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# Microsoft announces plans to establish its first cloud region in Austria to accelerate local innovation and growth

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*Microsoft establishes Center of Digital Excellence, new skilling initiative for up to 120,000 Austrians by 2024 and plans for its first local cloud region*

**Vienna, Austria – Oct. 20, 2020** – Microsoft Corp. today announced a significant commitment to drive local innovation and growth in Austria, including plans to establish its first datacenter region in the country, which will bring the power of Microsoft's global-scale and trusted cloud to the country's broad ecosystem of startups, SMBs, enterprises and government. The company also announced a new Center of Digital Excellence to modernize Austria's IT infrastructure, public governmental services and industry innovation. Microsoft will also continue to invest in new community resources to boost innovation and digital skilling for approximately 120,000 Austrians by 2024. [According to research from IDC](#) (<https://aka.ms/IDCEconomicImpactStudy>),\* Microsoft's investment in a new cloud region will help generate up to \$2.1 billion in new revenue in Austria's ecosystem of local partners and its cloud-using customers fueled by Microsoft over the next four years.

Microsoft President Brad Smith made the announcement at the Austrian Federal Chancellery alongside Austrian Chancellor Sebastian Kurz, Margarete Schramböck, Federal Minister for Digitization and Economic Affairs and Dorothee Ritz, General Manager of Microsoft Austria.

"Microsoft's decision to make Austria a cloud region is a great opportunity for Austrian business and represents a decisive competitive advantage. Austria should become the European frontrunner in the field of digitization, which also requires the expansion of the digital infrastructure. I would like to thank Microsoft for its commitment to our country, domestic companies and their employees in particular who will benefit," said Sebastian Kurz, Federal Chancellor of the Republic of Austria.

"Today marks a major milestone for Microsoft in Austria," said Brad Smith, President of Microsoft. "This announcement represents much more than building data centers. It is an opportunity to bring to Austria the technology needed for people, businesses and government agencies to reimagine and transform their operations, grow their enterprises, and gain new digital skills."

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"Trust is the core of successful digitization and the cornerstone of all our partnerships. By enabling our customers and partners to build their cloud infrastructure around an Austrian datacenter region, we further extend our commitment to Austria as a successful business location," said Dorothee Ritz, General Manager, Microsoft Austria.

### **Delivering the Microsoft Cloud in Austria**

Today's announcement will pave the way for local companies, startups and institutions to fully utilize the potential of cloud computing, while maintaining the highest cybersecurity, data residency and compliance standards. The Austrian datacenter region will join Microsoft's global-scale cloud, now totaling **64** regions announced, with Microsoft Azure available in over **140** countries, and will provide companies local access to Microsoft's full set of cloud services, all built on a foundation of trust:

- **Microsoft Azure:** An ever-expanding set of cloud services that offers computing, networking, databases, analytics, AI and IoT services.
- **Microsoft 365:** The world's productivity cloud that delivers best-of-breed productivity apps integrated through cloud services and delivered as part of an open platform for business processes.
- **Dynamics 365 and Power Platform:** The next generation of intelligent business applications that enable organizations to grow, evolve and transform to meet the needs of customers and capture new opportunities.

Microsoft offers more than 90 certifications and spends \$1 billion every year on cybersecurity to address security at every layer of the cloud. Microsoft's Austria datacenter region will help companies comply with the [European Union's General Data Protection Regulation](https://blogs.microsoft.com/on-the-issues/2018/05/21/microsofts-commitment-to-gdpr-privacy-and-putting-customers-in-control-of-their-own-data/) (GDPR), and will also help customers store data at rest in Austria. As part of Microsoft's global commitment to be carbon negative by 2030, the company will shift to 100 percent supply of renewable energy for its datacenters by 2025.

Hundreds of enterprise customers and partners in Austria are already driving business transformation with Microsoft's global cloud services, including [Austrian Airlines](https://customers.microsoft.com/en-us/story/740192-austrian-airlines-travel-transportation-yammer-austria) (<https://customers.microsoft.com/en-us/story/740192-austrian-airlines-travel-transportation-yammer-austria>), [AVL Racing](https://news.microsoft.com/europe/features/a-hundredth-of-a-second-makes-the-difference-how-avl-vehicle-simulation-uses-the-microsoft-cloud-to-make-racing-cars-just-a-wee-bit-faster/) (<https://news.microsoft.com/europe/features/a-hundredth-of-a-second-makes-the-difference-how-avl-vehicle-simulation-uses-the-microsoft-cloud-to-make-racing-cars-just-a-wee-bit-faster/>), [Constantia Flexibles Group](https://www.cfex.com/) (<https://www.cfex.com/>), [Porsche Holding](https://customers.microsoft.com/en-us/story/753872-porsche-holding-automotive-microsoft-365-e3) (<https://customers.microsoft.com/en-us/story/753872-porsche-holding-automotive-microsoft-365-e3>), [Raiffeisen Bank International](https://www.rbinternational.com/en/homepage.html) (<https://www.rbinternational.com/en/homepage.html>), [RHI Magnesita](https://www.rhimagnesita.com/) (<https://www.rhimagnesita.com/>). Customers including [Erste Group](https://www.erstegroup.com/en/home) (<https://www.erstegroup.com/en/home>) and [Bawag Group](https://www.bawaggroup.com/BAWAGGROUP/group/EN) (<https://www.bawaggroup.com/BAWAGGROUP/group/EN>) have expressed their intent to use the Microsoft Cloud services from the Austria region when available, to drive digital innovation and increase operational efficiency using Microsoft Azure as the preferred cloud platform.

"The development of cloud capabilities is a major component of IT Innovation at Erste Group. It offers us more flexible and faster processes to improve our customer care and banking services. Given the sensitivity of our business, data storage under the highest security and compliance standards is our top priority," said David O'Mahony, COO Erste Group. "We are partnering with Microsoft on a number of strategic areas to utilize Microsoft's cloud services, Azure and Office 365. With the establishment of a Microsoft Cloud region in Austria, Erste Group will deepen its relationship with Microsoft as a key partner to further develop our cloud capabilities as part of the Group's digital transformation."

"Microsoft is a strategic cloud partner for the BAWAG Group. Deploying cloud workloads in Austria will further enhance our ability to transform legacy applications to fully support transparent, highly optimized and secure modern banking solutions," said Nikita Tschursin, Chief Technology Officer, Bawag Group. "With Microsoft Azure, the BAWAG Group is able to integrate innovative technologies with the existing infrastructure to better service financial markets in Austria, Germany and Switzerland."

## **Accelerating Digital Transformation of Austria's economy and skilling the workforce of tomorrow**

Together with Microsoft, the Austrian government's Ministry of Digitalization will launch a Center of Digital Excellence, which aims to modernize the Austrian IT infrastructure, public government services and employee readiness on digital transformation skills. As part of the center, Microsoft and the Ministry will establish a cybersecurity network comprising technical and scientific universities, chambers of commerce, industry representatives and data protection organizations to define national IT security requirements that meet modern cloud and hybrid architectural concepts. Additionally, the government will establish a two-year training program for public-sector employees in IT and relevant federal and state government departments to further increase competencies in state-of-the-art IT technologies.

Finally, Microsoft is launching its largest-scale skilling program for the Austrian market to date. Together with education partners and the Austrian Public Employment Service (AMS), Microsoft aims to skill up to 120,000 individuals by the end of 2024. The local skilling plan includes a program called [Austrian Skills Campus \(https://www.skills-campus.at/\)](https://www.skills-campus.at/), which provides college graduates and early-in-career professionals specific course to help them enter the job market at a faster rate. Today's announcements including a new cloud region, Center of Digital Excellence and skilling commitments in Austria represent a holistic approach to accelerate digital transformation of the country.

\* IDC Info Snapshot, sponsored by Microsoft, "The Microsoft Cloud Dividend Snapshot: Austria," Doc. #US46914020, October 2020