

Living & Working in Austria

The European Job Network



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1. GENERAL

1.1 Geography & Population

Austria covers an area of 83,879 square kilometres with a **population of 8,817,514** residents, (as of 2017) including 1,341,930 foreign citizens (15.3 percent of total population), thereof **664,729 EU/EEA citizens and Swiss citizens** (7.5 percent of total population). **Vienna** is the **most densely populated** province of Austria with 4,548 residents per square kilometre; **Carinthia** is the **least densely populated** province with 59 inhabitants per square kilometre. The average life expectancy is 81 years.

Austria is bordered by Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Germany, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Slovenia and Italy. Austria is a federal state comprised of nine provinces; each province has its own capital:



Statistik Austria: January 1, 2017

Province	Population in 2017	Provincial Capital	Population in 2017
Burgenland	292,638	Eisenstadt	14,339
Carinthia	561,227	Klagenfurt am Wörthersee	99,790
Lower Austria	1,670,299	St. Pölten	54,213
Upper Austria	1,472,779	Linz	203,012
Salzburg	552,393	Salzburg	152,367
Styria	1,240,108	Graz	283,869
Tyrol	749,496	Innsbruck	132,236
Vorarlberg	391,331	Bregenz	29,574
Vienna	1,887,243	Vienna	1,887,243

1.2 The Political System

Austria is a **democratic republic**. Bills are passed by the **parliament**. The **Austrian Federal Constitution** is one of the major Austrian laws. The Austrian Federal Constitution contains for instance the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms as well as the jurisdiction and enforcement of the Federation, and the constitutional law on the neutrality of Austria.

The **Federal President** is the head of the Republic. They represent the Republic of Austria abroad in addition to other duties (acting as Supreme Commander of the Austrian Armed Forces, appointing the **Federal Government** as well as high-ranking officials of the provinces, etc.). Austria is governed by the Federal Government led by the Federal Chancellor. Governmental affairs are run jointly with the Vice-Chancellor, Federal Ministers and Secretaries of State.

The state territory (the Federation) is comprised of **nine federal provinces** forming a monetary, economic and customs union. **Vienna** is the **federal capital** and seat of the supreme federal authorities. Each province is administered by its own **provincial government**, headed by a **provincial Governor** (Landeshauptfrau/Landeshauptmann). Each federal province is comprised of administrative entities referred to as political districts. The **district administrative authorities** (Bezirkshauptmannschaft, BH) are the administrative authorities governing the districts. Each district is comprised of several smaller administrative units which are the **municipalities and towns**. Every municipality is administered by the municipality office (Gemeindeamt), every city by a city administration. The municipal council (Gemeinderat)/city council (Stadtrat) along with the **major** (Bürgermeisterin/Bürgermeister) govern the municipalities/cities and towns.

Vienna is both the federal capital and federal province. Therefore there is a provincial parliament (Landtag) and municipal council (Gemeinderat) in Vienna. Vienna has municipal departments (Magistratsabteilungen, MA) having particular competencies for the entire city of Vienna (e.g. MA 35: Immigration and Citizenship (Einwanderung und Staatsbürgerschaft)) as well as district municipal offices (Magistratische Bezirksämter) fulfilling responsibilities from both district administrative authorities and municipality offices.

1.2.1 Elections & Electoral Law

All political institutions incorporated by the constitution are elected either directly or indirectly through **secret, personal and democratic** ballots.

Austrian citizens who are 16 or older may vote in the **National Council** (Nationalrat) elections, the **provincial parliament** (Landtag, parliament of each individual federal province) elections, **municipal council** (Gemeinderat) elections (EU citizens resident in the municipality may also vote in municipal council elections – Vienna has a special status), elections of Austrian representatives for the **European Parliament** (EU citizens with main residence in Austria also have the right to vote) and in the **Federal President** elections.

The **National Council** (Nationalrat) is elected **every five years**. A three-stage proportional electoral law is applicable; the voter gives their vote to a party and additionally a preference vote to an individual candidate. The votes cast are grouped into mandates (parliamentary seats).

The **Federal President** is elected directly by the people **every six years**, the **provincial parliament and provincial government** governing each of the federal provinces are elected **every five to six years**, **municipal councils and/or municipality representatives** – every five to six years. Mayors are elected either by the population of the municipality or representatives of the municipal administration/city administration which may vary from federal province to federal provinces.

Labour representatives are also elected. Employees can cast their votes in the **Chamber of Labour** (Arbeiterkammer) **elections**, **elections of the works council** (Betriebsrat) or the **youth consultative council** (Jugendvertrauensrat), or if working in the civil service in the **staff council** (Personalvertretung) **elections**.

Additional information:

The political system: www.politischebildung.at

Elections & electoral law: www.help.gv.at

Courts and judicial competencies: www.justiz.gv.at

Citizens' service and legal advice: www.help.gv.at

Ombudsmann Board (Volksanwaltschaft): volksanwaltschaft.gv.at

Statistical data – Austrian facts & figures: www.statistik.at

1.3 Migration & Languages

The proportion of the population originating from other countries has strongly increased in recent years due to migration. German citizens with nearly 181,618 are the largest group amongst the EU/EEA citizens, followed by nationals with place of birth in Romania (92,095), Croatia (73,334), Hungary (70,584), Poland (60,079), Slovakia (38,094) and Italy (27,290). Amongst nationals originating from non-EU/non-EEA states Serbia and Turkey represent the largest groups with 118,454 respectively 116,838; followed by persons born in Bosnia-Herzegovina (94,611) and the Russian Federation (32,018). Especially in larger cities you will therefore experience a diversity of languages every day.

German is the official language of Austria, and virtually always a prerequisite for participating in the working and economic life of the country. Regionally valid official languages are also: Burgenland Croatian, Czech, Hungarian, Romany, Slovenian and Slovak. These languages are spoken by recognised minorities. When dealing with authorities and offices (e.g. at the municipal district authorities, the Public Employment Service Austria, searching medical assistance) but also at school or at work it is advantageous and often necessary to speak German.

German language courses are offered by many facilities and institutions (for instance by adult training facilities such as the BFI (Career Promotion Institute), adult education centres (Volkshochschulen) and language institutes). Children and youth attending a school can participate in free German courses after school (also see section 10.1).

English is taught as first foreign language at schools and is currently spoken by many Austrians including civil servants and persons working for offices and authorities. English is often the everyday language in many international companies.

1.4 Statistical Labour Market Facts & Figures

In the third quarter of 2017 (July – September) an average of 4,307,300 people were in **gainful employment**; of which 2,289,300 were male and 2,018,000 female. The **quota of 15 year-old and older employed persons**, i.e. the proportion of employed persons in all persons in this age group was at 72.9 percent. The **part-time employment quota** (share of persons working less than 36 hours a week according to information provided by them) amounts to 28 percent. The share of female part-time employment lies at 47.7 percent.

248,100 unemployed were actively searching for a job and available for placement in the third quarter of 2017. This represents an **unemployment quota** of 5.5 percent (according to the EU definition of unemployment quota – not seasonally adjusted).

The youth unemployment quota (15 to 24 years old) is 10.5 percent whereas the unemployment quota of elderly people (55 to 64 years old) is 3.8 percent. Individuals with non-Austrian citizenship are also more strongly affected by unemployment (10.9 percent) than Austrian citizens (4.4 percent). Unemployment of **EU/EEA citizens including Swiss citizens** was comparably lower at 6.9 percent. When **comparing the provinces** unemployment in the third quarter of 2017 was highest in Vienna with an average of 10.1 percent and lowest in Tyrol with 3.1 percent.

Additional information:

Labour market statistics (Arbeitsmarktstatistik): www.statistik.at

Unemployment facts & figures: www.ams.at

European facts & figures in comparison: ec.europa.eu/eurostat

2. ARRIVING IN AUSTRIA

2.1 Duty of Registration

Residential registration is **mandatory** in Austria. Any person establishing their residence in Austria (or moving their place of residence within Austria) is obliged to register with the respective competent authority within three (3) days of establishing the residence.

Competent authorities are:

- the registration office at your place of residence (municipality office (Gemeindeamt) or in cities municipal district authority (Magistrat))
- in Vienna: the registration office of the municipal district offices (Magistratisches Bezirksamt)

The following **documents** are to be furnished:

- ▶ completed residence registration form (Meldeformular) for each person to be registered; the registration form can be obtained from the responsible registration authorities, in some newsagents/tobacconists (Trafik) or on the Internet
- ▶ passport
- ▶ birth certificate
- ▶ residence registration certificate(s) for any other places of residence

The **residence registration form** (Meldeformular) must be signed by the lessee (the property owner or the property management) and the residing person (e.g. tenant), submitted personally or by a person of trust or sent by post to the responsible residence registration authorities (Meldebehörde). The authorities issue a residence registration certificate (Meldebestätigung).

Upon registering in Austria, your personal data will be automatically saved in the **Central Residence Registry** (Zentrales Melderegister, ZMR) and available to authorities. Every person registered in Austria is assigned a dedicated number in the Central Residence Registry (Central Residence Registry Number, "ZMR-Zahl") which is shown on the residence registration certificate (Meldebestätigung).

EU/EEA citizens and their family members staying in Austria longer than three months and intending to reside here must additionally apply for a **registration certificate** (Anmeldebescheinigung) (please refer to section 2.2).

Additional information:

Registration and de-registration of the residence: www.help.gv.at

Residence registration form (Meldeformular respectively Meldezettel): www.help.gv.at

2.2 Residence in Austria

European Union (EU)/European Economic Area (EEA) citizens and Swiss citizens as well as their family members (if they are EU/EEA citizens or Swiss citizens) **do not require a visa or residence permit** to enter and stay in Austria as they enjoy both exemption from a visa requirement and freedom of establishment. They can stay in Austria for a maximum of three months provided they have a valid passport or personal ID without the obligation of being granted any additional permit.

The following applies to **longer stays** in Austria – you have

- ▶ to be employed or self-employed/freelancer in Austria, **or**
- ▶ to have **sufficient financial funds** and **comprehensive health insurance coverage** for both themselves and their family members and may not receive any social security benefits (such as social welfare benefits (Sozialhilfe)), **or**
- ▶ to **attend a school or other educational institution** including **vocational training** at a public school or legally recognised private school and have sufficient financial funds as well as comprehensive health insurance coverage.

Within a **four month period** from entering the country EU/EEA citizens and Swiss citizens have to report taking up of residence to the residence authorities (district administrative authority (Bezirkshauptmannschaft) or in cities – the municipal district authority (Magistrat)); the authorities will then issue a **registration certificate** (Anmeldebescheinigung) provided that they satisfy the prerequisites. If the family members (spouse, children, partners, etc.) are also EU/EEA citizens or Swiss citizens then taking up of residence must also be registered by means of a registration certificate (Anmeldebescheinigung).

EU/EEA and Swiss citizens can apply for an “**official photographic identification for EEA citizens**” (Lichtbildausweis für EWR-Bürger) with the responsible administrative authority.

For **privileged nationals of third states**, i.e. family members of EU/EEA citizens who are **not EU/EEA or Swiss citizens**, special regulations apply. Please contact the residence authorities or consultation services for more details in good time.

The required documents are to be presented in original copy and a court certified translation into German upon application submission. The competent authority will advise you which documents and application forms are required.

Competent authority:

- district administration authorities (Bezirkshauptmannschaft) or in cities municipal district authorities (Magistrat)
- in Vienna: department 35 of the municipal district authority (Magistratsabteilung 35, MA 35)

Additional information:

Residence and visa (Aufenthalt und Visum): www.help.gv.at

Registration certificate (Anmeldebescheinigung): www.help.gv.at

Official photographic ID for EEA citizens (Lichtbildausweis für EWR-Bürger): www.help.gv.at

Nationals of third states (Drittstaatsangehörige): www.help.gv.at

2.3 Bringing Domestic and Household Pets into Austria

When bringing dogs, cats and ferrets to Austria from EEA countries the animals must be chipped with a **microchip** and the owner must present a **pet passport** (Heimtierausweis).

Dog owners with residence in Austria are to pay fees called “**dog tax**” (“Hundesteuer”). The dog tax fee depends on the place of residence. Details can be obtained from the responsible municipality office (Gemeindeamt) or municipal district authorities (Magistratisches Bezirksamt) (in cities).

In virtually all Austrian municipalities as well as when using public transport dogs have to wear a muzzle and be on the leash. All dogs kept in Austria must be identified (i.e. chipped) and registered. Legal regulations related to the keeping of “fighting” dogs must be observed.

Additional information:

Bringing domestic and household pets to Austria

(Reisen mit Haus- und Heimtieren nach Österreich): www.help.gv.at

Household pets (Haustiere): www.help.gv.at

3. STANDARD OF LIVING IN AUSTRIA

3.1 Comparative Price Levels of Living Costs

Austria's currency is the Euro (€), one Euro is comprised of 100 cents. The system of **comparative price levels** allows comparison of the purchasing power between national currencies. The comparable price levels also indicate whether a country is cheap or expensive compared with the average (EU 28 = 100).

Comparative price levels (Vergleichende Preisniveaus): ec.europa.eu

3.1.1 Living Costs in Austria

Pricing 2018 (subject to change):

- ▶ 1 litre milk starting at 0.95 Euros
- ▶ 1 kilogram rye-wheat bread starting at 1.49 Euros
- ▶ 500 gram whole-wheat bread starting at 2.69 Euros
- ▶ 1 kilogram sugar starting at 0.99 Euros
- ▶ 1 kilogram flour starting at 0.49 Euros
- ▶ 1 kilogram apples starting at 2.49 Euros
- ▶ 1.5 litre mineral water starting at 0.25 Euros
- ▶ 2 litre orange juice starting at 2.39 Euros
- ▶ 250 gram butter starting at 1.99 Euros
- ▶ 0.5 litre beer starting at 0.73 Euros
- ▶ 500 gram coffee starting at 3.99 Euros
- ▶ 1 litre wine starting at 3 Euros
- ▶ cinema tickets between 6 and 10 Euros
- ▶ daily newspaper on average at 1.20 Euros
- ▶ public transportation (single fare in provincial capitals) at 1.00 to 2.80 Euros
- ▶ 1 litre petrol (normal) in December 2017 starting at 1.14 Euros
- ▶ 1 litre diesel in December 2017 starting at 1.03 Euros
- ▶ T-shirt on average starting at 10 Euros
- ▶ jeans on average starting at 30 Euros
- ▶ 1 kilowatt-hour electricity between 14 and 23 cents
- ▶ 1 kilowatt-hour natural gas between 5 and 8 cents

Additional information:

Electricity and natural gas prices in comparison (Strom- und Gaspreise im Vergleich):

www.e-control.at/preismonitor

Electricity prices in comparison (Strompreise im Vergleich): www.bmwf.gv.at

Petrol and Diesel prices (Benzin- und Dieselpreise): www.oeamtc.at

Internet and telephony rate calculator (Tarifrechner Internet und Telefon):

www.arbeiterkammer.at

3.2 International Dialling Code

The international dialling code for telephone calls to Austria is: **+43 (0043)**.

3.2.1 Emergency Services Numbers

The following emergency services numbers, stated below without a dialling code, can be reached across Austria without any dialling code:

Emergency services numbers	
Fire department	122
Police	133
Ambulance	144
Doctors on call	141
Europe-wide emergency service	112
Pharmacies call service	14 55
Poisoning emergency line	01 406 43 43
Social psychological emergency assistance (around the clock)	01 313 30
Helpline for children (“Rat auf Draht”)	147
Suicide and crisis intervention hotline (around the clock)	142
Women’s Domestic Violence Helpline – free helpline number (around the clock)	0800 222 555
Children and youth assistance services and attorney services	0800 240 264 (free of charge)
Women’s counselling services (violence)	www.help.gv.at
Men’s counselling services (violence)	www.help.gv.at
Austrian emergency service numbers	www.gesundheit.gv.at
Children and youth counselling services (violence)	www.help.gv.at
Finding a dentist & emergency services	www.zahnaerztekammer.at
Pharmacies on duty at night and during weekends	www.apotheker.or.at

3.3 Motor Vehicles

3.3.1 General

From first of November through fifteenth of April vehicles **are to be equipped with winter tires** to comply with the **weather based mandatory regulations** (snow and ice covered roads). All persons travelling in a motor vehicle **must wear seat belts** in Austria. Motor vehicle operators are to ensure that children under fourteen or shorter than 150cm are appropriately securely seated in the vehicle using a “**child safety seat**”.

Austrian motorways are subject to toll fees, the required **motorway vignette** (Autobahn-Vignette) can be purchased at motorway service stations and newsagents/tobacconists (Trafik). You can also order a **motorway vignette** online and **digitally** register your motor vehicle.

On Austrian **roads** and **motorways** motor vehicle operators are obliged to keep an “**emergency corridor**” free between the actual driving lanes (“Rettungsgasse (corridor for emergency vehicle access)”) when a traffic jam starts building up to ensure unobstructed deployment of emergency services vehicles.

Starting from 31st of March 2018 any newly approved models of passenger vehicles and heavy goods vehicles up to 3.5 tonnes have to be equipped with an automatic emergency call system, the **eCall system**. In Austria every motor vehicle has to undergo a **road-safety inspection** at regular intervals (referred to in Austria as “**Pickerl**”).

Generally, a **blood alcohol limit** of maximum **0.5 per mill** is prescribed by law. In certain cases this limit may be reduced to 0.1 per mill or even less.

If your **vehicle breaks down**, proceed as follows:

- ▶ Turn on the **flashing warning lights**.
- ▶ Position a **breakdown triangle** in the proximity of your vehicle.
- ▶ Put on the **reflective high visibility vest** (Warnweste; in the neon colours yellow or orange) at any time when you leave the motor vehicle.
- ▶ Call the **ÖAMTC emergency service** (ÖAMTC Nothilfe) on **120** or the **ARBÖ emergency service** (ARBÖ Nothilfe) on **123**. ÖAMTC and ARBÖ are Austrian automobile associations. If you are a member in one of the two associations, you will be rendered assistance free of charge or at reduced rates.

If you are involved in an **accident with or without damage to persons**, the following is to be observed:

- ▶ Make the **emergency call to 112**. In this way you are informing the police, medical services and when required the fire brigade.
- ▶ Provide first aid to any injured persons using the “**vehicle first-aid kit**”. This is also referred to in Austria as “**Autoapotheke**” (car first-aid kit). A first-aid kit must always be onboard of any motor vehicle.
- ▶ Fill in an **accident report form** (Unfallbericht). The accident report is indispensable for clarifying your insurance claims.
- ▶ If you do not call the police or leave the place of the accident without providing aid to others or without recording your personal details in an accident report, you can be prosecuted (**hit & run offence**).

Additional information:

Motor vehicle regulations in Austria (Kraftfahrzeug-Vorschriften in Österreich): www.help.gv.at
Motorway vignette (Autobahn-Vignette): www.asfinag.at
Road-safety inspection of vehicles (Kraftfahrzeugüberprüfung, “Pickerl”): www.help.gv.at
ÖAMTC, Austrian Automobile Club: www.oeamtc.at
ARBÖ, Automobile Club Austria: www.arboe.at

3.3.2 Driving License and Vehicle Admission to Traffic

Driving licenses which have been issued in other EU/EEA countries are also valid in Austria. You must report every change of address (main place of residence (Hauptwohnsitz)) to the authority responsible for the area of your principal residence. The following applies to **Swiss citizens**: the driving license must be reissued within six months by the competent regional district administrative authority and/or competent traffic & transportation office (Verkehrsamt), or the Federal Police Headquarters (Bundespolizeidirektion).

If you want to **get a driving license** in Austria you will have to take a driving course. This course is comprised of a theory section (traffic rules, technical aspects, etc.) and a practical section (driving lessons). This course ends with the final driving license test. Getting a driving license involves high costs (on average between 1,000 and 2,000 Euros). Remember to compare prices offered by individual driving schools.

Individuals with a main place of residence (Hauptwohnsitz) outside of Austria may operate a motor vehicle or trailer **with foreign registration plates in Austria for a maximum of one year**. When relocating to Austria you are allowed to drive a vehicle with foreign registration plates for **one month**; within this period you must apply for an official Austrian technical vehicle data registration document (Typenschein).

In the case of imported vehicles with EU vehicle type approval certificate the approval details must be entered into the vehicle type approval database. If no EU vehicle type approval certificate applies to the vehicle (generally for type approval certificates issued before 1st of January 1996), you have to obtain a technical vehicle data registration document (Typenschein) for such a vehicle. If a vehicle is approved for traffic for the very first time in Austria you have to pay the **NoVA tax** (car registration tax based on standardised fuel consumption (Normverbrauchsabgabe)).

After having the vehicle registered in the license approval database and/or obtaining a technical vehicle data registration document and payment of the car registration tax based on standardised fuel consumption (NoVA), you can have your vehicle registered with any vehicle registration and admission to traffic department (Zulassungsstelle) of an insurance company. Subsequently, you must take out **third-party liability insurance** with one of the many insurance companies. Within the EU there is freedom of choice regarding motor vehicle insurance companies. The motor vehicle can be insured in any EU member state with an authorised insurance company. The final traffic registration is performed at the vehicle registration and admission to traffic department of your selected insurance company. For more details related to importing motor vehicles to Austria consult the technical inspection offices of the authorities of the respective provincial government.

Additional information:

Motor vehicle & driving license check list (Checkliste KFZ und Führerschein): www.help.gv.at
Motor vehicle admission to traffic (KFZ-Zulassung): www.help.gv.at
Third-party liability insurance (Haftpflichtversicherung): www.help.gv.at

3.4 Housing

In Austria over 40 percent of new housing is comprised of detached and semi-detached houses and more than 50 percent of new flats are in residential buildings comprising more than two apartments. In towns and built-up areas there are large numbers of flats in multi-storey buildings; detached and semi-detached houses predominate in rural areas.

3.4.1 Renting an Apartment

Apartment rents vary depending on the region. Small apartments are often more expensive comparing the price per square meter than large apartments. On top of the rent you have to pay **operating costs** (Betriebskosten) (approximately 25 percent of the net rent) as well as heating and electricity. When you rent an apartment you will have to register with one of the utility companies to be able to receive **natural gas, electricity or community heating**. **Operating costs** (Betriebskosten) include amongst others costs of water supply/sewage, sewers maintenance, waste disposal, cleaning costs, costs of heating, playground, laundry facilities, etc. which every tenant has to pay along with the rent every month.

In Austria a **rental contract** (Mietvertrag) is an oral or written agreement between the landlord or owner and the tenant. The rental contract regulates which apartment has been rented to you and for how long; additionally it specifies apartment size, rental costs, termination deadlines, house rules etc. **Rental contracts** are concluded either for a **limited period** (normally for 3 years) or **unlimited term**. If a limited period rental contract is not annulled, then it is automatically extended for the contractually specified limited period. If the rental contract is not annulled after the lapse of the second limited rental period then it is deemed extended for an unlimited term.

Please note: time limited rental contracts normally cannot be terminated by the tenant prior to lapse of the limited rental period, unless it is specifically stated in the rental contract.

Contracts for unlimited term can be terminated by both the landlord and the tenant. You have to observe the **termination periods** specified in the rental contract. A **sub-rental agreement** (Untermietvertrag) can be concluded between the principal tenant and the sub-tenant. Special regulations apply to sub-rental contracts.

Recommendation: conclude your rental or sub-rental contract in writing – you might need it if any disputes come up.

Rents for the majority of apartments are regulated throughout Austria by the **Rental Law Act** (Mietrechtsgesetz); whereas rents for detached houses are generally not covered by the Rental Law Act. Statutory periods of notice are also valid for detached houses. Prior to renting an apartment you will be faced with certain **costs** such as **rent prepayment** (Mietzinsvorauszahlung), **security deposit** (Kaution) and under certain circumstances **commission** (Provision) and “**key money**” (Ablöse).

Consult competent counselling services such as Tenants Association (Mietervereinigung) or Tenants Protection Association (Mieterschutzverband) in the federal provinces.

Additional information:

- Privately owned rental apartments (Private Mietwohnungen): www.help.gv.at
- Housing – authorities and counselling offices (Wohnen – Behörden und Beratungsstellen): www.help.gv.at
- Tenants Association (Mietervereinigung): mietervereinigung.at
- Utility companies (Energieversorgungsunternehmen): www.help.gv.at

3.4.2 Viewing a Potential Apartment

You can view apartments before you sign a rental contract. Apartments advertised in newspapers or on the internet are often offered through real estate agents. When several interested potential tenants simultaneously view an apartment we call it “**collective viewing**” (similar to “open house viewing” in the USA). Often you have to call and arrange an appointment for viewing the apartment. During this viewing you should ask as many questions as possible and never prematurely sign a rental contract or **rental contract offer** (Mietanbot), even if the landlord or the real estate agent are pushing this. With a **rental contract offer** (Mietanbot) you confirm that you intend to rent the particular apartment subject to certain conditions. When the landlord accepts your rental contract offer, then the rental agreement is deemed concluded.

Please note: submitting a rental contract offer is binding for you. Do not have the apartment “reserved” for you either; since a reservation is often a hidden rental contract offer.

3.4.3 Purchasing an Apartment

If you are **EU/EEA or Swiss citizen**, you should before buying an apartment or submitting a binding purchase offer (also see section 3.4.2), contact the Chamber of Labour (Arbeiterkammer) or any of the tenant protection organisations, or research on the internet for more details related to buying property.

Additional information:

- Purchasing property (Wohnungseigentum): www.help.gv.at
- Housing – purchasing property (Wohnen im Eigentum): www.arbeiterkammer.at
- Austrian Association of Real Estate Trustees (Österreichischer Verband der Immobilienwirtschaft): www.ovi.at

3.4.4 Application for a Radio and TV License

If you have a radio and/or a TV set in your apartment, you are required to register all of your equipment; for which you then have to pay **TV & radio license fees** (Fernseh- und Rundfunkgebühr). If your income is below a certain level, you can apply for exemption from the TV & radio license fee payments.

Additional information:

TV and radio license fees (Gebühren Info Service, GIS): www.orf-gis.at

Exemption from TV and radio license fees (Gebührenbefreiung): www.gis.at

4. SEEKING EMPLOYMENT IN AUSTRIA

EU/EEA citizens, Swiss citizens and their family members (spouses, children, stepchildren and adopted children, etc.) are entitled to live and work in Austria without work permits in accordance with the principle of “free movement of labour” (special regulations apply to Croatian citizens).

4.1 Seeking Employment from the EU/EEA Countries and Switzerland in Austria; Seeking Employment by Citizens of Third Countries

Prior to coming to Austria, job seekers can obtain information and use various services offered by the **Public Employment Service Austria (Arbeitsmarktservice Österreich, AMS) on the Internet:**

- ▶ seeking employment, province information, regional job opportunities using EURES
- ▶ seeking employment using the AMS (Public Employment Service Austria) website; you can also register online in the eJob-Room
- ▶ AMS (Public Employment Service Austria) services: career focus tests (AMS career compass (AMS Berufskompass), AMS youth compass (AMS Jugendkompass)), interactive application portal including application training and online application coach
- ▶ information provided by the AMS (Public Employment Service Austria): career information systems (Berufsinformationssystem, BIS), occupation related lexica (Berufsexika), qualifications barometer (Qualifikations-Barometer; labour market trends and opportunities on the Austrian labour market), further education database (Weiterbildungsdatenbank), career information centres (Berufsinformationszentrum, BIZ), barrier-free access to AMS offices, unemployment benefits
- ▶ AMS information for youth: workroom (Arbeitszimmer.cc), AMS youth compass (AMS Jugendkompass), application tips for youth
- ▶ employment seekers can obtain information on claiming unemployment benefits from the employment service or the competent authority in their home country (also see section 8.4.2)
- ▶ **English** information on services provided by the Public Employment Service Austria (AMS), residence, living and working conditions can also be found on the AMS website

For citizens of third countries:

Working of qualified third country citizens, the Red-White-Red Card (Rot-Weiß-Rot-Karte) in English: www.migration.gv.at/en

After arriving in Austria you have to observe the following when **seeking employment:**

- ▶ to be able to claim unemployment benefits from your country of origin in Austria (such as unemployment benefits) it is necessary to personally register at the competent AMS office in Austria

When **coming to the AMS office for the first time**, you have to bring the following documents with you

- ▶ your e-card (health insurance card) or confirmation of your social security number (also see section 8)
- ▶ an ID card with a photo (passport, personal ID, etc.)
- ▶ the **portable document U2** issued by the employment service of your home country and the confirmation of your employment periods in the home country (**portable document U1**), if available

As soon as you are registered with your competent AMS office (AMS office competent for the district you registered your residence), your AMS adviser will inform you of reported vacancies. You can also post a job ad using the **eJob-Room**, the online job exchange.

At the AMS offices you can anonymously use the self-service computers and printed vacancies lists to search for suitable vacancies. The AMS website offers in addition to the eJob-Room some other **useful job exchanges**. An overview of all AMS offices including opening hours, addresses and phone numbers is available at www.ams.at/.

Please note: your eAMS account gives you access to many AMS services from anywhere and at any time allowing you to easily handle some of your matters directly from home. You need a computer or a mobile smartphone with internet access to be able to use your eAMS account. You can request your eAMS account access details online, on the phone or personally at the AMS office.

4.2 EURES (European Employment Services)

You can find out about job vacancies in Austria and obtain other information about Austria by contacting the EURES network at the competent employment service office in the EU/EEA countries and Switzerland.

The **EURES website** informs job seekers amongst others about living and working conditions as well as job opportunities in the individual regions of the EU/EEA states and in Switzerland as well as lists job vacancies. Additionally you can post your personal CV online which can be viewed by potential employers.

Around 1,000 specially trained EURES advisers work in the public employment services in all EU/EEA countries and Switzerland to support and advise citizens seeking a job in another EU/EEA country or Switzerland. You can find your EURES advisers responsible for the desired region using the EURES website. In Austria EURES is integrated into the Public Employment Service Austria.

Additional information:

EURES website: eures.europa.eu

EURES contacts in Austria: www.ams.at

4.3 Public Employment Service Austria (AMS)

The public labour administration services, better known as the **Public Employment Service Austria** (Arbeitsmarktservice, AMS), offer their services through local AMS offices. The Public Employment Service Austria (AMS) is responsible for **consultation, job referral, unemployment insurance benefits** (such as unemployment benefits (Arbeitslosengeld)) for persons who are permanent residents of Austria and are currently residing in Austria. Online information is also available for persons outside of Austria (also see section 4.1). Job seekers and unemployed persons may register as seeking employment at their local AMS offices. The local AMS office in the district of your registered residence is the competent office.

Local AMS offices: www.ams.at

On the Public Employment Service Austria (AMS) **website** you can also find the following services and more details regarding

► **eJob-Room:**

The eJob-Room offers an **overview** of all **vacant positions** in Austria and the EEA countries **reported** to the **Public Employment Service Austria, AMS**. You can search for a particular position by selecting the requested employment form, place of work, commencement date of employment, occupational group/occupational designation. This service is available to both registered and unregistered users.

Please note: you can also register for the eJob-Room even when your place of residence is still outside Austria. **Registered users** are additionally offered the following services:

- publishing of applications in the eJob-Room
- use of the extended job vacancies listing (the eJob-Room vacancies)
- apprenticeship seekers can create personality and interests profiles; these profiles will be then compared with corporate requirement profiles and a level of compliance determined

eJob-Room offers are free of charge.

eJob-Room: www.ams.at

► **AMS Job Robot (AMS Jobroboter):**

Additionally, the AMS Job Robot (AMS Jobroboter) allows you to search for vacancies on corporate sites on the internet. It works just like a search engine, looking on Austrian corporate websites for vacancies using specially developed criteria.

- The free **AMS JOB APP** delivers vacancies from the AMS eJob-Room directly to your smartphone. This enables you to search for vacancies or apprenticeship placements, and get information on new matching vacancies through push messaging. All app functions are available without registration.

AMS JOB APP: www.ams.at

AMS Job Robot (AMS Jobroboter): jobroom.ams.or.at

► **Job application tips (Bewerbungstipps):**

Offering interactive application training, application coaching on the internet (step-by-step assistance drafting applications), provides tips and tricks regarding job hunting.

Application documents (Bewerbungsunterlagen): www.ams.at

Practice folder for job seekers (Praxismappe für die Arbeitsuche): www.ams.at

► **Interactive application portal (Interaktives Bewerbungsportal):**

The interactive application portal assists you in any application related matters. As soon as you are registered you can access your personalised content using the My Portal (Mein Portal) menu.

Interactive application portal (Interaktives Bewerbungsportal): bewerbungsportal.ams.or.at

► **Services rendered to job seekers:**

Information on claiming unemployment benefits, emergency assistance benefits; information on responsibilities of benefit recipients towards the Public Employment Service Austria (AMS), etc.

www.ams.at

► **AMS publications for EU/EEA citizens and Swiss citizens:**

Country information (Länderinformationen): www.ams.at

EURES in the border regions (EURES in Grenzregionen): ec.europa.eu/eures

► **Information for foreign workforce:**

www.ams.at

► **Career information system (Berufsinformationssystem, BIS):**

Online information database on professions and qualifications.

www.ams.at/bis

► **Occupation related lexica (Berufslexikon):**

Details regarding professions (job profiles, requirements, training opportunities, career opportunities, employment forms, etc.). You can search for apprenticeship professions, professions after graduation from a university, professions after graduating from vocational schools, semi-skilled professions, unskilled professions, short and special training courses.

www.berufslexikon.at

► **Qualifications barometer (Qualifikations-Barometer):**

Information about qualification trends and latest developments on the labour market.

bis.ams.or.at/qualibarometer

► **Further education database:**

Assistance when looking for suitable training opportunities and details about course providers as well as prerequisites.

wbdb.ams.or.at/wbdb

► **Workroom (Arbeitszimmer.cc):**

Platform for young people who want to exchange tips and tricks regarding profession, study course, school selection.

www.arbeitszimmer.cc

► **Career compass (Berufskompass), AMS youth compass (AMS Jugendkompass), AMS business establishment test (AMS Gründungstest), AMS career compass – reorientation (AMS Berufskompass – Neuorientierung):**

Questionnaire regarding choice of profession; after filling in the details you will receive an online evaluation and interests profile.

www.berufskompass.at

► **Career information centres (BIZ, BerufsInfoZentren):**

BIZ at various locations in Austria offer information about occupational and training possibilities, job opportunities, tips and tricks regarding profession choice; brochures and occupation related videos as well as personalised assistance are offered free of charge.

www.ams.at/berufsinfo-weiterbildung

► **Offers for women and girls:**

www.ams.at/service-arbeitsuchende

► **Disabled persons:**

www.ams.at/service-arbeitsuchende

► **AMS research network (AMS-Forschungsnetzwerk):**

Information system covering networks of labour market relevant topics; publications and surveys are available for download.

www.ams-forschungsnetzwerk.at

Addresses:	
<p>Public Employment Service Austria (AMS) of Burgenland Permayerstraße 10 7000 Eisenstadt Phone: +43 (0) 2682 692-0 Internet: www.ams.at/bgld</p>	<p>Public Employment Service Austria (AMS) of Carinthia Rudolfsbahngürtel 42 9021 Klagenfurt am Wörthersee Phone: +43 (0) 463 38 31-0 Internet: www.ams.at/ktn</p>
<p>Public Employment Service Austria (AMS) of Lower Austria Hohenstaufengasse 2 1010 Wien Phone: +43 (0) 1 531 36-0 Internet: www.ams.at/noe</p>	<p>Public Employment Service Austria (AMS) of Upper Austria Europaplatz 9 4021 Linz Phone: +43 (0) 732 69 63-0 Internet: www.ams.at/ooe</p>
<p>Public Employment Service Austria (AMS) of Salzburg Auerspergstraße 67a 5020 Salzburg Phone: +43 (0) 662 88 83-0 Internet: www.ams.at/sbg</p>	<p>Public Employment Service Austria (AMS) of Styria Babenbergerstraße 33 8020 Graz Phone: +43 (0) 316 70 81-0 Internet: www.ams.at/stmk</p>
<p>Public Employment Service Austria (AMS) of Tyrol Amraser Straße 8 6020 Innsbruck Phone: +43 (0) 512 58 46 64 Internet: www.ams.at/tirol</p>	<p>Public Employment Service Austria (AMS) of Vorarlberg Rheinstraße 33 6901 Bregenz Phone: +43 (0) 5574 691-0 Internet: www.ams.at/vbg</p>
<p>Public Employment Service Austria (AMS) of Vienna Ungargasse 37 1030 Wien Phone: +43 (0) 1 878 71-0 Internet: www.ams.at/wien</p>	<p>Public Employment Service Austria (AMS) Treustraße 35–43 1200 Wien Phone: +43 (0) 1 331 78-0 Internet: www.ams.at</p>

4.4 Working in the Border Regions

Special regulations apply to cross-border commuters (labour market in the Bodensee Border Region and Pannonia Border Region). Please consult the internet websites of the border regions for more information.

- ▶ **Labour market in the Bodensee Border Region (Germany, Principality of Liechtenstein, Austria, Switzerland)**
www.arbeitsmarkt-bodensee.org
- ▶ **EURES Pannonia Border Region (Burgenland region, southern Lower Austria, eastern Styria, western Hungary)**
www.eures-pannonia.hu

Additional information:

Working in the border regions (EURES in the EU network): www.ams.at

4.5 Daily Newspapers

Newspapers & Internet Addresses:	
Wiener Zeitung	www.wienerzeitung.at
Die Presse	diepresse.com
Kurier	kurier.at
Oberösterreichische Nachrichten	www.nachrichten.at
Der Standard	derstandard.at
Salzburger Nachrichten	www.sn.at
Kleine Zeitung	www.kleinezeitung.at
Vorarlberger Nachrichten	www.vn.at
Kronen Zeitung	www.krone.at
Tiroler Tageszeitung	www.tt.com

Additional information:

Job vacancies published in newspapers (Jobs in Zeitungen):
www.ams.at/service-arbeitsuchende

4.6 Private Recruitment Agencies & Hidden Labour Market

The role of private recruitment agencies is growing. Primarily highly qualified positions are nearly exclusively offered on the market through HR consulting companies and agencies. The Public Employment Service Austria (AMS) cooperates with a large number of these agencies. On the AMS website you can also find links to the job-exchanges (Jobbörsen) of many large companies.

Please note: services offered by many HR recruitment agencies and temporary employment agencies are not free. You often have to pay fees for the assistance rendered by HR recruitment agencies.

Contact reputable HR recruiting agencies or headhunters, respectively search job exchange listings.

Some of the job vacancies or newspaper job ads never reach the offices of the Public Employment Service Austria (AMS). Therefore, it may prove worthwhile to send **unsolicited application letters** (i.e. without any reference to a specific job advertisement) to potentially interested employers.

Business directories or yellow pages directories have listings of corporate addresses in certain occupational areas.

Additional information:

Corporate job exchanges (Jöbbörsen von Firmen und Unternehmen):

www.ams.at/service-arbeitsuchende

Business directory (Branchenverzeichnis): www.herold.at

4.7 Au Pairs

Young people from abroad may work in Austria as an au pair for a specified period of time. Au pairs are accepted in the host family and integrated into everyday family life. In addition to working in the household and performing childcare, the au pair has to attend a language school or another course.

Essential **prerequisites** for working as an au pair are as follows:

- ▶ age of 18 to 28 years
- ▶ prior childcare experience as well as enjoying working with children is an asset
- ▶ the scope of employment and the commercial reimbursement is appropriate for working as an au pair
- ▶ minimum skills in German (school level or one semester studies or language course) demonstrated through certificates to be presented
- ▶ readiness to adjust to other cultures and different lifestyles as well as to help with childcare and light housework
- ▶ involvement of an authorised agency when referred to an au pair position
- ▶ maximum of one year employment as au pair in Austria in the last five years

The Housemaid and Domestic Workers Act (Hausgehilfen- und Hausangestelltengesetz, HGHAG) regulates employment of au pairs. Most **au pair agencies** assist au pairs with **formalities prior** to the au pair assignment (selection of host family, travel etc.) as well as during their assignment. Employment of au pairs requires **registration with the legally prescribed social security institution** (gesetzliche Sozialversicherung, Federal Act on General Social Insurance (ASVG)).

Au pairs from the **EU/EEA states** and **Switzerland** enjoy **freedom of establishment** and do not require a residence permit. EU/EEA citizens have to apply for a **registration certificate** (Anmeldebescheinigung; also see section 2.2) for a stay exceeding three months. Contact the Public Employment Service Austria (AMS) or any of AMS local offices to obtain additional information about working as an au pair for citizens of **non-EU/non-EEA countries** (a special residence permit is required).

Additional information:

Au pair: www.help.gv.at

4.8 Seasonal Workers

The demand for seasonal workers is concentrated in the tourism as well as agriculture and forestry sectors. There is especially a recurrent need for experienced harvesters (e.g. asparagus or grape harvesting) from spring to autumn in the **Eastern regions of Austria** (Burgenland, Lower Austria, Upper Austria, and Vienna).

Experienced skilled workers (skilled restaurant workers, cooks) as well as auxiliary workers with professional experience (kitchen help, cleaning staff, housekeeping staff, waitress help, bartenders etc.) are especially sought after in the **winter sport regions of Western Austria** from November to March, and in all tourist regions throughout Austria from May to October. In the area of tourism, special **labour law provisions** are effective (e.g. specific working time during the week or month, respective regulations concerning rest breaks and days off). Information on your rights and obligations as an employee should be obtained from the Chamber of Labour and trade unions prior to starting a new job.

Additional information:

Seasonal job vacancies (Saisonstellen): jobroom.ams.or.at

Seasonal work permit for foreign job seekers from Croatia (quota permits (Kontingentbewilligungen)): www.ams.at/_docs/001_Neue_EU-Buerger_08.pdf

Seasonal workers (Saisonarbeit): www.arbeiterkammer.at

4.9 Croatian Citizens on the Austrian Labour Market

EU/EEA citizens except for Croatian citizens have **free access to the Austrian labour market and no longer require a work permit. Transition periods apply to Croatian citizens.** If you are Croatian and would like to work in Austria

- ▶ and **have not yet found a job**, consult the Public Employment Service Austria (AMS) website when seeking employment;
- ▶ and **have already found a job**, employers must apply to the AMS for an **employment permit** (Beschäftigungsbewilligung) except if eligible for receiving a **freedom of movement confirmation** (Freizügigkeitsbestätigung).

Please note: Croatian citizens able to furnish a Public Employment Service Austria (AMS) confirmation of their free access to the labour market (“freedom of movement confirmation” (Freizügigkeitsbestätigung)) may be employed without an employment permit (Beschäftigungsbewilligung); i.e. they are entitled to free job selection in Austria.

Please note: specific labour market access regulations are valid for Croatians with key qualifications as well as Croatian seasonal workers.

No visa or residence permit is required for Croatian citizens to enter Austria. If however their intended stay in Austria exceeds three months, they have to apply for a **registration certificate** (Anmeldebescheinigung) (also see section 2.2).

Additional information:

Admission of specialists and skilled labour force with Croatian citizenship (Fachkräfte-Zulassung für kroatische Staatsbürger/innen): www.ams.at

4.10 Self-Employment – Setting up a Business

EU/EEA citizens and Swiss citizens may set up their own business and obtain a business license registration (Gewerbeanmeldung); however some exceptions may apply:

www.wko.at/service/Startseite.html

If you want to set up a business or take over an existing business as a successor or franchisor, you should definitely contact the **new entrepreneur service** (Gründerservice) **of the Economic Chamber** in the federal province where you want to live or have your residence. You will receive useful tips, comprehensive counselling and assistance supporting your successful start-up as an entrepreneur.

New entrepreneur service of the Economic Chamber: www.gruenderservice.at/

Irrespective thereof you should consider your **objectives, market prospects, corporate forms, location, costs and financing** as well as **potential subsidies**. When you want to operate your own business you will have to apply for a business license (Gewerbeberechtigung) with the trade and industry authorities (Gewerbebehörde) and for approval of business facilities (Betriebsanlagengenehmigung) when applicable. Furthermore you have to apply for a tax ID at your competent fiscal office for your business and register with the Social Security Institution for Trade and Industry (Sozialversicherungsanstalt der gewerblichen Wirtschaft) to take out health, accident, pension and unemployment insurance. Potential employees will have to be registered with the competent regional health insurance fund (Gebietskrankenkasse).

Setting up a business:

www.bmdw.gv.at

www.help.gv.at

Vienna Business Agency (Wirtschaftsagentur Wien):

www.wirtschaftsagentur.at

5. WORKING IN AUSTRIA

5.1 Labour Law – Overview

Austrian labour law covers the rights and obligations of employees. This includes the following legal regulations and acts of law

- ▶ Salaried Employees Act (Angestelltengesetz)
- ▶ Waged Employees Severance Pay Act (Arbeiter-Abfertigungsgesetz)
- ▶ Federal Act on Work Safety & Health Protection at Work (Arbeitnehmer/innenschutzgesetz)
- ▶ Employment Safeguarding Act (Arbeitsplatzsicherungsgesetz)
- ▶ Labour Relations Act (Arbeitsverfassungsgesetz)
- ▶ Working Hours Act (Arbeitszeitgesetz)
- ▶ Alien Employment Act (Ausländerbeschäftigungsgesetz)
- ▶ Act on Continued Payment of Wages and Salaries (Entgeltfortzahlungsgesetz)
- ▶ Equal Treatment Act (Gleichbehandlungsgesetz)
- ▶ Maternity Protection Act (Mutterschutzgesetz)
- ▶ Vacation Act (Urlaubsgesetz)

Work and law (Arbeit und Recht): www.arbeiterkammer.at

5.2 Representation of Labour Force

Interests of employees are primarily represented in Austria by the Chambers of Labour (Arbeiterkammer, AK), trade unions (Österreichischer Gewerkschaftsbund, ÖGB) and works councils (Betriebsrat).

The Chamber of Labour as well as Austrian trade unions and works councils represent the social, economic, professional and cultural interests of employees in Austria. They are independent democratic institutions. Employees are automatically members of the **Chamber of Labour** which provides them with legal representation if necessary. Voluntary joining or leaving are legally not foreseen and therefore not possible. There is also the possibility of joining a **trade union** through an application process.

The Austrian Chamber of Labour offers **legal assistance free of charge, both on the phone and on their premises** related to many issues under the Austrian Labour Act, industrial safety, minimum wages as well as consumer, apprentices and youth protection, etc. The Austrian Trade Union Federation normally offers counselling services to their members – both on the phone and on their premises; non-members can obtain once-only **free-of-charge legal advice**.

The Chambers of Labour and trade unions are part of the so-called **economic and social partnership** and negotiate issues related to salaries/wages and prices with the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber as well as Chamber of Agriculture. Trade unions negotiate for instance the collective agreements for various sectors. A **collective agreement** (Kollektivvertrag, KV) is an agreement annually renegotiated for all employees within a certain sector by the trade unions with the employers. A collective agreement sets equal **minimum standards for wages and salaries** (“minimum wages”) and working conditions for all employees within a certain sector. All trade unions (trade unions of different branches) are part of the **Austrian Trade Union Federation** (Österreichischer Gewerkschaftsbund, ÖGB), the **Austrian Federation of Chambers of Labour** (Arbeiterkammer Österreich, AK) is the umbrella organisation which incorporates all Austrian Chambers of Labour.

Employees can be represented in the enterprise by **works councils**. The works council represents the staff in contact with the company owner. Works council members have for instance a right of co-determination regarding amongst others recruitment, termination and dismissal of employees.

Additional information:

Chambers of Labour (Arbeiterkammern): www.arbeiterkammer.at
Austrian Trade Union Federation (Österreichischer Gewerkschaftsbund): www.oegb.at
Works council (Betriebsrat): www.betriebsraete.at

5.3 Employment Forms

Austrian labour law distinguishes between the following forms of employment

- ▶ **Employment contract** (Arbeitsvertrag):
concluded between an employer and an employee
- ▶ **Short-term contracts as independent contractors** (freier Dienstvertrag):
concluded between a principal (customer) and an independent contractor
- ▶ **Contract for work and labour and “employee-like” workers** (Werkvertrag und arbeitnehmerähnliche Beschäftigung):
includes both those employed on the basis of a contract for work and services (Werkvertragsnehmer), who require a business license (Gewerbeschein), and in certain cases “new self-employed persons” (Neue Selbständige). In case of a contract for work and labour you are free to decide when, where and how you work. In contrast to a short-term contract as an independent contractor, you work independently.

Additional information:

Employment contracts (Arbeitsverträge): www.arbeiterkammer.at
Forms of employment (Arten von Beschäftigung): www.usp.gv.at
Short-term contracts as independent contractors (freier Dienstvertrag): www.arbeiterkammer.at
Contract for work and labour (Werkvertrag): www.arbeiterkammer.at

5.3.1 Employment Contract & Position Specifications Statement

An **employment contract** (Arbeitsvertrag) is defined as a binding arrangement whereby one person undertakes to perform work for another person. It can be concluded orally, in writing, or by way means of a conclusive act. The employment contract is deemed concluded conclusively if you start your performance without any objection from your employer and afterwards receive your remuneration.

Exception: apprenticeship contracts (Lehrverträge, contracts concluded for persons in training) must be concluded in writing.

If the employment contract is not concluded in writing then you will receive a **position specification statement** (Dienstzettel) from your employer **immediately after starting to work**. The position specification statement covers the major rights and obligations in an employment contract. Keep your position specification statement stored securely since it serves as evidence in case of any disputes. The minimum content of the position specification statement is legally prescribed. The employer is also legally obliged to issue a position specification statement. Independent contractors are also entitled to receive a position specification statement.

Additional information:

Employment contract and position specification statement (Arbeitsvertrag und Dienstzettel): www.arbeiterkammer.at
Apprenticeship – apprenticeship contract (Lehre – Lehrvertrag): www.arbeiterkammer.at

5.3.1.1 Working Hours & Vacation Entitlements

According to the law, **full-time employment** (Vollzeitarbeit) is:

- ▶ a **working day of 8 hours** (working time within a 24-hour period)
- ▶ a **weekly working time of forty (40) hours** (working period from Monday to Sunday inclusive)

Collective agreements have shortened the working week in many branches of business. A bonus of 50 percent or compensatory time-off is applicable for overtime work. If the daily working time exceeds six hours it must be interrupted by a half hour **break**. This break is unpaid and is not included in the working hours. Other working hours arrangements such as **part-time employment, seasonal employment** etc. are possible.

Employees are granted a **vacation entitlement** (Urlaubsanspruch) for at least five weeks (= thirty business days respectively twenty-five working days) per working year; this also applies to minimum-income employees (geringfügig Beschäftigte) and part-time employees.

If set forth in the collective bargaining agreement or employment contract, employees are also entitled to **special benefits** (Sonderzahlungen). In addition to their monthly remuneration they are paid a **vacation bonus** (Urlaubsgeld), also referred to as vacation allowance (Urlaubszuschuss or Urlaubsbeihilfe), and a **Christmas bonus** (Weihnachtsremuneration (Christmas remuneration) or Weihnachtsgeld), each corresponding to a full monthly remuneration.

Please note: there is actually no legal entitlement to the vacation bonus (so-called 13th salary) and the Christmas bonus (so-called 14th salary).

The vacation bonus is not the same as the **vacation remuneration** (Urlaubsentgelt) which is the remuneration an employee is entitled to despite the fact that they do not perform any work during this time. You can also be employed as a **minimum-income employee** (geringfügig Beschäftigter). You are employed as a minimum-income employee if your monthly remuneration does not exceed 438.05 Euros (in 2018), irrespective of how many hours you are working. Minimum-income employees have the same entitlements as any other employees, such as right to vacation, continued payment of remuneration in case of illness (Entgeltfortzahlung im Krankheitsfall), severance pay (Abfertigung), and special benefits (Sonderzahlungen).

Additional information:

Working hours (Arbeitszeit): www.arbeiterkammer.at

Vacation (Urlaub): www.arbeiterkammer.at

Rights of employees (Arbeitnehmer/innenrechte): www.arbeiterkammer.at

Minimum-income employment (Geringfügige Beschäftigung): www.arbeiterkammer.at

5.3.1.2 Termination

Every employee is protected by Austrian labour law through the **termination notice periods and termination dates**. Termination notice periods and termination dates are mostly regulated by collective agreements and employer/works council agreements; they are otherwise regulated by the Salaried Employees Act (Angestelltengesetz) or the Civil Code (Allgemeines Bürgerliches Gesetzbuch, ABGB). If you want to quit your employment, then this is employee-based termination. If your employer terminates your employment, then this is employer-based termination.

The **termination date** (Kündigungstermin) is the point of time when the employment should end. This is the last day of the employment and not the day when the termination notice was served. The **termination period** (Kündigungsfrist) is the period between the termination of the employment and the last day of the employment (i.e. termination date). The employment contract may be terminated orally, in writing or through a conclusive action. Conclusive action would be for instance when the employment papers are handed back to you.

Termination dates and period vary for salaried and waged employees. Prior to quitting your employment please familiarise yourself with the applicable employment termination regulations.

When your employment has been terminated, you can **appeal against the termination** under certain circumstances. It is however important to contact the works council, the Chamber of Labour or your trade union representative immediately after receiving a written or oral termination notice.

Please note: when appealing against a termination notice you have to observe deadlines.

Additional information:

Employment termination (Beendigung des Arbeitsverhältnisses): www.arbeiterkammer.at
Brochure “labour law at your fingerprints” (Arbeitsrecht griffbereit): www.arbeiterkammer.at

5.3.2 Persons Working on Short-Term Contracts as Independent Contractors

Employment based on a short-term contract as an independent contractor (freier Dienstvertrag) is characterised as follows:

Persons working on short-term contracts as independent contractors

- ▶ may engage subcontractors to fulfil their obligations
- ▶ can use their own resources
- ▶ are not incorporated into the corporate organisation
- ▶ are normally paid by the hour
- ▶ enjoy no or only low-level personal security

In contrast to the contract for work and labour, there is no warranty to produce a certain work. Independent contractors working on short-term contracts with a monthly remuneration exceeding the **minimum salary limit** (in 2018: €438.05) have to be registered by the employer with the competent regional health insurance fund and hence enjoy health insurance coverage. They are entitled to **sickness benefits** (Krankengeld) starting from the fourth day of occupational incapacity; they also enjoy accident, unemployment and pension insurance as well as are subject to the Law on Insurance against Non-Payment in case of Insolvency (Insolvenzentsicherungsgesetz, IESG) stipulations. Independent contractors are also entitled to receive a **position specification statement** (Dienstzettel).

Please note: independent contractors only enjoy limited protection under Austrian Labour Law. Without an appropriate agreement between the principal and the independent contractor there is however **no** legal entitlement to special benefits, vacation, a release from performance obligation and protection against dismissal. Termination periods and dates are specified in the employment contract respectively the stipulations of the Civil Code (Allgemeines Bürgerliches Gesetzbuch, ABGB) are deemed applicable thereto.

The employer must take out accident insurance for any **minimum-income employees**. Taking out voluntary health and pension insurance is possible; persons receiving remuneration at the legally stipulated minimum-income level have to apply at the competent regional health insurance fund themselves. Independent contractors have to pay income taxes when their annual income exceeds a certain amount. They are classified as entrepreneurs and have to apply for a tax identification number with the responsible fiscal authorities.

Additional information:

Short-term contracts as independent contractors (Freier Dienstvertrag): www.arbeiterkammer.at
Minimum-income employment (Geringfügige Beschäftigung): www.arbeiterkammer.at

5.3.3 Contract for Work & Labour and New Self-Employed

In a **contract for work and labour** (Werkvertrag) a contractor undertakes to carry out a particular service or work and the customer promises to pay for the service or work. In contrast to the employment contract or persons working as independent short-term contractors, in the contract for work and labour the result of **the performance rendered is decisive**. The contractor is responsible for successfully performing the works (i.e. the specified service) or achieving a specific result.

Characteristics of contracts for work and labour:

- ▶ personal and economic independence from the party ordering the works (principal, i.e. the customer)
- ▶ no obligation to perform the work or service personally (sub-contracting to third parties is allowed)
- ▶ the contractor (WerkunternehmerIn, approximate equivalent of contract assignee) uses their own resources
- ▶ they are not incorporated into the corporate organisation of the party ordering the works

The contract for work and labour is deemed fulfilled with the performance of the contractual works. The completion of the agreed works and/or achievement of the result are deemed as automatic satisfaction of the obligation. Taking out **insurance is mandatory**. Irrespective of your income you are to register with the Social Security Institution for Trade and Industry (Sozialversicherungsanstalt der gewerblichen Wirtschaft, SVA). Entrepreneurs with a business license (Gewerbeschein) are referred to in Austria as “Gewerbetreibende” (traders, business persons). **Business persons** run their business using contracts for work and labour. Business persons however require a business license to be entitled to operate their business.

“Neue Selbstständige” or **“new self-employed persons”** (i.e. freelancers) perform any type of commercial services not requiring a business license (Gewerbeschein) and which are not services rendered by independent contractors. This category includes professionals such as: authors, experts and consultants, translators and psychotherapists. The mandatory insurance of the “new self-employed” covers pension, health and accident insurance as well as coverage within the framework of the self-employed insurance fund. Special regulations are deemed applicable to unemployment insurance. **“New self-employed persons”** with contracts for work and labour are always to report their activities to the Social Security Institution for Trade and Industry (Sozialversicherung der gewerblichen Wirtschaft, SVA).

Additional information:

Contract for work and labour (Werkvertrag): www.arbeiterkammer.at

Social Security Institution for Trade and Industry (Sozialversicherungsanstalt der gewerblichen Wirtschaft): www.svagw.at

“New self-employed” (Neue Selbstständige): www.wko.at

Addresses:

Chamber of Labour (AK) of Burgenland

Wiener Straße 7
7000 Eisenstadt
Phone: +43 (0) 2682 740-0
Internet: bgl.d.arbeiterkammer.at

Chamber of Labour (AK) of Carinthia

Bahnhofplatz 3
9021 Klagenfurt am Wörthersee
Phone: +43 (0) 504 77-0
Internet: kaernten.arbeiterkammer.at

Chamber of Labour (AK) of Lower Austria

AK-Platz 1
3100 St. Pölten
Phone: +43 (0) 5 71 71-0
Internet: noe.arbeiterkammer.at

Chamber of Labour (AK) of Upper Austria

Volksgartenstraße 40
4020 Linz
Phone: +43 (0) 50 69 06-0
Internet: ooe.arbeiterkammer.at

Addresses:

Chamber of Labour (AK) of Salzburg Markus-Sittikus-Straße 10 5020 Salzburg Phone: +43 (0) 662 86 87-0 Internet: sbg.arbeiterkammer.at	Chamber of Labour (AK) of Styria Hans-Resel-Gasse 8–14 8020 Graz Phone: +43 (0) 5 77 99-0 Internet: stmk.arbeiterkammer.at
Chamber of Labour (AK) of Tyrol Maximilianstraße 7 6010 Innsbruck Phone: +43 (0) 800 22 55 22 Internet: tirol.arbeiterkammer.at	Chamber of Labour (AK) of Vorarlberg Widnau 2–4 6800 Feldkirch Phone: +43 (0) 50 258-0 Internet: vbg.arbeiterkammer.at
Chamber of Labour (AK) of Vienna Prinz-Eugen-Straße 20–22 1040 Wien Phone: +43 (0) 1 501 65-0 Internet: wien.arbeiterkammer.at	Austrian Chamber of Labour Prinz-Eugen-Straße 20–22 1040 Wien Phone: +43 (0) 1 501 65-0 Internet: www.arbeiterkammer.at
Austrian Trade Union Federation (ÖGB) of Burgenland Wiener Straße 7 7000 Eisenstadt Phone: +43 (0) 2682 770-0 Internet: www.oegb.at	Austrian Trade Union Federation (ÖGB) of Carinthia Bahnhofstraße 44 9020 Klagenfurt am Wörthersee Phone: +43 (0) 463 58 70-0 Internet: www.oegb.at
Austrian Trade Union Federation (ÖGB) of Lower Austria AK-Platz 1 3100 St. Pölten Phone: +43 (0) 2742 266 55-0 Internet: www.oegb.at	Austrian Trade Union Federation (ÖGB) of Upper Austria Weingartshofstraße 2 4020 Linz Phone: +43 (0) 732 66 53 91-0 Internet: www.oegb.at
Austrian Trade Union Federation (ÖGB) of Salzburg Markus-Sittikus-Straße 10 5020 Salzburg Phone: +43 (0) 662 88 16 46 Internet: www.oegb.at	Austrian Trade Union Federation (ÖGB) of Styria Karl-Morre-Straße 32 8020 Graz Phone: +43 (0) 316 70 71-0 Internet: www.oegb.at
Austrian Trade Union Federation (ÖGB) of Tyrol Südtiroler Platz 14–16 6020 Innsbruck Phone: +43 (0) 512 597 77 Internet: www.oegb.at	Austrian Trade Union Federation (ÖGB) of Vorarlberg Steingasse 2 6800 Feldkirch Phone: +43 (0) 5522 35 53-0 Internet: www.oegb.at
Austrian Trade Union Federation (ÖGB) of Vienna Johann-Böhm-Platz 1 1020 Wien Phone: +43 (0) 1 53 444 39 Internet: www.oegb.at	Pension Insurance Institution (Pensionsversicherungsanstalt) Friedrich-Hillegeist-Straße 1 1021 Wien Phone: +43 (0) 50 303-0 Internet: www.pensionsversicherung.at

5.4 Educational Leave & Sabbaticals, Educational Part-Time Employment

Employees may take out educational leave with the objective of completing occupational training or further training. You can go on **educational leave** after a minimum employment period of **six months** provided that the employer agrees thereto. There is no legal entitlement. The **minimum duration** is **two months**; **maximum** educational leave is **twelve months**. During this leave period, wages or salary are not paid; instead, employees receive an **educational allowance** from the Public Employment Service Austria in the amount of unemployment benefits they would have otherwise received. Participation in further education courses of a minimum 20 hours per week (including learning times) is necessary. Special regulations are deemed applicable to attending a university.

Educational part-time employment allows taking educational courses while maintaining your employment. You agree with the employer on the reduction of the working hours to participate in educational training. A written agreement between the employee and employer specifying the starting point, duration, scope and location of part-time employment is necessary.

Additional information:

Educational leave and sabbaticals (Bildungskarenz): www.arbeiterkammer.at

Educational leave and sabbaticals for persons working on short-term contracts as independent contractors (Bildungskarenz für freie Dienstnehmer/innen): www.arbeiterkammer.at

Educational leave and sabbaticals as well as educational part-time employment (Bildungskarenz und Bildungsteilzeit): www.help.gv.at

6. RECOGNITION OF FOREIGN GRADUATION CERTIFICATES & LICENSES

6.1 General

Occupational recognition (recognition of licenses) for regulated professions:

The 2005/36/EC directive on recognition of occupational qualifications only applies to the so-called regulated profession qualifications of **EU/EAA citizens and Swiss citizens**. This regulation also applies to third-country citizens with completed EU/EAA or Swiss training under certain circumstances. A **profession is deemed regulated** when commencement or practicing of such is linked to certain qualifications pursuant to legal or administrative regulations. The required qualifications are based on different educational levels depending on the profession. The list of regulated professions contains around 100 occupational designations. It is the responsibility of individual nation states to define their respective regulated professions and corresponding admission procedures. Within the EU/EEA and Switzerland, regulated profession qualifications of applicants originating from these states **must be recognised** if the applicants are already **entitled to practice their profession there**. In such cases **no occupational recognition procedure is required** and hence not possible. Furthermore, **nostrification** (recognition of college/university education) is not required for admission to post-graduate studies.

If you are **not entitled to practice your profession** in your home country or your current place of residence, you have to apply for an occupational recognition procedure to obtain entitlement to practice a regulated profession. If for instance the prerequisites for practicing as an architect in Spain have to be satisfied through registration on an appropriate list, and you are not on this list, then you have not yet obtained an entitlement to practice this profession in Spain therefore you cannot work as an architect in Austria.

Nostrification (Nostrifikation) is to be understood as recognition of graduation at a foreign university as equivalent to graduating from a bachelors', masters', diploma or doctorate course at an Austrian university, college, or university of applied sciences.

Successful nostrification means that you are deemed fully equivalent to having graduated from an Austrian university and are entitled to use the corresponding Austrian academic degree and practice the respective profession which requires graduation from a university in Austria.

University graduation certificates:

Graduates from colleges and universities within the EU/EAA/Switzerland do not need to apply for recognition of their diplomas unless they want to work in the public sector and/or practice one of the legally regulated professions (see above). Please contact **ENIC NARIC Austria** to clarify any issues related to recognition of foreign university graduation diplomas, appraisal of foreign higher education qualifications, recommendations related to general university entry qualifications and confirmation for using academic titles.

Additional information:

ENIC NARIC AUSTRIA: www.aais.at/

Questions related to **appraisal of training entitling to practicing of a certain profession** etc. can be electronically submitted online.

Additional information:

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

Assessment of foreign higher education graduation diplomas can represent an alternative to nostrification proceedings. It is not binding but relatively easily to obtain (non-bureaucratically). Academic assessment of foreign diplomas can be for instance quite supportive when seeking employment, applying for and conducting an interview at the Public Employment Service Austria (AMS).

Equivalence of completed apprenticeship training:

Occupational qualifications as defined in the Vocational Training Act (Berufsausbildungsgesetz, BAG) obtained at school and/or at work – irrespective whether in an EEA country or not, are defined as equivalent to completed Austrian apprenticeship training. A corresponding **application** must be submitted to the **Federal Ministry of Digitalisation and Business Location** (Bundesministerium für Digitalisierung und Wirtschaftsstandort). The application for determining equivalence of training – provided it is not rejected – can return the following

- determination of full equivalence
- admission to the practical part of the final apprenticeship exam
- admission to extraordinary completion of the final apprenticeship exam

Additional information:

Equivalence of foreign professional training (Gleichhaltung einer ausländischen Berufsausbildung): www.bmwf.gv.at

School graduation certificates:

An EU directive on recognition of occupational qualifications is applicable within the EU/EAA/ Switzerland allowing direct access to the labour market. If you wish to start working directly based on the occupational qualifications gained at school no nostrification is required (recognition proceedings for school training).

Nostrification of foreign certificates is based on a comparison of school attendance abroad and passed exams with the current Austrian curriculums. If individual courses or curriculums cannot be sufficiently proven, you will have to take appropriate additional exams. The **Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research** (Bundesministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft und Forschung, BMBWF) in Vienna is the competent authority regarding nostrification of foreign certificates; the ministry is comprised of various departments and multiple sub-departments.

Foreign certificates can also be assessed. Such **assessment** should facilitate the appraisal of foreign school graduation certificates and allow general appraisal of comparability with an Austrian school graduation certificate. **The issued assessment is primarily useful when seeking employment.** The assessment does not replace the recognition of qualifications and access to legally regulated professions respectively nostrification of certificates.

Additional information:

Assessment and nostrification of foreign school certificates (Bewertung und Nostrifikation von ausländischen schulischen Zeugnissen): www.asbb.at

Assessment and nostrification of foreign school certificates (points of contact for school graduation certificates (Ansprechpartner/innen für schulische Abschlüsse)): www.bmb.gv.at

Foreign high-school graduation certificates issued by EU/EEA countries and Switzerland are seen as equivalent to those issued in Austria when they are required for **admission to an Austrian university**. These certificates must however be issued by foreign educational institutions showing no major differences in comparison with the Austrian educational system. If any differences are determined, the university or the university admissions commission may declare these as equivalent for the purpose of being admitted to studying after for instance having passed additional examinations.

Additional information:

Recognition guide with information on recognition procedures and competent institutions (Anerkennungs-Wegweiser): www.berufsanerkennung.at

List of professions regulated in Austria (Liste reglementierter Berufe in Österreich): www.bmfwf.gv.at

Austrian universities and universities of applied sciences (Österreichische Universitäten und Fachhochschulen): www.studieren.at/hochschuluebersicht

Points of reference regarding recognition of foreign graduation certificates (Anlaufstellen zur Anerkennung ausländischer Bildungsabschlüsse): www.anlaufstelle-erkennung.at/anlaufstellen

7. TAXES

7.1 Income Tax & Employee Tax Assessment

Both employed and self-employed pay income respectively payroll taxes. Different regulations apply to your tax liabilities depending on whether you have a job in a company or are self-employed.

► **Tax liability of employees:**

Employees do not have to pay their income taxes directly to the fiscal authorities in Austria. The income tax is deducted at source from their gross wages/salary as wage/salary tax and transferred by the employer to the fiscal authorities. Employees may submit an employee tax assessment form (Arbeitnehmerveranlagung) at their competent tax authority and have any excess wages/salary taxes refunded. An **application-free employee tax assessment** applies when a **tax refund** for the tax payer results from the income gained from employment specified on the salary/wage slip (Lohnzettel). In such a case the tax payers are refunded any excess wages/salary taxes irrespective of whether an application has been submitted. The application-free tax assessment is linked to certain prerequisites, such as there is no other income.

► **Tax liability of self-employed (“new self-employed”, employed on the basis of a contract for work and services and self-employed with a business license):**

Self-employed persons are responsible for paying their income taxes themselves. Their tax liability is linked to their taxable annual income. If your annual income exceeds 11,000 Euros, you have to pay tax on it. During the initial registration of self-employment you have to **apply** for a **tax ID** with your competent tax authority. In the subsequent year an initial income tax declaration must be submitted to the tax authorities competent for your place of residence. **Please note:** if the established company is a joint stock company or a limited liability company, you will have to pay a corporate income tax of 25 percent. Please consult your tax adviser for further details

► **Tax liability of persons working on short-term contracts as independent contractors:**

Social security contributions of persons working on short-term contracts as independent contractors are automatically deducted at source by the employer; they have however to pay their taxes themselves. Please contact your competent fiscal authorities.

The Austrian income-tax system is based on **progressive six-stage taxation rates**. This means the more money you make the higher taxes you pay.

Income taxation brackets in Euros – Marginal tax rate	
11,000 and below	0 percent
over 11,000 and less than 18,000	25 percent
over 18,000 and less than 25,000	35 percent
over 25,000 and less than 31,000	35 percent
over 31,000 and less than 60,000	42 percent
over 60,000 and less than 90,000	48 percent
over 90,000 and less than 1,000,000	50 percent
over 1,000,000	55 percent

Differentiation is made between gross salary/wage and net salary/wage. The net salary is the income after all deductions including taxes and social security contributions.

Additional information:

Income and taxes (Steuer und Einkommen): www.arbeiterkammer.at
Gross/net calculator (Brutto-Netto-Rechner): bruttonetto.arbeiterkammer.at
2018 tax guide (Das Steuerbuch 2018): www.bmf.gv.at
Employee tax assessment (Arbeitnehmerveranlagung): www.help.gv.at

Who is liable for tax?

- ▶ employees and pensioners with a taxable annual income exceeding 12,000 Euros; taxes are deducted at source by the employer or the pension insurance institution (Pensionsversicherungsanstalt);
- ▶ new self-employed, business persons with a business license, persons working on short-term contracts as independent contractors from annual profits exceeding 11,000 Euros

When should you independently submit a tax declaration without being contacted by the competent fiscal office?

If your income from employment (if you are a white/blue collar employee) exceeds 12,000 Euros then you are obliged to submit an **income tax declaration** (Einkommensteuererklärung) or **employee tax assessment declaration** (Erklärung zur Arbeitnehmerveranlagung) if

- ▶ you have any other income in addition to your taxable income (such as from short-term contracts as independent contractors/contracts for work and labour or from rentals) **exceeding a total of 730 Euros** then you have to submit an income tax declaration (form E 1, E 1a); **Submission deadline:** by April 30 of the following year, respectively by June 30 of the following year for online assessment
- ▶ during the course of the calendar year, you have at least **from time to time earned two or more taxable incomes** (as wages or salary) for which tax was not calculated on the basis of all income for the same period (such as company pension in addition to General Social Insurance Act (ASVG) pension); then you have to submit an Employee Tax Assessment Declaration (form L 1); **Submission deadline:** by September 30 of the following year
- ▶ your income does not involve taxable income from employment and the annual income exceeds 11,000 Euros, then you have to submit an income tax declaration (Einkommensteuererklärung) (form E 1, E 1a); **Submission deadline:** by April 30 of the following year, respectively by June 30 of the following year for online assessment
- ▶ your income originates from employment and no income (wage/salary) tax has been deducted (cross-border commuters, foreign pension payments (Grenzgänger/innen, ausländische Pensionen); **Submission deadline:** by April 30 of the following year, respectively by June 30 of the following year for online submission
- ▶ you receive income **working on short-term contracts as an independent contractor** (freier Dienstnehmer/freie Dienstnehmerin) and have **not yet received a tax identification number**, you have to register the start of your occupational activities with the fiscal authorities competent for your place of residence **within one month**. Under fiscal law, persons working on short-term contracts as independent contractors are deemed self-employed i.e. freelancers. The principal (i.e. the customer) does not deduct any taxes at source; the fiscal authorities stipulate the due tax amount ex post for short-term contracts as independent contractors. An appropriate form (E 1 and E 1a) will be sent to you. Even if your income is too low to be taxable, you still have to fill in and return the income tax declaration form to your fiscal authorities. **Submission deadline:** by April 30 of the following year, respectively by June 30 of the following year for online submission

Additional information:

Persons working on short-term contracts as independent contractors, section: Fiscal law (Freie Dienstnehmer/innen, Kapitel Steuerrecht): www.arbeiterkammer.at

Useful tax tips (Steuertipps): www.arbeiterkammer.at

Taxes and financial matters (Steuern und Finanzen): www.usp.gv.at

Fiscal offices competent for your place of residence (Wohnsitzfinanzämter): service.bmf.gv.at

Taxes and financial matters (Steuern und Finanzen): www.help.gv.at

Address:**Federal Ministry of Finance**

(Bundesministerium für Finanzen, BMF)

Johannesgasse 5

1010 Wien

Phone: +43 (0) 1 514 33-0

Internet: www.bmf.gv.at

The citizens' service of the**Federal Ministry of Finance:**

Monday – Friday from 8 am to 5 pm,

Phone: + 43 (0) 50 233 765 at local rates

8. SOCIAL SECURITY IN AUSTRIA

Registration with the appropriate **social security** institution is **mandatory**; every business and every enterprise pays social security contributions for each employee and their dependants. Self-employed persons with a business license, “new self-employed”, and contract assignees have to register with and pay their social security contributions to the competent social security institution.

Employers are **responsible** for **registering** their **employees with the appropriate social security institution**. Every person and their family members are assigned a social security number with the registration. **Social security contributions** of employees and persons working on short-term contracts as independent contractors are **automatically** deducted at source by the employer.

The payment of social security contributions is **shared by the employer and employee**. The employer is responsible for paying both shares to the competent social security institution. The **amount of social security contributions** (i.e. contribution rates) depends on whether the employee is a blue or white-collar employee, apprentice, minimum-income employee, etc.

In Austria, employees and independent contractors whose income exceeds the low-income limit (€438.05 per month in 2018) are covered by all aspects of the social security system. **Employees with remuneration below the low-income limit** as well as **students** are only covered by part of the social security system (accident insurance). Minimum-income employees are eligible for voluntary health and pension insurance. Students can be co-insured free of charge, subject to satisfying certain prerequisites.

Additional information:

Austrian social security system (Österreichische Sozialversicherung):

www.sozialversicherung.at

Social security contribution values and contribution rates 2018 (Beitragsrechtliche Werte, Beitragssätze 2018): www.hauptverband.at

Benefit-related values 2018 (Leistungsrechtliche Werte 2018): www.hauptverband.at

Social security benefits:

- ▶ **health insurance** including maternity protection: free insurance protection for family members (subject to certain preconditions), cost coverage for medical treatment, hospital stays, health check examinations, and childcare allowance, sickness benefits, care-related benefits etc.
- ▶ **accident insurance**: coverage for accidents at work and vocational illnesses and their consequences, e.g. invalidity and occupational incapacity etc.
- ▶ **pension insurance**: old-age pension benefits etc.
- ▶ **unemployment insurance**: benefits granted during unemployment (e.g., unemployment benefit payments, emergency assistance benefits)

Additional information:

Benefits of the social security institutions (Leistungen der Sozialversicherungsträger):

www.help.gv.at

Addresses:

Federal Ministry of Finance

(Bundesministerium für Finanzen, BMF)
Johannesgasse 5
1010 Wien
Phone: +43 (0) 1 514 33-0
Citizens' service: +43 (0) 50 233 765
Monday through Friday from 8 am to 5 pm
Internet: www.bmf.gv.at

Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health and Consumer Protection

(Bundesministerium für Arbeit, Soziales, Gesundheit und Konsumentenschutz, BMASGK)
Stubenring 1
1010 Wien
Phone: +43 (0) 1 711 00-0
Citizens' service: +43 (0) 1 711 00-86 22 86
Monday through Friday from 8 am to 4 pm
Internet: www.sozialministerium.at

8.1 Health Insurance

There are many **health insurance institutions** (health insurance/social security institutions (Krankenkassen/Sozialversicherungsanstalten)) in Austria; all health insurance institutions come under the umbrella of the Main Association of Austrian Social Security Institutions (Hauptverband der Österreichischen Sozialversicherungsträger). Your competent insurance institution is determined by both your place of residence and occupation. A **free choice** of insurance institution is **not allowed**; the competent insurance institution will be assigned to you.

Health insurance (Krankenversicherung) **covers** amongst others **free treatment** by medical doctors with appropriate contracts with the insurance institutions and hospitals as well as **sickness benefits**. The prerequisite for free treatment is presentation of an **e-card** (an electronic health insurance card) where all personal data (name, insurance number, etc.) of the insured person are stored. Your e-card will be sent to you and your family members within 14 days by your health insurance company following registration with your competent health insurance institution. The back of the e-card corresponds to the **European social security card**. The e-card ensures free-of-charge medical treatment in European Union states.

Health insurance coverage is applicable when you

- ▶ are employed or self-employed (**please note:** minimum-income employees have to take out health insurance coverage themselves) or
- ▶ receive an unemployment benefit/emergency assistance benefit or
- ▶ receive a pension benefit or
- ▶ receive a weekly maternity allowance, or childcare allowance

You **may co-insure** your **family members** (amongst others your spouse, partner, registered partner as well as children, grandchildren, foster children and stepchildren) provided **they are resident in Austria**. Minors up to 18 years of age are co-insured. Minors (children, foster children etc.) attending schools, vocational training or universities can be co-insured free-of-charge up to 25 years of age, subject to satisfaction of certain prerequisites. Spouses respectively partners with children can be **co-insured free of charge**. The **co-insurance for childless spouses respectively partners** entails an **additional contribution rate** of 3.4 percent of the contribution assessment basis of the income of the insured spouse. There are also exceptions here. If you intend co-insuring your family members you have to notify your employer thereof.

Additional information:

Online guide to co-insuring relatives (Online-Ratgeber Mitversicherung von Angehörigen):
www.sozialversicherung.at

Other health insurance **benefits** include amongst others: dental treatment, rehabilitation, home nursing, recuperation assistance, health protection benefits and medical check-ups under the mother-child pass system, and care benefits. When you are employed and become ill over a longer period, you will initially receive full wages respectively salary (so-called “**continued payment of remuneration**” (Entgeltfortzahlung)), and then half of it. Afterwards, you will receive **sickness benefits** (Krankengeld) from your competent health insurance institution. Persons working on short-term contracts as independent contractors are also entitled to sickness benefits. They receive sickness benefits from the fourth day of occupational incapacity.

Additional information:

Sickness benefits (Krankengeld): www.help.gv.at

Prescription medicines are obtained at pharmacies for 6 Euros **per prescription item** (effective 2018). Patient’s annual medication costs are limited to a maximum of two percent of their net income. When the medication costs exceed this amount then the patient is automatically exempt from **prescription fees**. Persons with low income can apply for exemption from prescription fees.

Employed persons are registered by their employers with their competent health insurance institution (health insurance/social security institution); **self-employed persons** (new self-employed/freelancers, self-employed/freelancers with a business license (Gewerbeschein)) **have to personally register** with their competent health insurance company (Social Security Institution of Trade and Industry (Sozialversicherungsanstalt der gewerblichen Wirtschaft)).

Additional information:

Benefits from the legally prescribed health insurance (Leistungen der gesetzlichen Krankenversicherung): www.help.gv.at

Contact details of the health insurance institutions (social security institutions): www.sozialversicherung.at

8.2 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 amongst others accident treatment costs, rehabilitation, and reimbursements, respectively surviving dependants’ benefits (such as surviving dependants’ pensions).

Additional information:

Accident insurance (Unfallversicherung): www.auva.at

Accident insurance – an overview (Überblick zur Unfallversicherung): www.help.gv.at

Addresses:

Austrian Accident Insurance Institution – main office (Allgemeine Unfallversicherungsanstalt – AUVA, Hauptstelle)
Adalbert-Stifter-Straße 65
1200 Wien
Phone: +43 (0) 5 93 93-0
Internet: www.auva.at

Main Association of Austrian Social Security Institutions (Hauptverband der Österreichischen Sozialversicherungsträger)
Kundmanngasse 21
1031 Wien
Phone: +43 (0) 1 711 32-0
Internet: www.sozialversicherung.at

8.3 Pensions Insurance

In Austria women currently reach pensionable age at 60 and men at 65.

The following applies to EU/EEA citizens and Swiss citizens:

Pursuant to Austrian law you are entitled to pension benefits if you have been self-employed or employed for over 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.

Additional information:

Pension: www.arbeiterkammer.at

Information in several foreign languages: www.pensionsversicherung.at

Pension: www.help.gv.at

Address:

Pension Insurance Institution

(Pensionsversicherungsanstalt)

Friedrich-Hillegeist-Straße 1

1021 Wien

Phone: +43 (0) 50 303

Internet: www.pensionsversicherung.at

8.4 Unemployment Insurance

8.4.1 Financial Benefits

The Public Employment Service Austria (Arbeitsmarktservice, AMS) is responsible for unemployment insurance benefits in Austria (such as unemployment benefits or emergency assistance benefits).

Additional information:

Services of the Public Employment Service Austria for job seekers (Leistungen des AMS für Arbeitsuchende): www.ams.at

Public Employment Service Austria – benefits: www.ams.at

8.4.2 Receiving Unemployment Benefits from EU/EEA States and Switzerland while Seeking Employment in Austria

If you want to receive your unemployment benefits originating from the EU/EEA zone or Switzerland when seeking employment in Austria, you have to contact your competent public employment service office in your country of origin, apply with them for your unemployment benefits as well as fill in the **form U2 (portable document U2)** and have it confirmed. This form includes amongst others the deadline for registering with the local office in Austria and maximum duration of the receipt of foreign unemployment benefits in Austria. After registering with the competent local Public Employment Service Austria office, the foreign public employment service will be immediately informed of your registration as a job seeker in Austria. This results in the foreign public employment service releasing payment of your benefits. If you have not found employment in Austria within the period stipulated on the form, you remain entitled to your benefits only if you immediately return to your country of origin in good time. It is essential to note all the information you are provided on this topic in your country of origin.

Additional information:

Unemployment insurance in the EEA and Switzerland (Arbeitslosenversicherung im EWR-Raum und in der Schweiz): www.ams.at

8.4.3 Aggregating Insurance Periods from Employment in the EU/EEA States and Switzerland

When verifying your Austrian unemployment benefit eligibility, insurance periods in the EU/EEA states or Switzerland will also be considered if you had been employed in Austria with mandatory unemployment insurance for at least one day directly before submitting the application (the “one-day rule”). In order to be able to have the foreign insurance periods recognised in Austria it is necessary to have the **portable document U1 form** filled in and confirmed by the competent public employment service office in your country of origin. In many cases you can apply for this form electronically; being able to provide this form when submitting an application in Austria may accelerate the assessment of your eligibility. In the case of **cross-border commuters** the foreign insurance periods are considered immediately – the aforesaid “one-day rule” does not apply to this group.

In order to **receive unemployment benefits** in Austria, you have to satisfy the **prerequisites applicable to eligibility for unemployment benefits in Austria**. Please refer to the Public Employment Service Austria (AMS) website for details regarding prerequisites to be satisfied in order to become eligible for unemployment insurance benefits in Austria (also see section 8.4.1). Periods of self-employment covered by unemployment insurance are also taken into consideration when calculating unemployment benefits in Austria.

Additional information:

Unemployment insurance in the EEA and Switzerland (Arbeitslosenversicherung im EWR-Raum und in der Schweiz): www.ams.at

8.5 Means-Tested Minimum Benefits/Social Welfare Benefits

The **means-tested minimum benefits** (Bedarfsorientierte Mindestsicherung, BMS), also referred to as **social welfare benefits** (Sozialhilfe) are foreseen for people having no reasonable funds to pay for their living or that of their family members. Means-tested benefits are intended to support individuals who can no longer cover their costs of living themselves. Means-tested minimum benefits are only available when no other sufficient financial means (such as income, social security benefits, alimonies, etc.) or assets are available. Currently **EU/EEA citizens** are only entitled to means-tested minimum benefits if they are in Austria as employees or have lived here for over five years. The amount of means-tested minimum benefits is individually regulated by each federal province.

Please note: contact the competent provincial government regarding the amount of the means-tested minimum benefits respectively your eligibility requirements to **means-tested minimum benefits as an EU/EEA citizen**.

The competent **district administrative authority** (district administrative authority (Bezirkshauptmannschaft), municipal district authority (Magistrat) in cities; social council offices in Vienna (Sozialzentrum)) decides whether the means-tested minimum benefits will be granted. This authority also accepts the applications and makes the corresponding payments of the means-tested minimum benefits. Persons receiving means-tested minimum benefits and able to work will be correspondingly noted at the Public Employment Service Austria (AMS) as seeking employment.

Additional information:

Means-tested minimum benefits, counselling and assistance (Mindestsichernde Leistungen, Beratung und Betreuung): www.help.gv.at

9. LIVING WITH CHILDREN IN AUSTRIA

9.1 Maternity Protection

As a rule, pregnant working mothers **are entitled to maternity leave** which starts **eight weeks prior to delivery** and lasts **eight weeks after delivery**. During this period an **absolute ban on employment** applies. Furthermore, for female employees who are **not self-employed** their contractual employment remains upheld during their compulsory maternity protection period.

Upon confirmation of pregnancy, you should immediately inform your employer. As soon as the employer has been informed of pregnancy, employment of pregnant employees **may not be terminated nor they may be fired**. Female employees and, subject to certain prerequisites, females working on short term contracts as independent contractors, generally receive a **maternity weekly allowance** (Wochengeld) during the compulsory maternity protection. Also females receiving further education subsidies, childcare allowance, unemployment benefits or emergency assistance benefits are eligible to weekly allowance (Wochengeld).

Minimum-income employees who are covered by health self-insurance pursuant to section 19a of the General Social Security Act (ASVG) are also entitled to a weekly maternity allowance. In this case, this weekly maternity allowance amounts to **9.12 Euros** per day (2018).

Details regarding the amount of the weekly maternity allowance (Wochengeld) can be obtained from the respective competent health insurance institution. Please remember that you have to apply for the weekly maternity allowance at the beginning of the compulsory ban on employment.

Competent authority:

The health insurance institution (Krankenkasse)

Additional information:

Weekly maternity allowance (Wochengeld): www.arbeiterkammer.at

An **entrepreneurial aid** (Betriebshilfe) is foreseen for self-employed women running a **business**, i.e. replacement labour is provided for the business. Under certain circumstances they are also entitled to **weekly maternity allowance**. The weekly maternity allowance is primarily applicable to self-employed females with no business license (new self-employed/freelancers (Neue Selbstständige)). Such entrepreneurial aid/weekly maternity allowance (Betriebshilfe/Wochengeld) will only be granted respectively provided when the compulsory insurance with the competent health insurance fund remains in force. The **weekly maternity allowance** (Wochengeld) in this case amounts to €53.96 per day (2018). Both entrepreneurial aid (Betriebshilfe) and weekly maternity allowance (Wochengeld) must be applied for.

Competent authority:

Social Security Institution for Trade and Industry (Sozialversicherungsanstalt der gewerblichen Wirtschaft)

Additional information:

Entrepreneurial aid and weekly maternity allowance (Betriebshilfe und Wochengeld): www.svagw.at
Maternity protection benefits for businesswomen (Mutterschaftsleistungen für Unternehmerinnen): www.usp.gv.at

9.2 Mother-Child Pass

At the beginning of pregnancy, you will receive a **Mother-Child Pass** (Mutter-Kind-Pass), to be used for recording **medical check-ups** of the mother and unborn child and subsequently for recording vaccinations and check-ups during infancy and early childhood stages. You can obtain your mother-child pass for instance from your gynaecologist, your general practitioner, the outpatient services (Ambulanz) of hospitals with maternity clinical departments or from pregnancy consultation offices (Schwangerenberatungsstelle).

The mother-child pass check-ups are a **prerequisite for the receipt of the full childcare allowance** (Kinderbetreuungsgeld).

Also uninsured persons and their children with no insurance eligibility as a relative can have free examinations covered by the mother-child pass.

Additional information:

Before the child delivery (Vor der Geburt): www.help.gv.at
Mother-child pass (Mutter-Kind-Pass): www.bmgf.gv.at

9.3 Parental Leave, Childcare Allowance and Parental Part-Time Work

Parental/Maternity leave (Elternkarenz/Karenz) is deemed **entitlement to release from performance obligations under employment contract** (Dienstfreistellung) pursuant to the Labour Law following the birth of a child (also applies to adoptive and foster parents) and after the expiry of the maternity protection period. The maximum duration of the maternity protection pursuant to labour law providing **protection against dismissal and termination** is up to the day before the second birthday of the child. If you intend to take out a longer maternity leave, you absolutely need a written corresponding agreement with your employer. Only one of the parents is entitled to parental leave or both of them in turns.

Informing the employer of the paternity/maternity leave periods:

If the mother is the first to take maternity leave, then they are to inform their employer not later than on the last day of the maternity protection period on whether they are taking out the maternity leave and if so for how long. If the father is the first to take the parental leave, they are to inform their employer of the beginning and duration of the parental leave not later than eight weeks after the delivery.

During the parental/maternity leave you receive no remuneration; hence the **childcare allowance** (Kinderbetreuungsgeld, KBG) can be received during this time provided that all prerequisites have been satisfied. Every child, including foster and adopted children, is eligible to receiving childcare allowance.

Persons working on short-time contracts as independent contractors (freie Dienstnehmer/innen) are not entitled to maternity leave, are however entitled to childcare allowance provided they have satisfied the respective prerequisites.

The following prerequisites must be satisfied by EU/EEA citizens and Swiss citizens:

The EEA directive 883/2004 applies to **EU/EEA citizens and Swiss citizens**. The member state where the parent is employed (employment state principle) is the overriding state responsible for payment of any family benefits. In the country of residence, an equalization payment may be granted if family benefits are lower than in the country of employment. You can provide evidence of your **legal residence** in Austria for yourself and your child through the presentation of the registration certificate (Anmeldebescheinigung) or the official photographic identification for EEA citizens (Lichtbildausweis für EWR-Bürger). Special regulations apply in case of cross-border commuter related issues.

Additional information:

Children allowance – cross-border commuter related issues (Kinderbetreuungsgeld – grenzüberschreitende Sonderregelungen): www.bmfj.gv.at

In principle you can choose one of the two variants:

Variant 1:

Childcare allowance benefits account (Kinderbetreuungsgeld-Konto) (flat rate benefit): the flat-rate childcare allowance is granted to parents **irrespective of their profession practiced** before delivery of the child. A **benefit eligibility period (Anspruchsdauer)** can be flexibly selected from 365 days to 851 days. If the parents swap, the benefit eligibility period extends to 456 up to 1,063 days. The **amount** of the childcare allowance (Kinderbetreuungsgeld) is correlated to the period during which the benefits are paid. Daily childcare allowance is between 14.53 and 33.88 Euros. The parent receiving the childcare allowance may have an additional annual income of up to **16,200 Euros** or up to 60 percent of their last income from the calendar year before the birth of the child.

Variant 2:

Income-linked childcare allowance benefits (Einkommensabhängiges Kinderbetreuungsgeld): The prerequisite of this variant is that the benefits recipient has been in gainful employment with mandatory health and pension coverage in Austria for 182 days directly before the child delivery. The income-linked childcare allowance benefits amounting to **80 percent of the last net income** can be received for a maximum of 14 months (the other partner must receive these benefits for minimum two months out of these 14 months). In this variant, the parent receiving the childcare allowance benefits may additionally earn **6,800 Euros**. Parents who have virtually equal shares in receiving childcare allowance benefits are additionally granted a “**partnership bonus (Partnerschaftsbonus)**” amounting to 1,000 Euros.

Additionally a **family time bonus for fathers (Familienzeitbonus für Väter)** after the birth of the child is available. The family time bonus is a monetary benefit for fathers in gainful employment who intensely and exclusively dedicate their time to their family directly after the birth of the child.

The following applies to **EU/EEA citizens**: they have to have their centre of vital interests in Austria and live in the same household with the child. The family time bonus amounts to 22.60 Euros per day. Fathers remain health insured during this period.

Competent authority:

Health insurance institution (Krankenkasse) in Vienna: childcare allowance customer centre (Kundencenter für Kinderbetreuungsgeld)

Recipients of childcare allowance and their children automatically **enjoy the benefits of health insurance**. During, respectively after receipt of the childcare allowance benefits, **unemployment benefits and emergency assistance benefits** may be applied for.

Additional information:

Parents and maternity/parental leave (Eltern und Karenz): www.arbeiterkammer.at

Childcare allowance benefits (Kinderbetreuungsgeld): www.help.gv.at

Childcare allowance benefits – online calculator of additional income (Kinderbetreuungsgeld – Zuverdienstrechner online): www.gleich-berechnet.gv.at

Parental right to part-time work: parental right to part-time work (Elternteilzeit) is a legally regulated **entitlement to reduction of the present total working time and/or change of the current working hours**. The entitlement to parental part-time work remains in force no longer than up to the **seventh birthday** of the child, upon satisfaction of certain prerequisites. Parents whose children were born starting from 1st of January 2016 must reduce their weekly normal working hours by at least 20 percent. The remaining working time may not exceed twelve hours.

This is however only possible if:

- ▶ the company has more than 20 employees
- ▶ and the employment at the point of parental part-time work has lasted for a minimum of three years without any interruptions (including maternity protection and leave)
- ▶ the parent applying for part-time employment lives in the same household with the child

Both parents are eligible to opt for parental part-time work. The terms (commencement, duration, extent and conditions) are to be agreed with your employer. If there is **no entitlement to parental part-time work** this can still be agreed with employers up to the 4th birthday of the child.

Additional information:

Parental part-time work (Elternteilzeit): www.arbeiterkammer.at

9.4 Family Allowance Benefits

The EEA directive 883/2004 applies to **EU/EEA citizens and Swiss citizens**. The member state where the parent is employed (employment state principle) is the overriding state responsible for payment of any family benefits. In the case whereby both parents are employed in two different countries, the country of residence principle applies, family allowance benefits are thus granted in the country where the child permanently resides.

Children with main residence in Austria are principally also entitled to family allowance benefits. Family allowance benefits must be applied for at the competent authorities.

Competent authority:

Fiscal office competent for your place of residence (Wohnsitzfinanzamt)

The **family allowance benefits amount** (Familienbeihilfe) depends on the age of the child. Child-related special **tax allowances** and **supplements** are granted as of the second or further child, or one or more disabled children. You can use the **family allowance benefits calculator** (Familienbeihilfe-Rechner) to determine your family allowance benefits total. In a joint household, the parent who is the primary caregiver is entitled to receive the family allowance benefits. Under exceptional circumstances family allowance benefits can also be paid directly to children. Family allowance benefits are paid every month.

Additional information:

Family allowance benefits (Familienbeihilfe): www.help.gv.at

Family allowance benefits (Familienbeihilfe): www.arbeiterkammer.at

Family allowance benefits calculator (Familienbeihilfe-Rechner):
familienbeihilfe.arbeiterkammer.at

10. EDUCATION IN AUSTRIA

10.1 Education & Training – Overview

Very young and pre-school children are taken care of in **crèches** (Kinderkrippe) (for babies and very young children up to 3 years of age) as well as public and private **kindergartens/child groups** (Kindergarten/Kindergruppe) and **pre-schools** (Vorschule) for children older than 3 years. The demand for crèches and kindergartens is often greater than the available places. Very young children are also cared for in very small groups by “**day-care parents**” (Tageseltern) – especially in small cities and agricultural regions.

Generally, education is compulsory from the age of six for all children permanently living in Austria. **Schooling is compulsory** for nine years in Austria (from 6 – 15 years of age); attendance of state schools is free of charge.

Please note: as of 1st of July 2017 **compulsory education** period has been extended **to the age of 18**. This is deemed applicable to all youth permanently residing in Austria and graduating from their compulsory schooling in the school year 2016/2017 or afterwards. Legal guardians must ensure that after completing the general compulsory schooling youth will have access to further schooling/training. They may either attend a secondary school, complete apprenticeship or any other training or become a trainee.

After children have successfully completed their first four years of **compulsory primary school** (Volksschule/Grundschule) (primary level), they may either attend the **cooperative secondary school** (kooperative Mittelschule), a **new secondary school** (neue Mittelschule), or the lower level of a **secondary academic school** (Unterstufe der allgemeinbildenden höheren Schule; secondary level 1).

In their ninth year of schooling, children may attend a **pre-vocational technical school** (polytechnische Schule), a vocational intermediate secondary or higher school (berufsbildende mittlere bzw. höhere Schule) as well as the upper level of a secondary academic school or the upper level of a secondary grammar school (Oberstufengymnasium) (secondary level 2). The **pre-vocational technical school** (polytechnische Schule) uses vocational placements and professional theory training to prepare for apprenticeships or vocational schools.

There are also special schools (special needs education/including training) for children with mental and/or physical disabilities or special educational needs which cover the first eight to nine years of schooling (special needs schools for children with particular fostering needs). Alternatively, a **vocational preparatory year** (Berufsvorbereitungsjahr) can be taken in the ninth school year; possibly followed by **integrative vocational training** (integrative Berufsausbildung).

Following completion of their ninth year of schooling, young people have the option of professional training in the form of an **apprenticeship** (vocational school and apprenticeship – dual training system), of entering the workforce, or of continuing their education at a secondary school (secondary level 2).

Additional information:

The Austrian education system: www.bildungssystem.at

Intermediate-level secondary vocational schools, health sector and nursing schools and **vocational secondary higher schools** entitle students to exercise an occupation respectively several occupations according to the type of school attended. Graduates of intermediate-level secondary vocational schools may take diploma and school leaving examinations (A-Levels, Reifeprüfung) through extension courses.

Graduation from an academic secondary school or higher secondary vocational school and passing the corresponding school-leaving examination (Reifeprüfung or Reife- und Diplomprüfung) entitles students to enrol in educational colleges, universities of applied sciences, academies, colleges, universities, i.e. tertiary educational facilities.

However, young people and adults who have not passed the school leaving examination (Reifeprüfung, in Austria also referred to as “Matura”) entitling to enrolment at universities may still be admitted to higher educational institutions through the secondary educational path (**the academic qualification test** (Studienberechtigungsprüfung), **the matriculation exam for professionals** (Berufsreifeprüfung), **Matura examination for vocational trainees** (Berufsmatura), or **Matura examination for external candidates** (Externistenmatura)).

Please note: special fostering is offered for pupils/students with a **first language other than German**. There are for instance German language courses for children at compulsory schools during the teaching hours and/or in the afternoon at the school. Please ask at your respective school for more details.

Some schools also offer **first language teaching** in the mother tongue of your child. It is important that your child does not forget their first language. Ask whether your school also offers mother tongue classes in the first language of your child.

Additional information:

The Austrian education system (Das österreichische Bildungssystem): www.bildungssystem.at

Schools (Schule): www.help.gv.at

Online school and training directory (Online Schul- und Bildungsverzeichnis):

www.schulen-online.at

School and training guide (Schul- und Bildungsführer): www.bmb.gv.at

School, apprenticeship, university training (Schule, Lehre, Hochschulbildung): www.help.gv.at

Pupils/students with other mother tongue than German (Schüler/innen mit anderen

Erstsprachen als Deutsch): www.help.gv.at

Schools with foreign curriculum, international schools (Schulen mit ausländischem Lehrplan, internationale Schulen): www.herold.at

School service offices (Schulservicestellen): www.bmb.gv.at

Academic qualifications test, matriculation exam for professionals, Matura examination for external candidates (Studienberechtigungsprüfung, Berufsreifeprüfung, Externistenprüfungen): www.erwachsenenbildung.at

“Training up to the age of 18” programme (AusBildung bis 18): www.help.gv.at

10.2 Teaching and School-Free Times

The school year in Austria is comprised of two semesters. In the federal provinces Vienna, Lower Austria and Burgenland school starts on the first Monday in September, in the remaining provinces on the second Monday in September. The school year ends at the end of June respectively beginning of July of the subsequent year. Nine weeks summer vacation separates two school years. Additionally, there is a **Christmas break** (normally between 24th of December and 6th of January) and **Easter break** (1.5 weeks) at each school. Furthermore, there are the so-called **school-governed free days** (schulautonome Tage). Each school can decide on which dates they have these additional school-free days. The first semester ends in February, the second semester starts also in February; in-between there is a one week **semester break** (Semesterferien). **Statutory holidays** are school-free. **Classes start** normally at 8 am, but there are also schools at which classes already start at 7.30 respectively at 8.30.

Additional information:

School-free times (Schulferien): www.schulferien.org/oesterreich/ferien

10.3 Registering at Kindergarten & School

Please find out in good time at the municipality office (Gemeindeamt), competent municipal district authorities (Magistrat) or at the desired kindergarten and school from when and how long you can register your child at a kindergarten or primary school (registration/enrolment deadlines). At primary school (Volksschule) these deadlines are also referred to as **pupil enrolment**. Normally, parents register their children at a primary school in their close neighbourhood.

For children who turn six by 31st of August the **general compulsory schooling** at the primary school starts on the first Monday in September (in Vienna, Lower Austria and Burgenland) respectively on the second Monday in September (in all other provinces).

The decision about acceptance at a primary school is incumbent on the respective provincial school superintendent (Landesschulinspektor). This is however only true for public schools.

If you want to register your child at a **private school**, you should arrange an appointment with the headmaster. The majority of private schools are confessional schools, there are also few schools teaching their own curriculum. Some of the private schools do not have the so-called “public equivalency right” (Öffentlichkeitsrecht). Certificates from schools without the public equivalency right are often not recognised or no official Austrian certificates are issued by those schools.

Please take your child with you to **pupil enrolment** so that the headmaster can gain their first impression of your child and determine the readiness of your child for school attendance. Children subject to compulsory schooling who are not ready for school attendance must be accepted into **pre-schooling**.

Documents: the list of documents (residence registration form, ID, etc.) required for school enrolment can be obtained from the respective school.

Enrolment at schools **after the primary school** often takes place in the first two weeks after the semester break. Please contact the competent **school service offices** in your federal province.

Important: children subject to compulsory schooling may also start attending the school in the middle of the school year. Contact the **school service office** and ask which school your child could attend.

Important: children and youth with German skills as yet insufficient to follow the class can still be accepted as **‘extraordinary’ pupils** (außerordentliche Schüler/innen).

In Vienna, Lower Austria, Upper Austria, Burgenland and Tyrol **public kindergartens are free** respectively costs are partially reimbursed. The **mandatory kindergarten year** before school is free of charge throughout Austria. This means that all children of age 5 to 6 must attend kindergarten (20 hours per week without lunch). Children staying at the kindergarten after lunchtime are served **lunch** there. Please ask in good time whether the eating habits of your child (e.g. no meat, no pork) can be considered. The lunch is either included in the kindergarten fees or has to be paid separately.

Additional information:

Enrolment at the primary school (Anmeldung in der Volksschule): www.help.gv.at

Readiness for school attendance (Schulreife): www.schule.at

School service offices at the federal provinces (Schulservicestellen in den Bundesländern):
www.bmb.gv.at

10.4 Initial Vocational Training – Apprenticeships

Vocational training is provided in Austria either through an **apprenticeship** (Lehre) or **school-based education** (in intermediate or higher-level secondary technical and vocational schools and colleges which offer practice-oriented instruction). In Austria, training is offered in approximately 200 occupations. Young people who take up an apprenticeship receive on-the-job training in a company and also attend a vocational school on a part-time basis (**dual training system**). An apprenticeship lasts between two to four years depending on the apprenticeship trade and ends with the successful completion of a final apprenticeship examination (Lehrabschlussprüfung). An **apprenticeship contract** (Lehrvertrag) must be signed at the beginning of the apprenticeship which regulates amongst others the duration of the apprenticeship. In the case of minors, the apprentice's legal guardian is also required to sign the contract. Throughout Austria, apprenticeship programs are based on **standard job profiles**. If you are looking for an apprenticeship, it is recommended that you contact the nearest branch of the Public Employment Service Austria.

Additional information:

Apprenticeship (Lehre): www.arbeiterkammer.at

List of apprenticeship programs (Liste der Lehrberufe von A–Z): www.bmfwf.gv.at

Apprenticeship (Lehre): www.help.gv.at

Public Employment Service Austria (Arbeitsmarktservice Österreich): www.ams.at

10.5 Further Education

Ongoing training is one of the major prerequisites for a successful career. Amongst the largest training and further education institutions in Austria are the Careers Promotion Institute (Berufsförderungsinstitut, BFI), Trade & Industry Promotion Institute (Wirtschaftsförderungsinstitut, WIFI) and adult educational centres (Volkshochschule, VHS).

Careers information centres (BIZ and BiWi) offer both a comprehensive overview of career and schools education and training opportunities in Austria and individual consultation on specific educational and training issues.

Language courses are offered by all large training institutions (WIFI, BFI, adult educational centres) and language institutes.

Institutions & Internet Adresses:

Careers Promotion Institute (BFI)	www.bfi.at
Trade & Industry Promotion Institute (WIFI)	www.wifi.at
Adult educational centres of Burgenland (Burgenländische Volkshochschulen)	www.vhs-burgenland.at
Adult educational centres of Carinthia (Die Kärntner Volkshochschulen)	www.vhsktn.at
Association of adult educational centres of Lower Austria (Verband Niederösterreichischer Volkshochschulen)	www.vhs-noe.at
Association of adult educational centres of Upper Austria (Verband Oberösterreichischer Volkshochschulen)	vhs-verband-ooe.at
Salzburg adult educational centres (Volkshochschule Salzburg)	www.volkshochschule.at

Institutions & Internet Adresses:

Styria adult educational centres (Volkshochschule Steiermark)	www.vhsstmk.at
Tyrol adult education centres (Volkshochschule Tirol)	www.vhs-tirol.at
Vorarlberg adult educational centres (Volkshochschulen Vorarlberg)	www.vhs-vorarlberg.at
Vienna adult educational centres (Die Wiener Volkshochschulen)	www.vhs.at
Career information centres (BerufsInfoZentren, BIZ)	www.ams.at
Career information centre of Vienna Trade and Industry (Berufsinfozentrum der Wiener Wirtschaft, BiWi)	www.wko.at

11. CHECKLIST FOR RELOCATING TO AUSTRIA

Before entering Austria:

- ▶ Public Employment Service Austria (Arbeitsmarktservice Österreich): www.ams.at
- ▶ EURES website: eures.europa.eu
- ▶ Checklist for relocating: www.help.gv.at

The following documents are required:

- ▶ your **passport** or your **personal ID** – minors must also have their own passport
- ▶ other **personal documents** (e.g. birth certificate, marriage certificate)
- ▶ **e-forms/portable documents** (uniform European forms for recognition and confirmation of social and employment relevant data) for you and your family
- ▶ **claiming unemployment benefits** originating from your home country: the **portable document U2** form issued by the employment service of your home country and the confirmation of your employment periods in the home country (**portable document U1**) must be presented at your first appointment at the Public Employment Service office (AMS) to be able to claim the respective benefits
- ▶ **insurance**: your European social security card (e-card) or a comparable form (E 111) or any other insurance protection
- ▶ **motor vehicle documents**: driving license, vehicle admission to traffic certificate, other documents or papers required for admission to traffic (e.g. EU vehicle type approval certificate)
- ▶ original copies and German or English translations of **certificates, diplomas, work certificates, character references/work testimonials**
- ▶ **curriculum vitae** and **application** in German, CV in German, or when required also in English, Europass
- ▶ your children's **certificates and school attendance confirmations** translated into English/German to help your children to be placed in the appropriate school grade as quickly as possible

Further issues:

- ▶ inform the **landlord** and authorities (fiscal authorities, utility companies, schools, etc.) in your country of origin about moving to Austria when required; terminate rental contracts well in advance, etc.
- ▶ organise **accommodation** (apartment, etc.), or book a hotel room or other accommodation
- ▶ **sufficient funds** are required to cover any costs incurred in the first months (rent, living costs etc.)
- ▶ provide for **health and accident insurance** in Austria
- ▶ obtain an **EU household pet passport/microchip** before moving your pets

Upon arrival in Austria:

- ▶ **when you have an employment contract:**
 - immediately **contact your employer**
 - when starting to work request a **confirmation of registration with the appropriate social security institution**
- ▶ **when seeking employment:**
 - **register** at your **local Public Employment Service Austria** (Arbeitsmarktservice Österreich, AMS) **office** within the specified period if for instance you continue claiming your original unemployment benefits when seeking a job, it is indispensable to take the portable documents U1 and U2 with you.

The following provisions generally apply:

- ▶ Within **three (3) days** of moving into your new accommodation/house, register with the responsible **residence registration authorities** (Meldebehörde)
- ▶ Register with the competent **social security institution** (Sozialversicherungsanstalt) (this especially applies to minimum-income employees, contract assignees, family members): receipt of the social security number and social security card “**e-card**”
- ▶ Open a **bank account**
- ▶ Re-register your **motor vehicle**
- ▶ Registration with the competent department of the municipal office (Gemeindeamt) or municipal district authority (Magistrat) if you are going to bring your dog with you (“**dog tax**” (“Hundesteuer”))
- ▶ Register with the competent **fiscal office** (taxes, family allowance benefits)
- ▶ Register for **gas and electricity** as well as your **telephone, television and radio, and mobile phone**
- ▶ **Register at school** (contact the school)
- ▶ Submit a **registration certificate** (Anmeldebescheinigung) at the administrative authority (district administration authority (Bezirkshauptmannschaft) or municipal district authority (Magistrat)) within four months

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