

Directorate-General for the Presidency
 Directorate for Relations with National Parliaments

Factsheet: The Austrian Federal Council



1. At a glance

Austria is a federal republic and a parliamentary democracy. The Austrian Parliament is a bicameral body composed of the National Council (Nationalrat) and the Federal Council (Bundesrat).

The 61 Members of the Federal Council are delegated by the nine regional parliaments (Landtage) and represent the interests of the regions (Länder) in the federal legislative process. They need not necessarily be Members of the regional parliament that delegates them, but they must in principle be eligible to run for elections in that region. The overall number of Members of the Federal Council is linked to the population size of the regions. The biggest region delegates twelve, the smallest at least three members.

The Presidency of the Federal Council rotates every six months between the nine regions in alphabetic order. It is awarded to the Federal Council Member who heads the list of Members established by her or his region.

In most cases, the National Council issues federal legislation in conjunction with the Federal Council. However, with some rare exceptions the Federal Council only has a so-called “suspensive” veto right. The National Council can override a challenge by the Federal Council to one of its resolutions by voting on the resolution again.

2. Composition

Composition of the Austrian Federal Council			
	Party	EP affiliation	Seats
	Österreichische Volkspartei (ÖVP) Austrian People's Party		22
	Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreichs (SPÖ) Social Democratic Party of Austria		21
	Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs (FPÖ) Freedom Party of Austria		15
	Die Grünen The Greens		3
			61

3. Officeholders

President of the Federal Council  Mr Robert Seeber (ÖVP/EPP), since 1 January 2020	Chairperson of the EU Affairs Committee  Mr Christian Buchmann (ÖVP/EPP), since 12 October 2018
Secretary General of the Austrian Parliament: Mr Harald Dossi, since 1 March 2012 Director of the Federal Council: Ms Susanne Bachmann, since 1 November 2006	

4. Relations with Members of the European Parliament

Participation rights for Austrian MEPs in plenary sittings	Yes (<i>"The President can, after consultation of the Conference of Presidents, give speaking rights to the Members of the European Parliament elected in Austria for all deliberations of the Federal Council and its committees that are dedicated to EU topics, and can set the duration and form of the speaking rights."</i>)
Participation rights for Austrian MEPs in committee meetings	Yes (Austrian MEPs have the right to attend the deliberations of the EU Affairs committee in an advisory capacity; for other committees, see above)
Availability of videoconferencing system in Austrian Federal Council	No

5. Information links

- Official website: <http://www.parlament.gv.at>
- [Rules of procedure in English](#)
- [List of committees](#)
- [Documents submitted to the Interparliamentary EU Information Exchange \(IPEX\)](#)
- [European Parliament Information Office in Vienna](#)

6. Contacts

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Last updated on 08/01/2020. Photo credits: Austrian Parliament.