

Enhancing and funding primary healthcare in Austria

Interim report



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The Recovery and Resilience Facility project as a boost for primary healthcare

100 PHCUs (primary health care units) – Austria is reshaping its primary care system to make healthcare fit for the future. How did this transformation come about?

In 2021, the European Commission launched the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF), a funding instrument designed to help EU member states mitigate the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic while strengthening Europe's sustainability and resilience. As part of its Recovery and Resilience Plan, Austria included the project "Enhancing and Funding Primary Healthcare in Austria" and is receiving €100 million in RRF funding for this purpose.

Before the RRF project began, primary care in Austria was assessed as weak by international standards as it focussed on solo practices and was below average in terms of expenditure, but there was also plenty of potential. The RRF project has significantly strengthened primary care in Austria, representing a major step towards the future model of multiprofessional primary care.

Most of the RRF funds are directed towards financial support for PHCUs, group practices, and independent outpatient clinics, thereby strengthening local healthcare in a targeted

and sustainable way. The funding boosts innovative care models in which interprofessional collaboration is part of everyday primary care practice, for example, by expanding PHCUs nationwide, modernising infrastructure, setting up initiatives for social inclusion or providing training and further education for members of the health and social professions.

Some of the RRF funds have been channelled into the Austrian Primary Health Care Platform, which provides significant support for the cultural shift towards multiprofessional primary care. On behalf of the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection (BMASGPK), the Department for Primary Health Care and Coordinated Health Service Delivery (APV) at the Austrian National Public Health Institute (GÖG) is responsible for setting up and running the Primary Health Care Platform. The platform allows Austria's multiprofessional primary healthcare community to network



PATRICK LOBIS,
Head of the European Commission Representation in Austria:

"Securing the future of resilient healthcare is a priority for the European Commission across Europe. Strong primary care is the foundation of any resilient healthcare system. As experience in Austria shows, primary health care centres can play a crucial role in ensuring access to effective healthcare services. We value our cooperation with the specialist agencies and everybody else who is involved and look forward to further exchanges."

“



KORINNA SCHUMANN,
Federal Minister,
Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection:

“Strengthening primary care is a key concern of our health policy – especially regarding comprehensive, high-quality care close to home for all generations. Children and families in particular need low-threshold services that provide early support and comprehensive assistance. With the opening of the 100th primary health care unit, we have succeeded in establishing this forward-looking care model more broadly across the country. In doing so, we are creating modern care structures that benefit both patients and health and social professions – and are investing sustainably in a solidarity-based healthcare system.”

more easily, connecting practice, science and policy and facilitating a continuous exchange of experience throughout the country. Because new ideas are better developed together, the platform’s central activities are networking, participation and knowledge transfer, whether nationally or internationally, in direct contact or online on its own website.

In addition, the project contributes to implementing the United Nations’ 2030 Agenda with its 17 sustainable development goals, especially Good health and well-being, No poverty, Industry, innovation and infrastructure, Reduced inequalities, Sustainable cities and communities and Climate action.

The RRF funds have also been used to launch new research funding for primary care. Grants will be provided for applied research projects in primary care that focus on improving social inclusion, ecological sustainability, digitalisation or multiprofessionalism in primary care as well as on establishing research networks between universities, universities of applied sciences and primary care facilities.

The RRF project to strengthen and enhance primary healthcare can already be considered a success and is also recognised internationally as a best practice example. The following sections outline key developments that have been initiated by this project. ●

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ULRIKE KÖNIGSBERGER-LUDWIG,
State Secretary,
Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs,
Health, Care and Consumer Protection:

“Primary health care units work – and they offer more than many people think: longer opening hours, more time for patients and a strong team from various health and social professions under one roof. This relieves the pressure on hospitals, ensures faster help on site and makes jobs in the healthcare system more attractive again. Without the EU recovery plan and support from the Austrian Primary Health Care Platform, we would not be where we are today. Our goal is clear: we want to expand this successful model further – for young and old. Because good care should not be a stroke of luck but should be available in every location.”

“



HERWIG OSTERMANN,
Executive Director,
Austrian National Public Health Institute:

“Austria’s path to modern primary care requires an efficient and sustainable care structure – and multiprofessional primary health care units play a key role in this. The RRF project serves as a springboard here: with funding for the establishment of PHCUs, further training and networking, care can be managed in line with demographic needs. In this way, we are contributing to a resilient healthcare system that strengthens primary care as the first level in healthcare.”

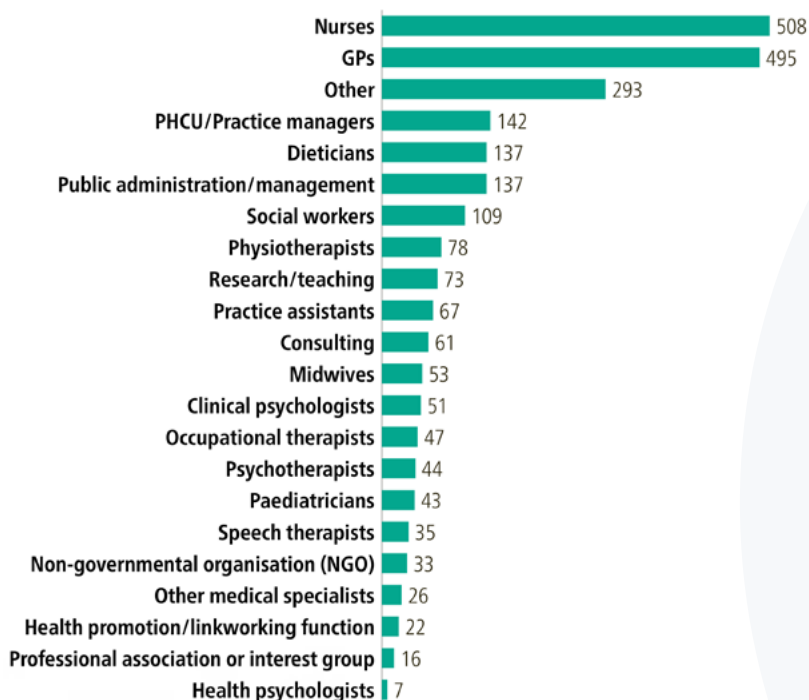
Health thrives together: the Austrian Primary Health Care Platform

The Austrian Primary Health Care Platform is a nationwide platform for networking, knowledge transfer and participation in the field of primary care. It has been connecting the primary healthcare community in Austria since 2022, both as an analogue knowledge community and as a digital platform with extensive services. The community has grown considerably during this time, with more than 2,470 individual members and 144 institutional members now active (as of 1 July 2025). The aim of the platform is to strengthen primary healthcare in Austria.

A DIVERSE COMMUNITY

The community is characterised by its versatility, multiprofessionalism and wealth of knowledge. Platform members currently include individuals from 12 health and social professions, practice managers, various professional associations and interest groups,

those involved in teaching, research and public administration, and students. The platform is not restricted to members of the health and social professions but is a meeting place for all people who are interested in primary healthcare. Membership of the Primary Health Care Platform is free of charge.



59

contributions
in the media library



2,474

individual
members



144

institutional
members



65

platform events



3,452

participants at
platform events



SARAH BURGMANN,
Deputy Head of the Department for Primary Health Care and Coordinated Health Service Delivery, Austrian National Public Health Institute:

“The development of the Austrian Primary Health Care Platform fills me with enthusiasm because it opens up new avenues for modern, team-based care and takes collaboration in the healthcare sector to a new level. As coordinator of the Austrian Primary Health Care Platform, I see it as our task to pick up on needs from practice, science and politics and combine them with international trends. By joining forces in the community and working closely with our stakeholders and partners, we create innovative solutions that meet the needs of the people of tomorrow in a sustainable way.”

144 institutional members

- Aidshilfe Oberösterreich
- ARGE Pflege.Challenge Waldviertel
- Austrian Primary Care Association
- aws Austria Wirtschaftsservice GmbH
- Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection (BMASGPK)
- Governing body of Social Insurance Institutions
- European Forum for Primary Care
- Austrian National Public Health Institute (GÖG)
- Gesundheitsdrehscheibe Stadt Graz
- Austrian Health Insurance Fund (ÖGK)
- ÖLYI Österreichische Lymphinstitute
- Initiative Schmerz e.V. – Verein zur Förderung der Selbstwirksamkeit in der Schmerztherapie
- PVE – Verein gemeinnütziger Anbieter gesundheitlicher und sozialer Dienste
- neunerhaus – Hilfe für obdachlose Menschen
- Österreichische Apothekerkammer
- Österreichische Gesellschaft für Allgemein- und Familienmedizin
- Österreichische Gesellschaft für Kinder- und Jugendheilkunde
- Austrian’s Children’s League
- Junge Allgemeinmedizin Österreich
- Psychotherapeutischer Bereitschaftsdienst
- WELYI Welser Lymphinstitut
- Telemed Austria
- 4 municipalities
- 8 professional associations
- 5 educational establishments
- 2 funding agencies
- 80 PHCUs
- 23 additional doctor’s practices



STEFAN KORSATKO,
GP and Family Doctor,
Medius – Zentrum für Gesundheit:

“When we started the OEFOP (Austrian Forum for Primary Care) ten years ago, primary care in Austria was little more than a vision – a delicate little plant, nurtured by idealism and the will to change. Today, it has grown into a strong, professional network. The Austrian Primary Health Care Platform has not only taken up our dreams, it has exceeded them by far: it has brought the idea to a wider audience, anchored it, connected it – and thus led primary care to where it belongs: right at the heart of the healthcare system.”



ANDREA SIEBENHOFER-KROITZSCH,
Director, Institute of General Practice and Evidence-based
Health Services Research, Medical University of Graz:

"I am very impressed by the Austrian Primary Health Care Platform, which developed out of the 'Austrian Forum for Primary Care' in Graz. This forum has been professionalised and offers everything from knowledge transfer and networking to data usage and has become absolutely relevant throughout Austria."



Media library

primaerversorgung.gv.at/mediathek

NETWORKING: LEARNING FROM EACH OTHER

'Better together' is the motto under which the platform connects a total of 2,500 people from all nine federal states and beyond to form an active community. From intraprofessional networking groups on the development of professional roles and areas of responsibility in the health and social professions via topic-specific networking groups on teaching and research to the annual members' meeting to bring the diverse community together in person, the platform offers a wide range of opportunities for dialogue regarding the new model of team-based primary care. Website services such as the bulletin board connect bidders with those looking for jobs, collaborative ventures, internships and premises for practices.

KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER: SERVICES FOR THE COMMUNITY

The Austrian Primary Health Care Platform is also characterised by its facilitation of knowledge transfer. Members can take part in free webinars on current topics such as data protection or social prescribing, or access recordings later in the media library. A members-



Members' meeting in 2024

only area provides extensive materials, checklists, specialised information and tools. From recommendations for interprofessional collaboration and a concept for a health café to an online tool for regional healthcare profiles, the services offered by the platform are as diverse as the community itself. One focus is on health promotion in primary care, including a section on equal opportunities in primary care so that primary care providers can find all practice-relevant information in one place.



MIRA MAYRHOFFER,
PHCU Manager,
Medizin Mariahilf:

"The Austrian Primary Health Care Platform has enabled me to network with my colleagues at management level throughout Austria and engage in regular dialogue. By sharing innovations, ideas and solutions to problems, all primary health care units can benefit from each other. Processes can be adapted efficiently, which benefits both staff and patients!"



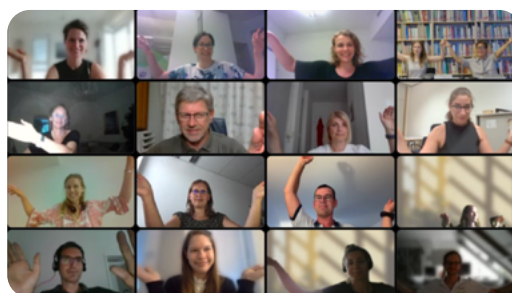
SARAH EGGINGER,
Nurse,
Hausarztmedizin Plus –
Gesundheitszentrum Haslach:

"I particularly appreciate the interprofessional networking via the Austrian Primary Health Care Platform – the dialogue is open and enriching. The high-quality and interesting webinars as well as the training and further education opportunities are a real added value. The platform also serves as a reliable source of information for daily practice."

Another service for the community is videos on health and social professions: currently, two infovideos on the role of social work and nursing highlight the exciting areas of responsibility of these two professional groups in the new PHCU model. They help raise awareness both within and outside both groups in order to inspire members to work in PHCUs and to support interprofessional collaboration through knowledge of each other's competences.

PARTICIPATION: CO-CREATION ON MANY CHANNELS

Involving the community in the development process of the Primary Health Care Platform before it was founded and continuing to do so in the long term is a priority and a success factor alike. During ongoing operations, members of the platform can actively participate in idea workshops or surveys; the results of such formats then flow directly into programme planning. The GÖG and BMASGPK project team also engages directly with the community both nationally and internation-



Idea workshop

ally and is present at fairs, conferences and site visits, for example. Since 2024, the Primary Health Care Platform has been active on social media, another channel through which the community can network.

The (cultural) change towards multiprofessional team-based care is taking place in dialogue with the community, politics and science. Thanks to its activities, the platform has made a significant contribution to the further development of primary healthcare: it has been and still is an important catalyst for the process of change. ●

PHCU developments in Austria: a model for success in primary care

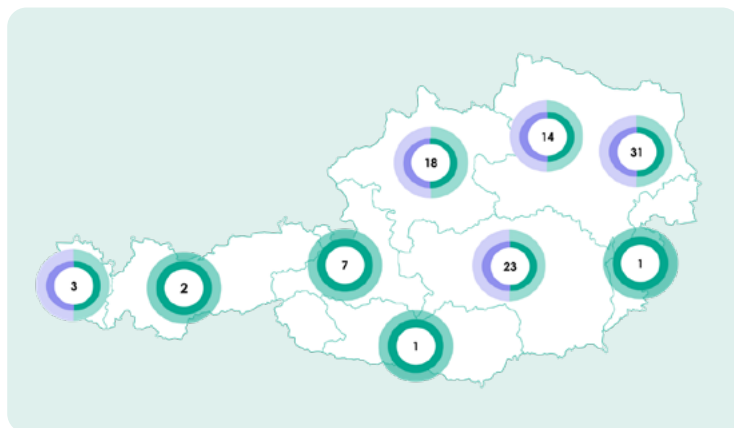
Well-developed primary care with a broad range of services is an important political goal: it helps improve the health status and health opportunities of the population as a whole.

The concept of multiprofessional and interdisciplinary primary care has been in place in Austria since 2014. In 2015, the time had come: Austria's first PHCU opened in Vienna, namely Medizin Mariahilf. To date (as of 1 July 2025), there are 100 PHCUs throughout Austria, 13 of which are paediatric PHCUs. An interactive PHCU map on the website of the Primary Health Care Platform (primaerversorgung.gv.at) shows the current locations of all PHCUs in Austria.



PHCU map

primaerversorgung.gv.at/standorte-pve-landkarte



WHAT SETS PRIMARY HEALTH CARE UNITS APART

What is special about a PHCU/paediatric PHCU? In this form of organisation, general practitioners and/or paediatricians, nurses, office assistants and members of other health and social professions such as dietitians, physiotherapists, psychotherapists and social workers work together in a team. The services offered by a PHCU are tailored to the needs of the region and can be very diverse. In addition to the treatment of acute and chronic illnesses, the focus is on health promotion, prevention and psychosocial health. Interprofessional collaboration between members of different health and social professions enables the strengthening of public healthcare efficiently and to a high standard, covering holistic care and continuous coordination of individual services from infancy to old age. Patients also benefit from close coordination within the team. They gain additional points of contact alongside their general practitioner, appreciate the extended opening hours of a PHCU and develop greater health literacy. Whether as a primary health care centre on one site or a primary health care network at several locations, PHCUs are covered by public health insurance and the first point of contact for everybody with health concerns.



STEFAN EICHWALDER,
Director of the Health Systems Division,
Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs,
Health, Care and Consumer Protection:

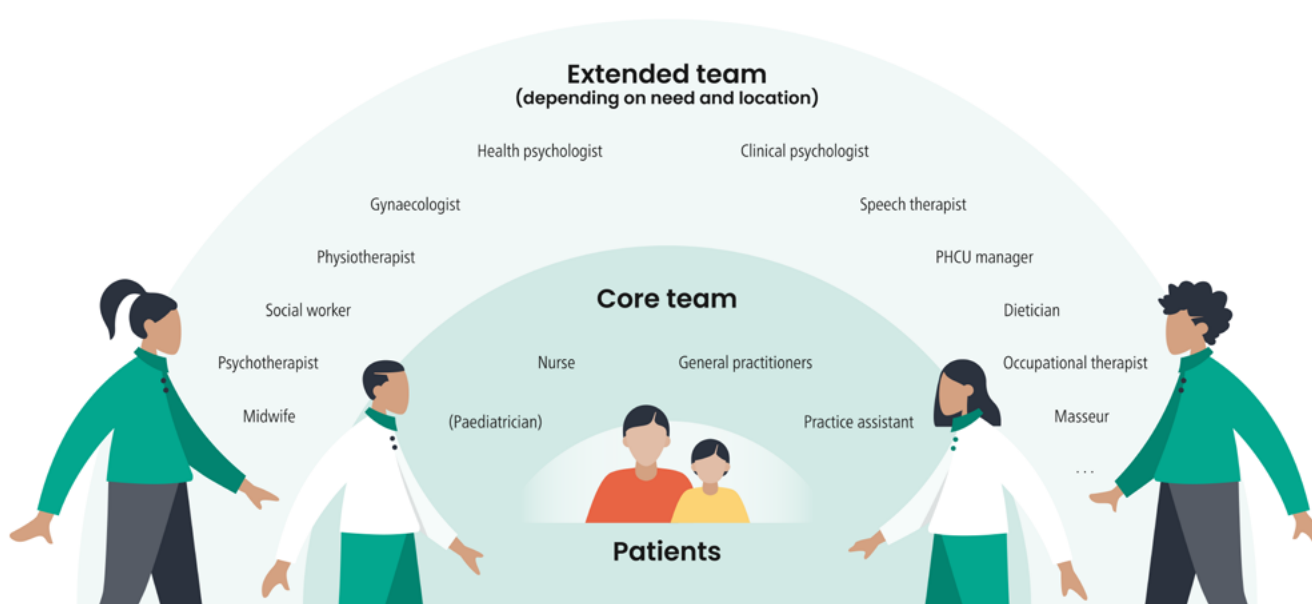
"Strong primary care is essential for safeguarding Austria's public health-care in the long term and for improving medical care for everyone. Primary health care units play a central role in this, thanks to their multiprofessional teams and broad range of services. The rapid development in recent years is particularly encouraging, highlighted by the opening of the 100th primary health care unit in July. This success has been made possible largely through targeted support from EU funds under the Recovery and Resilience Facility."

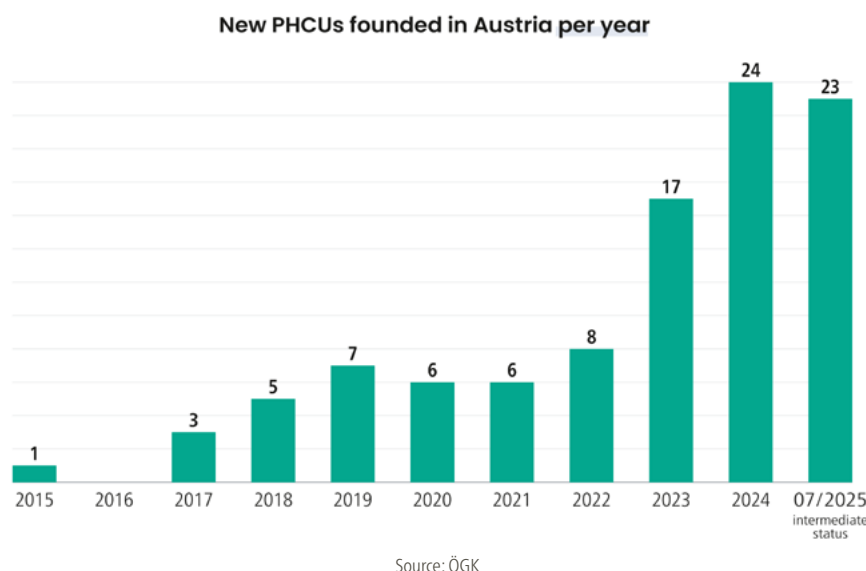


DAVID WACHABAUER,
Head of the Department
for Primary Health Care and Coordinated
Health Service Delivery,
Austrian National Public Health Institute:

"The fact that Austria now has 100 PHCUs is not only the result of the efforts of the federal government, provinces and social insurance institutions but also of the many courageous steps taken by individual teams. We have had the privilege of accompanying many founders on their journeys – from the initial concept to concrete implementation. The RRF grants were a key driver in this process: they provided financial support to the founders and gave them planning security. It is wonderful to see how the theoretical concept of PHCUs is now becoming a vibrant place where multiprofessional teams are rethinking healthcare together."

The team in a primary health care unit





THE RRF PROJECT BOOSTS PHCU DEVELOPMENT

As already mentioned, Austria's first primary health care unit was founded in Vienna in 2015. The Primary Health Care Act (PrimVG), passed in 2017, provided the legal framework for establishing and running PHCUs, and their number has been growing steadily.

A strong dynamic has been in place since funding was introduced as part of the European Union's Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF). New PHCUs are supported in the same way as existing PHCUs, contracted group practices and independent outpatient clinics for general medicine or paediatric and adolescent medicine. The Primary Health Care Platform was also established thanks to RRF funds.

Another positive development has been observed following amendments to the Primary Health Care Act: since 2023, it has become even easier and quicker to set up a PHCU. The Act also enabled such units for team-based primary healthcare for children and adolescents, so-called paediatric PHCUs.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

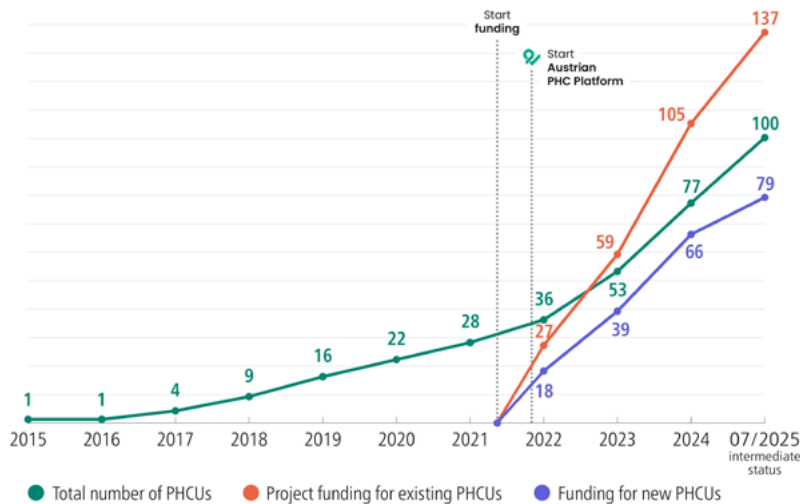
The Regional Healthcare Structure Plans stipulate that there should be a total of 133 PHCUs in Austria by the end of 2025. The current government programme also defines the expansion of PHCUs as a goal: a continued increase in the number of PHCUs after 2025 is, therefore, to be expected. ●



BERNHARD WURZER,
General Director, Austrian Health Insurance Fund (ÖGK):

"Today, healthcare without primary health care centres is almost unimaginable. What was initially difficult for many to conceive of is now well established practice in the 100 primary health care units. Both patients and employees benefit from the close cooperation between doctors, nurses, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, psychotherapists, dieticians and midwives. Here at the ÖGK, we are committed to providing comprehensive care for our policyholders, regardless of age, place of residence or social status. We can offer this with primary health care units, which provide coordinated care with extended opening hours – it is the model of the future."

Development of new PHCUs and RRF funding applications



Source: aws, ÖGK; status as of 31.12.

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CLAUDIA NEUMAYER-STICKLER,

Deputy Chair of the Conference of Social Insurance Institutions:

“With the continuous expansion of primary health care units, we are strengthening low-threshold access to medical care – close to home, multiprofessional and also at off-peak times. The social insurance institutions are thus demonstrating once again that they are in favour of solidarity-based healthcare that not only works today but will continue to do so in the long run.”

“



BARBARA ENGLER,
PHCU Patient:

“I am a patient at a primary health care unit and think it's great because my children and I are looked after by a competent team, whether it's for vaccinations, flu-like symptoms or minor injuries. Even when the kids get sick on a Friday afternoon. I also really appreciate the friendly approach, especially with the children.”

“



MANUELA HASELAU,
PHCU Patient:

“My GP is part of a primary health care unit and I would definitely recommend it to others as I receive very competent care from the team and the opening hours are unbeatable for me as somebody who works. It's also very beneficial for the care of my mother, who I look after. Nurses can also advise my mother and me and home visits from both our GP and the nurse are possible if we need them.”

A better start: funding and the PHCU accelerator

PHCUs are supported by the RRF project with a variety of measures and offers, first and foremost in the form of extensive funding.



Since the end of 2021, new PHCUs and existing PHCUs have been able to submit their projects to Austria Wirtschaftsservice GmbH (aws) for funding and since 2024, contracted group practices and independent outpatient clinics have also been able to do so. As of 1 July 2025, 184 projects have concluded a funding agreement; a selection of projects is

presented on the following pages. Funding has been provided, for example, for building a new PHCU, structural adaptations, medical equipment, further education and training or sustainable mobility. The application period for funding ends on 31 January 2026. This support has sparked a significant increase in newly founded PHCUs.

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MELANIE VÖHRINGER,
Programme Manager, Austria Wirtschaftsservice GmbH:

“The funding of primary health care units through the Recovery and Resilience Facility is a key lever for creating new primary care models. As the federal government’s promotional bank, we provide targeted support for the implementation of this forward-looking model of care. The funding programme for investments when establishing a PHCU or supporting existing PHCUs, contracted group practices and independent outpatient clinics strengthens regional care, promotes multiprofessional cooperation and creates modern jobs in the health and social sector. The high demand for PHCU funding clearly shows how great the interest in and need for new forms of care is in Austria.”

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CHRISTINE HABERLANDER,
Deputy Governor and Member of the Provincial Government of Upper Austria:

“In Upper Austria, we work together every day to ensure that people can live well and healthily. We are united by the goal of providing high-quality medical care in all parts of the province. In primary health care units, the proven collaboration between health insurance funds, the Medical Chamber and the province of Upper Austria has proved to be extremely successful. As a pioneering province, we are playing a leading role in primary care: together with Vienna and Styria, we are among the provinces with the most funding agreements for new PHCUs – a clear sign of our commitment. Primary health care units bring together general medicine, paediatrics and therapeutic services under one roof, making them a forward-looking care model for all generations. In this way, we are securing the backbone of our medical care system while at the same time relieving the burden on staff in our hospitals.”

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MARTINA RÜSCHER,
Member of the Provincial
Government of Vorarlberg:

“Primary health care centres are a forward-looking model for us because they provide comprehensive, interdisciplinary care close to home. They not only strengthen cooperation between different health and social professions but also relieve the burden on doctors, thus making a decisive contribution to the attractiveness of the profession. This ultimately benefits patients in particular, who receive high-quality and easily accessible care. Improving health-care for children and adolescents is also particularly valuable. With the expansion of the primary health care centres, we have succeeded in achieving the goals of the Regional Healthcare Structure Plan (RSG). All three primary health care centres in Vorarlberg – the PHCU in Bregenz-Vorkloster, the MedEms in Hohenems and the paediatric PHCU in Dornbirn – were set up within the current funding period. Many thanks to all those involved and especially to the dedicated teams in the centres who made this possible.”

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BEATE PRETTNER,
Member of the Provincial
Government of Carinthia:

“We are very pleased that, together with the Carinthian Health Fund and the social insurance institutions, we have succeeded in setting up a trilateral agreement. With this framework agreement on the distribution of costs for financing primary health care units in Carinthia, including funding for new PHCUs, we want to jointly support and promote the rapid expansion of PHCUs in Carinthia in the best possible way.”

“



KARLHEINZ KORNHÄUSL,
Member of the Provincial
Government of Styria:

“Our goal for healthcare provision for Styrians is ‘Open up wherever possible!’ because no matter where someone lives, the same standards of care must be provided. The key to expanding health centres in Styria is strong cooperation between all system partners. From the state and the Styrian Health Fund, the Austrian Health Insurance Fund and the Austrian Medical Chamber to the hospital operators, we are working together to improve care for the people of Styria. With our existing 24 health care centres (PHCUs), including two paediatric PHCUs and one health centre which is similar to a PHCU, we are focusing on strong local services complementing the solo and group practices. A large number of new PHCUs were supported and made possible by the funding provided as part of the RRF project. For the future, it would also be important to integrate gynaecology and dentistry into PHCUs in order to improve care in these areas too.”

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PETER HACKER,
Executive City Councillor, Vienna:

“Vienna is dedicated to expanding the number of contracted practices, primarily with the help of primary health care units. By mid-2025, there were 23 PHCUs and 8 paediatric PHCUs plus 2 independent paediatric outpatient clinics in operation in Vienna. This has significantly increased general medical care, especially in the early morning and evening but also at the weekend. However, this is by no means the end of the story: the idea of primary health care units must be further developed in the specialist medical field as well, also in the form of multiprofessional centres. The goal in Vienna is to have 100 regional health care centres in operation by 2030.”



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PETRA DORFSTÄTTER,
CEO, PVZ-Schwechat:

“With RRF funding, practical communication training tailored to the needs of the various health professions and a one-day emergency training course were implemented at the Primary Health Care Centre in Schwechat. These training courses have not only strengthened our team in the long term but have also made a noticeable contribution to improving the quality of patient care.”

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VALENTIN BÜRGSCHWENDTNER,
Social Worker,
Allgemeinmedizin Graz Gries:

“The RRF grant made a valuable contribution to the partial financing of my participation in the university course in Primary Health Care at the Medical University of Graz – a course that sharpens our awareness of systemic relationships in the healthcare system and opens up new perspectives for interprofessional work.”

A BETTER START: THE PHCU ACCELERATOR

At the beginning, potential PHCU founders face many questions: What do I need to consider from a tax perspective? What do I need to know legally? And what is important in terms of team management? This is why the Primary Health Care Platform launched the PHCU accelerator: it supports founders and guides them through all the steps from the idea to commissioning and beyond. Interested parties receive all relevant information free of charge and in compact form in one place. With formats such as information events and workshops, mentoring, the opportunity to network with other PHCU founders and extensive templates and materials, the accelerator offers a customised, goal-oriented range of services. This is what the programme covers in detail:

Information events and workshops: Founders can take part in events on topics such as founding a PHCU, taxes and law, organisation and personnel or planning and construction. At these events, there is plenty of room for questions from founders – and for answers from experts. The events are free of charge

for members of the Primary Health Care Platform and the recorded events can be viewed at any time in the media library. There is also an online “walk-and-talk” format: in a virtual PHCU tour, those who are interested gain insights into the team roles and work processes of a PHCU and can ask questions directly to the team.

An online tool for regional healthcare profiles: The tool helps founders create their healthcare concept. It provides an overview of the population and the care situation in a specific district, enabling PHCU founders to clarify characteristics relating to demographics, prevention and epidemiology in order to align the services offered by their practice as closely as possible to the regional needs.

Templates and materials: Containing all of the important information on setting up a practice in one document, a comprehensive handbook is available to download from the Primary Health Care Platform website. Plus there are templates for a business plan, the website and the concept for a PHCU.

↓
2,083

downloads of
start-up handbook

19

mentors

55

funding agreements
for new PHCUs

116

project funding
agreements for
existing PHCUs

13

funding agreements
for contracted group
practices and independent
outpatient clinics

status as of 1 July 2025

Personal reasons to start a PHCU

primaerversorgung.gv.at/meingrundzugruenden



Mentoring: Nineteen experienced PHCU founders and managers from almost all federal states accompany new founders on their start-up journey and share their experiences.

Direct consultations: If questions remain unanswered despite the many offers, the accelerator team is also available to answer them personally. These questions may, for example, concern the choice of location, the next steps or questions about funding.

The website of the Primary Health Care Platform offers even more: for example, ten steps to founding a PHCU in detail, further downloads such as sample contracts, a list of all PHCU contracts or the bulletin board where founders can find other co-founders, employees or consultation rooms.

PERSONAL REASONS TO START A PHCU

Why do founders choose the PHCU path?

The GÖG and BMASGPK project team spoke to PHCU founders, looked at patient surveys and read numerous studies and evaluations from Austria on the topic of primary care.

These are the ten most important advantages of PHCUs:

1. **Working in a team**
2. **High levels of patient satisfaction**
3. **Various funding opportunities**
4. **Working as equals**
5. **Focusing on one's own tasks**
6. **Reducing the burden on our healthcare system**
7. **An attractive workplace for young professionals**
8. **Shared responsibility**
9. **Attractive and fair pay**
10. **Flexible working hours and holidays**



In 2024, the Primary Health Care Platform launched a media campaign to raise awareness of the topic. The focus was on PHCU founders, who described the reasons for starting their PHCU in short videos. These included door-to-door exchange with colleagues from different professional groups, providing comprehensive care for patients, and enjoying greater flexibility and an improved work-life balance.

SELECTED PROJECTS:

FROM PROJECT FUNDING TO THE FOUNDING OF A PHCU

Three years after funding started, we take a look back. Which projects have been realised? How has funding helped establish new units or expand primary care services? The following pages highlight selected projects:



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VERONIKA LANGE,
GP and Family Doctor,
Gesundheitszentrum Itzling:

“With the help of the funding received, the health centre Itzling has converted the existing solo practice into an attractive, barrier-free centre. Specifically, two additional workstations for assistants and a room for the nurse were added as well as a new building for the extended team. The health centre is now being completely refurbished with the help of the RRF funding.”



“



CHRISTINA KIBLBÖCK,
Paediatrician, Kinderärzte am Domplatz:

“Kinderärzte am Domplatz is a paediatric PHCU where four experienced paediatricians work together with experts from nursing, speech therapy, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, psychology, psychotherapy, dietology, social work and office assistants. The common goal of the multiprofessional team is to provide the best possible medical and therapeutic care for all of the children entrusted to us with medical expertise and compassion. Thanks to the RRF funding, we were able to realise this project in line with our ideas and the needs of our young patients.”



“



FABIENNE LAMEL, WOLFGANG MÜCKSTEIN,
WOLFGANG WEINHAPPEL,
GPs and Family Doctors, PHCU Medizin Mariahilf:

“With the help of EU funding, an old apartment building was extensively renovated, remodelled and made barrier-free. Two consulting rooms and two large, bright nursing rooms were created in which wound care according to modern standards, infusion therapy, blood samples, ECGs and nursing counselling are carried out. A waiting area with a pleasant atmosphere was created, as was a new social room for the team. Heating and cooling is provided by an air heat pump.”





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CHRISTOFER PATRICK REICHEL,
GP and Family Doctor,
Gruppenpraxis Sierndorf:

“When we heard about the possibility of RRF funding for our group practice, this was really very good news for us as we had already planned to improve the services for our patients but this project could not be realised with our own funds alone. Thanks to this support, we will be able to add more consulting rooms to the existing building and thus provide even more efficient and convenient care for the steadily growing number of patients. The fact that this funding has now been made possible for group practices as well really is an important step towards making primary care more attractive, especially in rural areas and small towns, as in our case.”



“

HANNELORE FAUSTER,
BARBARA SCHMIDMAYR,
MONIKA SCHUSTER,
GPs and Family Doctors, PVN Schöcklblick:

“Thanks to funding from Austria Wirtschaftsservice GmbH, we were able to make forward-looking investments, be it in the area of digitalisation or modernising the equipment and premises of our medical practices – this is how we ensure sustainable patient care.”



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MICHAEL KAIBLINGER,
GP and Family Doctor,
PVZ Tullnerfeld:

“The Primary Health Care Centre in Tullnerfeld was built in 2022/23 as a sustainable and energy-efficient new building in one of the fastest growing regions in Austria. The funding from the RRF has helped ensure that medical care can be provided close to home in the region.”



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VERENA BRENNEIS,
MANUELA HOCHEGGER,
EVA-MARIA TAMMINEN,
GPs, Gesundheitszentrum
Reininghaus:

“The RRF funding has enabled us to build and set up the health centre in Reininghaus from scratch. In this way, we are providing healthcare close to home with the highest possible quality of treatment – in an atmosphere in which both patients and employees feel comfortable. The support was a decisive impetus for us to realise our vision of future-oriented primary care in the growing Graz district of Reininghaus.”



Beyond borders: international networking, research and teaching

Research, teaching and international networking are essential for sustainable and strong primary healthcare. Since the start of the RRF project to make primary healthcare in Austria more attractive and to promote it, significant progress has been made in these areas.

Thanks to the commitment of the GÖG and BMASGPK project team, Austrian primary healthcare has gained significant international visibility, and activities in research and teaching have expanded considerably since the project began. How were these successes achieved? The answer lies in a variety of targeted measures and innovative approaches.

PART OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY: MEMBERSHIP OF THE EUROPEAN FORUM FOR PRIMARY CARE

The Primary Health Care Platform has been an institutional member of the European Forum for Primary Care (EFPC) since the start of the project in 2021. In addition, APV employees are honorary members of the EFPC's Executive and Advisory Board. Over the years, the project team has also organised numerous EFPC webinars: the English webinars can all be found in the media library.

A STAGE FOR AUSTRIA: VISIBILITY AT INTERNATIONAL CONGRESSES

The GÖG project team has been represented at EFPC conferences with a wealth of workshops and presentations since the start of the project, a commitment that culminated in bringing the conference to Vienna in 2025! At other international conferences, including

European Public Health Conferences and WONCA Europe Conferences, Austrian primary care initiatives, the RRF project and the Primary Health Care Platform have been presented to international audiences of experts, enabling Austria to position itself as an active and visible player in the European discourse on the further development of primary healthcare.

BRINGING INTERNATIONAL EXPERTISE ON BOARD: THE SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY BOARD

At the same time, the project team has brought international expertise on board. Since 2025, a Scientific Advisory Board has advised the project team on key primary healthcare issues and supported it with scientific and strategic developments. The board consists of leading experts in primary healthcare in Europe. The expertise of the advisory board ensures that the platform remains at the forefront of innovation and contributes to the advancement of high-quality primary healthcare in Austria.

CROSS-BORDER EXCHANGE

The GÖG and BMASGPK project team has welcomed several international delegations to Austria, including delegations from Kosovo,

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FLORIAN MÖLZER,
GP and Family Doctor,
CEO, medloft | Primärversorgungszentrum Margareten:

“The site visit to the Netherlands provided valuable insights into a modern healthcare system. It was striking that there is often more time for direct patient care as organisational tasks – such as issuing sick notes – are not part of GP care. At the same time, it became clear that the quality of care in the Netherlands also varies greatly depending on the provider.”



Site visit in the Netherlands

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INES SCHÖLS,
Regional Director for Styria,
PVE Diakonissen GmbH:

“For me, the visit to the Netherlands was like looking through a pair of glasses into the future, where Austria should be in a few years’ time. I like this vision. A key step will be to strengthen the competences of the health professions involved in primary care. I found many new ideas and inputs particularly motivating, which have great added value for patients at relatively little cost.”

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MATTHIAS KÖNIG,
GP, Primärversorgungszentrum
Allgemeinmedizin Vorkloster:

“For me, the site visit made me realize that we need more co-operation and networking in primary care in Austria. I was impressed by the confident independence, professional expertise and effectiveness of the primary care providers. However, after this brief glance, the primary care landscape seemed somewhat less colourful and personal than in Austria, which I consider to be one of the many strengths of our system.”

Poland and the Netherlands. The programme included guided tours of PHCUs and presentations at the Gesundheit Österreich GmbH site to give international guests insights into Austrian primary care, the primary healthcare reform and the RRF project.

The GÖG and BMASGPK project team also organised their own trips to Slovenia and the Netherlands. The aim of the site visits was to familiarise delegates with successful primary care practice models on site, to visit research institutes and interest groups representing

different professional groups, to learn from each other and to bring innovative approaches back to Austria. The composition of the Austrian delegations was as colourful as the primary healthcare community itself: members of the health and social professions from primary care, representatives of Junge

Allgemeinmedizin (JAMÖ) and Junge Pflege, experts from the Austrian Health Insurance Fund (ÖGK) and the federal states, researchers in the field of primary healthcare and employees from GÖG and the BMASGPK were able to participate, get to know each other and network.



Site visit in Slovenia



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MAGDALENA PILS,
Social Worker,
PVZ Melk:

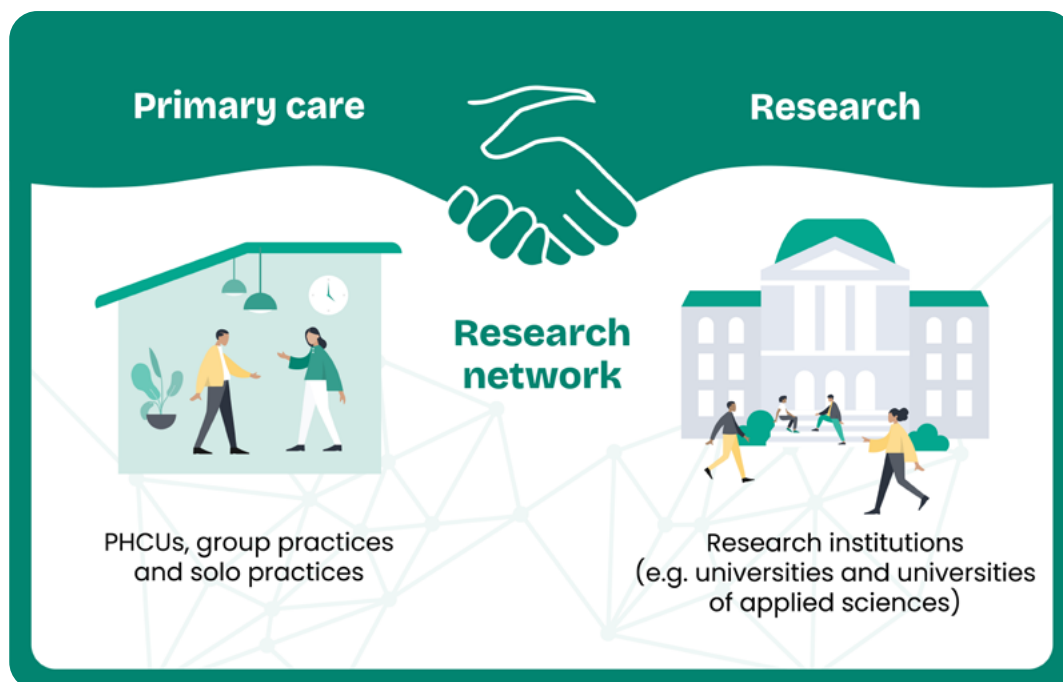
“Our site visit in the Netherlands impressively showed how the inseparable link between mental and physical health is already anchored in the healthcare system. The support from social workers plays an important role in this – just as it does in primary health care units in Austria. This holistic approach to patient care and prevention made a lasting impression on me.”

“



THOMAS PEINBAUER,
GP, Hausarztmedizin Plus –
Gesundheitszentrum Haslach:

“Although Slovenia borders on Austria, it was the site visit with GÖG that first made me aware of the strong anchoring and organisation of primary care. I was impressed by the degree of academisation in general and family medicine. I also took away the model of the simulation centres, where you could practise first and last aid situations with your own primary health care team.”



NETWORKING KNOWLEDGE: RESEARCH AND TEACHING

The Primary Health Care Platform is also committed to networking within Austria. The research and teaching networking group set up by the platform aims to bring people in Austria who research or teach in primary healthcare closer together and to promote professional exchange. The group organises online meetings and panel discussions and also provides topic-specific information and teaching materials. Members can actively help shape content and contribute their own areas of specialisation.

RESEARCH THAT IS PUT INTO PRACTICE: NEW FUNDING

To further strengthen primary healthcare and make it more attractive, research networks are also being established in Austria based on international models involving collaboration between scientific institutions and primary health care units or GP practices to conduct joint research. In spring 2025, the platform published a call for proposals for such practical, application-orientated research projects, which will be financed by RRF funds. The projects submitted were evaluated

by the international Scientific Advisory Board. Out of all the submissions, the projects from the Paracelsus Medical University, the Medical University of Innsbruck and the Medical University of Graz received funding. They will conduct research on telemedicine and AI-assisted ultrasound training as well as the effects of heat and extreme weather events on primary care in the near future. A further call is planned for the end of 2025.

MAKING RESEARCH MORE VISIBLE: ON THE PLATFORM'S WEBSITE

To provide the primary healthcare community with the best possible support for research, training and networking with research partners, easily accessible resources are available on the website. These include information on data sources for health services research, an online library with theses on the topic of primary care, a topic exchange for inspiration for theses and a collection of current training programmes. In addition, the platform's events offer opportunities for further professional training, including credit for further training hours or points. And the digital bulletin board provides support in the search for research partners or study participants. ●

Outlook

We remain true to our claim:
health thrives together!

Together we have achieved a lot in recent years and made great progress in primary healthcare in Austria. This has only been possible thanks to cooperation between the federal government, the federal states and the social insurance institutions with many other stakeholders and, in particular, with the many courageous founders and primary care professionals who take Austrian primary care a step further with their work every day.

Together with its partners, the Primary Health Care Platform will continue to vigorously support the community, especially PHCU founders and primary care providers, in practising multiprofessionalism in everyday life. Applications for funding can still be submitted until January 31, 2026. Strengthening research and teaching also remains a key objective for the coming years.

The GÖG and BMASGPK project team is looking forward to meeting many members at member meetings, webinars and other

events in the coming years and to exchanging ideas with them.

The RRF project is strengthening and enhancing primary healthcare in Austria, making it more attractive for both patients and providers. In the coming months, many further projects are set to benefit from RRF funding.

Beyond the RRF project, it is essential to maintain momentum and keep primary healthcare high on the agenda. The current healthcare reform plays a central role in this, especially through the measures set out in the 2024–2028 Federal Target-Based Governance Agreement: expanding PHCUs, strengthening local care, and improving the networking of care structures.

Once the RRF project is completed, we will look back on what has been achieved – until then, we will continue to work together to strengthen Austrian primary healthcare! ●





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