

Introduction to the City of Vienna Department for Women's Affairs (Municipal Department 57)

The City of Vienna Department for Women's Affairs (Municipal Department 57) is responsible for the advancement, promotion and coordination of women's issues in Vienna. It advocates a gender-equitable society, which offers women and men equal living and working opportunities. The provided services are directed towards girls and women living in Vienna and to the employees of the Vienna City Administration.

The staff team includes legal experts, political scientists, social scientists, social workers, clinical psychologists and health psychologists, office administrators, economists, and public-relations experts, whose qualifications match the wide range of tasks performed by the department.

Herstory

The Municipal Department 57 was established on the 10th of December 1991. Back then the list of responsibilities included participation in legal matters relevant to women in Vienna, in particular in legal provisions concerning female municipal employees. Moreover, the department worked on the establishment of kindergartens, the institutional promotion of women, public relations for the advancement of gender equality, activities for the further and continuing professional training of women, measures to endorse women in the City of Vienna and at the same time, continuously coordinated with the federal government. After its foundation, ten women started working in the newly founded Women's Office in 1992. It was later renamed to City of Vienna, Department for Women's Affairs (Municipal Department 57).

Since then roles and responsibilities have been repeatedly adapted. In 1999, for example, the department took over the management of the 24-Hour Women's Helpline, which provides advice, information and support to women and girls from 14 years, who are affected by sexualised physical or psychological violence. In 2003 the processing of financial contributions to the women's shelters was added to its list of responsibilities, in connection with its financial support of women-relevant projects and measures for the advancement of women in the City of Vienna. In 2019 the department opened the Women's Center, where women in Vienna can get counselling and information from a team of legal experts, social workers and psychologists free of charge.

In 2021, the department celebrated its 30-year anniversary. In 2023 the department received the Common Assessment Framework (CAF). This certificate showcases public-sector organisations across Europe that are using excellent and innovative quality management techniques to improve their performance.

Guidelines, principles and goals

The main objective of the City of Vienna Department for Women's Affairs is to promote equality of women and men and to encourage women to become proactive, lead an autonomous life and participate in all areas of life. Consequently, with its services and information work, it promotes the empowerment of girls and women in Vienna. In this context, empowerment means encouraging, strengthening and supporting self-efficacy, independent living and social participation. With the counselling services offered by the department, girls and women can receive continuous support.

In its work, the City of Vienna Department for Women's Affairs aims at an interdisciplinary approach to girls and women in Vienna taking into account the diversity of their lives.

Vienna's Dedication to Gender Equality

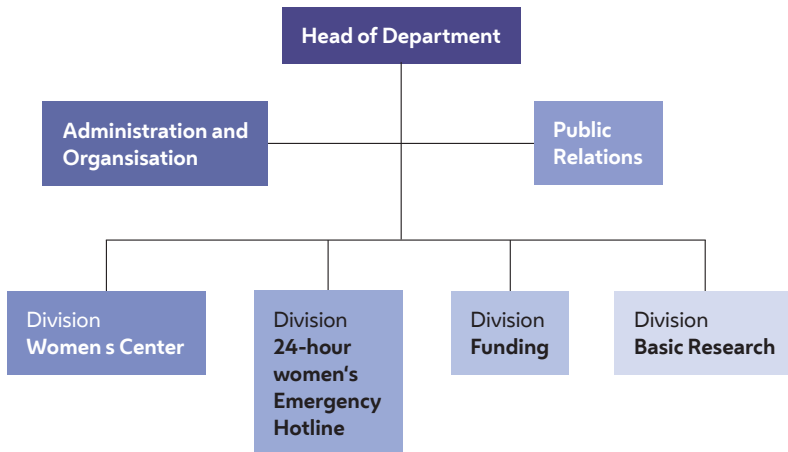
The City of Vienna Department for Women's Affairs cooperates with many different bodies, inside and outside of the city administration. The department's experts are members of different committees for studies and projects, as well as working groups and advisory boards within and outside the city.

Vienna has embraced a widespread approach to incorporating gender perspectives into its organisational framework and policy implementation. This commitment is evident through initiatives such as gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting, targeted efforts against gender-specific violence and sexual harassment and the integration of gender perspectives in key areas such as urban planning, housing, health services, as well as within labour market policies and education.

The success achieved in advancing gender equality within the City of Vienna can be attributed to the commitment of political representatives and prominent figures within the Vienna City

Administration. Critical contributions also stem from gender experts and specialised divisions within various departments, such as the health department (MD 24), which actively shapes the landscape of gender mainstreaming. Notably, the presence of around seventy trained „Contact Women“ across various departments further underscores Vienna’s dedication to fostering a gender-sensitive environment in every facet of its administration.

Organisational chart



The City of Vienna Department for Women’s Affairs has various divisions dedicated to different focal points, such as counselling, funding, research or public relations.