International Activities of the City of Vienna
Cities are home to more than half of the world’s population today. They play a crucial role in shaping people’s living conditions, and they take responsibility for their future. To meet the challenges this entails, many cities all over the world are implementing “Smart City” urban development policies.

The city has always been a place of great changes and of social innovation. A Smart City defines itself by how it confronts the challenges that result from the combination of declining resources and growing needs.

Vienna’s policies in the year under report were informed by its Smart City Framework Strategy, which was adopted by City Council resolution and is therefore binding upon all areas of the City Administration. Pursuing its Smart City goals, the City of Vienna has worked for socially and ecologically sustainable development, ensuring the competitive standing of the city both nationally and internationally and winning international recognition in Europe and beyond.

The high level of interest in collaborative projects, worldwide demand for Viennese know-how and the number of international enterprises that have recently established a presence in Vienna are evidence that we were on the right track again in 2014, and are an affirmation of how we see ourselves: as a reliable partner in joint efforts to meet urban challenges.

In this report, you will find interesting insights into the wide range of international activities pursued by the City of Vienna.

I wish to thank all those whose committed work has contributed to the success of our joint endeavours in 2014.

Dr. Michael Häupl
Mayor and Governor of Vienna
Wien Museum ............................................................................ 45
Urban Development, Transport, Climate Protection, Energy Planning and Public Participation ................. 46
Mobility Agency ......................................................................... 48
Environment ............................................................................. 48
Wien Kanal – Sewage System Management ....................... 52
Ombuds Office for Environmental Protection (WUA) ... 52
Housing, Housing Construction and Urban Renewal ... 52
WohnService Wien ................................................................... 54
Wiener Wohnen – Public Housing Administration .......... 54
Wohnfonds, Wien ..................................................................... 54
Court of Audit ........................................................................ 55
Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid ............. 56
European Union ....................................................................... 58
EU Grants – Urban Development ........................................... 58
EU Funding – International Cooperation ......................... 58
Services of General Interest .................................................. 59
Eusdr – EU Strategy for the Danube Region ..................... 59
International Organisations .................................................. 61
United Nations ....................................................................... 61
Vienna Service Office ............................................................ 61
Other Activities ...................................................................... 62
Liaison Offices ....................................................................... 63
Vienna House, Brussels .......................................................... 63
Compress Representative Offices in Central, Eastern and South-East Europe ........................................ 64
Representative Office Tokyo .................................................. 67
International Guests at Vienna City Hall ......................... 68
International Guests Received by the Mayor .................. 68
Entries in the City of Vienna’s Golden Book .................... 69
Speakers of the Vienna Provincial Parliament ................ 70
Visits Abroad by the Mayor .................................................. 71
International Activities of the Districts ......................... 72
Margareten – 5th District ...................................................... 72
Simmering – 11th District ..................................................... 72
Hietzing – 13th District ........................................................ 72
Ottakring – 16th District ...................................................... 73
Döbling – 19th District ........................................................ 73
The Vienna Tourist Board ..................................................... 74
Vienna Products .................................................................... 80
The Austrian Association of Cities and Towns .................. 82
PaN – Partner of All Nations ............................................... 83
Index of Countries, Regions and Cities ......................... 84
The Organisation of the Vienna City Administration .... 86
Contact ................................................................................ 88
Chief Executive Office –
Executive Group for European and International Affairs

As the central hub of the City of Vienna’s international activities, the Executive Group for European and International Affairs (MD-EUI) functions as the primary point of contact for foreign institutions and has a coordinating role in the city’s international relations. The MD-EUI team ensures strategic coordination in the bilateral and multilateral fields, is responsible for development policy and represents the City of Vienna in international organisations. Within MD-EUI, the International Strategy and Coordination Unit designs and implements politically and economically relevant international activities, including in particular the publicising of Vienna in focus destinations (see relevant section below). The unit also serves as the primary point of contact for foreign delegations visiting departments and other institutions of the City Administration, and coordinates Vienna’s cooperation agreements with other cities.

Cooperation partners of MD-EUI are the Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs (BMEIA) and Austria’s diplomatic missions and consulates, as well as the Federal Economic Chamber (WKO) and its international offices. International partners are the foreign diplomatic missions that are accredited in Austria and their economic and cultural affairs units, as well as the Taipei economic and cultural affairs office (which represents Taiwan) and the liaison offices of the Iraqi Kurdistan region and the Republika Srpska. MD-EUI also collaborates with other Austrian ministries, all the federal provinces and the liaison offices of the latter in Vienna.

Among its cooperation partners are of course the international organisations that are present in Vienna, among them the United Nations Office (UNOV) and the United Nations Information Service (UNIS), as well as

---

President Dr. Heinz Fischer addressed Diplomatic Academy members and guests at the celebration marking the 50th anniversary of its reopening, which took place in the Banqueting Hall of Vienna City Hall. (DA Vienna/Ernst Weingartner)

The Arab-European Young Leaders Forum was opened in the Marble Hall of the Foreign Ministry. The paintings on the ceiling depict scenes from Austria’s history and were painted by Leopold Kupelweiser (1796–1862). (Mahmood)
the OSCE, OPEC, OFID and international NGOs. The list of permanent cooperation partners also includes the Austrian Development Agency (ADA), the association Go-Governance, the Institute for the Danube Region and Central Europe (IDM), Österreichischer Austauschdienst (ÖeAD – Austrian Agency for International Cooperation in Education and Research), the Intercultural Centre/National Agency for Erasmus+ (IZ), the umbrella organisation of bilateral friendship societies “Partner of all Nations” (PaN) and the development policy organisation Südwind-Agentur; collaboration is especially close with the Diplomatic Academy (DA). In 2014, the Diplomatic Academy celebrated the 50th anniversary of its reopening under Bruno Kreisky in 1964. The celebration was hosted at Vienna City Hall, and City Councillor Andreas Mailath-Pokorny was among the guests.

In addition to the activities and events reported in other chapters, MD-EUI organised Tunisia Days, which were mainly dedicated to culture. Culture was also the main focus of a visit by a student group from Bosnia-Herzegovina. The group worked on a film project involving the cities of Vienna and Sarajevo and the centennial of the outbreak of World War I in 1914. The visit, which was organised by ÖeAD, also took the young people to Vienna City Hall and to the University of Vienna. The Diplomatic Academy Student Initiative (DASI) was the first organisation to host a conference marking the 25th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall. The conference motto was “25 years: picking up the pieces of the Berlin Wall”.

The 12th Dialogue Forum brought together representatives of six cities for discussions about the conflicting needs resulting from modern cities’ development imperatives and the requirements of preservation of their cultural heritage. In pursuit of its mission to preserve the Jewish heritage in Eastern and South-East Europe, the organisation CENTROPA organised a summer academy for about one hundred teachers in Vienna, Zagreb and Sarajevo. WIZO is a worldwide women’s organisation that supports 800 institutions in Israel. In the year under report, WIZO and MD-EUI continued their collaboration on the renovation of a child day-care centre in Rehovot. At the invitation of Ulm’s Mayor Ivo Gönner, young people participated in a Danube youth camp under the motto “We are Europe”. A meeting of 60 young people from all Danube basin countries took place in Vienna, where the Speaker of the Vienna Provincial Parliament, Harry Kopietz, welcomed them as symbolic “young bridges across the Danube”. A colour guard group from Arezzo (Tuscany) gave a flag-spinning performance in historic costumes in front of Vienna City Hall in early July to mark the beginning of Italy’s EU presidency.

The Arab-European Young Leaders Forum took place for the third time, bringing together 40 young people who are active in social and civil society initiatives in their home countries. Vienna was represented in the meeting by City Council and Provincial Parliament Member Muna Duzdar.

The various departments and institutions of the City Administration welcomed 517 international delegations, or a total of 3,716 visitors, in 2014. The majority of guests came from Germany, followed by groups – distinctly smaller in number – from the Republic of Korea, the Czech Republic, Denmark and Ukraine. The Saudi-Austrian Business Council paid two visits to Vienna, with very full programmes which ranged from the field of medicine to business start-ups to questions relating to Smart City strategies. The agenda of the second visit included meetings with the Austrian-Arab Chamber of Commerce at Vienna City Hall and with the Austrian Institute of Technology. The Saudi delegation was headed by the Mayor of Riyadh, Abdullah A. M. Al-Mogbel.

MD-EUI continued issuing its electronic newsletter about topics of relevance to Vienna. Published quarterly in German and English, the newsletter is targeted at an international readership.
NEW YORK – USA

New York focused on the European centre of culture, Vienna, during three weeks in late February. "Vienna: City of Dreams" was the motto of a festival hosted by the world-famous Carnegie Hall during which more than 90 events featuring prominent artists took place at 23 major arts and cultural centres and academic institutions. City Councillor for Cultural Affairs Andreas Mailath-Pokorny represented the City of Vienna at the opening. In the field of music, concerts by the Vienna Philharmonic and by artists from the Vienna State Opera were among the highlights of the festival.

The festival was opened with a traditional Viennese Opera Ball at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel in the presence of Mr. Mailath-Pokorny, who also attended the opening concert by the Vienna Philharmonic and a panel discussion on “Vienna 1860–1914: Creativity, culture, science and politics,” which had been organised by contemporary historian Oliver Rathkolb. Nobel Laureate Eric Kandel, State Opera director Dominique Meyer and Christian Meyer, director of the Arnold Schönberg Center, also sat on the podium.

Towards the end of his visit to New York, City Councillor Mailath-Pokorny met with George Pilzer, son of the legendary film producer and founder of the Rosenhügel studios in Vienna, Oskar Pilzer. Mr. Pilzer, now 92 years old, who also had a successful career in the film business, was presented with a street sign with the name of his father as a symbolic gift in recognition and appreciation of his father’s achievements. The street sign was subsequently installed in Vienna’s district of Hietzing, where it was unveiled in November in the presence of Mr. Pilzer.
SOFIA – Bulgaria

City Councillor Michael Ludwig visited the Bulgarian capital in March to participate in the opening of an exhibition on “The Vienna Model. Housing for the 21st Century City” and a Viennese Ball. Officials in Sofia expressed great interest in cooperating with Vienna in the areas of social housing and energy-efficient building renovation and retrofitting. During his visit to Sofia City Hall, Mr. Ludwig also presented an initiative for the preservation and further expansion of social and sustainable housing in Europe. The initiative was launched in 2013 by Vienna’s Mayor Michael Häupl and is targeted at all EU capital administrations. A delegation of business representatives accompanied Mr. Ludwig at his political meetings in Sofia. Sofia’s Mayor Jordanka Fandakova was guest of honour at the Viennese Ball.

SEOUL – Republic of Korea

With its dynamic, technologically advanced economy, the Republic of Korea is an important economic partner for Austria, as well as a major market for Austrian cultural exports. Focus activities were led in June by Vienna’s Deputy Mayor Renate Brauner to further intensify relations between Seoul and Vienna. At the heart of the programme was the festival “Vienna Seoul – StartUp!” The City of Vienna presented itself as an attractive European location for start-up companies in the programme events, which were organised in collaboration with Vienna’s Pioneers Festival and several local partners. The festival attracted a high degree of media attention.

The programme of focus activities also included events hosted by the Vienna Tourist Board and featuring Kim Sohyi, a celebrity chef and owner of the restaurant “Kim kocht” in Vienna whose family background is in South Korea. The Vienna Business Agency provided information about the opportunities Vienna offers in the life sciences sector, and the Vienna Film Commission presented the Austrian capital’s potential as a film location to Korean producers. The cultural highlight of the programme was a performance of the musical Mozart! – the fourth staging of the licensed production by the EMK Musical Company. South Korean pop star Hyo Shin Park played the role of Mozart in the production. The City of Vienna invited a large number of guests from the fields of business and culture to the event. The delegation programme included meetings with officials at Seoul City Hall and at the Samsung headquarters.
ISTANBUL – Turkey

With some 14 million inhabitants, Istanbul is one of the fastest-growing metropolises worldwide. The capital of Turkey is the leading economic centre of the Black Sea region, not least because of its favourable geostrategic position between Europe and Asia. Istanbul and Vienna have maintained close bilateral ties for many years.

Among other things, the two cities signed a cooperation agreement in 2011.

Following up on past activities, City Councillor for Housing Michael Ludwig led a delegation of officials and businesspeople on a visit to Istanbul in October 2014. A main focus of activities there was a Smart City Forum which had been organised in cooperation with Austria’s Economic Chamber and the Turkish association of cities and towns. The Forum was dedicated to questions of housing and infrastructure. Representatives of many Turkish cities participated in the event.

At the political meetings, the representatives of both sides underlined their desire for intensified collaboration, and particular interest was expressed in Vienna’s role as an internationally leading “smart city”, especially in the field of social housing. The exhibition “The Vienna Model. Housing for the 21st Century City” was shown at the Austrian Consulate General. A large number of guests from the fields of politics, business and culture attended the opening of the exhibition.
RIO DE JANEIRO – Brazil

Vienna is enjoying growing popularity in Brazil as a tourist destination, as a location for the regional headquarters of Brazilian multinational corporations, but also as a city implementing good practices in urban development that may serve as a source of inspiration for Rio’s own future evolution as one of the most dynamic urban centres in Latin America’s largest country. To tap into additional potentials for close economic, technological and cultural collaboration, the City of Vienna has been intensifying its contacts with Brazil in recent years, with focus activities in São Paulo, Brasília and Rio de Janeiro in 2013. Among the results of these activities was the signing by the two capitals of a cooperation agreement in the areas of technology and economic affairs; moreover, Brasilia funded internships for young Brazilian officials at Austrian institutions of higher learning, and Latin America’s largest media group Organizações Globo chose Vienna as the location for the shooting of a telenovela.

Focus activities in Brazil were resumed in 2014, ensuring continuity in Vienna’s international relations and further sharpening the profile of Austria’s capital as a tourism destination and a centre of business and culture in Brazil, a country with 180 million inhabitants. One objective was to attract Brazilian film and TV productions to Vienna. Given the worldwide distribution of Brazilian productions – especially of telenovelas – the cities and regions that feature in them can expect a significant international advertising impact. Against this background, the Vienna Film Commission and Deputy Mayor Renate Brauner hosted an information event about Vienna as a film location in Rio de Janeiro in October. A large number of Brazilian film producers and directors attended the event in Brazil’s leading film and media city. Rounding off the event, an evening gala reception was given under the motto “Vienna – City of Dreams”, highlighting tourist attractions, the creative industries and economic activity in Vienna for many guests from the world of film and the media. The event attracted much attention in the Brazilian media and was reported by national TV stations as well as print publications.
Bilateral Cooperation
Projects

AMMAN – Jordan

At a performance by the Vienna Boys’ Choir in Amman, capital of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Mayor Aqel Aid Biltaji and Vienna’s official representative at the event, City Council and Provincial Parliament Member Omar Al-Rawi, stressed their intention to cooperate at the municipal level in the future. The main focus in this context will be on best practices and cultural exchange. The Society for Austro-Arab Relations organised a football match between members of the Vienna Boys’ Choir and boys from the National Orthodox School.

BRNO – Czech Republic

The range of activities and projects with Austrian participation in Brno included meetings and events on “Bike Sharing”, school meal programmes and music school classes for blind pupils. The Ackermann Community of Munich, the Bernard Bolzano Society of Prague and the City of Brno organised their 23rd symposium in Brno. Lectures, discussions and excursions at the event, which is traditionally held every year on the Palm Sunday weekend, were dedicated to “People on the margins” in 2014. The Chairman of the Institute for the Danube Region and Central Europe, Vienna and former Deputy Chancellor of Austria, Erhard Busek, gave a lecture at the symposium. The Vienna Tourist Board joined Brno and other partner cities at the “Regiontour” travel and vacation fair. The 13th Austro-Czech Ball took place at the Brno Philharmonic concert hall.
Experts from several cities, including Vienna, attended an international conference of the “Convention of the Network of Cities with Exhibition Colonies in Europe 1927 – 1932”. Austrian academic institutions were among the cooperation partners of the recently launched “CEITEC – Central European Institute of Technology”, which aims at providing a link between science, research and the business community.

The City of Vienna contributed to the restoration of several pieces of furniture at the Villa Tugendhat, a key building of classical modern architecture and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. City Councillor Andreas Mailath-Pokorny handed over the restored items to the Villa Tugendhat at the close of the autumn CENTROPE meeting.

The Villa Tugendhat, a jewel of modernist architecture, was designed by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and built in the years 1929–1930. It was in this building that Václav Klaus and Vladimír Mečiar signed the document that divided Czechoslovakia into two sovereign states in 1992. The building was added to the UNESCO list of World Cultural Heritage Sites in 2001.

With Vienna and Sarajevo as cooperation partners, the Brno House of Arts (Dům umění) showed an exhibition entitled “The Dignity of Man” in remembrance of the outbreak of World War I one hundred years ago.

Representatives of the City of Brno and of the South Moravian Regional Transport System (Integrovaný dopravní systém Jihomoravského kraje) visited the Wiener Lokalbahnen rail company to discuss business management and operational issues. The delegation went on two field trips to the signalling centre at Wiener Neudorf and the workshops at Inzersdorf. Brno and Southern Moravia presented regional cultural highlights and tourist attractions at a press conference in Vienna, which was opened by the Czech Ambassador Jan Sechter.

The Austrian Honorary Consulate was reopened with Georg Stöger as Consul.

Following the Brno City Council elections in October, the city’s parliament elected Petr Vokřál of the ANO party as the new Mayor of Brno. In January 2015, Mr. Vokřál paid a visit to Vienna and met Mayor Michael Häupl. Ambassador Ferdinand Trauttmandorff received an international cooperation award in recognition of his services to bilateral relations between the Czech Republic and Austria, as well as between Vienna and Brno. The award was presented at Brno City Hall in February 2015.

**CENTROPE – Central European Region**

Centrope (Central Europe) is a network of regional and local administrations: the Czech Republic is represented by the Southern Moravian district with Brno;
Slovakia by Bratislava and Trnava with their eponymous capitals; Hungary by the Counties of Győr-Moson-Sopron with the town of Győr and Vas with its administrative centre Szombathely. The Austrian provinces forming part of CENTROPE are Lower Austria, Burgenland and Vienna. The CentrOpe region covers an area of about 44,400 km² with a total population of 6.7 million. The CentrOpe network was established in 2003 to promote cross-border cooperation in the areas of transport, tourism, research and development, the labour market and education.

Mayor Michael Häupl participated in a meeting of political representatives from the region at Villa Tugendhat in Brno. The completion of a motorway linking Vienna and the capital of Moravia was seen as a priority project by the meeting.

Slovakian musician Agnes Katona received the 2014 CENTROPE Prize in honour of her role as the founder of the “International Danube Philharmonic Orchestra”. The prize is endowed with 10,000 euro and presented for outstanding commitment to the cause of cross-border cooperation. The Danube Philharmonic brings together excellent orchestral musicians from the countries involved in the EU Danube Region Strategy. The CENTROPE Prize is sponsored by Raiffeisenlandesbank Niederösterreich-Wien.

UKRAINE

The Längenfeldgasse vocational college hosted the seventh “Creative Festival” in 2014. The event, which took place in the modern ceremonial hall of the school, was organised by officials from Odessa. 500 young artists and musicians from eight nations came together in Vienna and participated in the festival competition. The University of Drohobych held a competition in which teenagers presented their knowledge about Austria. The two winners, a boy and a girl, were invited to spend some time at the De La Salle Gymnasium, a school in Vienna’s 21st district. The Austrian Library in Drohobych organised a tour to Admont, Graz and Vienna for school pupils and students engaged in German language and literature studies.

The City of Lviv celebrated Europe Day in May with a special event: Artists from ten partner cities were invited to create collages with typical motifs from their home cities and display them on public walls located at major intersections around the city. Artists from Graz
and from the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts participated in the event. Mayor Andriy Sadovyi said he regarded the event as a signal of the close bond between Ukraine and Europe.

Numerous events were organised and coordinated by the Austrian Exchange Service (OeAD) headed by Andreas Wenninger, who also holds the office of Attaché for Science and Education at the Austrian Embassy in Kiev. An anthology of texts and translations was published under the title Galizien. Aus dem Großen Krieg ("Galicia. Stories from the Great War") in commemoration of the outbreak of the First World War one hundred years ago. The political crisis notwithstanding, Ukraine’s International Book Fair attracted a record number of visitors. The Danube Lounge was organised as a side event to the fair, offering readings and panel discussions. Among the panellists was Erhard Busek, Chairman of the Institute for the Danube Region and Central Europe (IDM). The Danube Lounge was launched in 2012 at the initiative of the Hungarian cultural institute Collegium Hungaricum with the objective of facilitating meetings of writers at book fairs in the Danube region. OeAD organised a conference in Kremenets (Ternopol Oblast) to mark the 230th anniversary of the birth of botanist Willibald Besser. Born in Innsbruck in 1784, Besser worked and lived in Kremenets for many years.

The Vienna-based NGO “Confinis – association for the implementation of charitable projects in developing countries” engaged in a project to clean up and restore the overgrown Jewish cemetery in Chernivtsi, once the second-largest Jewish cemetery in Europe. The project was sponsored by the Austrian provinces of Carinthia and Vienna. After completion of the work, it is planned to open the cemetery to local and international visitors as one example of the region’s common cultural heritage from the days of the Habsburg Empire.

As in previous years, several delegations visited Vienna, among them groups of students and political representatives. The OSCE invited social enterprise start-ups, NGOs and officials to Vienna, and a team of advisors to the Mayor of Kiev was welcomed in Vienna for presentations and discussions about economic issues.

Humanitarian aid was stepped up to help cope with the crisis in Ukraine. 176 hospital beds were provided for clinics in the Lviv region, and a large truckload of hospital beds, mattresses and blankets was sent to support the setting up of a provisional hospital in Zaporizhia. A humanitarian Christmas programme was again organised for children in Ukraine in cooperation with the Austrian embassy in Kiev. Books, educational games and cuddly toys from the flea market stock of Municipal Department 48 were provided for German-language schools and kindergartens.

Independent candidate Ivo Nesrovnal won the office of Mayor of Bratislava in local government elections in Slovakia. Adriana Krnáčová from the ANO party was elected Mayor of Prague. A Slovakian by birth, she is also the first woman at the helm of the Czech capital. Fellow ANO member Petr Vokříl (ANO) won the elections in Brno. In Warsaw, the incumbent Hanna Gronkiewicz-Waltz (PO) was re-elected to the mayoral office, as was the non-partisan Mayor of Kraków, Jacek Majchrowski.

Charming performances by young artists from Odessa won the hearts of the audience at the “Creative Festival”, which stopped off in Vienna for the 7th time in 2014. (Gals)
Presentations of Foreign Cities in Vienna

MOSCOW

Returning Mayor Michael Häupl’s visit to Moscow in 2013, the Russian capital organised “Moscow Days” in Vienna in 2014. The Vienna Economic Chamber hosted an economic forum, and experts in the fields of health, energy efficiency, security and cultural heritage from both cities met for round table talks. An exhibition of archival materials was mounted in honour of the 525th anniversary of bilateral relations between Moscow and Vienna. The programme was rounded off with an outdoor show dedicated to Moscow’s Gorky Park, which was on display at the centrally located Michaelerplatz, and a visit by Russian athletes to the City of Vienna’s Sports Office. The social highlight of the Moscow Days was a concert at City Hall with artists from the Bolshoi Theatre and the Ambassade Orchestra from Vienna.

Talks between Moscow’s Deputy Mayor Sergey Cheryomin and Mayor Michael Häupl centred on local government issues connected to the cooperation agreement signed by the two cities in 2013.

ZAGREB

The City of Zagreb organised activities with an economic focus in Vienna in May. The programme included a meeting of the two mayors, an economic forum hosted in cooperation with the Federation of Austrian Industries and meetings of representatives of the two cities’ public utility systems.
Membership in International Organisations

AER – Assembly of European Regions

With 205 member regions and 16 inter-regional networks, the Assembly of European Regions is still by far the largest regional-level organisation, whose importance is also due to the fact that its membership includes regions beyond the borders of the European Union. The AER’s partners are European institutions, including the Commission and the Council of Europe, and it also contributes to thematic activities, such as the Europe 2020 Strategy. AER has offices in Strasbourg and Brussels. Austria is represented in the AER by six members. The provinces of Upper and Lower Austria as well as Vienna are members of the AER Political Bureau. Vienna is especially interested in AER as a bridge between Western, Central, Eastern and South-East Europe, and as a link to Turkey and the regions of the Caucasus, Ukraine and Russia. The Annual General Assembly took place in Wrocław in the spring.

AER’s three standing committees conducted their regular activities. Committee I – Economy and Regional Development was chaired by Timișoara, Committee II – Health and Social Affairs by Norbotten and Committee III – Culture, Education, Youth and International Cooperation by Nordland. Furthermore, AER contributed to Interreg IV projects of the EU and prepared reports on various topics, including youth participation and business enterprises. AER hosted a series of events, including training academies on the EU grant system and peer reviews, and continued its partnership with “R20 – Regions of Climate Action”, an initiative founded by Arnold Schwarzenegger. A highlight of the 2014 calendar of events was “ALEC 2014 – Arctic Light e-Health Conference”, which was hosted by Sweden’s northernmost city of Kiruna in February. The key topic of discussions there was the participation of patients in health-care processes. The keynote speaker at the event was the President of Estonia, Toomas Hendrik Ilves. At the invitation of the Romanian region of Vrancea, the fifth Black Sea Conference took place at the expansive parliamentary palace in Bucharest; the opening speech was given by Prime Minister Victor-Viorel Ponta, who was accompanied at the event by the Romanian Foreign Minister and Minister of Communication. The key topic of the conference was good governance. A seminar on “Public Innovation” was organised in Ankara.

A high point of the AER’s 2014 activities was the Summer Academy in Novi Sad, capital of the Serbian Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, in late August. The event was attended by about 130 participants, more than half of them teenagers.

Wrocław is the capital of the Polish Voivodeship of Lower Silesia (Dolnośląskie). It has about 700,000 inhabitants, making it Poland’s fourth-largest city. The city passed from Habsburg to Prussian rule in the 18th century and became a part of Poland in 1945. Today it is a centre of education, business and the arts. Dietrich Bonhoeffer was born here in 1906. (TJR)
**Vojvodina** is an autonomous province within Serbia and was part of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy until 1918. The characteristic architectural style of the regional capital Novi Sad and other cities and towns in Vojvodina closely resembles that found in many other regions across the Habsburg Empire. In addition to its population of ethnic Serbs, Vojvodina is home to 25 other ethnic groups and has six official languages. On 1 February 2015, Novi Sad celebrated the 267th anniversary of its elevation to the status of Royal Free Town with many international guests, including visitors from Vienna. The historic privilege was conferred by Empress Maria Theresia in 1748.

The Summer Academy participants came from 36 regions in 21 countries of Europe. Presentations and workshops, as well as excursions, included one to the historic Habsburg town of Subotica, addressed multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-lingual challenges. The Vienna Inter-cultural Centre presented its activities, including its role as Austria’s National Agency for the EU’s Erasmus+ programme.

The Youth Regional Network (YRN) discussed issues facing young entrepreneurs at a meeting in Jönköping in spring. Elections to the AER bodies were held at the autumn conference in Istanbul. The Croatian County of Vafazdin took over the Presidency, with Kaliningrad and Vienna as Vice Presidents. The network currently has about 45 European members.

**ARC – Airport Regions Conference**

www.airportregions.org

Vienna cooperated with Barcelona, Eindhoven, Stockholm, Leipzig, Paris, Masovia, Prague, Malta and Bologna on the EU project “D’AIR – Decarbonated Airport Regions” during the last three years to bring down CO₂ emissions at airports. The project analysed and compared ecologically sustainable transport network options for air transport hubs.

The ARC has been active for 20 years as an interest group of cities and regions with international airports and currently has about 30 members in the EU and in Norway. Its programmes, discussions, projects, peer reviews and meetings focus primarily on the balance between the economic benefit of airports on one hand and the quality of life of nearby residents as well as the ecology of the surrounding region on the other. Erich Valentin, Member of Vienna’s City Council and Provincial Parliament, has held the position of ARC Vice President since 2011.

**CoR – Committee of the Regions**

www.cor.eu

The Committee convened in five plenary sessions in 2014 to adopt some 80 opinions prepared by its expert commissions. Vienna was represented in the expert commissions for culture, youth, education and research (EDUC) and for cohesion policy, transport and urban policy (COTER). The urban agenda was a key area of work. The CoR called for integrated policy-making processes with and for the cities. These and other policy statements were included in a position paper and a draft charter prepared by CoR that called for greater emphasis on multilevel governance in Europe. Vienna was also actively involved in the efforts of the networks set up by CoR for Europe 2020 and subsidiarity monitoring. These networks make for a speedy, unburdaicratric exchange of information which facilitates the involvement of regions, towns and municipalities in the decision-making process. Vienna also contributed to the interregional group of “Regions with Legislative Powers”.

The Committee of the Regions celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2014. It was created by the Maastricht Treaty and held its opening meeting in Brussels on 9–10 March 1994. Markku Markkula, Member of the City Council of Espoo, was elected as CoR President in February 2015. His term in office is two and a half years.

The Committee of the Regions provides institutional representation for the regions, cities and municipalities within the EU and supports the European Parliament, the Council and the European Commission in an advisory function. 353 members from 28 member states are involved in the legislative procedure. Austria is represented by twelve Members and an equal number of Alternate Members. Vienna’s representatives for the period 2010–2015 were Mayor Michael Häupl as Member and Deputy Mayor Renate Brauner as Alternate Member. City Council Member Elisabeth Vitouch, who also chairs the City Council Committee on European and International Affairs, was delegated by the Austrian Association of Cities and Towns. The Austrian delegation was chaired by the Speaker of the Provincial Parliament of Tyrol, Herwig van Staa.
Eurocities is the biggest network of European cities with populations of more than 250,000 inhabitants. It has 130 member cities from 30 countries. It provides a platform for cooperation on matters of urban interest and serves as a lobby for cities’ interests vis-à-vis the European institutions. Vienna is a member of the executive committee of Eurocities. Anna Lisa Boni, an official from the French region Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur, was appointed as the network’s new Secretary-General. Eurocities held its annual general assembly in Munich in 2014. Under the keynote theme “Energising Cities” the participants discussed questions related to energy efficiency and environmental protection. The Mayor of Nantes, Johanna Rolland, was appointed as the new President of Eurocities. Cardiff and Reykjavik joined Eurocities as new members, and cities from Greece, Sweden, Turkey and Belgium registered as associated members.

Liverpool was the 2014 winner of a Eurocities Award for energy efficiency in social housing and SMEs in neglected areas; Vilnius won an award for an interactive energy classification card, and the city of Malaga received a Eurocities Award for energy-efficient renovation projects with participation by building occupants.

A total of 38 officials from various municipal departments of the City of Vienna were active in many of the organisation’s 33 forums and working groups: Cooperation Platform, Cooperation and Participation (WG Branding Management and City Attractiveness, WG European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement), Cultural Forum, Economic Development Forum (WG Cohesion Policy, WG Metropolitan Areas), Eco-Forum (WGs Air Quality, Climate Change and Energy Efficiency, Green Areas, Greening the Local Economy, Waste Management, Water), Knowledge Society Forum (WG Inclusion, Open Data, Service Directive Implementation, Smart Cities, Smart Cities Virtual), Mobility Forum (WG Barrier-free Cities for All, Developing a New Mobility Culture, International Accessibility), Social Affairs (WG Education – Inclusion through Education and WG Health and Wellbeing, sub-WG Substance Abuse Prevention), Housing and Homelessness (sub-WG Homelessness, WG Migration and Integration). Vienna chaired the Working Groups on Housing and European Neighbourhood Policy and was vice-chair of the Homelessness Working Group. A Task Force chaired by Vienna (vice-chair: Birmingham) was charged with monitoring and influencing the urban agenda of the European Commission.


**MEMBERSHIP IN INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS**

17
FemCities

This network was established by the Women’s Issues Department of the City of Vienna (MA 57) and serves as an international forum for women- and equality-related issues. FemCities provides a platform for exchange and networking through conferences and other events.

The annual conference was held in Graz in 2014 under the headline theme “Towards gender equality – instruments put to the test: The European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life, gender mainstreaming and active measures to promote women”. 60 women from 19 cities in seven European countries participated in the conference. St. Pölten, Klagenfurt and an NGO from the Serbian city of Leskovac joined FemCities as new partners in the network.

A project module implemented in the context of the EU’s Danube Region Strategy was “Vienna Girls’ Day goes FemCities”; the Girls’ Day is held every year to support girls in making diversified career decisions that go beyond traditional roles. A delegation from Sarajevo attended workshops and visited businesses on the Vienna Girls’ Day in April. FemCities also maintained contacts with the EUSDR office in Vienna.

IRE – Institute of the Regions of Europe

The migration of rural populations to the big cities causes significant problems. The issues resulting from global imbalances between rural and urban areas were discussed at the three-day “10th Conference of European Regions and Cities” which IRE organised at Vienna City Hall. Under the keynote theme “Europe 2050: Overcrowded Metropolises – Empty Provinces”, the 2014 annual IRE conference offered presentations and panel discussions on regional transport, renewable energy, broadband Internet networks and regional tourism. Speakers and participants from business and politics discussed proactive strategies to cope with existing challenges and presented best-practice examples. Among the meeting’s prominent speakers were Kandeh K. Yumkella, United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Sustainable Energy for All, and American political scientist Benjamin R. Barber.

The IRE organised six other conferences in five countries in 2014 to discuss Smart Cities, the importance of regional media in South-East Europe and broadband networks in rural areas, and to celebrate Europe Day. A series of events dedicated to regional assemblies and parliaments was continued in Brčko after meetings in Dresden and Vukovar in the previous year. Within the EU, regional parliaments are responsible for informing local citizens about European law, values and activities. In candidate countries, it is incumbent on them to address issues relating to the future implementation of EU legislation at an early stage. The IRE activities also include the publication of academic articles and occasional papers.

Several new members joined the IRE: Bela Palanka in Serbia, the former royal residence and capital of Montenegro, Cetinje, the region of Prahova in Romania, the Croatian county Brod-Posavina, the Central Czech region Vysočina and network operator ZTE Austria. The IRE is based in Salzburg; as of February 2015, it had 124 members from 19 countries, including not only municipalities and regions, but also companies from the energy and environment sectors, transport and logistics, telecommunication and services, financial institutions, real estate and consulting businesses, as well as universities and other institutions of higher learning.
The 14th LHC World Conference took place in the new member city of Yangzhou. It is thought that Marco Polo may once have been governor of this historic city on the Yangtze Kiang, which has about five million inhabitants today. A fact of historical certainty is that Yangzhou used to be a major centre of Chinese painting. Under the conference motto "Historical Cities: Ancient Culture integrated into Modern Civilization" cities presented their solutions for reconciling historic legacy and present-day environments. In the face of climate change, many cities are opting for green growth. The city of Baghdad issued a dramatic appeal to the international community to protect the cultural heritage of Iraq – a region which was one of the cradles of civilisation in the era of ancient Mesopotamia.

A new board was elected at the conference, with Kyoto as chair and Xi’an and Vienna as vice-chairs. The other board members are Gyeongju, Konya, Ballarat, Ljubljana, Baghdad and Nara. The LHC now has 106 member cities from 62 countries; Suwon, Gizeh, Yazd and Shiras were admitted as new members in 2014, and the Ecuadorian city of Cuenca joined the League in February 2015. The League of Historical Cities was founded in Kyoto in 1986 with the objective of contributing to world peace. Historical cities are faced with similar challenges and cooperate across borders to protect and preserve their cultural heritage. World conferences, bilateral cooperation and the publication of a magazine all facilitate communication and the exchange of expertise.

The 2016 World Conference of the LHC will take place in Bad Ischl in Austria. The town where Emperor Franz Joseph I used to spend his summers is a leading holiday resort and spa, as well as a major conference centre today. The event will be organised in cooperation with the UNESCO World Cultural Heritage cities Hallstatt, Salzburg and Vienna.

The Mayor of Kyoto and LHC President Daisaku Kadokawa and other board members express their desire for world peace on this information board near the historic city walls of Kyoto. (LHC)
The autumn meeting of the heads of city administrations from Budapest, Brussels, Helsinki, Ljubljana, Nicosia, Paris, Tallinn, Vilnius and Vienna took place in Latvia’s capital Riga, one of the two European Capitals of Culture 2014¹. Discussions at the meeting focused on educational infrastructure and the challenges posed by public transport issues. At the spring meeting in Prague, the Chief Executive Director of the City and Federal Province of Vienna, Erich Hechtner, joined his counterparts from Central Europe for discussions about flood protection and energy supply issues. The meeting was also used to prepare an international conference in Vienna.

Bilateral meetings took place between Chief Executive Director Erich Hechtner and the top administrative officials from Stockholm and Brno, Irene Svenonius and Pavel Loutocký.

Coordination of Climate Protection Measures

The Austrian Climate Alliance and the “Federação das Organizações Indígenas do Rio Negro” in Brazil celebrated the 20th anniversary of the partnership under the motto “Together for Climate and Rainforest”. The members of the Austrian Climate Alliance are 950 local communities and districts, all federal provinces, the City of Vienna, five districts of Vienna, twelve schools and 38 business enterprises. The Climate Alliance works for the recognition of the rights of indigenous peoples and the protection of the rainforests in a territory that extends over 122,000 km².

¹ The other European Capital of Culture is Umeå in the Swedish region Västerbotten.
The City of Vienna’s Climate Protection Coordination Unit (MD-KLI) participated in the Energy Week in Brussels, which was dedicated primarily to sustainability issues. The funding of climate protection policies was discussed at a Covenant of Mayors meeting. Vienna joined the European Covenant of Mayors in 2014. Covenant signatories commit themselves to improving energy efficiency and reducing CO₂ emissions on their territories. MD-KLI speakers presented Vienna’s Climate Protection Programme at the international “Climate Dialogue” in Berlin.

A 30-strong delegation of politicians from Copenhagen, as well as visitors from Haifa, Prague and Yokohama were welcomed in Vienna for talks about the city’s climate protection policies. The German-language Slovak magazine Pressburger Zeitung ran a feature article on municipal climate protection policies.

Colouring books with climate-related content were provided for the association of Austrian expats in Rome, whose foundation dates back to 1926.

**Strategic Energy Policy**

The Strategic Energy Policy Unit (MDE) engaged in exchanges with national and international experts and presented the City of Vienna’s energy policy at meetings. Moreover, MDE organised and participated in meetings of the EU research project “Marie Curie CI-NERGY” led by the Stuttgart University of Technology. The trilemma of energy and climate protection policy – economy, supply safety and ecology – was discussed at a conference in Oxford. MDE gave one of 60 presentations on the topic. At the annual meeting of the German Renewable Energy Research Association FVEE in Berlin, MDE representatives gathered information about the wider political context in which Germany intends to achieve its Energiewende, i.e. the transition to renewable, non-nuclear energy sources.

At the annual energy talks in Ossiach, which have been held there since 1997, experts discussed the opportunities and risks of future business models in the energy sector. MDE participated in a congress of Austria’s social partners in Bad Ischl which was also attended by international guests. The meeting discussed the EU’s energy policy objectives and how to stimulate growth and promote employment. At the annual conference of the Institute of the Regions of Europe (IRE), MDE officials spoke about the shift to renewable energy sources. The meeting took place at Vienna City Hall, as did the energy and ecology conference “Zero Emission Cities”.

MDE presented its activities at a conference that was co-hosted by the Austrian Ministry of Science, Research and Economic Affairs and the Paris-based International Energy Agency (IEA), as well as at the “Russia Days” sponsored by the Austrian Institute of Technology (AIT) in Vienna.

**Executive Group for Personnel and Internal Auditing (MD-PR)**

The Human Resources Unit of MD-PR continued to promote international perspectives. Dublin was added to the list of mutual internship exchange destinations (previously Berlin, Paris and the Vienna House Brussels). The Director of Personnel and Internal Auditing, Martina Schmied, signed the agreement for the future exchanges in the Irish capital.

At a training course of the International Anti-Corruption Academy (IACA) in Laxenburg, participants from Tanzania, Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of Congo and from Bangladesh were informed about Vienna’s anti-corruption hotline 4000-82-400 and about risk analysis processes to prevent corruption. Officials from Stockholm and Vienna attended an anti-corruption meeting of the Deutsches Institut für Urbanistik, a local government think-tank in Berlin. Vienna contributed a presentation on the role of internal audit units in corruption prevention.
Executive Group for Organisation, Safety and Security (MD-OS)

The head of MD-OS, Director of Organisation and Security Wolfgang Müller, together with Director of Finance Dietmar Griebler, participated in expert talks on public-private partnerships in Düsseldorf. Smart city strategies were the focus of discussions at a meeting of a municipal management think-tank (Kommunale Gemeinschaftsstelle für Verwaltungsmanagement, KGS) in Dresden. MD-OS was also present at a conference on the future of government and administration in Berlin.

The Quality Management Unit received the Mayor of Belgrade Siniša Mali and participated in a conference in Rome on the implementation of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) for quality management in the education sector. Gender mainstreaming continued to draw much international interest. Experts from the Management Instruments Unit and from the Department for Gender Mainstreaming met with visitors from several European countries and from Malaysia to discuss the implementation of gender mainstreaming policies in various departments and administrative units, such as planning and education, as well as the integration of gender aspects in management instruments and skills training. The Department for Gender Mainstreaming participated in a meeting on the future of equal rights work in Zurich, the FemCities conference in Graz and a CEMR meeting in Brussels. A publication of the European Institute for Gender Equality cited Vienna’s gender mainstreaming policy as a best practice model.

The Crisis Management and Emergency Measures Unit organised an international crisis management conference which brought about one hundred crisis management and disaster relief experts to Vienna City Hall. Among the questions discussed at the conference was what to do if electricity supply systems were to fail on a pan-European scale for any significant amount of time; another major topic was cyber security. Officials from the unit participated in an exercise on “large-scale power failures” in Prague. Regular bilateral consultations again took place in Masovia, where the experts discussed crisis management, policing and fire rescue and ambulance services.

MD-OS welcomed visitors from Poland, Moscow, Berlin and the Republic of Korea.

The Process Management and ICT Strategy Unit presented its open-source software solutions at the 2014 Conference of the Major Cities of Europe in Dublin. The Zeppelin University in Friedrichshafen organised a workshop on the same topic. At a meeting of the Major Cities of Europe in Zurich, MD-OS gave a presentation on e-security awareness programmes. The digital agenda and e-government 4.0 were items on the agenda of a symposium in Munich.

Executive Group for Construction and Technology (MD-BD)

Director of Planning Thomas Madreiter spoke at international conferences in Bucharest, Istanbul, Basel and Rome. Officials from Kraków and Frankfurt/Main visited Vienna to learn about the Smart City Strategy. The Public Works Group engaged in expert exchanges about tunnel safety at a fire safety forum in Amsterdam. The City of Gdansk hosted a conference on active mobility. The shared space design for Vienna’s busy shopping area Mariahilfer Strasse was presented at the Velo-City Conference in Adelaide. Working meetings on barrier-free public spaces took place in Barcelona and in the context of the EUROCITIES Mobility Forum in Venice. The Environmental Technology and Official Procedures Group met colleagues from the same field at a city dialogue meeting in Bratislava.

MD-BD’s project management experts launched a cooperation project with the University of Maribor. The project is about statistical evaluations to assess the
effectiveness in practice of construction management. A survey found that 75 per cent of respondents believed that project management is a decisive factor for the success of a project.

Vienna’s new Central Rail Station was opened and will be in full operation as of 2015. MD-BD led 331 international visitors on tours of the site and visits to the “bahnorama” exhibition and viewing platform. The project managers of the Seestadt Aspern urban development zone received numerous international enquiries. The “dancing cranes” spectacle was seen by an audience of 15,000 and was also covered by foreign media. International visitors to the Seestadt Aspern development zone included delegations from Tunis, Kaiserslautern, Jordan and Kazakhstan. Officials from the City of Zagreb’s public utilities were interested in learning about Vienna’s land use and property development strategy.

Vienna’s gender-sensitive urban design and planning approaches continued to attract interest beyond expert circles, including in Tel Aviv-Yafo, Rome and London. No fewer than 1,240 participants from 80 countries came together at the Global Summit of Women in Paris. A number of invitations were issued after Vienna’s activities had been covered in feature articles and interviews in the press and on radio. MD-BD develops its gender-sensitive planning on the basis of a policy manual entitled Gender Mainstreaming in der Stadtplanung und Stadtentwicklung (“Gender Mainstreaming in Urban Planning and Urban Development”). Meetings with Turkish programme coordinators took place in Ankara in the context of the UN Programme “Women-friendly Cities”. Vienna’s good practice model for gender mainstreaming in hospitals was presented at Klinikum Nürnberg, the city of Nuremberg’s general hospital. The planning unit of MD-BD participated in a meeting at the UN Office Vienna and welcomed visitors from Denmark, Serbia and Ukraine, as well as from the Bavarian University of Applied Sciences at Weihenstephan.

EDUCATION, YOUTH, INFORMATION AND SPORTS

Young people from all EU member states, Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey came together in the Council Chamber of Vienna City Hall for the session of a “Model European Parliament”. City Councillor Christian Oxonitsch welcomed the 170 16- to 19-year-old participants. The assembly was also addressed by Austria’s former Chancellor Franz Vranitzky. The debates of the Model Parliament focused on environmental issues, youth unemployment and Internet freedom.

Politicians from Denmark informed City Councillor Christian Oxonitsch about the Eurovision Song Contest and discussed urban planning, economic issues and tourism with the Speaker of the Vienna Provincial Parliament, Harry Koptietz, and Deputy Mayor Maria Vassilakou.

The “Vienna Congress com.sult” took place for the 11th time in 2014. Political decision-makers and members of the academic and research communities discussed Europe’s future perspectives at the event.

Several foreign delegations visited Municipal Department 10 (MA 10 – Vienna Children’s Day Care Centres) to gather information about the Department’s high-quality care and elementary education services. Students from the University of Tübingen toured the training school for kindergarten teachers and training kindergartens. The Mayor of Priština, Shpend Ahmeti, visited the new Sonnwendviertel education campus for children up to age 14. September 2014 saw the inauguration of the so-called “market square” there, an open multi-use space for all children. Educators from the Czech Republic visited Vienna in the context of an EU project to learn about the methods and models of preschool education that are in use here. A delegation from Plön in the German state of Schleswig-Holstein travelled to Vienna on a Leonardo da Vinci grant to hear lectures about the promotion of language learning.

The Youth and Family Welfare Office (MA 11) maintained international contacts through its membership in the European Network of Social Authorities (ENSA)
and participated in information exchanges about current challenges in child and youth support work via the “Special Youth Care” platform. A meeting in Dietzenbach in the German state of Hesse focussed on questions relating to unaccompanied minors who are refugees in EU states. In the context of a cross-institutional experiential learning project, five young people were able to participate in one of the biggest international rowing competitions, the Vogalonga regatta in Venice. Some 2,000 boats with a total of 8,000 crew members competed at the four-day event. The outdoor event posed great challenges and offered rewarding experiences that bolstered the self-esteem of the young participants, some of whom had never before been to the seaside or slept in a tent.

Several delegations visited MA 11 to gather information about its social services for children and young people. Students from the city of Tongyeong on the South Korean coast were working on a research paper on infanticide and child abandonment, for which MA 11 provided information about the baby hatch, anonymous births and adoption. An Australian organisation was interested in learning about homes and crisis centres. The legislative background was a point of interest for students of the Catholic University of Applied Sciences in Münster, North Rhine-Westphalia. In the context of a project against domestic violence, officials from the Montenegro Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs gathered information about reporting processes in the event of perceived danger. MA 11 officials presented the legal basis of child protection work in Vienna for a group of visitors from Brazil.

The Drehscheibe centre

The Drehscheibe is an MA 11 unit that supports and assists minors from other countries in Vienna and organises their return to their home countries, working together with relevant authorities and organisations. Drehscheibe offers living quarters for unaccompanied foreign minors while they are in Vienna. Senior officials from the Moldovan Ministry of Social Affairs participated in a training course in Vienna to facilitate closer cooperation when returning young people to their home countries. Training courses were also offered to social workers from Bulgaria. The assistance of the Bulgarian Embassy was instrumental in continuing cooperation in this field quickly and effectively. The Drehscheibe centre welcomed a group of visitors from a training college for social workers in Nuremberg, and Croatia’s public broadcasting corporation “Hrvatska radiotelevizija” (HRT) produced a 40-minute documentary about the centre.

The director of Drehscheibe, Norbert Ceipek, who has received several international awards in recognition of his work, was invited to speak at a number of conferences, including a meeting of all Bulgarian crisis intervention centres in Pleven. At a meeting hosted by the Ministry of Social Affairs in Sofia, both sides agreed to appoint officials to act as direct contact persons for the repatriation of unaccompanied minors and to intensify training activities. The feasibility of searching for the families of unaccompanied minor refugees was debated at a conference in Brussels; the conclusions of the meeting were submitted to the European Parliament. Trafficking of children for forced begging and pickpocketing in Europe’s cities was discussed at a conference in London. About 500 children are believed to live in Europe in these conditions, about one hundred of them in Vienna. The resulting damage is quite high; children are trafficked from one city to the next, but not always under different names. Officials from the Drehscheibe spoke about the centre’s cooperation with police and NGOs at meetings in Hungary and Slovakia and presented their activities to a meeting of about one hundred social workers from all over Estonia, which took place in Tallinn. Estonia plans to establish a similar institution there. Drehscheibe officials gave a presentation on child trafficking at the Evangelische Hochschule Nürnberg (EVHN) – University of Applied Sciences.

Municipal Department 13 (MA 13) is responsible for several administrative areas which can broadly be grouped under the heading Education and Out-of-School Activities for Children and Young People. Karl Ceplak, Head of the Youth Section, led a delegation to Zurich and Basel to learn about “open youth work” in the two Swiss cities. Students from the School of Economics and Social Studies of the University of Tübingen and from the Münster University of Applied Sciences, as well as officials from the City of Berlin, were welcomed in Vienna for talks about children and youth work here. A fresh start was made to launch cooperation with Helsinki, and the traditionally strong relations with Jerusalem were continued and further enhanced.

A meeting on youth work in the school context brought 300 participants to Vienna and was opened by City Council Member Tanja Wehsely. Opening addresses at the Vienna Games Conference FROG at City Hall were given by the Federal Minister for Family and
Youth, Sophie Karmasin, and City Councillor Christian Oxonitsch. The conference provided a forum for dialogue between game studies experts and game designers. Youth workers participated in the FORUM 2014 held in Merano, which focused on youth work and schools. The Youth Section’s continuing education activities addressed the issues of radicalisation and extremist tendencies among young people. In this context, youth workers from Vienna met for talks and discussions with experts from German ministries and from academic institutions in Berlin, Nuremberg, Munich, Flensburg, Erlangen, Utrecht and Zagreb.

Designers from Thailand and students from the Prague Fashion School participated in workshops at the Fashion Design School at Schloss Hetzendorf, underlining the school’s excellent reputation. The programme “People to People” brought students from Louisiana to Vienna. Student exchanges with Eastbourne College in East Sussex were continued in the year under report, and students from the millinery and product design programmes at Hetzendorf went on a trip to Italy to gather first-hand information in the leather and millinery sectors there.

The Hetzendorf Fashion Design School showcased its students’ skills at international competitions, including the Style Award in Frankfurt/Main and the British Feltmakers Design Award in London. Two students from the millinery department won the Craftsmanship and Commercial Prizes at the London event.

The Vienna Public Libraries organised a rich and varied programme of events over the course of the year, offering book presentations, panel discussions, readings, exhibitions and action days to their patrons. Authors from Great Britain, Germany, the United States, Finland, Iceland and Serbia presented their new books. A reading and book presentation was also given by Andrey Kurkov from Ukraine. The Vienna Public Libraries cooperated with the Robert Bosch Foundation to support events for children with writers and artists from the Czech Republic, Poland and Russia. Moreover, cooperation projects were carried out with several embassies.

Library staff participated in a meeting of German librarians in Bremen and attended the annual meeting of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) in Lyon. Officials from the city libraries of Belgrade and of Neuss, North Rhine-Westphalia, were among the many expert visitors to the Vienna Public Libraries.

The Vienna Music School presented its repertoire to a delegation from Germany.

Vienna’s adult education institution Wiener Volkshochschulen (VHS) GmbH completed six projects under the EU programmes Grundtvig and Leonardo da Vinci in 2014. The project topics included multi-generational learning, women-specific biographical work and new concepts for educational work with migrants. Implementation of seven ongoing projects continued apace. The Volkshochschulen also hosted information events focused on socio-political issues and international developments. One example were discussions about human rights, which were organised in collaboration with international NGOs. Visitors from the adult education sector in Berlin were interested in expert talks and networking.

Apprentices had an opportunity to get to know the EU institutions during a trip to Brussels. The head of Vienna’s recycling centre for discarded electrical equipment gave a presentation at a meeting in San Salvador. Officials from the Turkish cities of Izmir and Yalova and from the Slovakian World Cultural Heritage city Banská Štiavnica participated in networking meetings that took place in the context of the EU projects. Continuing education conferences for participants from the German-speaking region of Europe were held in Munich and Leipzig.

As in previous years, the KONSuni performing arts school (Konservatorium Wien private university), which is owned by the City of Vienna, engaged in a wide range of activities with an international focus.
As a member of the Association Européenne des Conservatoires, Académies de Musique et Musik-hochschulen (AEC) and of the European League of Institutes of the Arts (ELIA), KONSuni participates regularly in expert meetings abroad. In the year under report, KONSuni officials attended conferences in Budapest (Annual Congress), Vicenza (Early Music Platform) and Aalborg (International Relations Coordinators Meeting).

Young musical theatre talents from the universities of Berlin, Essen, Leipzig, Munich, Osnabrück and Vienna participated in the annual graduates’ presentation which KONSuni hosted for the second time in 2014. The event has become an established professional forum which gives the performers an opportunity to showcase their talent and skills to an audience of experts from all parts of the German-speaking region.

The dance department promoted student mobility through regular exchanges with counterpart institutions in Bratislava, Berlin, Istanbul and Dresden. The programmes provided ample opportunity to exchange experience and get to know other training models. Summer courses (masterclasses) for early music were organised for the first time in cooperation with the University of Bologna and the Trossingen University of Music in the German state of Baden-Württemberg.

KONSuni students performed a rich musical programme at the opening event for the new EU mobility programme Erasmus+ at Vienna’s Hofburg conference centre. KONSuni was awarded the Erasmus Charter of Higher Education under the Erasmus+ Programme. In the context of European education programmes, KONSuni engaged in ongoing strategic partnerships with more than one hundred institutions of excellent standing, including the Sibelius Academy Helsinki, the Hanns Eisler School of Music in Berlin and the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester. Working constantly to expand its international contacts, KONSuni was able to sign a bilateral agreement with the Conservatoire national supérieur de musique et de danse de Paris in 2014.

A notable example of cross-disciplinary and inter-university cooperation was the Vienna Summer School in Urban Studies. In addition to academic collaboration, the closing event was organised together with KONSuni.

The Vienna Schools Department (MA 56) organised tours of the newly built Sonnwendviertel school complex near the new Central Rail Station. Delegations from Kosovo, Switzerland and Germany participated in the visits. A visit by a group of experts from Armenia focused on examples of completed building renovations and the technical aspects of refurbishment.

Press and Information Service (PID)

Organisational and financial support for Viennese Balls around the world is one of the many activities of Vienna’s Press and Information Service (PID – Municipal Department 53). The venues of the 27 balls which took place in 2014 were:

- Athens, Milan, Ottawa, Prague, Halifax, Vilnius, Berlin, Brussels, New York, Basel, Boston, Sofia, Cyprus, Bucharest, Denmark, Ulan Bator, Moscow, Shanghai, Opatija, Ashgabat, Belgrade, Rome, Mumbai, Montréal, Budapest, Trieste and Timişoara

The PID invited media representatives to Vienna to disseminate information about the City’s achievements through international channels. While culture continued to be an important theme, other topics such as services of general interest, the Smart City strategy and housing policies attracted more and more interest. Foreign journalists accredited in Vienna were invited on an excursion to the mountain springs at Kaiserbrunn, one of the sources of Vienna’s drinking water supply, and to a media talk with Mayor Michael Häupl. Numerous enquiries from international media underlined the effectiveness of continuous activities in
defined markets. Additional topics in this context were youth work, care for the elderly and infrastructure.

The international communication unit of PID collaborated with other sections in reporting on international issues and providing content for the wien.at media, i.e. the City of Vienna’s website, intranet and various print products. News was provided in formats that matched defined target groups. Reports were published in 2014 on the European Parliament elections in May and the third Danube Forum held at Vienna City Hall in June, to name but two examples, and supplements were produced on the Centrope region. The European Newspaper Congress brought together some 500 editors, publishers and online specialists at Vienna City Hall.

The PID also contributed communication expertise and media know-how to cross-departmental projects. One example was a project on “Diversity in the Economy and Local Integration” sponsored by the EU and the Council of Europe, another a human rights conference hosted at Vienna City Hall. Expert exchanges with partner cities were continued. Numerous groups of experts, officials and students were welcomed by PID, in some cases in cooperation with the Austrian Press Club Concordia and its President Andreas Koller, editor-in-chief of the Vienna office of the daily Salzburger Nachrichten.

The PID translation unit managed roughly 90 translations and 15 interpreting assignments per month for departments and institutions of the City of Vienna, covering not only German, English and French, but also many other languages, from Albanian to Urdu.

STADT WIEN MARKETING

Stadt Wien Marketing GmbH supports, facilitates and organises events with combined attendance figures of some three million per year. Among the most popular are the “Wiener Eisraum”, a temporary 7000 m² ice-skating rink in front of City Hall in winter, and an open-air film festival in the same location in summer, as well as the New Year’s Eve celebrations, which took place in the city centre for the 25th time on New Year’s Eve 2014/2015. Besides these, Stadt Wien Marketing managed several other events of varying sizes on behalf of the City of Vienna in 2014, including a Festival of Animals on the Danube Island, an Open Day at City Hall, a competition for Vienna’s top athletes and a “day of vineyard walks”.

VIENNA BOARD OF EDUCATION

The CENTRAL Europe Project “Smart Point” was implemented to provide a point of contact for young and would-be entrepreneurs. Working together on the project in the year under report were Bratislava, Budapest, Prague, Modena, Venice, Stuttgart and Vienna. The project, which is hosted by the Catholic School of Education in Vienna, provides important orientation for teachers and pupils. Schools in Vienna participated in 62 European and 49 e-twinning projects in the year under report, all of them listed in a report entitled Europäische Projekte an Wiener Schulen (“European Projects at Viennese Schools”).

The President of the Board of Education, Dr. Susanne Brandsteidl, presented publications about “Austria and the EU” and “European projects at Viennese schools” to teenage school pupils on Europe Day (9 May). (Stadtschulrat)
VIENNA FILM COMMISSION

The Vienna Film Commission provides free support services for film and TV productions of documentaries and feature films, as well as commercials. The Commission coordinates contacts and processes to help film teams obtain permits, among other things. Moreover, it assists film-makers in finding suitable locations and identifying service partners. The Commission’s remit also includes promotion of Vienna as a location for film shoots and productions.

In 2014, the Commission provided services to 108 international productions from EU member states, Macedonia, North America, Asia, Brazil, Israel, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates and New Zealand. Among the year’s most prominent productions were Woman in Gold and Mission Impossible 5.

The Vienna Film Commission participated in the film festivals in Berlin and Cannes, visited the Locations Trade Show in Los Angeles and presented itself in Seoul and Rio de Janeiro. Individual location tours were organised for several film productions, including projects from Argentina, Australia and India.

FINANCE, ECONOMIC AFFAIRS AND VIENNA PUBLIC UTILITIES

Deputy Mayor Renate Brauner presented a survey on demographic trends in Vienna in the summer. Entitled “Growing Vienna”, the report expected Vienna’s population to grow to 1.95 million inhabitants by 2024 and forecast that the two-million mark will be reached by 2029. The share of young people was expected to increase, as was that of the elderly. The statistics are an important basis for infrastructure development plans.

The Financial Affairs Department (MA 5) funded 50% of the cost of rent for the offices of OPEC and made a contribution towards the cost of asbestos clean-up works at the Vienna International Centre. Co-financing to the extent of 35% of rent cost was provided for the OSCE, the Wassenaar Arrangement office, the European Space Policy Institute (ESPI), the Southeast European Energy Community (ECSEE), the European Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA), the Vienna Centre for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation (VCDNP), “Sustainable Energy for All” (SE4ALL), the Council of Europe liaison office and the diplomatic missions of developing countries.

MA 5 participated in two meetings of the City Economic & Financial Governance Group which were held in Maastricht and Barcelona, and in an event on gender budgeting in Leipzig. An exchange of experiences with public-private partnerships took place in Germany.

MA 5 welcomed a large number of visitors, including banking sector delegations from Germany, Luxembourg and the USA. International visitor groups also came from Kraków, Sofia, Croatia, Ukraine, Serbia and the Republic of Korea, as well as from the Warsaw School of Economics and the University of California, Berkeley.

In view of Vienna’s growth, a reflection of the attractiveness of the city which is also confirmed by international statistics, reliable data are crucially important. Municipal Department 23 (MA 23 – Economic Affairs, Labour and Statistics) collects and manages these data and regularly issues relevant publications, some of them in several language versions: http://www.wien.gv.at/statistik/publikationen/

MA 23 officials met with counterparts from Brno, Brussels, Bucharest and Ljubljana to discuss innovation, economic questions and demographic trends. In Vienna, the department welcomed visitors from Stockholm, Copenhagen, Zurich, Berlin and Ukraine.

Municipal Department 27 (MA 27 – European Affairs) manages Vienna’s relations with the European Union, the Council of Europe and CENTROPE. It is responsible for policy coordination, strategy development and support measures, represents Vienna in European networks, including EUROCITIES, oversees the Vienna House in Brussels and actively supports the City Council Committee for European and International Affairs. For more detailed information about EU relations, as well as organisations and networks at the EU level, see the relevant chapters.

“Strategic options for Europe’s future” were discussed at an expert seminar organised in the run-up to the European Parliament elections. The seminar participants examined potential development paths for the European Union and spoke with election candidates who presented themselves at the meeting. Another
A seminar focused on European co-financing options for innovative research projects.

RECOM is the Regional Cooperation Management for cross-border activities with partners from Slovakia and Hungary. Its mission is to support the expansion of these activities and to provide effective public relations services. To this end, RECOM provided support and advisory services, engaged in networking and supplied information. Events with project participants were organised in 2014 as one programme period ended and the next one – which will last until 2020 – began.

The Union of Capitals of the European Union (UCEU) held its annual conference in Dublin under the keynote theme “Revitalising Europe through City and Citizen Engagement”. City Council Member Elisabeth Vitouch presented Vienna’s Smart City Strategy at the event.

At the Council of Europe, which Austria chaired during the first half of 2014, the European Committee on Democracy and Governance (CDDG) worked on an Internet-based tool for cross-border cooperation, e-democracy and the organisation of regional seminars, as well as discussing the problem of trafficking in humans and a decentralisation reform in Ukraine.

The Fire Services and Disaster Relief Department (MA 68) was frequently active in Austrian assistance and relief missions abroad in recent years. Senior staff participated regularly in international training courses, for example in the context of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism. The smooth functioning of international cooperation testifies to the dedication, flexibility and high level of capabilities of the Vienna Fire Brigade.

Slovenia was hit by an ice storm in the winter, leading to a collapse of the national power supply. 80,000 households were without electricity, cows were in danger of dying because milking machines did not work, and managed forests suffered enormous damage.

The Vienna Fire Brigade and the power and gas distribution agency Wiener Netze supplied emergency power units to the region of Logatec and Postojna. One of the 40 kVA units was used for a remote radio station to enable communication between emergency assistance teams in the region.

MA 68 also assisted in the wake of the devastating floods in Serbia and Bosnia-Hercegovina. Pumps and hoses, heating units and dehumidifiers were supplied to help remove dirt and sludge, and motor boats were left as donations in the emergency mission areas.

The Vienna Fire Brigade on its way to bring 40 kVA emergency power units to Slovenia, which had been badly hit by winter storms (Lichtbildstelle MA 68)
As in previous years, intensive international contacts were maintained in 2014 at various levels of Vienna’s utilities group Wiener Stadtwerke. Numerous delegations were welcomed for exchanges of information and experience.

A delegation from Zagreb met with the Stadtwerke management to discuss the financing of infrastructure projects and questions relating to the use of IT in customer billing processes. Visitors were also welcomed at WiPark, the group’s car park subsidiary, the public transport authority Wiener Linien and the Wien Energie group. Representatives of the China Guodian Corporation, one of China’s largest power suppliers, came to Vienna to learn about management control systems and regulatory regimes here.

**Wien Energie group**
Renewable energy sources were the main focus of interest for many delegations welcomed by the Wien Energie group, including visitors from Saudi Arabia and from Mongolia. Wien Energie presented its public participation projects at a meeting of the European Commission in Brussels. The World Bank and the Federal Ministry of Finance organised a conference on remote heating and cooling technology for officials from South-East European cities. Presentations were given on the new WiPark control centre, which uses the latest in high-tech equipment, and the visitors went on tours of the Simmering and Spittelau waste-to-energy plants.

At a conference on new business models for the transition to renewable energy in Berlin, Wien Energie received an award for its “citizens’ solar power plant” project. The awards for innovative regional energy utilities are sponsored by the Trianel network and EUROFORUM.

**Wiener Netze – distribution networks**
Smart grids and smart metering were at the centre of international exchanges in the year under report. Wiener Netze participated in expert workshops hosted by GEODE, the European Group of Energy Distribution Companies and Organizations, which represents small and medium-sized power and gas distributors. The European Commission extended invitations to several working group meetings. Moreover, Wiener Netze was present at the Annual Conference InnoGrid2020+ in Brussels, which brought together grid operators with researchers and participants from industry and politics for discussions about smart city issues.

International visitors were interested in learning about vocational training at Wiener Netze. A French delegation visited the distribution network operation on a fact-finding mission about training for teenage apprentices. Wiener Netze was certified in 2014 as an excellent apprentice training organisation.

**Wiener Linien – public transport**
Vienna’s public transport system Wiener Linien contributed to the activities of the International Association of Public Transport (UITP) and the German Association of Transport Providers (VDV). Wiener Linien assumed the vice-chair in the UITP’s Light Rail Committee and participated in the sub-committee on safety. Rolling stock design and tenders were the main topics of talks with public transport officials from German cities, as well as from London and Paris. A meeting of press spokespersons from public transport operators in the German-speaking region was hosted in Vienna. Wiener Linien was the subject of 235 international media reports.

**Wiener Lokalbahnen**
Wiener Lokalbahnen AG (WLB) was internationally active in rail cargo transport, running these operations via its subsidiary Wiener Lokalbahnen Cargo GmbH (WLC). Lokalbahnen transported twelve million passengers in 2014, making it the best year in the company’s history. A Czech delegation was welcomed for bilateral talks just as the record figures were released.
WiPark
The City of Vienna’s car park operator WiPark participated in the “Intertraffic” trade fair in Amsterdam, where several hundred exhibitors presented the latest developments in the transport and parking management sector. WiPark Garagen GmbH runs 60 car parks with space for 18,000 cars in Vienna.

B & F Wien – funeral services and cemeteries
The Bestattung und Friedhöfe GmbH, or B & F Wien for short, provides funeral services and manages Vienna’s cemeteries. It also hosts the secretariat of the European Federation of Funeral Services (EFFS), a pan-European umbrella organisation of funeral service providers. The 2014 General Assembly of EFFS took place here in October. Items on the agenda included the further extension of international networking activities and a university training programme for the funeral service sector. B & F Wien was also active in other international groupings, including the Association of Significant Cemeteries of Europe and the International Federation of Thanatologists’ Associations.

Efforts by the B & F management to establish good contacts with regional neighbours were rewarded with the first bilateral working meeting with representatives of Marianum, the municipal funeral services operator of the City of Bratislava, which manages 18 cemeteries in the Slovakian capital.

VIENNA BUSINESS AGENCY

The Vienna Business Agency offers a broad range of services and support programmes for businesses, both in the founding stage and during phases of expansion, as well as in the implementation of specific projects. VBA’s budget for business promotion measures was EUR 40 million in the year under report. Following the integration of the creative industries agency Departure and the technology agency ZIT under the VBA umbrella, activities in these two areas of business development were clustered under the VBA roof for the first time in its 32-year history. A core activity of VBA is to present and promote Vienna abroad as an attractive location for international businesses, work that has proven its effectiveness: every year, more than one hundred international companies decide to establish a presence in Vienna, and the upward trend continued in the year under report. Moreover, about 200 international corporations use Vienna as a coordination centre for their CEE activities.

As in previous years, VBA actively promoted Vienna as a business location through activities in specific international markets with follow-up meetings in Vienna scheduled shortly thereafter. In terms of sectors, the main focus was on innovation, in particular on innovative niches in research and development, clean tech production and urban manufacturing.

The Vienna Business Agency organised events in several cities, including Padua, Yekaterinburg, Warsaw and Bratislava, and also presented Vienna in a road show along the west coast of the United States, in Seattle and Palo Alto. Moreover, VBA participated in trade fairs in Dubai, New York, Istanbul, Paris and Bologna and collaborated with the federal agency ABA–Invest in Austria and the Foreign Business Centre in São Paulo in the organisation of investor seminars, which took place in Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo and Recife in the second half of the year. In Asia, VBA presented Austria as a location for life sciences and ICT enterprises, as well as for start-ups; these events took place in Japan, China and the Republic of Korea.

Gaming continued to be an area of interest, and VBA participated in two industry trade fairs, “Gamescom” and “GDC” in Cologne. Real estate and urban development projects were presented jointly with Wien Holding and Vienna’s urban development company WSE (Wiener Standortentwicklung) at Europe’s leading real estate trade fair Expo Real in Munich. A VBA team also visited the MIPIM show in Cannes, which focuses on residential and commercial real estate development. VBA hosted events for sectorial target groups in Vienna in cooperation with the relevant Chambers of Commerce. Participants included representatives of companies from Latin America, Italy, Great Britain, the United States, Canada, France and the Middle East.

Activities in the context of the EU project TwinEntrepreneurs, which aims at promoting business development in Bratislava and Vienna, attracted 220 participants. VBA contributed to the programme “i.e. SMART” for young people interested in entrepreneurship. The Mingo Services unit of VBA, which provides consultancy services to small business start-ups, was presented in Erfurt and at other international meetings.
The team at VBA’s Expat Center provided consultancy services in about 1,000 personal conversations. As in previous years, most enquiries came from U.S. citizens (about 14% of all consultancy talks), followed by expats from Germany, Great Britain and France. The major areas of interest continued to be Austrian laws and regulations governing establishment, residence and employment of foreign citizens. Other important questions related to family members seeking employment, tax and insurance issues, as well as finding a place to live. Information events were hosted on many of these topics, and the “Expat Club Vienna” offered a platform for encounters between its international and local members. Founded two years earlier by VBA, the Expat Club had more than 1,000 members in 2014.

Eleven enjoyable and entertaining events were organised for them, including an inter-cultural evening in cooperation with the Embassy of India, a tour of Vienna’s casino and an evening at a Viennese “Heuriger” wine tavern, which was attended by about one hundred guests. In addition to the Expat Center’s daily information and consultancy activities, about 40 events were hosted by the Center or organised at other venues for the Expat Club. In all, about 1,300 persons attended. Service activities for the human resource departments of international companies with a presence in Vienna were intensified. Opportunities for international networking arose when visitors from similar institutions in The Hague and Bonn came to Vienna. At the invitation of the government of the German state of Baden-Württemberg, the Expat Center presented its activities in Stuttgart.

The VBA’s Start-up Services unit offered consultancy and skill-building services in 15 languages for budding entrepreneurs. Under the banner of “Vienna Start-up Location”, activities focused on positioning Vienna as a favourable location for new entrants to the business world. A special success story was the launch of the “Entrepreneurs in Residence” programme in January 2015. The programme is sponsored by Cisco Systems Inc. About 2,500 national and international entrepreneurs and investors participated in the “Pioneers Festival” at Vienna’s Hofburg conference centre. Two start-up teams from Seoul and Portugal won the “Start-up
Vienna Welcome Package”, which was presented for the first time.

VBA’s Technology Services unit is a cross-sector network whose activities focus on areas with a strong local base: energy, mobility, life sciences, ICT and manufacturing technologies. The unit supports business enterprises, public institutions, education and R&D entities and promotes innovation and cooperation. International activities in the year under report included participation in Student Parliaments in Cork and Copenhagen, the Mobile World Congress, which brought together 40 businesses in Barcelona, and the Forum for Science Communication in Potsdam. A presentation was given in Paris about Vienna as an IT centre, and the WienWin initiative was presented at the EcoProcura conference in Belgium. The Technology Services unit supported the European-Korean Congress, which brought together 600 engineers and scientists in Vienna, and hosted matchmaking events for international delegations.

LISAvienna, a joint life sciences initiative of VBA and the national development and financing bank Austria Wirtschaftsservice Gesellschaft, has been engaged for many years in presenting Vienna at leading international trade fairs and exhibitions in the fields of biotechnology and medical technology. Activities in 2014 covered a wide geographic range, from Germany, an important export market, to the United States, China and the United Arab Emirates. LISAvienna also opened doors to the world for life science organisations based in Vienna. It organised presentations by medical technology companies for a delegation of senior officials from Russia’s healthcare system and presented an award for an outstanding project in the field of medical technology to underline Vienna’s advantages as a business location for the sector.

The Brussels field office of the VBA celebrated its 20th anniversary. The occasion was marked with a panel discussion about the challenges of urban development and business promotion. Among the panellists was Deputy Mayor Renate Brauner, who spoke to an audience of more than 150 at the event. At another event, members of the European Parliament and Commission representatives discussed migrant entrepreneurship in cities with panellists from Vienna, Helsinki and Berlin. In the context of the Brussels Open Days, a week-long series of events focusing on Europe’s regions and cities, the Aspern IQ Technology Centre in Vienna hosted a local discussion under the heading “Green Growth in Smart Cities – Energy-Efficient Technologies and their Importance in Everyday Life”.

VBA’s creative centre Departure celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2014. Since its inception, Departure has paid out EUR 30 million in grants to a total of 450 projects in the areas of design, fashion, architecture, music, publishing, multimedia, audiovision and the art market. Departure hosted or acted as project partner in a series of expert meetings, presentations and other events with international audiences from the creative industries in 2014. Moreover, Departure deployed self-developed event formats, such as the programme “curated by_vienna”, the Content Award and a series of ideas competitions to help position Vienna’s creative industries internationally.

The Content Award went on tour in 2014 to publicise innovative digital media content from Vienna beyond Austria’s borders. The first destination of a group of innovative media creators was Brussels, while the second “Content Award on Tour” event took place in London under the heading “Digital Vienna”. Content Award-winning digital productions were presented at the event, which was hosted by the VBA Foreign Business Centre in collaboration with Advantage Austria. The Departure programme “curated by_vienna” aims to support systematic cooperation between galleries in Vienna and international curators. In the year under report, the programme was inspired by ideas along the interface between art and architecture.

The winners of the ideas competition “Cycling Affairs – Smart Ideas for Cycling and the City” were presented at the largest German cycling trade fair VELOBerlin in March. Moreover, an exhibition about the ideas competition was on display at the Design Terminal Budapest.

VIENNA EMPLOYMENT PROMOTION FUND (WAFF)

The Vienna Employment Promotion Fund “waff” was established to improve the employability of Viennese people by assisting them in vocational training and continuing education and supporting them individually in their working careers. As every year, it was a contact point for national and international delegations, among them visitors from South Africa, Bosnia-Hercegovina, Sweden, Greece and South Tyrol. A key point of interest was the Territorial Employment Pact, a partnership that coordinates labour market and employment policy strategies and makes use of European Social Funds grants. Visitors were also interested to learn about waff’s “Quality Plan 2020”, a raft of measures to reduce unemployment among workers with low skill levels. Moreover, waff presented its advice centre and the programme “FreCh – Women Grasp Opportunities”, as well as its support measures for SMEs.

Waff officials participated in the EUROCITIES Social Affairs Forum in Barcelona, where they spoke about waff’s youth employment policies and the “vocational training guarantee” for young people in Vienna. The “Quality Plan 2020” was presented in Bremen.
WIEN HOLDING

Cultural and Event Management

Vereinigte Bühnen Wien – theatre group

21 countries and audience figures in the 21-million range – since 1996, the Vereinigte Bühnen Wien group of theatres has been exporting productions to countries all over the world. The top hit among them is the historical drama *Elisabeth*; to date, more than 9.8 million people around the globe have seen the story of the life, loves and sufferings of the eponymous Austrian Empress, making it the most successful German-language musical ever. Other musicals on international tour included *Dance of the Vampires*, *Mozart!*, *Rudolf*, *Rebecca* and *Der Besuch der alten Dame*. Starting in Austria, the productions travelled to EU countries, Russia and even to the Far East. Among the most recent premieres were *Elisabeth* in Shanghai and *Dance of the Vampires* in Paris.

Wiener Stadthalle

With about 300 events and one million visitors in 2014, Stadthalle is one of the most successful entertainment complexes of its kind in Europe. The finale of the 60th Eurovision Song Contest is scheduled to take place at Stadthalle on 23 May 2015, bringing the event back to Austria for the first time in 48 years. Extensive preparations commenced in 2014 for the several weeks of events leading up to the grand finale.

A temporary Viennese “Art Salon” was installed during the summer months in Trieste. Located in the building that used to house Trieste’s fish market, the “Salotto Vienna” was sponsored by Vienna’s Museum of Applied Arts (MAK). The Stadthalle entertainment complex presented itself in the salon’s art and architecture category. Stadthalle is a member of the European Arena Association, where its management engaged in talks about entertainment business trends and exchanges of information and key figures. Meetings took place in Glasgow and in Turku. Malmö made its experience as host of the 2013 Eurovision Song Contest available to the Stadthalle management.

During the flood disaster in May, Stadthalle provided financial assistance and donations in kind to the Belgrade Arena, where thousands of people found temporary shelter.

House of Music

The House of Music offers visitors a novel, innovative approach to music and caters especially to children and young people. This successful approach, which has been practised for years, was internationalised with the establishment of a “Casa de la Música de Viena” in Puebla, Mexico under a license agreement. The Centre, which is three times the size of the Viennese original, celebrated its opening in January 2015. It is home to a centre for music education and serves as the headquarters of “Orquestas Sinfónicas Esperanza Azteca”, a national network of youth orchestras. The contacts were established by Andreas Römer, a descendant of Ernst Römer, who emigrated to Mexico in 1938 when he was forced to leave Austria, where he had studied under Arnold Schönberg.

Pianist Lang Lang and House of Music Director Simon K. Posch signed a cooperation agreement between the House of Music and the Lang Lang International Music Foundation, New York. The first collaborative project was “Stairplay”: a staircase of sounds, literally music notes at every step, is a tool to be used in music education. The House of Music participated in trade fairs in China, the United States, Great Britain, Russia, Germany and the Netherlands.

Jewish Museum Vienna

Four exhibitions from Vienna’s Jewish Museum went on international tours. A series of portraits of Jewish women and men was on show at the Austrian Cultural Forums in Berlin, Prague, Milan and Rome, as well as
at the Austrian Embassy in Athens. A show about Jewish wit and humour (“All meshugga?”) was on display at the Brussels mission of the German state of Rhine-land-Palatinate and at Mainz City Hall. A photo exhibition was offered to audiences in Zagreb and Melbourne. The Jewish Museum Vienna cooperated with the Russian human rights NGO Memorial, the Moscow Museum for Modern Art and the Austrian Cultural Forum in Moscow in mounting an art exhibition under the headline "A Tale of Two Cities", which was shown in Moscow and subsequently in Vienna.

Mozarthaus Vienna
Mozarthaus Vienna organised five concerts, book presentations, an exhibition and music workshops for children in Tokyo and Osaka. The project was accompanied by an extensive media campaign. Mozarthaus staff also participated in workshops in Budapest and Prague.

Kunst Haus Wien – Museum Hundertwasser
Like Stadthalle (see above), the Kunsthaus participated in the “Salotto Vienna” in Trieste, and also presented its activities at tourism trade shows in Berlin, Budapest and Prague. Rinko Kawauchi, a photographic artist from Japan, produced a cycle of works during a visit to Austria on the themes of “imperial gold” and Alpine landscapes. The works will be on display at Kunsthau in 2015.

Logistics & Mobility

Hafen Wien – port facilities
Vienna received EUR 5.3 million in EU grants for the further extension and development of the city’s port facilities. The Port of Vienna has become one of the biggest cargo handling hubs on an inland waterway. It is a trimodal hub, linking freight transport by water, rail and road. The development plans include a land reclamation project at the Freudenau port, which will add 70,000 m² to the port premises, and an extension of the container terminal that will raise its current handling capacity of 600,000 container units by 30%.

The Port of Vienna continued cooperation with ports in Hamburg, Rotterdam, Koper, Trieste and Venice and participated in structural funds projects. Under the heading "Upgrading of Inland Waterways and Sea Ports", one of them aimed at developing the cargo transport and handling capacities of ports. The project partners came from Central Europe and Italy. A pilot project was carried out to develop a neutral Internet platform for shippers, forwarders, industry and port management companies. IMPALA is the acronym for another project which aims at reducing CO₂ emissions at inland ports and rail terminals through the increased use of electrically powered vehicles.

Real Estate Management

Vienna’s urban development company WSE (Wiener Standortentwicklung) participated in Europe's leading real estate trade fair Expo Real in Munich, where it presented several development projects (Neu Marx, Neu Leopoldau, Rathausstraße 1 and developments for the Vienna Hospitals Association KAV).

Media & Service

EU-Förderagentur GmbH
The EU-Förderagentur GmbH (EUFA) is a service organisation that supports the City of Vienna in the management and implementation of EU projects. It was founded in 2007. Euro Vienna is tasked to provide consultancy services, project development and project management. EU co-finance is available for projects in the fields of ecology/climate, integration/social issues, labour market and infrastructure. The two agencies also managed pilot projects for the EU Danube Region Strategy in the year under report. 871 applications were submitted from 14 countries under the START
 programme alone. Support was also provided for EU grant management processes. [www.europvien.at]

TINA Vienna – URBAN TECHNOLOGIES & STRATEGIES

TINA Vienna was founded in 1997 and operates under the umbrella of Wien Holding. Its mission is to export Vienna’s know-how and the products of its urban technologies and strategies to local government bodies within and outside Austria. Vienna’s Smart City Agency and its Competence Centre for Energy are integrated with TINA Vienna. TINA Vienna also represents Austria in the DonauHanse network and in projects. In the year under report, Claus Hofer was appointed as managing director.

A Smart City is one that succeeds in achieving top quality of life and prosperity through the deployment of innovative technologies and strategies. To become a Smart City – and, even more importantly, to remain one – strategies and technologies in the fields of mobility, energy, business, ecology, administration and housing, but also in the social sphere, have to be consistently reviewed and updated. The Smart City Wien Agency acts as a hub linking all initiatives and programmes that are under way in the context of Vienna’s Smart City Strategy. Vienna’s Smart City Strategy approach was presented at numerous international events in 2014. These included the “Euroforum Urban Technologies” in Berlin, the “Sustainable Development Symposium” in Bratislava, the “Future Cities Asia” conference in Hong Kong and other events in London, Munich, Gothenburg and Dublin. An exhibition which TINA Vienna designed on these subjects was on view in Istanbul in connection with a symposium in which City Councillor Michael Ludwig participated. [www.smartcity.wien.gv.at]

The Best Practices Hub Vienna, which is the European partner of the Best Practices and Local Leadership Programme of UN-HABITAT, is integrated with TINA Vienna and serves to promote the exchange of information and know-how on sustainable settlement policies. Projects for the Dubai Award were submitted in 2014. The Award honours projects aimed at improving the living environment in the broadest sense.

Moreover, TINA Vienna was an active partner in many international projects. The projects “EMPIRIC – Enhancing multimodal platforms, inland waterways and railway services integration in Central Europe” and “INWAPO-Upgrading of Inland Waterways and Sea Ports”, in which TINA Vienna gave project management assistance to the Port of Vienna, were successfully concluded in 2014, as were “Innospirit” und “Smart Hubs 2.0”. TINA Vienna contributed Viennese know-how to the projects “Transform” and “Optihubs”, as well as to the follow-up to “Smart Hubs 2.0” and to the project “Skopje Urban Road Management”.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL POLICY

Numerous international activities on behalf of the Public Health Services Department (MA 15) were pursued by the Commissioner for Women’s Health, Beate Wimmer-Puchinger, and her staff in the year under report. About 450 participants from the German-speaking region attended a conference at Vienna City Hall to discuss how to protect and strengthen women against breast cancer, eating disorders and postpartum depression. The City of Vienna’s programme “I’ll stay healthy – Sağlıklı kalacamım” was presented at a conference under the headline “Poverty and Health 2014”. The programme addresses Turkish migrant women who speak little German and seeks to enable them to get free-of-charge preventative medical check-ups. Commissioner Wimmer-Puchinger attended a psychiatry congress in Munich and presented the Vienna Women’s Health Programme at the 64th meeting of the WHO Regional Committee. Questions relating to child welfare and its protection were discussed at a meeting in Leipzig. A meeting of AWGyn, a German association of specialists in the field of aesthetic, plastic and reconstructive surgery in gynaecology, discussed questions relating to a positive and healthy body image in Berlin. A gender medicine data base with more than 10,000 screened entries from many medical disciplines was launched at Berlin’s Charité university clinic. At the invitation of the European Health Psychology Society, Commissioner Wimmer-Puchinger gave a lecture in Innsbruck on structural approaches for better maternal health in the perinatal period.

A delegation from the Union Nationale de la Femme Tunisienne (UNFT) visited Vienna. With some 150,000 members, UNFT is Tunisia’s biggest women’s organisation. The delegation members came from Tunis and Sousse. The City of Vienna contributed to the renovation of a women’s shelter in the kasbah of Tunis.

Two Ukrainian delegations were welcomed at the Health Care and Social Welfare Planning Department (MA 24). Austria’s Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection (BMASK) launched a collaborative project with the Republic of Moldova that aims at know-how transfer to improve minimum social standards and strengthen the European social
model. MA 24 participated in a meeting in Chișinău in this context. The heads of social services authorities from major German-speaking cities met in Berlin to discuss the implementation of the U.N. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and programmes for unemployed young people. A conference of European public administrators in Bremen focused on social inclusion. The Social Protection Committee (SPC), an advisory body for the EU Commission, held several meetings in 2014.

Vienna is a member of the European Social Network (ESN), an independent platform of social services in Europe with members from 30 countries. The ESN is a platform for information exchange and know-how transfer in relevant areas, including children, families and youth, ageing, welfare and care services. Its 2014 annual conference took place in Rome. About 90 visitors were welcomed at a seminar on social planning in Vienna, which was hosted by MA 24. The working group on “Ageing and Care” met in Brighton.

The Department of Social Welfare, Social and Public Health Law (MA 40) participated in the 22nd European Social Services Conference, which took place in Rome under the banner “Investing in people and communities. Social inclusion and social development”. Experts from MA 40’s minimum benefits policy unit and from the social welfare planning group of MA 24 went on a visit to Berlin, where they attended the 43rd working meeting of the heads of social services authorities from major German cities.

Many international expert delegations from all over Europe, but also from China, were welcomed at the headquarters of the Department for Ambulance and Patient Transport Services (MA 70) and informed about the operation of ambulance services in Vienna. MA 70 representatives visited the headquarters of emergency medical services in Italy and Switzerland, among other countries, with a view to deepening cooperation in the future. Officials from Vienna’s control centre for medical emergency calls participated in international conferences in Warsaw, Hamburg, Wiesbaden and Stuttgart, where the latest advances in the fields of medicine and control centre management were presented.

THE VIENNA HOSPITALS ASSOCIATION (KAV)

On 1 November, Udo Janßen was appointed as the KAV’s new Director General. The Vienna Hospitals Association employs a workforce of 30,000 and has a budget of EUR 3.7 million. It manages eleven hospitals, eight geriatric centres and six residential homes offering social and medical services, as well as eight vocational schools for care-givers.

As a member of the non-governmental European Hospital and Healthcare Federation (HOPE), KAV participated in the exchange programme run by HOPE to promote mutual learning and sharing of expertise. Seven KAV candidates for senior positions travelled to Great Britain, Sweden, Denmark and Hungary. Conversely, KAV welcomed physicians and managers from Spain, France, Latvia and Hungary. Moreover, KAV continued its activities as an employers’ representative and recognised social partner within the European Hospital and Healthcare Employers’ Association (HOSPEEM), where a KAV official serves as Deputy General Secretary. A major focus of discussions at HOSPEEM was EU legislation on required professional qualifications...
and health and safety in the workplace, as well as the EU Working Time Directive.

As in previous years, a large number of expert delegations visited the institutions managed by KAV in 2014. The visitors’ programmes included lectures and presentations, talks and tours of the facilities, as well as internships for longer visits. One example was the Austro-Chinese exchange programme, which brought two sizable groups of physicians to Vienna for ten-week visits. Moreover, KAV welcomed visitors from Germany, Ghana, the Republic of Korea, Indonesia, Estonia, Sweden, Singapore, Serbia, the Czech Republic, Russia and other countries, as well as from Tampere and Humenné. In the context of the “United European Gastroenterology Week”, which brought 2,000 participants to Vienna’s Austria Center, 300 endoscopic interventions were carried out in KAV hospitals and broadcast live to the conference halls.

Staff from KAV travelled abroad to attend conferences, participate in meetings and engage in studies. These included the Geriatric Centre Am Wienerwald, which participated in a workshop on the use of pets in therapy which took place in Solothurn; the Baumgartner Höhe Social Medicine Centre/Centre for Patients with Addictions collaborated with French and Australian addiction treatment institutions. At an event under the headline “Move the Future”, nursing staff at the Social Medical Centre Sophienspital were re-certified in the application of “MH Kinaesthetics” in the presence of the founders of the system. The Donauhospital was the first hospital in Austria to receive an international award for heart ultrasound diagnostics (echocardiography laboratory).

A group of child leukaemia patients from the region of Kharkiv were invited to spend summer holidays at a treatment centre in the Lower Austrian town of Ybbs on the Danube, where they were able to go on excursions and spend summer holidays at Bad Mitterndorf in addition to receiving medical treatment. It was the 18th summer programme for children from the Chernobyl region, bringing the total number of child participants up to 2,000. To mark the occasion, Austrian President Heinz Fischer invited the group to visit him at the Presidential Office.

**RETIRED AND CARE HOMES**

The City of Vienna’s provider of retirement and care homes for the elderly (Kuratorium Wiener Pensionisten-Wohnhäuser, KWP) engaged in national and international knowledge exchange and transfer at conferences and sector exhibitions and through publication of expert papers. Among other things, KWP participated in a conference in Glasgow and contributed a presentation on problems with eating and drinking in caregiving for dementia patients. The Council of International Fellowship Austria organised exchange programmes for social workers. In this context, visitors from Spain and Estonia were welcomed to Vienna in 2014. Talks about catering management were held at a meeting with a business in Nuremberg and symposiums in Munich and Fürstenfeldbruck.

Delegations from China, the Republic of Korea, Thailand, Serbia, Japan and Finland visited Vienna to learn about the services provided in residential homes for the elderly here. Visitors from a care home in a poor neighbourhood of Bangkok, which is funded exclusively from donations, were interested in the services provided at the Haus Hetzendorf residence.
Vienna’s Substance Abuse and Drug Policy Coordination Office (Sucht- und Drogenkoordination, SDW) represented Austria’s federal provinces in the EU Council’s Horizontal Drugs Group. The Group worked on measures to curb the spread of psychoactive substances. Lectures and workshops at a meeting in Berlin were dedicated to skill-building for preventive action against drug abuse and addiction.

New Zealand’s Interior Minister Peter Dunne and Ambassador Deborah Geels were informed about counselling, care and treatment services which are offered for addicts in Vienna. The First Lady of the Republic of Moldova, Margareta Timofti, visited social and medical service institutions together with officials from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNOSDC). The United Nations Office hosted a WebEx discussion about prevention and invited young people from Nairobi, Harare and Vienna to participate. An expert meeting discussed the current state of research on alcoholism prevention.

SDW staff were invited to give presentations at several international events. Among them was a conference in Potsdam on the goals, strategies and success of addiction prevention work. The Viennese model of collaboration between SDW, youth welfare authorities and hospitals was presented at the 19th Addiction Treatment Days in Hamburg. A conference in Amsterdam focused on re-integration in the labour market, and experts also met in Prague to discuss counselling and treatment services for addicts. Addiction prevention in neighbouring countries was the central theme at a conference in Berlin. A conference on the professionalisation of community programmes to prevent alcoholism took place in Hannover, and other substance abuse issues were discussed in Berne and Munich. Addiction and suicide prevention were the key areas of interest at a meeting in Cologne.

**VIENNA SOCIAL FUND**

The Vienna Social Fund (Fonds Soziales Wien, FSW) was established as an independent entity in 2004. It provides social services for about 100,000 people in Vienna every year. To fulfil its mission, FSW cooperates with about one hundred partner organisations that provide services in different areas, including medical and social care, people with disabilities, homelessness, refugees, indebtedness and mobility. Many international delegations were interested in learning about this wide range of activities, including visitors from Baku, Brest, Grodno, Minsk and Vitebsk/Belarus, Jyväskylä/Finland, Kyoto, Skopje, Priština, from the western Ukrainian city of Ivano-Frankivsk and from several other countries in Europe and Asia.

FSW engaged in exchanges through its membership in international organisations. The European Social Network (ESN) hosted a conference under the banner “Investing in People and Communities, Social Inclusion and Development” in Rome. 400 participants from 31 countries attended. A peer review process under the auspices of HABITACT examined aid for the homeless in Athens. The annual conference of FEANTSA, the European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless, was held in Bergamo. The main focus of discussions was on homelessness in connection with perspectives for coming generations. Another item on the agenda was the issue of homeless EU citizens living outside their native country. De-institutionalisation of social and health-care services was the topic of a meeting of the European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities in Oslo. A conference of the International Association on the Scientific Study of Intellectual and Developmental Disability Europe took place in Vienna. Discussions there covered many aspects of disability, as well as recent research advances with respect to intellectual disability. A meeting of the Alzheimer’s Society was held in Glasgow under the keynote theme “Dignity and autonomy in dementia”. FSW participated very actively in the working groups of the EUROCITIES Social Affairs Forum.
FSW staff engaged in networks and exchanges and were sought after as expert speakers. The Second Deputy Speaker of the Provincial Parliament, Marianne Klicka, and Vienna’s Senior Citizens’ Advocate Angelika Rosenberger-Spitzy engaged in talks with experts from Berlin who run a project for a “dementia-friendly community of Charlottenburg-Wilmersdorf, Berlin”. A meeting in Munich discussed ways to simplify project management. A conference in Hamburg concluded a project that enables persons with disabilities to go on six-week internships in another EU country. Experts discussed the use of technology in care for the chronically ill at a meeting in Mirandola in Italy’s Emilia-Romagna region. Decentralisation of social protection for young people with disabilities was discussed in Belgrade, and aspects of assistance for the homeless in Vienna were presented at a meeting in Warsaw.

2014 saw the conclusion of the EU project SPES (Supporting Patients through E-Services Solutions). It aimed at improving patients’ quality of life through the use of innovative technologies, including e-health processes and telemedicine. Vienna contributed a pilot project that examined technology solutions for the needs of persons with dementia. 98 candidates between 56 and 91 years of age were involved in the test series. Among the technology applications was a “talking key” that hangs above the user’s apartment door and reminds her or him to take keys along when leaving, touchscreens that help find frequently mislaid items, and a GPS localisation device.

HEALTH PROMOTION AGENCY

Vienna’s health promotion agency (Wiener Gesundheitsförderung, WiG) participated in a conference in Athens marking the 25th anniversary of the WHO’s Healthy Cities Network. 350 participants from all areas of health care came from 56 countries to discuss health in the cities of the 21st century. Addressing the meeting, the Second Deputy Speaker of Vienna’s Provincial Parliament, Marianne Klicka, emphasised the benefits of Vienna’s enriching exchanges with other cities. WiG presented its activities in meetings with counterparts from Lithuania, Slovenia, Japan and Turkey, which took place in the context of several research exchange programmes.

INTEGRATION, WOMEN’S ISSUES, CONSUMER PROTECTION AND HUMAN RESOURCES

In the Istanbul Convention of the Council of Europe, the signatory states committed themselves to implement concrete measures to prevent and combat violence against women. The Convention defines the concept of violence very broadly, an approach which the City of Vienna has also followed for several decades. Vienna has one of the most tightly-knit networks of counselling centres and shelters of any city worldwide.

A delegation of human resources management officials from the South Korean Province of Die Gyeonggi-do visited Municipal Department 2 (MA 2 – Personnel Service) for exchanges of information and experience.

Municipal Department 3 (MA 3 – Occupational Safety and Health) gave a presentation on employment support for people over 50 at Bratislava City Hall. The meeting was attended by administrators, associations, private sector companies and representatives from the City of Brno. Mediators from Russia visited MA 3 to gather information about social services offered in the workplace.

Municipal Department 14 (MA 14 – Automated Data Processing, Information and Communications Technologies) participated in conferences and gave
presentations on the ViennaGIS system, open government data, e-government and traffic telematics. MA 14 was present at the Gartner Symposium/ITxpo in Barcelona, the biggest and most important conference in the ICT sector. Moreover, Department 14 officials attended a meeting of the Major Cities of Europe IT Users Group in Zurich, as well as meetings of the EUROCITIES Knowledge Society Forum, and represented Vienna at a conference of the European Association of Public IT Service Providers. The ViennaGIS geo web service infrastructure attracted much international interest and was widely recognised as a model solution. At the Geospatial World Forum in Geneva, MA 14 won the Environmental Systems Research Institute Special Achievement Award for its project basemap.at. Basemap.at is an online cartographic product based on the administrative data of the nine Austrian provinces. It is the only official map that covers the entire Austrian territory on a scale of 1:1,000. It is the first open government data map produced by the Republic of Austria. Presentations about the ViennaGIS service were also given at meetings in Feldkirch, Gmunden and at the University of Salzburg.

Visits by international delegations from France, Ukraine, China, Georgia and Romania were hosted in cooperation with MD-OS/IKT. Both departments were also active in open data collaboration with administrators from Germany, Switzerland, Liechtenstein and Austria. This forum of the German-speaking region worked on metadata standard analysis and held its annual conference in Berne. A delegation from the Open Source Geospatial Foundation was welcomed by MA 14 for a four-day visit to discuss improvements and advances in geographical information systems (FOSSGIS).

MA 14 collaborated in the EU project "Iscope" to develop prototype web applications for the electronic provision of information about barrier-free routes through the city.

Officials from the city of Guangzhou, an important business centre in southern China, visited Vienna’s Municipal Department for Integration and Diversity (MA 17) for detailed information about the city’s “Start Wien” programme for immigrants. The metropolis, which has a population of 16 million, was planning to emulate Vienna’s programme for recent arrivals by launching an official contact point for immigrants. Several meetings took place with officials from the Czech Ministry for Labour and Social Affairs, which has also been interested in Vienna’s integration policy for some time. Government officials and representatives of the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and from NGOs from Moldova and Ukraine were also welcomed in Vienna.

MA 17 officials gave a presentation at a meeting on inter-cultural activities in the field of culture and participated in meetings of the EUROCITIES working group on migration and integration in Brussels and Zurich, as well as in the 4th European Roma meeting in Brussels.
A delegation of Polish immigration officials visited Municipal Department 35 (MA 35 – Immigration, Citizenship and Registry Offices). The talks focused on a comparison of Poland’s and Austria’s immigration laws. Administrative procedures and Austrian legislation concerning rights of residence and establishment were presented by the Austrian hosts.

The Procurement Department (MA 54) participated in a meeting of experts from the same field in Berlin. The conference provided valuable information and workshops in the areas of tendering legislation, process optimisation in procurement and logistics and e-procurement. An employee of the Berlin procurement agency was welcomed on an internship in Vienna and worked for several weeks in the customer management unit.

Many international delegations visited the Municipal Department for the Promotion and Coordination of Women’s Issues (MA 57), among them a group of 13 visitors from the Malaysian state of Selangor, delegations from Bratislava and from the Belgrade office of the OSCE. Members of the German parliament were also interested in discussing questions related to gender equality, employee protection and prevention of domestic violence, as well as Vienna’s helpline for women. The network “WAVE – Women against Violence Europe” organised a visit by experts in domestic violence prevention from Malta and Lithuania. A group of nine members of “ffortissimo”, a network of women leaders from Esslingen in the German state of Baden-Württemberg, were supplied with information about Vienna’s anti-violence policies. City Council Member Anica Matzka-Dojder and MA 57 officials presented their many activities to visitors from Seoul and Daejon, as well as to a delegation from Prague. Furthermore, MA 57 welcomed officials from ministries and other government bodies from Azerbaijan. A high-ranking delegation was welcomed from the City of Zagreb: the City Parliament’s commission on gender equality, whose nine members include a former minister and a well-known actress, participated in an extensive programme during a visit to Vienna. The items on the agenda included the presentation of the Vienna Women’s Award by City Councillor Sandra Frauenberger.

MA 57 participated in a conference hosted by the Vienna University of Technology under the banner of “Gender Equality in Higher Education” and was also present at the annual conference of WAVE at Vienna City Hall.

The Women’s Department co-financed a number of EU projects with a clear focus on women’s policies and relevance to the City of Vienna, adding to the breadth of services provided by MA 57 and thus benefiting the women of Vienna. While the projects were largely funded by the European Union, financial support provided by MA 57 was in many instances decisive to the viability of the projects. The projects and their results and follow-ups were highly positive additions to Vienna’s own policies and actions. One example was “Tricky Women”, a festival of animated films made by women. Organised by the association Culture2Culture, the festival brought 170 films by 130 artists to screens in Vienna. “Tricky Women” is the only animated film festival worldwide that has a gender dimension. L’HOMME – European Journal of Feminist History celebrated its 25th anniversary. The African Women’s Organization in Vienna presented the book The Unbidden Pain in the context of an Anti-Crime Conference hosted by the United Nations Office in Vienna. The book confronts the practice of female genital mutilation and draws on testimony by victims, as well as statements by religious and political leaders and opinion leaders.

MA 57 participated in an evaluation process concerning Lithuania that was conducted by EIGE, the European Institute for Gender Equality. Gender equality/gender balance was a focal area of the OECD’s 2014 economic survey on Austria. MA 57 officials participated in a round table meeting at the Federal Chancellery in this context.

WAST – ANTI-DISCRIMINATION UNIT FOR SAME-SEX AND TRANSGENDER LIFESTYLES

Vienna hosted a meeting of the network “Rainbow Cities”, which had been founded one year earlier. City representatives from Germany and the Netherlands attended the meeting, as did participants from Berga, Ljubljana, Madrid and Turin. The network is intended to foster international exchanges of information and experience and facilitate the joint drafting of strategies to be applied in anti-discrimination activities. The international situation of lesbian, gay and transgender persons was discussed with an NGO from St. Petersburg at the “Queer Town Talks” in Vienna. “Queer Amnesty” was the headline of an event where a human rights activist spoke about the situation in Cameroon. A panel discussion on homosexuality and care for the elderly was hosted at Vienna City Hall. Participants from 30 countries convened at the annual conference of the network “WAVE – Women against Violence Europe” in Vienna.

“Remembrance of forgotten victims in Vienna” was the keynote theme of WAST’s 2014 annual expert conference. City Councillor Sandra Frauenberger hosted a round table on international LGBT issues. A Czech delegation was welcomed for talks at the WAST offices. WAST contributed a photo exhibition to the “Rainbow Week” of events in June and gave interviews to several media, including a radio station from Australia.

Assisting in a twinning project launched by the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Human Rights to fight homophobia and transphobia in Kosovo, WASt contributed expertise locally in Priština. A conference on rainbow families took place in Cologne, and an international meeting on mobbing was hosted in Wels. WAST
also participated in an international conference on men’s policies and attended a coordination meeting of an EU project against bullying. The partners involved in this project are the region of Tuscany, Pistoia, Munich and several universities.

CULTURE AND SCIENCE

Speaking at a commemorative event which was hosted by the City of Sarajevo in remembrance of the outbreak of World War I a hundred years ago, Vienna’s City Councillor for Cultural Affairs Andreas Mailath-Pokorny warned against the danger inherent in “egoism of the nations”. A concert by the Vienna Philharmonic added an artistic highlight to the event. The Jewish Welcome Service hosted a visit to Vienna for 60 people from the United States, Israel, Argentina, Uruguay, Australia and Great Britain. The group was also received by City Councillor Mailath-Pokorny.

The Cultural Affairs Department (MA 7) engaged in cultural collaboration with other cities and organised international events, including musical and artistic performances in Austria and abroad. Culture Days were hosted in Almaty, and bilateral activities continued with a concert by the Kazakhstan State Philharmonic in Vienna. MA 7 also cooperated with the Kraków Philharmonic Orchestra and supported a concert at the county music school of Erding. Compositions by Strauss and Mozart added a Viennese note to the event. A Viennese Evening was organised in Trieste in connection with the “Salotto” pop festival. Days of Austrian Culture were celebrated in Tel Aviv-Yafo. A delegation from Yokohama was welcomed by MA 7 and engaged in talks with the City of Vienna, the Vienna Symphony Orchestra, the Theater an der Wien and the State Opera with a view to cultural cooperation projects.

The 26th International Children’s Film Festival took place in Vienna, with screenings of many films that would not ordinarily be part of regular cinema programmes, including international children’s films. Film productions from Argentina and Kazakhstan, among others, had their Austrian premieres at the festival. Some 80 choirs from around the world – one of them from as far afield as Botswana – participated in the international advent singing events which are traditionally staged at Vienna City Hall in December.

The Vienna Lectures series is a traditional component of MA 7’s activities. The lectures, which are organised by the department’s science and research promotion unit, focussed on recent change in the Middle East, among other topics. A collaboration project was carried out with the Institut Français d’Autriche under the keynote theme “Enlightenment for Present-Day Europe?” Continuing a 16-year-old tradition, a Vienna Lecture was presented at the Vienna House in Brussels in the winter semester (see the chapter on Vienna Representative Offices).

Grants were provided for postgraduate studies at the Diplomatic Academy and for students from Southeast Europe who are eligible for study programmes at the University of Vienna, as well as for graduates wishing to engage in studies at the Bologna Center of Johns Hopkins University. The Institute for Human Sciences continued to play an important role in Vienna’s academic and research landscape, engaging in intellectual exchanges between East and West and between many disciplines and schools of thought. The Fellowship Programme at the Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust Studies (VWI) was also continued. The Wiesenthal Institute joined the “European Holocaust Research Infrastructure”, a network linking Europe’s major Holocaust research centres and Yad Vashem in Jerusalem. The project for a joint Austro-Czech history book was pursued in collaboration with the competent
ministries and provincial authorities and the Austrian Academy of Sciences.

Among MA 7’s activities to promote academic projects and programmes was funding for a guest professorship at the Sir Peter Ustinov Institute for research into prejudices and how to combat them. In this context, public lectures were given in the summer semester. An expert meeting was held in the Minor Ceremonial Chamber of the University of Vienna under the keynote theme “Europe – Hope and Enemy Stereotype”.

The European Law Institute, whose mission is to promote the development of law in Europe, completed a statement on European legislation on contracts for the sale of goods. 23 universities from the CEE region participated in JOSZEF, a programme run by the Vienna University of Economics and Business which offers students from the CEE region study courses in Vienna. The Vienna Open Medical Institute and the City of Vienna funded scholarships to help physicians from the former East Bloc countries undertake study tours to Vienna. The Open Medical Institute was founded in 1993 and is run by the American-Austrian Foundation.

The City Archives Department (MA 8) engaged in exchanges with international counterpart institutions around the themes of digital long-term archiving, semantic wikis and urban history in World War I. MA 8 maintained contacts with the Bavarian State Archives and with archives in Stuttgart and Budapest. The online platform Vienna History Wiki went live in September and was presented at a conference of the International Council on Archives in Girona. “Coping with immeasurable losses – the populations of the European cities and World War I” was the keynote theme of the 33rd Conference of the Prague City Archives. The event was co-sponsored by several institutions, including the Institute of History of the Czech Academy of Sciences and the Faculty of Humanities at the Charles University in Prague, as well as the Vienna City Archives. Bilateral talks were held in Berlin about digitisation.

The Vienna City Library (MA 9) welcomed a group of experts from leading European architecture museums, 50 pupils from Milan, Turkish journalists, students from the Polish Senior Citizens Academy, visitors from the Konrad Adenauer Foundation in Sankt Augustin near Bonn and from the Bavarian Library Academy.

Book presentations with international participants included Leonhard Jörn’s book about World War I, Die Büchse der Pandora. Geschichte des Ersten Weltkrieges; an edition of postcards sent through the military mail during WWI, selected from the total of more than 29 billion such messages by editor Jens Eberts; and a book by Kazumi Negishi about the Austrian conductor Joseph Laska (1886–1964), who worked and lived in Japan. Many international visitors participated in a conference on biographical narratives about experiences of violence during World War Two, among them speakers from the universities of Siegen, Dortmund, Iasi and Uppsala. The topics of discussion at two other international meetings were Austrian composer Carl Goldmark (1830–1915) and L’Homme – European Journal of Feminist History.

MA 9 contributed to four exhibitions abroad. Department staff participated in international conferences, including one about Vienna’s cultural elites hosted by the Austrian Cultural Forum in New York, a meeting of German librarians in Bremen, the Poets’ Festival in Erlangen and a conference on the Congress of Vienna, which took place at the University of Amiens in the French region of Picardy.
WIEN MUSEUM

The Wien Museum continued its practice of loaning works of art and other objects from its collections to museums abroad; in 2014, special exhibitions at Kunsthaus Zurich, in Nuremberg, London and at the Wolfsburg Art Museum were supported by loans. Max Oppenheimer’s portrait of Thomas Mann, on loan to the museums of Lübeck, appeared on the cover of the exhibition there. Objects from the Wien Museum collections were also on display at the Museum of Modern Art in New York and the Gemeentemuseum in The Hague; Egon Schiele’s portrait of Ida Roessler made an appearance at the Neue Galerie New York. The art magazine Kunstforum International featured a stuffed budgerigar on its cover – the bird, which was shown perching on a wire, had been part of an installation in the lobby of the Wien Museum.

An exhibition on “The Myth of Galicia” was prepared in a collaborative project between the Wien Museum and the International Cultural Centre in Kraków. The exhibition was shown in Kraków in 2014 before opening in Vienna early in 2015. Researchers, historians and artists from Poland, Ukraine and Austria contributed to this project, which explores the legacy of a “Crown Land” of the Habsburg monarchy. Among Wien Museum’s major special exhibitions at home was “The Metropolis Experiment. Vienna and the 1873 world exhibition”. The successful show “Austrian Riviera. Vienna discovers the Seaside” ended in 2014. Reports and feature articles about Wien Museum’s exhibitions and activities were carried in the international press, notably a feature about the apartment in Kettenbrückengasse where Franz Schubert spent the last days of his life, which appeared in Neue Zürcher Zeitung.

The Wien Museum received a remarkable gift from London in 2014. Two paintings by Hans Canon were donated to the museum by Sylvia Askonas-Desfours Walderode, the widow of their last owner, Peter Askonas. Mrs. Askonas said the pictures should return to Vienna from where Rudolf Askonas had managed to save them shortly before the Nazi regime launched its plunder of Jewish families’ art collections. Had they not been taken abroad, Canon’s paintings may well have been incorporated into a Viennese museum collection in 1938 – as indeed happened to looted works of art from the collection of Rudolf’s brother Carl. That would have made them a case for restitution to their rightful owners today. But as the family managed to take them to England, the paintings remained in possession of the Askonas family for more than 70 years, a reminder of the city where they had risen to wealth and prominence before being forced to flee abroad. The Wien Museum owns about two dozen paintings by Hans Canon. A painting listed as “Portrait of a child” in the works register prepared by Franz Josef Drewes was identified by a Wien Museum curator as a portrait of Hans Canon’s great-niece. It had previously been regarded as lost, wrenched away from its proper place – a fate akin to that of the people whose traces were lost in Austria after 1938. A personal meeting took place between Wien Museum staff and Mrs. Askonas in Great Britain in connection with the donation. The two Canon paintings have now been added to the collections of the Wien Museum. The story of their provenance may tell visitors more about the fate of their former owners than about those who appear in the portraits.
URBAN DEVELOPMENT, TRANSPORT, CLIMATE PROTECTION, ENERGY PLANNING AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Urban Development and Planning Department (MA 18) was among Vienna’s most active participants in EU projects. These included “CLUE – Climate Neutral Urban Districts in Europe”: exchange of information and good practice among European cities, regions and universities; “MMWD – Making Migration Work for Development”: demographic change in South-East Europe and its effect on sustainable economic and social development; “PASTA – Physical Activity through Sustainable Transport Approaches”: systematic evaluation and promotion of active mobility, such as walking and cycling – Vienna was chosen as a case study for this project; “PUMAS – Planning Sustainable Regional-Urban Mobility in the Alpine Space” focused on a regional mobility master plan for the airport region Vienna-Schwechat; “RAILHUC – Railway Hub Cities and TEN-T”: improving transport networks in Central Europe through intermodal integration of railway hubs; “SETA – South East Transport Axis”: improvement of rail transport on the route from Vienna to Zagreb and the northern Adriatic via Bratislava and western Hungary; “UrbanAPI”: application of Geographic Information Systems in various areas, such as analysis of mobility behaviour; “TRANSFORM - Transformation Agenda For Low Carbon Cities”: current situation, support for urban strategy processes, data analysis, Smart (Energy) City implementation plans at the neighbourhood level.

National and international delegations were always very interested in MA 18’s expertise. The Department welcomed a total of 926 visitors in the year under report, some of them in cooperation with other urban development units. Among the visitors to MA 18 were a delegation led by the Mayor of Vietnam’s World Cultural Heritage city Hôi An and an urban designer from Copenhagen who gave a presentation on “The City of the Future”.

The exhibition “Building the City – Examples for and from Vienna” was on show in Zagreb, and Expo Real, the 17th International Trade Fair for Property and Investment, took place in Munich. MA 18 officials were much sought-after speakers and gave presentations at conferences on the EU projects “RAILHUC” in Budapest and “CLUE” in Turin, at a workshop on open spaces in Munich, at Smart Cities events in Barcelona, Brussels and Munich, as well as at the Urban Infrastructure Conference in London and the fourth Urban Forum in Moscow.

MA 18 acted as Austria’s permanent representative in the OECD.
Working Party on Territorial Policy in Urban Areas, which discussed the development of urban areas and policy instruments for its control. The international exchange of information helps in recognising new trends and challenges and identifying potential solutions at an early stage. The OECD publishes its analyses and recommendations to contribute to evidence-based decisions in its member states. The spatial implications of an aging society, land management consequences of big seaports, the effects of climate change and options for sustainable growth were among the focal areas of work in 2014.

MA 18 was active in the Economic Development Forum of EUROCITIES and as a member of the board of the 50-member Network of European Metropolitan Regions and Areas (METREX). Moreover, MA 18 contributed to the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT) with its programme “Best Practices of the City of Vienna”.

International visitors from EU countries, Norway, Belarus, Turkmenistan und China were welcomed by Municipal Department 20 – Energy Planning (MA 20) and informed about Vienna’s energy efficiency programme, the Renewable Action Plan and the Smart City Energy Strategy.

The EU project “Premium Light” was concluded in 2014. It produced a guideline to assist consumers as well as professional buyers in the service sector in choosing efficient technologies for efficient lighting. Municipal Department 39 – Research Centre, Laboratory and Certification Services (MA 39) tested new LED products in the course of the project. Vienna’s urban development information centre Planungswerkstatt changed its lighting system to LED. www.premiumlight.eu

MA 20 was active in the European Energy Research Alliance (EERA) and organised a meeting on the energy systems of the future in Vienna. In Zagreb and Barcelona, MA 20 speakers gave presentations on “Vienna in the post-oil era 2050”. Trips to Austria’s westernmost province Vorarlberg and Switzerland were made to gather information about energy-efficient building and heat supply systems in use there.

Officials from MA 20 went on a fact-finding tour to Vorarlberg and Zurich to learn about energy-efficient building and cutting-edge heat supply systems there. (Christian Fürthner)

The seventh implementation lab of CUPA (Co-operative Urban Planning Approaches Lab), a joint project by Municipal Department 21 (MA 21 – District Planning and Land Use) and TINA Vienna took place in Brașov (Kronstadt). Based on an analysis of the present situation of the winter skiing resort Poiana Brașov, an action plan was prepared to develop sustainable urban structures from the amorphous, tourism-based settlement that has historically evolved there, and to identify measures that have the potential to turn Poiana Brașov into an all-year-round tourist destination. In the context of the Smart City cooperation with Hamburg, Amsterdam, Genoa and Copenhagen, (energy) development potentials of the Part-Dieu neighbourhood in Lyon were discussed.

The head of the Road Management and Construction Department (MA 28), Bernhard Engleder, gave a presentation about measures to improve the situation of pedestrians in public spaces at the Walk 21 Conference in Sydney. Vienna will host the event in 2015. Delegations from Kuala Lumpur and Minsk were welcomed and supplied with information about road construction in Vienna, including practice examples.

Experts from the Hungarian Institute for Transport Studies (KTI) visited Municipal Department 46 – Traffic Management and Organisation (MA 46) to learn about Vienna’s traffic safety measures and its accident data base. The Berlin University of Technology continued its frequent exchanges with MA 46 on lighting conflicts in
road traffic, which are caused by street lamps, illuminated advertising, neon and LED light sources.

Officials from Municipal Department 65 – Legal Affairs: Traffic and Transport (MA 65) participated in the Smart City Expo World Congress in Barcelona. At a meeting in Sofia, MA 65 contributed a presentation on parking space management, fines and cycling, and gave an interview for Bulgarian media.

MOBILITY AGENCY

The Vienna Mobility Agency marked the European Mobility Week with a series of events on the themes of walking, cycling and public transport. A “streetlife festival” added a colourful highlight to the week’s programme. About 500 Austrian cities and towns participated in the European Mobility Week with its traditional car-free day on 22 September.

The Representative for Cycling Matters, Martin Blum, spoke at the RADforum Rhein Main conference in Frankfurt, which focused on bicycle parking and bicycle marketing. Participants at a cycling conference in Budapest were interested in learning about Vienna’s experience with its cycling infrastructure. The Representative for Pedestrians’ Matters, Petra Jens, visited the Institute for Urban Studies at the Bauhaus Universität Weimar and presented Vienna’s policies aimed at promoting walking. The Mobility Agency welcomed visitors from Kuala Lumpur and Minsk and hosted a visit by a delegation from Brasilia in cooperation with the Danube University Krems.

The London Borough of Hounslow, the City of Gdansk, San Sebastián and Antwerp joined Vienna as partners in the EU project SWITCH, which uses behaviour change approaches to encourage people to switch to active transport modes, i.e. walking and cycling.

ENVIRONMENT

City Councillor Ulli Sima welcomed a delegation led by the Mayor of Edirne, Recep Gürkan, for talks about garden and green space design as well as animal protection. The delegation of mayors from Turkey’s association of cities and towns also met City Council Member and MP Heinz Hufnagl. The programme of the visit included tours of the Spittelau waste-to-energy plant and Vienna’s central wastewater treatment facility (EBS).

Vienna’s EcoBusinessPlan was launched by the Environmental Protection Department (MA 22) in 1998. It provides consultancy services to companies to assist them in implementing ecological measures. The number
of completed projects reached 10,000 in the year under report, resulting in cumulative operating cost savings of EUR 120 million for the participating companies. Slovakian and Hungarian communities have successfully adapted the programme for their own use. Launched in 2012, "EKOProfit Bratislava" reduced CO₂ emissions by 880 tonnes, saved 1.4 kWh of energy and 113,000 litres of fuel, and cut solid waste volumes by 374 tonnes.

Environmentally responsible public procurement in general and Vienna’s EcoBuy Programme in particular were the themes of an international event at Vienna City Hall. Over 15 years of implementation, the EcoBuy Programme has helped reduce CO₂ emissions by 15,000 tonnes and cut the use of harmful solvents by 4,000 kilogrammes. Up-to-date building services engineering and the use of energy-efficient technologies have resulted in cost reductions of EUR 1.5 million. MA 22 also launched a cooperation with Fair Trade Austria. International visitors at the department included delegations from Sweden, the Republic of Korea, Bosnia-Hercegovina and Paris. Experts from St. Petersburg visited the air quality monitoring point at Taborstrasse.

The EU directives on the preservation of flora, fauna and natural habitats and bird protection were implemented through the establishment and management of protection areas under the Natura 2000 programme. Vienna secured EU co-financing for amphibian protection under the programme. The Environmental Noise Directive is the European Union’s legislative tool for noise abatement. As environmental noise exceeds tolerable levels at some points in Vienna, a package of countermeasures was adopted, to be implemented by 2018. Work was continued on Vienna’s geodata infrastructure, which also includes information on the natural environment. MA 22 contributed to INSPIRE, the EU’s Infrastructure for Spatial Information. MA 22 and the Department of Building Physics at the Vienna University of Technology contributed to an EU project aimed at minimising the negative effects of “urban heat islands”. The other partners in this project were from Germany, Poland, Italy, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovenia.

MA 22 officials were active in the Environmental Forum and the working group “Greening the Local Economy” of EUROCITIES.

Working together with private-sector gardeners and florists, the Parks and Gardens Department (MA 42) supplied the flower arrangements for the 2015 New Year’s Concert by the Vienna Philharmonic. “Green Vienna” was featured by the Serbian daily Politika and Slovenia’s national TV station RTV following research trips to Vienna by journalists from the region. The Parks and Gardens Department also welcomed experts in green space and waste management from Prague, a delegation from the Turkish city Edirne and visitors from the Berlin University of Technology who were interested in learning about the green Prater area. A delegation from Lower Saxony informed their Viennese counterparts about the state garden show at Bad Iburg. The association Amics d’Austria from Barcelona paid its annual visit to the “Catalan oak” at Stadtpark. MA 42 collaborated with several diplomatic missions in Vienna and organised the planting of a beech to mark the tenth anniversary of the Republic of Cyprus’s membership of the European Union. A high-ranking delegation from the Kingdom of Bhutan paid a visit to the Druk Yul Park, which is named in honour of their country, in the district of Liesing.
MA 42 officials participated in a study tour to Murcia, and the department made its traditional contribution to the summer design of green spaces in the Italian town of Cervia on the Adriatic coast.

Municipal Department 45 – Water Management is responsible for managing Vienna’s natural bodies of water. In the year under report, it welcomed visitors interested in the protection and management of such bodies of water, including measures to return them to a more natural state and recreational use; another major focus of the presentations, talks and excursions provided by MA 45 was flood protection. The Danube Island, which combines the functions of a flood protection structure and a major outdoor recreational area, continued to be a major point of interest for foreign visitors. The “Inselinfo” information centre there was a popular venue for receptions, lectures and talks in connection with guided tours.

With support from the EU Programme LIFE+, MA 45 carried out measures to ensure the future of the “Old Danube” lake with its outstanding ecological and recreational value for Vienna. Actions were taken to ensure good water quality, return selected stretches of shoreline to a natural state, maintain diversity of flora and fauna and improve the management of aquatic plant growth. A total of EUR 3.6 million will be invested up to 2017.

As always, Municipal Department 48 (MA 48 – Waste Management, Street Cleaning and Vehicle Fleet) was a popular destination for national and international delegations. 57 international delegations from 36 countries visited MA 48’s state-of-the-art waste treatment facilities. Together with 75 groups from Austria, the total number of visitors welcomed by the department came to 2,097. The city’s waste collection, re-use, recycling and disposal systems, as well as other actions for a clean city, were presented in lectures and on-site tours for the visitors. In addition, staff of the Wiener Kommunal-Umweltschutzprojektgesellschaft mbH welcomed 42 international delegations for tours of the Paffenauf waste incinerator, among them the Mayor of Split, Ivo Baldasar. Journalists from Slovakia, Slovenia, China and Bosnia-Hercegovina reported about MA 48’s winter snow clearing service, the WasteWatcher unit and the Rautenweg waste treatment and disposal site. City Council Member Erich Valentin met a delegation of high-ranking visitors from Wroclaw for talks about waste management.

MA 48 has maintained regular contacts with counterpart institutions from major cities in Germany for the past 15 years. A major topic of conversations in 2014 was disposal logistics. Several Swiss cities participated in a comparative survey of street cleaning services in major cities. At-source waste separation, waste container design and disposal fee systems were the main topics of discussion at an international meeting in Zurich. A seminar in Kempten focused on winter street clearing issues, including gritting and sanding technologies, weather forecasts and cooperation with the police. The 2014 edition of the winter maintenance conference of the World Road Association (PIARC), which is held every four years, took place in Andorra. About 140 expert papers were presented at the conference on topics ranging from climate change to the most recent advances in technology.

MA 48 also continued its activities at the EU level. As Austria’s largest municipal waste management operation, it submitted its position on relevant issues, such as EU plans for the regulation of the waste management sector, and represented Austria in the interest group “Municipal Waste Europe”. The Austrian Association of Public and Community Enterprises (VÖWG) hosted an information event about the institutions and mechanisms of the EU in Vienna, and the International Solid Waste Association (ISWA) Austria celebrated its 20th anniversary at the “48 Museum”.

Delegates from public authorities, universities, equipment manufacturers and other business enterprises came together in the international ISWA working groups. Working meetings took place in Oslo and Vienna.

Many groups of schoolchildren, students and forestry experts from all over the world gathered hands-on experience at Vienna’s Municipal Department 49 (MA 49 – Forestry Office and Urban Agriculture). Most visitors went on excursions to forest areas on the city territory.
environmental education institutions and tours to the wellspring protection zones that supply Vienna’s drinking water system. MA 49 officials gathered information abroad on visits to Latvia, Hungary and Germany.

The ETC (European Territorial Cooperation) project urbANNAtur, which is managed jointly by Bratislava and Vienna, received an award as the most successful project of its class. The bilateral project was launched in 2010 to develop new concepts for the recreational use of the Danube wetlands and the Lesser Carpathians as one way to counteract rising property development pressure. The presentation of the award took place in Smolenice, Slovakia. Another ETC project in which MA 49 collaborated with Hungarian partners received an “Environment and Energy” innovation award. The technical secretariat of the Hungaro-Austrian projects in Sopron organised an excursion to Bio Forschung Austria (http://www.bioforschung.at/) and to MA 49.

The excellent wines produced by the City of Vienna’s winery (Weingut Cobenzl) are enjoyed by connoisseurs in Austria and abroad. The typical products from Vienna’s vineyards have found their way onto the wine lists of top bars and restaurants in many countries. Wine sales in the main export markets Germany, the Netherlands, Japan and the US accounted for about ten percent of total sales. The Cobenzl winery participated in the trade show “ProWein” in Düsseldorf and offered wine tastings at a conference of radiologists in Hamburg and at the summer party of the Vienna House in Brussels in 2014.
WIEN KANAL – sewage system management

Underground tours through parts of Vienna’s sewer system that served as locations for the movie *The Third Man* in 1949 were again very popular with tourists – 18,000 visitors from Austria and abroad went on a "Third Man Tour" in 2014. The oldest parts of Vienna’s sewer system were built about 180 years ago.

Wien Kanal’s international activities in 2014 mostly involved exchanges of experience with sewage system managements from other big cities. Journalists from Izmir and sewage disposal experts from Munich were interested in learning about flood protection measures in Vienna. The Danish enterprise group Hofor gathered information about the installation and operation of glass fibre networks in sewers, and a delegation from the Cuban Instituto Nacional de Recursos Hidráulicos visited Wien Kanal to talk about wastewater management in Vienna.

Managing Vienna’s 2,400-km sewer system involves transporting 500 million litres of sewage to the main treatment facility in Simmering every day. In addition to managing this transport in an ecologically sustainable manner, Wien Kanal also has to clear the sewers of solid materials. No less than 15 tonnes of solids are removed daily to ensure proper flow rates throughout the system. More than 99 per cent of all households in Vienna are connected to the sewer network, which nevertheless keeps growing at a rate of about 10 kilometres per year. In addition to new construction, maintenance and repair works are carried out at more than 700 sites every year.

OMBUDS OFFICE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (WUA)

As Vienna’s representative body in all matters concerning nuclear power policy, the Ombuds Office met with representatives from Krško (Slovenia), Temelín and Dukovany (Czech Republic) and Paks (Hungary) under the terms of the relevant bilateral nuclear information agreements. WUA also participated in environmental impact assessment processes concerning a nuclear fuel storage facility in Bohunice, Slovakia and the decommissioning of the nuclear power plant Isar 1 near Essenbach, Bavaria. The shutdown process is especially important for Vienna because of the direct inland waterway connection between the Danube and its tributary, the Isar. Further information exchanges took place between WUA and authorities in Slovakia.

Vienna continued its activities as a member of the Cities for a Nuclear Free Europe (CNFE) network. City Councillor Ulli Sima travelled to Manchester for bilateral meetings in this context.

Vienna’s Database for Disinfectants (WIDES, www.wides.at) received much international attention, and environmental officers from the City of Stockholm visited Vienna for some first-hand information about it. The WIDES database was also presented at a conference in Bologna and in a webinar for the European Commission.

HOUSING, HOUSING CONSTRUCTION AND URBAN RENEWAL

Vienna is proud of its international standing as a pioneer city in the housing sector, a position that gave rise to many international exchanges and project initiatives in the year under report. Major themes in 2014 were the fight against potential EU intervention in local housing policies, and the presentation and promotion of the “Vienna Housing Model” as a proactive and sustainable approach to housing for the future.

At the “Cities of Tomorrow” conference, which brought together representatives from cities and from the European Commission, Vienna’s Mayor Michael Häupl and City Councillor Michael Ludwig called for a solid legal basis for social housing. The “Vienna resolution” on social housing, which rejects the notion that social housing should be restricted to low-income groups and calls for high-quality, affordable housing...
for everybody, was signed by 30 mayors of cities across Europe and handed over to the European Commission. Vienna is among the signatories of the European Declaration on Responsible Housing, which was drafted by the European Responsible Housing Initiative (ERHIN) and calls for affordable housing and sustainable urban planning. The importance of maintaining and expanding social housing was also underlined in an EU paper. About 60 per cent of all inhabitants of Vienna live either in social housing complexes or in subsidised apartments. 14,000 apartments were completed in 2014 or scheduled for completion in 2015, securing an equal number of jobs.

The exhibition “The Vienna Model – Housing in the 21st Century” was shown in Sofia, Riga, Istanbul and Hong Kong. A multi-media exhibition about “Housing in Vienna 1920 – 2020” was on display at the European Parliament in Brussels. The opening of the show and other events gave rise to talks with international contacts from the fields of politics, architecture, business and the media. One such occasion was a Smart City forum in Istanbul that presented housing and infrastructure solutions from Vienna.

Municipal Department 25 (MA 25 – Urban Renewal and Assessment in Matters of Housing Construction and Promotion) oversees Vienna’s neighbourhood urban renewal offices, which were popular points of contact for international visitors interested in Vienna’s policy of “soft” urban renewal.

The urban renewal office for districts 7/8/16 informed visitor groups from Bochum and Riga about revitalisation in the Brunnenviertel neighbourhood. A guided tour from the Sandleiten housing complex to the terminus of underground line U3 was offered to visitors from Weimar. The urban renewal office for districts 2/20 welcomed students from the Hamburg-Harburg University of Technology and a Bavarian delegation for tours of the Nordbahnviertel urban development zone in Vienna’s 2nd district. Geography students from Bochum were informed about urban renewal projects in the 20th district. Marking the 40th anniversary of the urban renewal offices, a field trip to Switzerland was organised for a group of staff.

Municipal Department 34 (MA 34 – Building and Facility Management) gave a presentation about construction site safety for a delegation from Seoul.

Visitors from Malaysia and Belarus met with officials from Municipal Department 37 (MA 37 – Building Inspection) to discuss fire protection.

17 groups of visitors from 13 countries were welcomed by Municipal Department 50 – Housing Promotion and Arbitration Board for Legal Housing Matters (MA 50) for expert talks about housing construction and urban renewal. MA 50 officials gave presentations in Zurich and Prague.
WOHNSERVICE WIEN

With more than 150 employees with 19 different native languages, the Wohnpartner diversity management agency worked to support and strengthen good neighbourly relations, in particular in Vienna’s social housing estates. In a survey conducted by the University of Oxford, Wohnpartner was identified as a best practice model for “living diversity” and invited to participate in the EU-MIA (European Migrant Integration Academy) in Turin. Wohnpartner also welcomed international visitors from Weimar, Munich and Jerusalem, as well as a delegation from a French energy utility, for talks and presentations in Vienna. Students from the University of Győr visited the agency’s neighbourhood centre in Ruithnergasse in Vienna’s 21st district.

Wohnservice staff undertook study tours to Berlin and Budapest. A summer school of the European Institute for Community-based Conflict Resolution (GB-KL-CBCR) took place in Sarajevo.

WIENER WOHNEN – PUBLIC HOUSING ADMINISTRATION

International delegations visited Wiener Wohnen to discuss public housing matters, including visitors from Habitat, the biggest social housing landlord in Paris, construction experts from North Rhine-Westphalia and Belgrade and politicians from Lingen in Lower Saxony. An exhibition about municipal housing in Vienna, its history and future, travelled abroad to be shown in Berlin, Brussels and Trieste. Wiener Wohnen participated in a conference under the headline “Housing Finance – Property Bubbles or Social & Ecological Resilience – It’s a choice” in Brussels and was listed among the five top housing administrations in the competition for the Social Responsibility Housing Award, Good Governance category.

As the City of Vienna’s enterprise in charge of the day-to-day management, including repair and renovation, of public housing in the city, Wiener Wohnen has some 220,000 apartments, 6,000 business premises and parking facilities for 47,000 vehicles under management.

wohnfonds_wien

The wohnfonds_wien fund for housing construction and urban renewal welcomed numerous groups of expert visitors for discussions ranging from affordable and subsidised housing and the housing situation of young people to low-energy “passive houses” and issues of (social) housing policy. The delegations came from city administrations in Frankfurt/Main, Riga, Karin Ramser, Deputy Director of Wiener Wohnen, at the “European Responsible Housing Awards Ceremony”, where Wiener Wohnen was nominated. (Bea Uhart)
Zurich, Copenhagen and Mongolia’s capital city Ulan Bator, from the Finnish parliament, from Thailand and from universities in Münster and Milan. A 15-strong ministerial delegation came from Taiwan, and wohnfonds_wien gave an interview to a journalist from the Slovenian daily Delo. A round table discussion on energy-efficient housing construction was organised in the context of the Moscow Days in Vienna, and wohnfonds_wien staff participated in a Smart City Forum in Istanbul.

COURT OF AUDIT

The Court of Audit continued its long-standing information exchanges and cooperation with auditing institutions abroad. Expanding its activities in this field, the Vienna Court of Audit joined the European Organization of Regional External Public Finance Audit Institutions (EURORAI) in the year under report. EURORAI is a co-operation project of regional public sector audit institutions in Europe. It provides a platform for international exchanges of information and discussions about how to apply international standards in audit processes, as well as opportunities to participate in international exchange programmes and continuing education events. Seven regional audit bodies from Austria have now joined EURORIA. Leading officials from the Republika Srpska’s audit authority in Banja Luka visited Vienna with a view to future cooperation. Visitors from Paris, Ljubljana, Bratislava and Zagreb came together in the Coat of Arms Hall of Vienna City Hall to discuss whistleblowing, corruption prevention, the independence of audit bodies and sports funding.

Vienna’s Court of Audit was invited to visit its counterpart institution in Hamburg for the first time. The presentations there introduced the legal position of the local audit body and its organisation, the annual reporting process, its cooperation with the German Federal Court of Audit, the “Citizens’ Budget” and the local system of “pre-audit offices”. Other subjects included issues relating to cost stability in large construction projects (Elbphilharmonie concert hall project) and auditing of government subsidies in the areas of culture, sports and business.

An auditor from Vienna spent a four-week internship at the Inspection Générale de Paris. Cooperation with Zagreb continued with a presentation and evaluation of the results of a joint (parallel) audit process on sports subsidies. The management of investment holdings (stakes in economic entities) was discussed in meetings with officials from Bratislava. The Slovenian internal auditing system was presented at a meeting in Ljubljana.
Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid

The City of Vienna chose “Education for all – measures for school education and vocational training” as the focus of its development cooperation policy in 2014 and supported ten NGO projects under this headline theme. The projects were implemented in Albania, Belarus, Burkina Faso, India, Moldova, Nepal, Rwanda, Serbia, Zimbabwe and Uganda. Vienna also contributed to major school infrastructure development projects in Johannesburg and Port Edward, South Africa. Six projects were launched in the Philippines to help with the reconstruction of infrastructure that had been destroyed by typhoon Haiyan on the Visayas islands. Housing and water supply systems, as well as fishing boats, were built in the projects on the islands of Cebu, Leyte and Panay.

The Balkans region suffered devastation as a result of widespread flooding. The houses of 32 families in Nemanja, a town in the district of Zenica in Bosnia-Hercegovina, were rebuilt with financial support from Vienna. In Šabac, Serbia, 252 family homes were repaired and basic necessities – beds, kitchen equipment and furniture – provided for the residents.

In the Middle East, tens of thousands fled from ISIS terror in northern Iraq to the Autonomous Region of Iraqi Kurdistan. Most of the refugees ended up in the area around the Region’s capital Erbil. The UNHCR appealed to the international community for help in supplying the refugees with food, water and shelters. Responding to the appeal, the City of Vienna contributed to assistance measures taken by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA).

The Chief Executive Office – Executive Group for European and International Affairs (MD-EUI) organised a panel discussion under the headline “Fair trade or free enterprise?” in collaboration with the Academic Forum for Foreign Affairs (AFA) and Fair Trade Austria. In a confrontational debate, the panellists sought to answer the question whether higher social and ecological standards or economic deregulation will contribute more to poverty reduction.

The annual conference of development policy experts took place on 1 December at the City Hall. The keynote theme in 2014 was “Food sovereignty – global
visions and local initiatives”. Andrea Ferrante, a critical agrarian expert and farmer who operates an organic farm in Italy, said in his keynote speech that the right to food should be at the centre of all development strategies. Farmers can engage in socially and ecologically acceptable agricultural production only if they own the rights to land and to seeds and do not depend on big agribusiness groups for their livelihood. The fact is often overlooked that it is the small family farms that feed the world, not the big business operations. Likewise, about 70% of worldwide investments in agricultural operations are made by small farms.

The President of the European Forum Alpbach and former EU Commissioner for Agriculture, Franz Fischler, called for a multi-pronged approach to overcome hunger and ensure food sovereignty. This should include democracy, an economic system with strong ecological and social components, determined action against climate change, investment in education and research, as well as a clear and well-defined rural development strategy. All speakers at the conference agreed that the world’s 800 million family farms are the backbone of food production. Helena Norberg-Hodge, Director of “Local Futures – International Society for Ecology and Cultures”, said that more local food solutions and less international trade are needed, notably to prevent cheap imports of agricultural products, which often involve transport of goods over extremely long distances and ruin local markets.

A large consignment of hospital furniture which had become available as a result of the refurbishment of the former Geriatric Centre Am Wienerwald was sent to Eastern Europe as humanitarian aid. In cooperation with NGO Caritas, 100 hospital beds were shipped to Albania by lorry and distributed to healthcare centres in and around the capital Tirana. Repeated shipments of humanitarian aid goods from Vienna also helped to expand social and healthcare services in the city and county of Sibiu. In addition to hospital furniture, office furniture was also provided in cooperation with the organisation “Austria pro Romania”. In all, 16 semi-trailer loads of furniture were received by Romanian institutions, including retirement and nursing homes, child day-care centres and schools, fire departments and service centres for persons with disabilities located in ten communities in the county of Sibiu. Furniture was also supplied for children’s homes and shelters for the homeless in Chișinău. For more information on humanitarian aid for Ukraine, see the chapter “Bilateral Cooperation Projects”.

Surplus nursing uniforms were donated to help solve an acute shortage of work clothes at the central hospital in Tuzla and three smaller health care centres in Lopare, Teočak and Srebrenik. The transfer was made via the Austrian army’s civilian-military cooperation team CIMIC, which was stationed in Bosnia-Hercegovina in the context of Austria’s participation in the EUFOR mission there.

MD-EUI co-funded transports of medical-technical equipment and other humanitarian aid goods by Viennese NGOs to Romania, Tunisia and Ukraine. A photo exhibition about “Nelson Mandela and his South Africa” was opened by South Africa’s Ambassador to Austria Tebogo Seokolo at the City Hall information centre in Vienna. The exhibition was mounted to mark the 20th anniversary of South Africa’s first free elections. It showed 23 photographs that illustrated Nelson Mandela’s unique achievement in transforming a state under apartheid rule into a pluralist, non-racist society.
European Union

EU Grants – Urban Development

The European Commission approved URBACT III for the new programming period 2014–2020. A new feature of the programme are “action planning networks” whose task is to prepare urban development strategies. Another instrument are implementation networks which every city may join once it has developed a strategy. Transfer networks are to facilitate the implementation of good practice examples in other cities.

The 58th German-Austrian meeting of the URBAN network and the Austrian Association of Cities and Towns took place in Vienna. The main topics of discussion were opportunities and constraints for the urban dimension in German and Austrian structural funds programmes and EFRD-co-financed projects in Mannheim, Graz and Vienna. The Reference Framework for European Sustainable Cities (RFSC) was the subject of a training seminar. It is an online programme that supports cities in their integrated urban development efforts. The requirements of urban development policies today were also discussed at meetings in Leipzig and Duisburg.

EU Funding – International Cooperation

In the programming period 2007–2013, Vienna’s Municipal Department 27 (MA 27 – European Affairs) acted as Managing Authority for two EU assistance programmes (CENTRAL EUROPE 2007–2013, European Territorial Cooperation Slovakia-Austria 2007–2013) and supported bilateral programmes (ETC Slovakia-Austria, Austria-Czech Republic, Austria-Hungary) in its capacity of Regional Coordination Office. Vienna plans to continue its participation in cooperation programmes, which are bundled under the established and well-known heading of Interreg in the programming period 2014–2020. CENTRAL EUROPE 2014–2020 was approved by the European Commission. The Managing Authorities of the bilateral programmes AT-CZ and AT-HU submitted proposals under the programme in the last quarter of 2014. It is expected that these, as well as the SK-AT programme, will be approved by the end of the 2nd quarter 2015.

Main areas of activity – international funding programmes

Volume of programme budgets available for bilateral programmes SK-AT, AT-CZ, AT-HU in the ETC funding period 2007–2013:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>Programme volume in EUR</th>
<th>Vienna’s programme share in EUR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EFRD (EU funds)</td>
<td>EFRD (EU funds)</td>
<td>EFRD (EU funds)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SK-AT</td>
<td>59,906,355</td>
<td>18,906,355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AT-CZ</td>
<td>107,435,393</td>
<td>9,891,513</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AT-HU</td>
<td>82,280,309</td>
<td>12,308,843</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>249,622,057</td>
<td>41,106,711</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EFRD quota 85:15 (max. project volume covered by EFRD funds: 85%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since almost all available EU funds were already committed in late 2013, no new projects were submitted and/or approved in 2014. All in all, 107 cross-border cooperation projects were initiated during the programme period.
ETC – transnational cooperation programmes

Vienna was involved in two transnational cooperation programmes, CENTRAL EUROPE and SOUTH EAST EUROPE, in the programme period 2007–2013. While many local government units and institutions from Vienna participated as project partners in the programmes, Municipal Department 27 (MA 27) executed the function of Managing Authority of the CENTRAL EUROPE programme and acted as representative of Austria’s nine provinces in the bodies of the SOUTH EAST EUROPE programme. As all funds had already been committed in 2012, no new funding agreements were issued in 2014, and activities focussed mainly on the completion of approved projects and preparations for the future transnational Interreg programme.

Transnational Cooperation Interreg
DANUBE (2014–2020)

MA 27 participated in the programming meetings of the new DANUBE programme on behalf of all Austrian Provinces. The meetings continued and largely concluded the discussions, started in 2013, about the future goals of the programme and its integration into the Danube Region Strategy. It is expected that the programme will be submitted and approved by the Managing Authority, which has its seat in Budapest, in 2015.

For further information, see also the chapter on Activities of the Chief Executive Office, Departments and Institutions.

SERVICES OF GENERAL INTEREST

Water Fact Sheet
The City of Vienna prepared a fact sheet of arguments against the liberalisation of the water sector. It was completed in late 2014 and will be used in discussions at the political and administrative level and in contacts with cooperation partners.

Free Trade Agreements
TTIP (Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership): The European Commission favours a far-reaching free trade agreement with the United States. The conclusion of the negotiations is planned for 2016.

Negotiations with Canada about CETA (Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement) were concluded in summer 2014. It will take until 2016, however, for the agreement to be signed.

Negotiations among the WTO member states continued on the Trade in Services Agreement (TISA), which will be based on the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS).

Railway package
The EU Council of Ministers continued its discussions about the railway package, but without reaching an agreement on the political questions; the technical talks focused on operation permits for trains and the issuance of safety certificates, among other subjects. The political issues were mainly about liberalisation and a potential separation of infrastructure and rail operations.

EUSDR – EU Strategy for the Danube Region

1,200 participants, including Austria’s Foreign Minister Sebastian Kurz and EU Commissioner Johannes Hahn, came together at the third Annual Forum of the EUSDR in Vienna. Following agenda proposals submitted by Priority Area 10 (building up institutional capacities), for which Vienna and Slovenia act as Priority Area Coordinators (PAC 10), the conference discussed education and the labour market, urban development, civil society and Roma inclusion.
The website “Urban Platform Danube Region” http://www.danube-capacitycooperation.eu/pages/danube-region-urban-platform went online. It was created by PA 10 as a “one-stop shop” for the cities of the Danube region. PA 10 carried out several projects on behalf of the European Commission. Among them was the establishment of a Technical Assistance Facility that provides consultancy to 35 selected projects to help them prepare submissions for co-financing. A call for proposals under the small projects fund “START” (10,000 to 40,000 euro) was issued, resulting in the submission in autumn of 870 applications for a total funding volume of 900,000 euro. PA 10 also planned to develop a guideline on EU funding under the title “Euro Access Danube Region”.

The second conference of the Urban Platform Danube Region took place at Vienna City Hall in January 2015. About 200 participants from 17 countries discussed good governance issues at the meeting.

PA 10 founded the “Danube Local Actors Platform” for local government authorities, universities and NGOs from the 14 EUSDR countries. The platform will facilitate the transfer of information between the EU institutions and civil society and will serve as a project marketplace in the current programming period. Information events are scheduled in connection with the upcoming EUSDR Forum in Ulm.

A “Participation Day” in Eisenstadt called for improvements in the funding schemes. The Austrian Ministries of Labour and Finance contributed to the work of PA 9 (human resources), which hosted an event about social inclusion of the Roma in collaboration with PA 10. PA 10 Coordinator Kurt Puchinger was among the group of nine winners of the Danube Flower Award, which also included Maestro Zubin Mehta. The awards, which recognise outstanding merit in the implementation of projects, were presented at the “Danube Business Forum” in Belgrade.

The Danube macro-region comprises Germany, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Slovenia, Hungary, Croatia, Bosnia-Hercegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria, Moldova, Ukraine and Austria. The EUSDR’s eleven priority areas are grouped under the headline themes of connecting the Danube region, protecting its environment, building prosperity and strengthening the region. Austria is responsible for mobility and multimodality on inland waterways (Federal Ministry for Transport and Wiadonau), human resources (Federal Ministries of Labour and Finance) and institutional capacity (Vienna/Slovenia).
UNITED NATIONS

The United Nations Office Vienna (UNOV) celebrated its 35th anniversary in the year under report. To mark the occasion, UNOV Director General Yuri Fedotov and Mayor Michael Häupl planted a vine from the Cobenzl winery at the Vienna International Centre (VIC) and opened an exhibition about the organisations housed there. The exhibition was subsequently shown at the Foreign Policy and United Nations Association of Austria (UNA-AUSTRIA) at Hernstein Castle and at the information centre at Vienna City Hall.

The annual conference of the Academic Council of the United Nations System (ACUNS) took place in Vienna. Participants from Vienna were also present at the general assembly in Istanbul, where presentations and discussions focussed on questions of resilience. Students from all over the world convened at the VIMUN – “Vienna International Model United Nations” to discuss international issues in a format that simulates international conferences. An evening at a “Heuriger” wine tavern and a reception at Vienna City Hall were organised for the participants in the two events.

The City of Vienna engaged in several cooperation projects with the United Nations Information Service (UNIS).

VIENNA SERVICE OFFICE

The Vienna Service Office (VSO) at the Vienna International Centre is run by the City of Vienna as a point of contact and free assistance for UN employees and their families. Information leaflets and brochures on questions relating to Vienna and Austria are available and especially useful for recent arrivals. Moreover, the VSO promotes the VIC and Vienna and assists UN employees in contacts with local authorities and agencies, responding to and providing practical help with enquiries concerning public authorities, bills, public transport, children, translation of forms, consumer protection issues, citizenship and residence regulations, and many more.
The VSO publishes a regular online newsletter that reaches about 800 VIC addressees. About 1,100 persons paid a visit to the VSO in 2014 in search of specific information; more than 900 UN employees dropped by to collect information leaflets, and VSO responded to about 200 enquiries by e-mail. More than 50% of all enquiries came from IAEA employees, followed by UNOV, CTBTO, UNIDO and other UN organisations.

The VSO organised a series of events, including a free-of-charge First Aid course, a tour of Naschmarkt, Vienna’s central market, and a visit to the City Library. The Municipal Department for the Promotion and Coordination of Women’s Issues (MA 57) presented itself at a VSO “Hospitality Afternoon.”

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Held twice a year, the “Vienna City Welcome” provides information for the staff of international organisations and embassies. It included a tour round the city, a reception at Vienna City Hall and information talks on the city’s healthcare services, waste management system and Internet services. About 90 participants took part on each date.

A package of classes in basic German and information about life in Vienna was offered to the members of the francophone expat organisations “Amicale des femmes francophones” and “Vienne Accueil”.

The City of Vienna supported the annual international Festival Bazaar of the United Nations Women’s Guild at the VIC. The proceeds of the bazaar went towards financing projects in aid of children. The UNWG gave donations to 37 children’s aid projects in 28 countries in 2014.

For a list of links to international organisations and many NGOs in Austria, see: http://www.wien.gv.at/politik/international/organisationen/uebersicht.html

2014 was the International Year of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. UNRWA has been supporting refugees for 66 years. This image was projected onto walls of buildings around the world; in Vienna, the chosen location was the Leopold Museum in the MuseumsQuarter complex. (Ulrich Fischer)
To mark the 20th anniversary of EU membership, the Liaison Office extended an invitation to a gala event hosted by Vice-Mayor Renate Brauner and Ambassador Walter Grahammer, Austria’s Permanent Representative to the EU. The commemorative publication *Wir sind 20 – Turning Twenty* was presented in the presence of one hundred guests. This publication, issued by the City of Vienna, is based on discussions between young people born around 1995 and persons involved in the accession negotiations.

In March 2014, International Women’s Day was as usual marked with a special event, this time featuring the representation of women’s interests in Vienna, Austria and Europe. One of the highlights in 2014 was the summer fête at the end of June, jointly organised by the Brussels office of the Vienna Business Agency and the Burgenland Liaison Office. Vienna’s representative at the fête – which once again provided cities, regions and EU players with opportunities for successful networking – was Executive City Councillor Georg Niedermühlbichler. In July, the presentation of the book *Europas Drahtzieher* by Raimund Löwel/ ORF (Austrian Broadcasting Corporation) and Cerstin Gammelin/Süddeutsche Zeitung was jointly hosted with the Baden-Württemberg State Representative Office. About 250 guests gathered for the panel discussion with EP President Martin Schulz, EP Vice-President Ulrike Lunacek and MEP Inge Gräßle. Social housing continued to figure prominently among the activities of the Liaison Office. With support from MEP Evelyn Regner, the Liaison Office mounted an exhibition featuring social housing at the European Parliament in October. The exhibition was opened by Executive City Councillor for Housing, Housing Construction and Urban Renewal Michael Ludwig. An inspiring discussion was triggered by the presentation of an exhibition featuring “The Suppressed Years” at the European Parliament in November. The Liaison Office and the office of the Austrian Federal Railways (ÖBB) in Brussels extended an invitation to a joint event at the Vienna House. The Head of the Austrian Federal Railways, Christian Kern, joined a discussion with Susanne Kill, Chief Historian of Deutsche Bahn, and Belgian researcher Herbert Ruland.

Cultural events were once again many and varied in 2014. A reading by the Alpha Award winner was organised in cooperation with Casinos Austria and Vienna’s Main Public Library. The 75th anniversary of Sigmund Freud’s death was the occasion for a presentation by cultural historian Lisa Fischer. To mark the First World War Centenary, the Vienna House organised a concert performance by the Belgian-Austrian duo Raskin & Fleischmann under the heading *Im Korngold – 1914-2014*; the event was moderated by Ursula Magnes, Head of Music of Radio Stephansdom. In the last two quarters of the year, the cultural programme was rounded off with two performances dedicated to the same theme. One event in the *Vienna Lectures* series was devoted to a reading from Karl Kraus’ drama *Die letzten Tage der Menschheit* (The Last Days of
Mankind). The reading by actor Hubert Kramar was introduced by historian Oliver Rathkolb. At the traditional “Wiener Kriminacht in Brüssel” (Vienna crime night in Brussels), author Gerhard Loibelberger read extracts from his novel _Todeswalzer_, whose plot takes place in the year 1914. The Austrian Cultural Forum proved an excellent and reliable partner of the Liaison Office in the organisation of cultural events.

Once again, the Office of the Business Agency and the Liaison Office jointly participated in the “Open Days – 12th European Week of Regions and Cities”. A panel discussion on “Green Growth in Smart Cities – Energy-efficient technologies and their bearing on our daily lives” was organised at Aspern IQ.

In 2014, the Vienna House once again served as a venue for exchange and meetings: 14 visitor groups visited the House with a view to gathering information on the tasks of the Liaison Office and of the Vienna Business Agency. Equipped with advanced technical facilities, the Vienna House is a popular venue for workshops organised by various networks and EU working groups. The Vienna House houses the city’s Liaison Office, the Office of the Vienna Business Agency and the Burgenland Liaison Office.

COMPRESS REPRESENTATIVE OFFICES IN CENTRAL, EASTERN AND SOUTH-EAST EUROPE

On behalf of the City of Vienna Press and Information Service the COMPRESS PR agency runs the Representative Offices of the City of Vienna in the following cities: Belgrade, Bratislava, Budapest, Bucharest, Ljubljana, Krakow, Moscow, Prague, Sarajevo, Sofia and Zagreb. For 18 years now, these offices have provided the mentioned cities with information on the City of Vienna’s communication priorities, have served as points of contact and have provided organisational support for events as well as to expert delegations and local projects. Moreover, the COMPRESS PR agency has provided up-to-date information on events in the target cities and countries and supported and accompanied delegations from the target cities during their visits to Vienna.

Media coverage: Eurovision Song Contest 2015 – a major highlight

In the year under review, 9,893 favourable news items on Vienna were published in the target cities. This means that, on average, 2.46 articles featuring Vienna appeared in each of the eleven target cities. With a record number of 558 press items, the Eurovision Song Contest 2015 was the absolute highlight. The counts of articles published were 94 in Serbia, 82 in Bulgaria, 81 in Bosnia-Hercegovina and 68 in Slovenia.

Even though the media in many countries faced difficulties, 1,107 press items on culture and music translated into an upswing of 55.92% in 2014 as compared with the previous year. Major increases were also registered in other areas: 714 press mentions were recorded in the area of “health and social affairs”, which translates into an increase of 48.75%. The “Mercer Study” (168 press items) and “Demography in Vienna” (26 press items) also attracted considerable interest, while the plus recorded in 2014 in the field of culture/literature, for example, amounted to 25.33%. A number of events, such as “BUCH WIEN” and the “Eine STadt. Ein BUCH.” initiative were also reported in the media. Topics relating to the Vienna Tourist Board (217 press items), and to the Vienna Business Agency (49 press items) reflected an increase of 19.81% in the area of “business and trade.”
Inter-community networks

COMPRESS continued to actively support the events organised by the City of Vienna in the network cities. The range of services extends from providing pertinent background information to organising fringe events and arranging appointments to personal support, both locally and in Vienna. In 2014, 38 delegations were looked after by COMPRESS in the target cities; 40 delegations were received in Vienna. Sixty-seven individually supported press tours added up to a grand total of 145 delegations, equivalent to a 9.85% increase over the previous year.

Background research was conducted into 82 topics from the wide range of municipal sectors, among them social housing. In 2014, the number of ad-hoc reports on events in the target cities and countries rose by 44.96% to 187.

In 2014, the networking events to which the Representative Offices invited local decision-makers, media and multipliers were devoted to “services and services of general interest in Vienna”. As in the previous year, specially made display columns and a short video film served as introductions to the theme. The experts and political representatives of the City of Vienna provided in-depth insights into different aspects of the services of general interest provided by Vienna, tailored to the target cities’ respective fields of interest. In Sarajevo, for instance, the event was adapted to take account of the flood disaster in May. In Prague and Budapest, the Vienna Business Agency was involved to address the topic of business start-ups. In Kraków the focus of the event, mounted in cooperation with the Vienna Tourist Board, was on the 150th anniversary of the Vienna Ringstrasse.

Mayor Michael Häupl accepted an invitation from his opposite number in Ljubljana, Zoran Janković, and received the Croat Holocaust survivor and Oscar winner Branko Lustig in Vienna. Mayor Yordanka Fandakova from Sofia was one of the guests attending the “3rd Annual Forum of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region”. The Mayor of Belgrade, Siniša Mali, took part in the “1st District Heating/Cooling and Waste to Energy Convention of Southern/Eastern European Municipalities”. Deputy Mayor Tadeusz Trzmiel from Kraków visited the Seestadt Aspern Urban Lakeside development project. The “Moscow Days in Vienna”, mounted with support from COMPRESS, caused a flurry of attention. On behalf of Vienna’s Executive Group for Construction and Technology, COMPRESS sounded out the interest shown by the target cities in the EU project “Life 2012 – Urbanlake”; bilateral meetings with Budapest and Bratislava were scheduled for the autumn. There was a lively exchange with the Prague Institute for Town Planning and Development, whose experts came on a fact-finding visit as part of a bilateral exchange scheme with Vienna.

COMPRESS has also been supporting the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR); preparations for the “4th Danube Financing Dialogue” in Zagreb, which is scheduled for April 2015, were already under way in the year under review. In addition, monthly surveys of media reports on the Danube region were drawn up and disseminated. COMPRESS was involved in organising and supervising both a EUSDR educational trip along the Danube headed by Parliamentary Group Leader Rudolf Schicker and trips by the Vienna EUSDR Coordinator Kurt Puchinger to Bucharest and Belgrade. As in previous years, the exchange of experience between the Chief Executive Office and its counterparts in the individual target towns was continued.

The Second Deputy Speaker of the Vienna Provincial Parliament, Marianne Klicka, opened an exhibition on “The Myth of Galicia” in Kraków; the Representative for cycling matters, Martin Blum, gave a presentation at a conference under the headline “The Adventure of Cycling” in Budapest. In May, the City Hall of Sarajevo, whose redevelopment had been supported by Vienna,
among others, was formally rededicated in the presence of City Council Member Omar Al-Rawi and Executive Councillor for Culture Andreas Mailath-Pokorny opened the exhibition “Der Menschheit Würde” (The Dignity of Man).

The cooperation between COMPRESS and the Austrian Embassies, Foreign Trade Centres and Cultural Forums was continued.

**Economic cooperation**

2014 was a mixed year in economic terms. Whereas the budget revenues of cities remained more or less at prior-year levels, and in some cases even decreased slightly, investments in most of the target cities within the EU were on the increase. The reason was that higher sums were drawn from the EU development funds set aside for the budget period 2007–2013, because in accordance with EU regulations financing commitments for projects not completed by the end of 2015 were bound to expire. Hence, member countries and cities were trying hard to ensure the implementation of approved projects. A similar scenario is expected for 2015.

In 2014, the investments made by the target cities amounted to a total of more than eight billion euros. More than half of the funds were channelled into transport projects, more specifically into the construction and upgrading of roads, bridges, tunnels, intersections, underground railway and tram lines as well as the procurement of public transport vehicles such as underground trains, ultra-low-floor trams as well as diesel- and gas-powered buses.

Urban development, health and environment, including waste management and energy efficiency, were further focal areas on which the representatives of the target cities and their Viennese counterparts exchanged experience, and which harbour business opportunities for local construction companies.

Special emphasis was placed on the cooperation with Moscow. A series of meetings was arranged as part of an economic forum organised in Vienna by the chambers of commerce and the municipal authorities of the two cities. Moscow’s main areas of interest were Vienna’s urban development and energy efficiency programme as well as waste management and waste incineration. Beyond this, Moscow entrepreneurs were informed about investment options in Vienna and on mentoring and support services for foreign investors. By the same token, investors were encouraged to channel funds into the development of new urban areas in Moscow and to locate their operations in industrial areas and technology parks.

In the year under review, the special service for Vienna-based entrepreneurs, which can be accessed at www.compresspr.at, published 5,339 calls for tender in the fields of municipal infrastructure and urban economy.

The weekly journal wieninternational.at, which has been online since 2006, can now also be accessed at wieninternational.wien. Following on from the previous year, the hallmarks of 2014
were “Smart City Vienna” as well as events commemorating the Centenary of the First World War and a series on the subject of film. The Facebook page (1,930 followers) has also helped to trigger an increase in the number of regular readers from approximately 400,000 to 500,000 page impressions. Thanks to the weekly news bulletin, wieninternational.at is now available to 5,728 subscribers. In 2014, approximately 6,100 event announcements and 154 prize competitions were listed on the start page.

The Enjoy Vienna incoming magazine is available on a monthly basis at Schwechat Airport. As of January 2014, it has also been on offer in new dispensers at two major stops of the City Airport Train (CAT). It is also available at hotels, cafés and museums as well as at tourist information offices. Enjoy Vienna is also a popular source of information in Vienna’s twin city of Bratislava. Moreover, the magazine is sent out to a mailing list of 10,000 VIPs in the target countries, and thanks to the augmented online presence at wien-international.at the number of online subscribers has meanwhile risen to 705.

In December 2014, Enjoy Vienna was awarded the Austrian Ecolabel.

REPRESENTATIVE OFFICE TOKYO

The AUA Vienna-Tokyo flight connection celebrated its 25th anniversary: Austrian Airlines, the Austrian National Tourist Office and the Vienna Tourist Board featured the occasion in a nine-hour broadcast on Japan’s “J-Wave” radio programme. A large number of guests gave accounts of their stays in Vienna, and Deputy Mayor Renate Brauner was among the personages who sent messages of congratulation. In parallel with the radio broadcast, piano and violin music was performed live at Tokyo’s main station. In the run-up to the event, interest was roused by the high-circulation paper Asahi Shimbun and the event was attended by an audience of 800 onlookers. Over 300,000 overnight stays in Vienna were booked by visitors from Japan.

Approximately 60 guests from the travel and media sectors made their way to the Tokyo “Daikanyama T-Site Garden Gallery” to experience the atmosphere of the “Classic Viennese Drawing Room” as a prelude to the 150th anniversary of Vienna’s Ringstrasse boulevard. The visitors were welcomed by Deputy Mayor Renate Brauner and Norbert Kettner, Managing Director of the Vienna Tourist Board. The topic was addressed by architects and authors and the event was covered by a large number of media.

Images of the classicist Ringstrasse architecture were displayed on eight large screens at the main station: the 30-second film was shown in the entrance and exit halls of the railway station, through which 400,000 people pass on a daily basis. It flickered across the screens 1,330 times a week. The film was also shown every twelve minutes and 95 times a day on the 7,072 screens of the six metro lines serving the centre of Tokyo. The metro is used by 6.6 million passengers a day. A trip to Vienna for two was the prize in a competition held under the motto “150 Years of the Ringstrasse”, and the promotion was rounded off with advertisements in Tokyo and Nagoya dailies.

Michael Tauschmann has taken over the management of the Japan branch of the Austrian National Tourist Office until mid-2015.
International Guests at Vienna City Hall

International Guests Received by the Mayor

21 January
Jacek Kozłowski
Voivod of Masovia

26 February
Xavier Bettel
Prime Minister of Luxembourg

3 March
Li Yong
Director General of the Industrial Development Board of the UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)

22 April
Saifallah Lasram
Mayor of Tunis

5 May
Milan Bandić
Mayor of Zagreb

6 May
Akel Aid Biltaji
Mayor of Amman

8 May
Johannes Hahn
EU Commissioner

12 May
Dorin Chirtoacă
Mayor of Chișinău

16 May
Andrej Fištravec
Mayor of Maribor

19 May
Carrie Lam
Chief Secretary for Administration, Government of Hong Kong

22 May
Abdullah A. M. Al-Mogbel
Mayor of Riyadh

3 June
Bohuslav Sobotka
Prime Minister of the Czech Republic

23 June
Michael Hašek
Governor of South Moravia

24 June
Erdene Bat-Uul
Mayor of Ulan Bator

26–27 June
Johannes Hahn
EU Commissioner

26 August
Jan Hamáček
Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament of the Czech Republic

8–10 September
Sergey Cheremin
Minister of the Moscow Government

2 October
Václav Šlajs
Governor of Pizděř

2 October
Erwin Sellering
Head of Government of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Germany

2 October
Yuli-Yoel Edelstein
Speaker of the Knesset
3 October
Roberto Cosolini
Mayor of Trieste

6 October
Shpend Ahmeti
Mayor of Priština

7 October
Milan Bandić and Branko Lustig
Mayor of Zagreb and Oscar winner

8 October
Siniša Mali
Mayor of Belgrade

4 November
Václav Klaus
Former President of the Czech Republic

7 November
Manuel Valls
Prime Minister of France

7 November
Martin Schulz
President of the European Parliament

7 November
Sigmar Gabriel
Vice-Chancellor and Federal Minister of Economic Affairs and Energy
Chairman of the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD)

14 November
Marcel Chládek
Minister for Education, Youth and Sports, Czech Republic

19 November
Torsten Albig
Head of Government of Schleswig-Holstein, Germany

19 November
Greg Clark
Minister for Universities, Science and Cities, Great Britain and Northern Ireland

15 December
Zoran Janković
Mayor of Ljubljana

12 November
Recep Gürkan
Mayor of Edirne
Union of Municipalities of the Marmara Region (UMMR)

14 November
Moran Mor Ignatius Aphrem II Karim, Patriarch of Antioch and All the East and Supreme Head of the Universal Syriac Orthodox Church, signed the City of Vienna’s Golden Book. (Christian Jobst/PID)

11 June
Serzh A. Sargsyan
President of the Republic of Armenia

5 December
Moran Mor Ignatius Aphrem II Karim
H.H. Patriarch of Antioch and All the East and Supreme Head of the Universal Syriac Orthodox Church

ENTRIES IN THE CITY OF VIENNA’S GOLDEN BOOK

21 January
George Abela
President of the Republic of Malta

5 March
Ivan Gašparovič
President of the Republic of Slovakia

26 January
Carrie Lam, Chief Administrative Secretary of Hong Kong (Christian Jobst/PID)

30 January
The President of Armenia, Serzh A. Sargsyan (Christian Jobst)
The exhibition “The Myth of Galicia” presents a multi-faceted picture of this former Crown Land of the Habsburg Empire. It was organised in a collaborative effort by Kraków’s International Cultural Centre and Wien Museum and shown in Kraków in 2014 and in Vienna in 2015. The Second Deputy Speaker of the Vienna Provincial Parliament, Marianne Klicka, was present at the opening in Kraków, together with IDM President Dr. Erhard Busek (left) and Austria’s Ambassador to Moscow, Dr. Emil Brix. Dr. Brix was Consul General in Kraków at the time of the founding of the ICC in 1991. (M. K.)

A visit to Vienna with an exciting programme was organised for thirteen boys and girls from the fire brigade youth organisation of Opatija. The Speaker of the Vienna Provincial Parliament, Professor Harry Kopietz, presented two training manikins to the group, which will be used to boost the effectiveness of First Aid training courses. (PID/Thomas Kluger)
Visits abroad by the Mayor

17 February
**Brussels**
Meeting of Mayors of EU capitals

2–3 April
**Brussels**
Meetings of the management of the Austrian Association of Cities and Towns

3 April
**Ústí nad Labem**
Opening of an Austrian Library at the Jan Evangelista Purkyně University

6–9 April
**Stockholm**
Study tour of the Vienna Science and Technology Fund (WWTF)

11–13 April
**Milan and Rome**
Bilateral meetings

15 May
**Bratislava**
Bilateral meetings

23 September
**Brno**
CENTROPE Annual Meeting

24 September
**Ljubljana**
Bilateral meetings

30 September – 1 October
**Rome**
Meeting of mayors of EU capitals

Mayor Dr. Michael Häupl speaks at the opening of an Austrian Library at the Jan Evangelista Purkyně University (Pepa)

The Jan Evangelista Purkyně University in Ústí nad Labem (J.E. Purkyně)
International Activities of the Districts

MARGARETEN – 5th District

Representatives from Margareten and from Berlin-Lichtenberg met on two occasions in 2014. In Vienna, the visitors from Berlin went on a tour of the district of Margareten, which focussed in particular on social housing, and met youth centre and park management workers at a round table discussion. On the agenda of the return visit to Berlin in the autumn were tours of cultural and housing projects, and the guests from Vienna were invited to attend a session of the district administration. District Chairwoman Susanne Schaefer-Wiery and her Berlin counterpart Andreas Geisel agreed to continue and expand the bilateral relations, especially in the areas of urban development and promotion of the local economy, meetings of inhabitants from all generations and cultural exchange.

SIMMERING – 11th District

Several schools in the district continued their extensive contacts with partner schools abroad. Mutual visits took place between the secondary school at Enkplatz and its partner school in Kraków, as well as between the primary school at Svetelsky-strasse and its partner school in the town of Jemnice, county of Vysočina, in the central region of the Czech Republic.

HIETZING – 13th District

The District of Hietzing welcomed visitors from two international networks. The European Union of Supported Employment (EUSE) unites eleven national organisations, including the Austrian Dachverband für berufliche Integration (Umbrella Organization for Supported Employment). The European Supported Employment Toolkit was presented
to a large audience at Kardinal König Haus, a Catholic education centre. The Toolkit is an instrument to be used for supported employment for persons with disabilities, persons released from prison, drug addicts and neglected young people.

40 delegates from 25 neighbourhood organisations from 19 countries came together at the founding congress of the European Neighbourhood Watch Association (EUNWA) which was established at the initiative of the neighbourhood group proNACHBAR in Hietzing. Representatives of ministries and from the police forces were also present at the conference, which took place under the auspices of the Federal Ministry of the Interior.

OTTAKRING – 16th District

The former Foreign Minister and Speaker of the House of Representatives of Japan, Yōhei Kōno, visited District Chairman Franz Prokop. A peace monument made from rubble from the city hall of Hiroshima has graced the public space in front of the Ottakring district administration since 2009 as a silent call for a world without nuclear arms. The atom bomb disaster and its aftermath also inspired the moving book *Sadako will leben* (published in English as *The Day of the Bomb*) by Karl Bruckner (1906–1982). Bruckner, a successful author of literature for children and young people, was one of the great sons of Ottakring.

DÖBLING – 19th District

A “Japanese Night” was organised in June to celebrate the 30th anniversary of Döbling’s cooperation with Setagaya. Choirs from both districts performed at the event. With more than 800,000 inhabitants, Setagaya is the largest municipality within the Tokyo Prefecture.
Following the stand-out success of 2013, Vienna managed another record year in 2014. Vienna registered 13,524,000 overnight stays, a rise of 6.3% over 2013, 11,043,000 of which (approx. 82% of the total) were by foreign visitors. The net sales generated in the hotel and accommodation sector reached 667.6 million euro, an increase of 9.6% over the previous year.

Unconventional marketing formats in major cities worldwide
In 2014, the Vienna Tourist Board continued its strategy of attracting a high degree of media and public attention with spectacular live events in the public spaces of major cities in selected markets. These live spectacles are always accompanied by supplementary marketing measures, ranging from social media campaigns through PR work to classical advertising, an obligatory component being the distribution of flyers promoting travel packages to Vienna with major local tour operators.

In the spring, the Vienna Tourist Board ran an integrated online and offline advertising campaign in China entitled “Vienna – City of Music”, which presented Vienna as a musical city of international standing. The campaign featured a competition in which entrants were asked to hum the Blue Danube Waltz or play it on an instrument, film themselves doing so and post their photo or video clip online on the Vienna Tourist Board’s website weiyena.info and the Chinese social media platforms Weibo and PaPa. The Chinese tour operator Caissa launched a special Vienna package tour to accompany the campaign, and a karaoke booth was placed in the “Ginza” shopping mall in Beijing, where passers-by were also invited to perform their own version of the Blue Danube Waltz. The winner and three friends travelled to Vienna in August, with coverage of their visit also being published in the media.

Eye-catching interactive Vienna cubes in five major European cities
Warsaw, London, Prague, Berlin and Barcelona were the venues for an international marketing campaign centred on giant interactive cubes with a diameter of two and a half metres. Located in the respective city centres, the cubes invited passers-by to enter a competition and visit Vienna. Topped with the Vienna Tourist Board logo and the strapline “Vienna. Now or Never”, the eye-catching cubes were visible from far and wide on Warsaw’s Skwer Hoovera, London’s Leicester Square, Wenceslas Square in Prague, Wittenbergplatz in Berlin and Barcelona’s Old Port. The cubes also featured an installation counting down the minutes to the grand finale on the last day of the campaign, when the winners were drawn and presented with their prizes. The main prize in each city was a trip to Vienna for two. Members of the public could enter the competition via iPads available on the spot or via the website now.vienna.info. In the areas surrounding the cubes costumed promoters engaged passers-by, wearing different outfits each day, posing for photos dressed as the emperor and his wife to evoke Vienna’s imperial past, serving coffee in the guise of Viennese waiters or dancing to DJ beats dressed as Life Ball guests to showcase the modern face of the city. Dance instructors were also on hand to give members of the public a crash course in the art of the Viennese waltz. Shortly before the close of the campaign the website now.vienna.info had already registered well over 70,000 visits, and the banner advertising for the campaign had garnered over eight million
views. The total reach in all five markets combined was around 40 million.

**Premium events for VIPs in Basel and Bucharest**

The début presentation of Vienna’s contemporary art scene in the exclusive Collectors’ Lounge at the contemporary art fair Art Basel in 2013 was such a success that it was reprised in 2014. This year’s showcase was curated by Jenni Tischer, a graduate of Vienna’s Academy of Applied Arts and winner of the prestigious Baloise art prize in 2013, who designed the salon as a modern take on the Viennese coffee house using the “Viennese weave” (the traditional pattern of the woven cane seats on coffee-house chairs) as the dominant pattern throughout the space. Appropriate furnishing was provided by the Paris-based Viennese designer Robert Stadler with his “Thonet Chair No. 107”, which carries on the legacy of Thonet’s famous bentwood café and bistro chairs. The event was covered by a number of respected art journals including *Monopol* and *Art Magazine*, both from Germany, Canada’s *Montecristo Magazine* and the Austrian *Spike Art Quarterly*, as well as by the Swiss daily *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*.

At a VIP event in Bucharest co-hosted with the Romanian lifestyle magazine *Viva*, the Vienna Tourist Board showcased Vienna’s attractions for the high-end segment: some 1,000 invited VIPs from the worlds of fashion, society and the media attended the Vienna-themed summer party held at Mogosoaia Palace, around 30 minutes away from the city centre, where the celebrities and opinion leaders were served Viennese wines against a backdrop of large-format images of Vienna. The event was reported in *Viva*, which has a monthly circulation of 300,000, as well as in its sister magazines *Elle* and *Avantaje*, ensuring that the message was carried to a wide audience. Fashion designer Andrea Raicu, singer Horia Brenciu and TV presenters and media personalities Alessandra Stoicescu, Iulia Vantur, Virgil Iantu and Mihai Gainusa ensured the necessary “celebrity factor” and attracted coverage by the TV channels TVR, ProTV, Antena3 and Prima TV.

**Dance performances in Istanbul, “garden shows” in Abu Dhabi and Dubai**

The Vienna Tourist Board publicised the 150th anniversary of Vienna’s Ringstrasse boulevard in Istanbul with a public event in the city’s Bebek Park. The centrepiece of the event were dance performances staged by the Vienna-based artist Luis Casanova, in which six dancers from the Vienna State Opera and the twelve-member Turkish folk dance ensemble Üsküdar “painted pictures” with their dancing feet on paper strewn with pigment powder, accompanied by Viennese and traditional Turkish music. Two giant screens showed a bird’s-eye view of the pictures taking shape on the 60-square-metre sheet of paper. For the grand finale, entitled “Simasimetric”, a piece of music incorporating influences from the operetta *Wiener Blut* was created especially for the event by the composer Carlos Pino.

An artistic dance performance was staged for would-be tourists in Istanbul’s Bebek Park. (Yüksel Özen)

Two happy winners (centre) of a trip to Vienna at the “Vienna. Now or Never” promotion in London (Simon Wright)
Vienna's parks and gardens are especially popular in the Arab region. Ahead of the hot summer travel season, the VTB played to this popularity with promotions at the Marina Mall in Abu Dhabi and the Festival City Mall in Dubai, greening a 100-square-metre space in each to create a park scene complete with shrubs and flower beds. The installation, entitled "Connected Garden", was lent extra impact by a striking three-dimensional effect: passers-by sitting down for a rest on one of the park benches arranged around the artificial lawn could look directly at Vienna on a ten-square-metre LED screen showing an image of the Volksgarten with the Sisi statue and the Burgtheater in the background.

The scene adjusted automatically to the local time of day, showing the Viennese park scene bathed in radiant sunshine or as a romantic evening view. The video footage of joggers, children at play and sunbathers laziness on picnic blankets created the perfect atmosphere, giving the impression of a live broadcast, while in the surrounding area real-life promoters dressed as gardeners handed out flyers advertising travel packages to Vienna. The campaign was supported by online activities – visitors to flowers.vienna.info were able to choose photographic floral greetings from Vienna’s parks and send them with a personal message via Facebook, Instagram, Twitter or e-mail.

Viennese café society recreated in Moscow and New York City

Coffee-house culture gave Muscovites a taste for Vienna: A culinary promotion to attract visitors to Vienna was held in conjunction with the "Seasons" autumn festival in Moscow’s Hermitage Park. In cooperation with the lifestyle magazine Seasons the Vienna Tourist Board co-hosted a "Ringstrasse Café" where visitors were treated to Meinl coffee, a Viennese-style breakfast and apple strudel, accompanied by a live orchestra playing classical music. A Vienna travel package with the Russian tour operator TEZ-Tour was available for booking, and further interest was aroused by social media activities and a competition. A total of some 30,000 visitors were registered.

In New York, the Vienna Tourist Board caused a stir at Grand Central Station by installing a replica of Vienna’s Café Central in the Vanderbilt Hall. As well as serving coffee and pastries the café also provided a cinematic experience, with two huge concave screens showing archive film footage of scenes from the Ringstrasse boulevard in the years 1900 to 1930 alongside views specially filmed from the very same vantage points today. The spectacular promotion was devised to advertise the 150th anniversary of Vienna’s famous boulevard. Another screen installed opposite enhanced the Viennese ambience still further: as well as showing a panoramic view of the real Café Central, it also provided coffee-house guests in the Vanderbilt Hall with the opportunity to chat to real people there via
a live link. For this feature, the Vienna Tourist Board emulated the successful “Coffeehouse Conversations” staged for foreign guests in Vienna, with one of its own staff accompanied by multilingual “conversationalists” with an in-depth knowledge of Vienna. While the latter played their part in the real Café Central, staff from the Vienna Tourist Board directed proceedings in the New York “replica”, where the best Viennese coffee was served to guests sitting at authentic coffee-house tables surrounded by the typical Thonet chairs and cane newspaper holders carrying copies of the tourist information paper *Wien Journal*. Further reading material came in the form of a brochure listing all events connected with the Ringstrasse anniversary together with a guide to all the sights along the boulevard and their history. The FOX5 morning show *Good Day New York* announced the promotion on TV and some 4,500 guests visited the “Grand Central Café Central”, around 250 of whom held a “Coffeehouse Conversation” with somebody in Vienna.

**Vienna calls the tune in Paris**

A cube with the strapline “Vienna calls the tune” attracted the attention of passers-by in Paris. A 4.5-m² LED screen on the cube showed a top shot of a pianist as well as the interior workings of the hammers and strings inside the instrument. Seamlessly mounted on top of the image was the hollowed-out body of a real grand piano. On the floor in front of the cube was a sound board which allowed passers-by to activate the pianist: after choosing a piece of music from a selection of compositions by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Johann Strauss, Franz Schubert and Joseph Haydn they had to press the piano keys on the board in the prescribed order; if they hit the right notes, the virtual pianist on the screen began to play. This in turn set the piano keys and interior strings on the screen in motion, bringing the virtual piano to life. The promotion was supported by flyers featuring travel packages to Vienna organised in conjunction with “Euridice Opéra”, a tour operator specialising in high-end concert trips, as well as by numerous social media activities in which users were invited to share their impressions using the hashtag #VienneDonneLeTon ("Vienna calls the tune").

**Ice-cold art and hot punch in Rome**

Metres-high ice sculptures and a Christmas market brought festive spirit to the Eternal City. Ice sculptures up to three metres high mounted on pedestals in the central courtyard of the Palazzo Braschi gave the public a taste of winter in Vienna. To publicise the forthcoming 150th anniversary of Vienna’s Ringstrasse, ice sculptors carved frozen replicas of two of the boulevard’s famous landmarks: the City Hall and Kunsthistorisches Museum (Museum of Art History). Each of the sculptures took up to nine hours to create and remained in place for one to two days, depending on the weather. The artworks were carved in front of a live audience, surrounded by Vienna-branded huts serving onlookers Staud’s punch and gingerbread from the Viennese manufacturer Xocolat and supplying detailed information material including a tour package for spur-of-the-moment travellers. A snow cannon was on hand to provide special effects and an authentic wintry setting, the weather in Rome being rather too warm for the time of year. A wide range of PR activities drew media attention to the spectacle, while the social media and the website rome.vienna.info allowed users to follow and share the event online.
Classical and online advertising: high circulations, broad reach

In classical advertising, a total of eleven million newspaper copies in eleven countries carried ads for Vienna in 2014. Various types of outdoor advertising, from mega billboards to backlit posters, were used in 15 cities in nine countries, while radio adverts were run in a further eight states. Outdoor advertising included, among other activities, 105 buses carrying advertisements for Vienna in Milan, Venice, Bologna and Florence as well as two trams sporting Vienna ads in Milan, while an Austrian Airlines plane in specially designed brand livery spread the word about Vienna’s Life Ball to New York, Tokyo and Bangkok, as well as Vienna itself, for a six-week period. 89 online and social media advertising campaigns were run in 22 countries, complemented by search engine marketing in 17 countries and search engine optimisation in four countries.

Among the online activities, two campaigns publicising the 2015 Ringstrasse anniversary were especially noteworthy: The social media campaign “RememberRing” allowed users to find out which historical figure connected with the history of the Ringstrasse they would have been, while “ViennaRingView” used interactive gigapixel-sized panoramic images to give users a virtual view of the Ringstrasse accompanied by key facts relating to the history of Vienna’s showpiece boulevard.

International headlines: raising Vienna’s profile within the global travel industry

The media management unit of the VTB hosted visits by a total of 980 journalists from 42 countries, assisting them in their research and organising visitor programmes for them. It also organised 57 press events in 21 countries. Working to maintain and build Vienna’s profile within the global travel industry, the market management team visited 25 countries on 85 business trips abroad. Altogether, the team went to twelve trade shows, 33 workshops for foreign travel agencies and 51 special presentations; moreover, the VTB also organised the participation of industry players from Vienna in many of these events.

A key highlight and focal activity used for b2b advertising of the 2015 Ringstrasse anniversary was the “Viennese Salon” format, which the Vienna Tourist Board took to a total of 15 cities on four continents to publicise the jubilee to the media and the travel industry. Following the tradition of this Ringstrasse-era social institution, the Vienna Tourist Board’s contemporary take on the Viennese Salon impressed guests with artistic elements including dance performances and readings from the book 1865, 2015. 150 Years of Vienna’s Ringstrasse, which the Tourist Board brought out in cooperation with publisher Metroverlag to mark the anniversary. 13 writers of international standing were asked to contribute to the volume, all of whom produced pieces thematising the myth and reality of the famous circular boulevard.
A tasteful marketing offensive in the Republic of Korea

The Vienna Tourist Board kicked off its systematic cultivation of the Korean market with a testimonial by Vienna-based Korean celebrity chef Kim Sohyi. Her cookery show on Korean television enjoys cult status, which likewise ensured a huge amount of media attention for the Vienna promotion. Deputy Mayor and President of the Vienna Tourist Board Renate Brauner and Managing Director of the Vienna Tourist Board Norbert Kettner co-hosted a press conference with Kim Sohyi, accompanied by a show cooking event for journalists and representatives of major tour operators at the “Bailey House” in Seoul, where Vienna was presented as a metropolis on the cusp between traditional and modern. The promotion also exploited synergies with the staging of the musical Mozart! licensed from Vereinigte Bühnen Wien by a theatre in Seoul: during the Vienna presentation, media and travel industry representatives were also invited to attend the premiere of the musical.

First-class rankings for Vienna as a conference venue

The Vienna Convention Bureau, which operates worldwide to bring congresses as well as corporate incentives and events to Vienna, presented Vienna as a conference venue at 41 trade shows and industry meetings and coordinated the participation of Viennese businesses in these events.

At the AIBTM (American Incentive Business Travel & Meetings Exhibition) in Chicago – one of the leading fairs of its kind in North America, with some 2,000 industry visitors – the Vienna Convention Bureau put on an impressive show together with its long-standing collaboration partner, Barcelona: although the two cities are actually competitors, they join forces for overseas events in order to attract conference organisers to both destinations. In Chicago, they publicised their cooperation in an unconventional manner, with the exhibition stand, information materials and flyers all stamped with the word “Coopetition”. Stickers bearing the slogan “Barcelona & Vienna. Coopetition at its best” carried the message all over the exhibition grounds, catching the eyes of the jury adjudicating the “Innovation Award” presented annually at the AIBTM. The tandem promotion came out in second place as runner-up – no inconsiderable accomplishment given that the Award predominantly focuses on technical achievements.

Data collected by the International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA) and the Union of International Associations (UIA), the two leading organisations in the field, underline Vienna’s standing as an international conference venue. The ICCA global ranking for 2013, published in 2014, shows Vienna in third place behind Paris and Madrid, while the UIA ranking placed it in third place behind Singapore and Brussels.

In demand worldwide

To ensure that Vienna remains in demand worldwide in the future, the Vienna Tourist Board also carried out a worldwide fact-finding exercise: While working on its Tourism Strategy Vienna 2020, presented in 2014, the organisation leveraged its global reach and invited some 650,000 people – including travellers and tourism experts from all over the globe, as well as the people of Vienna – to suggest new, unconventional ways of developing Vienna as a tourist destination. A specially developed online platform for web-based cooperation allowed contributors to discuss the various proposals. In addition, around 2,500 stakeholders and industry representatives from Vienna and an international expert advisory panel made key contributions that helped set the course for tourism in Vienna over the coming years. The long-term concept, entitled “Global.Smart.Premium”, was unveiled at the Vienna Tourism Conference on 7 October. Its ambitious goals: by 2020 Vienna should be registering 18 million overnight stays, the local hotel industry should be posting an annual turnover of one billion euro, and the city should be served by direct flights from 20 additional international urban centres. This open and innovative approach to strategic development is now available to tourism organisations worldwide as an example of best practice. It even earned the Vienna Tourist Board a prize at the annual “Awards for Excellence and Innovation in Tourism” presented by the Madrid-based United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), taking second place in the category “Ulysses Award for Innovation in Public Policy and Governance” 2014.
WIEN PRODUCTS

www.wienproducts.at

WIEN PRODUCTS is an export initiative that was set up by the Vienna Economic Chamber in 1995 to provide support to Viennese companies producing wares of the highest quality that have a special connection with Vienna. In 2014, the WIEN PRODUCTS Service Center organised the following events in Austria and abroad in close cooperation with the WIEN PRODUCTS member companies. The events are listed in chronological order:

The companies of the WIEN PRODUCTS “Style” group showed for the first time at the “Tranoi” fashion fair in Paris in January. Mühlbauer Hutmanufaktur millinery, shoe designer Rosa Mosa and FLorian Jewelry presented their wares to an appreciative trade audience at the Palais de la Bourse in the French capital.

In view of the great success of the events in previous years, “Austrian joie de vivre” were held once again in January and February in the gourmet departments at 24 branches of the Galeria Kaufhof chain in Germany. The 18-day campaign presented and promoted high-quality food and beverage products, with three special customer evenings to generate additional publicity. Meinl am Graben coffee, tea and preserves, Schlumberger sparkling wines, Confiserie Heidi chocolates and Staud’s Wien pickles and preserves from the WIEN PRODUCTS “Delicatessen” group took part in the promotion.

In March, as part of the Wien Festival at New York’s Carnegie Hall, the WIEN PRODUCTS firms J. & L. Lobmeyr crystal and chandeliers, Wiener Silber Manufactur silverware, Augarten porcelain, Mühlbauer Hutmanufaktur and Lichterloh design, art & antiques mounted a joint display at the famous Manhattan concert hall. A fringe event, the Evening of Viennese Design @ Stillfried, was held at the city’s “Stillfried Wien” furniture store.

In May, some 630 exhibitors presented their offerings on 15,300 m² of exhibition space at the International Contemporary Furniture Fair in New York. As in previous years, WIEN PRODUCTS was an essential element of the Austrian group stand at the US East Coast’s major furniture and design fair. C. Bühlmayer gilders, picture frame makers and restorers, Wittmann furniture, Rauminhalt rare 20th-century furniture, Augarten porcelain, J. & L. Lobmeyr, Lichterloh, Woka Lamps and Wiener Silber Manufactur showed to a large trade audience at the four-day event.

1,500 visitors saw the “Luxury of Vienna” show in Moscow. (Peter Svernák)
The Masterpiece Collection show was held for the second time in July, presenting a blend of traditional and modern to 4,500 visitors. The exhibition, held at the Novomatic Forum opposite the Secession, brought together a total of 30 selected exhibitors from the fields of artisan manufacturing, design and the creative industries. The WIEN PRODUCTS members Augarten porcelain, Zur Schwäbischen Jungfrau table- and bed-linen, Jarosinski & Vaugoin silversmiths, the Austrian Mint, R. Horn’s Wien leather goods, Werkstätte Chlada pewterware, shirtmaker Gino Venturini and Wiener Schnecke Vienna vineyard snails took the opportunity to show off their craftsmanship and their product ranges.

Featuring more than 3,000 exhibitors on 250,000 m² of exhibition space and attracting some 67,000 international visitors, “Maison et Objet” in Paris is currently Europe’s leading B2B design fair. The WIEN PRODUCTS members Augarten, Lichterloh, Rosa Mosa, Wiener Silber Manufaktur, Woka Lamps and Jarosinski & Vaugoin presented their wares on a newly designed group stand at the September event.

The 9th WIEN PRODUCTS Collection was given a whole new look. The basic idea remained unchanged, however, with traditional Viennese companies creating new products in collaboration with external designers. Nine WIEN PRODUCTS members, including for the first time shirtmaker Gino Venturini, designed products which were unveiled to design aficionados in conjunction with Vienna Design Week and the opening of Vienna Art Week. The jewellers Schullin Wien, Skrein* and A. E. Köchert, together with Wiener Silber Manufaktur, Augarten, Jarosinski & Vaugoin, J. & L. Lobbmeyr, Werkstätte Chlada and Gino Venturini received excellent feedback about their new creations.

WIEN PRODUCTS visited Moscow for the third time in September, this year in cooperation with Rolls Royce. Ten WIEN PRODUCTS firms – Friedrich Otto Schmidt home furnishings, J. & L. Lobmeyer, Jarosinski & Vaugoin, Gino Venturini, R. Horn’s Wien and Zur Schwäbischen Jungfrau – were presented to 1,500 Rolls Royce customers. Fine wines from the Wieninger winery (WienWein) and Schlumberger sparkling wines received an enthusiastic reception, while a Viennese-style coffee house offered guests the opportunity to pause for a moment over a piece of Original Sachertorte or “Grand Guglhupf”.

The Design14 event was held for the first time in November in partnership with the Austrian daily Die Presse. More than 11,000 visitors attended the exhibition at Vienna’s Museum of Applied Arts (MAK), in which the WIEN PRODUCTS companies Augarten, Jarosinski & Vaugoin, J. & L. Lobbmeyr and Zur Schwäbischen Jungfrau took part. Also on the programme was a “design talk” with J. & L. Lobbmeyr, and a craftswoman from Augarten gave a live demonstration of porcelain painting.

The WIEN PRODUCTS companies Wiener Silber Manufaktur, Friedrich Otto Schmidt, Jarosinski & Vaugoin, J. & L. Lobbmeyr, the Austrian Mint and Schlumberger displayed their wares in a small but exquisite autumn presentation at the Austrian Embassy in Tokyo. Japanese handicrafts were also showcased in collaboration with Ishikawa Prefecture, while WIEN PRODUCTS companies participated in the subsequent Ishikawa art exhibition at Vienna’s Museumsquartier in early December.
In representing the interests of Austrian cities and towns internationally, the Association maintains contacts primarily with European bodies. Thematically, the focus in the year under report was on services of general interest, procurement and concessions legislation and EU state aid law. The Association regularly organised workshops in cooperation with municipal bodies, with the Austrian Association of Public and Community Enterprises (VÖWG) and the Labour Chamber to facilitate knowledge transfer and support advocacy work in the interest of the inhabitants of cities and towns in Austria. Another important focus of activities in 2014 was the implementation of the EU’s Danube Region Strategy and the role of cities. The Brussels Office supported these activities through the provision of news, relevant information and other important input. The Städtebund board came together in Brussels at its first meeting outside Austria.

The Städtebund representation at the EU Committee of the Regions (CoR) and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe (CLRAE) of the Council of Europe remained unchanged. Städtebund nominated the Mayor of Salzburg, Heinz Schaden, as its member at the CoR, with the Mayor of Bregenz, Markus Linhart, and City Councillor Elisabeth Vitouch from Vienna as alternate members. The Mayor of Wels, Peter Koits, and the Mayor of Innsbruck, Christine Oppitz-Pößer, served as Städtebund representatives to CLARE, with Silvia Huber, City Councillor of Wels, as alternate member.

The 64th Städtetag, the general assembly of the Association, took place in Graz under the keynote theme of “Re-thinking the city – finance, education, social policy”. An important subject of debate was the provision of municipal services in light of negotiations about tax revenue redistribution between the national and local governments. After a welcome speech by the Mayor of Graz, Siegfried Nagl, the American political scientist Benjamin Barber gave a keynote address under the heading “Why cities can do what nation states cannot – dysfunctional nations, rising cities”.

Together with the Gemeindebund, the national organisation of smaller local communities (http://www.gemeindebund.at/), the Städtebund represents the interests of local governments vis-à-vis the national government and the provinces (pursuant to Article 115 (3) of Austria’s Federal Constitution). Vienna’s Mayor Michael Häupl holds the office of President of the Städtebund. His deputies are the mayors of Linz, Bregenz, Graz and Salzburg – Klaus Luger, Markus Linhart, Siegfried Nagl and Heinz Schaden.
“PaN – Partner of all Nations” is the umbrella organisation of Austria’s more than 118 bilateral friendship societies. PaN operates under the auspices of the President of Austria, and the governors of the nine provinces form its honorary board. PaN’s goals are to deepen understanding of other countries and cultures and to weave a tight network of international understanding and cooperation at many levels. PaN engages in a broad range of activities, from humanitarian aid to cultural events, such as concerts and exhibitions or culture-themed trips. Some of its activities in Vienna in 2014 are listed below.

In June, the “PaN housing estate” in Vienna’s Leopoldstadt district was handed over to its inhabitants by City Councillor for Housing Michael Ludwig. The estate has been designed to create a lively neighbourhood where people from different cultural backgrounds can engage actively with each other. Both architectural design and social organisation of the estate are geared to this goal so as to provide a setting that is conducive to encounter and exchange, as well as common activities that strengthen good-neighbourly bonds.

In November, PaN and the City of Vienna’s Executive Group for European and International Affairs (MD-EUI) co-hosted an event at Hotel InterContinental under the heading “Curtain Call for Friendship Societies”. At the event, four bilateral friendship societies – Afghanistan, Australia, Bolivia and Mongolia – presented projects which they are running with PaN support. Many friendship societies engaged in a host of activities in the year under report, most notably humanitarian projects in aid of the partner countries.

The 7th General Assembly of PaN was co-hosted by the City of Vienna. City Council Member Elisabeth Vitouch opened the proceedings, which took place in the Heraldry Hall at City Hall. The PaN Award for outstanding merit in fostering international understanding was presented to Vic Huber in recognition of his 60 years of service in the Austrian-American Society, to Haydar Sari from the Cultural Affairs Department and to Jutta Unkart-Seifert, who was the first President of PaN and is therefore something of a mother figure to the organisation.

PaN assisted the City of Vienna in its humanitarian aid measures to help the Balkan regions that were hit by catastrophic flooding in 2014. In cooperation with PaN’s strategic partner, the Austrian army’s civilian-military cooperation team CIMIC, which was stationed in Bosnia-Hercegovina in the context of Austria’s participation in the EUFOR mission there, brought urgently needed hospital uniforms to the main hospital in Tuzla and three smaller health care centres in the region. Seven pallets of working clothes for medical staff were provided under the City of Vienna’s development cooperation programme and transported to Bosnia-Hercegovina.
Authority to give instructions to officials with special assignments in the framework of their Administrative Group

Request for examination by the Mayor or an Executive City Councillor for matters pertaining to his/her Administrative Group and/or decision by the City Council or City Council Committee for the City of Vienna Court of Audit to carry out an examination

*) of whom eight Executive City Councillors
CONTACT

Chief Executive Office of the City of Vienna
Executive Group for European and International Affairs
Director of International Relations
Dr. Oskar Wawra
Friedrich-Schmidt-Platz 3
1082 Vienna
Austria
Tel: +43 1 4000 82 575
Fax: +43 1 4000 7200
E-mail: post@md-eui.wien.gv.at
http://www.wien.gv.at/english/politics/international/

Editor and coordinator:
Thomas J. Resch
thomas.resch@wien.gv.at

Owner and publisher:
Vienna City Administration, Executive Group for European and International Affairs (MD-EUI)

English translation:
Vera Ribarich, Angela Parker, Erika Obermayer

Artwork:
Headquarter Strnat & Strnat GmbH, 1030 Vienna

Cover photographs by: Shutterstock

Printed by: Gerin, 2120 Wolkersdorf

Printed on eco-friendly paper from the “ÖkoKauf Wien” sample portfolio

Press date: 1 March 2015