

NON-EEA DRIVING LICENCES IN AUSTRIA

Driving licences issued by non-EEA¹ countries are subject to restricted validity in Austria. Licences from some countries *) may not be used at all. If you stay in Austria for a longer period or become a resident, your licence needs to be exchanged for an Austrian one. These rules also apply to Austrian citizens who own a non-EEA licence.

Validity

If you are **not a resident of Austria**, your non-EEA driving licence is **valid for 12 months** from the date on which you enter the country if you are 18 or over.

If you become a **resident of Austria**, your non-EEA driving licence is **valid for 6 months from the date on which you become a resident** if you are 18 or over. After these 6 months you may not make use of your licence anymore.

If your national driving licence is in German or divided into classes A to E, you may make use of your foreign driving licence within Austria without the need of a translation.

If your licence is neither in German, nor divided into classes A to E it is only valid in combination with an International Driving Permit from your home country or a translation which explains the extent of your licence (available e.g. at ÖAMTC).

Driving licences from the following countries² are not recognized in Austria:

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Afghanistan, Angola, Antigua & Barbuda, Equatorial Guinea, Belize, Bermuda, Bhutan, Bolivia, Burundi, Cayman Islands, China (incl. Taiwan), Cook Islands, Costa Rica, Dominica, Djibouti, Eritrea, Eswatini (formerly Swaziland), French Guyana, French Polynesia, Gabon, Gambia, Grenada, Guadeloupe, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Indonesia, Yemen, Virgin Islands (American and British), Cameroon, Kiribati, Colombia, Comoros, Libya, Marshall Islands, Martinique, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mayotte, Micronesia, Montserrat, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nauru, Nepal, Caribbean Netherlands, New Caledonia, Nicaragua, North Korea, Panama, Puerto Rico, Reunion, Solomon Islands, Zambia, Samoa (American), Samoa (West), Sao Tome & Principe, Somalia, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and Grenadine, Sudan, South Sudan, Suriname, Tanzania, Timor-Leste (East Timor), Tonga, Chad, Tuvalu, Vanuatu.

Licences from these countries **cannot be used for driving** within Austria, therefore you are not allowed to drive a hire car with such a licence. An **exchange** for an Austrian licence however is **still possible**.

¹ The following countries are members of the EEA: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden.

² This list is subject to permanent change and does not claim to be complete.

How does the exchange work?

A foreign driving licence can be exchanged for an Austrian licence at all driving licence authorities throughout Austria. Depending which country your licence is from, in addition to a medical test a driving exam may be required for the exchange.

Driving licences from the following non-EEA countries are considered equivalent to driving licences issued in Austria and can therefore be exchanged for an Austrian licence **WITHOUT having to take a knowledge or driving test**:

For all classes: Albania, Andorra, Gibraltar, Guernsey, Isle of Man, Japan, Jersey, Kosovo, Monaco, Montenegro, San Marino, Switzerland, Serbia, UK of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

For class B: Australia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Hong Kong, Israel, New Zealand, Republic of North Macedonia, Republic of South Africa, Republic of South Korea (if the driving licence was issued after 1 January 1997), United Arab Emirates, USA.

Holders of driving licences from these countries only need a medical certificate.

Holders of driving licences from other non-EEA countries need a medical certificate and must take a practical test for which a fee is charged. The exam must be taken for each driving licence class.

When exchanging a non-EEA licence, the authority will investigate if any facts militate against the issue of an Austrian licence. Such an enquiry may take a few weeks.

The non-EEA driving licence is handed in to the authorities. You can pick up the new driving licence in credit card format at the authority or have it sent to you by post. The exchange costs €60.50 (excluding test fee).

If you exchange your licence **without a driving test** you will **not** be **allowed to drive** within Austria **until your new licence is issued**. If you successfully passed one or more driving tests during the exchange procedure, you will be issued a 'temporary driving licence' until your full Austrian licence is available. This will allow you to drive vehicles in Austria for a maximum of 4 weeks.

What other evidence is required?

The applicant needs to provide evidence of principal residence or a minimum stay of 6 months in the issuing country at the time their non-EEA licence was issued. This proof will not be requested if the licence owner is a citizen of the issuing country and already held the driving licence when setting up residence in Austria.



Which authority is responsible for driving licence exchange?

- The Police Directorate in each Bundesland (Landespolizeidirektion) or, in Vienna, the Motor Vehicle Department (Verkehrsamt), or
- The district administrative authority (Bezirkshauptmannschaft or Magistrat).

Which documents are required by the authorities?

- Driving licence application (Führerscheinantrag)
- Passport (Visa) or other official identity document with a photo
- Medical certificate (ärztliches Gutachten), no older than 18 months
- non-EEA driving licence
- “Klassifizierung”* (= classification) of the non-EEA driving licence (available from ÖAMTC – free of charge for members, € 27,40 for non-members). Not required for Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, Switzerland or Turkey.
- Residence registration form (Meldezettel)
- One passport photo (35 x 45 mm)

* The classification serves to harmonize the foreign driving license categories with the European categories. Most foreign driving licenses can be classified at all ÖAMTC branches. **If the driving license is not written in Latin script or the German alphabet, a translation by a sworn translator must be provided.**

Please note: Some authorities may require additional documents or photocopies. Authorities in Vienna require the original documents plus photocopies: 2 copies each of driving licence and passport (pages with photo and visa), 1 copy of the residence registration form.

Before you come to the ÖAMTC, please ask your driving license authority whether an ÖAMTC classification is accepted or whether you also need a translation by a sworn translator. This is handled differently by the authorities throughout Austria.

Important notes:

If a vehicle is driven without a valid driving licence, liability insurance may in the event of a traffic accident reclaim any payments made to the victim up to € 11.000 from the driver and the owner of the vehicle. A non-EEA licence is invalid if the holder fails to exchange it for an Austrian licence within 6 months of becoming a resident. If the vehicle is lent to another person, the owner must make sure that the driver is in possession of a valid driving licence. To drive a moped, a moped driving licence is required.



Motorised vehicles (powered vehicles faster than 10 km/h or e-bikes faster than 25 km/h) may only be used on roads in Austria if they have been registered with the authorities and display licence plates.

Important notes on registering a vehicle:

- A vehicle can only be registered to persons whose main residence is in Austria.
- Insurance companies run registration offices (Zulassungsstellen) which are responsible for handling the official registration of vehicles. Vehicles must be registered at the place of your main residence: this is the place where you are ordinarily resident (it is important that you register as a resident at the local municipal authorities).

To register a vehicle, you need:

- Proof of legal ownership of the vehicle (e.g. purchase or donation agreement)
- Confirmation that liability insurance (Haftpflichtversicherung) has been taken out
- A valid identity document with a photograph (please note: a residence entitlement card (Aufenthaltsberechtigungskarte)/white card is not proof of identity)
- Since the vehicle must be roadworthy and in good mechanical condition, a valid technical inspection certificate ('§ 57a-Gutachten' by an authorised garage or ÖAMTC) must be presented.
- The cost of registering a vehicle is approx. €190.

Change of main residence within Austria:

If you move you must contact the local registration office, which will issue amended registration documents. If the new residence is located in a different political district, the vehicle must be re-registered with the local authority of this district. In all events, your insurance company must also be notified of any change of address.

The above information was collected and put together with great care, however we cannot accept any responsibility for its accuracy or completeness.

