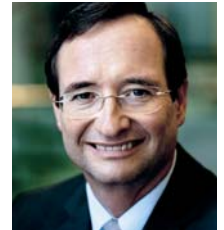




FOR THE AUSTRIAN ECONOMY.
THE AUSTRIAN CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE.

Anyone setting up their own business strives to translate their ideas into action. This, in turn, requires the efforts and application of one's entire creative and constructive ability.

Naturally, taking such a step is not without risk. The first few years starting business as an entrepreneur are not always easy. Concerted advice and support focussed on the business is enormously important. This is the role that the Chambers of Commerce Organisation fulfils by making available not only a wide range of services but also the specialised knowledge of its staff members. In this way, Austria's business people can rest assured that they are receiving the best-quality professional care and representation available to them.



Christoph Leitl

President of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber

The principal task of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber is to represent the interests of its members, the Austrian business people, both at the national and the international level. As the powerful voice of enterprise, the Chamber is committed to an economic policy which looks to the future and encourages businesses to become competitive, with the ultimate goal of promoting Austria as an ideal business location.

In this way, the Austrian Economic Chamber is an important element in shaping the basic framework of economic policy and thereby securing the quality of life for each individual.



Anna Maria Hochhauser

Secretary-General of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber

AUSTRIA – AN ECONOMIC SUCCESS STORY.



Today, Austria finds itself amongst the most prosperous countries in the world. Within the last decade our Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has risen almost 40 percent and income per capita has risen by 25.6 percent. With annual inflation rates of around 2 percent, Austria is clearly below the EU average.

Products with International Renown

Mechanical engineering, steel construction, the production of food and beverages, chemicals and vehicles, as well as electronics, are only a few of Austria's major industrial sectors enjoying an internationally distinguished reputation.

Austria is also a leading global player in the fields of environmental technology and renewable energy, such as solar energy and bio-energy. The major service sectors include the tourism and leisure industry. Austria boasts a wealth of resources at its disposal in the raw material and energy production sector. As the world's ninth largest exporter of electricity, Austria uses more water power than any other EU member state.

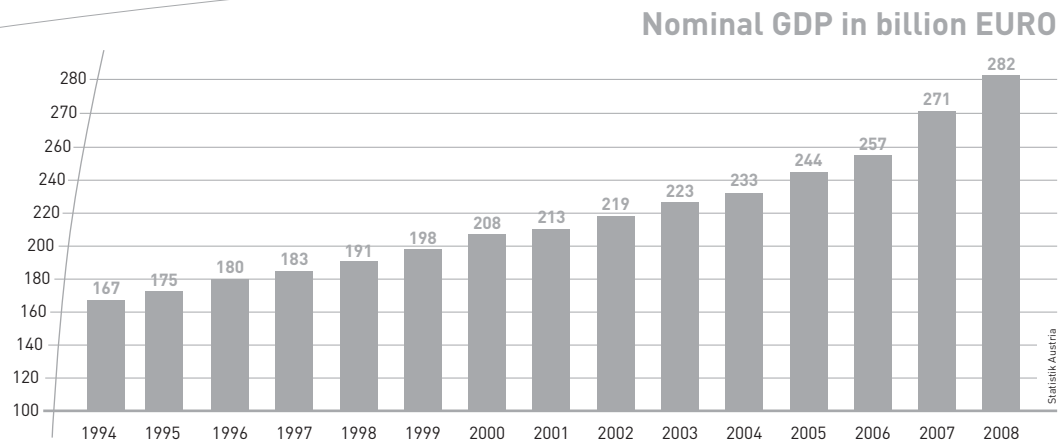
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Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises – the Backbone of the Economy

Small and medium-sized enterprises are the backbone of the Austrian economy and of the labour market. They generate the major part of economic output. Around 200,000¹⁾ enterprises employ some 3.7 million people. As a result, they make up more than 60 percent of the contributions to the social security system.

1) enterprises with employee accounts

Figures: Statistik Austria



IN ACTION FOR MORE THAN 150 YEARS



- FOR AUSTRIA'S BUSINESSES.

For over 150 years, chambers of commerce have represented the interests of people in business in Austria. The first Austrian Chamber of Commerce was established with compulsory membership in 1848/49. A milestone of recent development was the adoption of the new Chamber of Commerce Act in 1946. At that time, the Federal Chamber of Trade and Commerce was set up, which included the professional associations with their own legal personality and budgetary power.

Structural Change and the Social Partnership

Starting in the 1950s, Austria carried out comprehensive structural change, transforming the agrarian society of those times into the industrial and service economy of today. The internationalisation of the domestic economy made rapid progress and reached its climax with Austria's accession to the European Union in 1995. The Austrian model of social partnership was also a contributory factor to this successful development. Within the framework of this partnership, the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber, the Austrian Chamber of Agriculture, the Federal Chamber of Labour, as well as the Austrian Trade Union Federation negotiate to find solutions to resolve the particular social and economic issues of the day. The common goal of consensus is still, even today, helping to create stable economic conditions and confidence in Austria as a business location.

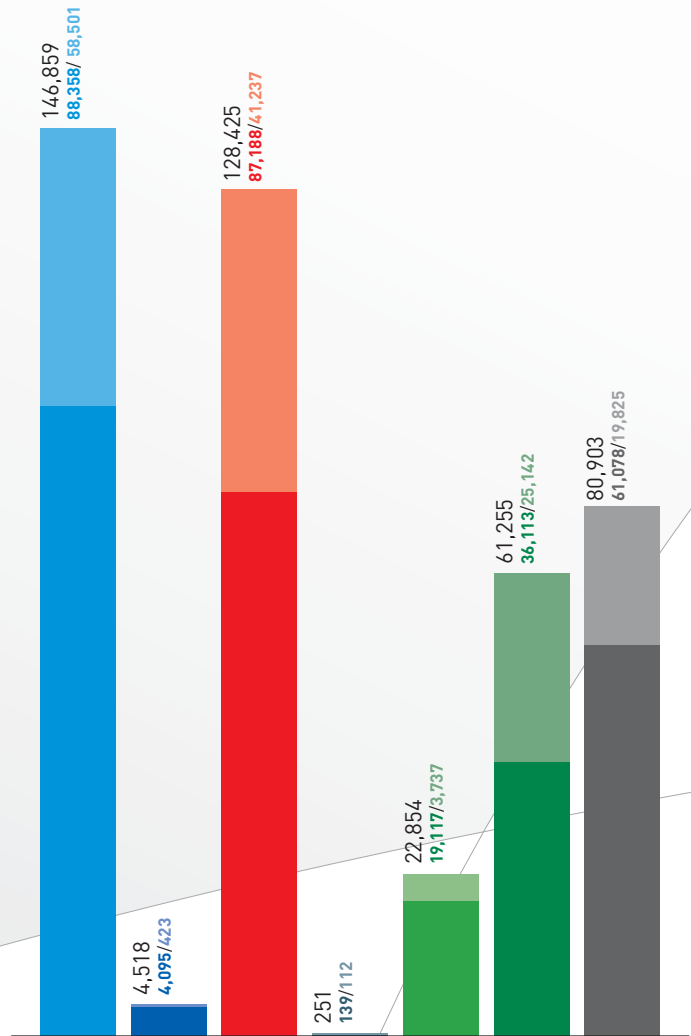
Successful Reform

A considerable proportion of this success is due to the contributions made by the Chambers of Commerce. In preparation for a bright economic outlook for the future, the first of many extensive reforms was put in place in November 2000. Among other things, the reforms bring substantial financial relief for businesses, with the aim of strengthening Austria's economy and thereby guaranteeing further employment.

WE REPRESENT INTERESTS - AND

Memberships by Division

Source: WKO Membership statistics, active and inactive. As of: 31.12.2008



PROMOTE THE ECONOMY.

Roughly eight per cent of all those in work are self-employed. Each business is a member of the Chamber of Commerce in its federal province, as well as being a member of the relevant professional association for its particular industry. Altogether, the Austrian Chambers of Commerce have about 400,000¹⁾ member businesses, of which approximately one third are run by women. Through legal regulation of membership fees, the Chambers can be truly independent in the representation of their members' interests.

The Voice of Enterprise

At the very heart of the Chambers' work is the representation of the common interests of all their members. As the powerful voice of enterprise, they push for policies which look to the future and are beneficial for business. The Chambers also concern themselves with the negotiation of compromise and harmony between the various different sector-related interests.

Modern Service Provider

The Chambers take on the concerns of businesses and offer tailor-made services, suited to every stage in the progress of the business, from establishment to succession. In addition, they put together expert know-how, which they are able to offer to their members.

Social Responsibility of Businesses

The Chambers have a further task in highlighting not only the importance of business for society, but also the responsibility of business towards society. To this end, and with the support of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber, the Federation of Austrian Industry, and the Ministries of Economic Affairs and of Social Affairs, the association respACT austria was created as a successor to CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) Austria. This association offers small and medium-sized enterprises the opportunity to show what they have achieved for the community and also to improve their management practices and image. In this way, businesses can turn their social commitment into a competitive advantage.

1) excluding inactive members (not in business)

WE ARE COMMITTED – TO BUSINESS.



11,662 businesswomen and businessmen are available to act as elected representatives representing the members. They are elected by the membership for a term of five years, and are re-sponsible for the forming of opinions and the decision-making process within the organisation.

Elected Representatives and Staff Members

The outstanding level of co-operation within the organisation is seen in the dualism of the relationship between elected representatives and staff members. Honorary officers represent the organisation professionally and they are supported by full-time staff members.

Management Teams of the Chambers

The elected top management team of the Chambers in the provinces comprises the president and vice-president; otherwise the management of the provincial Chambers is carried out by full-time managers and their deputies.

At present, the top management team of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber (WKÖ) consists of the president, and five vice-presidents (one woman, four men). The Secretary-General and the deputy Secretary-General head up the day-to-day management team of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber.

Provincial Chambers of Commerce

Economic Parliament
Extended Presiding Committee
Presiding Committee
Management

Austrian Federal Economic Chamber

Economic Parliament
Extended Presiding Committee
Presiding Committee
Secretariat-General

REPRESENTATION AT ALL LEVELS - FOR A



STRONG ECONOMY.








The responsibilities in the Chambers of Commerce Organisation are clearly defined. The nine provincial chambers are directly responsible for the care of their own members and for the regional affairs of that region; the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber is responsible for all matters that go beyond the responsibility of a province.

Member and Service Orientation

The provincial Chambers of Commerce are divided into professional associations, which represent the individual sector-related interests. These are assigned to one of the seven divisions. The nine Chambers of Commerce are directly responsible for looking after their own members and dealing with the affairs of that region. They are assisted in their work by 84 district and regional branch offices throughout Austria. This guarantees individualised service and efficient representation of the interests of the members in the regions.

National and International Representation of Interests

The key competence of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber is the representation of business interests at federal, EU and international levels, as well as foreign trade.

-  Crafts and Trades
-  Industry
-  Commerce
-  Bank and Insurance
-  Transport and Communications
-  Tourism and Leisure Industries
-  Information and Consulting



WE OFFER SERVICES FOR MEMBERS ON SITE



PROMPTLY AND EFFICIENTLY.

Whether it concerns legal matters, collective agreements, business promotions or tax issues, the district offices and Chambers of Commerce in the provinces are available at all times as highly competent providers of services to their members.

Service for Every Industry

Every industry and business group is represented within the Chamber of Commerce. The staff can provide the members with help and assistance quickly and without fuss and in various ways – ranging from personal consultations, to special brochures, to information seminars. The goal is to create the best possible conditions for doing business and thereby lay the foundations for a strong economy.

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Selected List of Services:

Legal Advice:

- Labour and Social Security Law
- Trade Law
- Company Law
- Administrative Law
- Competition Law
- Public Procurement Law
- Transport Law
- Industrial Law
- Cartel Law
- Customs Law
- Commercial Law
- Environmental Law
- Factories Law
- Town Planning law
- Tax and Financial law

Business Administration & Technology:

- Waste Management
- Enterprise Europe Network
- Business Start-up Service
- Telecommunications
- Advice on Energy Matters
- Franchise Service
- Business Statistics
- Business Succession Service
- Advice on Promotion and Grants
- Patents, Trademarks and Designs

Institute for Economic Promotion (WIFI) – Training and Further Education ■

SPECIAL SERVICES – TAILOR-MADE



FOR BUSINESSES.

The Austrian Chambers of Commerce deal with the key issues of domestic economy:

Knowledge gives a Competitive Edge

The network of the **Institute for Economic Promotion (WIFI)** is Austria's largest provider of vocational training and further education. In the areas of management, personal development, languages, business administration, IT/computer sciences and technology, the WIFI continuously develops new educational programs in order to meet the demands of the market.

Service Platform for Women

Woman in business represents the interests of business women and provides the interests of women in business and provides a service platform and network. Its goal is to increase the success of women in business and to motivate even more women to take the step into independence and self-employment.

Good Advice – world-wide

Austrian Trade (AWO) is part of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber and is the largest service provider in the export sector – with 108 trade offices in 73 countries. Within Austria, regional managers advise companies on foreign markets and suitable sales possibilities, they establish contacts to be able to initiate business and provide support with market research.

Successful Promoters and Young People in Business

The **Business Start-up Service** is the start-up and advisory contact point for people who want to start up a business. The **Junior Chamber Austria** is the community of interests for people in business between the ages of 18 and 40. Besides providing various service products, the networking of young business people with partners looking for potential co-operation is at the forefront of its activities.



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WIRTSCHAFTSKAMMERN ÖSTERREICHS