



Summary

In 2009, the Federal Ministry of Health commissioned the Austrian Public Health Institute (Gesundheit Österreich GmbH, GÖG) to develop a concept for establishing Health Impact Assessment (HIA) in Austria (Horvath et al. 2010). It describes four phases of implementation in which particular strategies and areas of action were produced in using the five key areas of a capacity building model (NSW 2001).

At the end of 2015, the HIA-Support-Unit (situated at GÖG) together with the Federal Ministry of Health reflected past years' activities. This reflexion also included the opinions of the members of the Austrian HIA-network and the HIA-steering group.

This reflexion and the according report (Gruber et al. 2016) were the basis for this detailed concept which includes an actualisation of the existing planning (originally till 2021) and an extension of the time frame till 2025. Again, the national HIA-network and steering group were involved and the Federal Ministry of Health and Women's Affairs was consulted.

The next phases of establishing and developing the application of HIA have their focus on federal level, especially on the activities and tasks of the HIA-Support-Unit, which has been implemented for that reason.

Among other activities the development of a communication concept is intended in the key area organisation development. Till the end of 2018, in the context of the Austrian Health care reform a catalogue of criteria for the application of HIA will be prepared. This catalogue is supposed to facilitate the application of HIA inside and outside the traditional health (care) system.

In the key area workforce development the realisation of additional Health Impact Assessments is scheduled among others, which would promote the advancement of experts' knowledge in Austria essentially. This would foster the further establishing of HIA in Austria. Accordingly, the HIA-Support-Unit is supposed to continue carrying out HIA itself, but other public health institutions shall be motivated, too. Also, the implementation of HIA in the curricula of study programs at universities of applied sciences and universities plays an important role when imparting HIA-expertise. To guarantee the long-term realisation of Health Impact Assessments, HIA-trainings shall be established; e.g. in administrative departments on federal and regional level.

In the context of the key area leadership decision makers in federal ministries shall be addressed primarily till the end of 2018. Thus, HIA shall be known in each federal ministry till 2021. To extend the key area leadership national processes and strategies shall be identified, which may be used for establishing HIA; currently these are the Austrian health targets, the diabetes strategy and the healthcare reform in its actual period 2017-2021.

In the key area partnerships care and development of the national HIA-network as well as establishing additional provincial networks – beside the Styrian HIA-network – are essential. Further HIA-conferences could take place in cooperation with other policy areas such as e.g. traffic or

environment. On federal level partnerships between ministries or departments shall be established and national as well as international networking shall be fostered.

Still, the objective of implementing HIA shall be followed. In doing so, the adequate form of implementation has to be clarified in a first step. A HIA is not feasible for every project and the HIA's quality might suffer if it has to be carried out on a mandatory basis. Thus, the introduction of a mandatory HIA does neither seem realistic nor constructive. Therefore, an adequate form of implementation has to be discussed with representatives from the administration.

Even though establishing HIA has to be continued in phases, time frames must not be seen or set too tightly. Activities regarding the further implementation of HIA also have to follow the (political) framework and development in Austria. Therefore, a certain flexibility is needed.