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Monetary unit

Social spending is expressed in millions of Euros (EUR).

General notes

The Austrian Social protection system is largely by insurance based and can be traced back to the General Social Security Law (ASVG) – passed in 1955 – and parallel legislation for various occupational groups.

The social insurance system consists of 28 insurance agencies that all belong to Federation of Austrian Social Insurance Agencies. The agencies are headed by political bodies that have some autonomy, to which representatives of the insured population are appointed by the employers' representatives and unions as well as interest groups. The Federal Ministry for Social Security and Generations, as the supervisory authority is the control instance.

Since 1 July 1994, unemployment insurance is separately organised under the auspices of The Federal Ministry of labour and Economy. The Labour Market Service with about 100 regional offices operates for unemployment insurance.

The individual country notes of the OECD Benefits and Wages (www.oecd.org/els/social/workincentives) provide a comprehensive description of characteristics of social programmes (e.g. conditions for receipt, calculation of payment rates, tax treatment of social support, benefit duration, etc.) for the working-age population, including: unemployment insurance and assistance, social assistance, employment-conditional benefits, housing benefits, family benefits, childcare support, and support for sole parent households.

Break in series:

Data on social spending are not available for periods 1981-1984 and 1986-1989.

Data for 1990 onwards are based on the new ESSPROS methodology format. Coherent spending series for 1980 onwards at the individual programme level were obtained on basis of information for a few years in the early 1990s for which both historical spending series and information based on the new ESSPROS format were available. For certain programmes and aggregate categories, breaks in series (between 1989 and 1990) were inevitable. In general, programmes from the old ESSPROS format which could not be matched with a figure from the new ESSPROS format were set for the 1990-98 period to “missing”; similarly, figures from the new ESSPROS format which could not be matched to a programme from the old methodology were set to “missing” for the period 1980-89.

Secretariat estimates: No

Sources

Data provided by EUROSTAT (ESSPROS database).

OECD Labour Market Policy database.

OECD Health Data 2003 (www.oecd.org/health/healthdata).

MISSOC, Mutual information system on social protection in the Member states of the European Union and of the European Economic Area, *situation on January 1st, 2001 and evolution* (http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/missoc2001/index_en.htm).

“The Austrian welfare system: a survey of social security systems”, Federal Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs, Vienna, 1998.

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Code	Title of the programme	Description of the programme and attached notes
1.	OLD AGE	
40.10.1.1.1.1	Employees and self-employed	Old age pension is payable to persons retiring at the statutory retirement age, <i>i.e.</i> 65 for men and 60 for women. There are supplements for low-income claimants. The payment rate is income dependant and also depends on the length of time insured and the age at when claim is made.
40.10.1.1.1.3	Civil servants	The desegregation for social expenditure pertaining to civil servants in "Old age cash benefits", "Disability cash benefits" and "Survivors" is estimated by Austrian authorities.
40.10.1.1.3.1 40.10.1.1.3.2 and 40.10.1.1.3.3	Care allowance	The care allowance is financed from general tax revenue. Up to and including 1992, Care was registered under <i>Versorgungsgesetze</i> and <i>Sozialleistungen der Länder</i> . Since 1993, it has been registered under <i>Bundespflegegeld</i> .
40.10.1.1.2.4	Partial pension	Persons who meet the criteria for early retirement due to a sufficiently long contributory record and who reduce their working hours are entitled to a partial pension at a rate of 50 or 70 % of the full pension depending on the reduction in working hours.
40.10.1.2.2.0	Other benefits in kind	They include home help, meals on wheels, home cleaning, visiting service, laundry service, repair service, week-end help, and mobile nurses and nursing care.
2.	SURVIVORS	
40.10.2.1.1.1 and 40.10.2.1.1.2	Employees and self-employed	The percentage ranges between 40 and 60 % as a function of the level of family income at the time of death, persons with small and medium incomes being protected suffering losses.
3.	INCAPACITY RELATED BENEFITS	(Disability, Occupational injury and disease, Sickness)
40.10.3.1.1.1 and 40.10.3.1.1.2	Employees and self-employed	In terms of the Disabled Employment Act, a person with a reduced work-capacity of at least 50 % is considered disabled. The disability pension is granted for a period of 24 months. A new application must be made to extend the period.
40.10.3.1.5.7 and 40.10.3.1.5.8	Early retirement benefit due to reduced capacity to work	Early retirement is possible on reaching the age of 55 regardless of sex if the same or similar occupation was pursued throughout the last 15 years (vocational protection); the working capacity for this vocation must be reduced by at least 50 per cent. It replaces the invalidity pension for employees aged over 55.
40.10.3.1.2.1 40.10.3.1.2.2 40.10.3.1.2.3 40.10.3.1.2.3	Insurance for work accidents	The insurance of work injuries covers accident prevention, therapy, occupational medical care, rehabilitation, provision of prostheses and orthopaedic aids as well as disability and survivors' benefits. The insurance of work injuries grants pensions after work accidents and occupational diseases which may be payable in addition to a pension from the pension insurance. Payment rates depend on the degree of disability and on the income level during the year prior to the accident.
40.10.3.1.4.1	Sickness benefits	These expenditures are paid through the " <i>Soziale Krankenversicherung</i> ". The mandatory expenditure is paid by employers for the first 6 to 12 weeks of sickness. They are rather included in "Sick leave paid by the employer". Up to and including 1994 data for "Sick leave paid by the employer" are estimates based on 1993 data from the sickness insurance institutions. Generally the legally stipulated minimum time period is 52 weeks. According to the insurance funds' statute, however, the sickness benefit can be extended to 78 weeks.
40.20.3.1.4.1	Sick leave paid by the employer	See 40.10.3.1.4.1 above.

40.10.3.1.4.2	Institutions for the assistance for sick people	There is statutory entitlement for employees and civil servants to paid leave from work when they have to nurse a sick family member (spouse or cohabite, children adopted or foster children, parents or grandparents) residing in the same household. Within one year, employees are entitled to a total of one week of paid nursing leave.
4.	HEALTH	
40.10.4.2.0.0	Public expenditure on health	See <i>OECD Health Data 2003</i> .
5.	FAMILY	
40.10.5.1.1.1	Child benefit (tax system)	Family allowance is a universal benefit for children. It also covers adopted children, step-children and foster children. Foreigners resident in Austria are similarly entitled to family allowance upon completion of a waiting period.
40.10.5.1.2.1 and 40.10.5.1.2.2	Maternity/parental leave benefits and aid at child birth	Maternity benefit is granted by the health insurance institution for employed mothers or a temporary help allowance for self-employed mothers. These benefits are granted for eight weeks before and after giving birth (12 weeks in case of premature and multiple births). Parental leave benefit is the main income replacement payment available to dependent workers and civil servants who intend to personally provide care for their children after the maternity allowance period. Aid at child birth (birth grant) was cancelled in general as from 1997; residual amounts from 1998 onwards are for special cases.
40.10.5.2.1.1	Child day care (Kindergarten)	In order to help parents to be gainfully employed, the Public Employment Service grants a child care subsidy to low income parents which contributes towards the cost of child care. The benefit is financed by the unemployment insurance system. It is under the responsibility of the Länder.
6.	ACTIVE LABOUR MARKET PROGRAMMES	
		See OECD Labour Market Policy database.
40.10.6.0.5.1	Training and mobility support	Subsidies for job facilities provided for disabled people are awarded, namely if immediate employment is obstructed by a lack of facilities on the job. In addition, there are grants for travel expenses, job interviews, removal, for apprenticeships and vocational preparation.
7.	UNEMPLOYMENT	
40.10.7.1.1.1	Unemployment benefits	The minimum qualifying period for the first spell of unemployment is 52 weeks of insurance within the last 24 months. For unemployed persons under the age of 25, the qualifying period is 26 weeks within the last 12 months.
40.10.7.1.1.2	Means-tested assistance	It is granted subsequent to unemployment benefit in the event of long-term unemployment and is payable indefinitely. It is 92 % of the unemployment benefit, plus any family allowances taking the income of the spouse or partner into account. It includes benefit for unemployed lone-parents " <i>Sondernotstandshilfe</i> ".
40.10.7.1.1.3	Bad-weather compensation (for shelter)	A specific Austrian problem in comparison with other industrialised countries is the over proportional level of the unemployment rate in seasonal industries and sectors (agriculture and forestry, construction, hotel and catering).
40.10.7.1.2.1	Early retirement for labour market reasons	Early retirement pension on grounds of unemployment are payable to men who reached the age of 60 and women aged 55 or more, at the condition that the beneficiary has worked for at least 15 years at the time of retirement and has received unemployment benefit for at least one year before reaching the age limit.
8.	HOUSING	
40.10.8.1.1.1	Rent subsidy	They are aimed at securing a basic standard. For these benefits, the income limits are usually higher than for the financial benefits to secure a livelihood under social assistance.
9.	OTHER SOCIAL POLICY AREAS	

40.10.9.0.0.0 Other social expenditure

In each Landër basic rates (Richtsätze) are fixed for food, maintenance of clothes, personal hygiene, heating and lighting, smaller household appliances and personal needs of an appropriate education and the participation in social life. The need which is not covered by the basic rate (accommodation, clothing, etc.) is to be covered by supplementary cash benefits or benefits in kind. The general conditions vary from one land to another: some do not refer to nationality while another grant full social assistance only to Austrian residents.