<sup>125</sup> *Making Women Visible*, 8

<sup>126</sup> „Bécs másként látja”

<sup>127</sup> Ursula Bauer interview 05.05.08

equality, link to the existing steering and reporting systems”<sup>128</sup> As one can see from this list, the gender mainstreaming project – as a part of the municipal organization – is working both on external and on internal implementation. External implementation was the very successful campaign “Vienna sees it differently” where awareness was raised on gender issues by changing streetsigns<sup>129</sup> (so that both sexes are displayed), and an example for internal implementation is when the human resource of Vienna City Administration is provided with gender trainings.

“Gender mainstreaming – that is, taking the gender perspective in consideration in the decision aking processes – is a great tool to increase client orientation, with it the administration can become a more effective and efficient service provider with social responsibility” – claims Bauer.<sup>130</sup> The project tries to cooperate with as many departments as possible, so far from the 70 departments they have work relationship with 20. “We try to achieve that they come to us for advice so that we do not force the topic on them. In order to reach this goal, we organize trainings for the employees and also we provide them with information. Of course, one third of the staff will be always ignorant.”<sup>131</sup> The issue of gender mainstreaming is there already in the field of social services, employment, health issues, in the planning department and also in the budgeting process. In the following, due to the length constraints, I will focus on two fields: gender budgeting and gender-sensitive planning, as both of these fields are rather unique and rare to find embedded in other European municipal administrative bodies. Also, the strengths, the hardships representatives of these fields had to face are very similar to the experiences of the other projects dealing with gender mainstreaming.

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<sup>128</sup> ibid

<sup>129</sup> „Bécs másképp látja”

<sup>130</sup> interview

<sup>131</sup> „Bécs másképp látja”

### 5.3.3 Gender-budgeting

Gender budgeting is a fairly new phenomenon within the City Hall of Vienna, the first overall gender budgeting took place in 2006. This means that from 2006, all departments have to take in consideration the gender perspective when preparing their budget. The process is monitored by Andrea Hlavac, the Gender Budgeting Commissary in the Office of the Administrative Group Finance, Budget and Statistics. “There are sanctions for not doing gender budgeting right” - claims Hlavac<sup>132</sup>, whose opinion is that without sanctions, initiatives cannot be effective within an administrative body, such as the City Hall. The sanction is basically that the department has to redo the budgeting procedure again right from the planning. According to Hlavac, the key questions are the following in order to do successful gender budgeting:

1. Who is the target group? Who do we want to reach?
2. Who benefits from the measures and services?
3. Does the measure and/or service help to reduce existing gender inequalities or does it increase them?
4. In what way can we provide measures and services for the better use of the actual target groups and their good?<sup>133</sup>

Although researchers and members of the civil society<sup>134</sup> claim, that the necessary knowledge is missing on the part of the personnel of the City Hall in order to do effective gender budgeting, they do acknowledge the fact that “at least something is done,”<sup>135</sup> and that the questions are very good for awareness raising. Also, the “prestige” of the gender

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<sup>132</sup> Andrea Hlavac interview, 05.05.08.

<sup>133</sup> *ibid*

<sup>134</sup> Margit Schratzenstaller and Sabine Steinbacher interviews

<sup>135</sup> *ibid*

perspective became high, since it is included into the general guideline on how to do budgeting prepared for the departments of the City Hall<sup>136</sup>.

The gender budgeting part of the general guideline consists of the numbers of the departments, where each line – each department – has to name “gender-specific” goals, initiatives, and success factors. One example could be: the goal is to increase the participation of women in the given department, the initiative is to give out information to women about the department and to establish career opportunities for them, and the success factor is the rising number of female colleagues. In the 2006 report, the gender budgeting part was 24 pages. The evaluation of the 2007 budget is not uploaded yet to Vienna City Hall’s official website.<sup>137</sup>

### 5.3.4 Gender-sensitive Planning

As was mentioned before, the existence of the Coordination Office for Planning and Construction Geared to the Requirements of Daily Life and the Specific Needs of Women<sup>138</sup> owes its existence to the exhibition “Who does public space belong to – women’s everyday life in the city” – that was organized in 1991. This exhibition was organized partly by Eva Kail, who later became head of MA57 and then head of the Coordination Office. The Coordination Office was established in 1998 with the primary aim of “strengthening social intelligence in the planning departments within the city administration”<sup>139</sup>. In the establishment of the Coordination Office, a lot depended on the person of Eva Kail, who was a planner by profession, and studied regional planning at a technical university. She remembers:

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<sup>136</sup> <http://www.wien.gv.at/finanzen/budget/ra06/pdf/40.pdf> (last accessed: 07.06.08)

<sup>137</sup> <http://www.wien.gv.at/finanzen/budget/ra06/> (last accessed 06.06.08)

<sup>138</sup> Will be mentioned as Co-ordination Office

<sup>139</sup> Kail, Eva and Elisabeth Irschik. „Fair Shared City: Gender Mainstreaming Planning Strategy in Vienna”, Co-ordination Office for Planning and Construction Geared to the Requirements of Daily Life and the Specific Needs of Women, Vienna, 2007., 2

When I was a student there was a lot of feminist literature I was reading but it was more about the private/public divide but nothing in the planning field. When I started to work I wondered whether it was possible to connect the feminist theory with my knowledge of planning. Some German literature existed, so I read a lot and I wanted to involve it into my everyday work. If one is engaged in women's topic, the resources are always small, but here it is rather good because here in the Office it is possible to work continuously.<sup>140</sup>

Since the establishment of the office, many gender-sensitive planning projects were implemented. The biggest one is called "Frauen-Werk-Stadt", which is a residential area, a housing construction "geared to the specific needs of women:"<sup>141</sup> 350 apartments were built in the framework of the project. According to the publication of the Women's Office, the apartments satisfy "the empirically investigated needs of women in daily life"<sup>142</sup> from public transport system and transparent stairwells to interiors that take account of women's needs. The project was so successful that it was followed by Frauen-Werk-Stadt II, and now Frauen-Werk-Stadt III is in the realization stage. The significance of this project – apart from awareness raising in the field of gender-sensitive construction – is that planning criteria for gender-sensitive planning were developed during the implementation that are used now in all construction projects that are subsidized by Vienna. Eva Kail concludes:

It is compulsory to work with us only with these projects. It works nicely because we don't have to go and say 'work with us', but there is the contract, and they are demanding our advice by themselves – we are also invited to other projects too. For example I participate in many juries of planning competitions. That is a very good response – now our expertise is greater than our resources – it was in the last two years. It is a compliment that they are asking for our advice.<sup>143</sup>

Another special area the Coordination Office is working on is the field of gender-sensitive park design. Studies show that girls between the age of 14-18 make less use of parks than boys. Gender sensitive park planning gives "equal consideration for girls' and boys' different behaviour patterns and to the different strategies girls and boys pursue to take

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<sup>140</sup> Eva Kail interview 05.05.08.

<sup>141</sup> "Fair-shaired city", 4.

<sup>142</sup> *An Introduction to Gender Mainstreaming*, 49

<sup>143</sup> Eva Kail interview 05.05.08.

possession of space”<sup>144</sup>. Therefore, guidelines were set up by the Coordination Office that contains suggestions and advice on how to plan parks. These guidelines are taken into consideration whenever new parks are designed or others rebuilt.

There are many reasons for the success of the Coordination Office that Eva Kail lists: it is important that the Coordination Office is placed high enough in the hierarchy; it is part of the technical direction/committee of the City. It is also necessary to study foreign examples and to keep in touch with other gender-sensitive planners – said Eva Kail. Right now there are no organized networks for gender-sensitive planners but there is an e-mail list, and Kail and her colleague, Elisabeth Irschik gets invited to many countries to explain their activities. Among the reasons for success, Kail counts in the favourable historical and political circumstances in Vienna:

In Vienna it is a lucky situation because the Social Democratic party was constantly in government, it is rather strong, and also the women’s organization in this party is rather strong. 15 years ago there was a very positive situation that there was political support – the policy atmosphere was very supportive – there were more open doors than resistance. This was really the spirit of the time.<sup>145</sup>

Among the hardships Kail mentions psychological resistance: in the beginning other planners felt that the Coordination Office questions their competence. Eva Kail describes the situation as follows:

My boss did not like our title “planning orientated for everyday life”. He was a bit offended because it said to him that he has not thought about everyday life before. And you can say “yes, you have forgotten a lot on everyday life”. A lot of men got offended. Regardless of what the topic is, if you are in the position of moralizing and teaching, and telling the others – that is always difficult.<sup>146</sup>

Besides psychological resistance there are difficulties on the structural level as well.

Eva Kail continues:

During an evolution of any administration usually the pressure is becoming much higher for people: the financial means became smaller, the needs

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<sup>144</sup> „Planning recommendations for the gender-sensitive design of public parks” Municipal Department 42 Parks and Gardens, Vienna, 2006, 1

<sup>145</sup> Eva Kail interview 05.05.08.

<sup>146</sup> *ibid.*

bigger so they are constantly fighting to manage their everyday work. Gender-planning means new criteria, more work. New qualitative criteria – more complicated processes, more work – on the structural level it is very clear that you create resistance<sup>147</sup>.

The Coordination Office uses various strategies to convince possible partners about cooperation. One of the most peculiar one was a game organized for politicians, officials and for key players working for the City Hall where all participants could find out themselves the importance of gender sensitive planning. “The second time was a forum, scene playing stopping and playing, interaction- rather successful for 4 hours, traffic planners, they for the first time understood what we are talking about., we were not fighting real conflicts, just playing –it is a good method, standing in the shoes of others” – concludes Kail<sup>148</sup>.

The results of gender-sensitive planning are clearly visible: since the establishment of the Coordination Office, 6 model projects were realized for gender-sensitive park planning, guidelines were set up, and all of the housing projects of the City Hall are evaluated from the gender perspective as well. Eva Kail is also satisfied with the results:

So far around 7 hundred projects were asking for subsidized housing. Two thirds of newly erected houses are financed by subsidies, so the influence is rather big. And if you are continuously working and telling people the same criteria they start to listen and react, because if they don't, they don't get the subsidies – that is a very good connection to gender budgeting.<sup>149</sup>

#### **5.4 “Ingredients” For Successful Gender Equality Policy Implementation In Vienna**

In the methodology chapter on implementation patterns I have briefly mentioned the necessary “ingredients” and the “ideal” pattern that is needed for effective gender mainstreaming. As I take Vienna as one of the “best practices” in Europe for successful local level implementation, I found it best to elaborate on the success factors not only relying on

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<sup>147</sup> Eva Kail interview 05.05.08.

<sup>148</sup> Eva Kail interview 05.05.08.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid.

the general theoretical literature but linking the topic to the actual policy making and implementation processes that can be observed in Vienna.

#### **5.4.1 Strategies Have “Added Up”**

According to the project manager of gender mainstreaming in Vienna City Hall, Ursula Bauer,<sup>150</sup> the reason for Vienna’s “women-friendliness” is that the strategies have added up in the past few decades. The implementation process was the bottom-up type: the strong feminist movement in the 70s achieved recognition by bureaucrats and at some point, political will was born. These two factors, feminist movement (NGOs, women’s organization, civil society in general) and political will are the most important in terms of gender equality policy implementation – as Bauer claims. In the 70s autonomous space (e.g. women’s shelters) for women was created, and also feminist policies. In the 80s institutional women’s policies were added (this is when MA 57 Women’s Department was established), and in the 90s, gender mainstreaming. These three spheres – NGOs, women-specific programs and gender mainstreaming form strong advocacy for gender equality.

#### **5.4.2 Strong Bond Between NGOs, Gender Experts And Vienna City Hall**

The bond between civil society and local government is clearly visible in the previously mentioned financial subsidies for NGOs each year. At the conference of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions in 2008<sup>151</sup>, Ursula Bauer mentioned NGOs as key to successful gender mainstreaming<sup>152</sup>, plus she added the importance of the scientific community and gender experts. These experts can also help creating a “know-how” that can be transferred via trainings, conferences and publications to the bureaucrats who have to

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<sup>150</sup> Chief Executive Office, Executive group for organization, safety and security, project manager of gender mainstreaming

<sup>151</sup> [http://www.ccre.org/photos\\_detail\\_en.htm?ID=32](http://www.ccre.org/photos_detail_en.htm?ID=32)

<sup>152</sup> „Ingredients for a successful start” – Ursula Bauer’s presentation can be found at: [http://www.ccre.org/champs\\_activites\\_detail\\_news\\_en.htm?ID=1263&idca=3117](http://www.ccre.org/champs_activites_detail_news_en.htm?ID=1263&idca=3117)

implement gender equality policies. Networking is a key here, not only among “outsiders” and “insiders”, but also among the different departments within the municipal bureaucracy.

### **5.4.3 Strong Political Will**

Gender expertise, feminist activity and women’s NGOs are not enough to achieve local level gender policy implementation in themselves. Without strong political will, support from the senior management (especially the financial and human resources<sup>153</sup>), success is not possible. In order to gain political will - besides the luck to have a top leader who understands the importance of gender equality - strong networking and influencing capabilities are needed on the part of those who are “outside”, and also, certain favourable political conditions. Several of my interviewees<sup>154</sup> stated, that such favourable political condition in Vienna is the fact that the Social Democrats are on the rule for decades, while the rest of Austria is ruled by the Conservatives. This creates a kind of competitive process where Vienna claims that it is “special” and wants to “see differently” compared to the rest. Being progressive, multicultural, tolerant and non-discriminative are part of the image of the city and this fact may help the existence of gender equality policies, too.<sup>155</sup>

### **5.4.4 Gender Sensitive Heads Of Departments**

It follows from political will, that special departments and positions were created taking gender equality as a priority. I have already mentioned some of these, such as the women-specific department of MA 57 Women’s Office, the Women’s Health Commissioner, the Gender Mainstreaming project, the Coordination Office for Planning and Construction Geared to the Requirements of Daily Life and Specific Needs of Women, the Gender Budgeting Commissioners, and also, the Executive City Councillor for Women’s Issues.

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<sup>153</sup> *ibid*

<sup>154</sup> Eva Kail, Meike Lauggas, Ursula Bauer

<sup>155</sup> Unfortunately, the „liberal city” of Budapest („Budapest – the liberal city” was the slogan of the campaign for the liberal mayor in 2007) does not really take into consideration gender equality issues

Besides these positions, we can find 5 Equal Opportunity Advisors and also 180 Equal Opportunity Contact Persons<sup>156</sup> in the municipal structure.

“It is like a spider-web” – commented this structure Andrea Hlavac. This web (i.e. supportive network of women within the administration) definitely has its advantages. For example, according to the experiences of Hlavac and Bauer, sexist language is less frequently used, women leaders and gender experts cannot be easily discouraged, and gender equality matters relegated as non-important by other colleagues, as these appear at way too many positions for that. “The old men’s network does not work here anymore” – claims Andrea Hlavac. This has great importance regarding the fact that in her research on local implementation of gender equality policies, Ingrid Pincus found one of the main factors that block gender equality initiatives is that male leaders are mostly insensitive to the issue and gender experts are often discouraged – also humiliated – while trying to do their job (Pincus 2002:106). Also very importantly, some of the high positions are held by women.<sup>157</sup>

#### 5.4.5 Sanctions

Besides the above mentioned factors, Ursula Bauer mentioned, that “no high-brow concepts” are used, meaning that the gender equality principles are adapted to the local situation, and that “the work is done directly in and with the departments.”<sup>158</sup> This translation of the general principle of gender equality leads to the creation of rules, guidelines and goals that are understandable for the non-experts, as well. Also, the “down-to-earth” and “step-by-step” approach creates the possibility of another important factor: the sanctions.

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<sup>156</sup> The Equal Opportunity Advisors and the Contact persons are not solely working on gender equality matters

<sup>157</sup> As Andrea Hlavac put it funnily referring to her colleague, Ursula Bauer, „She has the power and I have the money – this is the best strategy”.

<sup>158</sup> Ursula Bauer’s presentation:

[http://www.ccre.org/champs\\_activites\\_detail\\_news\\_en.htm?ID=1263&idca=3117](http://www.ccre.org/champs_activites_detail_news_en.htm?ID=1263&idca=3117)

One example for effective sanctioning is that if an applicant for municipal subsidies only has a chance if s/he proves that there is gender mainstreaming (or, to put it differently, taking into consideration gender equality principles) in the organization that applies for the money. This is the case with municipal housing and also, applying for municipal grants for entrepreneurships. If one does not cooperate with the Coordination Office for Planning and Construction Geared to the Requirement of Daily Life and the Specific Needs of Women, and thus does not regard the guidelines for gender-sensitive planning and building, then no municipal subsidies will be given. As two-third of Vienna's housing is built from municipal subsidies and are municipal housing, this is quite a motivation for the building societies to cooperate.

In the case of gender budgeting, as previously mentioned, since 2006 all departments of the municipality have to answer questions regarding gender equality in their annual budgeting plan. If the answers are "fake", or not good enough to reveal the gender (equality) dimension of the given budget item, then the department budget is sent back for revision – which means more work and also possible reproach from the head of the department in question. "This is also a good way to teach the departments to become gender-sensitive" – claims the Gender Budgeting Commissary. Another type of sanction is linked to subsidies just as in the first example: if institutions cannot prove that they have gender equality plans, then they do not receive money. According to Hlavac, since this regulation, more organizations employ gender experts than before. The reason: it pays off.

### ***5.5 Points For Improvement***

Although the Viennese results are clearly remarkable compared to other European municipalities, still, there is room for improvement. For instance, cooperation among the

departments could be stronger<sup>159</sup>, not all departments are working together with the gender mainstreaming project (17 out of more than 70), not all employees know what gender mainstreaming strategy means. Also, as Bauer admits, the marketing, and dissemination of information of the gender equality projects is not strong enough. "We do much more work than what can be seen from the outside" – she says.

However, in order to make gender mainstreaming effective, general knowledge about these issues should be improved, the public and citizens of Vienna should be informed much more often about gender equality – claims an "outsider" who is working with the City Hall as trainer on gender issues<sup>160</sup>. It was also mentioned that gender budgeting is not fully effective enough – but that is due to the fact that it has only started. It is also not by chance, that Ursula Bauer's presentation at the Pisa conference ended with the sentence "It's a long way to gender mainstreaming" – and also with an illustration of a snail.

The findings of this chapter can be summarized and completed with the points Ursula Bauer presented at a press meeting in 2007. (see Table 4 below).

**Table 4: Success factors and challenges for gender mainstreaming in Vienna<sup>161</sup>**

<i>Important success factors</i>	<i>Challenges</i>
Clear political will	Neoliberal paradigm – privatization euphoria (shrinking public administration, less control on social services)
Support from the senior management (human and financial resources)	Tight budget – decreasing revenues

<sup>159</sup> According to Meike Lauggas, there are no regular meetings between the MA 57 Women's Department and the gender mainstreaming project's representative

<sup>160</sup> Sabine Steinbacher, Imkontext.at

<sup>161</sup> Based on Ursula Bauer's presentation in a press meeting organized by Compress, Vienna, 2007.01.07.

Long tradition in women's policies both inside and outside the administration	General reorganization process in public administration
Strong link to the existing steering and reporting systems	Being afraid of changes, in particular men who are afraid of the change in traditional roles and expectations
Cooperation with the Personnel Training Department of the City of Vienna	"inner couch potato" – passivity, ignorance, lack of cooperation
No high-brow concepts. The work is done directly in and with the departments	
Establishing a network instead of new departments or advisors	

### **5.6 The "Ideal" Policy Implementation Pattern in Viennese projects**

In the methodology chapter on local level implementation and on implementation patterns I have already mentioned that I will take one certain implementation pattern as a basis for comparison. I name this the "ideal" implementation pattern, as it has all the "ingredients" necessary for successful implementation, and also, because according to Viennese gender experts this pattern is the most effective one. It starts on the bottom with gender experts with local knowledge then includes the local decision makers and it ends at the top with supranational organizations. It is the synthesis of the bottom-up and the top-down approach as all players have effect on all levels – there is feedback, effective communication, sharing of experience, knowledge, and there is a constant learning process that brings the cause of gender equality further. The results of the projects are channeled back into the studies of the gender experts so that the cycle starts again, allowing continuous progress – it is not one-way - that is

why it is “ideal.”<sup>162</sup> In the following I will provide two examples for such implementation patterns in Vienna – one is gender budgeting and the other one is a project of the Coordination Office, gender-sensitive park planning.

### 5.6.1 The "Ideal" Pattern And Gender Budgeting in Vienna

As it was previously mentioned that the wide-ranging implementation of gender budgeting in Vienna started in 2006. Since then, the gender aspect is part of the general guideline for municipal departments that they have to take into consideration when planning their annual budget. It is compulsory and there are certain sanctions if it is not done properly. Gender budgeting of Austria became a “best practice,” as it is included in several international documents, among others, in the report on gender budgeting published by the Council of Europe<sup>163</sup>. If we look at the process gender budgeting became a general tool for all departments in Vienna City Hall, it is easy to see that it belongs to the “ideal” type of implementation patterns.

Although the history of gender budgeting dates back to the 80s, according to the publication of the Women’s Office titled *Gender Budgeting 2004*,<sup>164</sup> in Vienna the process started in 2000 by BEIGEWUM; an organization dealing with social, economic and ecological alternatives.<sup>165</sup> Two members started the discussion by founding a working group titled “Women and Budgets.”<sup>166</sup> In this group local gender expertise gathered: sociologists, economists from the academy, various institutions and organizations. Relying on international documentations and already existing international experiences and best practices, the aim of

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<sup>162</sup> See the chapter on local implementation patterns for illustration

<sup>163</sup> “Gender budgeting - Final report of the Group of specialists on gender budgeting (EG-S-GB)” Directorate General of Human Rights. Strasbourg, 2005

<sup>164</sup> *Gender Budgeting 2004*. MA 57 – Office for Promotion and Co-ordination of Women’s Issues, Vienna, 2005.

<sup>165</sup> In German: Beirat für gesellschafts-, wirtschafts- und umweltpolitische Alternativen: <http://www.beigewum.at/>

<sup>166</sup> In German: Frauen und Budget

the group was to bring the topic into public knowledge and to launch wide-ranging discussion in Vienna and in Austria on the issue. After two years of work and a series of lectures on the issue (organized by the University of Economy), a publication was born titled “Women do budgeting. State finances from a gender perspective.”<sup>167</sup> We can consider this book as one of the milestones in the implementation process, as it was capable of drawing the attention of the wider public to the issue. Although no “official” discussion was started with the municipality, a few women from the bureaucracy (the “femocrats”) showed interest and this can be seen as the first step when the local gender expertise and knowledge was channeled into the municipal structure, although this time only informally.

Political will was born in 2003, when the Green Party – more precisely, the “Green Women”<sup>168</sup> from Vienna started a pilot project in the 12<sup>th</sup> district. The aim of the experiment was to try gender budgeting in practice and to draw the necessary conclusions for possible future municipal implementation. Meanwhile, a handbook was prepared that gave more precise information on what to do at the local level, how to lobby for gender budgeting, and what needs to be changed for successful implementation.<sup>169</sup> The City Hall of Vienna officially started the implementation of gender budgeting in 2005, and the first overall municipal budget that took into consideration the gender perspective (more than 1000 budget items were revised in order to do this) started in 2006. Since then, one can find gender budgeting guidelines on Vienna City Hall’s homepage,<sup>170</sup> and also have a look at all budget items and their gender relevance. Also, gender budgeting of Vienna became a model to follow, as since the implementation, the representatives of gender budgeting get invited to several international conferences, and the Viennese example also gets mentioned in international documentations.

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<sup>167</sup> In German: *Frauen macht Budgets. Staatsfinanzen aus der Geschlechterperspektive* published by BEIGEWUM, Vienna, 2003.

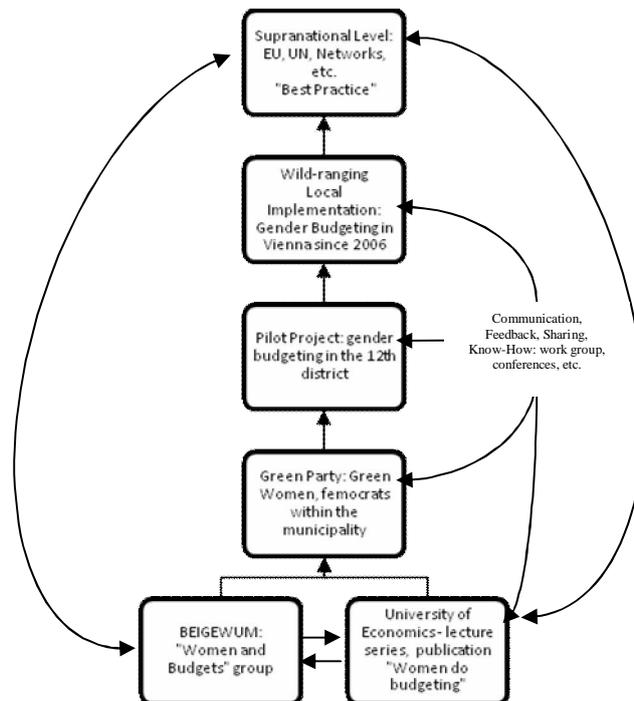
<sup>168</sup> In German: *Grüne Frauen*

<sup>169</sup> Bergman-Gubitzer-Klatzer-Treitl-Neumayer. *Gender Budgeting. Handbuch zur Umsetzung geschlechtergerechter Budgetgestaltung* <http://www1.uni-ak.ac.at/gender/wp-content/gender-budgeting-handbuch.pdf>

<sup>170</sup> <http://ww.wien.gv.at/finanzen/budget/va08/>

As we see, this process completes a full cycle: from international experiences and expertise local knowledge was born in the civil society, that influenced politicians and local decision makers in the municipality, and this lead to the overall implementation of gender budgeting in Vienna, and this experience and expertise was linked back to international knowledge again. From international policy documentations the way to local level implementation lead through local civil society meetings, workgroups, studies, handbooks, and pilot projects.

**Table 5: Implementation of gender budgeting in the municipality of Vienna**



## 5.6.2 The "Ideal" Pattern: Gender-Sensitive Park Planning In Vienna

Eva Kail and Elisabeth Irschik summarizes the gender-sensitive park design as follows: “the project gender-sensitive park design can be described as an ideal process flow of implementing gender mainstreaming into everyday administration.”<sup>171</sup> In the following, I will present a brief overview why it belongs to the “ideal” type of implementation. The first step towards gender mainstreaming in the field of park design was a socio-economic analysis on the “different ways of park utilization by girls and boys”, published by Edit Schlaffer and Cheryl Benard in 1997.<sup>172</sup> Based on the observation of 36 parks in Vienna, the study concluded that girls are less confident than boys when it comes to the occupation of public spaces, such as parks. The most assertive group gets the park – and these are always the boys.

A lecture on a conference followed this study, and as a consequence of this, in 2000, gender-sensitive park design became one of the strategic projects of the Coordination Office. 6 pilot projects followed this decision, meaning that 6 pilot parks were designed in a gender-sensitive manner. During the pilot projects there was constant dialogue between the Coordination Office and the civil society, there was feedback about which pilot was the most successful. “Different forms of participation were tested (...) evaluations were an important part of the project (...).”<sup>173</sup> Constant cooperation, evaluation and feedback is further emphasized by Eva Kail in the essay “Fair Shared City: Gender Mainstreaming Planning in the City of Vienna”:

Working groups in cooperation with competent bodies in the administration and planning experts from outside were organised to discuss experiences from the pilot parks and to draw up “planning recommendations for gender-sensitive design of public parks”. With these planning recommendations, gender-sensitive park design is now considered citywide. The guidelines have since become the basis for all park design in Vienna<sup>174</sup>

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<sup>171</sup> “Fair shared City”, 5

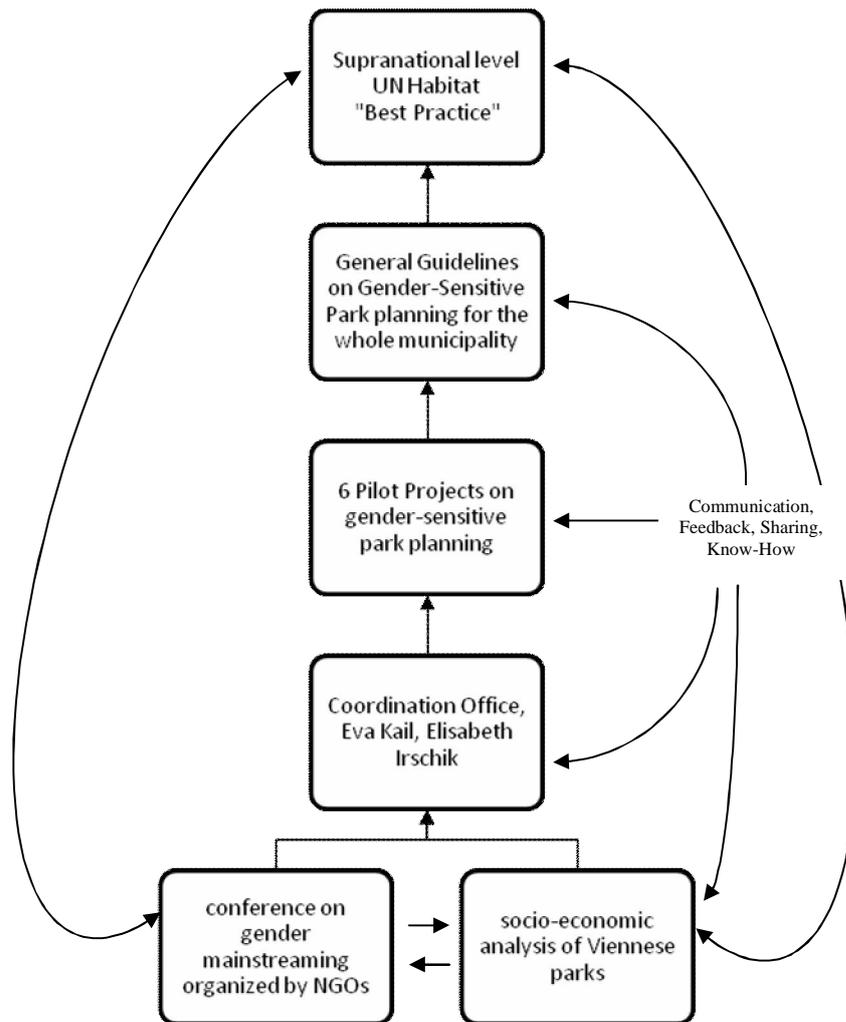
<sup>172</sup> Ibid.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid, 4

<sup>174</sup> Ibid, 6.

Since the introduction of these guidelines, many international NGOs became interested in gender-sensitive park design, it became great media publicity, and a best practice for gender experts.

**Table 6: Implementation of gender-sensitive park planning in Vienna**



## 6. Conclusion

In this thesis my aim was to prove that despite the skepticism and criticism surrounding gender mainstreaming as a strategy to achieve gender equality, under certain conditions gender mainstreaming can work effectively and on the long-term it is capable of transforming a bureaucratic system, such as the administrative body of a municipality.

To prove my point, I conducted a case study on Vienna City Hall, where – as I have argued - all the necessary “ingredients” are there for gender equality strategies to work successfully. I discussed two fields of policy-making in detail, where signs of the transformative nature of gender mainstreaming approach can be seen: these were gender budgeting and gender-sensitive planning.

Following the theoretical literature on policy implementation models, my aim was to find the “ideal” gender equality implementation pattern – an implementation pattern that secures the highest chances that gender equality policies will be put into practice. As local level policy implementation research is very scarce, I have done my research on this level in order to contribute to the already existing literature.

I have also conducted some field research on Hungarian gender mainstreaming implementation patterns and have found that it would be rather insightful to compare the “ideal” implementation pattern to Hungarian cases. However, due to the length constraint, this thesis deals only with the Viennese cases.

## Appendix

### List of interviewees:

*Andrea Hlavac*: Gender Budgeting Commissary in the Office of the Administrative Group Finance, Budget and Statistics

*Elisabeth Irschik*: colleague of the Coordination Office for Planning and Construction Geared to the Requirements of Daily Life and the Specific Needs of Women

*Eva Kail*: head of the Coordination Office for Planning and Construction Geared to the Requirements of Daily Life and the Specific Needs of Women

*Margit Siegrun*: organizer of the MILENA network and of femcities.at

*Margit Schratzenstaller*: Researcher (Tax and Budget Policy) at the Austrian Institute of Economic Research (WIFO), participant in GenderAlp! Project, preparing Gender budget analysis for Upper Austria

*Meike Lauggas*: representative (Fachreferentin) for MA57 Women's Office – Office for the Promotion and Coordination of Women's Issues

*Ursula Bauer*: Executive Office, project leader of gender mainstreaming project in Vienna City Hall, formerly working for MA57

*Sabine Steinbacher*: gender expert, gender trainer, founder of the organization Imkontext (Supervision and Coaching, Consultancy for Social Development), Vienna

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