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## EU-Representation of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber



The Voice of Austrian Businesses in Brussels

## The EU-Representation of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber (WKÖ)

The EU-Representation of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber (Wirtschaftskammer Österreich – WKÖ) within the Permanent Representation of Austria to the EU was founded in 1989. Being amongst the initiators of the accession process of Austria to the EU, WKÖ has always considered the European integration as a priority and therefore supported it actively. Since Austria joined the EU in 1995, the role of WKÖ has become even more important. The EU-Representation of WKÖ is an integral part of the Austrian diplomatic representation, a fact that definitely facilitates the relations with the European Institutions. This unique position of WKÖ's EU-Representation also ensures the necessary permanent contact with all other departments at the Austrian Permanent Representation (federal ministries, social partners, representations of the Austrian regions, cities, communes, and the National Bank) in order to represent the interests of the Austrian business community.

The EU-Representation serves as the interface between WKÖ and the European Institutions and cooperates with the most important business associations at European level. The EU-Representation maintains extensive relations with the relevant Commission services and with the members of the European Parliament. In addition, the EU-Representation can profit from a vast network of colleagues working at the European Institutions and business associations.

Technically and organisationally the EU-Representation is part of the European Policy Coordination Department of WKÖ. Nevertheless, the EU-Representation does not only follow the assignments of the European Policy Coordination Department, but provides services and assistance to the whole chamber organisation, i.e. all divisions and policy departments of WKÖ. Thus, the team of the EU-Representation does at all times have a comprehensive grasp of the current European issues which affect the Austrian economy.

## Offered Services

### Proactive representation of interests

- Early identification of EU-plans relevant for Austrian businesses and tailor-made reporting to the WKÖ-departments
- Active representation of WKÖ-positions vis-à-vis EU-institutions
- Collaboration within European associations and cooperation with national partner associations in Brussels
- Provision of a network of relevant decision-makers and cooperation-partners at EU-level
- Case-related interventions for Austrian businesses (internal market barriers, projects etc.)
- Supply of Know-How for an optimal representation of WKÖ-members interests at EU-level

### Information, advice and support

- General information on the EU (policies, procedures, institutions, contact persons etc.)
- Specialised information related to EU-law (e.g. internal market barriers, infringement procedures)
- Supplying information and support on EU subsidies and calls for tenders
- Organisation of sector seminars with regard to the participation of Austrian companies at external aid programmes
- Providing EU documents (e.g. Council, Commission, Parliament, Court of Justice)
- Serving as interface between WKÖ-organisation, EU-institutions and European associations

### Active and understandable EU-communication

- Daily and targeted preparation of information to the WKÖ-organisation on EU-policies
- Newsletter (EU-Today and EU-Panorama) on developments relevant for Austrian businesses
- Contributions to journals of the regional chambers, trade journals etc.
- Lectures on EU-topics
- Press, Communications and Public Relations in Brussels (press conferences, background information, events etc.)

### Training Programmes and Internships

- Development and realisation of training programmes in Brussels for Chamber staff and Trainees

## WKÖ-Network in Brussels

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