

THE CHAMBER OF LABOUR

WHO WE ARE,
WHAT WE DO.

7 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**AK
INFORMATION**
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membership
contribution

AK

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Die Ratgeberreihe der AK Wien



STRONG SUPPORT

WHY IS THE CHAMBER OF LABOUR IMPORTANT?

We are always on hand to stand up for employees' rights and defend workers' interests on the political stage. Because all workers have rights. This is why we take steps to ensure that employees' interests are not overlooked.

wien.arbeiterkammer.at/immernah



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Who makes up the Chamber of Labour?

Think of the Chamber of Labour (AK) as a kind of lawyer for working people. We're there for you in case you have legal difficulties at work or in everyday life.

1

What does the AK do?

Your boss won't pay you? You've been sacked for no reason? Or you're not given any time off? Then you can come to us for advice.

And best of all:

It doesn't cost a penny extra – every employee is automatically an AK member – and they can all take advantage of the AK's comprehensive range of services.



We provide advice and support in almost all life situations – every year we talk to more than two million people about problems at work, with apprenticeships or with the public employment service (AMS). We help workers whose employer has gone out of business, who have been taken for a ride by companies when shopping, or who are having trouble with rental contracts.

2

Why is the AK important?

We're always on hand to stand up for employee rights

For many years, there simply wasn't anyone who helped to make employees' lives better. Just to give you a few examples: from the right to a minimum of five weeks' annual holiday to parental and carer's leave – the AK, in collaboration with the trade unions, fought for many of the rights that we now take for granted.



Our experts take a very close look at what the law says, providing expert opinions, drafting proposals for legislation and safeguarding key labour rights for our members. Because fair working conditions and a highly developed welfare state must not be taken for granted.

If you go to work, you have certain rights – but they aren't always respected. And when this happens, it's important that the AK is on hand to provide support.

3

Who are the AK's members?

Am I a member?

Basically, anyone in employment is a member

So besides salaried and non-salaried workers, this includes people in mini-jobs and on freelance contracts, workers on parental leave, the unemployed*, apprentices, and people doing national or civilian national service.

*If you were in employment for more than a year or if you received unemployment benefit for a longer period.

4


How long has the Chamber of Labour been in existence?

For more than a century

The AK was officially founded on 26 February 1920. And over the next hundred years, we'll always be there, fighting to protect and strengthen the rights of all workers.

5

What does the term “interest group” mean?



The AK is referred to as an interest group, because all of our work is aimed at protecting employees' interests.

Together, not alone

When it comes to safeguarding regulated working hours, fair working conditions or the right to paid holidays, it's hard to get things done on your own.

This is where interest groups can help. They stand up for shared interests, fight to achieve improvements and defend people's rights. Employees are represented by the Chamber of Labour and the Austrian Trade Union Federation (ÖGB).

6

Why do we need the Chamber of Labour (AK) and the Austrian Trade Union Federation (ÖGB)?

One team, two focuses

The Chamber of Labour ...

has extensive knowledge. We look closely at what the law says, carry out studies, and provide advice and support in almost all life situations. Every year we talk to more than two million people about problems at work or with apprenticeships or rental contracts, as well as helping workers whose employer has gone out of business. Are you facing racial or sex discrimination? We can help you as well. And if the worst comes to the worst, we can even represent you in court.

The trade unions ...

cooperate directly with works councils – in other words, they work very closely with employees. If necessary, they can also organise strikes. Year after year, they take action to ensure that employees receive better pay and working conditions. And this is exactly what happens in negotiations on collective agreements. The facts and figures in AK reports also provide vital support.

7

What are the AK elections?

A vote for social justice

Every five years, AK members all over Austria take part in secret, direct elections to choose their representative assembly – just like parliamentary elections. The candidates come from different political

parties or groups. Your vote sets the direction that the chambers will head in.

Why is it important to vote in the Chamber of Labour elections?

If more people cast their vote in the AK elections and tell us that they like what we do, the AK can make its voice heard more clearly. And that's a bonus for all workers.



All AK members can vote, regardless of their nationality – an important difference compared to Austrian parliamentary elections.

Important information

You can download copies of the latest Federal Chamber of Labour publications at wien.arbeiterkammer.at/publikationen.

You can also order copies by contacting us directly:

- E-mail: mitgliederservice@akwien.at
- Order hotline: +43 (0)1 50165 1401

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THE AK – ALWAYS THERE WHEN YOU NEED US

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Watch our videos? Or get to know more
about us on social media? Feel free to look
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