

AUSTRIA: Statement for ICN 2

Director General of WHO
Director General of FAO
Excellencies
Distinguished Ministers
Heads of Delegations
Ladies and Gentlemen

First of all I would like to **convey the sincere wishes of the Federal Minister of Health Sabine Oberhauser and Federal Minister of Agriculture Mr. Andr  Rupprechter** for the success of the ICN 2. Due to unforeseen reasons, both ministers are unfortunately not able to attend this important Conference.

On their behalf I would like to take this opportunity to thank - the Director Generals of FAO and WHO - for convening ICN 2. Twenty years after the first ICN we have to recall the current level of under- and malnourishment and mention for the first time the global obesity epidemic and the global challenge of diet-related chronic diseases. The complexity of socioeconomic and environmental impacts calls for cross sectorial inclusive approaches in particular in areas like agriculture, health, trade, education, science and social policy.

Therefore it is of utmost importance that member states take adequate measures to combat hunger and undernourishment as well as take actions to reverse the trend towards overweight and obesity with all its consequences for our society.

Allow me now to draw your attention to **two major measures in Austria:**

In the **new extended Austrian Food Model, agriculture and food system governance have an essential role** to address the challenges and can effectively contribute to alleviate the negative consequences of food insecurity, malnutrition and obesity. We are strongly convinced, that sustainable **agricultural policies have to become increasingly nutrition sensitive.**

There is an undeniable need to put **family farms** in the centre of action, being the main food providers in certain regions. Austrian agriculture is mainly driven by families, which are the social unit of production and consumption. They are also the source of labour in agriculture and therefore require effective rural development policies to sustain their livelihood.

There are many different types of agriculture at regional, national and local level, from horticulture to cattle grazing; there is no "one size fits all". Nevertheless, family labour and in particular the role of women are vital for providing food security and nutrition.

The overarching principle of the new extended Austrian Food Model is **sustainability** with six strategic goals: **food security, food quality and safety, diversity of foodstuffs, regionality and appreciation of food.**

For the latter, Austria relies in particular on **awareness raising** and **education** and successfully implements **school milk and school fruit programs** which contribute from childhood on to healthy diets.

As far as awareness raising is concerned, Austria has also launched the campaign “**food is precious**”, which helps **to prevent food waste at all stages: purchase, storage and consumption**. It - will be one contribution to the joint FAO/UNEP campaign: think.eat.save. Thus helping to develop people’s consciousness that food is precious.

As second example of our national measures I would now like to inform you about the **Austrian Nutrition Action Plan**:

Anticipating the new European Food and Nutrition Action Plan it follows a **horizontal “health in all policies” strategy** and incorporates the concept of the **WHO EURO Health 2020**. It aims at the coordinated implementation of effective measures to support all people - living in Austria - to make healthy dietary choices, to reverse or at least to stop still rising figures of overweight and obesity and to reduce the prevalence of diet-related chronic diseases by 2020.

To enable and enhance the necessary **multidisciplinary dialog** and to involve all relevant stakeholders a new advisory board – the National Nutrition Commission – was implemented in 2010, chaired by the Ministry of Health. Its members act as ambassadors to raise nutrition higher on the political agenda.

Current activities are mainly targeted towards **infants, children, adolescents, pregnant and nursing women, socially disadvantaged and the elderly**. We focus on both, **environments** on the one hand by creating conditions that make the healthy choice the easier and **individual competencies** on the other hand by enhancing nutrition literacy.

- A **success story** is our “School Cafeteria” initiative. It aims at improving the nutritional quality of the food offered in school cafeterias. Currently 300 caterers take part reaching approx. 220.000 pupils. This is for the time being the widest reaching public health intervention initiative that ever took place in Austria in the school setting.
- Another measure is the implementation of a free of charge nutrition counselling for pregnant women and families with new-born.
- Finally, we published food based dietary guidelines for different age groups, did awareness campaigns and are active in product reformulation (e.g. Regulation on trans fatty acids and the agreement on salt reduction with bakeries)

Austria fully supports FAO’s and WHO’s roles in collaboration with other UN agencies and international organisations in combating hunger and malnutrition. We are interested to see how tangible results after the outcome of the Conference have been implemented once an appropriate follow-up mechanism will be in place.

Finally I would like to recall that Austria, as member of the EU, fully aligns itself with the statement made by the EU Presidency on behalf of its 28 member states.

Thank you for your attention.