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Almost half of the Austrian population volunteers

Proportion of volunteers has risen since 2006 from 44.0 % to currently 49.4 %

Vienna, 2022-12-05 – According to the Survey on Volunteering 2022 by Statistics Austria, around 3.73 million people aged 15 and older living in Austria regularly engage in voluntary unpaid activities. About a quarter of these people (25.8 %) are involved in associations (formal activity), 36.7 % are volunteering informal, for example in their neighbourhood.

“In Austria, there is a high willingness to volunteer for social interests and other people in their free time: 3.73 million people are involved in voluntary work in associations, churches, organisations and initiatives or help and support other people informally, which is almost half of the population aged 15 and older. In recent years, informal engagement in particular has grown strongly,” says Statistics Austria Director General Tobias Thomas.

Significant increase in informal volunteering since 2006

The reasons for volunteering vary greatly: The majority of respondents would like to help others (92.9 %) or just enjoy the activity they volunteer with (91.8 %). 84.0 % would like to contribute to the common good in a useful manner. Self-serving motives, on the other hand, hardly play a role: only 5.5 % volunteer in order to increase their chance to get a job.

Compared to the results of the volunteer survey conducted by Statistics Austria in 2006, there is a slight increase in the participation rate: in 2006, 44.0 % of people in Austria engaged in voluntary work, in 2022 this number increased to 49.4 % (see Table 1). Formal and informal volunteering, however, have developed very differently. Concerning informal activities, such as helping neighbours, there has been a significant increase from 27.0 % in 2006 to 36.7% at present. On the other hand, there has been a slight decline in formal involvement in associations (2006: 28.0 %, 2022: 25.8 %), which is probably also due to the Corona pandemic and the resulting restrictions of association activities.

Clear difference between the sexes

The results of the Survey on Volunteering show that a total of about 1.9 million men and about 1.8 million women in Austria participate in voluntary, unpaid activities.

The difference between the sexes is particularly pronounced in informal voluntary activities. It is predominantly women who care for or visit persons in need of care or help others with household chores. 41.2 % of women report visiting persons in need of care (26.1 % of men). 40.8 % of women provide help with housework, compared to 30.7 % of men.

The opposite is true for manual work where the difference between the sexes is even more pronounced: More than half of men (57.4 %) and only 11.4 % of women help in this regard.

These differences are similar in organised formal volunteering: the share of men in disaster relief and rescue services (79.2 %) is significantly higher than that of women (20.8 %). The area with the highest proportion of women (59.8 %) is “religion and church”.

70 % of all managers in associations are men

Within associations, there are large differences between men and women when it comes to management positions. Thus, 69.2 % of men are entrusted with a management function, for example as honorary functionaries, compared to only 30.8 % of women. Men also dominate the fulfilment of the core purposes of

organisations, such as operations or representative appearances. 60.9 % of formally active men and 39.1 % of women undertake these tasks. In contrast, the gender ratio for supporting activities is almost balanced: 49.7 % of male and 50.3 % of female volunteers are entrusted with basic activities, such as secretarial work or collecting donations.

For detailed results and further information, please refer to our [website](#).

Table 1: Voluntary work by sex – persons 15 and older

Category	Total in 1 000	Volunteered in the past 12 months		
		Volunteers total in 1 000	Formal activities in %	Informal activities in %
01 Total	7 555	49.4	25.8	36.7
02 Men	3 703	52.4	30.5	37.2
03 Women	3 852	46.5	21.2	36.2

Q: STATISTICS AUSTRIA, Survey on Volunteering 2022.

Table 2: Voluntary work by education – persons 15 and older

Category	Total in 1 000	Volunteered in the past 12 months		
		Volunteers total in 1 000	Formal activities in %	Informal activities in %
01 Total	7 555	49.4	25.8	36.7
02 Compulsory education (max.)	1 602	31.5	13.8	23.7
03 Apprenticeship, Vocational middle school (BMS)	3 458	48.6	25.0	36.3
04 High school diploma	1 250	57.7	31.4	42.6
05 University diploma	1 245	66.0	37.8	48.6

Q: STATISTICS AUSTRIA, Survey on Volunteering 2022.

Information on methodology, definitions:

Sample and data collection: The Survey on Volunteering used a subsample of the Austrian Microcensus. The basis of the sample consisted of 32 000 people aged 15 and older. The participation was voluntary. 13 013 cases were the basis of weighting, extrapolation and analyses.

Extrapolation: Results were extrapolated using iterative proportional updating (following the model of the Microcensus basic programme) in order to represent the population numbers in Statistics Austria's population register at the beginning of the respective quarter (excluding the population living in institutions) and the labour status as depicted in administrative data.

If you have any questions on this topic, please contact:

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