



Austria

Giving the green light to innovation

Austria’s welcoming approach to new technologies earns the country a spot in the top tier, as one of this year’s Innovation Champion.

Austria earned high marks on research and development. Spending more than three percent of GDP, the country devoted a higher share to R&D than most countries, including Germany and the United States.

While drones in Austria face some headwinds due to government rules, other measures help offset these burdens on the growing industry. Apart from some location limitations, recreational operators can fly their drones widely. At the same time, license requirements for drones over 25 kilograms hamper their widespread adoption.

Commercial drone operations have already begun to take off, however. In Graz, Amazon has set up a development site to fine tune the technology it needs to send a fleet of delivery drones into the air.

Austria has also begun preparing for the development and widespread use of self-driving vehicles. In 2016, the Federal Ministry for Transportation released guidelines for self-driving vehicles, and a road map for how the country can support research and development in this rapidly growing sector.

Sources: (FFG) (The Verge)

WHAT DID WE DO RIGHT?

Austria has increased R&D investment to a total of 3.1 percent of GDP. It has also laid out a road map for research into self-driving vehicles and a national regulatory framework for testing and development.

WHAT CAN WE DO BETTER NEXT YEAR?

Austria should ease the way for up-and-coming businesses. Among the European countries graded, Austria ranks last for new business creation, with an annual new business entry rate of 1 per 1,000 people.

Diversity	B
Freedom	A
Broadband	A-
Human Capital	B+
Tax Friendliness	C
R&D Investment	A
Entrepreneurial Activity	B-
Drones	C
Ridesharing	C-
Short-Term Rentals	B
Self-Driving Vehicles	A
Environment	B



Broadband

Average monthly internet speeds of 13.8 mbps are supported by affordable service, with an average monthly cost of \$12.35.



R&D Investment

Spends more than three percent of its GDP on research and development activities — more than most other countries ranked in the Scorecard.



Self-Driving Vehicles

In 2016, the Austrian Ministry of Transport released guidelines for how the government can best integrate self-driving vehicles onto the country's roads.



Short-Term Rentals

Federal rules largely allow short-term rentals to operate freely, but restrictions — like those in Vienna — require hosts to register with the city government.

VIENNA

Vienna embraced the integration of information and communication technology in 2011 with its Smart City Wien initiative, and has since made the industry a focus of its long-term planning.

The ICT industry already makes up a significant portion of the city's economy, adding four times the value of the local tourism industry and accounting for more than 50,000 jobs. The Smart City program places ICT at the heart of future development for the city, with plans to focus on the industry for decades and goals for business and residential development through 2050.

Then, in 2013, the Aspern Smart City Research program launched to test the integration of technology into everyday life. The project ultimately hopes to identify technological solutions to urban energy needs by testing smart buildings, grids and the integration of ICT infrastructure, among other efforts.

Aside from the citywide initiatives, local organizations have played a role in promoting physical connections via technology. Vienna-based TTTech provides systems for organizations including NASA and Boeing, and the company recently received a €75 million investment from Samsung as part of the Korean company's push to develop self-driving vehicles.

Sources: (Invest in Austria) (Reuters) (Ciriec) (Wien) (IEEE) (ASCR)

Vienna has cemented its commitment to the information and communication technology sector through initiatives like the Aspern Smart City Research program, which tests ICT and smart city products to identify technological solutions to urban energy needs.

