

Thermo-energetic renovation of buildings

National audit abstract	
Country	Austria
The Name of the Audit	Thermo-energetic renovation of buildings
Publication Information	June 2009; Reihe Bund 2009/7 and nine additional reports for the Laender; available in German at www.rechnungshof.gv.at

The national audit objectives

To investigate the contribution of the housing sector and the investments of the Austrian states (Laender) to fulfil the Kyoto Protocol commitment in this sector.

The scope of the audit

- Cost and effectiveness of measures dealing with the mitigation of carbon dioxide emissions in housing; technical standards in renovation and thermo-energetic reconstruction; subsidies and loans; legal framework at the federal and state levels; contribution of the sector to reach the Kyoto target.
- Audit period covered or end date of audit process: 2002–2007.
- Audited entities: Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management; governments and administrations in all nine states.

Conclusions of the audit findings and key recommendations

In the housing sector, the emission reduction already achieved by thermo-energetic renovation of residential buildings was compensated by emissions from additional new buildings. Changes need to be made to transform the existing grants into an effective instrument for emission reduction. In the long term, regulatory measures will have to be taken.

The audit found that the EC Directive on the energy performance of buildings was not implemented by all states in due time, and in some states, there was no incentive to use environmentally neutral building materials. Grant amounts often were not related to energy savings.

The audit recommended that the fundamental criteria for housing grants and the corresponding reporting be completed by net present values on a standardized nationwide basis. The specific costs per reduced tonne of carbon dioxide should be determined in a standardized manner. Amounts of assistance for thermo-energetic renovation projects should be based on the greenhouse gas savings achieved.

Responses of the government to the audit recommendations

The recommendations resulted in various amendments to the legal frameworks of the states, changes in the funding and granting systems, and a contract between the federal Ministry and the states dealing with applicable standards.