Austria: Industrial relations profile

Facts and figures
Area: 83,872 square kilometres
Population: 8.4 million
Language: German, Slovenian (regional), Croatian (regional), Hungarian (regional)
Capital: Vienna
Currency: Euro

Economic background

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GDP per capita (2011)</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(in purchasing power standards, index: EU27=100)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Real GDP growth (% change on previous year) (2011)</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inflation rate (2011)</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(annual average rate of change 2010–2011)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average monthly labour costs, in € (2008)</td>
<td>€3,880.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average labour productivity (% change on previous year) (2011)</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gross annual earnings, in € (2009)*</td>
<td>€27,780 (employed and self-employed, including apprentices and not adjusted for working time / seasonal employment)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender pay gap (2010)</td>
<td>25.5% (provisional data)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment rate (15–64 years) (2011)</td>
<td>72.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female employment rate (15–64 years) (2011)</td>
<td>66.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment rate (15–64 years) (2011)</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly minimum wage</td>
<td>No statutory minimum wage</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Eurostat; * Statistik Austria

Industrial relations characteristics, pay and working time

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trade union density (%) (2011)</td>
<td>34% (unadjusted for retirees)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Trade union members as a percentage of all employees in dependent employment)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employer organisation density (%)</td>
<td>100%**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Percentage of employees employed by companies that are members of an employer organisation)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective bargaining coverage (%) (2011)</td>
<td>Estimate: 95–99% of private sector employees***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Percentage of employees covered by collective)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreement</td>
<td>Value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of working days lost through industrial action per 1,000 employees (2011)</td>
<td>not available 2010: 0 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collectively agreed pay increase (%) (annual average 2010–2011)</td>
<td>2.0% collectively agreed minimum pay increase****</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual pay increase (%) (annual average 2010–2011)</td>
<td>3.2%****</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collectively agreed weekly working hours (2011)</td>
<td>38.5–39 hours (estimate on the basis of collective agreements)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual weekly working hours (2011)</td>
<td>36.7 hours for dependent employees (not corrected for working time) and 42.1 hours for full-time dependent employees****</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Source: ÖGB and own calculation based on all employees in dependent employment
** Refers to the membership domain of the Federal Economic Chamber (WKO) for which membership is obligatory for companies in essentially all areas of business with the exception of agriculture, the liberal professions and the non-trading public sector.
*** Adjusted for public sector employees who are excluded from formal bargaining
**** Source: Statistik Austria

**Background**

**Economic context**

Austria is a highly developed industrialised country, with an important and still growing service sector, where tourism and the public service are significant elements. However, as is the case with virtually all European countries, Austria was severely hit by the global economic downturn in autumn of 2008, which caused a gross domestic product (GDP) growth rate for 2009 of minus 3.8%. In 2011, the real GDP growth rate was at 2.7% (both figures by Eurostat). In response to the crisis and after intense negotiations with the social partners, the Austrian government introduced two economic stimulus packages and two labour market packages, in the framework of which – among other measures – the pre-existing short-time work regulation was made more flexible. In retrospect, there is widespread consensus about the measure’s success in preventing large-scale job losses. In 2011, the unemployment rate was at a low 4.2%.

The overriding characteristic of the Austrian economy is the predominance of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), while large multinationals headquartered in Austria are rare. The country’s accession to the European Union (EU) in 1995 and to the European Monetary Union (EMU) in 1998 has not only intensified foreign trade with other EU countries, but also subjected the so-called sheltered sector to strong pressure to restructure and modernise. Austrian companies have also become highly engaged in the NMS. Moreover, the major part of the formerly nationalised industries have been liberalised and privatised, in particular since the EU entry. These adjustment problems have challenged the Austrian labour market, which had traditionally been characterised by low unemployment rates. In recent years, with the accession of the ‘new’ central and eastern European Member States to the EU, trade and investment of Austrian
businesses have increasingly focused on these emerging markets. In May 2011, the domestic labour market was finally opened for workers from the NMS (with the exception of workers from Bulgaria and Romania) after the full exploitation of the seven-year transitional period after the eastward enlargement of the EU. In the first year, some 27,000 workers from these countries entered the Austrian labour market, which by and large corresponds to the numbers estimated beforehand. Most of these workers came from Hungary, Slovakia and Poland and were employed in the construction and tourism sectors.

**Legal context**

The Austrian industrial relations system is mainly based on close voluntary cooperation between employers, employees and the state – which is commonly referred to as social partnership. This specifically Austrian manifestation of corporatism is, by international standards, highly developed. In contrast with other countries, social partnership is not just a system of labour management relations or of wage bargaining; rather, it signifies a highly institutionalised cooperation between the industrial relations actors that covers all important matters of economic and social policy.

Despite its ‘institutionalised’ character, the concept of social partnership is based on the principle of voluntarism, which means that this system of close cooperation is mostly of an informal nature and not regulated by law. Nevertheless, the core social partner organisations (see section on ‘Main actors’, below) are anchored in Austria’s political system in numerous ways, in that they are equipped with the following rights: to evaluate draft legislation and even to draft texts for legislation in their sphere of interest; to make recommendations to law-making bodies; to be represented on numerous commissions, advisory boards and committees dealing with socioeconomic issues – in particular, the Public Employment Service (AMS) – and social insurance institutions; and to nominate candidates to act as lay judges in labour and social courts, as well as to appoint assessors for the cartel court. Moreover, they have the right to conduct collective bargaining. In an amendment to the Austrian constitution in 2008, the social partnership (more specifically, the two mandatory chambers, the Federal Economic Chamber and the Chamber of Labour) was embedded in the constitution.

**Industrial relations context**

During the period of the conservative–right-wing populist government between 2000 and 2006, the Austrian system of social partnership was overtly challenged. Attacks on the system were launched especially by the populist Freedom Party (FPÖ), since this party has never been able to gain influence in the system of social partnership. The then government adopted a new type of unilateral policymaking, which, according to commentators, implied weakening social partnership as a factor in public policy (AT0305202F). However, Austrian corporatism has largely recovered since the mid-2000s, when the ‘grand coalition’ government between the Social Democratic Party (SPÖ) and conservative People’s Party (ÖVP) took office again.

Irrespective of these recent developments, the collective bargaining system has continued to work. During recent years there has been a slight increase in both the number of collective agreements and collective bargaining coverage. The number of agreements has grown because some formerly state-regulated business areas have been opened up to collective bargaining. Collective bargaining coverage has also been partially extended to as yet uncovered sectors and branches, such as the health and social services sector and the adult education sector (AT0803029Q). This upwards tendency has resulted in an overall collective bargaining coverage which reportedly stands at an already extraordinarily high level of between 95% and 99%.
Main actors
The main industrial relations actors in Austria are as follows:
- the Austrian Trade Union Federation (Österreichischer Gewerkschaftsbund, ÖGB);
- the Chamber of Labour (Arbeiterkammer, AK);
- the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber (Wirtschaftskammer Österreich, WKO);
- the Chamber of Agriculture (Landwirtschaftskammer, LK).

Trade unions
Trade union density in Austria has been declining since the 1960s. This trend is mainly due to the long-term structural transformation of the economy and employment: in the strongholds of unionisation – namely in manufacturing and the public sector – employment has declined, to the benefit of the private service sector which tends to record low density rates, especially among women, white-collar workers and atypical workers.

Most important trade union confederations
There is only one trade union confederation in Austria – namely, the ÖGB. After several merger projects involving the ÖGB’s affiliates in recent years, the confederation currently has eight trade unions affiliated to it. The largest and most powerful affiliates are the Union of Salaried Employees, Graphical Workers and Journalists (Gewerkschaft der Privatangestellten Druck, Journalismus, Papier, GPA-djp), the manufacturing union PRO-GE (Produktionsgewerkschaft) and the Union of Public Services (Gewerkschaft Öffentlicher Dienst, GÖD). Whereas the GPA-djp and PRO-GE unions draw part of their relative power from their pattern-setting role in collective bargaining, GÖD represents the well-organised public sector employees who enjoy high legal protection. Further trade unions are vida, comprising the three sections ‘transport’, ‘social, personal and health services’ and ‘private services’; the Union for Municipal Employees and the small Arts, Media, Sports and Liberal Professions (Gemeindebedienstete, Kunst, Medien, Sport, Freie Berufe GdG-KMSfB); the Union of Construction and Wood Workers (Gewerkschaft Bau-Holz, GBH) and Union of Post and Telecommunications Employees (Gewerkschaft der Post- und Fernmeldebediensteten, GPF).

Main trade union developments
In recent years the Austrian trade unions have increasingly been confronted by the need to merge in light of a combination of factors – in particular, membership decline and financial weakness, especially in the wake of the revelation regarding ÖGB’s involvement in the financial debacle concerning its former bank BAWAG PSK (AT06050291). As a consequence of the BAWAG crisis, ÖGB was forced to sell all of its shares in the bank in 2006. Since then, the only source of revenue for ÖGB and its member unions has been the membership dues paid by trade union members. With the latest restructuring and merging processes, Austria’s trade union structure under the umbrella of ÖGB was significantly streamlined, compared with the late 1990s (AT07040291). Within a 10-year period, the number of trade unions affiliated to the ÖGB was reduced from 14 to eight unions.
Employer organisations
Due to compulsory membership of all of Austria’s companies – with the exception of those in agriculture, the liberal professions and the non-trading public sector – of the WKO and its respective sub-units, the density of WKO in terms of both companies and employees is 100%.

Most important employer organisations
Apart from the WKO, there is a voluntary employer organisation, the Federation of Austrian Industry (Industriellenvereinigung, IV). The membership domain of the IV encompasses manufacturing, managerial staff in the manufacturing industry and enterprises associated with manufacturing industry.

Main employer developments
After thorough restructuring of the WKO in the first half of the decade, which has culminated in a reduction in compulsory membership fees by 30%, the chamber leadership implemented further reforms in the years thereafter and introduced a more streamlined organisational structure. Furthermore, an additional reform of the system of membership dues and an amendment to the current system of voting rights for member companies were introduced (AT0512202N).

Industrial relations

Collective bargaining

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels of collective bargaining</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal or dominant level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existing level</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Austria, the conclusion of collective agreements is essentially confined to the private sector. These agreements are negotiated, almost without exception, at multi-employer sectoral level. The coverage rate stands at between 95% and 99%. Collective agreements are legally binding.

Extension of collective agreements
The legislator has provided for an official procedure called an extension order (Satzungserklärung), whereby a collective agreement (or part of it) can be extended to include employment relationships of essentially the same nature which are not covered by an agreement. An extension order is issued by the Federal Arbitration Board (Bundeseinigungsamt) on application from an employer or employee organisation possessing the capacity to conclude agreements. In practice, such a procedure is relatively unusual, since there are only a few areas of employment which are not covered by a collective agreement.
Main mechanisms in wage bargaining coordination

Wage bargaining in Austria is only marginally influenced by tripartite consultation. Nevertheless, it is strongly coordinated across the economy. This is because a practice of ‘pattern bargaining’ prevails, in which the metalworking industry takes on a leading role as the first major sector conducting wage negotiations in the annual bargaining process. The results have a considerable signal effect for other sectors in as far as they are taken as a role model. In practice, though, they often mark one of the highest wage agreements as compared to other sectors due to the relative strength of the metalworkers’ trade unions. Despite this high degree of bargaining coordination, Austria’s collective bargaining system is not marked by centralised, tripartite concertation of wages. This is reflected by a high degree of pay inequalities between sectors, gender and employee statuses, and by flexibility.

Main trends in collective bargaining

In Austria, a tendency towards ‘organised decentralisation’ of collective bargaining has been observed since the late 1980s. This means that higher-level bargaining parties have deliberately devolved bargaining tasks to a lower level – in particular with regard to working hours and, with some delay, to variable pay – but have maintained control over lower-level bargaining. For instance, some collective agreements include a so-called ‘delegation clause’, which leaves the regulation of explicitly defined issues to the parties at company level – that is, the management and works council. This was important when short-time working schemes were implemented during the economic crisis as they were based on a contractual agreement between the company and works council.

Other issues in collective agreements

Collective bargaining in Austria mainly focuses on quantitative issues, such as remuneration and working time. Qualitative issues – such as in-service training and further training, work organisation and so on – are of only minor significance. Many of the issues fall within the regulatory scope of establishment-level co-determination and hence the consultation rights of works councils. Training issues fall, in particular, within the competence of the statutory vocational training system, where the social partners are strongly involved – for instance, through the AMS institutionally and through consultation in the process of drafting legislation.

Focus on training and lifelong learning issues

Issues of training and lifelong learning are dealt with in collective bargaining to a very limited extent only (see above). However, some collective agreements – for example, the metalworking agreement – provide for one week of paid training leave for preparation purposes ahead of examinations (AT07110291). Furthermore, the right to annual week-long educational leave is provided for in the collective agreements in the electronics industry, as well as in the extra-university research sector.

Focus on gender equality in collective bargaining

In the course of 2011, significant improvements with regard to gender equality were reached in the annual collective bargaining process. This was sparked by the suggestion of additional wage bargaining rounds for female employees only, which was brought forward by the white-collar union GPA-djp before the beginning of the autumn bargaining round (AT1109011I). While those additional bargaining rounds did not materialise, the unions concentrated on improving framework conditions especially for female workers in the regular bargaining rounds and were
quite successful. This first and foremost concerns the first-time consideration of phases of parental leave (which most often affect female workers) towards the classification in wage groups (i.e. the calculation of wage increases). Ten months of parental leave will be credited towards pay progression in the collective agreements in the retail sector, the general crafts and trade sector, the private telecommunications sector, the IT sector and the milk industry. In the stone and ceramics sector, 16 months of parental leave are to be credited towards wage development, and in the metalworking sector, 16 months for every child the parent is taking leave for (marking an improvement in the former provision of taking only 10 months into account for one child only). In the retail sector collective agreement, which is the largest single collective agreement for female workers in the country, further framework conditions were improved (AT1201011I): Special payments, i.e. holiday pay and Christmas bonus, are to be paid a month earlier than before (at the end of June and at the end of October, respectively). Moreover, the crediting of 10 months leave also includes family hospice leave periods. Those periods will not only be calculated towards the classification in wage groups, but also towards service anniversary bonus payments, irrespective of the length of employment with a specific company, thus taking into account the high fluctuation in the sector. The measure is considered an important step towards reducing Austria’s high gender pay gap.

**Industrial disputes**

The frequency and scale of industrial disputes have been extraordinarily low in Austria in recent years. Between 2005 and 2010, not a single industrial dispute occurred in Austria. In 2011, however, warning strikes took place in the metalworking sector. They occurred when the positions of the opposing social partner delegations became so entrenched that the negotiations in the social bargaining process came to a halt. The sector, which always starts the annual autumn bargaining round, has traditionally served as setting the pattern for the whole economy. Warning strikes in about 200 companies employing about 100,000 workers were held for two days and the unions threatened to strike for an indefinite period. However, after intervention by the highest social partner level, a further (third) round of negotiations was taken up in which a comparatively good result in terms of wage increase for the employees was reached (AT1112011I). Official statistics as to the exact number of workers involved and working days lost are not (yet) available.

**Tripartite concertation**

As far as general economic and social matters are concerned, national tripartite policy concertation is most strongly institutionalised in the so-called Parity Commission (Paritätische Kommission). This commission consists of top representatives of the government and the four major social partner organisations. The Parity Commission runs four subcommittees: the Advisory Council for Economic and Social Affairs (Beirat für Wirtschafts- und Sozialfragen), the Subcommittee on International Issues (Unterausschuss für Internationale Fragen), the Subcommittee on Wages (Lohnunterausschuss) and the Subcommittee on Competition and Prices (Wettbewerbs- und Preisunterausschuss).

The Parity Commission is the focal point for tripartite social dialogue, where matters of particular significance, common strategies and concerted action, as well as emerging conflicts, are discussed and the recommendations of the Advisory Council for Economic and Social Affairs are considered.
Apart from the Parity Commission, a series of national and territorial – that is, regional – employment pacts (TEPs) have been set up by the (regional) governments in close cooperation with the national and regional social partners, with the aim of implementing tailor-made employment policies at national and regional level. The social partners’ participation in government employment policies is most strongly institutionalised in the AMS, which is the core instrument for realising labour market goals at the national and regional level.

**Workplace representation**

The works council (Betriebsrat) is the only body in the private sector representing employees at workplace level. In legal terms, the works council is a body which can be set up within establishments consistently employing five or more workers. It exercises the workplace-level consultation and co-determination rights conferred by law on the workforce as a whole. Works councils can either be established separately for blue-collar workers and white-collar workers, or may represent both categories. A works council is elected by the workforce – essentially by all employees within the establishment aged at least 18 years – for a term of four years on the basis of proportional representation, with the number of council members determined by the size of the workforce. With regard to the works council’s information, consultation and co-determination rights, the employer is required to hold regular discussions with the works council and keep it informed on matters that are relevant to the workforce. The most important instrument for the expression of works council’s co-determination rights over a specific range of ‘social’ matters is the conclusion of a works agreement (Betriebsvereinbarung) between management and the works council.

In the public sector, a series of special rules exist regarding employee representation bodies (Personalvertretung) for each of the major employers – that is, the federal government, regional (Länder) governments, local governments and public enterprises; the rules are fixed by particular legal provisions. These bodies largely correspond to the works councils in the private sector (AT0309203T).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main channels of employee representation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Works council type (WC)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Most important body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Alternative body</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Employee rights**

In Austria, jurisdiction in matters relating to labour and social security law falls within the scope of ordinary courts. The competent courts of first instance are the Land Courts (Landesgerichte) domiciled in each of the provinces (Länder). Each one acts as a labour and social security court (Arbeits- und Sozialgericht), along with their other areas of jurisdiction – with the sole exception of Vienna, which has a special labour and social security court. The courts of second instance are the four Higher Land Courts (Oberlandesgerichte), and the third and final instance is the Supreme Court of Justice (Oberster Gerichtshof). These labour and social security courts are competent to rule on all disputes arising from labour law – including disagreements over issues such as employment contracts, pay, working conditions, any form of discrimination, unfair dismissal and surveillance – and all benefit claims arising from social security law (AT0403203T).

The function of labour inspectorates is to oversee the enforcement of the protective public law provisions. The inspectorates have a duty, in certain circumstances, to report infringements of
health and safety regulations; such infringements generally constitute administrative offences and are punishable by a fine.

Pay and working time developments

Minimum wage
There is no statutory minimum wage provision in Austria. Minimum rates of pay are not fixed by law but are laid down in sectoral/branch-level collective agreements. The wage set for the least skilled group of workers determines the de facto minimum wage for the industry covered by the applicable collective agreement.

A monthly minimum wage of €1,000 (gross) has been established by collective agreements in virtually all branches of the economy since 2008. However, collectively agreed minimum wages vary with the grading system. This means that they are differentiated according to age, job classification, formal qualification and period of employment for all the employees concerned. In the retail sector, a minimum monthly wage of €1,300 could be reached in the fall bargaining round in 2010 (AT1012011I), sparking discussions on the ÖGB’s demand to implement this minimum wage in all sectors. The line of argument for the ÖGB is that with the introduction of a nationwide means-tested minimum income scheme of €744 for those on social security benefits (AT1009011I), the difference between this minimum and wages in low-paid sectors needs to be enlarged.

Pay developments
According to Eurostat data, the gross annual earnings of full-time workers in industry and services increased from €36,673 in 2006 to €39,023 in 2008, on average. This means that the gross annual earnings of these workers increased by an average of 3.2 percentage points a year in this period. No more recent data are available.

Eurostat data also reveal that monthly labour costs (expressed in full-time units) rose from €3,364 to €3,880 in the period 2000–2008. This corresponds to an annual increase of 1.9 percentage points, on average, in that period. Statistics Austria (Statistik Austria) indicates a growth in labour costs per hour actually worked from €23.09 to €26.40 an hour in the same period – this signifies an annual increase of 1.8 percentage points. No more recent data are available.

Statistics Austria data indicate a yearly increase in collectively agreed wages and salaries of 2.6 percentage points on average in the period 2003–2009. From 2009 to 2010, though, the rate of change amounted to only 1.6 percentage points, thus showing the effect of the economic downturn; between 2010 and 2011, it increased by 2 percentage points again. The national inflation rate amounted to an average of 1.8 percentage points over the same time span (2003–2008), reaching a low of 0.5 percentage points in 2009. This means that a good proportion of the wage agreements were offset by inflation. In 2010, inflation rose by 1.9 percentage points, in 2011 by 3.6 percentage points.

While usually wages are increased by a specific number of percentage points, occasionally a mix of a fixed amount and percentage points, or a fixed amount only are agreed upon; sometimes, pay increases take the form of one-time payments. Wage demands by the trade unions have traditionally been derived from productivity growth and inflation in the preceding year, with the goal being full compensation for inflation and partial compensation for productivity gains. Labour productivity itself is not usually an issue in the negotiations.
Gender pay gap

The most recent Eurostat figures on the gender pay gap in Austria from 2010 indicate that it has not changed in recent years and that the country's pay gap – defined as the relative difference in the gross hourly earnings of women and men within the whole national economy – is still amongst the highest in the EU27 at 25.5% (AT1008021I). Even when the data are corrected for differences in age, education, length of employment and segregation effects attributable to the distribution of jobs according to occupations and sectors, the pay gap falls only by seven percentage points. As shown by the latest report on the status of women in Austria (Frauenbericht 2010), a large gap of 18.1% remains even when factors explaining wage differences, such as working time, sector, occupation, education and employment with a company have been accounted for.

Working time

The law restricts the working day to a maximum of eight hours and the working week to a maximum of 40 hours. However, weekly working hours may be varied up to 50 hours over a reference period, by agreement, as long as an average 40-hour week is maintained.

Working time as an issue in collective bargaining

Average collectively agreed working hours in Austria have amounted to between 38.5 and 39 hours a week, without any major variations for years. This is because, in those sectors where the trade unions were strong enough to push through working time reductions, often in exchange for flexible working time arrangements such reductions were realised long ago, mostly in the 1980s and 1990s. Nevertheless, working time still remains an issue in collective bargaining. This is particularly the case since the last amendments to the Working Time Act (Arbeitszeitgesetz, AZG), which have increased the options for flexible working hour arrangements, reserving their implementation to regulation by collective agreement (AT0708019I). During the latest financial and economic crisis, a discussion on working time came up in the collective bargaining rounds of the metalworkers. While the trade unions demanded a shortening of working hours allowing the employment of more workers and thus decreasing unemployment, organised business opposed this as, in their opinion, it would prove to be a disadvantage and decrease in competitiveness for Austrian companies. They called for an even greater flexibilisation of working hours. Negotiations on the topic were first postponed and then called off with the unexpected withdrawal of the employers’ demand.

Actual weekly working hours

Austria is one of the EU countries with the highest actual weekly working hours, measured as hours of work of full-time employees (both self-employed and dependent employees). In 2011, Austria recorded an average of 44 weekly hours actually worked, with a slight downwards trend since 2007. The relatively long working hours each week, by international standards, can be attributed to the fact that the practice of extra hours and overtime is widespread in Austria’s economy.

Bibliography and links

European Industrial Relations Observatory (EIRO), Various features; available at http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/
Österreichischer Gewerkschaftsbund (ÖGB), Various facts and figures; available at http://www.oegb.at/servlet/ContentServer?pagename=OEGBZ/Page/OEGBZ_Index&n=OEGBZ_2.1.c
Sozialpartner Österreich [joint webpage of the Austrian social partner organisations]; http://www.sozialpartner.at

Bernadette Allinger, FORBA (Working Life Research Centre) and Georg Adam, Department of Industrial Sociology, University of Vienna