

United in diversity:**ANTHEMS AND FLAGS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,**

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Austria

1. Flag

- Created in 1230
- Adopted in 1786

The Austrian flag has three horizontal bands: red, white and red. Duke Frederick II of the Holy Empire is said to have introduced this flag as early as around 1230 to show the will for greater visibility within the Holy Roman Germanic Empire. According to legend, the flag appeared in 1191 during a crusade. Following a battle, the white tunic of Duke Leopold V Von Babenberg is said to have been covered in blood, except at the location of his belt. The stained tunic was then used as a flag to gather the troops. On his return to Austria, the Emperor authorised the use of the colours red and white in defensive battles against the Slavs and Hungarians.



At the time of the Hapsburg Empire, the imperial flags were organised around the coat of arms of their dynasty. As the House of Hapsburg was at the head of the Holy Empire from the 15th century, their emblem featured the two-headed eagle, symbol of this imperial attribute. Until 1918, this flag was used as the State flag during ceremonies. As this emblazoned fabric is quite complex to produce, the red and white flag has been used in parallel since the early 17th century.

The fact remains that the red-white-red flag was officially adopted as the Austrian flag in 1786. Throughout the various periods in history, the flag has been decorated with different coats of arms and emblems. On the establishment of the First Republic of Austria in 1918, only the three bands were retained. With the annexation of Austria by Nazi Germany, the Swastika was imposed on Austria between 1938 and 1945. Since its reinstatement at the end of World War II in 1945, the Austrian flag has remained unchanged. The official State flag today bears the federal eagle as an emblem. This eagle has been one-headed since the fall of the monarchy.

The Austrian emblem has therefore greatly evolved throughout its history. The fact remains that these three bands of red-white-red are both the oldest and the most representative of this country, which extended its authority and influence to all of Central Europe and sometimes even beyond it.

2. Anthem

- *Land der Berge, Land am Strome*
(Land of Mountains, Land by the Stream)
- Written by Paula von Preradovic
- Composed by Johann B. Holzer/W.A. Mozart
- Created and adopted in 1947

From 1797 to 1918, and for a shorter period from 1929, the melody of the imperial anthem remained the same: *Gott erhalte Franz den Kaiser* (God save the Emperor Franz); it was composed at Joseph Haydn's initiative. This famous Austrian classical composer evoked the desire to compose the equivalent to "God Save the Queen" to strengthen patriotism, while the Hapsburgs

were facing the turmoil of the French Revolution. The Governor of Vienna commissioned the poet Lorenz Haschka with the task of writing the words, and in 1797, the entire piece of work was offered to Emperor Franz II. The words were changed upon the arrival of each new Emperor. Other anthems were used between 1918 and 1945, and Haydn's melody is today the air of the German national anthem.

The current Austrian national anthem *Land der Berge, Land am Strome* was adopted in 1947 after a call for participation. In this way, the postwar government wanted to express a new beginning. The Council of Ministers decided that the choice of the melody should be in relation with an existing air, the *Freimaurerkantate* (the Freemasons' cantata), composed by Mozart as was supposed in 1947. That same year, the government of the Federal State of Austria called on poets and writers to compose a eulogy that paid tribute to both the Federal State and to its people. Among the 1,800 proposals submitted, the writer Paula von Preradovic won the 10,000 Schilling award with her text *Land der Berge, Land am Strome*. In March 1947, this "people's anthem" was heard for the first time on radio.

Since the 1960s, the origin of the *Freimaurerkantate* melody has been called into question. According to experts, the Austrian anthem presents structural similarities with Johann Holzer's work, particularly with the song *Im Namen der Armen* (In the name of the poor). In fact, Holzer and Mozart were both members of a Masonic Lodge and kept company together. Because of this, Holzer has often been mentioned as the co-composer of the melody, or even as its main composer.

Today, the Austrian national anthem is officially one of the symbols of State, such as the flag or the Federal coat of arms. As such, it is protected by the penal code. Ongoing debates since mid-2005 have led to a change in the anthem's text. The first verse, which initially mentioned "the great sons" of Austria, was adapted in January 2012 to now refer to the "daughters and sons of Austria".

• **Land der Berge, Land am Strome**

• *Land der Berge, Land am Strome,
Land der Äcker, Land der Dome,
Land der Hämmer, zukunftsreich!
Heimat großer Töchter und Söhne,
Volk, begnadet für das Schöne,
Vielgerühmtes Österreich.
Vielgerühmtes Österreich.*

• **Land of Mountains, Land by the stream**

• Lands of mountains, land of streams,
Land of fields, lands of spires,
Land of hammers, with a rich future,
You are the home of great sons,
A nation blessed by its sense of beauty,
Highly praised Austria,
Highly praised Austria.

