

Utility-scale energy storage austria

Austria's Climate and Energy Fund has launched a EUR17.9 million tender program ...

ICLG - Renewable Energy Laws and Regulations - Austria Chapter covers common issues in renewable energy laws and regulations - including the renewable energy market, sale of renewable energy and financial incentives, consents and permits, and storage.

The main participants in the renewable energy sectors for both gas and electricity in Austria are the utility companies (especially the utility companies of the provinces and Verbund AG) and their subsidiaries and private entities that operate renewable energy plants and infrastructure.

Austrian renewable energy policy and regulation is – as mentioned – characterised by the distribution of competences between the federation and the provinces.

On the federal level, the legislative competence lies with the Austrian Parliament, while the administrative competence is divided between various ministries. The most important ministries in the context of renewable energy are:

On the provincial level, the legislative competence lies with the provincial parliaments. The highest administrative authorities are the provincial governments (Landesregierungen). The provinces have the legislative competence for environmental topics, such as nature protection laws, building codes or spatial planning laws. Their executive competence covers not only provincial legal acts but – for example – also federal laws such as the Environmental Impact Assessment Act (Umweltverträglichkeitsprüfungsgesetz, UVP-G).

The district administrative authorities enforce numerous federal and provincial legal acts. Finally, municipalities enforce certain aspects of planning law, such as land use and zoning plans, as well as building law.

The Austrian market regulator for both the electricity and the gas sector is Energie-Control Austria für die Regulierung der Elektrizitäts- und Erdgaswirtschaft (E-Control). Its task is to supervise the unbundling of the electricity and gas markets. To fulfil this task, E-Control has several executive rights, e.g., the remittal of ordinances on tariffs or the determination of non-discriminatory access to the grids.

The federal government holds ownership stakes in energy companies such as Verbund AG or OMV AG. The provinces also hold stakes in provincial utilities. The share of stakes varies; in some cases, the government(s) hold(s) up to 100%.

In addition to the previously mentioned EAG as the most important funding instrument of renewable energy projects, the government recently announced and partially implemented several other legislative acts. These include, for example, the implementation of the Renewable Heat Act (Erneuerbare-Wärme-Gesetz, EWG) and the amendment to the Energy Efficiency Act (Energieeffizienzgesetz, EEffG). Furthermore, the draft of the Renewable Gas Act (Erneuerbare-Gase-Gesetz, EGG) was adopted by the Council of Ministers on 21 February 2024 and forwarded to the Federal Parliament for further consideration.

There are further legislative plans in the field of renewable energies that are of great importance for meeting the climate goals (see question 9.1 below).

In Austria, there are various options for financial support for the expansion of renewable energies. Funding and investment subventions according to the EAG depend, among other things, on whether the plant is newly built or adapted and on the type of energy source (e.g., photovoltaic, biomass or wind power plants). In addition to the funding provided by the federal government, there is a wide range of funding provided by the provinces, which is in most cases also linked to the type of energy source.

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