

CULTURE, SOCIETY AND POLITICS IN THE GERMAN-SPEAKING COUNTRIES- IRE214

Maya Hadar

Fall 2018

Session 4: Austria- introduction

Introduction to Austria

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- **General information**
- **Conceptualizing Austria**
- **The country's political structure**

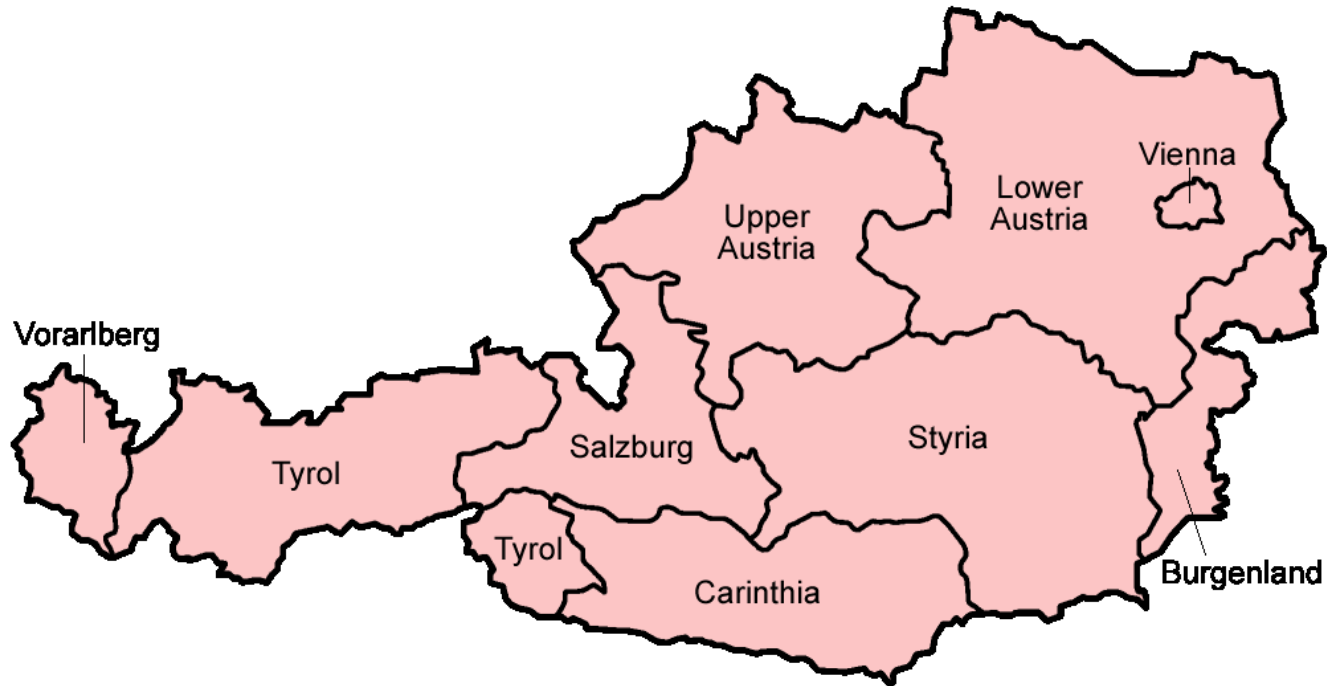


General Information



- Area: 83.87 sqkm
- Major religion: Christianity
- Majority language: German
- Minority languages:
 - Croatian, Slovene, Hungarian, Czech, Slovak and Romani
- Life expectancy
 - 80 years (men)
 - 84 years (women)





- The Republic of Austria is made of **nine states**
- **Vienna** – serves as the capital city of the entire country

General Information



- 9 federal states:
 - Vienna (Wien)
 - Burgenland
 - Lower Austria (Niederösterreich)
 - Upper Austria (Oberösterreich)
 - Styria (Steiermark)
 - Salzburg
 - Carinthia (Kärnten)
 - Tyrol (Tirol)
 - Vorarlberg



General Information



- The federal legislation is carried out by the two chambers of Parliament:
 - National Council (Nationalrat)
 - Federal Council (Bundesrat)

- Austria is a member of:
 - The European Union
 - The United Nations
 - Most UN organizations



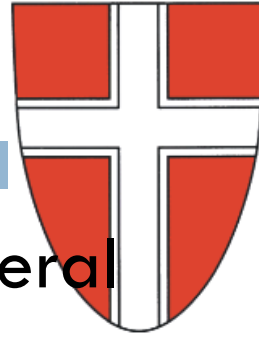
General Information



- 8.7 million inhabitants, 98% speak German
- The six ethnic groups officially recognized (Croatians, Roma, Slovaks, Slovenians, Czechs and Hungarians) are concentrated in the east and south of the country
- Appr. 66% of Austrians are Roman Catholic, 3,9% are Protestant, 4,5% are Muslims, the rest belongs to other religious denominations
- Danube - 2850 km long, flows into the Black Sea



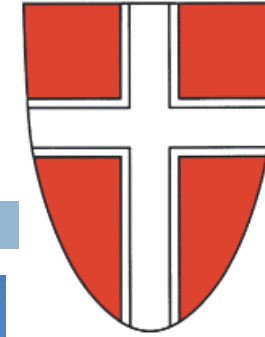
Vienna



- Capital of Austria and a federal state
- Surrounding province: Lower Austria
- Located in the north-east of Austria
- Borders the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary
- Famous for architecture and music



Vienna



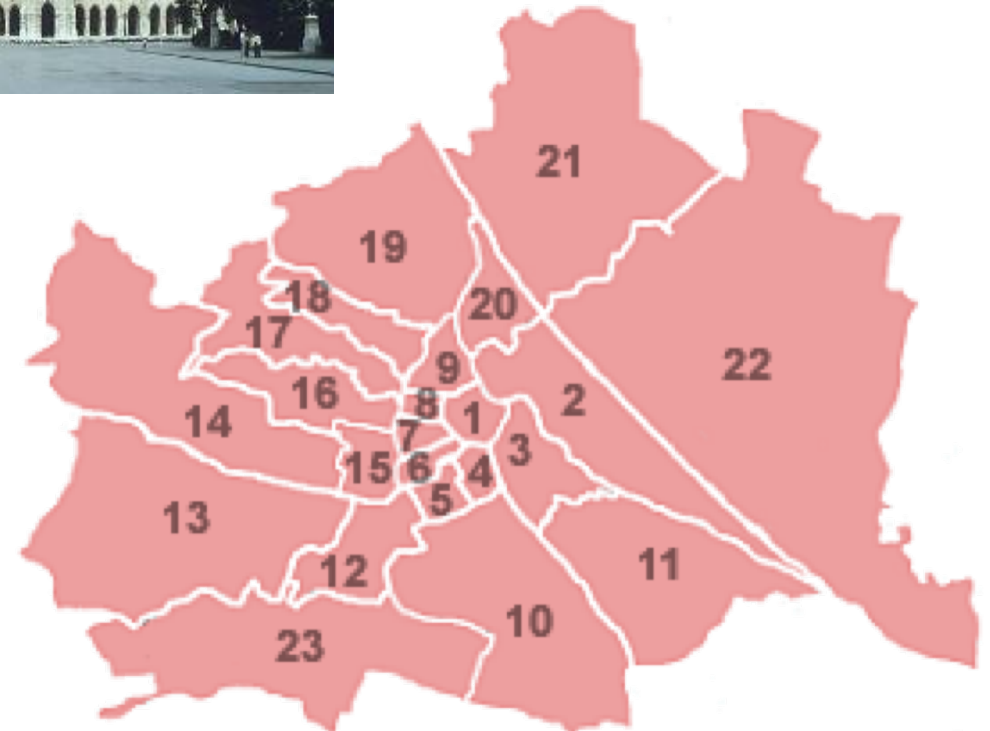
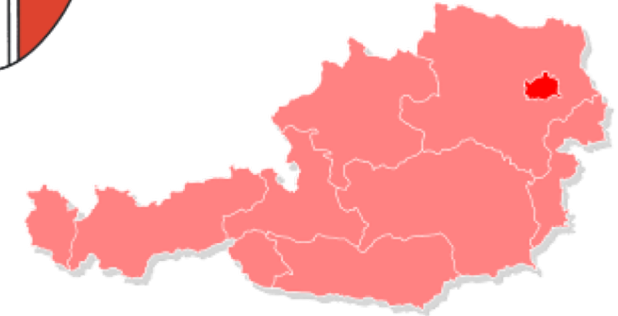
- Population: 1.7 Million

- Area: 414,90 km²

- 23 districts

- Prominents:

- Johann Strauß (composer)
- Franz Schubert (composer)
- Arthur Schnitzler (author)
- Sigmund Freud (psychoanalyst)
- Erwin Schrödinger (physicist)
- Gustav Klimt (painter)



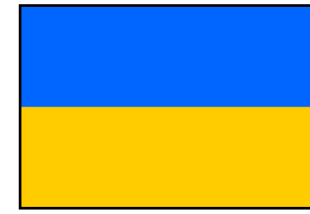
Burgenland



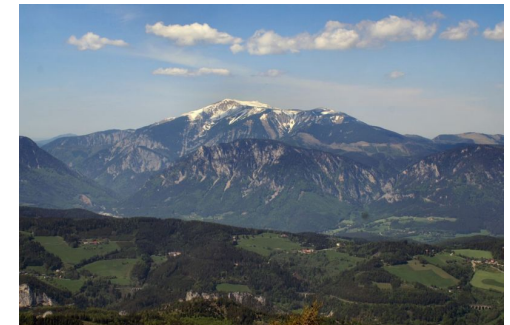
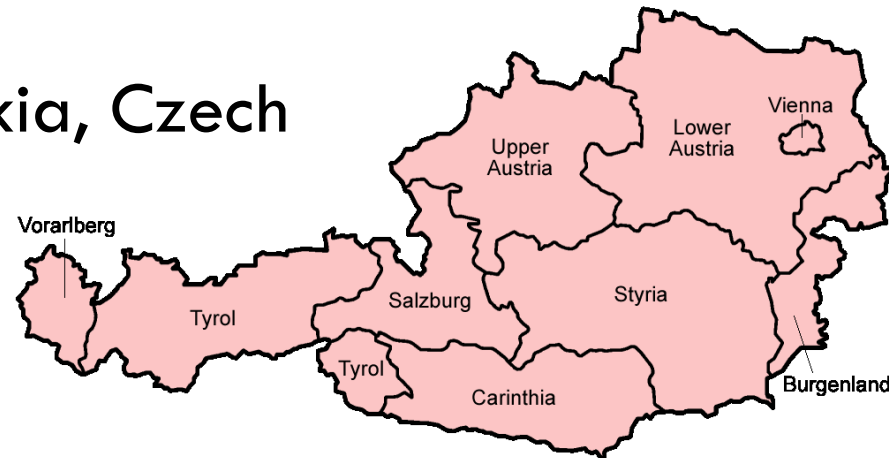
- Most east, young and flat Austrian federal state
- Capital => Eisenstadt
- Neighbouring federal states: Lower Austria, Styria
- Neighbouring states: Slovakia, Hungary, Slovenia
- 7 districts, 3,966 km² , 284,897 residents
- Several ethnic minorities: Croatians, Hungarians, Roma
- Important wine growing area



Lower Austria



- Located in the north-east of Austria
- Austria's largest federal state
- Capital: St. Pölten
- Neighbouring provinces: Upper Austria, Styria, Burgenland
- Neighbouring states: Slovakia, Czech Republic
- 19.177 km²
- 1.6 million people
- 4 districts, called "Viertel"
- Highest mountain of Lower Austria: Schneeberg, 2076m



Upper Austria



- The fourth-largest federal state
- Capital: Linz (cultural capital of Europe 2009)
- Neighbouring provinces: Lower Austria, Styria, Salzburg
- Neighbouring states: Czech Republic, Germany
- 11.981 km²
- 1.41 million people
- 5 regions
- important industry: VOEST Alpine



Styria



- Second largest Austrian federal state (concerning the area covered)
- Capital: Graz (cultural capital of Europe 2003)
- Neighbouring federal states: Burgenland, Lower Austria, Upper Austria, Salzburg, Carinthia
- Neighbouring states: Slovenia
- 16.391 km², 1.21 million residents



Styria



- Styria is called “the green heart of Austria” (61% of it are covered by forests, fruit gardens, vineyards and grasslands)
- 17 districts
- Styria is the home of the well-known company “Magna” (car supply industry)
- Arnold Schwarzenegger



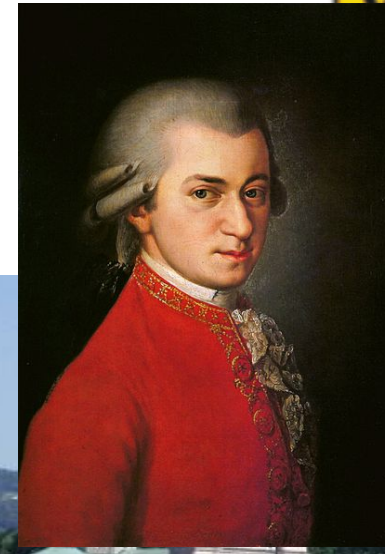
Salzburg

- Divided into five regions, called “Gau”
- Capital: Salzburg
- Neighbouring federal states: Upper Austria, Styria, Carinthia and Tyrol
- Neighbouring states: Germany
- 7.154 km², 531.721 residents



Salzburg

- Winter sports and various music festivals are the main attractions for tourists
- Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was born in Salzburg



Carinthia



- Southernmost Austrian federal state
- Capital => Klagenfurt
- Neighbouring provinces: Styria, Salzburg, Tyrol
- Neighbouring states: Slovenia, Italy
- 9.535 km²
- Population => 558,271
- 8 districts
- Known for its chemical, mechanical engineering and electrical industry



Carinthia



Carinthia shares the
Großglockner (3798m) – the
highest mountain of Austria –
with Tyrol



Tyrol



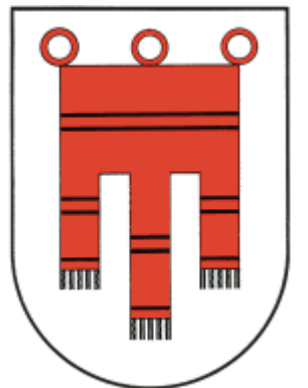
- Capital: Innsbruck
- Dominated by the wonderful peaks of the Alps
- Neighbouring federal states: Salzburg, Vorarlberg
- Neighbouring states: Germany, Italy, Switzerland
- **North and East Tyrol** (8 districts) =>
- 12.647 km², 710.084 residents
- **South Tyrol** (has been a part of Italy since 1918)
=>
- 7.400 km², 507.657 residents



Vorarlberg



- The westernmost, and second smallest Austrian federal state
- Capital: Bregenz
- Neighbouring federal state: Tyrol
- Neighbouring states: Germany, Switzerland, Liechtenstein
- 2.601 km², 370.000 residents, 6 regions
 - Lake Constance (Bodensee) is one of the biggest lakes in Europe
 - **River Rhine** forms part of the western border of the federal state

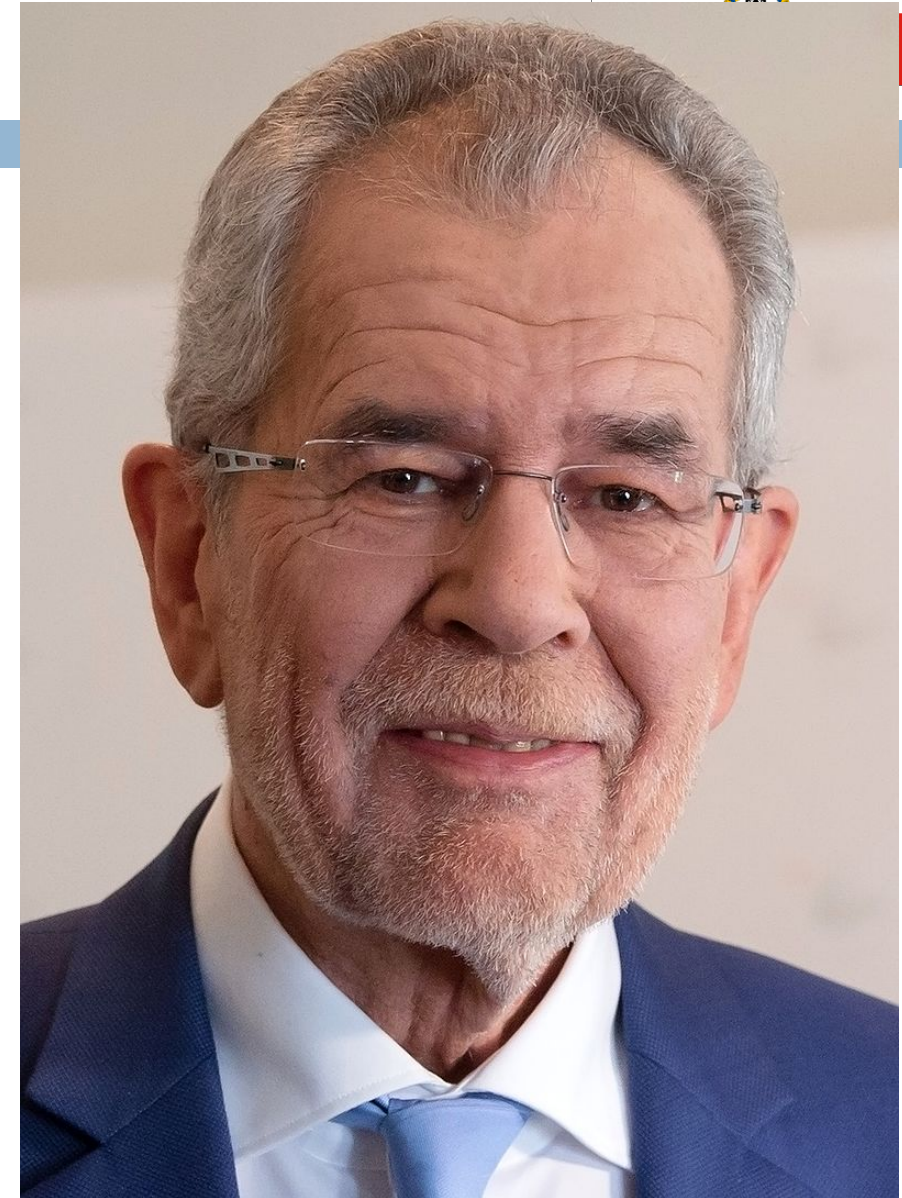


Political Leaders



President: Alexander van der Bellen

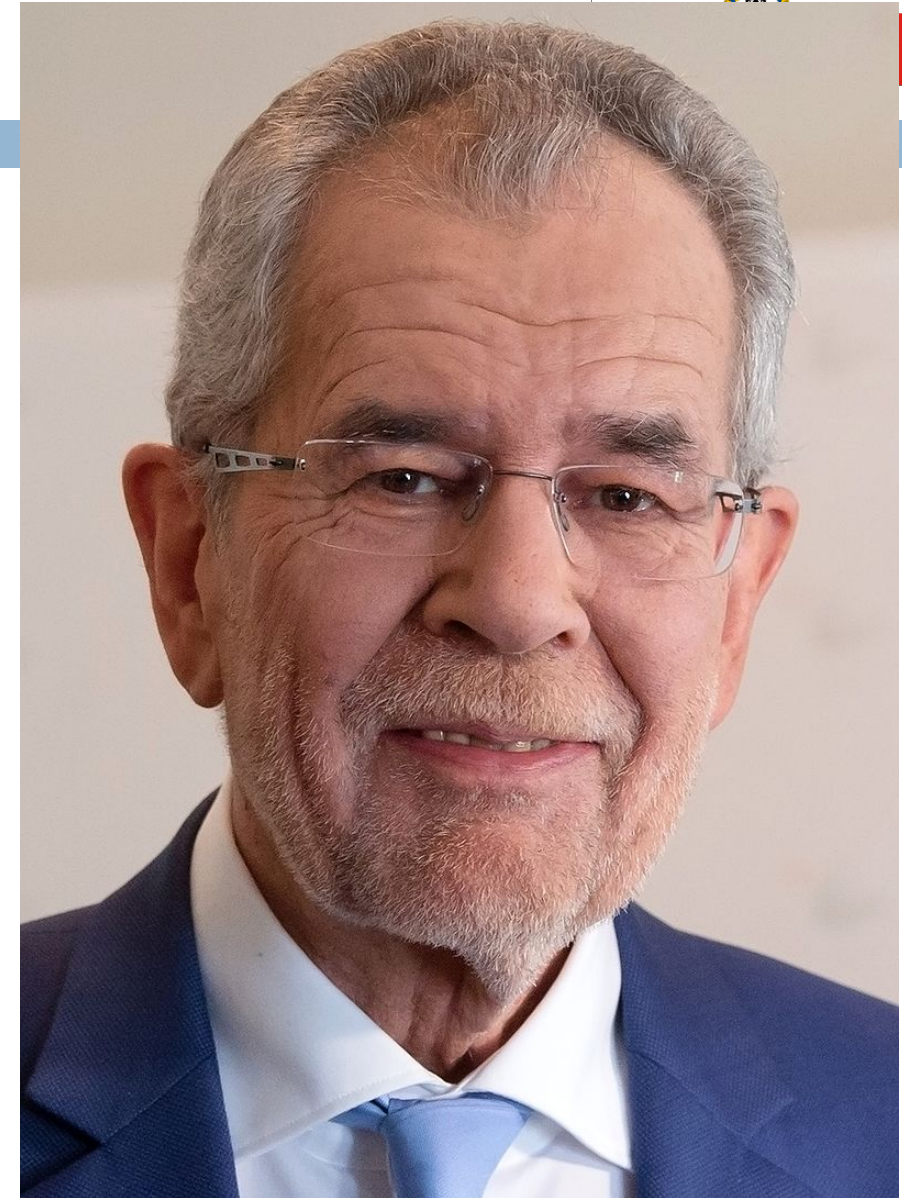
- Green Party politician
- largely ceremonial post
- Elected in the December 2016, defeating Norbert Hofer of the far-right Freedom Party
 - Initial run => Won a narrow victory, highly polarized election annulled due to vote-counting irregularities



Political Leaders

President: Alexander van der Bellen

- Hofer's potential in becoming the first far-right European head of state in recent history attracted major international media



Political Leaders



Chancellor: Sebastian Kurz

- Heading the Austrian People's Party (OeVP)
Youngest Minister of Foreign Affairs in Austrian history –was 27 when entered office
- World's youngest head of government (sworn chancellor in December 2017 at the age of 31)
- Became OeVP chairman in May 2017



Political Leaders



Chancellor: Sebastian Kurz

- Immediately ended the decade-long coalition government with the Social Democrats (SPOe) and called for an early election
- Formed a coalition government with the far-right Freedom Party (FPÖe), making Austria the only country in western Europe with a far-right presence in government
- 6k people protested, denouncing the Freedom Party as Nazis



Neutrality and Army



- In 1955 Austria declared its **permantent neutrality**
- Although not a member of NATO, Austria does participate in various international military activities
- Have an army- mandatory conscription for men
- Member state of the EU, Council of Europe, UN, OECD and OSCE

Austrian Culture



- **Traditional dishes (Vienna):**
 - Wiener Schnitzel
 - Tafelspitz
 - Apfelstrudel
 - Palatschinkeen (sweet pancakes)
 - Sachertorte
- **Christmas tree** => was exported to Austria by a German princess, who married a Habsburg prince
- **Opera Ball (Vienna)** => The most famous ball event of Austria



Changing Manifestation of Austria



- Roman Provinces (1-5th c. AC)
- Frontier Province (Mark) (803-1156), 996 “Ostarrichi”
- Duchy (1156) – state sovereignty
- Regnum (1192-1699)
- World Empire (1516-1556)
- Continental Empire (1699-1918)
- Republic (1918-38, 1945)
- United with Germany in World War II
- Republic of Austria (modern times)



Conceptualizing Austria



- There is **no natural geographical territory** defined as "Austrian"
 - Throughout history, similarly to other states, Austria had different territories with changing boundaries
- There is **no 'Austrian people'** in an ethnic sense
 - Austrians are the people that belong to the respective state
 - Subjects of the Duke, Archduke, King, Emperor etc.
 - Citizens of the Empire, Republic
- The Austrian population consists of various ethnic groups which form one nation; Political nation: Austrian Ethnic nation: German, Czech, Magyar, Croat, ...

Always a 'Team player'



- Was often part of larger political units: Holy Roman Empire => German Confederation => Austrian Empire => Austro-Hungarian Empire => European Union
- Independent since 1955
- **Industries** include: Steel, machinery, chemicals, forestry, hydropower, handicrafts (wood, glass, textile, ceramic), tourism, foreign trade

Austrian Culture



- **Midsummer fires** are lit by the end of June to welcome summer, mainly in the Wachau Valley (lower Austria, Vorarlberg)
- **Zwickelscheit:** a log which is brought to the households by the youngsters on January 1; it is put under the table and is said to bring good luck (Burgenland)
- **Budelfrau:** a helper of Santa Claus who brings sweets for the children on January 6 (Burgenland)



Austrian Culture



- **Perchten** are figures wearing beautiful/ugly masks (*Schönperchten/Schiachperchten*) and going around in the villages on January 6
- **May trees** are put up on May 1 to welcome spring
- **Prangstangen** are decorated with flowers and are carried around in June to secure a good harvest for the farmers salzburg



Austrian Culture



- the **Dirndl**, consists of a close fitting bodice combined with an apron in a different colour
- The traditional **Steireranzug** is a greyish garment made from loden with green embroidery
- the **Lederhosen**, knee-long trousers or short-pants made from leather, are worn with rustic shoes and woollen socks
- **bread consecration** is an important Easter tradition Tyrol



Economy



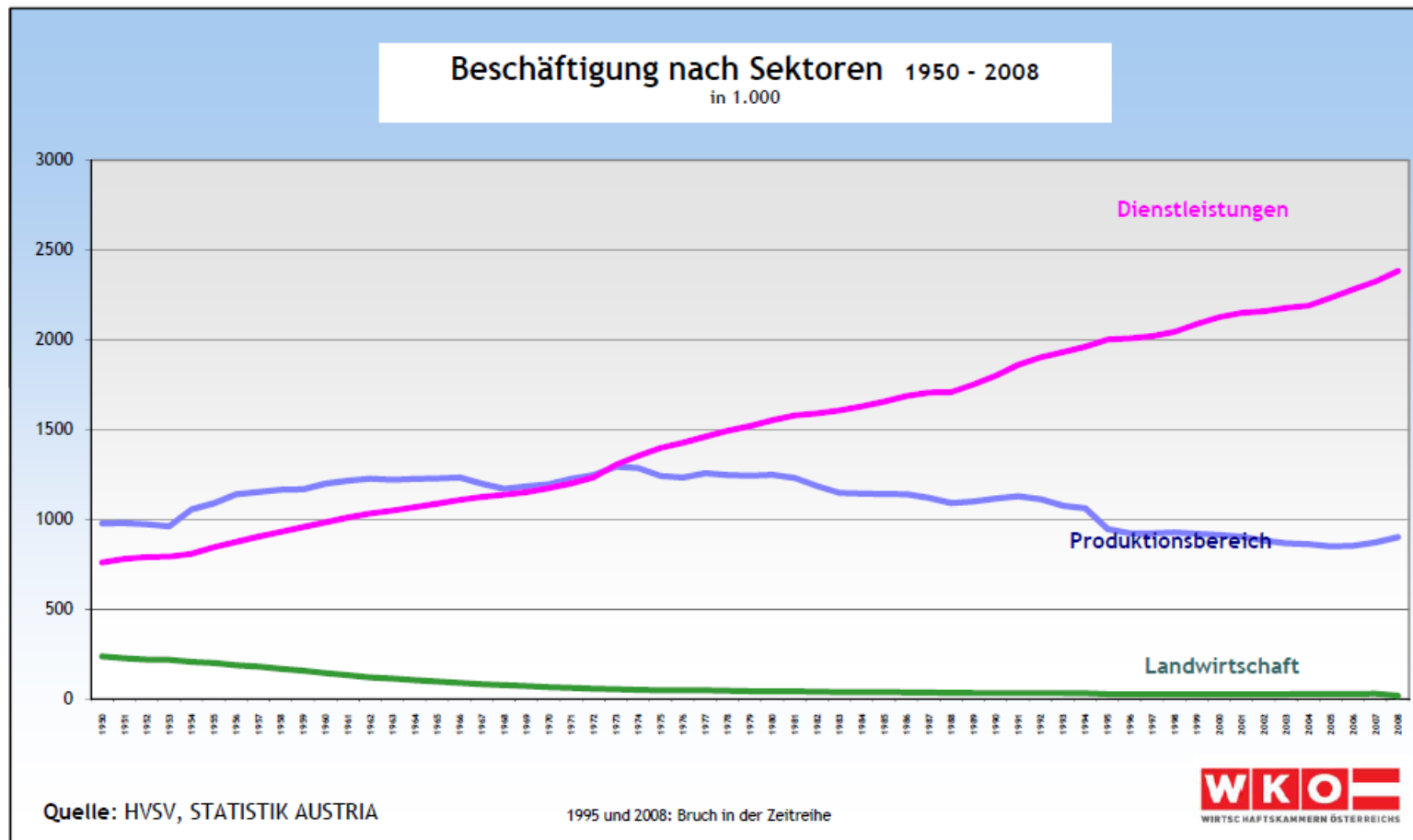
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- **Austria ranks high in:**
 - Wealth, Growth and Competitiveness
 - Living standards and quality of life
 - Employment (relatively low unemployment)
 - Public opinion: citizens satisfied, despite concerns
 - Attractiveness to others: migration, tourism, business leaders..



Austria moves towards the Service Society

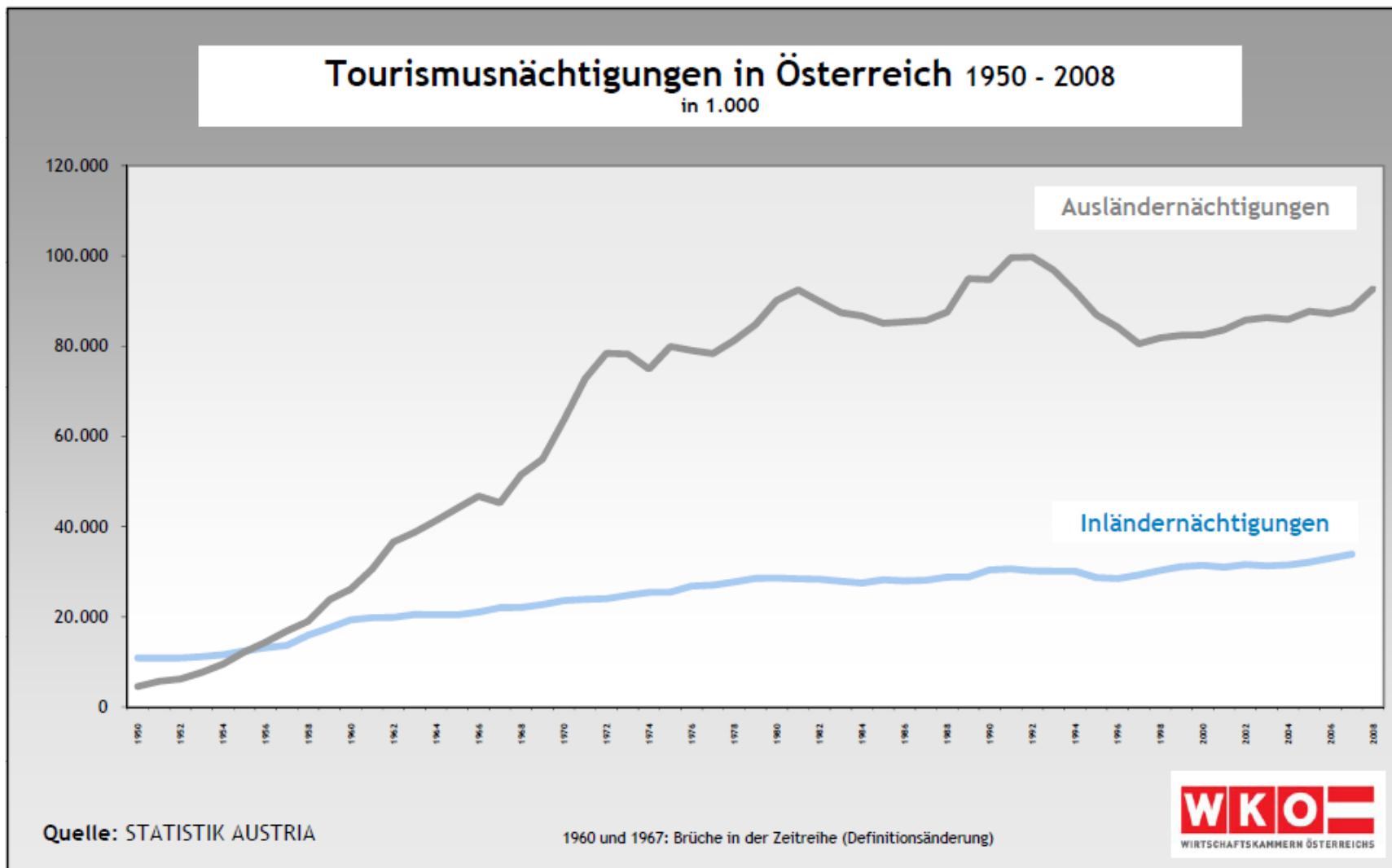
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Tourism is an important sector

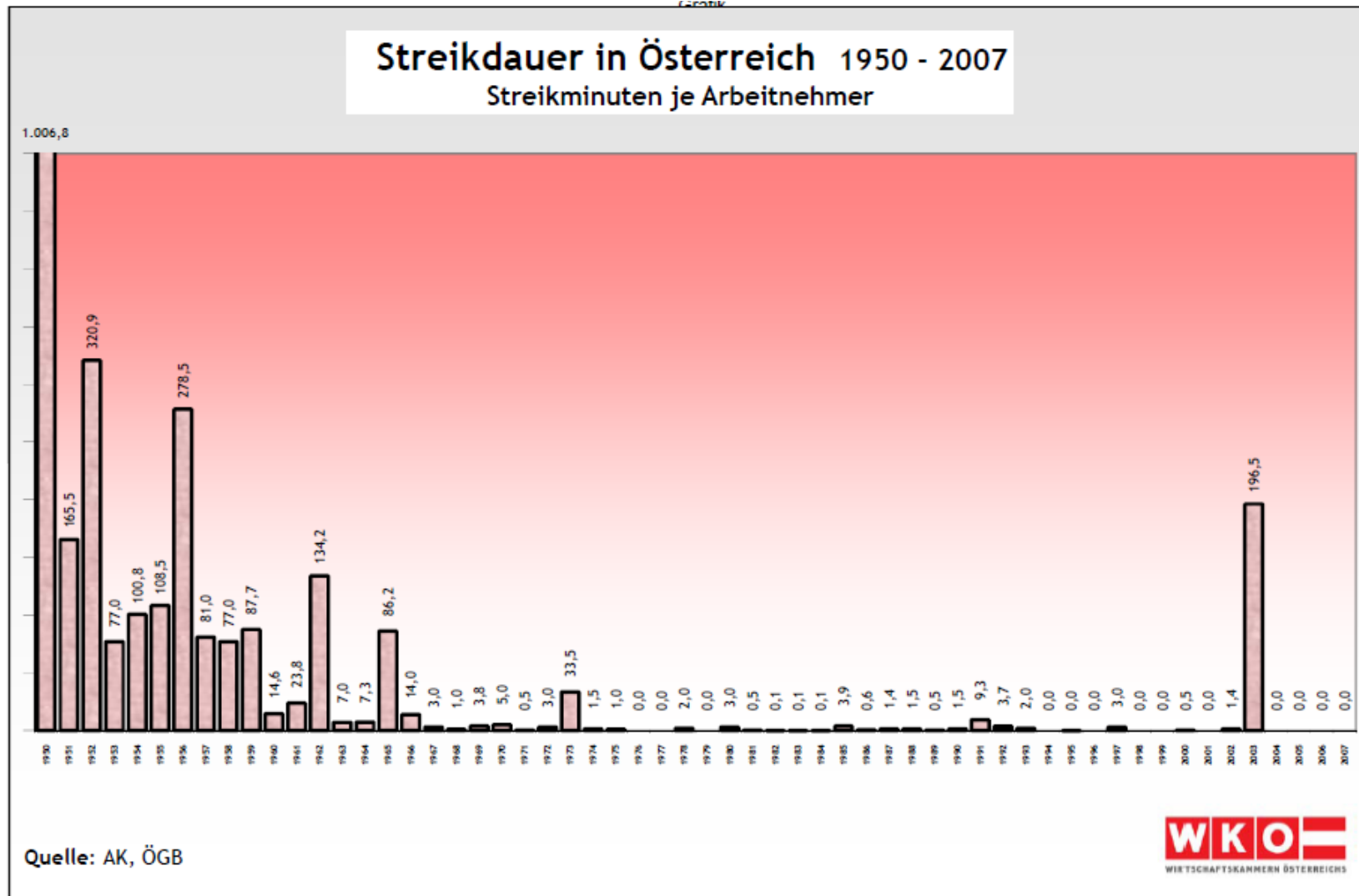
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Very few strikes



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Economic & Social Partnership- Institutional Setup

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- The Austrian System of Economic and Social Partnership
 - Works on different levels, based on different grounds (legal, voluntary, bargaining)
 - General level => The Austrian Social Partners
 - Sectoral Level => Sectoral Unions and Federations (Economic Chamber)
 - Company Level: Works Councils and Management
 - Aims: Strengthening Competitiveness and stability, preserving and improving social standards and protecting the ecological bases of existence

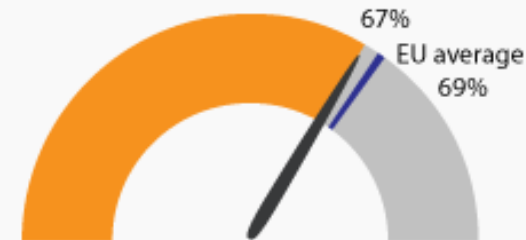


Labour Relations in Austria

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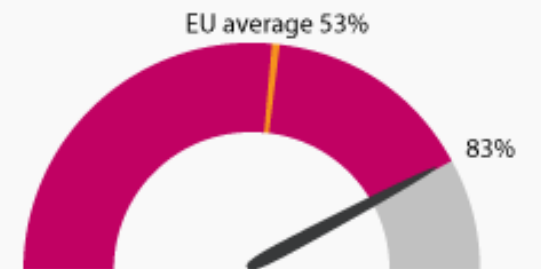
Sozialpartnerschaft

- Have contributed to Austria being one of the richest countries in the world and are still very important
- Have helped mitigate the impact of the Euro crisis in Austria
- Confidence in Social Partners is (very) high



Ability to choose or change methods of work

Data source: 2015 EWCS survey [↗](#)



Possibility to accumulate overtime for days off

Data source: 2013 ECS survey [↗](#)



Institutional Setup: Social Partners

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The Austrian Social Partners:

- The Economic Chamber (WKÖ)
- The Chamber of Labour (BAK)
- The Chamber of Agriculture (LKÖ)
- The Austrian Trade Union Federation (OGB)



Confidence in institutions

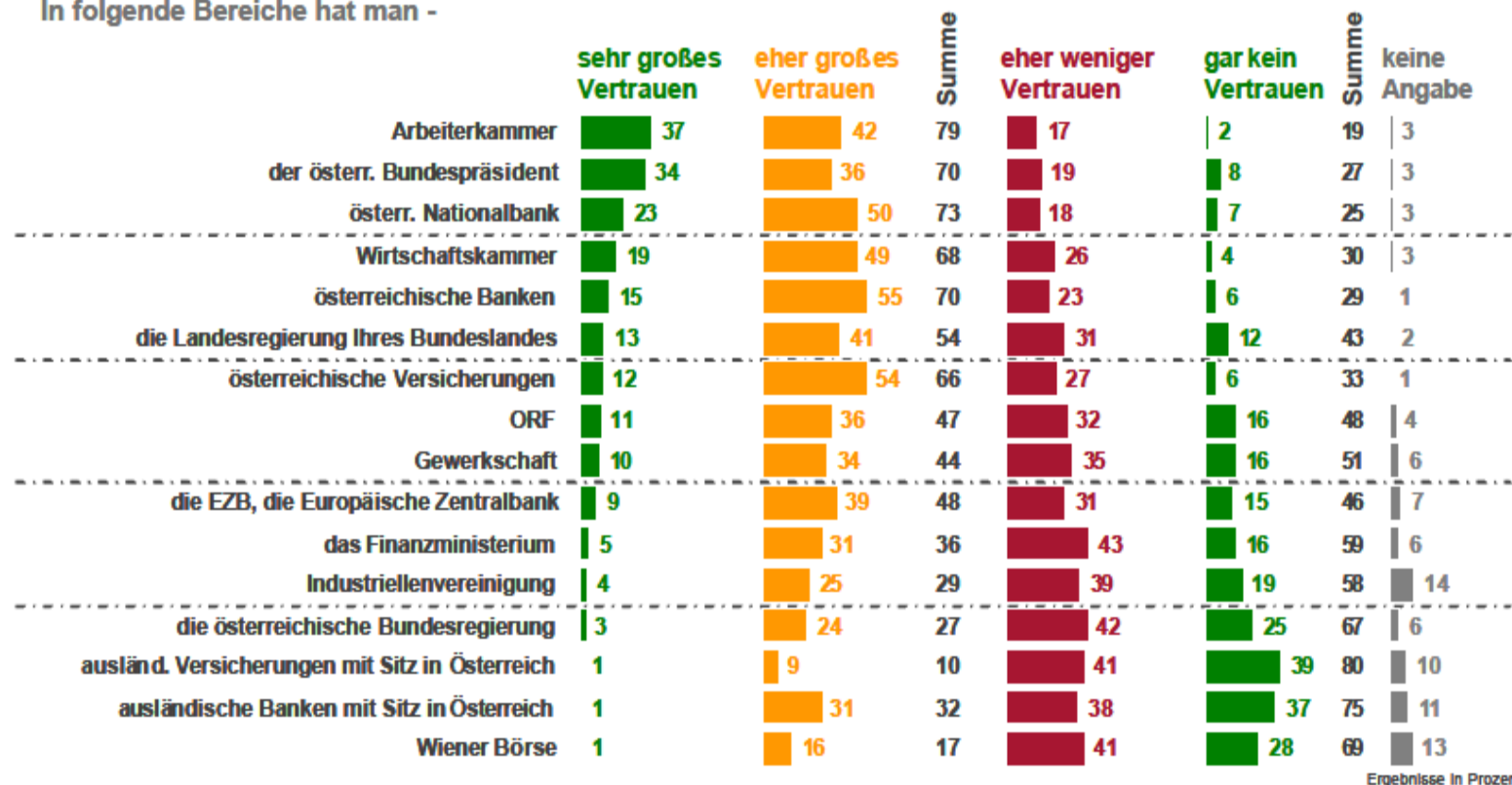
- Austrians have varying degrees of confidence in institutions:

- Chamber of Labour ranking first
- President
- Bank

VERTRAUEN IN INSTITUTIONEN

Frage 4: Hier stehen nun einige Namen von Institutionen. Sagen Sie mir bitte zu jeder, ob Sie zu diesen im Großen und Ganzen großes Vertrauen haben (1), eher schon Vertrauen haben (2), eher weniger Vertrauen haben (3) oder gar kein Vertrauen haben (4).

In folgende Bereiche hat man -



Ergebnisse in Prozent

Life Satisfaction, Confidence & Optimism

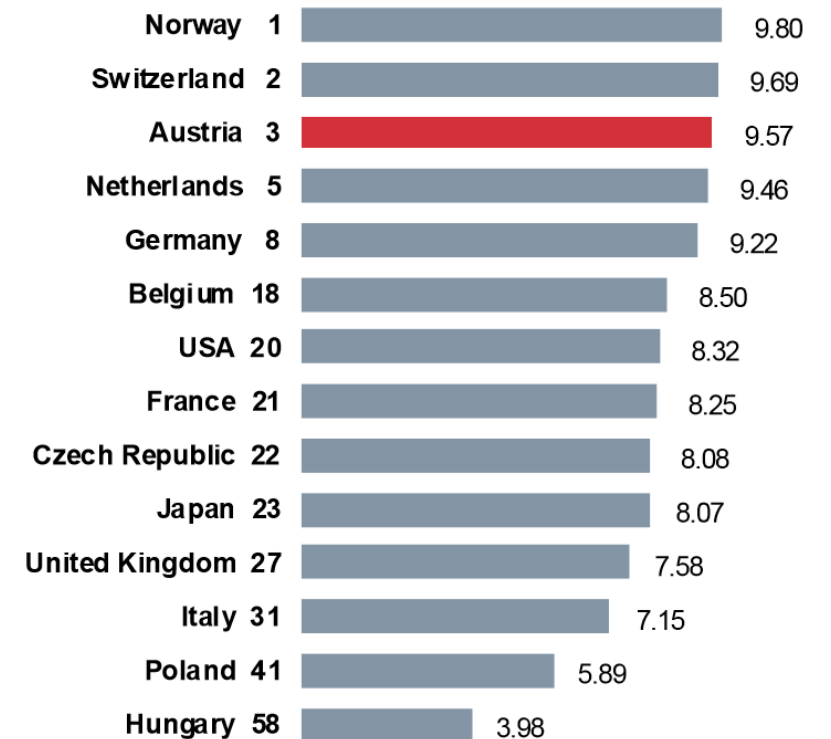


Eurobarometer Nr. 72, December 2009:

<u>Comparing Austria and EU:</u>	<u>AUS</u>	<u>EU</u>
Satisfied with life	85%	78%
Satisfied ec. Situation	43%	23%
Confidence Government	54%	29%
Confidence political parties	36%	16%

Unmatched quality of life

10 = The nation's quality of life is very high



Source: IMD World Competitiveness Yearbook, 2017

Life Satisfaction, Confidence & Optimism



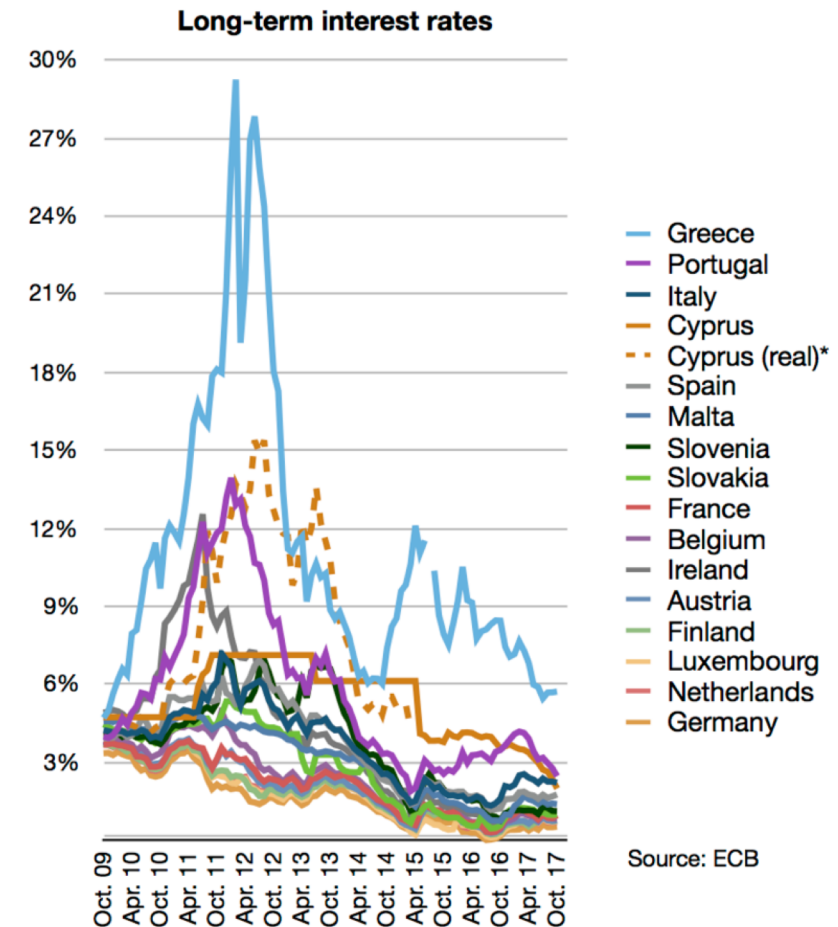
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- The European debt crisis/Eurozone crisis is a multi-year debt crisis that has been taking place in the EU since 2009
- Several Eurozone member states (Greece, Portugal, Ireland, Spain and Cyprus) were unable to repay/refinance their government debt/to bail out over-indebted banks under their national supervision without the assistance of third parties (other Eurozone countries, the European Central Bank, or the International Monetary Fund)

Eurobarometer Nr. 72, December 2009:

Austria:

- 2/3 see no impact of the EU debit crisis on personal situation
- 20% expect improvements



* actual market trade values without cut-off yield for Cyprus government bond maturing 3 February 2020



Austria and the EU

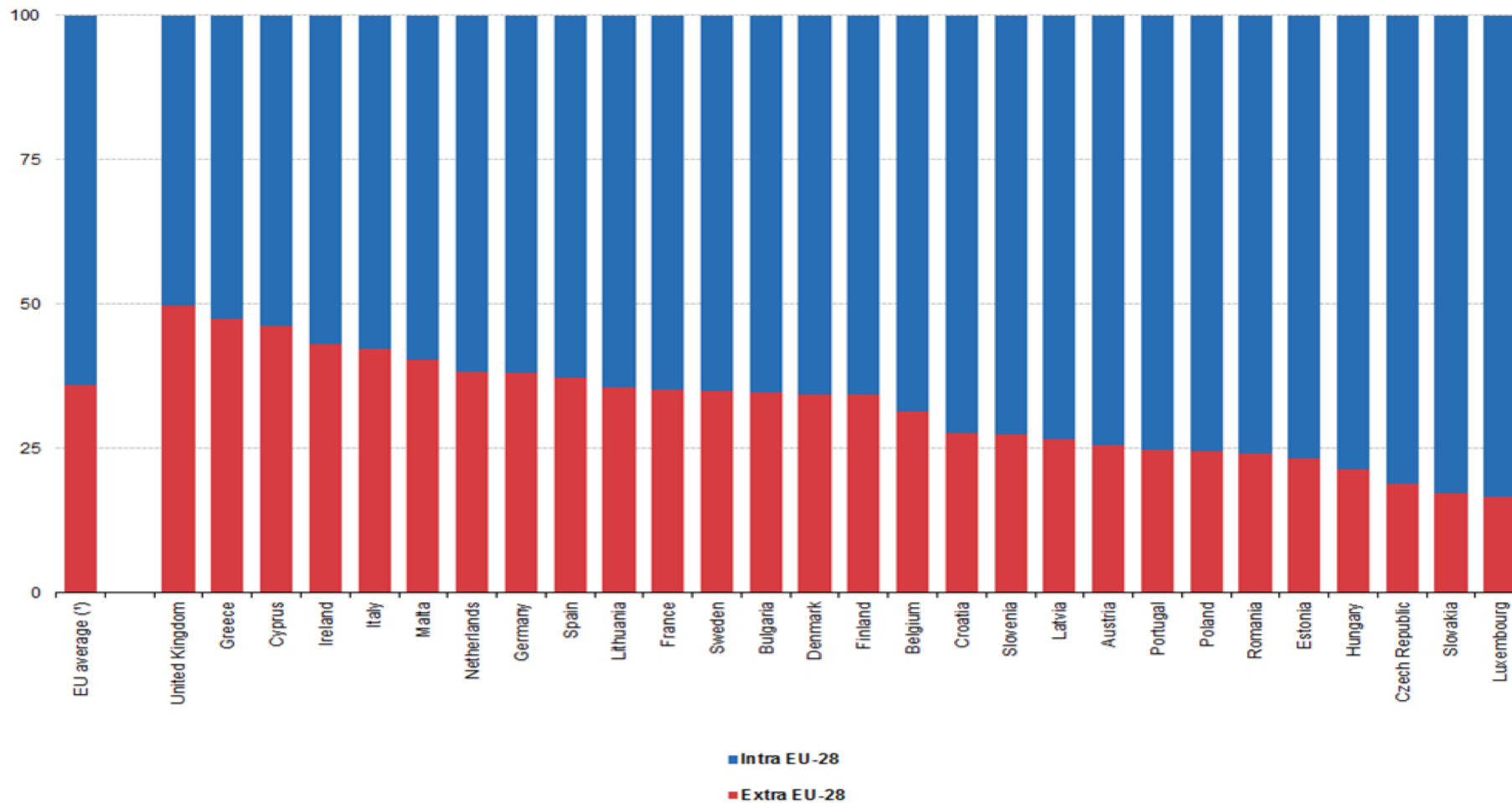
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- EU member since 1995, Schengen 1997
- **Intra-EU trade** accounts for 71% of Austria's exports
 - Germany 30%, Italy 6%, and Slovakia 4%
- **Exports outside the EU** => 6% go to the US, 5% to Switzerland
- **Imports:**
 - 78% come from EU Member States (Germany 43%, Italy 6% and Czech Republic 4%)
 - **Outside the EU** => 6% come from Switzerland and 3% from China

Austria and the EU



Intra and extra EU-28 trade in goods, 2017
(imports plus exports, % share of total trade)



(*) Weighted average.
Source: Eurostat (online data code: ext_lt_intratrd)



Austria and the EU

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Austria and the EU

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- **Council of the EU** => national ministers meet regularly to adopt EU laws and coordinate policies
 - Council meetings regularly attended by Austrian representatives depending on the policy area being addressed
- **Presidency of the Council of the EU** => The Council doesn't have a permanent, single-person president. Its work is led by the country holding the Council presidency, which rotates every 6 months



Austria and the EU

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- During these 6 months, ministers from that country's government chair and determine the agenda of Council meetings in each policy area + facilitate dialogue with the other EU institutions
- Austria currently holds the presidency (July-Dec 2018)



Council of the
European Union

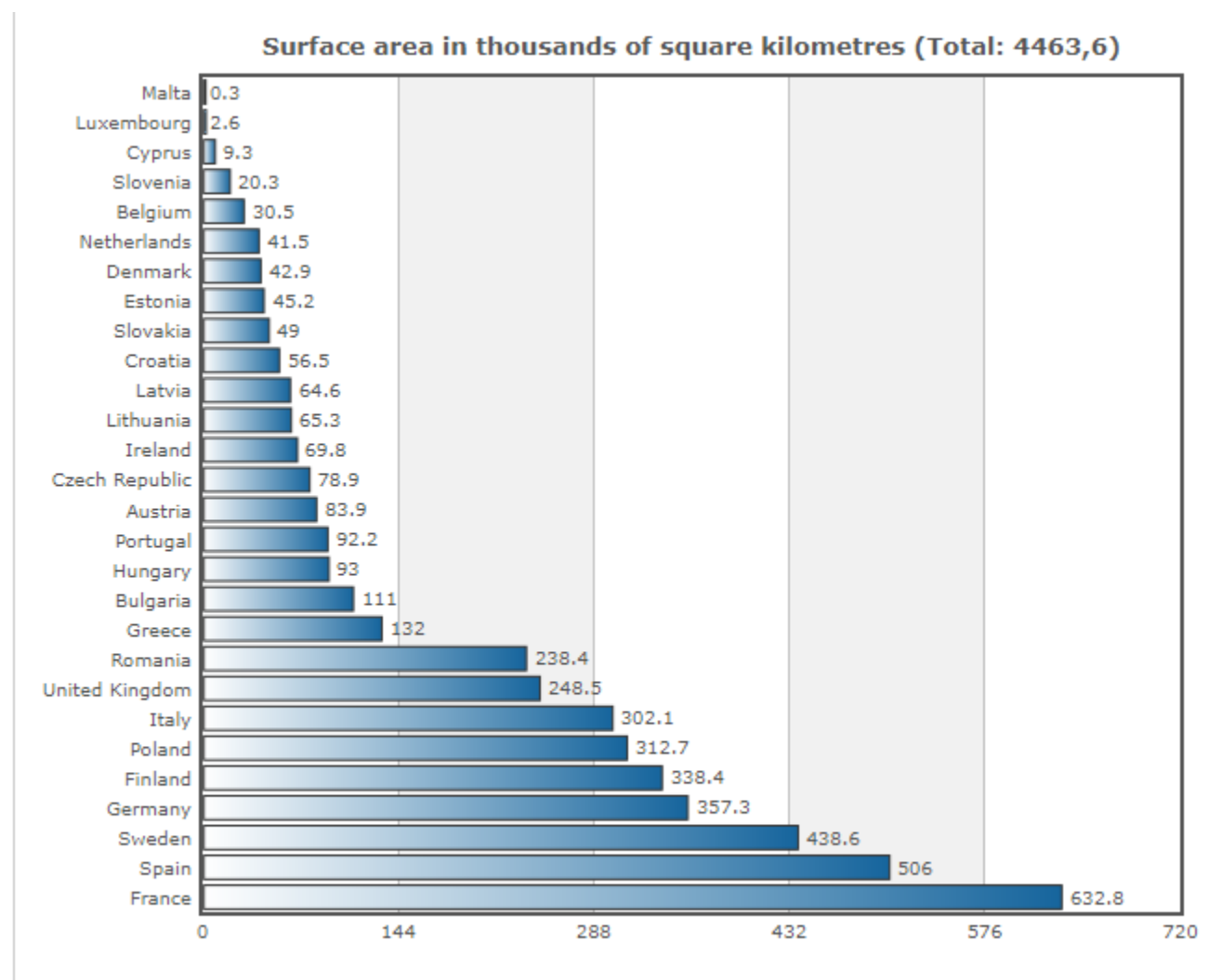




How did Austria get there?

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- **Despite:** no significant resources, small country
- **But:** skills, small country (cf Nordics), institutional setup and cooperation





How did Austria get there?

49

- **Despite:** no significant resources, small country
- **But:** skills, small country (cf Nordics), institutional setup and cooperation,
- Success Factors:
 - Political Consensus – learning from the past
 - Labour Relations – negotiations to prevent conflicts
 - Mixed Economy: Private – Public – Welfare State
 - Technology Follower

Challenges



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- **Globalisation** and new capitalism lead to:
 - Increasing pressure on living and working conditions and on social protections systems, Public Services (privatizations)
 - Rising inequalities
- Further challenges Austria is facing:
- The EU crisis =>
- Rising inequalities, Education, Innovation, Tax structure
 - Sustainable Growth Model

■ Next Session...

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- **The Austrian Empire**
- **The Austro-Hungarian Empire**
 - **Nationalism and social multiculturalism**
 - **Politics and society**
 - **Foreign policy**



Thank You For Your Attention!

Questions???