

Raw Materials and Energy Resources

Austria's most important mineral products are iron ore, magnesite, lignite (brown coal), oil and natural gas and minor quantities of copper, lead and zinc. Austria has to import most other minerals and many basic materials. It presents a good market for Canada in this area (woodpulp, asbestos, various ores, and chemicals).

In terms of energy, Austria's oil production has fallen in recent years and imports have increased. Austria is a significant producer of hydroelectric power meeting 75 per cent of domestic electricity needs (balance is thermal), and is a net exporter of power (net 15 per cent of production). Overall, Austria imported 67 per cent of its total energy requirements in 1982.

Agriculture and Forestry

The 45 per cent of land in agricultural use is split evenly between arable land and pasture; another 40 per cent is classed as forest and woodland. These two economic sectors together contribute 5 per cent of total GDP.

Overall Austria is 95 per cent self-sufficient in agriculture. It generally produces about 80 per cent of its basic food requirements. Livestock and dairy account for some 70 per cent of agricultural production. The country is normally self-sufficient in potatoes, sugar and dairy produce, and nearly so in vegetables. Austria is a traditionally significant producer and exporter of wines and cheeses. In the past three years, Austria attained over-sufficiency in grains and thus became a significant factor in specific export markets (almost 1 million tons in 1982, primarily to COMECON countries).

Transportation and Communications

Austria is a main communications link and transit point serving as bridge between East and West, and Northern and Southern Europe. It is the main road and rail channel for land transport of merchandise between Western Europe, the Balkans and the Middle East. Austria has a dense network of domestic roads and several international freeways linking it to other countries, and 6,000 km of railroads including main-trunk transit lines.