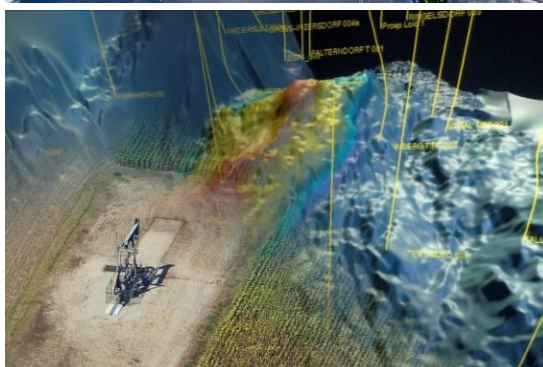




Researcher's Guide to AUSTRIA

Welcome to Austria!
Willkommen in Österreich!



If you are a researcher **planning your next stay in Austria**, look here for career opportunities and find relevant information and assistance

www.euraxess.at

There are many important issues one has to take into consideration when moving to another country. This Researcher's Guide to Austria wants to support you and your family to get a good start in Austria. It provides information about Austria in general but will also guide you to the legal basis of entry and residence regulations, taxation and social security.

This guide provides information especially for scientific (academic) teachers or researchers and their families. It is available for download (.pdf) on the website of [EURAXESS Austria](http://www.euraxess.at).

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Content

1	About Austria	2
2	The Research & Development Landscape of Austria	3
2.1	Research Policy (as set out in the ERA Portal Austria).....	3
2.2	Structure of the Austrian Research System	4
2.3	Research Funding – Austrian Database for Scholarships and Research Grants	6
3	Higher Education in Austria	8
3.1	Public Universities and Universities of the Arts	8
3.2	Private Universities	9
3.3	Universities of Applied Sciences (UAS; <i>Fachhochschulen, FH</i>)	10
3.4	Certificate University Programmes for Further Education (<i>Universitätslehrgänge</i>)	10
3.5	University Colleges of Teacher Education	11
4	Recognition of Qualifications	12
5	Entry & residence regulations and work permits	13
6	Taxation	14
7	Social Security in Austria	15
7.1	Health Insurance.....	16
7.2	Accident Insurance	16
7.3	Pension Insurance.....	16
7.4	Unemployment Insurance	17
7.5	Social Security and Stipends	18
7.6	Guaranteed Minimum Resources.....	18
8	Intellectual Property Rights	20
8.1	Protection of inventions/company labels/designs in Austria	20
8.2	IPR issues at application stage.....	21
9	The Austrian Education System	22
10	Learning German	23
11	Accommodation	24
12	Childcare	25
13	Dual career and integration services	26
14	EURAXESS – Researchers in Motion	27
14.1	EURAXESS Austria	27
14.2	EURAXESS Jobs – posts from Austria	28
14.3	The Network of EURAXESS Centres	28
14.4	Research working environment – Austrian organisations.....	29
15	Contact	30
16	References	31



1 About Austria

Austria, officially the Republic of Austria, is located in the heart of Europe and can be proud of a long history of scientific research as well as a highly diverse research landscape with internationally renowned research institutions – all this in addition to a rich cultural past and present and an exceptionally high quality of life. This wealthy, stable and prosperous nation of about 8.8 million people joined the European Union (EU) in 1995 and is part of the Euro zone and the Schengen area.

The country also plays an active part in the European Research Area (ERA). Investments in research and development have been steadily increased in recent years in order to further strengthen Austria's position as a knowledge society and to foster innovation and work towards the goal of becoming one of Europe's most innovative countries.

To achieve this goal, Austria also strives to provide favourable conditions and adequate support for researchers. With her active research landscape, a dynamic and innovative economy and a high quality of life, Austria is an attractive destination for international researchers and their families.

Further information

Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs: www.bmeia.gv.at/en

Austrian Economic Chambers: www.wko.at

Austrian National Tourist Office: www.austria.info/uk

Relevant information on the topics of Science, Research and Innovation in Austria:
www.innovationaustria.at/home-en.html



2 The Research & Development Landscape of Austria

In recent years Austria has invested substantially in research and development, reaching the second-highest research intensity in the EU.

Even though further measures are required to reach Austria's goal of becoming one of Europe's most innovative countries efforts undertaken in recent years such as the reorganisation of non-university research institutes and the implementation of new funding programmes have already made an impact. The numbers of scientific publications and patent registrations have increased and the collaborations between science and business have been expanded. In addition, Austrian research organisations and enterprises have successfully participated in the EU research framework programmes. Austria is among the three most successful countries regarding the success rate in Horizon 2020.

New measures to achieve a better environment for research are put in place continuously, such as the increase of the research premium, which can be claimed for expenditures on R&D, to 14 % in the course of the latest tax reform.

Compared with 2017 the total amount of the Austrian Gross Expenditure on R&D (GERD) has risen by 5.6 %. Regarding the latest presumptions, in 2018, 49.5 % of total R&D expenditure were financed by domestic business, 34.1 % were contributed by the public sector, 15.8 % were financed from abroad and 0.6 % by the private non-profit sector.

According to the latest estimates of Statistics Austria € 12.34 bn have been spent on research and development (R&D) in Austria in 2018, representing a research intensity of 3.19 %.

2.1 Research Policy (as set out in the ERA Portal Austria)

The RTI (Research, Technology, Innovation) strategy "Realising Potential, Increasing Dynamics, Creating the Future – Becoming an Innovation Leader", which was launched in 2011 for the next decade, aims to see Austria promoted from the group of "innovation followers" to the league of "innovation leaders" regarding the Innovation Union Scoreboard. The RTI strategy defines Austria's strategic and operational goals, sets priorities and includes support measures for the promotion of research, technology and innovation. It addresses measures to strengthen national research structures with a focus on excellence, to foster the innovative capacity of companies, to raise the efficiency of governance, and to link research, technology and innovation to the education system. The strategy should also help to mobilise research, technology and innovation for the grand challenges of society and the economy. The Federal Government proposes to set itself the goal of increasing the country's research ratio to 3.76 % of the GDP by 2020. Over time, Austria has more than doubled its research expenditure since 2005, increasing its R&D quota from 2.37 % to 3.19 % by the end of 2018. By international comparison, Austria has the second highest R&D rate, in terms of gross domestic expenditure on R&D relative to gross domestic product, and the seventh highest in the world.

The European Research Area (ERA) plays an important part in Research, Technology and Innovation in Austria. In order to position Austria in the group of "Innovation Leaders" in the long run it will be necessary to promote internationalisation efforts in research and to participate even more in



European research programmes and to optimise the participation of the country's enterprises and research organisations.

On 29 May 2015 the Competitiveness Council adopted conclusions in connection with the European ERA Roadmap 2015-2020. In these conclusions the Council called upon each member state to provide for the national implementation of the European ERA Roadmap by means of national action plans or strategies. With the "[Austrian ERA Roadmap](#)" Austria complies with this request by the research ministers of the European Union and follows the European ERA Roadmap, both with regard to structure and to content. On 30 November 2018 Council Conclusions on the governance of the European Research Area were adopted under the Austrian Presidency. The ERA Council Conclusions consist of three parts: (a) Acknowledgement of important progress by the different ERA-related groups in implementing the ERA agenda; (b) Decision of the research ministers on the "ERA Advisory Structure", based on the pertinent review and the ERAC report; (c) Outlook on the future of ERA, with the invitation to the European Commission to publish a new ERA Communication by 2020 as well as to Council Presidencies to organise regular ERA ministerial conferences. Regarding the Horizon Europe regulation, the Council reached a political agreement with a partial general approach.

Regarding Europe and the European Research Area (ERA), the ERA Observatory Austria establishes a new roof for the integrated governance of Austria's role in European RTI policy. It supports evidence-based decision-making and enables Austria to play an active role in Europe. If you are further interested in EU-related research policy and its implementation in Austria and in Europe please refer to the [ERA Portal Austria](#).

2.2 Structure of the Austrian Research System

2.2.1 Policy level

Three ministries are responsible for research and technology at the policy level in Austria: the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research (BMBWF), the Federal Ministry for Transport, Innovation and Technology (BMVIT) and the Federal Ministry for Digital and Economic Affairs (BMDW). The Ministry of Finance (BMF) allocates the financial resources.

There are three advisory bodies at the policy level, the Austrian Council for Research and Technology Development (www.rat-fte.at), the Austrian Science Board (www.wissenschaftsrat.ac.at) and the ERA Council Forum Austria (<https://era.gv.at/directory/168>). The Austrian Council for Research and Technology Development advises the government in all matters related to research, technology and innovation and regularly monitors progress of the Austrian RTI strategy's implementation. The Austrian Science Board is the main advisory body in all university-related matters to the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research (BMBWF), the parliament and the universities. The ERA Council Forum Austria is a high-level expert body advising the Austrian Minister responsible for Science and Research at the interface of European research policy and the national science, research and innovation system. It provides strategic orientation and advice in the context of "Europe 2020", "Innovation Union", "ERA Partnership" as well as Horizon 2020.



2.2.2 Operational level

The Austrian Agency for International Cooperation in Education and Research (OeAD, www.oead.at) is Austria's central organisation for mobility and cooperation programmes in education, science and research in Europe and worldwide. The OeAD has 58 years of experience and works with thousands of people, connecting them with educational institutions in Europe and all over the world. The OeAD advises, promotes and supports international cooperation in education, science and research. The OeAD provides guidance to internationally orientated activities and coordinates and supports their implementation.

Three main funding agencies, the FWF (Austrian Science Fund), FFG (Austrian Research Promotion Agency) and the AWS (Austria Wirtschaftsservice GmbH) manage the funding for research, technology development and innovation on behalf of the ministries.

The Austrian Science Fund (FWF, www.fwf.ac.at) is Austria's central funding organisation for basic research and for the advancement and appreciation of the arts. The purpose of the FWF is to support the researchers through stand-alone projects. In this way the FWF provides financial support for Austrian research centres, to help them compete in the international marketplace for leading researchers and the best ideas.

The Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG, www.ffg.at) is the national funding agency for industrial research and experimental development in Austria. The FFG offers a comprehensive range of services for Austrian enterprises, research institutions and researchers and a targeted combination of funding instruments, which includes direct support for stand-alone projects in industrial research and industrially oriented structural programmes. The FFG is part of the Austrian innovation system and helps Austria's business and science sectors to remain competitive both nationally and internationally. It provides high-quality research promotion services and achieves the highest degree of customer satisfaction.

Austria Wirtschaftsservice GmbH (AWS, www.awsg.at) is Austria's national promotional bank. AWS offers a broad range of company-specific investment promotion programmes and services, such as financial assistance and consultancy for companies, from the pre-seed phase to the expansion stage. It offers Austrian companies financial assistance in the form of loans, guarantees, grants and/or equity as well as consultancy services.

2.2.3 Research performers

The Austrian research landscape is highly diverse and differentiated. It consists of universities, non-university research establishments and enterprises. Austria has 22 public universities, 13 private universities and 21 universities of applied sciences (*Fachhochschulen*) while approximately 2,000 enterprises are involved in research, including multinational corporations with headquarters in Austria.

Universities and the business sector are the biggest research performers. Due to several targeted promotion programmes the scope and share of research carried out by non-university research institutes has increased in recent years. The universities have dual responsibility for basic research and scientific training while the focus of the non-university research institutes is normally directed



towards the application of knowledge but in many cases they also make important contributions to basic knowledge.

All scientific topics are represented in the Austrian research landscape, particularly since the public universities, which support a broad variety of disciplines, still account for most of the research done in Austria.

Natural and technical sciences are generally very well established in both public and private research sectors. Many Austrian research institutions, such as the prestigious Universities of Technology of Vienna and Graz and the University of Innsbruck, are internationally renowned for state-of-the-art research in fields such as nanotechnology and quantum optics.

Life Sciences are also well established, evidenced by the approximately ten public universities that focus extensively on biomedical research, foremost universities in Vienna, Graz, Salzburg and Innsbruck. Additionally, several clusters for biomedical research as well as more than 100 biotech companies, mainly located in Vienna, Tyrol and Styria, exist.

Austria has a long history not only in hard science but also in social sciences and humanities, beginning at the turn of the last century. This is very much reflected in the current landscape by a wide variety of institutions in both the public and private sector that are actively doing research in this particular field of science.

Further information

Statistics Austria: www.statistik.at/web_en > Research and development (R&D), innovation

Relevant information on the topics of Science, Research and Innovation in Austria:
www.innovationaustria.at/home-en.html

A detailed list of all Austrian research organisations can be found on the website of EURAXESS Austria: www.euraxess.at/austria/research-austria

2.3 Research Funding – Austrian Database for Scholarships and Research Grants

The Austrian Database for Scholarships and Research Grants is the most comprehensive national funding database for all research areas. It stores information about grants for students, graduates, scientists and researchers who are coming to Austria, leaving Austria or looking for funding within Austria. The database covers research allowances, prizes and other funding opportunities as well.

The information includes application conditions and deadlines as well as duration, allocation and other details of each grant. The database is continuously updated both by the Austrian Agency for International Cooperation in Education and Research (OeAD) and directly by grant-awarding institutions. This guarantees that available information is always up to date.

This bilingual (German, English) database has been financed by funds of the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research (BMBWF) and the EU.



Further information

Austrian Database for Scholarships and Research Grants: www.grants.at

For personal assistance please contact the EURAXESS Centre: info@oead.at



3 Higher Education in Austria

In Austria there is a wide variety of institutions of tertiary education. In addition to public universities, the Austrian tertiary sector includes universities of applied sciences (UAS, *Fachhochschulen*, since 1993), private universities (since 1999) and university colleges of teacher education.

The common language of instruction is German but some of the programmes are offered in English (about 16 % of the degree programmes at public universities in 2019).

General information

Website "Study in Austria": www.studyinaustria.at

Full list of study programmes in Austria:

Website www.studienwahl.at/en (with search for language of instruction)

Brochure "Study Guide" (Download on www.oead.at)

Brochure "Higher Education Institutions": Overview of the study options as well as contact addresses of all Austrian universities, universities of applied sciences, university colleges of teacher education and private universities (Download on www.oead.at).

Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research (BMBWF): www.bmbwf.gv.at

Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria (AQ Austria): www.aq.ac.at/en

3.1 Public Universities and Universities of the Arts

In Austria there are 22 public universities which offer a wide range of study programmes, including specialised universities such as medical universities, universities of technology and other universities with specific orientation, e.g. the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna; the Vienna University of Economics and Business; the University for Continuing Education Krems; etc. In certain studies (e.g. medicine, veterinary medicine, psychology, pharmacy, etc. see: www.studienwahl.at) there is a limitation in the number of new entrants, therefore applicants have to undergo an entrance procedure.

Academic calendar

The academic year in Austria begins on October 1st and ends on September 30th of the following year. It consists of:

- winter semester (October 1st to January 30th),
- summer semester (March 1st to September 30th) and
- periods during which no lectures are held (Christmas, semester and summer breaks).

Exceptions from this schedule are possible; please inquire at the higher education institution of your choice.



Structure of study programmes

In the last few decades the Austrian university system has introduced the European three-tier system of degrees according to the Bologna Process. Besides, the old two-tier system still exists in a few disciplines (for example medicine).

a) Bachelor's and master's programmes

Most degree programmes distinguish between

1. **Bachelor's** programmes, which conclude with the degree of Bachelor. ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System) credits: 180; in special cases 240
2. **Master's** programmes, which require the successful completion of a bachelor's programme and conclude with the academic degree of Master. ECTS credits: at least 120

b) Traditional degree programmes (*Diplomstudium*)

On completion, these programmes award a traditional university degree: "*Magistra/Magister*" or "*Diplomingenieur/in*" (for engineers). The duration of traditional degree programmes is between 4 and 6 years.

c) Doctoral studies (Dr./PhD)

Doctoral studies are based on the successful completion of traditional or master's degree programmes and are conceived to demonstrate the ability of autonomous research and promote the training and career development of junior academic staff. In analogy, doctoral studies in the arts are based on the demonstration of profound artistic work. Doctoral programmes conclude with the degree of "*Doktor/in*" or "PhD".

Further information

Universities Austria (uniko): www.uniko.ac.at

Full list of study programmes in Austria:

Website www.studienwahl.at/en

Brochure "[Study Guide](#)" (Download on www.oead.at)

3.2 Private Universities

The curricula of the 14 Austrian private universities as well as the academic degrees awarded are similar to those awarded by public universities. Private university institutions and their study programmes need an accreditation from the AQ Austria.

Further information

Conference of Austrian Private Universities (OePUK): <https://oepuk.ac.at> (in German only)



Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria (AQ Austria): www.aq.ac.at/en

3.3 Universities of Applied Sciences (UAS; *Fachhochschulen, FH*)

Universities of applied sciences (UAS) offer professionally oriented higher education. This is reflected in their curricula, which include mandatory job-oriented practical training or internships in the bachelor's programmes. Applicants have to undergo an entrance procedure because of the limited number of study places per year.

The academic degrees awarded are bachelor's and master's degrees. In the technical fields the degree of "Master of Science" or "*Diplomingenieur/in*" (equivalent to a "Master of Science") is awarded. Graduates of UAS master's programmes may enrol in doctoral programmes at universities.

Duration:

UAS **bachelor's** programmes: 3 years (180 ECTS credits)

UAS **master's** programmes: 1 - 2 years (60 - 120 ECTS credits)

At present about 490 UAS degree programmes in areas such as business, engineering and IT, natural sciences, social sciences, media and design, military and security and health sciences are offered by 21 institutions. About 60 degree programmes are offered entirely in English (WS 2018/19). UAS institutions and their study programmes need an accreditation from the AQ Austria.

Further information

FH guide – Austrian Universities of Applied Sciences at a glance: www.fachhochschulen.ac.at/en

An overview of the programmes can be found on: www.studienwahl.at/en

Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria (AQ Austria): www.aq.ac.at/en

3.4 Certificate University Programmes for Further Education (*Universitätslehrgänge*)

Certificate university programmes for further education are the main form of continuing education offered within the university sector. An internationally common master's degree (MA, MSc, MBA, etc., depending on the discipline) is awarded when the certificate university programme for further education is comparable to the respective master's degree programme with regard to admission conditions, content and scope of the curriculum. Usually these programmes comprise 90 to 120 ECTS credits. Most programmes are part-time programmes, therefore the duration varies from one to three or four years.

In all other cases the title of "*Akademische/r ...*" ["Academically (certified) "] together with an attribute characterising the field of the certificate university programme for further education may be awarded if the programme comprises a minimum of 60 ECTS credits.

Universities of applied sciences and private universities also have the possibility to offer certificate programmes for further education.

An overview of the courses can be found at: www.studienwahl.at/en



3.5 University Colleges of Teacher Education

The 14 Austrian university colleges of teacher education, nine state-run university colleges as well as five private institutions, offer qualifications and continuing further education programmes for pedagogical and especially teaching professions.

Range of studies: Teaching qualifications are offered as four-year (eight-semester, workload 240 ECTS credits) bachelor's (**Bachelor of Education, BEd**) and at least one-year (two-semester, at least 60 ECTS credits) master's (**Master of Education, MEd**) degree programmes. Master's degree programmes with teaching qualification for secondary schools may only be offered in the form of a joint study programme with one (or several) universities. At the moment all programmes with teaching qualification for secondary schools (bachelor's as well as master's degree programmes) are joint study programmes with universities.

Public university colleges of teacher education offer the following degree programmes:

- Bachelor's and master's degree for teaching qualification for primary level
- Bachelor's and master's degree for teaching qualification for secondary level (secondary school)
- Bachelor's degree programmes only as well as bachelor's and master's degree programmes for teaching qualification for secondary level (vocational schools)

Further information

All Austrian University Colleges of Teacher Education: <https://www.ph-online.ac.at> (in German only)

Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research (BMBWF): www.bmbwf.gv.at



4 Recognition of Qualifications

ENIC NARIC Austria (National Academic Recognition Information Centre) is the official contact point for all kinds of questions concerning transnational recognition in the field of higher education.

What is academic recognition?

Academic recognition means that studies completed or examinations passed in one country are credited towards studies in another country. This recognition can take place in different stages of study. The field of academic recognition is therefore split into three main areas:

- entry into studies: admission
- progress of studies: recognition of examinations
- completion of studies: recognition of diplomas (including nostrification)

Certain rights are linked to the recognition of diplomas, e. g. the right to use an academic degree and to be admitted to further studies or to certain professions and activities.

What is professional recognition?

Professional recognition means that employees who are entitled to exercise a given profession on the basis of the education in their country of origin may be admitted to the relevant profession in another country. The professional recognition of diplomas is of special importance within the European Economic Area (EEA) and is regulated by the EU directive on professional recognition.

In this area the NARIC acts as an important point of intersection between higher education and professional activity.

Further information

NARIC Austria: www.naric.at

Recognition, application and information system (AAIS – Anerkennungs-, Antrags- und Informations-system): www.aais.at



5 Entry & residence regulations and work permits

The Austrian Agency for International Cooperation in Education, Science and Research (OeAD) has developed a database that will help you find the right visa or residence title for your research stay: www.oead.at/entry

When performing a query of the database you will also find a lot of specific information, e.g. concerning work options, health insurance and entry and residence regulations for family members.

Further information

Federal Government's official website on migration: www.migration.gv.at/en

Austria's digital authority: oesterreich.gv.at

In case of further questions please contact the EURAXESS Centre: recht@oead.at



6 Taxation

The Austrian tax system is a pay-as-you-earn system. The most important categories of income that are subject to taxation for researchers/scientists are income from employment and income from independent personal services (self-employment). The difference between these categories is the method of levying – employers are obliged to deduct taxes from the wages and transmit them to the tax office; in case of independent services the self-employed person has to file an income tax declaration. Tax rates are basically the same for both kinds of taxes.

However, as the Austrian tax system considers individual situations (i.e. special expenses, extraordinary burdens), it is possible that you might claim back some tax. To get a tax return you have to file a return for tax assessment (*Erklärung zur Arbeitnehmer/innenveranlagung*) with the tax office.

Every person who has her/his regular residence or habitual abode in Austria is subject to unlimited liability to tax with their worldwide income. Unlimited liability is constituted if your stay in Austria exceeds six months. A limited liability to tax applies to those persons who have neither their residence nor their habitual abode in Austria; they are subject to tax only with their income from Austrian sources. There is no joint taxation of married couples or households in Austria.

EU/EEA (European Economic Area) nationals with no main place of residence in Austria but main source of income in Austria (90 percent of their income is generated in Austria or their income generated abroad not exceeding a total of 11,000 Euros) can opt for unlimited tax liability in Austria when filing their return for tax assessment (*Erklärung zur Arbeitnehmer/innenveranlagung*) with the tax office. In this case only the incomes generated in Austria will be taxed despite the unlimited tax liability.

It may occur that foreign nationals also have to pay taxes in their home countries. Austria has concluded **Double Taxation Agreements** (*Doppelbesteuerungsabkommen*) with some countries to avoid double taxation.

Tax benefits for highly qualified researchers moving to Austria (*Zuzugsbegünstigungsverordnung*)

Provided that the required criteria (in particular public benefit) are met highly qualified researchers moving to Austria may be entitled to tax benefits. This concerns

- 1) the possibility of a tax deduction of 30 % ("*Zuzugsfreibetrag*"), limited to five years, on income from scientific work in Austria and abroad, and
- 2) the application of a standardised tax rate on non-Austrian-sourced income to avoid additional tax burden. The application for obtaining such tax benefits must be filed with the Austrian Ministry of Finance within 6 months of the date of the move to Austria.

Further information

The Tax Book 2019: https://english.bmf.gv.at/services/publications/The_Tax_Book_2019.pdf?6tn8y4

Federal Ministry of Finance (BMF): <https://english.bmf.gv.at/taxation/Double-Taxation-Agreements.html>

Austria's digital authority: oesterreich.gv.at



7 Social Security in Austria

Principles

Social insurance in Austria is compulsory and mainly financed by contributions. It follows the principle of solidarity which basically means equal benefits for all people insured.

Social security covers health, accident, and pension insurance, usually administered independently by different social insurance carriers. The Main Association of Social Security Institutions (*Hauptverband der österreichischen Sozialversicherungsträger*) is responsible for the macroeconomic interests of the social insurance carriers and acts as their representative to foreign organisations.

Unemployment insurance is part of the compulsory social insurance system in Austria. It is administered by the Public Employment Service Austria supervised by the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health and Consumer Protection (*Sozialministerium*; in German).

Family benefits such as child benefit, care benefit, maternity benefit, etc. are financed by general taxation and thus a non-contributory state support.

Most relevant social insurance carriers for mobile researchers

There are currently five social insurance carriers in Austria that might be relevant for mobile researchers:

- Insurance Institution for Public Service Wage and Salary Earners – BVA: www.bva.at (in German)
- The nine District Health Insurance Funds – GKK: www.sozialversicherung.at
- Social Insurance Institution for Trade and Industry – SVA: www.sva.or.at (in German)
- Pension Insurance Institution – PVA: www.pensionsversicherung.at (in German)
- Accident Insurance Institution – AUVA: www.auva.at (in German)

There is no free choice of the social insurance carrier; employers are responsible for registering their employees with the appropriate social security institution (please see also below). Compulsory social security covers health, accident and pension insurance even in case that a single insurance carrier only covers one of the aforementioned.

Overview of social security covered by the different carriers:

Social insurance carrier	Health insurance	Accident insurance	Pension insurance
BVA	X	X	
GKK	X		
SVA	X		X
PVA			X
AUVA		X	



7.1 Health Insurance

If you are employed or self-employed you are covered by health insurance. If you are employed, your employer is responsible for registering you with the competent social insurance carrier (BVA, GKK). If you are self-employed, "newly" self-employed or receive minimum income, you typically have to register with and pay for health insurance yourself (SVA) unless you are already covered by health insurance due to a gainful occupation.

Once you are registered you will receive an e-card with your personal data (name, insurance number, etc.). The back of the card constitutes to the European social security card. The card ensures free of charge medical treatment in the EU countries as well as the EEA (European Economic Area) countries, Switzerland, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia. Health insurance covers free treatment by doctors who have contracts with your social security carrier (BVA, GKK, SVA) and hospitals. ("*Alle Kassen*" refers to doctors having concluded contracts with all insurance carriers). There are also private doctors whose services are not covered by the social insurance system and have to be paid for. Part of the corresponding costs may be reimbursed by your social insurance carrier.

Family members can be co-insured, provided that they are resident in Austria and not themselves subject to compulsory health insurance. Minors up to 18 years of age will be co-insured, minors (children/grandchildren) attending schools or vocational training or university can be co-insured free of charge up to 27 years of age. Spouses with children can be co-insured free of charge, co-insurance of spouses without children entails an additional contribution.

General information: www.sozialversicherung.at (in German)

7.2 Accident Insurance

Accident insurance covers benefits payable as a result of workplace accidents, occupational illnesses and the accidental death of an employee. These benefits include for instance accident treatment costs, rehabilitation, reimbursements, surviving dependents' benefits (e.g. widow's/widower's pension).

Details: www.auva.at > Service > [English information](#)

7.3 Pension Insurance

In Austria females currently reach retirement age at 60 and men at 65. As of 2024 the retirement age for women will be raised stepwise from 60 to 65 years.

The following applies to EU/EEA (European Economic Area) nationals and Swiss nationals:

You are entitled to pension benefits if you have been employed or self-employed for more than one year and have paid pension insurance contributions. Insurance periods below one year will be added to the pension insurance periods obtained in your home country.

**For third country nationals:**

There are bilateral agreements with the following countries: Australia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Chile, India, Israel, Canada (and Quebec), North Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Serbia, Tunisia, Turkey, Uruguay and the USA. The individual agreements vary in content but care for the portability of your pension rights.

Coming up: RESAVER – a single European pension arrangement

In order to alleviate the problem of preserving the supplementary pension benefits of researchers who move between different countries the European Commission supports a consortium of employers in creating a single European pension arrangement (RESAVER). RESAVER aims to enable mobile and non-mobile employees to remain affiliated to the same pension vehicle when moving between different countries and changing jobs. We suggest asking whether your employer/organisation is part of the RESAVER consortium or planning to join RESAVER in the future.

Details: www.resaver.eu

7.4 Unemployment Insurance

Unemployment benefits consist of a basic sum, family supplement and various supplementary benefits. While in receipt of unemployment benefits you and your family members continue to be covered by health insurance.

The following applies to EU/EEA (European Economic Area) and Swiss nationals:

If you have already paid contributions in any EU/EEA country or Switzerland, this period will be taken into account for the fulfilment of the qualifying period and to determine the duration of the reference period, provided that you have been employed in Austria for at least one day and have paid the mandatory unemployment insurance prior to your application for the unemployment benefits. After consultation with the public employment services of your country of origin you may under certain circumstances receive benefits from your country of origin for an approved period while already seeking employment in Austria. It is essential to register with your competent public employment service office **prior** to departure to Austria, stating that you are intending to seek employment in Austria. Under certain circumstances you may also be entitled to receive benefits attributable to insurance periods abroad.

Qualifying period:

At least 52 weeks of contribution paying employment over the past 24 months from the moment of application must be demonstrated (for persons over 25 upon initial claim), or

at least 28 weeks of contribution paying employment over the past year from the moment of application must be demonstrated (applies to additional claims).

For third country nationals:

There are only five countries where bilateral agreements on social security include unemployment benefits: Bosnia & Herzegovina, Israel, North Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia. Please note that



in most cases the agreement only settles addition of insurance periods to determine the qualifying periods.

Please note that in the special case of **educational leave** (*Bildungskarenz*, minimum duration two months, maximum duration twelve months) no wages or salaries are paid. Instead, employees are entitled to an educational allowance from the Public Employment Service Austria (AMS) in the amount of the unemployment benefits they would have otherwise received. For more information please consult the brochure "[Living and working in Austria](#)".

Further information

Main Association of Social Security Institutions (*Hauptverband der österreichischen Sozialversicherungsträger*): www.hauptverband.at (in German)

Publication "[Zwischenstaatliche Beziehungen Österreichs im Bereich der sozialen Sicherheit auf einen Blick](#)" (in German)

7.5 Social Security and Stipends

If you are not employed or self-employed due to the nature of your stipend, social security issues will have to be dealt with on a case-by-case basis, depending on the type of stipend and respective personal circumstances. In most cases, if there is no employment or the status of self-employee, general self-insurance or the "*Studierendenselbstversicherung*" (provided certain conditions are met) can be taken out.

In order to apply for co-insurance with your family/partner an [application form](#) needs to be filled in, which can be downloaded at www.sozialversicherung.at (in German).

Third-country nationals coming from a country without a cross-national agreement on social security in most cases will have to insure themselves with the Social Insurance Institution for Trade and Industry (SVA).

If you are not insured anywhere, there are different options, from self-insurance via the main social insurance carriers in Austria to contracts with private insurance companies. For personal assistance please contact the EURAXESS Centre: research_career_eu@ffg.at

7.6 Guaranteed Minimum Resources

Guaranteed minimum resources (*Mindestsicherung*) are provided for persons who have no reasonable funds to pay for their living costs or those of their family members. Guaranteed minimum resources are intended to support individuals who can no longer pay for their living costs on their own. An amount stipulated every year corresponds to costs for covering the required costs of food, clothing, body care, heating and electricity, furnishings and other personal needs such as appropriate social and cultural involvement as well as housing needs. Guaranteed minimum resources benefits are only available when no other sufficient financial means (such as income, social security benefits, alimonies, etc.) or assets are available.



EU and EEA (European Economic Area) nationals, respectively, are only unrestrictedly entitled to guaranteed minimum resources if they are in Austria as employees or have lived here for more than five years. Nationals of third countries are only eligible to receive guaranteed minimum resources if they have been legally residing in Austria for more than five years. The amount of the guaranteed minimum resources will be determined individually by each federal province.

Further information

Publication "[Living and working in Austria](#)" (Public Employment Service Austria/*Arbeitsmarktservice Österreich* – AMS/EURES)



8 Intellectual Property Rights

Inventions, company brands and industrial designs can be protected by Intellectual Property Rights (IPR), such as patents, utility models, trademarks and registered designs. The [Austrian Patent Office](#) is the national Centre of Excellence which provides protection for inventions required for the legitimate safeguarding of the interests of scientists in case they plan to commercialise research results.

Copyrights – the protection of creative and technological expression (e.g. books, plays, music or software, building designs and instruction manuals) – need no special registration; they are generated by the creation of the opus itself. The copyright belongs solely to the creator and generally lasts for 70 years after the creator's death.

8.1 Protection of Inventions/company Labels/Designs in Austria

- *Patent or Utility Model*

There are two possibilities to protect technological inventions: a patent or a utility model. They both assign the right for a limited period of time to exclude others from possessing, importing, producing, using or selling the invention without permission. The right can be sold or transferred by licence. Patents and utility models are territorial rights and therefore limited to the countries for which the protection is granted and limited to a maximum of 20 years for patents and six to ten years for utility models. A technical invention is patentable if it is novel, contains an inventive step and if it is capable of industrial application. In contrast to a patent a utility model involves testing for novelty as well but none for the inventive process or commercial applicability. The protection through utility models is normally granted more quickly than a patent but it also confers weaker protection and is only applicable in certain countries.

Topographies – three-dimensional structures of micro-electronic semiconductor products – can also be protected and the right will be entered in the semiconductor register.

- *Trademark*

A company label can be protected by a trademark – an independent property right which allows distinguishing goods and services of different companies from one another. Trademarks can be protected for ten years but this period may be extended indefinitely by paying the fee every ten years.

Community Trade Marks and designs can be registered with the OHIM, the [Office for Harmonization in the Internal Market](#), the official trademarks and designs registration office of the European Union. The Community Trade Mark (CTM) and the Registered Community Design (RCD) are prerequisites for commercialisation in the European Single Market.

For an EU-wide search for trademarks you can refer to [this database](#); to search for patents worldwide the [Espacenet database](#) is a useful tool. A global brand database can be found [here](#).



- *Industrial Design*

By registration of an industrial design the appearance of a commercial product is protected (e.g. the shape of a mineral water bottle). The protection is valid for five years and can be extended four times up to a maximum of 25 years.

serv.ip ("Service of Industrial property") at the Austrian Patent Office (www.patentamt.at) is a service centre which employs specialists in commercial legal protection.

For information regarding universities and inventions please see the website of the [Regional Knowledge Transfer Centers \(Wissenstransferzentren\) of the Austrian universities](#).

8.2 IPR Issues at Application Stage

Different organisations have different ways of dealing with IPR issues. As there might be sensitive information that has to be given to the partners before submitting a proposal which should be protected or if the partners want to make sure that all partners are in line with the conditions and really join the project if it is approved a contract or an agreement should be signed beforehand. This could be a Letter of Intent (LoI), a Confidentiality Agreement (CA)/Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA) or a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). Model agreements might be available at your organisation/university. Links to such models can also be found at a dedicated section within the [IPR Helpdesk](#).

Standard sample contracts for technology transfer have been made available free of charge online to enable Austrian universities and their contractual partners to avail themselves of comprehensive contract expertise complete with commentaries. The contracts can be found at www.ipag.at.

Useful Links

European Patent Office: www.epo.org

Espacenet (world-wide patent search): www.epo.org/searching/free/espacenet.html

IPAG – Intellectual Property Agreement Guide: www.ipag.at

IPR Helpdesk: www.iprhelppdesk.eu

Regional Knowledge Transfer Centers (*Wissenstransferzentren*): www.wtz.ac.at

Office for Harmonization in the Internal Market: <http://oami.europa.eu>

World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO): www.wipo.int



9 The Austrian Education System

Compulsory education for all children who are permanently living in Austria starts at the age of six and lasts for nine years. Austria has a free public school system. The school year starts in early September and ends in early July.

Education in Austria is divided into primary education from the age of six to the age of ten years and secondary education. Lower secondary education encompasses the first four years after primary education. At the secondary level II students will attend the upper level of academic secondary schools or the medium or upper level secondary technical and vocational schools. Once students have completed nine years of compulsory education they can also take up an apprenticeship within the dual system of practical training combined with part-time vocational schooling or attend a programme of training leading to a healthcare profession.

The goal of the programme "Education up to the age of 18" is to ensure that all young people in Austria attend a school or complete an apprenticeship until their 18th birthday so that they can enjoy a good start into (working) life.

Upon completion of the secondary level II the Austrian education system offers additional educational opportunities, ranging from short-cycle tertiary education in the field of vocational education and training (VET) to degree-level programmes at universities, universities of applied sciences and university colleges of teacher education.

Source and further information

The Austrian Education System: www.bildungssystem.at/en

The simplified diagram of the Austrian education system, produced by Euroguidance Austria, is available as a poster and a leaflet in more than 20 languages (Albanian, Arabic, Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian, Bulgarian, Chinese, Czech, Dari, English, French, German, Hungarian, Italian, Kurdish, Polish, Romanian, Romani, Russian, Slovak, Slovene, Spanish, Turkish and Urdu) and can be ordered or downloaded from the website www.edusystem.at.

Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research (BMBWF) – Education in Austria:

<https://bildung.bmbwf.gv.at/enfr/school/schools.html>

Brochures available at <https://pubshop.bmbwf.gv.at>

Recognition guide: www.berufsanerkennung.at/en

Contact points for people with qualifications gained abroad (*Anlaufstelle für Personen mit im Ausland erworbenen Qualifikationen*) offers comprehensive information and advice on recognition and evaluation procedures; free of charge and in multiple languages:

www.anlaufstelle-anerkennung.at/anlaufstellen (in German)



10 Learning German

The [language portal "Mein Sprachportal"](#) offers German learning programmes and is available in ten languages: German, English, French, Turkish, Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian, Hungarian, Romanian, Polish, Arabic and Dari/Farsi. An overview of German courses and certificated German language institutes in Austria and abroad can be found as well.

The main language of instruction at Austrian universities and universities of applied sciences is German; still, a growing number of programmes are taught in English. www.studienwahl.at/en offers an overview of all study programmes.

In order to be admitted to a degree programme students have to prove sufficient knowledge of German. At some universities students need proficiency in German corresponding to level B2, at others corresponding to level C1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. There are different diplomas that are accepted, e.g. the *Österreichisches Sprachdiplom Deutsch*, Austria's officially recognised examination system for German as a foreign language with licensed examination centres all over the world.

Courses in your own country

The [Österreich Institut](#) conducts German language courses outside Austria (Rome, Belgrade, Warsaw, Krakow, Wrocław, Bratislava, Budapest and Brno). It promotes and supports education in German as a foreign language and collaborates with interested partner institutions in the field of German as a foreign language and other languages.

The [Österreichische Sprachdiplom Deutsch](#) (ÖSD, Austrian Language Diploma German) is a state-recognised four-level examination system for German as a foreign language. It has been designed for people wishing to learn German in Austria and abroad. This diploma is of international importance as a proof of proficiency in German and is recognised as a qualification by universities, other educational institutions and employers in many countries.

The ÖSD is conceived as a central examination that is not dependent on a certain course and that is oriented towards communicative skills. It is not so much linguistic knowledge but rather proficiency in speaking with a view to future situations in which the language will be used that is examined.

Courses in Austria

Austria has many language schools teaching German. Selected language schools offering "German as a Foreign Language" are united in [Campus Austria](#), an association of Austrian language schools.

The [University Preparation Programmes](#) offer intensive German language courses for foreign students to prepare them for supplementary examinations prescribed by the universities they applied to. *Attention:* Only students who have been admitted by an Austrian tertiary education institution can attend these courses.



11 Accommodation

General information concerning housing, regarding ownership, rentals, grants and financing can be found online at Austria's digital authority. Furthermore, the OeAD-Housing Office provides accommodation in flats and student halls of residence for recipients of OeAD grants, for Erasmus+ students, visiting lecturers, foreign researchers and guests in the city of Vienna and in the federal provinces.

General information on housing in Austria can be found in the publication "Living and working in Austria" of the Public Employment Service Austria/*Arbeitsmarktservice Österreich* – AMS/EURES.

Further information

Austria's digital authority: oesterreich.gv.at

OeAD-Housing Office: www.housing.oead.at

Publication "[Living and working in Austria](#)"



12 Childcare

For the coordination and management of family life and work different childcare facilities are provided mainly by regional bodies (municipalities) or private institutions.

At most Austrian universities childcare facilities are offered for university staff (UniKid Childcare facilities for university staff; www.unikid-unicare.at/en/home)

Further information on different facilities (e.g. children's groups, day nurseries, daycare)

Austria's digital authority: oesterreich.gv.at

Childcare facilities: www.kinderbetreuung.at (mainly in German)



13 Dual Career and Integration Services

Austrian dual career and integration services (DCIS) have a limited scope, mainly targeting partners of leading and established researchers (professors and group leaders), outstanding artists or administrative managers. The range of available DCIS depends on the specific case and available resources. Several Austrian universities and research organisations outsource their DCIS.

The last few years saw the creation of several regional DC Service networks. They came in addition to already existing single DC measures and services at Austrian universities and research organisations. The creation of a national DC Service Network is currently being discussed.

Integration services are provided by either the DC units, other parts of the respective institution, or externally. Networking for DC partners/families is also offered by EURAXESS Meeting Point VIENNA. This platform offers tools to enable exchange and social integration for international PhD students, postdocs and researchers in the Vienna area.

Further information

Report "[An analysis of Dual Career and Integration Services](#)"

EURAXESS Meeting Point Vienna:

www.facebook.com/euraxessVIENNA

[EURAXESS Meeting Point Vienna](#)



14 EURAXESS – Researchers in Motion

EURAXESS – Researchers in Motion www.euraxess.org is a pan-European web portal that provides access to a wide range of information and support services for researchers wishing to pursue research careers in Europe.

EURAXESS encompasses the following areas:

- **Jobs & Funding**
 - Database with job vacancies and funding opportunities for researchers throughout Europe; about 65,000 job vacancies have been published in EURAXESS Jobs in 2018
 - Information on initiatives concerning the rights and duties of researchers and their employers (European Charter & Code)
 - Support regarding career development of researchers
- **Information & Assistance**
Support for researchers and their families regarding their stay in a foreign country
- **Partnering**
Connecting individual researchers and organisations to facilitate collaboration
- **Science4Refugees**
Internships, part-time and full-time jobs, access to the European Research Community and research buddies for refugee researchers and students
- **EURAXESS Worldwide**
A networking tool for European researchers working outside Europe (ASEAN, China, India, Japan, Latin America and Caribbean States, North America, Korea, Australia/New Zealand)

14.1 EURAXESS Austria

EURAXESS Austria www.euraxess.at represents a national extension of the EURAXESS – Researchers in Motion web portal. EURAXESS Austria provides access to comprehensive and up-to-date information on all matters that are essential for the career development and mobility of researchers and their families.

Information on the following areas is available:

- Research funding
- Research job opportunities
- Legal issues (entry and residency conditions, work permits, social security, tax issues)
- Administrative and cultural issues (housing, language courses, childcare, etc.)
- Career development
- Austrian research landscape (wide scope of research institutions and activities across Austria)
- Women in science (promotion of women, strategic information, activities, links to databases)
- Access to EURAXESS portals of other countries



- Contact details of all EURAXESS Centres

14.2 EURAXESS Jobs – Posts from Austria

Companies, universities and research organisations can post vacancies and search actively for research personnel and the CVs of international researchers. Since 1 October 2009 (the date when an amendment of the 2002 Austrian University Act came into force) universities have to publish research job vacancies internationally or at least throughout the EU. EURAXESS Jobs is mentioned in the legal notes as a cost-free tool to post jobs internationally and almost all Austrian universities are taking advantage of this possibility. As of February 2019 554 Austrian organisations are registered in EURAXESS Jobs and the number of job publications has risen from 1,050 in 2014 to 1,777 in 2018.

14.3 The Network of EURAXESS Centres

The mission of EURAXESS Information & Assistance is to provide comprehensive and up-to-date information and personalised assistance for all researchers and their families seeking advice in issues relating to their relocation across borders and career development. EURAXESS Centres provide information and assistance in matters such as entry conditions, visas, work permits, recognition of diplomas, job opportunities, salaries, taxation, pension rights, healthcare, social security, accommodation, childcare, schooling and language courses. There are currently more than 500 EURAXESS Centres in 40 European countries.

The **Austrian EURAXESS network** consists of

two Bridgehead Organisations, which also act as EURAXESS Centres:

- Austrian Agency for International Cooperation in Education and Research (OeAD),
info@oead.at, www.oead.at

The OeAD is the contact point for detailed questions concerning legal issues, entry, residency and work permits as well as the Austrian Database for Scholarships and Research Grants www.grants.at. It maintains the networking platform [EURAXESS Meeting Point Vienna](#) for PhD students, postdocs and researchers in the Vienna area in order to facilitate the social integration of internationals.

- Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG), research_career_eu@ffg.at, www.ffg.at

The FFG is responsible for detailed information concerning social security rights and taxation.

and 30 EURAXESS Centres:

These are research support units, international offices, HR departments and welcome centres at Austrian universities and universities of applied sciences as well as research organisations, regional information offices and networks which provide support for regional and practical requests. Contact persons and addresses can be found [here](#).



14.4 Research Working Environment – Austrian Organisations

Promotion of the "European Charter for Researchers" & "Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers" and broad implementation of their principles at Austrian universities has been part of the performance agreements with universities since 2010. In Austria 41 institutions including universities, funding organisations, an enterprise, research organisations, universities of applied sciences, a private university, umbrella organisations and the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research have signed the "Charter & Code".

The Medical University of Graz, the Austrian Science Fund (FWF), the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna (BOKU), the University of Applied Sciences Technikum Wien and the University of Salzburg (pending) have received the HRS4R (Human Resources Strategy for Researchers) acknowledgement from the European Commission and the HR logo.



HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

Further information

The European Charter & Code for Researchers: www.euraxess.ec.europa.eu/jobs/charter

The Human Resources Strategy for Researchers: www.euraxess.ec.europa.eu/jobs/hrs4r



15 Contact

Austrian Agency for International Cooperation in Education and Research (OeAD-GmbH)

OeAD (Österreichische Austauschdienst)-Gesellschaft mit beschränkter Haftung

Ebendorferstraße 7, 1010 Wien, Austria

T +43 1 534 08-252; F +43 1 534 08-999

info@oead.at

Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG)

Österreichische Forschungsförderungsgesellschaft mbH

Sensengasse 1, 1090 Wien, Austria

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research_career_eu@ffg.at



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Strategy for Research, Technology and Innovation of the Austrian Federal Government – Realising Potential, Increasing Dynamics, Creating the Future – Becoming an Innovation Leader

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Study Guide. Study Programmes. A Brief Guide for International Students

Information brochure for international students who are interested in studying in Austria.

www.oead.at/fileadmin/Dokumente/oead.at/KIM/Downloadcenter/Incoming/Guide_SiA_2017_final.pdf (15.7.2019)



EURAXESS – Researchers in Motion

www.euraxess.org

EURAXESS Austria

www.euraxess.at

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