

Austria

Exchange rate: US\$1.00 equals 0.80 euros (€).

Old Age, Disability, and Survivors

Regulatory Framework

First laws: 1909 (salaried employees) and 1939 (wage earners).

Current laws: 1955 (employees) and 1979 (self-employed).

Type of program: Social insurance system.

Coverage

Wage earners and salaried employees (separate systems with essentially identical provisions) earning €16.54 or more a month, and apprentices.

Special systems for miners, notaries, public-sector employees, and self-employed persons in trade and agriculture.

Source of Funds

Insured person: 10.25% of earnings.

Employer: 12.55% of payroll.

Government: Any deficits and the cost of care benefit and income-tested allowance.

The maximum earnings for contribution and benefit purposes are €3,450 a month. (The maximum earnings for contribution and benefit purposes are adjusted annually.)

Qualifying Conditions

Old-age pension: Age 65 (men) or age 60 (women), with 180 months of insurance coverage in the last 30 years, 300 months of insurance, or 180 months of contributions.

Early pension: Age 61.5 (men) or 56.5 (women) with 45 years of insurance (men) or 40 years of insurance (women) and with monthly earnings of €16.19 and below and under certain other conditions. The age requirement will be increased by 1 month per quarter beginning July 1, 2004. (The early pension will be phased out gradually by October 1, 2017.)

Deferred pension: A deferred pension is possible.

Reciprocity or international agreement is required for payments abroad beyond 2 months, except in member states of the European Union.

Disability pension: The loss of 50% of earning capacity compared with an insured person with a similar level of education. Must have 60 months of contributions (plus 1 month for each month from age 50) in the last 10 years (plus 2 months for each month from age 50), 300 months of insurance, or 180 months of contributions. The qualifying conditions are relaxed for persons aged 57 or older.

Partial pension: A partial pension is paid if monthly earnings are above €21.11.

Survivor pension: The insured met the insurance or contribution requirements for a disability pension or was a pensioner at the time of death.

Old-Age Benefits

Old-age pension: The benefit accrues at 1.96% of the assessment base for each year of insurance.

The assessment base is equal to revalued average earnings in the best 16 years, up to an annual maximum of €3,013.22. (The assessment period will be increased gradually by 12 months per year until it reaches 40 years in 2028.)

Early pension: The benefit is reduced by 4.2% for each year it is awarded before age 65 (men) or age 60 (women), up to a maximum of 15%.

Deferred pension: The pension is increased by 4.2% for each year of deferral.

The maximum pension is 80% of the assessment base (up to 91.76% for a deferred pension).

Child's supplement: €29.07 for each child under age 18 (age 27 if student, no limit if disabled).

Income-tested allowance: An amount to raise the pension to €553.19 a month for an individual; €1,015 for a married couple, plus €69.52 for each child for which a person receives a child's supplement.

Schedule of payments: Fourteen payments a year.

Benefit adjustment: Benefits are adjusted annually (newly granted pensions are first adjusted in the second calendar year after the year of receipt of the pension).

Care benefit: Pensioners in need of personal care may be entitled to a monthly benefit varying from €145.40 up to €1,531.50 (in 7 levels) depending on the amount of care required. The benefit is paid 12 times a year.

Permanent Disability Benefits

Disability pension: The benefit accrues at 1.96% of the assessment base for each year of insurance. If the insured is younger than age 60, insurance coverage is projected to age 60 for benefit calculation purposes.

The assessment base is equal to revalued average earnings in the best 16 years, up to an annual maximum of €3,013.22. (The assessment period will be increased gradually by 12 months per year until it reaches 40 years in 2028.)

The maximum pension is 60% of the assessment base.

Child's supplement: €29.07 for each child under age 18 (age 27 if student, no limit if disabled).

Income-tested allowance: An amount to raise the pension to €553.19 a month for an individual; €1,015 for a married couple, plus €69.52 for each child for which a person receives a child's supplement.

Schedule of payments: Fourteen payments a year.

Benefit adjustment: Benefits are adjusted annually (newly granted pensions are first adjusted in the second calendar year after the year of receipt of the pension).

Care benefit: Pensioners in need of personal care may be entitled to a monthly benefit varying from €145.40 up to €1,531.50 (in 7 levels) depending on the amount of care required. The benefit is paid 12 times a year.

Survivor Benefits

Survivor pension: A widow(er) receives up to 60% of the insured's pension. (Rates under 60% may be increased to 60%, depending on the beneficiary's total income.)

Income-tested allowance: An allowance to raise the survivor pension to €53.19 a month.

Orphan's pension: 40% of the survivor pension (60% if a full orphan) for each orphan under age 18 (age 27 if student, no limit if disabled).

Income-tested allowance: An allowance to raise the orphan's pension to €243.95 a month (€66.28 for a full orphan); after age 24, the allowance raises the orphan's pension to €433.48 a month (€53.19 for a full orphan).

Schedule of payments: Fourteen payments a year.

Benefit adjustment: Benefits are adjusted annually (survivor pensions of insured persons whose old-age pension was first granted in 2004 or after are first adjusted during the second calendar year after the year of receipt of the survivor pension).

Care benefit: Pensioners in need of personal care may be entitled to a monthly benefit varying from €145.40 up to €1,531.50 (in 7 levels) depending on the amount of care required. The benefit is paid 12 times a year.

Administrative Organization

Federal Ministry of Social Security, Generations, and Consumer Protection provides general supervision.

Pension insurance institutions administer pensions (separate institutions for railroads, mining, and the self-employed).

Self-governing institutions are managed by elected representatives of insured persons and employers.

Sickness funds collect contributions, transmit them to pension insurance institutions, and maintain contribution records for individual workers.

Special funds equalize surpluses and deficits between various systems.

Sickness and Maternity

Regulatory Framework

First law: 1888.

Current laws: 1955 (employees), 1960 (maternity), 1974 (cash benefits for wage earners), and 1979 (self-employed).

Type of program: Social insurance system. Cash and medical benefits.

Coverage

Employed persons earning €16.19 or more a month, apprentices, and pensioners.

Special systems for public-sector and railway employees and the self-employed in agriculture and trade.

Source of Funds

Insured person: 3.9% of wages (wage earners), 3.7% of salary (salaried employees), or 4.35% of pension (pensioners).

Employer: 3.5% of payroll (wage earners) or 3.7% of payroll (salaried employees).

Government: 70% of cash maternity benefits.

The maximum monthly earnings for contribution and benefit calculation purposes are €3,450. (The maximum earnings for contribution purposes are adjusted annually.)

Qualifying Conditions

Sickness and maternity benefits: Currently in covered employment.

Sickness and Maternity Benefits

Sickness benefit: The employer pays 100% of earnings for up to 12 weeks (plus an additional 4 weeks at 50%), depending on length of service.

After the right to full benefit from the employer is exhausted, sickness funds pay 50% (60% after 6 weeks) of covered earnings (25% to those receiving 50% of earnings from the employer), plus eventual family supplements (depending on the regulation of the sickness fund) for 26 to 52 weeks, depending on the length of the contribution period.

The maximum benefit is 75% of covered earnings.

Maternity benefit: 100% of earnings for 8 weeks before and 8 weeks after the expected date of childbirth (12 to 16 weeks after childbirth in special cases).

Workers' Medical Benefits

Service benefits are ordinarily provided by doctors, hospitals, and pharmacists under contract with and paid directly by sickness funds; some funds operate their own clinics or hospitals. Benefits include medical (including psychotherapy), maternity, and dental care; hospitalization; medicines; appliances; home care; preventive examinations; and transportation.

Cost sharing: Patients pay €4.35 per prescription, part of the cost for dental care, and up to 20% of the cost of appliances. Cost sharing is at least €23 for appliances. Exceptions are made for patients with limited means.

There is no limit to duration.

Dependents' Medical Benefits

Same as for the insured but with 10% cost sharing during the first 4 weeks of hospitalization. The wife of an insured man receives the same maternity care as an insured woman.

Administrative Organization

Federal Ministry of Social Security, Generations, and Consumer Protection performs general supervision.

Nine district and eight occupational sickness funds administer contributions and benefits.

Special funds for railroad, mining, and public-sector employees and the self-employed.

Self-governing institutions are managed by elected representatives of insured persons and employers.

Work Injury

Regulatory Framework

First law: 1887.

Current law: 1955.

Type of program: Social insurance system.

Coverage

Employed and self-employed persons, apprentices, and students.

Special system for public-sector employees.

Source of Funds

Insured person: None.

Self-employed person: A flat-rate contribution of €3.16.

Employer: 1.4% of payroll.

Government: Federal government contributes to accident insurance for farmers.

The maximum monthly assessment base per employee for contribution and benefit calculation purposes is €3,450. (The maximum earnings for contribution purposes are adjusted annually.)

Family Allowances Equalization Fund reimburses the General Accident Insurance Fund for accident insurance of students.

Qualifying Conditions

Work injury benefits: There is no minimum qualifying period.

Temporary Disability Benefits

The insured receives sickness benefit until a decision on permanent disability is made. For sickness benefit, the employer pays 100% of earnings for up to 12 weeks (plus additional 4 weeks at 50%), depending on length of service.

After the right to full benefit from the employer is exhausted, sickness funds pay 50% (60% after 6 weeks) of covered earnings (25% to those receiving 50% of earnings from employer).

The maximum benefit is 75% of covered earnings.

Permanent Disability Benefits

Permanent disability pension: The full pension (66.6% of the assessment base) is paid for a 100% reduction in earning capacity.

Partial pension: A proportionately reduced pension is payable with at least a 20% reduction in earning capacity.

The assessment base is equal to average covered earnings during the last year before the onset of disability.

Supplementary pension: 20% of the disability pension for a reduction in earning capacity of 50% to 70%; 50% if the reduction is higher.

Child's supplement: 10% of the disability pension for a 50% or higher reduction in earning capacity for each child under age 18 (age 27 if a student, no limit if disabled).

The maximum supplement is €76.31 a child.

The combined total disability pension, supplementary pension, and children's supplements cannot exceed 100% of the assessment base.

Schedule of payments: Fourteen payments a year.

Benefit adjustment: Benefits are adjusted annually.

Care benefit: Those in need of personal care may be entitled to a monthly benefit varying from €45.40 up to €1,531.50 (in 7 levels) depending on the amount of care required. The benefit is paid 12 times per year.

Workers' Medical Benefits

Comprehensive care, including rehabilitation (the first 4 weeks are provided under sickness insurance), and allowances for training and relocation.

Survivor Benefits

Survivor pension: 40% of the assessment base is paid to a widow aged 60 or older (widower aged 65 or older) or disabled. Other widow(er)s receive 20% of the assessment base.

Orphan's pension: 20% of the assessment base for each orphan (30% for a full orphan) under age 18 (age 27 if a student, no limit if disabled).

The assessment base is equal to average earnings during the last year before death.

The combined total survivor and orphan's pension cannot exceed 80% of the assessment base.

Schedule of payments: Fourteen payments a year.

Benefit adjustment: Benefits are adjusted annually.

Other survivor benefits: Partial reimbursement of funeral and transportation costs (at least €79.79).

Administrative Organization

Federal Ministry of Social Security, Generations, and Consumer Protection performs general supervision.

General Accident Insurance Institution administers long-term benefits (separate institution for railway employees, public-sector employees, and the agricultural self-employed).

Sickness funds collect contributions and transmit them to accident insurance institutions.

Unemployment

Regulatory Framework

First law: 1920.

Current law: 1977.

Type of program: Social insurance system.

Coverage

Employed persons earning €16.19 or more a month and apprentices.

Exclusions: Public-sector employees and the self-employed.

Source of Funds

Insured person: 3% of earnings.

Employer: 3% of payroll.

Government: Any deficit.

The maximum monthly earnings for contribution and benefit purposes are €3,450. (The maximum earnings for contribution and benefit purposes are adjusted annually.)

Qualifying Conditions

Unemployment benefit: Twenty-eight weeks of contributions in the last 12 months; 52 weeks in the last 24 months for a first claim to benefit. (The reference period is extended for specified periods, including sickness, unemployment, and noninsured employment.) The insured must be registered at an employment office and be capable of and willing to work. Unemployment is not due to voluntary departure without good reason, misconduct, work stoppage, or the refusal of a suitable offer, in which case disqualification usually lasts 4 weeks.

Unemployment Benefits

55% of net earnings is payable for up to 20 weeks. The payment of benefit can be extended to 30 weeks (with 156 weeks of insurance in the last 5 years); to 39 weeks (aged 40 or older with 312 weeks of insurance in the last

10 years); to 52 weeks (aged 50 or older with 468 weeks of insurance in the last 15 years); or to 78 weeks (certain groups of older workers with 780 weeks of insurance in the last 25 years).

The minimum benefit is €4.08 a day.

The maximum benefit is €7.52 a day.

Dependents' supplement: 1/30 of €29.07 a day for each dependent, but the total benefit including the base amount cannot be more than 80% of net earnings.

Emergency assistance: According to the number of dependents, 92% to 95% of unemployment benefit is payable to unemployed citizens without time limit when the insurance benefits are exhausted.

Administrative Organization

Federal Ministry of Social Security, Generations, and Consumer Protection performs general supervision.

Regional offices of the labor market service administer benefits and offer job-seeking services.

Family Allowances

Regulatory Framework

First law: 1948.

Current law: 1967.

Type of program: Universal system.

Coverage

Permanent residents with one or more children. (Noncitizens are eligible if employed for more than 3 months or resident for at least 5 consecutive years.)

Source of Funds

Insured person: None. (A portion of the land tax is allocated to finance family allowances for the agricultural self-employed.)

Employer: 4.5% of payroll.

Government: States contribute €1.74 a year for each inhabitant. A portion of federal tax receipts is transferred to the Family Allowances Equalization Fund.

Note: Federal government, states, and municipalities with more than 2,000 inhabitants pay family allowances out of their own budget but do not pay employer contributions.

Qualifying Conditions

Family allowances: Child must be under age 18; under age 26 if a student, in vocational training, or severely disabled.

Family Allowance Benefits

Family allowances: €105.40 a month for the first child under age 3, €112.70 for the first child between ages 3 and 9, €130.90 for the first child between ages 10 and 18, and €152.70 for the first child from age 19.

Each of these amounts is increased by €12.80 for the second child and by €25.50 for the third and each subsequent child.

Severely disabled child supplement: A supplement of €38.30 for a severely disabled child.

Administrative Organization

Federal Ministry of Social Security, Generations, and Consumer Protection administers the program through the Family Allowances Equalization Fund attached to the Ministry.

Tax administration pays allowances directly to recipients; surpluses are accumulated in a reserve fund.

Separate organization for public-sector employees (federal government, states, and municipalities with more than 2,000 inhabitants pay family allowances out of their own budget).