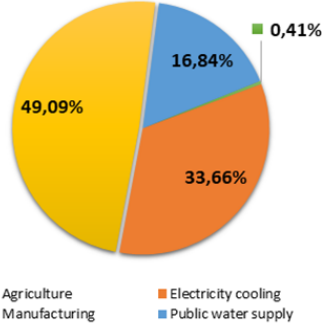
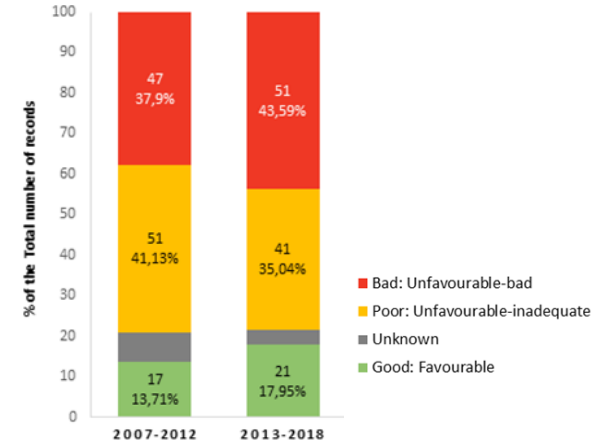




of inhabitants **9.1 million**
 Surface area **82 159 km²**
 GDP per capita **125 pps [1]**
 Significant bodies of water (RBDs) **Danube**
 Polity **federal state**
 Layers of government **central government; 9 federal states; 95 districts (including 15 cities); 2 098 municipalities**
 Legislative powers at the sub-national level **Yes**
 Decentralisation index **1.5 (18 out of 27) [2]**
 Water Exploitation Index plus (WEI+) **1.78% (2017) [3]**



Water abstraction per sector in Austria - Source: EEA (2022)



Conservation status for habitats in 2007-2012 and 2013-2018 in Austria - Source: EEA (2021)



Water bodies with less than good ecological status in Austria - Source: EEA (2021)

Main actors responsible for WEFE nexus relevant governance

NEXUS PILLARS	POLICY MAKING	POLICY EXECUTION
Water	Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Regions and Water Management	Provinces; municipalities
Energy	Federal Ministry of Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology	Environment Agency Austria; provinces; municipalities
Food	Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Regions and Water Management	provinces
Ecosystems	Federal Ministry of Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology	Environment Agency Austria, provinces, municipalities

WEFE NEXUS PERSPECTIVE

CHALLENGES

- Improve conservation objectives and measures for species and habitats in Natura 2000 sites
- Restore river and floodplain habitats and improve river connectivity
- Adapt existing infrastructure, such as sewerage systems, to manage heavier rainfall events
- Identify and address sources of nutrient pollution in agricultural areas
- Support ecosystem services' assessments and natural capital accounting

OPPORTUNITIES

- The Austrian government has executed the Austria's Water Treasure study (2023) as a guide for water management until 2050[4]
- A Biodiversitätsdialog 2030 has been held about measures to restore and protect wet habitats, and agricultural landscapes
- Austria's Recovery and Resilience Plan supports climate and environmental objectives to further the green transition
- A new biodiversity fund has been created to finance nature protection and restoration measures that will receive a top-up of EUR 50 million from Austria's RRP.
- 77 local action LEADER groups have been set up to advance a bottom-up approach that engages local actors in developing rural areas

More information on WEFE nexus governance in the EU

[1] EU purchasing power standard
 [2] <https://portal.cor.europa.eu/divisionpowers/Pages/Decentralization-Index.aspx>
 [3] The threshold for water scarcity is set at > 20%
 [4] <https://info.bml.gv.at/en/>

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