

International Report – Austria

October/November 2026

1. Healthcare Reform in Austria – Current Developments and Implications for Medical Training

The Austrian healthcare reform aims to safeguard public healthcare in the long term, improve access to medical services, and align care more closely with patients' needs. Its main priorities include strengthening the office-based care sector, expanding primary care, improving coordination between hospital-based and office-based care, and ensuring the long-term financial sustainability of the solidarity-based healthcare system.

Key areas of reform

- Strengthening outpatient care: Expanding primary healthcare units (PHUs), group practices, and multiprofessional care models to improve access to medical services and ease the burden on hospital outpatient departments.
- Reform of hospital structures: Improving coordination between inpatient and outpatient care and distributing medical services more appropriately according to need.
- Funding and governance: Increasing joint planning and coordination by the federal government, the Länder, and social health insurance, as well as providing additional funding to expand public healthcare.
- Digitalisation and prevention: Expanding digital health services, improving care coordination, and placing greater emphasis on health promotion and preventive care.

2. Shortening of Basic Training

On 29 July 2026, the 2026 amendment to the Medical Practitioners Act was promulgated, introducing, among other things, the following changes:

- The option of counting time spent in the Clinical Practical Year („KPJ“) towards basic training was abolished (with retroactive effect from 1 June 2026).
- Basic training was generally shortened from nine to six months, effective 1 August 2026.

3. Increasing Waiting Times for PGT Posts

Waiting times for training posts are a significant issue in relation to entering the profession and pursuing a medical career. Whereas doctors were in short supply just a few years ago, the situation has now reversed. The Austrian Medical Chamber (ÖÄK) is receiving numerous complaints from medical university graduates who are unable to obtain training posts.

The ÖÄK is currently analysing this phenomenon and raising it with policymakers, calling for a guarantee of training places for graduates of Austrian medical universities. Politicians (particularly Social Democratic politicians) are calling for a compulsory work obligation.

Longer waiting times can delay the start of training, create uncertainty in career planning, and make workforce planning more difficult.

4. Training Evaluation – Fourth Round and Results

The fourth round of the training evaluation provided an opportunity to systematically record medical training conditions once again and assess how training quality has developed across several survey periods.

The response rate was over 60%.

This time, the module questions focused on onboarding and the choice of training institution.

All results are fully available online at: <https://www.aerztekammer.at/ausbildungsevaluierung>

The results of the module questions are available at: https://www.aerztekammer.at/documents/d/content-pool/260916_prasentation_ausbildungsevaluierung-2026 (German version only)

5. Senior Physicians' Survey – Second Round

The second round of the senior physicians' survey (starting 5 October 2026) aims to systematically record the current situation, concerns, and needs of department heads in hospitals and compare them with the results of the first survey.

This year, the questionnaire also addresses the use of AI, as well as discrimination and abuse of power.

The aim is to identify developments, highlight existing problem areas, and derive concrete approaches for further advocacy work.

6. Discrimination and Abuse of Power in Everyday Medical Practice

The Austrian Medical Chamber (ÖÄK) and the BKAÄ are currently addressing the issues of discrimination and abuse of power in the medical environment intensively.

This work focuses in particular on how to deal with discriminatory behaviour, hierarchical dependencies, and abuse of power in medical practice and during medical training.

A survey of all doctors in Austria may be planned.

Dr.CS / 28th September 2026