

Exercise 2 Stop and think - women were not allowed to ...

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| **QUESTION - Stop and think:**  *Which rights did women not have in Austria in the 19th century?*  Mark with a cross:  Women were not allowed to... |
| * marry * vote * be elected * make music in public * go on maternity leave * work without permission from father/husband * write for the newspaper * study |

From 1861 onward, the Empire of Austria had a parliament (Reichsrat) consisting of two chambers, the Herrenhaus and the Abgeordnetenhaus. The people had no say in the composition of the Herrenhaus because all members were appointed by the emperor. In the Chamber of Deputies sat representatives who were elected indirectly through electoral votes (curia system). The right to vote was not linked to gender, but to education and wealth. Thus, if a woman provided the necessary direct tax contribution, she could vote through a representative or proxy. However, there were very few of them.

In the middle of the 19th century, the first associations representing the interests of women were founded. Women were not officially allowed to be members of (political) associations or to participate in political meetings until the beginning of the 20th century. Despite this prohibition, they organized themselves in various women's associations. One example is the Viennese Women's Employment Association, which was founded in 1866. A first women's rights movement emerged in Austria. The goals of these women's movements were primarily to improve the living conditions of working women and to achieve equal participation in public, social and cultural life. In addition to the right to work, the right to earn their own money and the right to a school and university education, women also wanted the right to political participation - the right to vote.