

100-year review (2/2)

Three times fewer employees, number of passengers tripled

- Started 1923 with -235bn kroner (€ -134m), today a profit of €193m
- CEO Andreas Matthä: ÖBB is a stabiliser of the national economy

(Vienna, 21 April 2023) - ÖBB will be 100 years old this year. To mark the occasion, the Executive Board today took stock not only of the year 2022, but also of the past 100 years. In 1923, on 1 October 1923 to be exact, ÖBB started operations with almost 113,000 employees and 2,600 steam locomotives, which consumed 2.2 million tonnes of coal per year. The start-up loss of ÖBB in 1923, the year of its foundation, amounted to 235 billion kroner. Converted and adjusted for purchasing power, this would correspond to a loss of 134 million euros today. In 2022, ÖBB generated a pre-tax profit of 193 million euros.

Andreas Matthä, CEO of ÖBB, commented: "The employees of the time achieved incredible things, they steered ÖBB out of programmed bankruptcy twice in its history. Once right after its foundation and a second time after the Second World War and its integration into the German Reichsbahn. This asset was probably one of the greatest transformations of the 2nd Republic. ÖBB was not only a railway company, but also a stabiliser of the national economy."

Background: ÖBB was not a newly founded company in 1923, as railways had already existed in Austria since 1837. After the collapse of the Habsburg monarchy, however, the various sections of the railway were heavily in debt and structurally completely outdated, so the government of the time decided to hand them over to professional management as a "separate economic entity".

"The evolution of the railways can be mapped in many parameters, but the performance is most clearly shown when productivity is compared. Today, ÖBB is almost three times smaller in terms of the number of employees, but it transports more than three times as many passengers if you include the Postbus. In terms of train kilometres travelled, productivity has actually increased eightfold in recent years," explains railway boss Matthä (see also graphics).

	1923	2022	Change
Employees (without apprentices)	112,740	42,603	-62%
Number of passengers, in millions	120	253	111%
Passengers (incl. Postbus) in millions	120	447	273%
Freight transport in million T	23	88	283%

A comparison with the challenges of today is almost inevitable, even if they are not as dramatic as they were 100 years ago: Today, ÖBB is facing a similar turning point. Climate change and digitalisation have triggered a transformation in the entire mobility system.

"If we consistently continue on the path of railway expansion, digitalisation and decarbonisation in the coming years, we can achieve great things similar to those of our forefathers," the ÖBB CEO points out, "we are only at the beginning of this change, in a few years ÖBB will not only be a railway, but a door-to-door mobility and logistics provider that transports people and goods throughout Europe from e-bikes to buses to trains."

By 2030, the performance of the rail network in Austria is set to increase by 25% from 160 million train kilometres today to around 200 million. This requires not only the upgrade of the rail infrastructure but also modern digital control of train operations. ÖBB's train fleet is also to be expanded on a similar scale.

"The railway is on the verge of the next evolutionary step and I am optimistic about the future despite the crises. Because the future is literally on track," says ÖBB CEO Andreas Matthä.

Historical photos can be found here: [100 years of the ÖBB - ÖBB-Presse \(oebb.at\)](https://www.oebb.at/100-years-of-the-oebb)
Graphics: We are happy to supply the raw data on request.

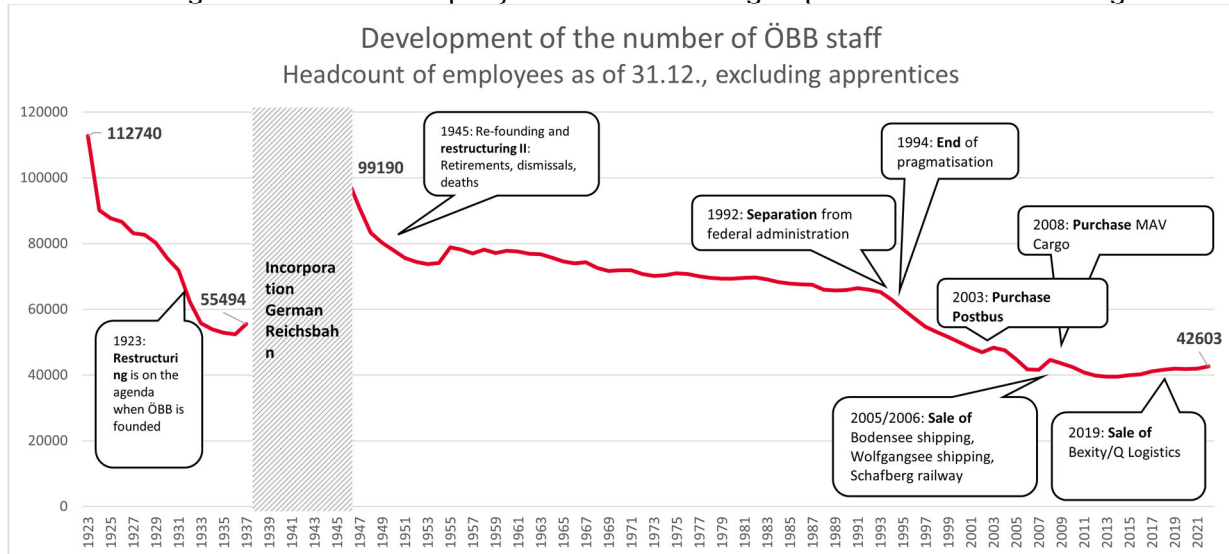
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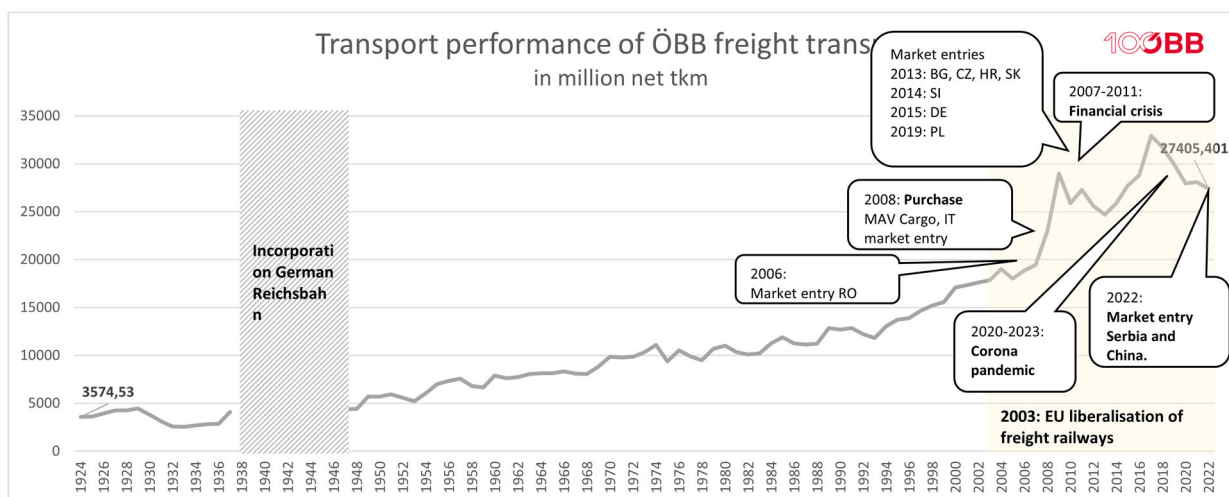
Today. For Tomorrow. For us.

ÖBB has been shaping mobility in Austria for 100 years. As a comprehensive mobility and logistics service provider, ÖBB transported a total of 447 million passengers and over 88 million tonnes of freight to their destinations in a climate and environmentally friendly manner in 2022. This is thanks to the electricity for locomotives and stations being generated entirely from renewable energy sources. With a punctuality rate of around 95.5 per cent in passenger transport, ÖBB is one of the most punctual railway operators in Europe. ÖBB invests more than three billion euros per year in railway infrastructure in its drive to build a railway system fit for the future. Across the Group, around 42,600 bus and rail employees and an additional approx. 2,000 apprentices ensure that more than 1.2 million passengers and around 1,230 freight trains arrive safely at their destinations every day. ÖBB is the backbone of the Austrian public transport system and, as Austria's largest climate protection company, gets people and freight to their destinations safely and in an environmentally friendly manner.

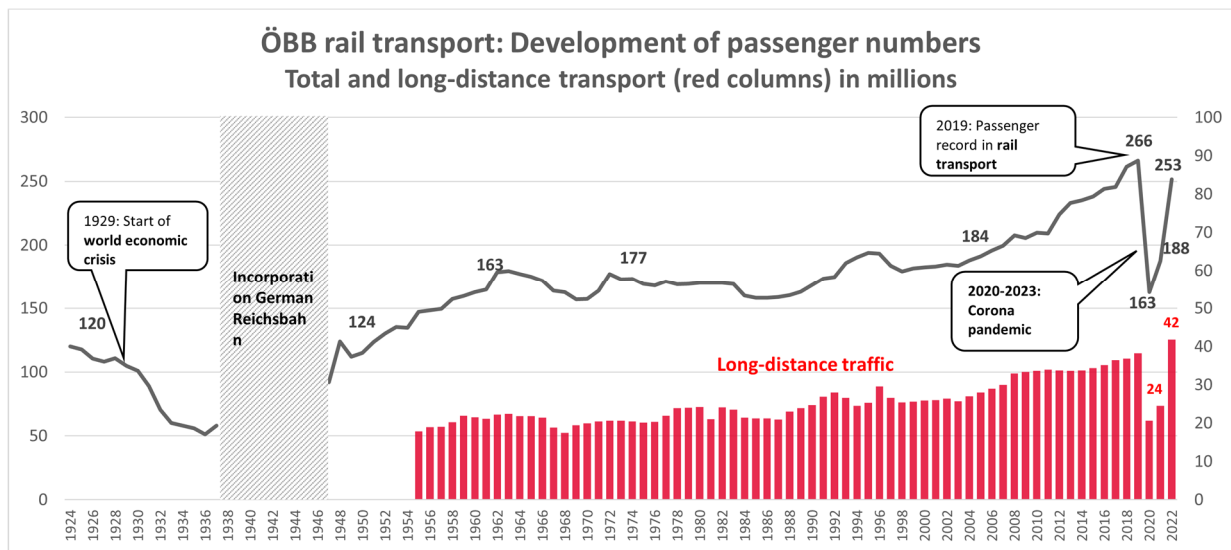
The strategic lead company of the group is ÖBB-Holding AG.



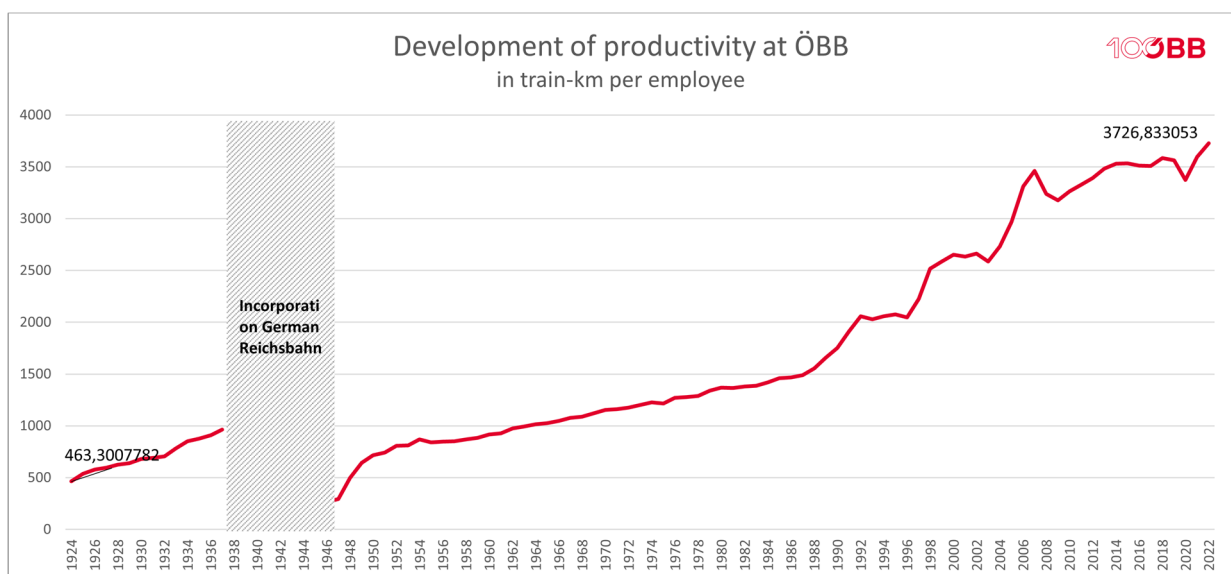
ÖBB began operations on **1 October 1923**. The legacy that the company inherited at that time was a difficult one: At the time of its foundation, ÖBB had a staff of **112,740 employees**, its fleet consisted of **2,600 steam locomotives** that consumed **2.2 million tonnes of coal** per year. When ÖBB was integrated into the German Reichsbahn, a considerable proportion of the staff was dismissed; the door was opened to veteran National Socialists. Today, ÖBB employs 42,603 staff, three times less than when it was founded, and this despite expansion and increased performance.



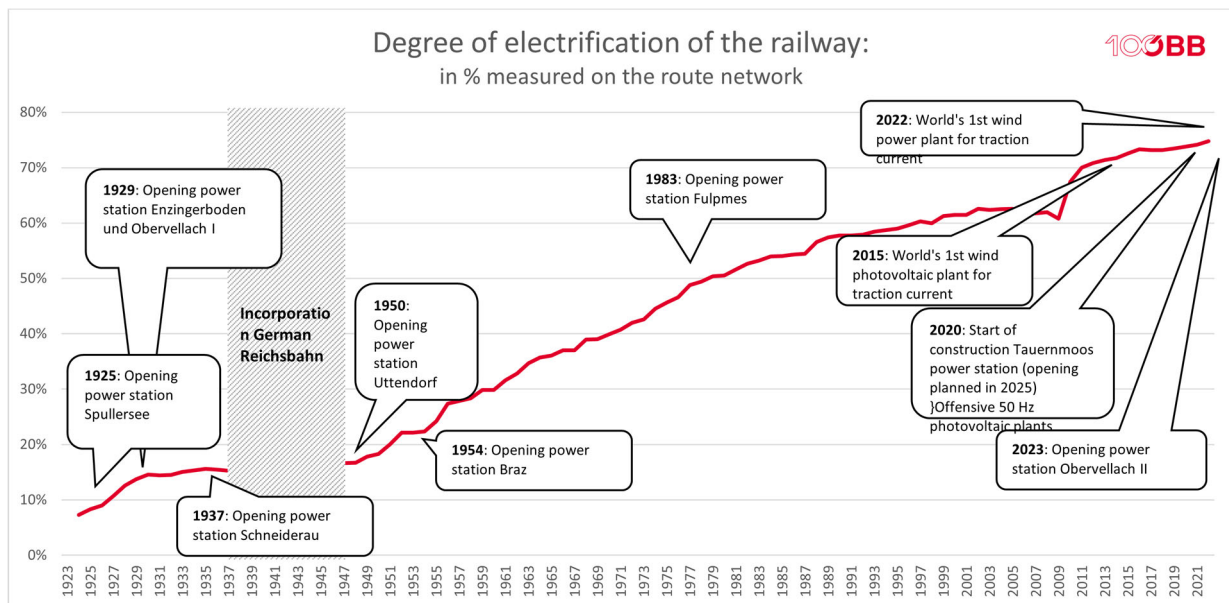
ÖBB's freight transport is a special story about growth. In 100 years, the transport performance has quadrupled in terms of tonnes, and even increased almost eightfold in terms of net tkm. The starting point for this rapid growth was liberalisation in the EU. This gave rise to the expansion policy from 2006, the acquisition of the Hungarian MAV Cargo in 2008 and market entries in numerous eastern European markets. In 2022, this was followed by Serbia and China. Today, ÖBB Rail Cargo Group is No. 2 in Europe in terms of transport performance and present in a total of 18 countries.



ÖBB has probably undergone one of the biggest transformations in the 2nd Republic. Today it is almost **three times smaller** in terms of the number of employees, but it transports **more than twice as many passengers**. A real travel boom began in Austria in the mid-1920s. The country's economic situation had calmed down so that even working-class families from Vienna could afford to travel to the countryside by train at the weekend. In summer, the Danube beach at Kritzensdorf was a popular destination, in winter the city dwellers took their skis to Kaltenleutgeben in the south-west of Vienna for winter sports, and in the months in between, hiking on Vienna's local mountains - Semmering, Rax & Co - was the order of the day. With the onset of the world economic crisis as a result of the stock market crash on so-called "Black Friday" in the USA, this development came to an abrupt end - for the time being. After the Second World War, rail transport in the smaller country of Austria developed steadily upwards - up until the present day. In 2019 there was a passenger record, in 2022 a new all-time high in long-distance traffic. **In 2023, ÖBB predicts a "year of the century" and more passengers than ever.**



Productivity has increased eightfold at ÖBB within the last 100 years.



After the collapse of the monarchy, Austria wanted one thing above all; to become **independent** of coal imports from abroad. Thus, the so-called "electrification programme" for the railway lines was created in 1920. When the Austrian Federal Railways (ÖBB) was founded in 1923, just 25 kilometres in the Inn Valley and 65 kilometres of the Mittelwald Railway, built in 1912 to connect Innsbruck with Garmisch-Partenkirchen in Bavaria, were electrified. **A multi-stage electrification strategy was designed to raise the electrification level to 85% by 2030 and to 89% by 2035.**

Notes on the graphics:

Creating long-term timelines involves great difficulties - timeline disruptions for various reasons (due to changes in definition or company acquisitions or sales, line integrations, discontinuations or spin-offs) and a diverse, partly contradictory, partly incomplete source situation make it difficult to create congruent, valid timelines. The trends should therefore be interpreted as an overall picture. The graph should not be used as a source of individual values.

On the productivity graphic: The representation of productivity is intended to provide an overall view of the development of the performance of ÖBB employees over the last 100 years. It shows how many train kilometres in the ÖBB network were operated per ÖBB employee per year. Numerous inaccuracies are not taken into account in the graphic - the train kilometres reflect the operating performance of all railways in the ÖBB network, the employees also include the Postbus and subsidiaries abroad. A representation that takes all these aspects into account is not possible due to the data available.