

Studying in Austria

A guide for international students & families — how Austrian higher education works, the student residence permit, low public tuition, English programs, and post-study work.

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AFFORDABLE, CENTRAL, HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE

Austria offers **affordable public universities** (the University of Vienna dates to 1365), a superb quality of life, and a central-European location. Non-EU students apply for a **student residence permit (Aufenthaltsbewilligung Student)** before arriving, pay **modest tuition**, and can move toward a **Red-White-Red Card** after graduating. This guide walks it in **ten steps**.

General guidance, not legal or immigration advice. Austrian rules, tuition, and the funds requirement change. The figures here are recent examples and **must be confirmed with the Austrian representation, OeAD, and your university.**

Understand Why Students Choose Austria

WHAT TO KNOW

Austria offers **affordable public tuition**, **historic and highly ranked universities**, **an exceptional quality of life** (Vienna regularly tops livability rankings), and a **central location** for exploring Europe — with growing English-taught options.

BY THE NUMBERS

Affordable

modest public tuition

Quality of life

Vienna tops rankings

Central Europe

+ rich culture

HOW TO HELP

Weigh Austria's **affordability**, **quality of life**, and **central location** against the German-language expectation for many programs — it's excellent value in the heart of Europe.

GOOD TO KNOW

Vienna regularly ranks as one of the world's **most livable cities** — a genuine draw for students.

Understand the System

WHAT TO KNOW

Austrian higher education includes **public universities** (Vienna, TU Wien, Graz, Innsbruck, WU Vienna) and **universities of applied sciences (Fachhochschulen)**, which are more practical. Degrees follow the European bachelor's—master's—doctorate structure.

BY THE NUMBERS

Public universities

Vienna, TU Wien, Graz

Fachhochschulen

practical UAS

3+2

European structure

HOW TO HELP

Choose between a **public university** and a **Fachhochschule (UAS)** based on whether you want academic breadth or practical, career-focused study.

GOOD TO KNOW

Fachhochschulen (UAS) are **practical and employer-linked**, often with smaller classes — a strong route for professional fields.

Get the Student Residence Permit

WHAT TO KNOW

Non-EU/EEA students staying over 6 months need a **student residence permit (Aufenthaltsbewilligung Studierender)**, applied for **before entering Austria** at an Austrian embassy/consulate. It **can't be obtained by converting a tourist stay**, and renewals happen in Austria.

BY THE NUMBERS

Aufenthaltsbewilligung

student residence permit

Before entering

apply from abroad

Not from tourist

can't convert

HOW TO HELP

Apply for the **Aufenthaltsbewilligung Studierender** **before you travel** (3–6 months ahead), with admission, funds proof, and insurance — you can't switch from a tourist stay.

WATCH OUT

Apply **early (3–6 months ahead)** — processing plus document translation and legalization takes time, and you must apply from abroad.

Apply to Universities

WHAT TO KNOW

Applications go **directly to universities**. Deadlines are typically **5 September** (winter semester) and **5 February** (summer semester). Some programs require **entrance exams** (e.g., MedAT for medicine), and non-German documents need **sworn translation**.

BY THE NUMBERS

Apply directly

to universities

5 Sep / 5 Feb

semester deadlines

Entrance exams

for some (MedAT)

HOW TO HELP

Apply **directly to your universities** by the 5 September / 5 February deadlines, prepare for any **entrance exam**, and get non-German documents sworn-translated.

GOOD TO KNOW

Some competitive programs (like medicine's MedAT) have **entrance exams** — check your program's selection early.

Plan for Tuition & Funding

WHAT TO KNOW

EU/EEA students mostly pay only the **ÖH student-union fee (~€25/semester)** within standard study time (~€363.36/semester if they overrun). Non-EU students pay **~€726.72/semester**. **OeAD** manages scholarships (e.g., **Ernst Mach grants**).

BY THE NUMBERS

EU

ÖH fee (~€25/sem)

Non-EU

~€726.72/sem

OeAD

scholarships

HOW TO HELP

Budget the **modest tuition** (non-EU ~€726.72/semester) plus living costs, and explore **OeAD scholarships** like the Ernst Mach grants.

GOOD TO KNOW

Austrian public tuition is **remarkably low** — the real budget line is living costs, not fees.

Meet the Financial Requirement

WHAT TO KNOW

For the permit you must prove **sufficient funds**, and the amount is **age-based**: recently about **€722.58/month (under 24)** or **€1,308.39/month (24 and over)**, covering living costs (a portion allocated to rent).

BY THE NUMBERS

Age-based

under vs. over 24

~€723 / €1,308

per month

Covers

living costs

HOW TO HELP

Prepare **proof of funds** at the age-appropriate monthly amount, plus **health insurance** — both are required for the residence permit.

WATCH OUT

The funds requirement is **higher if you're 24 or over** — confirm the current amount for your age with OeAD/the authority.



Meet Language Requirements

WHAT TO KNOW

Many programs are taught in **German** (often requiring **B2 or C1**), with a growing number in **English** (especially master's). Even in English programs, German strongly helps daily life and future career prospects in Austria.

BY THE NUMBERS

German

B2/C1 for many

English

growing (master's)

German helps

daily life & work

HOW TO HELP

Take the **right test for your program's language** (German B2/C1, or English), and learn German — it materially helps with life and work in Austria.

GOOD TO KNOW

Many Austrian programs — especially at bachelor's level — are **in German**, often needing B2/C1 — check your program's language.

Arrange Insurance & Prepare to Move

WHAT TO KNOW

You need **health insurance** (ÖGK statutory or equivalent, recently ~€79/month for students), and non-German documents must be **sworn-translated and legalized/apostilled**. Budget living costs of about **€950–1,100/month**, and use OeAD student housing.

BY THE NUMBERS

Health insurance

ÖGK ~€79/month

Translate docs

sworn + legalize

Living costs

~€950–1,100/mo

HOW TO HELP

Arrange **health insurance**, get documents **sworn-translated and legalized**, and use **OeAD student housing** — then complete arrival registration.

GOOD TO KNOW

All non-German documents need **sworn translation and legalization/apostille** — a common cause of delay, so start early.

Understand Work Rules

WHAT TO KNOW

Students may work **up to 20 hours per week** alongside their studies (with an employment permit for non-EU students, arranged via the employer). Full-time work is possible in breaks, within the rules.

BY THE NUMBERS

Work

up to 20 hrs/week

Employment permit

for non-EU

Full-time

possible in breaks

HOW TO HELP

You may work **up to 20 hours/week** (with the required employment permit for non-EU students) — useful, but plan to fund your studies primarily from other sources.

GOOD TO KNOW

Non-EU students generally need an **employment permit** (arranged by the employer) to work — confirm the current process.

Thrive & Work After Study

WHAT TO KNOW

After graduating, you can apply for a **12-month job-search residence permit** to find qualified work, then switch to the **Red-White-Red Card (Rot-Weiß-Rot Karte)** once you have a suitable job — a clear path to working in Austria.

BY THE NUMBERS

12-month permit

to find work

Red-White-Red Card

for skilled work

Clear pathway

to staying

HOW TO HELP

Plan for the **12-month job-search permit** and the **Red-White-Red Card** route, build networks during study, and target Austria's in-demand fields if you want to stay.

GOOD TO KNOW

Austria's **12-month job-search permit** plus the Red-White-Red Card is a clear post-study pathway — confirm current salary thresholds and conditions.

Studying in Austria: The Essentials

A snapshot — figures change, so confirm everything with the Austrian representation, OeAD, and your university.

The system

Public universities (Vienna, TU Wien, Graz, Innsbruck, WU) and universities of applied sciences (Fachhochschulen); European bachelor's—master's—doctorate structure.

The permit

Non-EU/EEA students staying over 6 months need a student residence permit (Aufenthaltsbewilligung Studierender), applied for from abroad before entering; can't be converted from a tourist stay.

Applying & language

Apply directly to universities (deadlines ~5 Sept / 5 Feb); many programs in German (B2/C1), growing English options; entrance exams for some; sworn-translate documents.

Money

EU pay the ÖH fee (~€25/sem; €363 on overrun); non-EU ~€726.72/semester; prove age-based funds (~€723/mo under 24, ~€1,308/mo 24+); ÖGK health insurance; OeAD scholarships.

Work & after

Work up to 20 hrs/week (employment permit for non-EU); a 12-month job-search permit and the Red-White-Red Card provide a post-study work pathway.

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