

The Republic of Austria

The "Österreich" Inflation Issue of 1922-24



None of the designs submitted to the competition were selected, however. Instead, Professor Wilhelm Dachauer designed an 'ear of corn' for agriculture (it looks like barley); metal-working hammer-and-tongs being swallowed by a fleshy plant (industry and commerce); and an allegorical female head with an owl perched on her hair (arts and science). This allegorical head probably depicts the actress and singer Erika von Wagner, and is usually referred to by the German Frauenkopf (= female head). The agriculture/industry stamps were printed by typography but the arts stamps were engraved by F. Schirnböck and recess printed.

The denominations issued can best be viewed in terms of the inflation which descended upon Austria in the years of their use. The exchange rate of Kronen to the £1 sterling is tabulated here:

1914	23.1.1920	11.11.1920	25.10.1921	1.1.1922	31.4.1922	15.6.1922
24Kr	1,000Kr	2,000Kr	8,000Kr	45,000Kr	93,000Kr	84,000Kr

Also relevant is the progressive increase in the postal rates. New higher face values were steadily introduced, and old smaller or unuseable values withdrawn, sometimes with a brief period when they could be exchanged. After February 1921 all Fahrpost (parcels etc) charges had to be paid in cash, not by applying adhesives: the opportunities for genuine use of high-value stamps were greatly diminished!

Date	LL	IL	FL	IPC	FPC	IRg	FRg
1 December 1921	7½	10	25	5	15	10	25
1 May 1922	20	25	75	12½	45	40	75
21 Aug 1922	80	100	300	50	180	160	300
18 September 1922	160	200	600	100	360	320	600
1 November 1922	320	400	1500	200	900	640	1500
1 August 1922	--	600	2000	300	1200	1000	2000
1 December 1923	--	1000	3000	500	1800	2000	3000
1 December 1924	--	1500	4000	700	2400	3000	4000

LL, IL, FL = local, inland, foreign letter, at lowest weight step (ignoring any reduced-rate eg for Hungary); IPC, FPC = inland, foreign postcard (ditto); and IRg, FRg = inland, foreign registration fee.

The type of paper used for the copper recess printed stamps (the Frauenkopf) also produce the usual variations of up to 1mm in the linear dimensions of the design of the stamps; and depending on how it was inserted in the printing press one finds 'tall' stamps (25 x 29.5mm) and 'wide' stamps (26 x 29mm).

All of these stamps were perforated 12½, the "agriculture/industry" stamps on a comb machine and the "arts" stamps on a line machine. For the "arts" stamps, the 20, 25, 50, 100, 200 and 1000Kr values were also issued with a line perforation 11½; the 50Kr stamp is known as a rarity with a line perforation 11½:12½; and the 50, 200, 1000 and 2000 Kronen values are found in pairs imperforate between.

The catalogues remark that many varieties of shades, paper, perforation oddities and so forth are found; indeed, the author's solitary copy of the 10,000Kr is on 'granite' paper which is mentioned in old copies of 'Austria' but not in the modern catalogues. There are several well-known plate errors in this issue; each catalogue lists several but none lists all! Stamps are also found in unissued colours, as blackprints, as minisheets, and similar productions of questionable authenticity.

The tables that follow give details for the agriculture/industry stamps and then the "Frauenkopf" stamps. The dates of issue and validity come from Kroiss; those in the Postverordnungsblatt (the Post Office bulletin sent mainly to its staff) often have issue dates a month or so earlier. Numbers are either those delivered to the central warehouse or those actually sold; the catalogues that contain them have the numbers but no explanation!

All face values are in Kronen. "CV" = colour variants if more than 1. "S.F." = last date for use as supplementary franking on inland postal stationery, but only valid if applied by post office at point-of-sale.

Des = Design: '1' = hammer&tongs (the wider design); '2' = ear-of-corn (the narrower).

The agriculture/industry stamps



ANK	Face	Colour	Issued	Valid till	S.F.	CV	Des	Number
360	½	ochre	Jan 1922	31.7.1923	30.9.1923		2	12,756,000
361	1	brown	Feb 1922	31.7.1923	30.9.1923		1	11,750,000
362	2	greenish blue	Feb 1922	31.7.1923	30.9.1923	2	1	14,640,000
363	2½	chestnut	Feb 1922	31.7.1923	30.9.1923		2	9,329,000
364	4	purple	Feb 1922	31.7.1923	30.9.1923		1	4,880,000
365	5	olive-green	Jan 1922	31.7.1923	30.9.1923	2	1	39,455,000
366	7½	slate-violet	Jan 1922	31.7.1923	30.9.1923		2	17,340,000
367	10	claret	Jan 1922	31.12.1923	31.12.1923		1	63,187,000
368	12½	olive-green	Jan 1922	31.7.1923	30.9.1923	2	2	28,632,000
369	15	blue-green	May 1922	31.7.1923	30.9.1923		2	9,507,000
370	20	blue	May 1922	30.9.1923	31.12.1923		2	66,663,000
371	25	claret	May 1922	30.9.1923	31.12.1923		2	27,756,000
372	30	pearl-grey	May 1922	30.9.1923	31.12.1923		1	17,115,000
373	45	red	May 1922	30.9.1923	31.12.1923		1	12,400,000
374	50	chestnut	Aug 1922	30.9.1923	31.12.1923	2	1	29,520,000
375	60	sage-green	Aug 1922	30.9.1923	31.12.1923		1	7,700,000
376	75	ultramarine	May 1922	30.9.1923	31.12.1923		1	19,132,000
377	80	yellow	Aug 1922	30.9.1923	31.12.1923		1	48,000,000
378	100	drab	Aug 1922	30.6.1925	30.9.1925		2	173,952,000
379	120	chocolate	Aug 1922	30.9.1923	31.12.1923		2	9,342,000
380	150	orange	Aug 1922	30.9.1923	31.12.1923		2	14,060,000
381	160	apple-green	Sep 1922	30.9.1923	31.12.1923		2	30,016,000
382	180	scarlet	Aug 1922	30.9.1923	31.12.1923		2	9,393,000
383	200	pink	Aug 1922	30.6.1925	30.9.1925		2	149,760,000
384	240	bright violet	Aug 1922	30.9.1923	31.12.1923	2	2	17,520,000
385	300	light blue	Aug 1922	30.6.1925	30.9.1925		2	76,128,000
386	400	bright green	Nov 1922	30.6.1925	30.9.1925	3	2	85,500,000
387	500	yellow	Sep 1922	30.6.1925	30.9.1925		2	161,164,000
388	600	slate	Sep 1922	30.6.1925	30.9.1925		2	69,540,000
389	700	chocolate	Dec 1924	30.6.1925	30.9.1925		2	41,361,000
390	800	violet	Dec 1924	30.6.1925	30.9.1925		2	7,089,000
391	1000	mauve	Aug 1923	30.6.1925	30.9.1925		1	160,000,000
392	1200	carmine	Aug 1923	30.6.1925	30.9.1925		1	19,739,000
393	1500	orange	Dec 1924	30.6.1925	30.9.1925		1	54,600,000
394	1600	slate	Aug 1923	30.6.1925	30.9.1925		1	5,407,000
395	2000	blue	Aug 1923	30.6.1925	30.9.1925	2	1	21,850,000
396	3000	light blue	Jan 1924	30.6.1925	30.9.1925	2	1	25,560,000
397	4000	blue on azure	Dec 1924	30.6.1925	30.9.1925		1	4,842,000

The Frauenkopf issue



ANK	Face	Colour	Issued	Ended	S.F.	CV	AT	AW	BT	BW	Number
398	20	sepia	Feb 1922	31.7.1923	30.9.1923			Y		Y	4,900,000
399	25	blue	Jan 1922	31.7.1923	30.9.1923	2		Y		Y	12,337,000
400	50	lake	Feb 1922	30.9.1923	31.12.1923	3	Y	Y	Y	Y	9,630,000
401	100	green	Mar 1922	30.9.1923	31.12.1923	3	Y	Y	Y	Y	6,360,000
402	200	purple	Mar 1922	30.9.1923	31.12.1923		Y	Y		Y	5,700,000
403	500	orange	May 1922	30.9.1923	31.12.1923		Y	Y			6,912,000
404	1,000	deep violet on yellow paper	Aug 1922	30.6.1925	30.9.1925		Y		Y	Y	12,672,000
405	2,000	green on yellow paper	Nov 1922	30.6.1925	30.9.1925	3	Y				10,265,000
406	3,000	lake	Aug 1923	30.6.1925	30.9.1925		Y				2,512,000
407	5,000	grey-black	Aug 1923	30.6.1925	30.9.1925	2	Y				3,030,000
408	10,000	chestnut	Jan 1924	30.6.1925	30.9.1925			Y			1,892,000

- CV = number of colour variants if more than 1
- AT = Perf 12½; tall stamp;
- AW = Perf 12½; wide stamp
- BT = Perf 11½; tall stamp;
- BW = Perf 11½; wide stamp

Examples



5kr imprinted card uprated with 10kr adhesive. 22-11-1922



50kr imprinted card uprated with another 50kr imprint and a 100kr adhesive. 14-12-1922



200kr printed card uprated with a 300kr adhesive. 14-8-1924



500kr printed card. 13-4-1924