

DRŽAVNI ZAVOD ZA STATISTIKU
REPUBLIKE HRVATSKE
CROATIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS

INTERESTING POINTS

Zagreb, 26 June 2018

The country in the geographical heart of the European Union takes over the presidency of the EU Council

While Croatia is awaiting its first presidency of the Council of the European Union (hereinafter: the EU), which will start on 1 January 2020, some countries have already played this role several times. One of them is Austria, which on 1 July 2018, will take over for the third time the leading position in the EU Council, which was founded back in 1958 to improve legislation. Austria will thus take over the task of chairing meetings in the EU Council and representing the EU Council in other EU institutions for six months.

Since Croatia and Austria have had strong relations throughout history, we have decided to present you the old-new presiding country of the EU Council.

“Identity card”

Austria, whose official name is Österreich, which translates as eastern border area, is geographically located in the heart of Europe, as evidenced by the fact that it borders with eight countries: Germany, the Czech Republic, Liechtenstein, Switzerland, Italy, Slovenia, Hungary and Slovakia. Austria extends over 82.4 thousand km²¹ and according to the population estimate, at the beginning of 2017, it had 8.8 million inhabitants², thus making 1.7%³ of the total EU population. According to the 2016 data on population density, Austria had 105.9 inhabitants per square kilometre⁴. Official language is German and it is also the easternmost country belonging to the German speaking area. It is interesting that Austria has one of the oldest national flags in the world and it has been using the euro as official currency since 1999.

Finally, it is important to mention the living standard. One of the indicators is certainly the gross domestic product (GDP), which amounted to 42 thousand euros per capita in Austria in 2017. For comparison, GDP in Croatia amounted to 11.7 thousand euros⁵ in the same year.

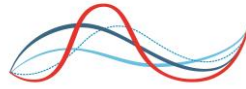
¹ Eurostat: <https://bit.ly/2ISCF2r>

² Eurostat: <https://bit.ly/20QTgsn>

³ Eurostat: <https://bit.ly/1MbycOb>

⁴ Eurostat: <https://bit.ly/1JNBipS>

⁵ Eurostat: <https://bit.ly/1SXqlUH>



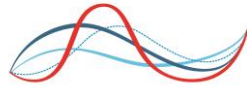
The second EU country by the number of Croatian immigrants

Strong relations between Croatia and Austria have lasted for many years. It is partly due to our interconnected history, but also cultures. Ever since the time we belonged to the same country, Croatian citizens often emigrated to Austria. The trend has continued in recent years. Among the EU Member States, Austria is the second country, after Germany, by the number of Croatian immigrants. During 2016, Austria has welcomed more than 2 thousand Croatian citizens, which accounts for 7.6% of the total number of Croatian citizens who emigrated into some of the EU countries. However, although to a much smaller extent, the emigration of Austrian citizens to Croatia has also been recorded. In 2016, a total of 124 Austrian citizens emigrated to Croatia. It is interesting that, according to the last, 2011 Census of Population in Croatia, 297 persons declared themselves Austrians and 380 persons stated that they have Austrian citizenship.

Austrians – our faithful guests

Although the data from the 2011 Census show that a relatively small number of Croatian citizens declared themselves Austrians, there are times when the presence of Austrian citizens in Croatia is much higher. We are talking about the arrival of tourists from Austria, who have proven to be our faithful guests, whose number is on the rise. In 2017, they recorded 1.3 million arrivals, which is 8.2% more than in the previous year. In 2017, as compared to 2016, there was also an increase in the number of nights by 7.5%, which leads to the number of almost 7 million tourists from Austria who stayed overnight in Croatia in 2017. The average number of nights per arrival of tourists from Austria in 2017 was 5.3.

For their vacation in Croatia, Austrians prefer destinations in the County of Istria and the County of Primorje-Gorski kotar. The County of Istria was the most popular among Austrian tourists in 2017. Namely, 48% of all tourist nights realised by Austrian tourists in Croatia were realised in Istria (3.3 million nights), and the total number of arrivals of Austrian tourists increased by 600 thousand. At the same time, Austrian tourists realised 332 thousand arrivals and 1.7 nights in the County of Primorje-Gorski kotar, which is 24% of the total nights realised by tourists from Austria. The largest share of Austrians spending their vacation in Croatia (41% of the total realised nights) chose to stay in hotels and similar accommodation (2.9 million nights).



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As in migrations, a reciprocal movement of population in tourism is noticeable. The citizens of Croatia are very happy to travel to Austria and in 2017, it was the first choice of domestic population for one-day trips abroad organised by Croatian travel agencies and the second choice for trips with overnight stays.

It should also be noted that in 2017, a total of 353 thousand passengers were recorded between Croatian and Austrian airports.

Trade in goods also on the rise

Apart from the movement of population, either permanently or tourist, Croatia and Austria are also connected by economic ties, primarily in terms of trade in goods. In 2017, as compared to 2016, Croatia's export to Austria was 10.2% higher, while import in the same period also increased, by 4.4%. Observing the value in kuna, Croatia's export to Austria amounted to 6.6 billion kuna in 2017, while the total value of import from Austria to Croatia amounted to 12.4 billion kuna.

At the end of this brief statistical overview of Croatian and Austrian relations, it should be noted that these are not the only areas in which these two countries cooperate. The former impact on the development of education, the international recognition in 1992 and the establishment of diplomatic relations, as well as current economic, cultural and scientific cooperation are just one of the indicators that the new country holding the presidency of the EU Council is a very important partner for Croatia.

Good luck, Austria!