

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

THIS REPORT CONTAINS ASSESSMENTS OF COMMODITY AND TRADE ISSUES MADE BY
USDA STAFF AND NOT NECESSARILY STATEMENTS OF OFFICIAL U.S. GOVERNMENT
POLICY

Voluntary Public

Date: 1/17/2018

GAIN Report Number: AU1801

Austria

Post: Vienna

New Responsibilities and Name for Austrian Agriculture Ministry

Report Categories:

Agricultural Situation

Agriculture in the News

Approved By:

Kelly Stange

Prepared By:

Roswitha Krautgartner

Report Highlights:

Elisabeth Köstinger, the first female agriculture minister of Austria, will now head the “Federal Ministry of Sustainability and Tourism,” which covers the agricultural agenda.

On December 18, 2017, the new ministers of the coalition government between the Austrian People's Party ("ÖVP") and the Austrian Freedom Party ("FPÖ") were sworn into power. [Elisabeth \("Elli"\) Köstinger](#) from the ÖVP took over the agricultural agenda. Succeeding Andrä Rupprechter, Köstinger is Austria's first female Agriculture Minister. In her last position as a member of the European parliament Köstinger distinguished herself in agricultural and environmental topics.

The Agricultural Ministry, which Köstinger took over in mid-December 2017, covered agriculture, forestry, environment, and water-management. By end of December, the Austrian government proposed changing the names and responsibilities of several ministries, including the "Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water-Management". The Ministry covering the agricultural agenda is now re-named the "[Federal Ministry of Sustainability and Tourism](#)". In addition to agricultural responsibilities, the new ministry also covers energy, mining, and tourism, which were formerly included in the Ministry of Economy. This change came into effect on January 8, 2018.

In terms of agriculture, the [government program](#) of the OeVP – FPOe coalition contains the commitment to, "protect the Austrian high environmental, animal welfare, and food standards." This commitment includes maintaining the ban on cultivation of biotech crops and to produce an action plan to nationally ban the herbicide Glyphosate.