



The Red-White-Red Card and the Blue Card-EU Criteria-guided immigration of qualified workers

A. Red-white-red card

The red-white-red card is a residence title for third country nationals with certain qualifications. The main requirement is a **matching job offer in Austria**. The red-white-red card will be issued for 2 years and binds the employee to a certain employer. After 2 years it is possible to change to the free labour market if the employee was employed for at least 21 months.

5 different groups of workers are eligible for the red-white-red card:

1. Personnel with particularly high qualification

Persons are considered particularly highly qualified if they achieve at least **70 out of 100 points** on a scoring system (**see Annex A**). If a person with particularly high qualification finds an occupation appropriate to this qualification, the red-white-red card may be granted.

Highly qualified persons without a job offer also may apply for a visa D at the competent Austrian embassy if they can provide evidence of this qualification. If this visa D is granted, the person may enter Austria for 6 months to search for employment.

2. Other key personnel

Persons who achieve at least **55 out of 90 points** on a scoring system (**see Annex C**) may obtain the red-white-red card, as they are considered other key personnel.

Prerequisite is an offer of employment.

Key personnel have to earn at least **€ 3.465 gross** 14 times a year. The red-white-red card may be denied if persons with the same qualification who may be placed in this position are registered with the Public Employment Service Austria (AMS).

3. University graduates who studied in Austria

University graduates (bachelor, master or PHD studies) who have found an occupation corresponding to their level of education may be granted the red-white-red card if they get paid the locally customary gross minimum salary which comparable Austrian graduates (junior employees) would receive.

4. Personnel for occupations with skilled labour shortage

There is a yearly regulation containing a list of occupations with skilled labour shortage. Persons who achieve at least **55 out of 90 points** on a scoring system (**see Annex B**) and have been trained in one of the listed occupations may obtain the red-white-red card. Prerequisite is an employment in this occupation for a wage in accordance with the Collective Agreement or the remuneration otherwise customary in this sector.

Link to the list of occupations with skilled labour shortage:

Austria-wide occupations with labour shortage in 2026:

<https://www.migration.gv.at/de/formen-der-zuwanderung/dauerhafte-zuwanderung/bundesweite-mangelberufe/>

Regional occupations with labour shortage in 2026:

<https://www.migration.gv.at/de/formen-der-zuwanderung/dauerhafte-zuwanderung/regionale-mangelberufe/>

Regular Workers in Tourism, Agriculture and Forestry

A person that has been working as a seasonal worker may apply for a Red-White-Red Card as a Regular Worker in the fields of Tourism, Agriculture or Forestry, if

- he/she has been employed for at least 7 months in the last two years as a Regular Seasonal Worker in the same industry,
- he/she can proof German language skills at A1 level,
- he/she received a binding job offer for permanent employment by the respective employer

B. Blue card – EU

This residence title is granted to persons with at least tertiary qualification after a three years' study programme, or proof of at least three years of relevant professional experience as information and communications technology professionals and service managers, if they have found an employment appropriate to their education with a gross income of at least **€ 3.977**, 14 times a year, and if no persons with the same qualification are registered as job-seekers with the Public Employment Service Austria. The blue card – EU will be issued for 2 years and binds the employee to a certain employer. After 2 years it is possible to change to the free labour market if the employee was employed for at least 21 months.

C. Procedural provisions on red-white-red card and blue card -EU:

Applications for a red-white-red card or blue card-EU are filed at the competent Austrian embassy abroad. If a qualified worker is already legally staying in Austria (visa-free residence, visa D for searching work or residence title for university graduates), the application may also be filed in Austria at the competent immigration office, (in Vienna: Municipal Department 35, Business Immigration Office).

Applicant is the qualified worker him-/herself, a written declaration by the future employer has to be attached. The application may also be filed in Austria by the future employer. The procedure may take a maximum period of 8 weeks.

D. Family members

Family members (spouses, minor, unmarried children) receive a “red-white-red card - plus” with free access to the labour market. Family members of workers from group 2,3 ,4 and 5 have to prove their knowledge of German of level A1 already at the moment of filing the application (exempt are minors younger than 14 or persons with certain previous knowledge or school-leaving certificates).

Eligibility criteria for skilled workers	Points
Qualification	Maximum allowable points: 30
Completed vocational education/training in the shortage occupation	30
Work experience matching one's qualification	Maximum allowable points: 20
Work experience (per half-year)	1
Work experience in Austria (per half-year)	2
Language skills	Maximum allowable points: 25
Elementary use of the German language on a basic level (A1 level)	5
German language skills for the intensified elementary use of the language (A2 level)	10
German language skills for the independent use of the language (B1 level)	15
English language skills for the intensified elementary use of the language (A2 level)	5
English language skills for the independent use of the language (B1 level)	10
French language skills for the independent use of the language (B1 level)	5
Spanish language skills for the independent use of the language (B1 level)	5
Bosnian, Kroatian or Serbian language skills for the independent use of the language (B1 level)	5
Age	Maximum allowable points: 15
Up to 30 years of age	15
Up to 40 years of age	10
Up to 50 years of age	5
Sum total of maximum allowable points:	90
Additional points for English language skills, when English is the predominant language of the respective company	5
Required minimum:	55

Eligibility criteria for key workers	Points
Qualification	Maximum allowable points: 30
Completed vocational education/training or special know-how or skills* in the prospective occupation	20
General eligibility for university admission	25
Completion of a programme of studies with a minimum duration of three years at an institution of tertiary education	30
Work experience matching one's qualification	Maximum allowable points: 20
Work experience (per half-year)	1
Work experience in Austria (per half-year)	2
Language skills	Maximum allowable points: 25
Elementary use of the German language on a basic level (A1 level)	5
German language skills for the intensified elementary use of the language (A2 level)	10
German language skills for the independent use of the language (B1 level)	15
English language skills for the intensified elementary use of the language (A2 level)	5
English language skills for the independent use of the language (B1 level)	10
French language skills for the independent use of the language (B1 level)	5
Spanish language skills for the independent use of the language (B1 level)	5
Bosnian, Kroatian or Serbian language skills for the independent use of the language (B1 level)	5
Age	Maximum allowable points: 15
Up to 30 years of age	15
Up to 40 years of age	10
Sum total of maximum allowable points:	90
Additional points for English language skills, if English is the predominant language of the respective company	5
Bonus points for professional athletes and professional sports coaches	20
Required minimum:	55

Eligibility criteria for very highly qualified persons	Points
Special qualifications and skills	Maximum allowable points: 40
Graduation from an institution of higher education, minimum duration of programme: four years	20
- in the subjects mathematics, informatics, natural sciences or technology (MINT subjects)	30
- Post-doctoral qualification (habilitation) or PhD	40
Gross salary of previous year earned in a senior management position with a company listed on the stock exchange or a company for which the Austrian foreign trade office in charge issued a positive report about its activities or business segment:	
- €50,000 to 60,000	20
- €60,000 to 70,000	25
- More than €70,000	30
Research and innovation activities (Patent applications, publications)	20
Awards (recognised prizes)	20
Work experience (adequately reflecting applicant's qualification or senior management position)	Maximum allowable points: 20
Work experience (per year)	2
Six months of work experience in Austria	10
Language skills	Maximum allowable points: 10
German or English language skills for the elementary use of the language on a basic level – (A1 level)	5
German or English language skills for the intensified elementary use of the language – (A2 level)	10
French language skills for the independent use of the language – (B1 level)	5
Spanish language skills for the independent use of the language – (B1 level)	5
Bosnian, Croatian or Serbian language skills for the independent use of the language – (B1 level)	5
Age	Maximum allowable points: 20
Up to 35 years of age	20
Up to 40 years of age	15
up to 45 years of age	10
Studies in Austria	Maximum allowable points: 10
Second part of diploma programme (Diplomstudium) or half of the required total ECTS points	5
Completed diploma programme (Diplomstudium) or Bachelor's and Master's degree programme	10
Sum total of maximum allowable points:	100
Required minimum:	70

ATTENTION: Since the provisions at hand have been presented in a very abridged version, we kindly ask you to obtain detailed information from competent authorities or advice centres. In spite of careful examination mistakes can happen, therefore no guarantee for details contained in this information can be assumed.

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