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Research intensity expected to be 3.34% in 2024

Around 16.6 billion euros will be spent on research in Austria this year

Vienna, 2024-04-24 – According to Statistics Austria’s estimate, €16.6 bn will be used in Austria for research and development (R&D), which corresponds to a research intensity of 3.34% measured as a share of the nominal gross domestic product (GDP).

For 2023, the estimate is at 3.26%, and for 2022 3.18%. In 2021, 3.26% of Austrian gross domestic product was spent on research and development. The decline in the research intensity from 2021 to 2022 can be explained by the sharp increase in gross domestic product that followed the pandemic-driven slump from 2020 to 2021. Due to the economic and political upheavals of recent years (pandemic, war in Ukraine, high inflation), there were greater fluctuations in GDP growth. Nominal GDP fell by 4.1% from 2019 to 2020, then rose by 6.4% in 2021, by 10.4% in 2022, and by 6,7% in 2023. A nominal increase of 4.6% is expected for 2024. Research expenditure was less volatile than economic output in the Covid years, which resulted in fluctuating research intensities.

Research expenditure in Austria has increased sharply in the long term. In 2004 the research quota was 2.17%, and in 2014 the EU target of 3% was achieved for the first time at 3.08%.

Sharp rise in public research funding

R&D expenditure is funded from a wide variety of sources. The government sector is expected to spend almost €5.6 bn in 2024, accounting for 34% of R&D funding and 10% more than in 2023. Government research funding had already increased by 14% in nominal terms from 2022 to 2023. In 2024, the largest share of this will come from the federal government (“Bund”) at €4.6 bn, while the regional governments (“Länder”) will contribute around €700 mn to R&D funding. In 2024, 51% of R&D expenditure in Austria is expected to be funded by enterprises (€8.4 bn). The R&D funding of enterprises also includes the reimbursements of the research premium, which the Federal Ministry of Finance estimates at €1.0 bn for 2024. €2.6 bn (16%) will be funded from abroad, mainly by companies whose subsidiaries conduct R&D in Austria.

Third largest research intensity for Austria within the EU

For international comparisons, preliminary data for 2022 is available. Austria had the third highest R&D intensity within the EU in 2021 (3.18%), only surpassed by Belgium (3.43%) and Sweden (3.40%). The European target of an R&D intensity of at least 3% was also met by Germany (3.13%), while Finland (2.95%) and Denmark (2.89%) remained just below. The EU average, however, lies considerably below this self-imposed target (2.24%). Thus, research expenditures in the EU were still significantly lower than in other economic areas: In 2021, South Korea spent 4.93% of the gross domestic product on research, the USA 3.46%, Japan 3.34% and Switzerland 3.31%. China’s R&D intensity 2020 amounted to 2.41% and was therefore also higher than in the EU-27.

Gross domestic expenditures on R&D and research intensity in Austria 1993 to 2024

Year	Gross domestic expenditures on R&D in million Euro	Gross domestic expenditures on R&D as % of GDP
1993	2 303.3	1.45
1998	3 399.8	1.73
2004	5 249.6	2.17
2006	6 318.6	2.36
2007	6 867.8	2.42
2009	7 479.8	2.60
2011	8 276.3	2.67
2013	9 571.3	2.95
2014	10 275.2	3.08
2015	10 499.2	3.05
2016	11 145.0	3.12
2017	11 289.8	3.06
2018	11 912.0	3.09
2019	12 441.2	3.13
2020	12 199.0	3.20
2021	13 225.5	3.26
2022	14 236.6	3.19
2023	15 580.4	3.26
2024	16 643.7	3.34

S: STATISTICS AUSTRIA. – Gross domestic expenditures on R&D: Final figures until 2021, from 2022 estimated values.

For detailed results and further information please refer to our [website](#).

Information on methodology, definitions: The global estimate of gross domestic expenditure on R&D (GERD) is based on results from R&D surveys as well as other currently available documents and information, particularly the R&D-relevant budget appropriations and final outlays of the federal government (“Bund”) and the regional governments (“Länder”), preliminary trends of the innovation survey 2022, and the latest macro-economic forecasts. Expenditures on and funding for expenditures on R&D performed in Austria is presented according to the definitions of the Frascati Manual of the OECD. Reimbursements from the R&D tax incentive (“research premium”) are, in line with the recommendations of the Frascati Manual, considered as funding by the business enterprise sector. Data for the years 1993, 1998, 2004, 2006, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, 2015, 2017, and 2019 are results from detailed R&D surveys among R&D performing institutions, which are usually conducted every two years. Values for the remaining years are estimates based on information which was available at the time of the respective estimate.

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