

aws / Austria

Outstanding volume expected to reach **bEUR 5.4** at year-end 2021 (75% covid share)

20,360 supported SMEs in portfolio (H2 2020)

New production (in units) in 2020 is **18x** the one a year ago

When the covid crisis broke out and governments across Europe shut down public life in an attempt to contain the spread of the virus, **aws** - the national promotional institution of Austria - became one of the most important players in the fight against the economic consequences of the crisis.

aws' first measure was the introduction (on 12th March 2020) of the "**aws Überbrückungsgarantien**" (**bridge finance guarantees**) the aim of which it is to facilitate the financing of working capital (e.g. goods purchases, personnel costs) loans from companies under strain due to the covid crisis. Having started with guarantees under the de-minimis regulation, the guarantee scheme of **aws** currently uses the legal possibilities given by the EU Temporary Framework (TF). Three different guarantee products are available for companies: 100% guarantees for an amount of up to kEUR 500, 90% guarantees for higher amounts (both under the TF) and 80% guarantees under de-minimis. The interest rate for 100% guarantees is capped with 0% in the first two years and then with 75bps on the 3m-EURIBOR. There is no guarantee fee for the 100% and 80% guarantees and a fee of 0.25 to 1% for large loans of up to mEUR 27.7 according to the regulations of the TF. The guarantee period is minimum 6 months and maximum five years and there is no processing fee. An amount of bEUR 5.25 is available for these **bridge guarantees**.

More information on the **bridge finance guarantees** can be found under the following link (in German):

<https://www.aws.at/aws-garantie/ueberbrueckungsgarantie/>

After a short starting period, **aws** introduced a fast-track procedure allowing to confirm a guarantee within 24 hours (and within 48 hours for guarantees over mEUR 20). The bridge finance guarantees terminated on 30th June 2021, currently a prolongation until 31st December 2021 is in preparation.

As a measure to boost the economy out of the crises, the Austrian federal government via **aws** starting from 1.9.2020 supports businesses of all sizes and sectors with the so-called **Investitionsprämie (investment premium)** as a grant of 7% of the ...

... investment costs (14% for investment costs in the area of digitisation, ecologisation and health). In total, the programme has a budget of bEUR 5. More information is to be found under this link (in German): <https://www.aws.at/corona-hilfen-des-bundes/aws-investitionspraemie/>

On the equity side, **aws** launched the covid package for start-ups including a **covid-start-up aid fund** and the **venture capital fund**. With this **Covid start-up aid fund** (max. volume: mEUR 50), innovative start-ups receive a subsidy on private investments made since the outbreak of the COVID crisis. If a start-up enterprise receives fresh equity or quasi-equity deposits from investors of at least kEUR 10 and maximum kEUR 800, these funds will be doubled by a grant from the federal Austrian government. Under the planned **venture capital fund**, the **aws** capital guarantee of 50% (of the fund volume) is used to mobilise additional risk capital. It assumes a risk of up to mEUR 25 from the **venture capital fund(s)** invested in start-ups in order to better facilitate their delayed implementation of business models due to the crisis. More information on the equity products is available under the following link (in German): <https://www.aws.at/covid-paket-fuer-start-ups>

Furthermore, in the frame of the covid measures of the federal government of Austria, **aws** manages an **aid fund for non-profit organisations**, and a **Comeback grant** for film and television productions.

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