

The Republic of German Austria: The 1919 overprinted issues

For the first issue of the new Deutschösterreich state, **Deutschösterreich** was overprinted diagonally in typography on the then current Imperial issues. This overprint was not however applied to the remainders as happened in the successor states: since the State Printing Works in Vienna still possessed the original printing plates the original stamps continued to be produced and used, initially without overprints.

Post- und Telegraphen-Verordnungsblatt Nr. 67.

Nr. 67. Ausstattung der Postwertzeichen.

Bis zur Ausgabe neuer Postwertzeichen werden die gegenwärtig geltenden Brief-, Gil-, Zeitungs- und Portomarken, Postkarten und Kartenbriefe mit dem Aufdruck „Deutschösterreich“ versehen.

Die bereits im Verkehr stehenden Postwertzeichen ohne Aufdruck werden aufgebraucht.

Wien, den 2. Dezember 1918.

Post Office Decree PTOB 67 dated 2 Dec 1918 (reproduced in its entirety above!) states that new deliveries of previously-valid letter, express, newspaper and dues stamps will have the overprint "Deutschösterreich" applied; existing stock may be used up as it is. The orientation of the imprint is not specified in the decree.



The 1919 overprinted definitives

Kroiss (see refs) quotes "Die Postmarke, Nov 1919" where it is written that there was considerable philatelic speculation in these overprints; and that the 4Kr and 10Kr, reportedly issued in April & May respectively, had sold out. He gives no dates for their first known usage. Another journal, the D-Ö Briefmarkenzeitung, stated that the perforators in the State Printing Works were fully booked to produce the Renner series (named after their designer; see later) so could not produce enough of the high value overprints.

The normal perforation for all values is 12½ comb for the typographed values up to 1Kr, 12½ line for the recess-printed higher values. The 2 Kronen stamp exists in both vertical and horizontal pairs with the centre imperf. The 80h and 1Kr values are known with an inverted overprint, but the main variety (on the 35th and also on the 100th stamp in the sheet) is the broken 's' in *Österreich* which occurs on all the heller values with the exception of the 25 and 40 heller. Rarely, missing-, double-, and inverted-overprints are found. Trial horizontal overprints were produced on the 3h & 15h, but these were unsatisfactory.

The original 2, 3, 4 & 10 Kronen stamps were printed both in 'wide' and 'tall' formats, 25x30mm and 26x29mm respectively – it depended on which way the pre-dampened sheet was placed into the printing press.

The overprints were applied only to Kronen stamps on granite paper, all bar the 10Kr being only on the 'tall' stamps. There are three sub-varieties of the 2 Kronen value: greyish blue perf 12½; dark blue perf 12½; and greyish blue perf 11½. There are two sub-varieties of the 4 Kronen value: yellow-green perf 12½ and perf 11½. And there are two sub-varieties of the 10 Kronen value: both are violet perf 12½ but as well as the 'tall' stamp it is found on the 'wide' stamp.



ANK	Face	Colour (s)	Issued	Number
228	3h	Violet	January 1919	40,012,000
229	5h	yellow-green	January 1919	35,995,000
230	6h	Orange	February 1919	1,017,500
231	10h	Claret	January 1919	78,030,000
232	12h	greenish-blue; dark greenish-blue	February 1919	1,217,500
233	15h	Red	March 1919	1,188,400
234	20h	blue-green	Dec 1918	57,840,000
235	25h	Blue	March 1919	4,045,000

236	30h	Violet	February 1919	4,871,000
237	40h	Olive	February 1919	5,242,000
238	50h	dark green; black-green	February 1919	1,272,000
239	60h	dark blue	March 1919	5,342,000
240	80h	red-brown	March 1919	27,520,000
241	90h	claret (also on thick paper)	February 1919	4,475,000
242	1Kr	red on yellow paper	February 1919	5,050,000
243	2Kr	blue	March 1919	3,876,800
244	3Kr	carmine	March 1919	1,124,000
245	4Kr	yellow-green	April 1919?	442,500
246	10Kr	violet	May 1919?	298,000

The 3, 6 & 12h stamps were valid until 15 Jan 1920 (albeit of little use by then!), the rest until 31 October 1920.

Examples



Deutschösterreich overprints uprating a KK postcard to Czechoslovakia.



Three Deutschösterreich overprints on a letter from Vienna to Paris. Cancelled 6 May 1919; Paris arrival on back for 4 June. Censored.