

Ozlilly in Austria - My permanent residence visa

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My permanent residence visa from 1999 has an "Invalid" stamp on it - "ungültig" in German.

E-Card

It's been a few months now that I picked up some medicine or was at a doctor's surgery, and the receptionist told me my e-card would be cancelled if I did not bring a photo to the health department. I never received a letter or information personally. However twice I was told by some third party that the health department needed a photo from me. Eventually, one day, I decided to go into the digital health records, ELGA. There I saw the notification.

ELGA

Do you go into your digital health records, ELGA? Do you check your meds, your on-line information, the doctors you've visited, or the drugs you got on prescription?

I didn't think most people do. I'm a baby-boomer - from the pre-digital age. Eventually, one day, I went into [ELGA](#) and found some of my health records. For example, there is a record of my Corona vaccinations.

So, I found a banner at the top of my profile in ELGA, saying that my e-card was going to be cancelled if I did not provide a passport photograph. I was shocked. Why didn't I get a notification? Why didn't they send me a letter? Do they really think that everybody goes into their digital records? My card was marked as valid until 2025!



That was the beginning

I don't even remember how I then got to the next step which was an appointment at a police station to verify my identity.

I later discovered (I'm a private detective after all) that Austria began populating their E-cards, the Austrian Medicare card, with identity photos, despite the long, weary arguments and discussions a couple of decades ago when it was assured this would never happen.

Digital Watchdog

They used what they had on file - passport photos, driving license photos - all the stuff they had acquired digitally in the last few years.

Like I said before, I've been here since before the digital age and I even got myself an Austrian Driver's License when they were a pink slip of paper with no expiry date.

So, they found no digital photos of me for them to use, despite my rail card and UN ID. The one hundred percent digital control has not yet manifested after all. Though the actual monitoring appears to have been taken over by Google.



Vienna, Austria

Identity

I've been living in Austria for 35 years. I know the requirement to register your residential address. I remember the time we moved to Zwettl, where we had to re-register from Linz to Zwettl. Then promptly, the day after my visa expired, the foreign police were at the front door. I was shocked! I couldn't believe that they were tracking me so meticulously. It was no big deal, I just had to apply for an extension. My visa was on the grounds of family partnership with an Austrian citizen. I had to reapply, and for the first time, I got a visa that I did not have to pay for. It was an unlimited visa for permanent residence in Austria. Shortly afterwards I began working in Vienna and we moved from Zwettl to Kirchberg am Wagram.

Residential Mobility

I guess it is not "normal" for Austrians to be residentially mobile. I keep getting amused at things I experienced years ago which now appear to be new in my current environment. I remember how normal it was in America for people to move around and change residence. Apparently, it was to follow the job prospects and stay employed.

United States

Josef and I were NGO Volunteers in the United States, so it was not quite the same thing. We were mobile for our missions and went to where we were assigned. I started out in Eugene, Oregon, while Josef was in Coos Bay. Then I was in Medford until Josef and I had our legal wedding in Jacksonville, Jackson

County, Oregon.

We were redeployed to Yakima, Washington State, until we were told by our church leaders, to return home, due to fears of legal repercussions for Reverend Moon, as the Unification Church and its founder suffered severe public, especially media, persecution. I carefully hoarded my letter of notification that my Green Card Application was being dealt with. The waiting list was long, and I was number 7000.

Seattle to New York

Reluctantly we obeyed, and travelled from Seattle, Washington, to New York, NY in a mobile home with a half dozen other outcast foreign missionaries. As we passed Mount Rushmore, the clouds and fog lifted just a few minutes, but nobody had a camera to record the historical event.

[I'm diverging.](#)

I started working in Vienna in 1999 and that's the year I got my permanent residence permit in my passport. However, once my passport expired and I applied for a new passport, the pages of the expired passport were cancelled, up to where my Austrian residence visa was. So, I kept my old passport with the visa and always had it with me when travelling on my new, valid passport.

Legitimations Card

Once I worked for the UN, I had a legitimations card, which was ranked higher than a residence visa. Ranking is so common in Austria. It took me a while to use the privilege of my green legitimations card on immigration, when returning to Austria, after a foreign trip. I heard from a number of UN colleagues who shared their experiences as foreigners and how useful the legitimations card was.

It's been raining all day today. I'm writing this on Friday, 14 April. It is even quite cold. I was out on my mission to get the required photo onto my e-card this morning.

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