

The 1919-1920 Definitive Issue: the lower values

In 1919, the Republic of German Austria had just been proclaimed. Its first postage stamp issue consisted of Austrian Empire stamps diagonally overprinted with **Deutschösterreich**. The young Republic believed that its future lay in uniting with Germany, and the Allies didn't finalise the Treaty of St Germain until 10 Sept 1919. Article 88 of the Treaty effectively forbade any such union and resulted in the dropping of Deutschösterreich on 1 Jan 1922.

So, a new issue of stamps (and postal stationery) was required, depicting the new country's German-Austrian aspirations. On 12 July 1919, the Postal Gazette PTVOB030 appeared, consisting almost entirely of Decree Nr 85 dated 11 July and entitled *Ausgabe neuer Postwertzeichen* (Issue of new postage stamps). The lower values, 3 heller to 1 krone, had designs (described in detail) of a Posthorn, an Allegory, or the State Arms; the designation Deutschösterreich was in an arc at the top *in German writing in gothic characters*. The Decree carefully added that unnecessary values could be withdrawn and new ones added as required. The new stamps would become available at counters etc as the old ones ran out. Mixed Franking was thus allowed, and is indeed found; the valuation depends on the mixture! Consult Kroiss pp 59-61.

The designs chosen for this first issue also had obvious Republican connotations. The currency was still stable enough for heller values to have some validity and the low values, up to and including 1 Krone, were in three designs, all produced by Josef Franz Renner, a professor at the Academy of Graphic Art in Vienna. They depicted variously a post horn, the single headed eagle of republican Austria, and a worker planting a tree as a symbol of the New Republic. Professor Renner also included the words "Deutschösterreich" in the design. The higher values (2 to 50 Kronen) are the "Parliament" stamps, described separately.



The stamps were printed by typography. The heller values were issued comb perf 12½; values 5, 10, 15, 25, 30, 40 & 60 heller were also issued imperforate. Because of the economic conditions of the times, some of the heller values perforated 12½ were also printed on a thick grey paper (10, 15, 20 and 50 heller values only) as well as on normal white paper. The red 1 Krone value was printed on yellow paper as standard. Some of the imperforate values were perforated privately, but these are relatively scarce and well worth keeping a sharp look-out for. Untrimmed part-sheets can be found; the specimen illustrated shows the plate edge bars and a nail-head mark. Numerous plate faults can be found in the catalogues (eg 92 in the 2022/23 Netto!) The issue was valid until 31 July 1922; it could be used as official supplementary franking till 30 September 1922.

ANK	Face	Colour (s)	Issued	Number
255	3h	light grey; grey; dark grey; <i>black-grey; grey-black</i>	July 1919	25,251,000
256	5h	green	July 1919	28,913,000
257	5h	light grey; <i>dark grey; black-grey</i>	Jan 1920	9,933,000
258	6h	orange; reddish-orange	July 1919	2,747,000
259	10h	dark rose	July 1919	??
260	10h	red; also on grey paper	Jan 1920	22,737,000
261	12h	green-blue; <i>dark-green-blue</i>	July 1919	2,481,000
262	15h	khaki; also on grey paper	Jan 1920	23,550,000
263	20h	dark-green	July 1919	118,687,000
264	20h	green; also light-green on grey paper	Jan 1920	82,788,000
265	25h	dark-blue; <i>light-blue; deep-blue</i>	July 1919	2,344,000
266	25h	violet	Jan 1920	48,231,000
267	30h	brown; red-brown	July 1919	3,126,000
268	40h	violet	July 1919	3,721,000
269	40h	dark-rose	Jan 1920	97,008,000
270	45h	olive	July 1919	2,323,000
271	50h	dark-blue; steel-blue; also dark-blue & black-blue on grey paper	July 1919	6,900,000
272	60h	olive; dark-brown-olive	Jan 1920	17,256,000
273	1Kr	red	July 1919	15,295,000
274	1Kr	light-blue; dark-blue; <i>deep-blue</i>	Jan 1920	17,802,000

Notes: the colours in italics are rare (hence expensive). Issue dates from Kroiss.



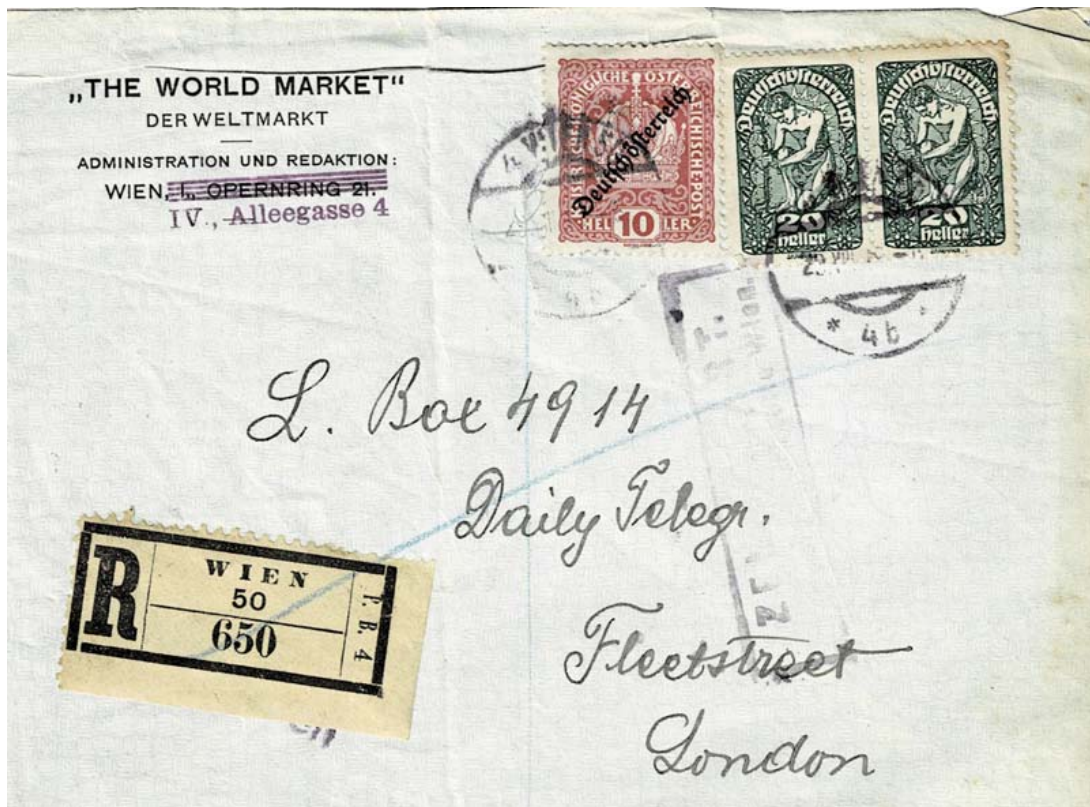
The imperforate stamps are tabulated next; some of the colours are different from the same-face-value perf stamps. All imperf's were issued on 20 January 1920, to match a postage rates rise. They were printed on white paper (although when that was unobtainable a variety of other papers were used!).

ANK	Face	Colour(s)	Number
275	5h	Green	3,240,000
276	5h	Grey	10,200,000
277	10h	Carmin	6,600,000
278	10h	Red	21,120,000
279	15h	Khaki	7,680,000
280	25h	Violet	9,200,000
281	30h	dark-brown; light-brown	14,313,000

282	40h	Violet	7,320,000
283	60h	Olive	7,700,000



Examples



Mixed overprinted and 1919 issues on a faintly-censored registered letter from Vienna to the Daily Telegraph in London.



A similar mixture uprating a postcard to Finland.