

Water and waste water management

Name of Supreme Audit Institution

Österreichischer Rechnungshof (Austrian Court of Audit)

Title of summary report on audit findings

Supplement to the Annual Report concerning the year 2000

Description of the Audit

The aim of the audit was to investigate and evaluate the economic and efficient use of invested funds, if another type of granting system would be more sensible, if the execution (e.g. control mechanisms) is efficient and if there is a contribution to improve to the environmental situation.

The audit was undertaken by the Austrian Court of Audit on its own initiative, was conducted between September 25th and December 1st, 2000 and covered the period between 1993 and 2000.

Scope of audit

determination of objectives and their achievement

mechanisms of distribution

co-operation of federal and provincial authorities

macro-economic consequences

efficiency of waste water treatment

financing

priorities

upcoming costs and investments

handling of the granting system

economy of the system and options

control mechanisms

Audited units

- Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management
- Kommunalkredit Austria AG (the entrusted bank)
- Amt der Kärntner Landesregierung (government of Carinthia)
- Amt der Oberösterreichischen Landesregierung (government of Upper Austria)
- Amt der Steiermärkischen Landesregierung (government of Styria)
- Amt der Tiroler Landesregierung (government of Tyrol)

Audit Participants

Department 19 of the Austrian Court of Audit (Federal ministry of agriculture, forestry, environment and water management, Kommunalkredit Austria AG)

Departments 44 and 48 of the Austrian Court of Audit (provinces)

Summary of the audit findings and evaluation of the audited activities

From 1993 to 2000 grants in the amount of 2 752.04 Mill. EUR were allocated and 693 Mill. EUR were paid out. As a consequence investments in the amount of 7 977.47 Mill. EUR were promoted. The handling of the grants was a very complex system and re-enacting was only possible with incommensurate efforts. Financing was secured only until 2004. The Austrian Court of Audit recommended a change in the financing system in order to be able to adopt the need for liquidity better to the fund-raising as well as a new legal regulation of the handling. The system itself was working effectively but very slowly and inflexibly. The Austrian Court of Audit recommended to streamline the granting system and to redesign the standards concerning priorities, granting and financing.

The connection rate to waste water management systems showed an increase from 71% in 1993 to 81.5% in 1998; water quality was clearly improved, more than 81 % of surface waters can be classified biological water quality stage 2 or better.

The Austrian Court of Audit showed possibilities to reduce the overall costs and demonstrated their consequences on the required funds.

Addressees of the summary report on audit findings

Reports were forwarded to the National Council (federal legislation) and the diets (provincial legislation) of Carinthia, Upper Austria, Styria and Tyrol.

Results of the audit

Negotiations for reconstructing of the financing system were initiated.

The handling was partly streamlined and restructured.

The law concerning environmental grants in Austria was reviewed, new standards concerning the granting system were set up.

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