

Country Profile – Austria

Job market

What are my chances of getting a job?

Despite the recession at the end of the Noughties, Austria is faring reasonably well compared to other European countries. As a result, there are still areas of growth and job opportunities.

- **Typical problems encountered:** Austrian employers usually look for graduates with relevant degrees. Arts and social science graduates may find it more difficult than others to find graduate employment.
- **How to improve your chances:** a relevant specialist qualification or work experience before you apply for a job will make you more attractive to employers.
- **Language requirements:** the majority of the Austrian population are German-speaking. Although English is widely used in business, a sound knowledge of German is virtually essential for any type of employment, except perhaps for teaching English or for au pair positions. If you have only spoken 'high' German before, it may take a while to adjust to the Austrian dialect and accent. Eastern European languages may also be an asset as Slovenian is an official language in the province of Carinthia, and Croatian and Hungarian are official languages in Burgenland. Visit [Campus Austria](#) for an overview of accredited language schools.

Where can I work?

- **Major industries:** manufacturing, wholesale and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles, real estate, commerce and service industries, construction, healthcare, tourism (especially winter sports), communications.
- **Recent growth areas:** electronics and electrical engineering, fields dealing with operating systems and IT, manufacturing, the wholesale and retail trade, healthcare, social work and construction.
- **Shortage occupations:** people skilled in the interface between business and technology are in demand and there is also a shortage of skilled manual workers in all fields. More detailed information about the labour market is available from [EURES - European Job Mobility Portal](#).
- **Major companies:** Spar Österreich Group, Rewe International AG, Trenkwalder International AG, Austrian Federal Railways (ÖBB), Voest Alpine AG, Wienerberger, OMV, Red Bull GmbH, Swarovski, Telekom Austria.
- **Search for more companies:** [Kompass](#) is a worldwide business directory searchable by country and product/service. [Herold \(Austrian Yellow Pages\)](#) has a searchable database, and [Europages](#) has Austrian companies listed. The [Austrian Federal Economic Chamber](#) has an A-Z of companies. Advice is also available from the [Austro-British Chamber](#).
- **Major cities:** Vienna (capital), Klagenfurt, Graz, Salzburg, Linz and Innsbruck.

What's it like working in Austria?

- **Average working hours:** usually eight hours a day with a legal maximum of 40 hours a week.
 - **Holidays:** employees are entitled to five weeks' leave per calendar year.
 - **Tax rates:** non-residents are subject to limited tax liability (only if income is from an Austrian source). For more details see [Austrian Federal Ministry of Finance - Bundesministerium für Finanzen \(BMF\)](#).
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Applying for jobs

A concise CV, together with a covering letter, is the usual way of applying for work. Electronic applications are increasingly popular in Austria and typically the first contact will be by sending a covering letter and CV by email.

The CV should be precise and to the point, and include only the most relevant information. It can be in chronological or reverse chronological order, and all gaps between employments or studies should be explained. Make sure to date your CV at the end. Including a photograph is common practice. The photograph should have your name and address written on the back as it may be detached and stored separately.

As in the UK, it is good practice to write covering letters to a specific person, so contact the company to ask the name of the appropriate individual. The letter should be one page in length and should state why you are applying for the job and what attracts you to working for the organisation. You should highlight your key qualifications. End the letter by expressing your interest in attending an interview. See [Eurograduate - The European Graduate Career Guide](#) for more information on applications in Austria and an example CV.

Interviews tend to be formal occasions and interviewees should be aware of the business titles of interviewers. You may be asked to attend more than one interview at the same company. Dress code is formal and a strong emphasis is placed on punctuality.

Will my UK qualifications be recognised?

A UK graduate with additional Austrian qualifications may be more valued by employers. There are few opportunities for 'any discipline' graduates, and a qualification relevant to the area of work is usually required.

Visit [ENIC-NARIC](#) for information on comparability of your academic and vocational qualifications. You may also wish to check with the [UK National Europass Centre \(UK NEC\)](#) for information on how to make your skills and qualifications easily understood in Austria. Also see [Europass](#).

Do I still need to pay UK tax and National Insurance?

If you are planning to live and work in Austria, check your UK tax and National Insurance position with [HM Revenue & Customs \(HMRC\)](#) to ensure that you are not losing any UK pension rights.

Vacancy sources

Graduate recruitment takes place throughout the year, with a peak at the end of the academic year. Jobseekers in Austria need to be aware of newspapers, recruitment agencies and the importance of networking. As the majority of companies in Austria are small or medium-sized, hearing about positions through word-of-mouth and speculative applications are common.

Job websites

- [job-consult.com](#) - graduate jobs (German)
- [Stepstone Austria](#) (German/English)
- [Job Pilot Austria](#) (German)
- [Jobbox](#) (German)
- [Hogastjob](#) - jobs in tourism (German/English)
- [Hoteljob Österreich](#) - jobs in tourism (German)
- [Karriere](#) (German)
- [Stellenmarkt](#) (German)
- [Jobsearch Austria](#) (German)
- [Jobadler](#) (German)

Check with [EURES - European Job Mobility Portal](#) for information about job vacancies, living and working conditions, and labour markets in Austria, as well as a CV-posting service for jobseekers.

Recruitment agencies

Some UK-based employment agencies deal with international vacancies or have branches in Austria. The [Recruitment and Employment Confederation \(REC\)](#) has contact details of approved UK agencies.

[Euro-CIETT](#) is the European organisation of the International Confederation of Private Employment Agencies (CIETT). Popular recruitment agencies include [Manpower Austria](#) and [Adecco Austria](#).

Newspapers

The press is a very important source of vacancies, and you'll find job listing in the 'Karriere' or 'Job' sections in both national and regional papers, including:

- [Der Standard](#)
- [Die Presse](#)
- [Der Kurier](#)
- [Krone](#)
- [Kleine Zeitung](#)
- [Wiener Zeitung](#)
- [Nachrichten.at](#)
- [Salzburger Nachrichten](#)
- [Tiroler Tageszeitung \(TT\)](#)

[Wirtschaftsblatt](#) also has a vacancy section, and is an invaluable source of business news if you want to sound well informed at a job interview.

Access to Austrian newspapers is available via [Kidon Media-Link](#).

Other sources

Recruitment fairs organised by [AIESEC \(Association Internationale des Etudiants en Sciences Economiques et Commerciales\)](#) take place throughout Austria.

There are nine state-run provincial employment offices in Austria as well as 99 regional branches in almost all municipalities. Vacancies can be accessed directly through the [Austrian Employment Service - Arbeitsmarktservice \(AMS\)](#), which has a department for graduates (Akademiker) in its offices in university towns. The English pages on the website give general employment information.

[Jobnet Austria](#) is a network which provides jobs and careers news for students.

Hidden vacancies

You need to be aware of the importance of networking in Austria. Austrian students often develop their business contacts by linking their dissertations or project work to specific employers or industries. Family connections are also important, particularly to find a place in the public sector. You may need to think creatively to develop your own network of contacts. For example, find out whether your university has an Austrian alumni group and contact them for suggestions. Create a profile on [LinkedIn](#) and network online.

Work experience

Work placements and internships

As in the UK, there are a number of ways of gaining work experience in Austria. No distinction is made between placements and internships. They are common and flexible, ranging from just a few weeks to a year, and are available throughout the year.

Opportunities are advertised through job websites or the [Austrian Employment Service - Arbeitsmarktservice \(AMS\)](#).

In addition, there are some work placement opportunities for those studying vocational subjects. [IAESTE \(The International Association for the Exchange of Students for Technical Experience\)](#) offers paid course-related work placements abroad for degree-level students in science, engineering, technology and related fields. The placements usually take place in the [AIESEC \(Association Internationale des Etudiants en Sciences Economiques et Commerciales\)](#) also offers students and graduates the opportunity to work abroad.

See [Intern Abroad](#) to search for internships and placements in Austria.

Exchange programmes

Your institution may be involved in the [Leonardo da Vinci Programme](#), through which vocational training exchanges and work placements are arranged with partner organisations in other countries. Contact your institution's international office or careers service for more information.

Teaching schemes

The market for teaching English is mainly for business purposes, but there are summer opportunities for teaching English to children and young people. Useful information about teaching English in Austria is available from [Virtual Vienna - Career](#).

Longer-term teaching posts in other subjects may be available in the English-language schools in Austria. A list of these is available from the [UK in Austria - Living and Working in Austria](#).

Teaching information and jobs can also be found on [Teach Abroad Austria](#).

Volunteering

Volunteering is a good way to gain experience. The [Youth in Action](#) programme is funded by the [European Commission](#) and has various opportunities to experience Europe. [The European Voluntary Service \(EVS\)](#) is part of this programme and young people (18-30) can volunteer in a range of countries, including Austria.

Voluntary opportunities in Austria can also be found on [Volunteer Abroad](#) and [Service Civil International](#).

Casual work and short-term opportunities

Graduates are most likely to find seasonal or holiday employment in ski resorts and hotels. You can also work picking grapes in the autumn. Information on seasonal and casual vacancies in tourism can be found in special brochures available in all the Austrian

jobcentres or look for advertisements at [Anywork Anywhere](#), [Season Workers](#) and similar sites.

Apart from casual work, opportunities exist for au pairs. You will probably need some childcare experience but you may not necessarily need to know German. Try agencies or websites such as [New Au Pair](#) for openings.

Postgraduate study

Austrian undergraduate degrees (Diplom) used to take longer to complete than UK first degrees, and could be followed by the equivalent to Masters degrees (Magister). The entire process would take between four and six years to complete. The degree structure in Austrian higher education institutions today conforms to the Bologna Process, as detailed on the [European Higher Education Area \(EHEA\)](#) website, which brings it in line with other European countries.

How does the higher education system work?

There are three different types of higher educational institutions: federal universities (Universitäten), private universities (Privatuniversitäten) and universities of applied science (Fachhochschulen).

Austria has 13 private universities and over 20 federal or state universities. Each university has its own specialist area, such as business, arts, engineering or medicine.

The institutions use a common credit system which is compatible with the [European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System \(ECTS\)](#).

What courses are available?

Masters degrees typically take between two and four semesters (between 1 - 2 years), and doctoral courses take between 2 and 4 semesters (or 2 - 4 years). The majority of courses are taught in German, although some are taught in English, so check with the institution before applying.

For detailed information on the Austrian education system, courses and more, visit [Austrian Academic Exchange Service](#), particularly the International Programmes section for courses in English. The [Austrian Academic Portal](#) is also a useful starting point, as is [Postgraduate.at](#), although it is only in German.

Where can I study?

Postgraduate education is offered by universities and the university-level institutions of music, drama and art. A full list of institutions is available from the [Austrian Academic Portal](#).

There are several institutions specialising in postgraduate education, including [Danube University Krems](#), the [Institute for Advanced Studies Vienna](#) and the [Diplomatic Academy of Vienna](#).

Universities are listed and ranked internationally at [Top Universities](#).

Applying for postgraduate study

Application deadlines vary from institution to institution, so you are advised to enquire with each potential host organisation well in advance. Many of the websites of the institutions have information on the admission deadlines.

Procedures vary between institutions. Check the websites of the institutions you are interested in applying to for more information.

Fees and scholarships

While undergraduate study costs relatively little for Austrian and EU nationals, postgraduate study costs can vary and depend on the institution at which you are studying. Fees will differ from course to course so it is best to check the website and course description at the institution's website.

Living costs vary, and while part-time work may assist with funding some expenses, it is unlikely to cover all costs.

Grants may be available from the institution's own resources. Information on scholarships is available from the [OEAD Grants](#) website. Also visit [Erasmus Mundus](#) for potential funding for postgraduate programmes.

Are there any exchange programmes?

UK students on undergraduate degree programmes or postgraduate Masters and some PhD programmes may be interested in spending time studying in Austria through the [Erasmus](#) programme. This programme is open to all subject areas, but check with your institution's Erasmus coordinator first (usually based in the international office) to see which countries they have links with and in what subject areas.

Will my qualification be recognised in the UK?

Check with [UK NARIC \(National Recognition Information Centre for the United Kingdom\)](#) that the Austrian qualification you undertake will be recognised on return to Britain.

Visa and travel information

Visa requirements and applications

Holders of European Economic Area (EEA) or Swiss passports do not require a visa for Austria. (The EEA comprises the [European Union \(EU\)](#) plus Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.) However, they must register with the local Aliens Administration Office within five days of arrival in Austria. They should also obtain an ID document (available from police stations or employment offices) within three months of arrival in order to prove their right of abode in Austria, although this is not obligatory.

With the recent enlargement of the EU, the above policies may not yet be applicable to citizens of some new EU member states. If you are from Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Romania or Bulgaria, and want to work in Austria, some restrictions on work permits (Beschäftigungsbewilligung) may apply. You should contact the Austrian Embassy in your home country for more information, or visit [EURES - European Job Mobility Portal](#) to find out which regulations apply (go to 'Living & Working' and select 'Austria').

If you are not a UK national, contact the Austrian Embassy in the country where you are currently residing about how to obtain visas and work permits. If you are living in the UK, go to [Austrian Embassy - UK](#) requirements and regulations for working in Austria. A list of embassies is available from [Embassies Worldwide](#).

Any foreign national to whom labour restrictions apply, and who wishes to work in Austria, will need both a work permit and residence permit. Your work permit must be applied for by your future employer in Austria and must be obtained prior to your departure from your country of residence. Your work permit, along with a residence permit, the form for which can be obtained from any Austrian Embassy, must be presented upon arrival in Austria.

Permanent residency

If you intend to stay in Austria for a period exceeding six months you must apply for a residence permit.

EU and EFTA citizens who intend to reside in Austria should file their application after their arrival in Austria.

If you are of a different nationality, you must obtain your residence permit before you travel. Forms are available from any Austrian Embassy.

Help in an emergency

Emergency phone numbers are:

- 112 - general emergency
- 122 - fire service
- 133 - police
- 141 - Ärztekundendienst - GPs on duty during the night and at weekends

- 144 - ambulance
- 140 - alpine rescue

Travel advice

Find the latest travel advice and a traveller's checklist on the [Foreign and Commonwealth Office \(FCO\)](#) website.

Country overview

Geography

- **Full country name:** Republic of Austria.
- **Population:** approx. 8.2 million (The World Factbook, July 2012).
- **Border countries:** Liechtenstein, Switzerland, Germany, Czech Republic, Italy, Slovenia, Hungary and Slovakia.
- **Climate:** warm in summer, cold in winter with heavy snow in the mountains.
- **Terrain:** 60% of the country is mountainous.
- **Natural hazards:** landslides and avalanches.

Living in Austria

- **Cost of living:** broadly comparable to that in other countries of Western Europe. For useful information about life in Austria, go to [Vienna Expats](#). [EURES - European Job Mobility Portal](#) also has some helpful information in its living and working conditions section.
- **Internet domain:** .at
- **Health:** Austria has an excellent health service and social security system. In order to access public healthcare, EU citizens should register for a [European Health Insurance Card \(EHIC\)](#). If you are resident in Austria for more than a brief period, you will have to pay contributions for medical care to a local social insurance organisation (Sozialversicherungsträger). Ask your employer for information.
- **Laws and customs:** laws related to drugs are similar to those in the UK and strictly enforced. Same-sex partnerships have been legal since January 2010. Austria does have smoking bars and some restaurants have smoking sections, but generally smoking is banned in public areas.

Economy and finance

- **Currency:** Euro (€).
- **Type of economy:** social market economy.
- **Health of economy:** a combination of income tax reforms, stabilisation measures and stimulus spending has relieved the effects of the global recession, and parliament has approved an austerity budget in 2012 that aims to bring public finances into balance by 2016. An overview of current trends is available from [EURES - European Job Mobility Portal](#).
- **Unemployment rate:** 5.4% (The World Factbook, 2011).
- **Main exports:** machinery and equipment, motor vehicles and parts, paper and paperboard, metal goods, chemicals, iron and steel, textiles, foodstuffs.

Culture

- **People:** 90% German-speaking Austrians, with small Austrian minorities who are Slovene-, Croatian- and Hungarian-speaking. There are small immigrant communities of Turks, Germans, Roma and guest workers from Eastern Europe and refugees from the Serbian wars.
- **Major religion:** Roman Catholic.
- **History:** for an overview of Austrian history see [BBC Timeline: Austria](#).

Politics

- **Type of government:** federal parliamentary democratic republic, divided into nine federal states (Bundesland).
- **Major political parties:** Alliance for the Future of Austria (BZÖ); Austrian People's Party (ÖVP); Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ); Social Democratic Party of Austria (SPÖ); The Greens (Grüne).

More information

- [British Embassy Austria](#)
- [BBC Country Profile - Austria](#)
- [The World Factbook](#)
- [XE Universal Currency Converter](#)

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