

APPENDIX

COMPARATIVE NOTES ON WAGE-PRICE SETTING IN WESTERN EUROPE

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AUSTRIA

Unions

At the end of 1955, about two-thirds of all wage and salary earners were organized into unions (1.4 million in 2.2 million). There are 16 national unions, which fall into 3 groups: (1) Unions of manual workers (58 percent of total union membership in 1955), (2) the large union of salaried employees in the private sector (13 percent), and (3) the unions of public and municipal employees (29 percent). All national unions belong to the Austrian Trade Union Federation (OGB), a highly centralized organization which provides a common financial base and joint departments of research, education, public relations, etc. All activities of the individual unions are governed by general principles laid down by the OGB and they may be required to consult with the OGB if their actions affect the General interests of labor.

The Act for the Protection of Freedom of Work and Assembly of 1930 prohibits the union shop and the use of force or intimidation to gain union members.

The unions have no party affiliation and the three leading parties—Socialist Party, People's Party (a business-agricultural group), and Communist Party—are all represented on the main bodies of the OGB. The OGB has, however, a definite policy on a wide range of social matters.

Besides the OGB and its constituent unions, there is a chamber of labor in each Province. These are official bodies, membership in which is compulsory for wage earners below the executive level. They are legally charged with furthering the interests of wage earners; they examine proposed legislation and make recommendations and do research on housing, nutrition, public health, prices, etc. A one-half of 1 percent tax supports them. Another of their functions is to cooperate with the unions in collective bargaining. Separate agricultural labor chambers exist to represent agricultural and forestry workers.

Employers' associations

There are several voluntary employers' associations, the most important of which is the Austrian Industrial Employers' Association (VOI). The VOI has some 3,000 members representing employment of about 300,000. There are some 20 voluntary associations limited to particular industries which are empowered to conclude collective agreements.

Corresponding to the chambers of labor are chambers of industry and commerce at the Federal level and by Provinces. The provincial chambers are divided into six sections: crafts, industry, commerce, banking and insurance, transportation, and tourism. Chambers are legal corporations, membership in which is compulsory; they can fine members and make collective agreements. They are often consulted by Government on policy matters.

Collective bargaining

At present most contracts are made between trade unions and chambers of industry and commerce. The overall coverage of collective bargaining is extensive; at the end of 1954 there were 87 national contracts and 102 supplements thereto valid in one or more Provinces. In addition, separate works

¹ It is the purpose of this series of brief notes to outline some of the main features of wage and price setting institutions, procedures, policies, and controls in the various economies of Western Europe. There is nothing definitive about these notes; they draw only upon those published materials most readily available in this country and can serve only as a basic introduction to the economic institutions and policies of each country covered.