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ترحيب BEM-VINDO

Tips and Informationen About Living in Austria



MenschenRechteReligion
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<http://MenschenRechteReligion.eu>





Emergency Calls

- FIRE BRIGADE **122**
- POLICE **133**
- RESCUE SERVICE **144**
- UNIVERSAL EMERGENCY CALL **112** (works even when cell phone credit is 0)
- Women's Helpline against Male Violence (FrauenHelpLine) **0800 222 555**



Pharmacy Emergency Service
<http://MenschenRechteReligion.eu/s/notdienst>

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Stand: 1/2016 Mit freundlicher Genehmigung: www.refugeeguide.de und Stadt Salzburg

Welcome to Styria,
welcome to the district of Voitsberg!

This guide contains useful tips and information about living in Austria.

This guide has been inspired by the questions that are repeatedly asked by many refugees. We'd like to thank www.refugeeguide.de and the City of Salzburg for providing the fundamental content and allowing us to use them herewith.

The information in this brochure is based partly on valid laws and partly on generally valid regulations.

People in Austria do not always behave in accordance with these laws and regulations. Nevertheless, the behavior described here is standard for most people.

Together, we aim to create a good co-existence in the Voitsberg region. In order for this to happen, we ask you to read this guide so that you feel more acquainted with the city. I look forward to a good and enriching coexistence!

For questions please contact the person in charge of CARITAS. But you can also contact the members of our association MenschenRechteReligion. But please bear in mind: We from MenschenRechteReligion are happy to help you but we are doing this in our leisure time without remuneration. Therefore we are not available every time but we do our best to help you as soon as possible.



Dietmar Böhmer
Chairman
Association MenschenRechteReligion



An overview of the key points

- ✓ Each person is entitled to respect and appreciative treatment, irrespective of gender, age, education, religion, origins or appearance.
- ✓ Each person has the right to freedom of expression. This means that each person can express their opinion, provided their opinion does not malign, offend or threaten others.
- ✓ If you feel threatened, call the police on 133. It is never permitted to respond with violence. Violence is strictly forbidden.
- ✓ Children have a right to an upbringing free of violence. Corporal punishment, psychological injury and other degrading measures are punishable.
- ✓ Children must attend school from the age of 6. Unauthorized absence from lessons is not permitted. Education is compulsory up to the age of 15.
- ✓ Austrians often shake hands as a greeting or when saying goodbye. Both men and women shake each other's hands and look each other in the eyes.
- ✓ In Austria, it is often the case that male doctors treat women, and female doctors treat men. In an emergency, you cannot choose the gender of your doctor.
- ✓ It is an offence to offer or suggest gifts or bribes to authorities.
- ✓ It is forbidden to use your mobile phone to make calls or to text people whilst driving or cycling. When travelling by car, all the passengers must belt up, and children must also use a special seat that is suitable for their size.
- ✓ Employment is permitted only with an authorization, and is also subject to compulsory insurance. You will be committing fraud if you work without paying tax or contributions. Citizens are obliged to pay tax. Tax evasion is a punishable offence.
- ✓ Sunday is a day of rest. Most businesses are closed on this day.
- ✓ Neighbors could complain if you are too loud e.g. mowing the lawn. Also, the hours from 22.00 (10 pm) to 06.00 (6 am) each day are considered rest hours. You should not be too loud during this time either.
- ✓ Punctuality is important. If you are going to be late, it is advisable to call the other person and inform them about the lateness.



Chapter 1 – Public Life

„Grüß Gott“, „Guten Tag“ and „Auf Wiedersehen“, „Servus“ are standard forms of greeting or saying goodbye to people. It is standard to greet all persons individually if you are meeting one person or a small group of people. If, for example, you enter a shop or the doctor's waiting room, it is customary to say „Grüß Gott“ to everyone who is waiting there already.

You also greet people who you meet in the street in small villages, in your neighborhood or in remote regions.

Smiling is not usually interpreted as flirting, not even if you are talking to people you do not know. People usually just want to be friendly. It doesn't matter if they are men or women!

Privacy is important to people in Austria. This can sometimes seem distant. It is quite normal to sit next to strangers on a train or in a restaurant for several hours and only say „Guten Tag“ or „Auf Wiedersehen“. In the same way, sometimes people want to sit on their own, e.g. on the bus or on a train.

In order to have privacy, people usually keep their doors closed e.g. in the office or at home. It is polite to knock if you wish to enter.

It is an offence to urinate in public. You will usually find a public toilet in the vicinity. Toilets usually provide toilet paper, but not bidets. Toilet paper is disposed of in the toilet, not in the rubbish bin next to the toilet.

However, sanitary items for women, such as tampons or towels, are disposed of in the rubbish bin next to the toilet. Any residue in the toilet should be removed using the toilet brush. The toilets should be kept as clean and dry as possible.

That's why the toilets should be sat on when used. Where there are no urinals,

this also applies to men. For reasons of hygiene, it is important to wash your hands after using the toilet.

Spitting on the ground in public is not tolerated.

In public (especially on the bus or on a train) it is considered impolite to hold loud conversations. That's why it is best to have quiet conversations or telephone calls, so that you do not disturb others.

In public transportation, some seats are reserved for elderly or ill people, and for pregnant women - and there are also spaces for prams/buggies and wheelchairs. These areas are to be kept clear or vacated as soon as they are required.

On escalators: you stand on the right and walk on the left.

If you need help, you can ask other adults for assistance. They are usually very nice and are pleased to help. It is, however, inappropriate to approach children without the permission of the parents.

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Foto: hochzeitstafel.pixello.de

Chapter 2 – Personal Freedom

Each and every person can practice their own religion – or none at all. Religion is considered a private matter, and religious freedom applies. This means that you are permitted to believe in whatever you want to believe in. At the same time, you should respect the wishes of others to believe in a different God, several Gods or none at all.

In Austria, the aim of disputes and discussions is usually to come to an agreement. Here, the press has a special freedom, the so-called „freedom of the press“, which is legally stipulated. The press is concerned with many different topics, including criticisms against the government and other social organizations (e.g. churches). Each person has the right to freedom of expression, provided they do not discriminate against, offend or threaten others.

In Austria, public demonstrations of love (heterosexual as well as homosexual) between couples is common. This includes holding hands, being arm in arm, kissing and also cuddling in public. This is accepted and should be disregarded.

In summer, you often see people wearing t-shirts, short trousers or mini skirts. It is impolite to stare at these people for a long period of time.

People often walk around naked in saunas and in some swimming baths. People wear swimwear in public swimming baths. Swimming baths and saunas are not usually separate for men and women. However, sometimes there are special times „Nur für Männer“ (just for men) or „Nur für Frauen“ (just for women).

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Foto: Q.pictures_pixelio.de

Chapter 3 – Social Co-existence

Austrians often shake each other's hands - when they greet each other, when they say goodbye or when they meet new people. If you are new to a group, it is customary to greet everyone in the group with a handshake. In doing so, you should look them briefly in the eyes. Both men and women shake each other's hands and look each other in the eyes.

If you are meeting with friends, it is common to give each other a hug; in some regions also with a kiss on the cheek. This is a gesture of friendship.

Austrians often say exactly what they are thinking. They do not wish to be impolite, just honest. Constructive criticism is considered to be helpful in order to improve yourself and others. This is then particularly important in the workplace. That's why it is often the case that you provide criticism or also request feedback from others.

Punctuality is important to people in Austria. If you are going to be late, it is advisable to call the other person and inform them about the lateness. This applies in the work environment and also with groups of friends.

If you are offered something, „nein, danke“ is a polite rejection. „Ja, bitte“ or „gerne“ means that you wish to accept the offer.

In Austria, it is forbidden to discriminate for reasons of gender, color of skin, religion, disability, world view or sexual orientation; and could lead to prosecution. If you feel discriminated you can contact the anti discrimination hotline at **0316 71 41 37**.

If you feel threatened, call the **police** on **133**. It is never permitted to respond with violence. Violence is strictly forbidden in Austria.

Men and women enjoy equal rights in Austria. If somebody asks to be left alone; this should be respected. It is not permitted to harass others, whether they are male or female.

You should also ask someone's permission before you take photographs of them.

Homosexual partnerships are legal in Austria, and marriage can be officially registered.

Each person chooses their partner themselves and is free to decide whether he or she wishes to marry that person. It is just as customary to be unmarried as it is to be married. It is also possible for the married couple or partners to decide not to have children. There is no legal difference between legitimate and illegitimate children.

It is not permitted to simply kiss or caress the nice children of your neighbors, nor is it permitted to offer them sweets, without the permission of the parents, even if the children are open and friendly towards you.

Do not feed animals without the owner's permission. Animals are not always wild, and their keeping is regulated by the animal protection law. Even if you wish to be nice to your neighbors, you must not feed pets without the owner's permission.



Chapter 4 – Environmental Friendliness

Waste is kept separate and recycled. This means that you must use separate rubbish bins or dustbins for paper, plastics, organic waste etc.

It is not permitted to throw waste on the ground, either in the city or in the countryside. If there is no rubbish bin in the vicinity, you should keep the waste until you find a rubbish bin. You will find rubbish bins in public places, such as train stations, bus stops or in parks.

Please keep your water and power consumption (electricity, heating) to a minimum. This helps to protect the environment and will save you money.

Windows in rooms close with a tight seal. Please open the windows several times during the day to ensure the apartment is ventilated with fresh air. This also protects the walls from becoming moldy. Please do not let open the windows too long and keep on heating the room at the same time. This is waste of energy and money.

In Austria, when you buy bottles you will often pay a small deposit of between 9 and 29 cents. This is paid back to you when you return the bottle. You can return bottles to any supermarket that sells the brand; not just to the actual shop from where you bought the bottle.

Waste Separation Guides



German



English



Arabic



Farsi



Foto: unsplash, pixabay

Chapter 5 – Eating, Drinking and Smoking

You can drink the tap water in Austria. It is of very high quality. Tap water is subject to strict inspections and is healthy. There are only a few exceptions, e.g. in some public areas or on trains. These are provided with the „Kein Trinkwasser“ (not drinking water) sign accordingly.

Many Austrian dishes are prepared using pork, beef or chicken. You can always ask which meat or other ingredients are in the meal.

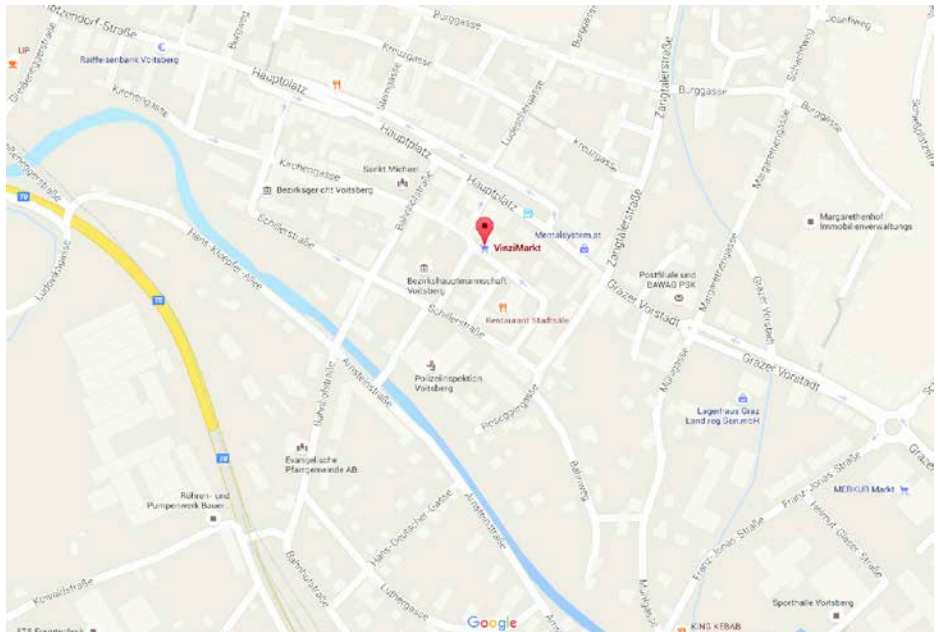
You often find doner kebabs in Austria. These could be made from chicken, veal or lamb. As with other fast food (pizzas, burgers, chips etc.), you eat doner kebabs without cutlery.

However, cutlery is usually provided at the dining table.

Many sweets in Austria contain gelatin, which is made from pork. To ensure that sweets are halal, it is best to buy products which are labeled as „vegetarisch“ or „vegan“, or contain no gelatin.

In Austria, there are many discount shops (e.g. HOFER, LIDL or Penny) and also some more expensive supermarkets (e.g. SPAR and BILLA), which offer all the items you need for your daily requirements. There are also farmers' or weekly markets, and also small international supermarkets (frequently Turkish and Asian). If you only eat halal, you will find meat and sweets, especially in Turkish and Arabic supermarkets (or restaurants). Differing to supermarkets, fuel stations often have 24-hour opening and also sell foodstuffs - these are, however, more expensive.

A special supermarket is VinziMarkt in Voitsberg, which offers very cheap food-stuff. Not everyone is entitled to shop there. One of the entitled groups are the asylum seekers. **VinziMarkt**, Stadtpark 12, Voitsberg.



Karte © Google, Inc.



Google Maps VinziMarkt Voitsberg
<http://MenschenRechteReligion.eu/s/vinzi>

Alcohol, predominantly beer and wine, is considered a standard drink on social occasions, especially in the evenings, perhaps over dinner or when meeting friends. Nevertheless, it is also completely acceptable not to drink alcohol. If alcoholic drinks are offered, you can always refuse them with a „Nein, danke“. It is forbidden to drive a vehicle or cycle after you have drunk alcohol.

Some people smoke in public places. Restaurants and train stations provide separate „Raucherbereiche“ (smoker areas). It is usually considered more polite to smoke outside or on a balcony. It is considered impolite to smoke in the immediate vicinity of non-smokers, children or pregnant women.



Foto: Martin Moritz/pixello.de

Chapter 6 – Formalities

Businesses and official offices open and close punctually. If the opening times end at 16.00 (4 pm), it makes sense to be there by 15.55 (3.55 pm) at the latest, as at 16.01 (4.01 pm) you'll be standing in front of a locked door. The same applies to departure times of buses and trains etc.

Bureaucracy is sometimes complicated and can seem to be inefficient. Bureaucracy takes time and follows specific processes. However, these bureaucratic processes are the same for everyone, and are conducted so that everyone is treated equally. It is an offence to offer or suggest gifts or bribes.

Most people in Austria observe the traffic regulations. They follow the traffic signs and stop when they see a red traffic light, even if they can't see any traffic on the road. If there are no signs or no traffic lights, the person who is coming from the right has priority („Rechts vor Links“) (right before left).

Cities in particular provide special lanes for cyclists.

It is forbidden to use your mobile phone to make a call or text whilst driving a car or riding a bicycle.

When travelling by car, all the passengers must belt up, and children must also use a special seat that is suitable for their size.

Telephone calls are usually made during office times, i.e. up to 16.00 (4 pm) or 17.00 (5 pm). Private calls after 21.00 (9 pm) or 22.00 (10 pm) are not common. If you call someone, you say your name first of all.

In order to use public transport, you must first buy a ticket from a ticket office or from a ticket machine. When you get on the bus or train, you must first validate your ticket before the journey.



Chapter 7 – Courses, Education and Schooling

Both men and women are taught in courses and schools. Men and women are not segregated in lessons.

You should attend lessons on time. Unauthorized absence from lessons is not permitted.

Teachers will specify the conditions and content of the lesson. Homework should be carried out.

Children must attend school from the age of 6. Unauthorized absence from lessons is not permitted. Education is compulsory up to the age of 15.

Violence against children is forbidden. Corporal punishment, psychological injury and other degrading measures are not permitted. A slap in the face is also considered to be violence

German Lessons In the Internet

<http://MenschenRechteReligion.eu/a1a/> – Arabic

<http://MenschenRechteReligion.eu/a1f/> – Farsi

<http://MenschenRechteReligion.eu/a1p/> – Pashto



Arabisch



Farsi



Pashto



Chapter 8 – Money and Employment

Austria has a good social system. People in need will be helped. It is not good to exploit the system. Provided there is a legal employment opportunity, each and every person should contribute.

The prices in all businesses and supermarkets are fixed. It is not acceptable to haggle over the price.

Employment is permitted only with an authorization, and is also subject to compulsory insurance. You will be committing fraud if you work without paying tax or contributions.

Citizens are obliged to pay tax. Tax evasion is a punishable offence



Housing Market
<http://MenschenRechteReligion.eu/s/mwwo>

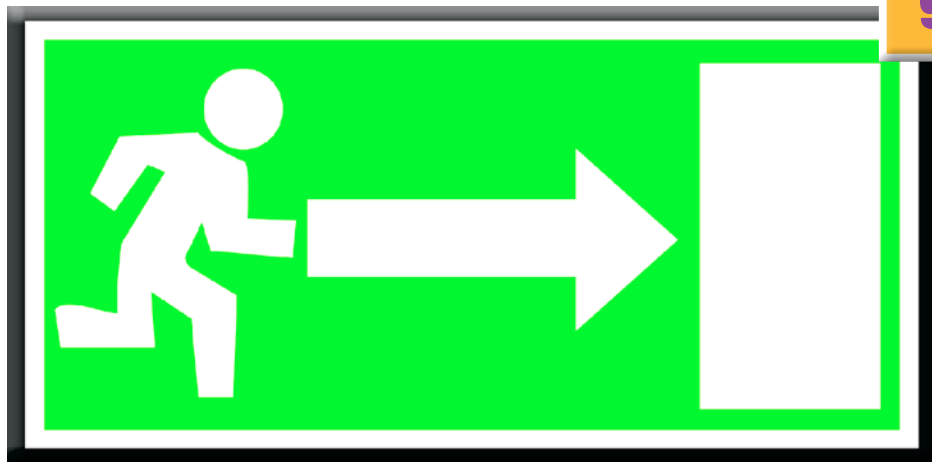


Train



Bus

Schedule
 Train: <http://MenschenRechteReligion.eu/s/zug>
 Bus: <http://MenschenRechteReligion.eu/s/bus>



Chapter 9 – In Emergencies

Always try to help people in an emergency situation. Everyone is obliged to help someone who is in need, e.g. by initiating first aid measures and calling the emergency services.

In the case of violent confrontations, theft or sexual harassment: call the police by dialing the number 133 on any telephone. Police are there to help you and will take your call seriously.

In cases of fire or medical emergencies: call the fire brigade by dialing the number 122 on any telephone. This number should be used only in (life-threatening) emergencies. The same applies to the emergency departments in hospitals. The rescue service has the number 144.

You can alternatively dial the European Emergency Number 112 which connects you to the mission control where they decide whether you need Police, rescue service or the fire brigade. And: Dialing 112 is even possible when your credit of the cell phone is zero.

If you need medication in the evening, Sundays or during holiday period, you can use an emergency pharmacy. To find out which pharmacies have an emergency service just look here: <http://menschenrechtereligion.eu/s/notdienst>

In Austria, it is often the case that male doctors treat women, and female doctors treat men. In an emergency, you cannot choose the gender of your doctor. The same applies to paramedics

About this guide

This guide is aimed at visitors, refugees and future citizens of Austria. It should make it easier for you to settle in and understand the country's rules and customs. The purpose of this guide is to offer useful information.

We are aware that some of the information may be considered presumptuous or derogatory. This was continuously critically queried and reflected during the preparation of the document. In order to counter this uncertainty, the guide was drawn up in close collaboration with people from the most varied of countries (with people from Syria, Afghanistan, Sudan, Egypt, Palestine and other countries; as well as with people who have recently immigrated to Austria).

Some of the content was taken from the „Refugee Guide“. This has been judged by the ProAsyl Germany (based on the English version) to be faultless, and many immigrants have mentioned that they would have liked such an information brochure. Other content was taken from a brochure made by the Integration Office of the City of Salzburg.

The Association MenschenRechteReligion made adaptations to the situation in the district of Voitsberg. We want to express our thanks to www.refugeeguide.de and the City of Salzburg for providing the foundations for the guide.



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