



Federation of European Accountants
Fédération des Experts comptables Européens

FEE Qualification and Market Access Working Party

Structure and Organisation of the Accountancy Profession

Key features

Austria

Status: March 2012

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Flag:



Population:

approx. 8,000,000

Capital:

Vienna

Languages:

German

In the EU since: 1995



Institut Österreichischer Wirtschaftsprüfer (IWP): <http://www.iwp.or.at/Seiten/default.aspx>

Kammer der Wirtschaftstreuhänder (KWT): <http://www.kwt.or.at>

| Professions ¹⁾ | Wirtschaftsprüfer (Chartered accountant and auditor) | Steuerberater (Tax consultant) |
|---------------------------|--|---|
| Protected title | Yes | Yes |
| Reserved activities | <p>§ 5 (1) WTBG²⁾</p> <p>The persons entitled to independently practise the profession of chartered accountant and auditor are reserved to do such <i>Wirtschaftstreuhaender</i> work explicitly referred to in other statutes with the explicit provision that it may only be validly carried out by chartered accountants and auditors.</p> | <p>§ 3 (1) WTBG</p> <p>The persons entitled to independently practise the profession of tax advisor are reserved the right to carry out the following activities:</p> <p>1.counselling and assistance in the field of tax law and accounting, 2.counselling in the field of balance sheets and preparation of financial statements/closing of commercial books of account and records, 3.representation in tax proceedings and administrative penalty proceedings concerning federal, provincial and local taxes, levies and charges and in subsidy matters before the finance authorities, the other Gebietskoeperschaften [federal, provincial and local authorities] and the Independent Administrative Panels; here reference to the authority granted replaces evidence by documents, 4.carrying out of auditing tasks which do not require a formal audit certificate and written reporting thereon and 5.drawing up of expert opinions in the fields of bookkeeping and balance sheets, tax law and in the fields where the giving of an opinion requires knowledge in the field of accounting and business economics.</p> |

¹⁾ in addition, accounting professions also include Bilanzbuchhalter*, Selbständige Buchhalter**, Gewerbliche Buchhalter**, Lohnverrechner**, Personalverrechner** - see Bilanzbuchhaltungsgesetz (BibuG)

*) may alternatively choose membership to Wirtschaftskammern Österreich (WKO, Austrian Federal Economic Chamber)

**) mandatory membership to WKO

²⁾ Wirtschaftstreuhandberufsgesetz, WTBG

| Professions ¹⁾ | Wirtschaftsprüfer (Chartered accountant and auditor) | Steuerberater (Tax consultant) |
|--------------------------------|---|---|
| Included authorisations | <p>§ 5 (2) WTBG²⁾</p> <p>In addition, the persons entitled to independently practise the profession of chartered accountant and auditor are entitled to carry out all activities laid down under Article 3. (authorisations steuerberater)</p> <p>Furthermore, they are entitled to represent entities in tax proceedings and administrative penalty proceedings before the Supreme Administrative Court and they may, in such proceedings, also sign the complaint and the petitions for a new trial and restoration of the previous condition.</p> | <p>§ 3 (2) WTBG</p> <p>In addition, the persons entitled to independently practise the profession of tax advisor are entitled to carry out the following activities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.all activities described under Article 2, 2.all consultancy services and activities in connection with operational accounting and counselling regarding establishing and organisation of an internal controlling system, 3.counselling in matters relating to contribution payments, insurance and services of the social security institutions and representation in the first and second instance of the respective administrative proceedings, 4.counselling on reorganisation, in particular the preparation of reorganisation opinions, organisation of reorganisation plans, examination of reorganisation plans and accompanying control in the implementation of reorganisation plans, 5.counselling in legal matters to the extent they are directly related to the Wirtschaftstreuhaender work to be carried out for the same principal, 6.counselling and representation before statutorily recognised churches and religious communities in matters concerning contribution payments, 7.representation before the institutions of the labour office, the professional organisations, the provincial tourism associations and before other authorities and agencies in charge of business matters to the extent they are directly related to the Wirtschaftstreuhaender work to be carried out for the same principal, 8.acting as escrow agent and administration of property with the exemption of the management of buildings and 9.counselling in work-related technical issues. |

¹⁾ in addition, accounting professions also include Bilanzbuchhalter*, Selbständige Buchhalter**, Gewerbliche Buchhalter**, Lohnverrechner**, Personalverrechner** - see Bilanzbuchhaltungsgesetz (BibuG)

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²⁾ Wirtschaftstreuhandberufsgesetz, WTBG

| | Wirtschaftsprüfer | Steuerberater |
|-----------------------------|---|--|
| Regulated profession | Yes | Yes |
| Supervision | Yes | Yes |
| Competent authority | <p>Kammer der Wirtschaftstreuhänder (KWT, Chamber of Public Accountants)</p> <p>Arbeitsausschuss für externe Qualitätsprüfungen (AeQ, working committee for external quality audits)</p> <p>Qualitätskontrollbehörde (OKB, Austrian Auditors Supervisory Authority)</p> | <p>Kammer der Wirtschaftstreuhänder (KWT, Chamber of Public Accountants)</p> |

| | Wirtschaftsprüfer | Steuerberater |
|--|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| No. of qualified professionals³⁾ | 2.711 (individuals and firms) | 6.202 (individuals and firms) |
| No. of new trainees per year | not available | not available |
| Total number of trainees | 2.658 | |

³⁾ as of 1 January, 2011

| | Wirtschaftsprüfer | Steuerberater |
|--|---|---|
| General initial education steps (without possible exemptions) | <p>§ 16 WTBG</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ University or equivalent degree ➤ Three years of training in auditing (for Steuerberater two years of training in auditing) ➤ Professional examination | <p>§ 14 WTBG</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ University or equivalent degree ➤ Three years of training in tax advising ➤ Professional examination or ➤ Nine years practice as Selbständiger Buchhalter bzw. Bilanzbuchhalter ➤ Professional examination |

Market access

resident professionals

| | Wirtschaftsprüfer | Steuerberater |
|---|--|---------------------------------|
| Registration required | Yes | Yes |
| Competent authority for registration | KWT (plus AeQ for statutory auditors) | KWT |
| Cost of appointment/ registration | € 285,90 for the deed (public fee acc. to Gebührengesetz) Based on Neugründungs-Förderungsgesetz (NeuFöG): none | |
| Oath required | Yes (Beeidigung) | Yes (Angelobung) |
| Insurance required | Yes | Yes |
| Professional address required | Yes – in EU or EEA (European Economic Area) Member State | Yes – in EU or EEA Member State |

Market access

professionals from other EU Member States

Temporary provision of non-audit services*

| | |
|--|--|
| Pro-forma declaration | None (§ 231 WTBG) |
| Requested data | None, but some obligation for information to be provided to the client |
| Requested documents | None |
| Competent authority | In country of EU Member State |
| Factual checks | N/a |
| Standard form | N/a |
| Compliance with host Member State rules | Some are applicable e.g. insurance required |

* Not relevant for statutory audit services

Market access

professionals from other EU Member States

Establishment of Statutory Auditors

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Required procedure | Aptitude test (§ 232 WTBG, A-QSG) |
| Infrastructure | Yes (§ 232 WTBG, A-QSG) |
| Professional address | Yes, in EU or EEA Member State (§ 232 WTBG, A-QSG) |
| Competent authority | KWT, AeQ |

Aptitude test

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Competent authority | KWT |
| Frequency | On demand |
| Form | 2 written exams + oral exam |
| Main Subjects | Acc. to Art 3 Abs 1 lit h RL 2005/36 EG written: general doctrine of law, fiscal law Oral: among others professional law, quality assurance |
| Language | German |
| Repetition | Yes (see § 23 WTBG) |
| Statistics | Not available |

Market access

professionals from other EU Member States

Establishment of other accountants not providing statutory audit

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Compensation measure | <p>Aptitude test (§ 232 Abs 6 WTBG)</p> <p>Aptitude test or adaptation period (§ 101 BibuG)</p> |
| Competent authority | KWT |
| Procedure | <p>Aptitude test (see § 232 Abs 6 WTBG)</p> <p>Aptitude test or adaptation period (see § 101 BibuG)</p> |

Market access professionals from Third Countries

Establishment of Statutory Auditors

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Required procedure | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Acquirement of Austrian license acc. to the general stipulations for official appointment and recognition in WTBG 2. Acquirement of a quality assurance licence and registration in the register for statutory auditors |
| Infrastructure | Yes |
| Professional address | Yes |
| Competent authority | KWT, AeQ and QKB |

Aptitude test

| | |
|----------------------------|-------|
| Competent authority | ➤ N/A |
| Frequency | ➤ N/A |
| Form | ➤ N/A |
| Main Subjects | ➤ N/A |
| Language | ➤ N/A |
| Repetition | ➤ N/A |
| Statistics | ➤ N/A |

Market access

professionals from Third Countries

Establishment of accountants not providing statutory audit

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Compensation measure | N/A |
| Competent authority | KWT |
| Procedure | Acquirement of Austrian license acc. to the general stipulations for official appointment and recognition in WTBG |

Professional Bodies

| | Title | Title |
|----------------------------|---|--|
| Professional bodies | ➤ IWP - Institut Österreichischer Wirtschaftsprüfer (FEE member body) | ➤ KWT - Kammer der Wirtschaftstreuhänder (FEE member body) |

| | IWP | KWT |
|------------------------------------|---------------|--|
| Membership | Voluntary | Mandatory |
| No. of members | ~ 900 | Total as of 1 January 2011 (individuals and firms): Wirtschaftsprüfer: 2.711 Steuerberater: 6.202 Bilanzbuchhalter (+ selbständige BH): 1.457 |
| Institute staff | 3 (Headcount) | 33 full time and 9 part time |
| Date of establishment | 1952 | 1947 |
| Local branches | No | 6 Regional offices |
| Subject to public oversight | No | YES |
| Oversight authority | n/a | Federal Ministry of Economy, Family and Youth (BMWFJ) |

Involvement in Qualification and Market Access

| | IWP | KWT |
|---|-----|--|
| Initial education | No | YES via Akademie der Wirtschaftstreuhänder (Academy of Chartered Accountants and Tax Advisers) |
| Examination | No | YES |
| Approval and registration | No | YES |
| Continued Professional Development | No | YES via Akademie der Wirtschaftstreuhänder (Academy of Chartered Accountants and Tax Advisers) |

Activities

| | IWP | KWT |
|--|-----|---|
| Standard setting | Yes | Yes, as overseen by BMWFJ* *§ 145 (5) WTBG |
| Quality assurance (as defined by Statutory Audit Directive of 2006) | No | No (provided by AeQ and QKB) |
| Disciplinary measures | No | Yes (besides disciplinary measures of AeQ and QKB for quality assurance), |
| Representation of interests | Yes | Yes |