

Study: Inhabitants of Burgenland save EUR 189 per month

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More than ever before: 86% have a savings passbook

9 out of ten put money aside for emergencies

Myth: more than a third investors believe that ethical and sustainable investments have lower returns

Inhabitants of Burgenland are still the savings champions: On average, every person puts aside EUR 189 per month. The principal motivation for this enormous savings effort is to attain financial security. However, even though the monthly savings amount is at an all-time high, inhabitants of Burgenland are more relaxed about the need to save than in 2009. Currently, only 45% attach great importance to savings – which is 10 percentage points lower than just two years ago. Sustainable investments have a great potential, but the study also reveals a mistaken belief: more than a third believes that returns on sustainable investments are lower. However, facts prove the contrary. Pinner: “Clean investments have the best returns.”

Savings amount stagnates at a high level

In nominal terms, the amount saved per month is at a high at EUR189. In comparison to 2010 the amount saved per month increased 13 Euros. “The amounts saved are still at an all-time high, although it seems as if there is not much room left to go any higher,” said Peter Rucker director of Erste Bank for the region Burgenland commenting on the trend. The development of the savings ratio also confirms this statement: In 2010, the net savings ratio was still 9.1%, but by the beginning of 2011, it had dropped to 8.7%.

Importance of saving money is now at “normal” level again

The attitude to savings has changed. While at the height of the financial crisis in 2009 half of the inhabitants of Burgenland believed it was very important to save money, this year only 45% share this opinion.

In comparison to 2010 the rate decreased (48%). But it could change in 2012: probably there will be a higher saving awareness because of sensitive markets. With respect to the reasons why save money at all, 9 out of 10 inhabitants of Burgenland stated the aspect “to achieve financial security”. The reason “being able to afford something later on” ranks second and was stated by 6 out of ten of the persons surveyed. Plans for major acquisitions such as a new car or a new home have become more important over the past few years and ranks third among the reasons for saving for over 57% of people. But how much will we save in the future? The inhabitants of Burgenland are optimistic, because every other person plans to save the same amount as today, 27% want to save even more, and only 23% believe that it will be less.

Savings passbooks rank number one

The savings passbook is still the most popular form of saving. At a share of 86%, almost every inhabitant of Burgenland has a one. Building society savings schemes are a perennial classic and rank second with a share of 67%. Still, almost half believe life insurance policies are the best, while for one out of four investment funds and securities are the ideal form of savings. “Austria is and remains a country of savings passbook savers,” commented Peter Rucker on this phenomenon. “Security and wealth preservation are the current themes for people. The savings passbook meets both requirements, which is why its popularity is at an all-time high.”



Peter Rucker director of Erste Bank for the region Burgenland

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“Clean investments” on the rise

As regards so-called ethical-sustainable investments, the study revealed a widespread myth: More than a third inhabitants of Burgenland believe that this type of monetary investment has lower returns than conventional investments of this type. Wolfgang Pinner, expert for ethical-sustainable investments at Erste-Sparinvest, reveals this belief to be a myth: “The largest sustainably managed stock fund in Austria – ESPA VINIS STOCK GLOBAL – achieved better returns over a period of five years than the global stock index MSCI World. “The willingness to invest “cleanly” is very high in Austria. Five out of ten inhabitants of Burgenland assess such investments as more attractive or at least equally attractive as other forms of monetary investments. Remarkable though, are the – quite unnecessary – subdued expectations with respect to earnings expectations: “More than a half would even accept lower profits if they were certain of having invested “cleanly,” explained Wolfgang Pinner.

EUR 2 billion sustainably invested

The interest in ecological, ethical and social investments is growing steadily. In Austria, the volume of sustainable investments has nearly tripled since the crisis year 2008 and amounts to around EUR 2 billion. The shifting attitude in society to fundamental values, and therefore, also with respect to the investment motivations has triggered a boom in sustainable investments. Erste-Sparinvest has already issued ten sustainable funds sold to the public with a total volume of around EUR 600 million. Apart from the sustainable ESPA VINIS funds (VINIS stands for accountability, innovation, sustainability, investment, security - www.vinis.at) two sustainable theme funds are managed together with WWF Austria.

Survey Design:

In the period from 11 to 29 July 2010, some 900 telephone interviews were conducted (Austrian population 15+). In each federal province, 100 interviews were conducted to enable a separate evaluation. To obtain the big picture, the provinces were weighted in accordance with their level of representativeness. In the case of comparable questions in the studies of 2009 and 2010, the differences have been highlighted to show the development.

[Presentation \[pdf; 492.4 KB\]](#)



Wolfgang Pinner, Experte für ethisch-nachhaltige Investments der Erste-Sparinvest

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