International Activities of the City of Vienna
As host city of the 2015 Eurovision Song Contest, Vienna chose “Building Bridges” as its motto for the event, underlining once more that we see our city as a place of cultural encounter and international dialogue.

Vienna has indeed been actively involved in the building of bridges, especially in international relations, in the 70 years that have passed since the end of World War II. Collaborative projects and initiatives were launched with other cities, especially with the capitals of the Central and Eastern European region, and we have worked to develop joint strategies in an effort to solve problems on an equal footing.

In June 2015, the United Nations Organisation celebrated the 70th anniversary of its foundation – an important event in the calendar of international activities of the City of Vienna, the sole European Union capital that is home to a United Nations Headquarters, housed at the Vienna International Centre.

As mayor of this city, it gives me pride that we have attained our present standing in the sphere of international dialogue and that Vienna is recognised and used as a diplomatic competence centre in the heart of Europe. This report presents an overview of the City Administration’s diverse activities in the field of international relations.

I would like to thank all those who contributed their constant efforts and commitment to another successful year for Vienna.
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Chief Executive Office – Executive Group for European and International Affairs

The Executive Group for European and International Affairs (MD-EUI) coordinates bilateral and multilateral cooperation activities, represents the City of Vienna in international networks and is responsible for development policy and contacts with international organisations. Within MD-EUI, the International Strategy and Coordination Unit designs and organises events to present the City of Vienna abroad, is responsible for cooperation agreements and serves as the first point of contact for international expert delegations in Vienna.

As in previous years, the main domestic cooperation partners of the MD-EUI team were the Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs (BMEIA) and Austria’s diplomatic missions. In addition, MD-EUI worked together with the Federal Economic Chamber (WKO) and its Foreign Business Centres, the Vienna Diplomatic Academy (DA), Österreichischer Austauschdienst (OeAD – Austrian Agency for International Cooperation in Education and Research), the Austrian Development Agency (ADA), the association Go-Governance, the umbrella organisation of bilateral friendship societies “Partner of all Nations” (PaN), the Institute for the Danube Region and Central Europe (IDM) and Austria's Federal Provinces. Other Austrian partners were the Austrian Libraries and Austrian Lecturers, the Academic Forum for Foreign Affairs (AFA), KulturKontakt Austria, the Intercultural Centre/Erasmus+ National Agency (IZ), universities and colleges.

MD-EUI maintained contacts and cooperation with foreign diplomatic missions and liaison offices, as well as with international organisations, including the United Nations and their special agencies, the United Nations Information Service (UNIS), OPEC and OFID (the OPEC Fund for International Development), as well as the OSCE and the European Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA). Moreover, it liaised and collaborated with national and international NGOs.

OeAD organised the secondment of Austrian Lecturers to many foreign universities, where they teach German with a focus on Austrian literature and general Austrian studies. The Slovakian universities of Prešov and Nitra invited MD-EUI to give presentations there. Vienna was among the guests of honour at city festivals.
in Novi Sad, Odessa, Yerevan and Tbilisi. Tel Aviv-Yafo hosted the 6th Cities Summit under the motto “Cracking the innovation code”.

The annual “Vienna International get-together” was hosted by the International Strategy and Coordination Unit in April. The event, which took place in the Banqueting Hall of Vienna City Hall, was attended by 450 guests, among them diplomats, members of the business and cultural communities, representatives of international organisations and of ethnic associations. The get-together has in recent years developed into one of the leading networking events for Vienna’s international community.

The 2nd District Energy Convention of Southeast Europe Municipalities took place in the Heraldry Halls of Vienna City Hall. 130 political decision-makers and experts from 27 Eastern and Southeast European cities met representatives of Austrian businesses, research institutions and officials from the municipal administrations of Graz, Villach and Vienna at the event. The conference received support from the Federal Ministry of Finance and the World Bank subsidiary International Finance Corporation (IFC) and was hosted in cooperation with the International Strategy and Coordination Unit. With modernisation of energy infrastructures an item on the agenda of many participating municipalities, the conference was geared towards informing decision-makers about Viennese expertise in the fields of energy supply (“waste to energy”, district heating and cooling, etc.), covering the whole range of activities from planning and design to technology to operation of energy supply systems. With the participation of international financial institutions such as the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the European Investment Bank (EIB) and the IFC, the conference also served as an information platform for potential financing models for future projects.

The 2015 edition of the annual conference of the Diplomatic Academy Student Initiative (DASI) discussed “Visible Effects of the Invisible Hand: Examining the Challenges of the World Economic Order”; the proceeds from registration fees were donated to the NGO Rwanga in Iraqi Kurdistan. The EuropCity Institute for intercultural competences organised an event about Felix Austria!, a film which had successful runs in American cinemas; in the documentary, an American takes a closer look at Austria from a surprising angle. A meeting of the Austrian Libraries, which exist at more than 60 universities abroad, took place in Vienna. Café Centropa, a social centre for Jewish Holocaust survivors, celebrated its tenth anniversary in April. 500 years of diplomatic relations between Poland and Austria were celebrated with a concert and a reception at Vienna City Hall.

The various departments and institutions of the City Administration welcomed some 4,500 international visitors in 2015, most of them from Germany, followed in number by guests from the Republic of Korea, Hungary, the People’s Republic of China and Ukraine. One of them was Mayor Gregor Macedoni from Novo mesto, Slovenia, who laid a wreath in St. Stephen’s Cathedral in commemoration of the 650th anniversary of the granting of Novo mesto’s town charter by Archduke Rudolph IV. A delegation from the Iranian city of Tabriz visited Vienna to gather information about urban planning and administration processes here. A ten-strong group from the Ministry of Construction and Architecture of Turkmenistan toured Vienna’s new Central Rail Station and the “ebswien” wastewater treatment plant and met for talks with experts from Wiener Netze.

MD-EUI continued issuing its quarterly electronic newsletter. Published in German and English, the newsletter informs the international community about topics of relevance to Vienna.
Focus Activities

NEW YORK

The 60th anniversary of Vienna Opera Ball events in New York was at the centre of activities in February. UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon was guest of honour and opened the ball together with Deputy Mayor Renate Brauner.

Against the backdrop of Vienna’s efforts to develop its position as a hub for Central, Eastern and Southeast European start-up companies, talks with investors from the start-up scene were another major programme item in the year under report. A symposium was organised jointly by the US-Austrian Foundation, Cornell Medical College and the City of Vienna, informing US participants about the opportunities Vienna offers as a leading academic and research centre. The opening address was given by Josef Penninger, Scientific Director at the Institute for Molecular Biotechnology of the Austrian Academy of Sciences.

A meeting was held with the President of the Borough of Brooklyn, Eric Adams, in the context of the partnership between Brooklyn and Vienna’s 2nd district Leopoldstadt. Both sides expressed their interest in intensifying contacts and collaboration. Sir Clive Gillinson, Director of the Carnegie Hall, was awarded the Grand Decoration of Honour in Silver of the Republic of Austria in recognition of his distinguished services to cultural life in Austria. The decoration was presented to Sir Clive at a reception hosted by the Austrian Cultural Forum in New York. A panel discussion about technology and innovation in Vienna was organised by the Vienna Business Agency, concluding the series of Vienna-themed activities in New York.

GOOD GOVERNANCE

Concluding a series of events and publications on good governance in the Black Sea region, a meeting under the headline “Good Governance and Participation” took place in Yerevan in May, supported by extensive organisational efforts by Yerevan’s local government and city administration. Speakers at the conference presented case studies from Black Sea nations and the European Union, highlighting different aspects of good governance before an audience of about 150 participants from the realms of politics and diplomacy, the media, universities and NGOs. The latest volume of the publication series Governance and Participation: the Black Sea was presented at a press conference. The Austrian Development Agency and the Austrian company Kapsch were among the sponsors of the event.

The West Balkans region continued to be a geographical focus area of foreign policy. In this context, a workshop on youth and political participation was organised in the Montenegrin capital city of Podgorica, giving rise to lively discussions among youth representatives of Montenegro’s political parties. An extensive series of youth programmes was presented by the Austrian parliament. The programmes bear the name of Barbara Prammer, former president of the National Council.
(lower house of parliament), who passed away in 2014. Opportunities for young employees in public administrations were another discussion point. The meeting was co-hosted by the City of Podgorica and the Austrian embassy.

Questions of good governance are concerned with democratic processes and how they are conducted, including issues such as transparency, control, the rights and duties of government and opposition, majorities and minorities, but also culture and the media.

The Good Governance Project was launched in Odessa in 2011, continued in Tbilisi and Batumi in 2012 and in Istanbul in 2013, and moved on to Chișinău in 2014. It is a joint initiative by Austria’s Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs, the City of Vienna and the association Go-Governance, which implements the project activities.

Workshop on “Youth and Participation” in Montenegro with Professor Melanie Sully, Director of the Go-Governance Institute, Ambassador Dr. Johann Fröhlich (left) and Dr. Josef Mantl, Deputy Director of the Go-Governance Institute and Deputy District Chairman of Vienna’s Josefstadt district (Marek Černý)
Bilateral Cooperation
Projects

On the occasion of a concert by the Brno Philharmonic Orchestra at the Konzerthaus in Vienna, Mayor Michael Häupl welcomed his counterpart from Brno, Primator Petr Vokřál, at Vienna City Hall. An exhibition about the UNESCO World Heritage property Villa Tugendhat opened at Vienna’s Museum of Applied Arts (MAK) following a press conference at which Brno’s current projects in the fields of art and tourism were presented to a large audience of interested media representatives. The exhibition presented large-format photographs, a video documentary and wall-mounted texts about the history of the Villa Tugendhat from its construction to the completion of the most recent restoration campaign in 2012.

A pilgrimage of reconciliation took place in remembrance of the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II and the expulsion of Brno’s German-speaking population. Ambassador Ferdinand Trauttmansdorff and City Council Member Ernst Woller participated in the march of remembrance from Pohořelice, a town about 25 km away from Brno, to the Moravian capital.

Architecture teams met in Brno at a follow-up meeting to the EU Project Arch4579 which produced a joint data base of buildings erected 1945–1979. Representatives of Vienna’s Municipal Department 19 participated in the meeting.

The XXIV symposium in the “Dialogue in the Centre of Europe” series organised by the Ackermann Community of Munich, the Bernard Bolzano Society of Prague and the City of Brno discussed the question “Where is democracy going?”, with contributions by Primator Vokřál and Kurt Scholz, chairman of the Austrian Future Fund. Other events included the Regiotour tourism trade fair and the Austro-Czech Ball, which again took place at the Brno Philharmonic concert hall (Besední dům).

Director of Planning Thomas Madreiter was invited in January 2016 to join a selection committee that is preparing the appointment of a new chief architect for Brno.

A joint statement under the heading Neighbourhood Dialogue 2030 was signed in August at a meeting in Linz by the Czech and Austrian foreign ministers, the governors of Upper and Lower Austria and their counterparts from the regions South Bohemia, Vysočina and South Moravia.

CENTROPE – Central European Region

The region covers an area of about 44,400 km² with a total population of 6.7 million. It comprises the Hungarian counties of Vas and Győr-Moson-Sopron with the towns Szombathely and Győr, the Slovakian regions Bratislava and Trnava with their eponymous capitals, South Moravia and its capital Brno, and the Austrian provinces Lower Austria, Burgenland and Vienna. Centrope was founded in 2003 to promote and enhance cross-border cooperation in the areas of tourism, transport and labour market policy. Lower Austria chaired the network in 2015, and the political conference was hosted by St. Pölten.

The 2015 CENTROPE Prize was awarded to the charity Red Noses Clowndoctors International, which was founded in 1994. Across the world, 345 performing artists play the part of Clowndoctors in more than 500...
hospitals and clinics, visiting about 700,000 (young) patients every year.

INDIA

A delegation from the Indian State of Andhra Pradesh visited Vienna in late October. The government of Andhra Pradesh, whose total population is about 50 million, is working on a greenfield project for a new capital city that is intended for a population of about 2.5 million. The first development phase is scheduled for completion as soon as 2018. The project is part of the broader goal of sustainable urbanisation of India, which has been declared by India’s Prime Minister Narendra Modi and includes the creation of a host of Smart Cities on the subcontinent. Viennese know-how and technology companies were presented to the visitors with a view to participation in the planning and implementation of this Indian model project. The Indian delegation was welcomed by Deputy Mayor Renate Brauner, heard expert presentations and went on excursions; talks with representatives of the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) were another item on the agenda.
UKRAINE

A wide array of activities were pursued in collaboration with Ukrainian institutions in the year under report. The City of Vienna continued its ongoing cooperation projects with the Austrian embassy in Kiev, the office of the Austrian Exchange Service (OeAD) at the National Ivan Franko University in Lviv and the Austrian Library in Drohobych, as well as with Austria’s honorary consulates in Chernivtsi, Lviv and Odessa.

The long-awaited honorary consulate in Chernivtsi was finally established. Headed by Sergey Osachuk, a known friend of Austria, the new institution garnered much interest in political circles and the media. A group of visitors from Carinthia and Vienna met with representatives of regional and municipal governments, the university – opened by Emperor Francis Joseph in 1875 –, schools and the Jewish community to discuss further cooperation in the future. Carinthia and the Chernivtsi region maintain an ongoing regional partnership. Posters and newspaper advertisements published by the regional press 1848–1918 were shown in an exhibition at Chernivtsi’s museum on Elisabeth Square. Chernivtsi hosts meetings of European writers twice a year, with reading events under the names Meridian and Paul Celan. Moreover, the city collaborates with Austrian partners in the fields of culture, science and education. The Austrian Development Agency plans to launch a project in the region in 2016.

Yaroslav Lopushansky, the very active head of the Austrian Library and the Austrian Culture and Education Centre at the University of Drohobych, organised the 4th Austrian Days in the autumn, bringing together intellectuals, professors, students and other interested participants for a week of discussions, readings and lectures. The general theme of the Austrian Days was Tyrol and the Carpathian region. An ethno-cultural excursion was organised to the Carpathian highland regions that are home to the ethnic minorities of the Hutsuls, Boykos and Lemkos. The programme also included visits to Drohobych, formerly the capital of the Galician oil industry, the historic town Stryi, birthplace of King Sobieski, and to Kolomyia, to which Austrian Emperor Charles I once paid a visit. Computer and sound equipment was installed in the library. The University of Innsbruck and the University of Teacher Education in Vienna continued their partnerships with the University of Drohobych. A group of pupils were invited to spend a week at the De La Salle Gymnasium, a secondary school in Vienna’s 21st district, and a group of students visited Vienna and Graz in the advent season and were welcomed at their partner school, the Stiftsgymnasium at Admont Abbey.

The Catholic University of Lviv and the Währing University of Applied Sciences stepped up their cooperation in the fields of journalism and media management studies through mutual exchanges of teachers and students. The Vienna University of Technology and the Lviv Polytechnic National University celebrated the 20th anniversary of close mutual collaboration with a special focus on architecture and urban design. Symposia in both cities marked the anniversary, and the website www.vienna-lviv.info was launched.

95 children from the crisis-ridden eastern part of the country spent holidays in the European region Tyrol, South Tyrol and Trentino at the invitation of Tyrolean governor Günther Platter. They also came on a day trip to Vienna. The National Operetta Theatre in Kiev first staged a Strauss operetta in 1935, establishing a tradition which it still continues every year. In 2015, sheet
music from Vienna came into play for performances of the Strauss operetta **Waldmeister**.

The first **Ukrainian Culture Days** in Vienna were organised by the local Ukrainian embassy. An exhibition, theatre plays, readings and musical performances – among them a splendid gala concert by Ukraine’s leading operatic stars at the Konzerthaus – gave impressions of present-day Ukraine that merged into an authentic and fascinating image of this great country’s cultural life.

Delegations from several Ukrainian cities, including **Dnipropetrovsk** and the historic city of **Chernihiv**, visited a number of departments of the Vienna City Administration, including the Executive Groups for European and International Affairs (MD-EUI) and for Organisation, Safety and Security (MD-OS), as well as Municipal Departments 9, 14 and 20. Tours of Vienna City Hall, which were offered by Municipal Department 55, were also very popular with the visitors.

In the field of **humanitarian assistance**, winter clothing and toys were provided by the “second-hand team” of MA 48 to the Austrian embassy in Kiev, which organised the distribution of the goods to schools and kindergartens. 100 hospital beds, complete with mattresses and nightstands, were delivered to a hospital in Dnipropetrovsk. Carinthia and Vienna continued to support the NGO Nova Simja (“New Family”) in Chernivtsi, whose activities shifted from its former focus on drug rehabilitation to assistance for internally displaced persons.

**Local elections** took place and returned mayors to office in these cities: Chernivtsi: Oleksiy Kaspruk, Dnipropetrovsk: Borys Filatov, Kiev: Vitali Klitschko, Kharkiv: Hennadiy Kernes, Lviv: Andriy Sadovyi, Odessa: Gennadiy Trukhanov.
Membership in International Networks

AER – Assembly of European Regions

2015 was a special, albeit not an easy year for the AER, which celebrated its 30th anniversary and can certainly be said to have acted as the driving force of regionalism in Europe during these past three decades. The founding of the CoR and the adoption of the principle of subsidiarity are direct results of its efforts. Then as now, it is the only organisation that brings together very different regions, from big metropolitan areas to the Swedish region of Norrbotten, which extends over more than 100,000 km².

Two plenary assemblies, one in Gothenburg and one in Brussels, discussed the future of regionalism in Europe and the AER’s internal structures. Hande Özsan Bozatlı from Istanbul was re-elected as President, while Mathieu Mori assumed the position of Secretary General. Vienna and Upper Austria continued to be members of the AER Political Bureau. From 2016, City Council Member Ernst Woller will represent Vienna there.

The AER’s youth exchange programme Eurodyssee also celebrated its 30th anniversary; every year, it gives about 500 young job-seekers an opportunity to work in one of the 30 participating regions. The Youth Regional Network (YRN) met in Ponta Delgada in the Azores for discussions on youth underemployment.

The AER’s three committees (Committee 1 for Economy & Regional Development, Committee 2 for Social Policy & Public Health; Committee 3 for Culture, Education & Youth) met in the Danish city of Aalborg in the spring.

Gothenburg in the region Västra Götaland has 550,000 inhabitants, making it Sweden’s second-largest city. Its harbour is ice-free all year round. Its design and striking red-white-red colour scheme has earned this waterfront office tower the nickname “The Lipstick”. (Bernhard Bouzek)
to discuss the “Europe of the people”. Innovation and research in the public sector were the headline themes at the autumn meeting in Winchester/Hampshire, UK. The AER participated in the climate conference COP21 in Paris, which was also attended by Vienna’s Mayor Michael Häupl.

APCS – Asia Pacific Cities Summit

Delegates from about 150 cities accepted the invitation extended by Graham Quirk, Mayor of Brisbane, the capital of Queensland and ‘Australia’s New World City’. The first of the biennial Asia Pacific Cities Summits was held in 1996. In 2017 the event will be hosted by the South Korean city of Daejeon.

Plenary meetings and workshops at the Summit debated these key issues: Global Cities – cultivating talent, technology, and trade; Digital Cities – the science and technology behind cities; Future Cities – developing cities and smart communities; and Cities for People – clean, green, accessible and inclusive cities. Presentations by city administrations and companies illustrated how cities – especially those in Asia – are confronting or already beginning to master the challenges of the future. Their Smart City plans in particular differ in many respects from those in Europe. An impressive number of companies presented their products and services and established contacts with city representatives with a view to future business. For its younger participants the Summit organised debates in a Young Professionals’ Forum.

Brisbane, founded in 1823, has 2.5 million inhabitants and is the capital of the Australian state of Queensland, which covers 1,700,000 km² and has a population of 4.5 million. (TJR)
The Executive Committee met in Brussels, the seat of the ARC, and in Oslo to discuss environmental issues relating to regions with airports on their territory. Eurocontrol, the European Organisation for the Safety of Air Navigation, organised workshops about its activities in conjunction with the ARC meetings. An international meeting was also held at Vienna International Airport near the town of Schwechat to mark the 10th anniversary of the public participation and mediation process there. Visitors from Southeast Europe were welcomed at the event. The experience gathered in the mediation process, which is among Europe’s most remarkable in terms of scope and collaboration among the stakeholders involved, was also presented at other events, including a meeting in Zurich in which the surrounding towns and communities were present.

Collaboration and expert exchanges within ARC also focused on observation of EU regulations on noise protection in air traffic areas and other expert issues. In this context, the ARC argues that European standards that go beyond mere recommendations should be included in member states’ national laws. The City of Vienna has pushed for European legislation on matters such as traffic safety, economy of air transport and noise minimisation.

Vienna City Council Member Erich Valentin serves as Vice President of the ARC. The other members of the organisation’s Executive Committee are Paris, Gothenburg, Fingal/Ireland, Prague, Stockholm and Frankfurt/Main. The President of the ARC comes from Barcelona.

Medellín has left behind its past image long ago and is regarded today as one of Latin America’s safest cities, and one of the most modern urban hubs in Colombia – so much so that the Urban Land Institute designated it the world’s most innovative city in 2013. The Medellín metropolitan region is situated at an altitude of some 1,500m in the Andes mountains and enjoys a very pleasant climate.

About 2,000 participants from 120 cities, including 114 experts, met there at the invitation of Mayor Aníbal Gaviria. The local population was also expressly invited to the "Cities for Life" meeting, the first conference of its kind, which attracted strong public interest. While problems and challenges were a major focus of the conference, neighbourhood assistance, safety
and resource conservation also featured large in the deliberations. The next "Cities for Life" meeting will be hosted by the Mayor of Paris, Anne Hidalgo, in 2016.

**CoR – Committee of the Regions**

The Committee of the Regions (CoR) provides institutional representation for the regions, cities and municipalities within the EU. It supports the European Parliament, the Council and the European Commission in their work. On behalf of its 350 members from 28 member states the CoR participates in the EU’s legislative process in an advisory function. Austria is represented by twelve Members and an equal number of Alternate Members. In the current administrative period (2015–2020) Vienna’s representatives are Mayor Michael Häupl as Member and Executive City Councillor Renate Brauner as Alternate Member. City Council Member Elisabeth Vitouch represented the Austrian Association of Cities and Towns (Städtebund) until November, when she was succeeded by City Council Member Muna Duzdar. At the start of the sixth administrative period in 2015 Markku Markkula from the City Council of Espoo was elected as the new President of the CoR.

The Committee convened in six plenary sessions in Brussels to discuss and approve the CoR opinion papers which had been prepared by its expert commissions. Vienna is a member of the expert commissions for social policy, education, employment, research and culture (SEDEC) and for cohesion policy (COTER). The latter is, inter alia, responsible for transport and urban development policies. Organising its activities efficiently, the Austrian delegation to the CoR ensures effective collaboration in the Committee’s bodies. Key issues in the year under report were: the Commission proposal for a 315-billion-euro investment package, a tentative assessment of the new cohesion policies for the period 2014 – 2020, plans to forge an energy union, contributions to the planned urban agenda, as well as the challenges posed by the refugee crisis and how to meet them.
In a combination of top-down and bottom-up processes, high-ranking guest speakers from EU institutions were regularly informed about local developments and the wishes, concerns and problems of Europe’s cities, municipalities and regions.

Once again, Vienna was actively involved in the efforts of the networks set up by CoR for Europe 2020 and subsidiarity monitoring. These networks make for a speedy, non-bureaucratic exchange and flow of information. Vienna was also active in the interregional groups “Danube Region” and “Regions with Legislative Powers”. The main focus of work in this context was the exchange of information about specific local challenges.

EUROCITIES

Eurocities is the biggest network of major European cities with populations of more than 250,000 inhabitants. With 170 full and associated member cities from 35 countries, it represents a total of 130 million people. Between Annual General Assemblies, the activities of Eurocities are conducted by an Executive Committee whose members represent twelve member cities, including Vienna. Eurocities is an advocacy organisation for urban concerns at the EU level. The goals of its activities are twofold: it provides a platform for information exchange and collaboration on EU projects, and it draws on its members’ expertise to draft policy positions which bring the cities’ input into the European legislative process. Relevant areas of interest in this context are the use of structural funds, social and environmental legislation, services of general interest and culture.

The work of Eurocities is done in forums, each of which covers several working groups: the Culture Forum, Economic Development Forum, Environment Forum, Knowledge Society Forum, Mobility Forum, and the Social Affairs Forum. A number of additional working groups have been established on cross-cutting themes, such as the EU’s Urban Agenda, and report directly to the ExCom. Virtual groups and ad hoc working parties are set up as the need arises – one example is a working group on Smart Cities. Eurocities lobbies the EU institutions with respect to important urban policies issues. In this context, political representatives from the member cities are invited several times a year to present Eurocities positions in talks with EU institutions.

Vienna participated in nearly all Eurocities forums and working groups in the year under report; with some 40 delegates sitting on 30 bodies of the network, it was
one of the most active cities involved. Officials from Vienna chaired the Urban Agenda and Housing working groups and served as deputy chairpersons in the European Neighbourhood Policy and Homelessness working groups. Several positions shared by Vienna were successfully advocated at the European level in 2015, including European cities being given the right to address the European Parliament and granted an exemption from the transparency register, and a debate being started about funding for (growing) cities. Last year’s achievements followed on the heels of earlier political successes involving services of general interest and culture, as well as preventing the liberalisation of the public transport sector and cities’ water supply systems.

The annual general meeting brought together 400 participants in Malmö and Copenhagen under the motto “Living cities – sustainable growth and quality of life”. Round tables were initiated there to discuss air quality, urban mobility, employment and urban development for investments. Vienna, Leipzig and Helsinki organised a “speed networking session” on asylum policy issues. Florence and Ljubljana joined the ExCom as new members.

FemCities

This European network was put in place by the Women’s Department of the City of Vienna (MA 57) and since 1997 has served as an international forum for exchange on women’s and equality-related issues. The focus of the network lies on exchanging good-practice examples and providing support in setting up administrative structures designed to promote women and equality.

The annual FemCities meeting was held in Zagreb in 2015 and focused on the effects of the economic crisis on women’s employment. The meeting was attended by about 100 delegates from universities, NGOs and administrative bodies in twelve countries. A series of events and meetings were held as part of the project module “Vienna Girls’ Day goes FemCities” in the wider context of the EU’s Danube Region Strategy. The Girls’ Day is held every year to support girls in making diversified career decisions that go beyond traditional roles. Representatives from the Serbian town of Zrenjanin in the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina visited Vienna to learn about the Girls’ Day activities. The delegation’s extensive programme included a reception by City Councillor Sandra Frauenberger and visits to the fire department, Municipal Department 14, Austrian Railways (ÖBB), the Vienna Economic Chamber, the Vienna Employment Promotion Fund (waff), the Museum of Science and Technology and the Vienna Board of Education.

FemCities participated in a workshop on equal opportunity policies hosted by the Urban Platform Danube Region (UPDR) and placed two articles in InfoEuropa, the magazine of the Institute for the Danube Region and Central Europe (IDM).

The 2016 Annual General Meeting will be held in Luxembourg.

IRE – Institute of the Regions of Europe

2015 was a year of great challenges to our common Europe. In the autumn, the refugee crisis became a burning issue. Representatives of local and regional governments at the “11th Conference of European Regions and Cities” organised by the IRE also confronted the refugee issue. The conference motto was “Survival strategies for Europe’s regions and cities”.

Participants at the 11th Conference of European Regions and Cities hosted by the Institute of the Regions of Europe (IRE) in Salzburg in September (from left): Dr. Jörg Wojahn/European Commission Representative in Vienna, MEP and Chairman of the European Parliament’s Committee on Foreign Affairs Elmar Brok and IRE Chairman Professor Franz Schausberger (Franz Neumayr)
Energy “greening”, tourism and regionally grown food were among the panel discussion topics, and EU Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport Tibor Navracsics spoke about research and innovation. 300 delegates from 23 countries attended the conference.

An anniversary edition of the IRE’s magazine News-region marked the Institute’s 10th anniversary, which was also celebrated at the Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs. The keynote speaker there was Theo Waigel, former German Minister of Finance and “father of the Euro”, who addressed the meeting on the theme of “Europe’s future – ways out of the crisis”. Among the IRE’s other events in 2015 were “Green Mobility” in Trieste, “The significance of industrial heritage for the regions of Southeast Europe” in Novi Sad and “Development of high-performance broadband Internet” in Linz; IRE also collaborated with the Bavarian Broadband Forum.

In his capacity as CoR rapporteur, IRE President Franz Schausberger prepared papers on the situation of local and regional administrations in the EU candidate countries. In recognition of his distinguished services, Mr Schausberger received the City of Salzburg’s Coat of Arms Medal in Gold, the Ring of Honour of the Province of Salzburg and the Mérite Européen award in Luxembourg.

The IRE network continued to grow, with new members from Serbia, Romania and Slovenia; Catalonia and Tivat in Montenegro also joined the IRE in 2015. At the latest count the IRE had 130 members from 22 countries, among them companies and academic institutions as well as cities and regions. United Nations Special Representative Kandeh K. Yumkella and Poland’s former Prime Minister and present MEP Jerzy Buzek joined the IRE Board of Patrons.

IRE interns wrote research papers on questions relating to regional and European policy. In the ten years of its existence the IRE has offered internships to more than 200 young people.

LHC – League of Historical Cities

The Board of the LHC met in Bad Ischl to prepare the 15th LHC World Conference scheduled to take place there in June 2016 under the motto “Smart, Innovative, Creative Historical Cities of the Future”. Side events will take place in Salzburg and Vienna, and participants will be offered an excursion to the town of Hallstatt, a UNESCO World Cultural Heritage site.

In the year under report the Iranian cities of Kashan and Nayshabur as well as Cuenca (Ecuador) and the south-east region of Malta joined the League. With Alba Iulia becoming a member in early 2016, the LHC now numbers 109 cities from 63 countries among its members.

OWHC – Organisation of the UNESCO World Heritage Cities

The General Assembly and World Congress of the OWHC took place in the city of Arequipa in the Peruvian Andes in 2015. Arequipa is situated at an altitude of 2,300m and has just under 850,000 inhabitants. The historical centre of the city was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2000. The headline theme of the World Congress was the resilience of World Cultural Heritage cities. Resilience is a quality that enables societies to cope with external stresses without changing key systemic functions – a sociological definition that may equally be applied to urban structures. Following presentations with many examples from member cities, the conference adopted a “Statement and Resolution on Urban Resilience”. Resilience is certainly a quality which historical cities have needed to survive and keep adjusting in the course
of their long history. Delegates from Vienna presented the development and the 150th anniversary of Vienna’s Ringstrasse boulevard as an example of an urban landscape’s ability to adapt. Vienna returned to the Board of Directors in 2015, the other members being Lyon, which also holds the presidency, Brussels, Sintra, Angra do Heroismo/Azores, Oaxaca, Valparaíso and Québec City. The 2017 General Assembly will be hosted by Gyeongju, Republic of Korea.

Philadelphia was the first US city to join the OWHC. From 1790 to 1800, Philadelphia, then the United States’ largest city and the world’s second-largest English-speaking city after London, was the capital of the USA (after New York and before Washington). America’s First and Second Continental Congresses, as well as the Constitutional Convention of 1787, convened in Philadelphia; both the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution were adopted here.

A new body of experts from the Regional Secretariats and the Board of Directors was appointed in the year under report to support the implementation of all proposed projects in the OWHC network. Vienna will continue its collaboration, both in the newly-founded body and in the activities of the European Regional Secretariats. One recent example was a photo competition under the headline “Colours in the World Cultural Heritage cities”, which was presented in a short video that is also available on YouTube, with graphics designed to appeal to young people.

Together with UNESCO and ICOMOS, Vienna was also represented on the jury of the Jean-Paul l’Allier Prize for Heritage, which honours outstanding achievements in the conservation, enhancement or management of World Heritage sites. The winning project was a newly designed pedestrian zone in the Spanish city of Córdoba.

The cathedral of Arequipa dominates one side of the Plaza de Armas. The volcanic summits of the Andes in the background reach altitudes of up to 6,000m. (Herbert Granec)
Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid

“Our world, our dignity, our future – promoting projects in the European Year for Development” was the City of Vienna’s headline theme for development cooperation policy in 2015. Twelve NGO projects in Bangladesh, India, Kenya, Kosovo, Lebanon, Mali, Nepal, Serbia, South Sudan, Zimbabwe and Uganda received support in this context. Vienna also assisted in the implementation of a major school infrastructure development project in Johannesburg and Port Edward, South Africa. To rebuild infrastructure destroyed in the earthquake in Nepal, Vienna joined forces with the provinces of Upper Austria and Vorarlberg and the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) to help reconstruction projects progress. With co-financing by ADA on top of the provinces’ contributions the impact of the initiative was greatly enhanced, raising the effectiveness and visibility of aid from Austria. The projects focused mainly on meeting urgent primary needs, such as reconstruction of housing, building of water supply systems and provision of food aid.

A large quantity of hospital furniture was donated as humanitarian aid in 2015. The furniture, which had become available after the closure of several geriatric centres, was used by MD-EUI to help medical institutions in Eastern Europe. A consignment of one hundred hospital beds, mattresses and nightstands was shipped to a hospital in Dnipropetrovsk in June. Several shipments of goods were organised in cooperation with the organisation “Austria pro Romania” in aid of social and healthcare institutions in Romania. The donations, which were transported to Romania on twelve semi-trailer trucks, were destined primarily for the psychiatric ward of the hospital in Sibiu and for the hospital centre in Tîrgu Mureș.

Nursing uniforms and two pieces of surgical equipment which were no longer needed in Vienna were handed over to Austrian armed forces stationed in Kosovo on the KFOR mission. The civilian-military cooperation team (CIMIC) there was thus able to supply urgently needed work uniforms to the hospital of Prizren. As there is a shortage of suitable work uniforms for doctors and nurses in the country’s hospitals, the man-

Aid was provided for reconstruction works in Nepal after the earthquake. (Shutterstock)

Loading of hospital beds to be shipped to Dnipropetrovsk. (BOB)
agements were glad to receive 1,800 pieces of second-hand work attire.

School furniture was supplied for two classrooms destined to serve socially disadvantaged children from Roma families, and several items of furniture went to the kindergarten of the Slovak town of Gortva. The hospital in Bălţi, Moldova received a second-hand but fully functional analogue X-ray unit.

In 2014, the City of Vienna donated 400,000 euro to help cope with the flooding catastrophe in the West Balkans region that year. In the year under report, three decommissioned fire engines and six waste collection vehicles, as well as kindergarten furniture and toys, were donated to the Serbian communities of Paraćin, Svilajnac and Kladovo. Deputy Mayor Renate Brauner, City Councillor Sandra Frauenberger and City Councillor Christian Oxonitsch presented the donations to the mayors of the Serbian communities.

MD-EUI co-funded transports of medical-technical equipment and other humanitarian aid goods by Viennese NGOs to Cape Verde, Moldova, Romania and Syria.

The annual conference of development policy experts at Vienna City Hall took place under the headline “Young Voices for Development”, focusing on current issues relating to the recently approved UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In her words of welcome to the meeting, City Council Member Muna Duzdar pointed to the importance of the conference theme in connection with the global right to education and underlined the necessity of awareness-raising. The meeting was inspired by the European Year for Development 2015. National and international speakers gave insightful presentations which discussed the challenges of development policy with a view to the future of young people. More than half the world’s population are people under 25. The United Nations adopted the Sustainable Development Goals to offer young people around the world a better future. Youth organisations in all parts of the world were involved in the drafting process which resulted in “17 Goals for the World”. The main focus areas of the SDGs are food safety, the fight against poverty and education, with specific objectives defined for children and young people.

Speaking for the organisation “Education International” in Brussels, Antonia Wulff underlined the new approach of the SDGs, which is meant to ensure high-quality primary and secondary education for all children by 2030. Reaching this goal will require enormous investments in infrastructure and teacher training. Jacob Sovoessi gave a presentation on his work in Benin, which is directed towards education for disadvantaged children and literacy programmes for women. Harrison Obeng Debra from the NGO “Young People We Care” is pursuing similar efforts in Ghana. Both speakers agreed that job opportunities for young people in Africa exist mainly in self-employment. Another interesting presentation was given by Johanna Rachbauer, who emphasised that a voluntary year in a social project can be an important contribution to global learning. Speaking of her own voluntary work for children at risk of poverty in the Republic of Congo, she said that this profound experience would enrich her future professional life.

The Executive Group for European and International Affairs (MD-EUI), the Academic Forum for Foreign Policy (AFA) and the Austrian Development Agency organised a discussion event under the headline “Putting development cooperation to the test”. In a confrontational debate, participants sought to answer the question of whether the mechanisms of development cooperation have functioned efficiently during the last decades and have in fact helped to mitigate poverty, or whether completely new forms of economic collaboration are needed.
Cross-border and transnational cooperation activities were supported under the established and well-known Interreg heading in the programming period 2014–2020. Minor changes were introduced to the programme structure at the start of the period. Vienna retained its function as Managing Authority for the transnational programme CENTRAL EUROPE 2020, as well as that of a Regional Coordination Office for the three cross-border programmes. The Slovakian Ministry for Agriculture and Rural Development took over the function of Managing Authority for the cross-border programme SK-AT. The call for project proposals under CENTRAL EUROPE was issued in February. Project proposals were invited for the programmes AT-CZ, AT-HU and SK-AT.

Strategically relevant meetings of the regional coordinators took place throughout the intensive phase of programme preparation. The regional coordinators then supported project proposers with advice in individual consultancy meetings right from the inception of the projects. In order to use synergies and optimise the programming processes for the three programmes, Municipal Department 27 regularly participated in meetings of the Cross Border Cooperation Working Group which was appended to the Secretariat of the Austrian Conference on Spatial Planning in 2012. The Working Group is a moderated forum that coordinates the activities of the Federal Provinces and the Chancellery in the implementation of current and preparation of future cross-border and transnational Interreg programmes.

The table below provides an overview of the thematic objectives of the three Interreg programmes, their common features and differences.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>SK</th>
<th>CZ</th>
<th>HU</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thematic objective 1</td>
<td>Promotion of research, technological development and innovation</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thematic objective 3</td>
<td>Improving the competitiveness of SMEs</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td>Thematic objective 6</td>
<td>Environmental protection and promotion of sustainable use of resources</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thematic objective 7</td>
<td>Promotion of sustainability in transport and elimination of bottlenecks in key infrastructural networks</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thematic objective 10</td>
<td>Investing in skills, education and life-long learning</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thematic objective 11</td>
<td>Improving institutional capacities and development of efficient public administration</td>
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<td>X</td>
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1 January 2015 was the 20th anniversary of Austria’s accession to the European Union.
Transnational cooperation programmes

CENTRAL EUROPE 2014 – 2020
MA 27 continued to exercise its functions as Managing Authority. The current programme SOUTH EAST EUROPE was divided into three strands: East (Programme DONAU), Southeast (Programme BALKANS-MEDITERRANEAN) and West (Programme ADRIATIC-IONIC SEA). Vienna continued to represent Austria’s provinces in the DONAU programme strand. The project implementation activities of MA 27 were supported by a 20-strong international Technical Secretariat based in Vienna.

EUR 246 million in funds are available from the European Fund for Regional Development (ERDF) for new cooperation projects in Central Europe, the same budget level as in the previous programme period. At a meeting in September 2015, the Monitoring Committee selected 91 projects (out of 620 proposals) for inclusion in the second phase of the project call, based on recommendations for approval made by the Secretariat after due evaluation of the proposals with respect to relevance and partnerships. 90 project proposals were eventually submitted. The final decision on co-financing will be taken by the Monitoring Committee in April 2016.

Transnational cooperation programme
DONAU 2014 – 2020
The first call for project proposals in a two-stage process was issued in September in Budapest in the context of a kick-off event. Over the following months some 500 project proposals were evaluated and the selected proposals handed on for submission in the second phase. A decision on the first phase is expected for spring 2016, while final approvals for phase two will be returned by the end of 2016.

EU GRANTS – URBAN DEVELOPMENT

The first call for projects to establish “action planning networks” under the programme URBACT III was launched in March 2015. The networks’ task will be to
develop integrated strategies (local action plans) for sustainable urban development, to be supported by public participation. Until the call was closed in June, 99 projects for action planning networks were submitted by proposers from 400 cities across the EU. The kick-off took place in Latvia’s capital Riga.

The 62nd meeting of the German-Austrian URBAN network in Kassel discussed the internal structure of networking with a view to the new programme period of the EU’s Structural Funds and the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI). With a volume of EUR 300 billion, EFSI was seen primarily as an instrument for major infrastructure projects. The fund is not intended as a source of co-financing, but as an instrument to reduce investment risks sufficiently for private investors to come on board. The 63rd network meeting took place in Regensburg.

MEETING OF THE EU CAPITALS

At the invitation of Mayor Michael Häupl, the mayors of the EU’s capital cities met Regional Policy Commissioner Corina Crețu at Vienna City Hall. Speakers at the meeting called for a strengthening of the urban dimension in European policies. The cities are places of action, and given that two-thirds of the world’s population will be living in cities by 2050, the latter need to have a stronger voice in political decision-making. The declaration “A strong voice in Europe” also called for the city representatives to be given the right to address the European Parliament. Another demand was that unused EU funding should be made available to fight youth unemployment in cities where this is a massive problem, and the meeting was also of the opinion that population density should be factored in when distributing EU resources. The next meeting will be hosted by Amsterdam.

EUSDR – EU STRATEGY FOR THE DANUBE REGION

Development of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region continued in 2015 with a view to the new Structural Funds period 2014–2020 and the new Interreg programme “Danube Transnational”. A “Danube Strategy Point” was opened in Brussels to support and coordinate the activities of the Priority Areas.

Priority Area 10 (PA 10 – Vienna/Slovenia) worked together with cities and urban networks in the Urban Platform Danube Region (UPDR) to develop macro-regional strategies and projects. As a structured bottom-up process, the EUSDR is also based on broad participation of civil society in all policy areas. The Danube Local Actors Platform was established for that purpose by PA 10 and continued to evolve as a network of civil society stakeholders.

Civil society involvement was also a major theme at the fourth EUSDR forum in Ulm. Other areas of discussion at the forum were professional skills, mobility and labour migration, competitiveness, entrepreneurship and good governance. About a thousand people participated in the debates.

The City of Vienna and PA 10 gave a presentation on the challenges confronting cities, regions and civil society in the Danube region in the context of the refugee crisis and organised a workshop under the heading “CAPACities” about the important role of cities for governance in the Danube basin. The second Participation Day for civil society stakeholders was also hosted by PA 10 and Vienna, as were several other stakeholder meetings and seminars.

A conference under the motto “Strengthening the Urban Dimension of the Danube Region” was hosted at Vienna City Hall in cooperation with the Austrian Association of Cities and Towns and the KDZ–Centre for Public Administration Research. About 200 participants from 17 countries gathered at the meeting, whose main focus was on good governance and the development of the public sector in cities along the Danube. The European Investment Bank (EIB) presented a report on projects with local administrative bodies, and the Austrian Development Agency spoke about new cooperation projects with the Association of Cities and Towns.

A conference on e-government/open government was hosted by Ljubljana, as was a forum under the headline
“Empowering Cities and People” in the autumn. “Duna Romani Luma – New paths towards the future” was the heading of a conference in Ulm which discussed questions relating to the Roma ethnic group; a project proposal in this area was submitted to GIZ, the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (German Association for International Cooperation). PA 10 was made EUSDR city representative in the Eurocities working group on Roma and met with the EU European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) in Brussels. PA 10 worked together with PA 9 (Investing in people and skills, Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection/Federal Ministry of Finance – Moldova) on a project aimed at improving the capacities of trade unions.

The Danube Local Actors Platform (D-LAP) was founded in Vienna. It brings together representatives of local authorities, universities and NGOs and aims to facilitate the transfer of information between EU institutions and civil society in the Danube region, with the additional function of a project marketplace for the upcoming programme period. The first objective of the D-LAP is to organise information events for civil society groups. An expert conference on trafficking in humans was hosted by the OSCE, and talks about potential collaboration were held with representatives of the Central European Initiative (CEI), the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) and the EESC.

EUSDR projects which the European Commission had entrusted to Vienna were implemented by EuroVienna EU-consulting & -management GmbH (Wien Holding) and PA 10. They concerned a Technical Assistance Facility (a financing instrument for project implementation) and the Danube Region Project Fund (focus on funding for smaller projects); the Danube Financing Dialogue took place in Zagreb in 2015.

Bratislava assumed the chairmanship of the Working Community of the Danube Regions, previously held by Baden-Württemberg, and of the Council of Danube Cities and Regions, previously chaired by the City of Ulm.

The Danube basin is a region characterised by great diversity. It is home to about 115 million people who live in Germany, Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia, Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria, Moldova, Ukraine and Austria. The Czech Republic, Slovenia, Bosnia-Hercegovina and Montenegro, although not situated immediately along the river, are also counted among the countries belonging to the Danube macro-region. The EUSDR’s eleven priority areas are grouped under the headline themes of connecting the Danube region, protecting its environment and building prosperity. Within these objectives, Austria is responsible for mobility and multimodality (Federal Ministry for Transport, Innovation and Technology and Viadonau), human resources (Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection and Federal Ministry of Finance) and Priority Area 10 “institutional capacity” (Vienna/Slovenia). Rudolf Schicker was appointed as Vienna’s EUSDR coordinator in February 2016.

In December, the European Council adopted the EU Strategy for the Alpine Region (EUSALP). The region comprises 48 sub-regions located in Germany, France, Italy, Liechtenstein, Slovenia and Austria. Austria is represented on the EUSALP Steering Committee by the Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs and the Province of Tyrol. The implementation phase was launched at the first general assembly, which took place in January 2016 in Brdo, Slovenia.
The 70th anniversary of the United Nations was celebrated around the world, and Vienna joined in with a series of festive events. An exhibition entitled “We the Peoples” was opened at the City Hall information centre on UN Peace Day (21 September). UN Tour Guides explained the mission of the United Nations to 150 school children who were present at the opening and sang songs for peace together with the Superar Children’s Choir at the City Hall. The exhibition featured 50 outstanding photographs illustrating the activities of the United Nations Organisation over the past 70 years.

The Conference of NGOs in Consultative Relationship to the UN (CoNGO) hosted a conference in October to mark the anniversary of the United Nations Office at Vienna, concluding a series of similar events in New York and Geneva. Vienna contributed a musical programme to the event. CoNGO’s mission is to facilitate the development of a dynamic and informed world-wide NGO community able to influence the policies and actions of the United Nations.

The City of Vienna supports the SDGs and worked to inform and educate the public about them at various events in the year under report. The SDGs are policy objectives of the UN which aim to secure sustainable development in the economic, social and ecological dimension.

Austria has been a UN member for 60 years and held the position of a non-permanent member of the Security Council three times during that period.

Cooperation with the United Nations Information Service (UNIS) was primarily geared towards promoting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These 17 priority goals for sustainability will replace the earlier Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as of 2016. The City of Vienna supports the SDGs and worked to inform and educate the public about them at various events in the year under report. The SDGs are policy objectives of the UN which aim to secure sustainable development in the economic, social and ecological dimension.
Awards were presented to young entrants at the human rights film festival “this human world”. The winners received photo and film cameras to encourage them to continue making documentaries, and an exhibition of award-winning drawings by school kids from Austria and neighbouring countries was mounted at the Vienna Human Rights Office on 10 December, the international Human Rights Day.

Students from all parts of the world had an opportunity to participate in debates about the problems of our world at the “VIMUN Vienna International Model United Nations”, an event that simulates the format of international conferences. A Model UN event was also hosted at UNOV for youngsters from Vienna’s schools and from neighbouring countries. The days of debate ended with an evening reception at the City Hall.

The annual conference of the Academic Council of the United Nations Systems (ACUNS) and a meeting of the United Nations Associations (UNAs) from Austria’s neighbouring countries took place in Vienna in cooperation with the City Administration. A tour of Vienna City Hall was organised for English-speaking teachers spending a year in Austria under the Fulbright Program.

The United Nations Women’s Guild (UNWG) provided financial support for 31 international projects in 24 countries in 2015, benefitting more than 17,000 children. Donations for the cause were collected at the UNWG International Festival Bazaar, which was organised at the Vienna International Centre with the support of the City of Vienna.

At the United Nations Headquarters in New York, the newly renovated and redesigned Viennese café was opened in the presence of Foreign Minister Sebastian Kurz and City Councillor Elisabeth Vitouch in the spring. Delegates and UN staff members enjoy the...
INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

The City of Vienna also showed an exhibition about the UN Office at Vienna (UNOV) in New York. The exhibition then toured to London, where it was on display at the Academy of Diplomacy. High-ranking representatives of UNA-UK and from the British Foreign Office gave speeches at the opening, and the Austrian Embassy hosted the opening evening of a “Vienna Concert Series”, performed by Auner Quartett at the Belgrave Square residence.

VIENNA SERVICE OFFICE

The Vienna Service Office (VSO) at the Vienna International Centre is an assistance facility for the employees of UN organisations, providing free information and help with questions about residence regulations, schools and kindergartens, bills, consumer protection, public institutions, and other issues that arise in connection with living in Vienna. The VSO publishes a regular online newsletter that reaches about 800 VIC addressees. It welcomed about 1,000 visitors in the year under report, in addition to responding to personal enquiries via telephone and e-mail.

Events and excursions organised for UN staff in 2015 included a tour of the collections held at the Josephinum building of Vienna’s Medical University, a visit to the University of Technology’s Atominstitut, and a guided tour of the Botanical Gardens. Vincent Kling, an award-winning literary critic and translator...
of international standing from the USA, gave a reading from Frederic Morton’s novel *The Forever Street* at the training gardens of the Parks and Gardens Department.

As a symbol of the high value attached to relations between the UN and its host city, a Christmas tree is sponsored by the City of Vienna every year to provide festive illumination in the rotunda of the Vienna International Centre.

### ACTIVITIES WITH INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS

Held twice every year, the “Vienna City Welcome” events provide information for the staff of international organisations and embassies to help them organise their life in Vienna. In the year under report about 90 participants were present at each of the events, which included a tour round the city and a guided tour followed by a reception at Vienna City Hall, as well as informative talks on the City of Vienna’s healthcare services, waste management system and Internet services.

To help new employees of the UN Office at Vienna and their families settle in, a course was offered under the title “Learning Your Way”. Participants took classes in basic German, received information about life in Vienna and went on excursions to the fire brigade, ambulance services, the public transport organisation Wiener Linien, the SMZ-Ost hospital, City Hall and Municipal Department 14. A similar package was offered to the members of “Amicale des femmes francophones” and “Vienne Accueil”.

### EUROPEAN UNION AGENCY FOR FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS (FRA)

Michael O’Flaherty from Ireland assumed the position of Director of FRA, the EU’s Fundamental Rights Agency, which employs a staff of about 90. Joint initiatives with the City of Vienna and its newly established Human Rights Office included school competitions. Moreover, Vienna was present at the preparatory meetings for a Fundamental Rights Forum scheduled to take place in June 2016.

### ENERGY COMMUNITY

The Energy Community has had its seat in Vienna ever since it was established in 2005. Having become operative in 2006, it will celebrate its tenth anniversary in 2016. The Energy Community acts as an energy policy interface between the European Union and the Southeast European and Caucasus regions. Its objective is to extend the EU internal energy market to other countries in the region on a legally binding basis so as to support investment, improve the environment and enhance the security of supply. The Secretariat of the Energy Community is located at Am Hof square in the centre of Vienna.

### OFID – OPEC Fund for International Development

OFID and the City of Vienna cooperated in supporting the Kakenya Center for Excellence in Kenya, a school that educates young girls to help break the cycle of destructive cultural practices. The Fund’s Director-General Suleiman Jasir Al-Herbish was presented with the Decoration of Honour in Gold for Services to the Federal Province of Vienna.
Chief Executive Director

Chief Executive Director Erich Hechtner attended the annual meeting of the heads of city administrations from Berlin, Bratislava, Helsinki, Lisbon, Ljubljana, Madrid, Nicosia, Prague, Riga, Stockholm and Tallinn. Discussions at the meeting, which was hosted by Dublin in 2015, focused on e-government, big data and electronic procurement. In addition, the participating officials visited Google Ireland.

Coordination of Climate Protection Measures

The Mayor of Paris, Anne Hidalgo, hosted a meeting of the Covenant of Mayors, bringing her counterparts from capitals and major cities across the EU to the French capital on the eve of the UN Climate Change Conference COP 21. President François Hollande and EU Climate Protection Commissioner Miguel Arias were also present at the conference, which adopted a declaration on the 2030 climate protection goals. The annual conference of the Climate Alliance member cities took place in Dresden. The Climate Protection Coordination Unit (MD-KLI) gave a presentation at an Energy Cities workshop in Bratislava and made suggestions for climate protection activities in Slovakian cities and communities.

An EU expert meeting on “Heating and Cooling in the European Energy Transition” in Brussels discussed the evolution of heating and cooling systems, with a special focus on financing issues.

The climate committee of the regional parliament of North Rhine-Westphalia visited Vienna in the context of a fact-finding tour on climate protection and nature conservation. An international delegation including visitors from Turin, Barcelona, the Czech town of Litoměřice, Graz, Milan, Zagreb, Istanbul, the Philippines and other countries gathered information about climate change and climate protection policies, as well as about the Covenant of Mayors in Vienna.

Strategic Energy Policy

The Strategic Energy Policy Unit (MDE) discussed topical energy policy issues and presented the City of Vienna’s energy policies in meetings with national and international experts, including visitors from Argentina. MDE also participated in meetings and research activities in the context of the EU research project “Marie Curie CI-NERGY”, led by the Stuttgart University of Technology, to support the transfer of know-how between the research community and public administrations. One of the project workshops took place in Nottingham. At the District Energy Convention of Southeast Europe Municipalities, which was hosted by Vienna, MDE presented the regulatory framework under which the local energy sector operates. Another conference under the headline Zero Emission Cities also took place at Vienna City Hall and focused on the future of urban mobility.
The 2015 edition of the "Energy 2050" conference in Fuschl am See brought together 220 high-ranking representatives of the European energy sector for talks about the current situation, future and opportunities of the energy market. The German Energy Agency hosted a conference on energy efficiency in Berlin. Nearly one year after the German government's decision to adopt energy efficiency as the second pillar of its Energiewende goal, i.e. the transition to renewable, non-nuclear energy sources, the conference provided an opportunity to assess progress made and discuss the next steps going forward. A key issue was the digitisation of the energy sector ("Lifestyle or necessity?").

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

In the context of international exchange programmes organised by Vienna's Academy of Public Administration, students from counterpart education institutions were invited to do internships in Vienna. Officials from the city administrations of Berlin and Paris completed one- and two-month internships in various departments of the City of Vienna. Internships for Viennese officials were offered by Berlin, Dublin and Paris.

28 students from the Academy of Public Administration in Mayen, Rhineland-Palatinate, visited Vienna to learn about public management and internship offers in administrative units, and Vienna was one of the stops on a study tour by 24 candidates for senior positions in the city administration of Berlin.

Presentations for the group mainly focused on human resources development. A trip to the urban development zone Sonnwendviertel including Vienna's new central rail station rounded off the programme. A group of 20 scholarship holders from the CEE region who were attending a summer school on "Leadership – dealing with conflicts" at the Catholic education centre Kardinal König Haus were invited to learn about the Vienna City Administration at a meeting with MD-PR Director Martina Schmied.

Internal audit systems and the consequences of auditing results were the main points of interest for visitors from the Korean region of Gyeonggi-do and delegations of audit officers from Bratislava, Ljubljana, Paris and the Republika Srpska.
The International Anti-Corruption Academy (IACA) in Laxenburg organised a training programme entitled “Anti-Corruption in Local Governance Training”. Following a similar training course in the previous year, the 2015 programme was attended by 16 participants from Bangladesh, Gambia, Nigeria, Romania, Russia, Saudi Arabia and the USA. The training programme informed the participants about Vienna’s anti-corruption policy, the dedicated anti-corruption hotline 4000-82-400 and about risk analysis processes to prevent corruption.

Drucker, who died in 2005, is regarded as the father of modern management theory. Henry Mintzberg, one of the most influential thinkers in the management field today, was among the speakers who discussed the general theme "Claiming our Humanity – Managing in the Digital Age".

The Organisation Unit welcomed an intern from the city administration of Budapest. The KDZ–Centre for Public Administration Research organised a workshop on quality management in Austria. MD-OS contributed presentations on management systems and contract management, strategy dialogues and participation as instruments of city administration development, the cooperative application of quality management systems and the implementation of ISO 9001. Among the participants were delegates from the Regional School of Public Administration in Danilovgrad/Montenegro. MD-OS presented a paper entitled "Leadership and human resources in a changing society: adequate transition or lost in translation?" at the 8th Quality Conference in Luxembourg.

The implementation of gender mainstreaming policies by the Management Instruments Unit with its Department for Gender Mainstreaming continued to be a focus of international interest. The unit received enquiries from European countries, Australia and India, from the United Nations, the OECD, the OSCE and the World Bank. The main points of interest were the implementation of gender mainstreaming in different technical areas, the integration of gender aspects in management instruments and gender statistics. A World Bank delegation visited MD-OS to learn about integration of gender aspects in urban planning to support women’s mobility. The practicalities of gender budgeting were a main point of interest in talks with visitors from Brussels and from Macedonia, and MD-OS officials spoke about equal opportunity issues at a panel discussion at the United Nations’ ACUNS conference and at a workshop on equal opportunities policy which took place in the context of a Danube Strategy meeting. Vienna’s gender policy was also presented at the Paris hôtel de ville on the occasion of International Women’s Day. Equal opportunity in public procurement and Vienna’s policies in this area were focal points at a meeting hosted by the Brussels metropolitan region. Vienna’s Gender Mainstreaming Department participated in the FemCities conference in Zagreb, an OSCE conference on "Refugee and Migrant Women in Austria" and in the final conference of the project "European Charter for Equality – Equality Indicators", which was hosted by the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) in Brussels. Vienna signed the Charter for Equality in 2006.

Delegates from the Crisis Management and Emergency Measures Unit, the fire brigade, ambulance services and the federal police travelled to a conference under the banner of "Crisis Management in the 21st Century" in Tallinn to discuss measures aimed at the prevention and mitigation of environmental risks and at preserving the safety of waterways. The Crisis Management and Emergency Measures Unit, ambulance services and fire brigade representatives were invited to participate as observers in an exercise involving voluntary emergency assistance organisations in Budapest.

Major events involving the Process Management and ICT Strategy Unit in 2015 were as follows: The project “Digital Agenda Vienna” won an audience award for its online participation activities, which aim to strengthen a culture of citizen-centred public participation in politics and public administration. Under the heading “Digital Agenda Vienna” an online participation process was set up, inviting the Viennese to post their ideas about a new ICT strategy for Vienna on an online platform. The year under report saw the 14th e-government competition in the German-speaking region of Europe. The competition has been a widely recognised yardstick for e-government activities in Germany, Austria and Switzerland for the last 13 years. Vienna won first place in the category “Trailblazing project for modern administrative processes” in 2015. “Open X” was the title of a conference on open government data hosted at Vienna City Hall with participants.
from the same group of countries; workshops were held at a later point in Stuttgart.

https://www.data.gv.at/infos/ogd-d-a-ch-li/

Executive Group for Construction and Technology (MD-BD)
Vienna’s Smart City initiative was presented at meetings in Austria and abroad, including the Smart City Expo World Congress in Barcelona and the “City of the Future” conference in Frankfurt/Main. Delegations from Namyangju/South Korea, Hubei/China and from Argentina, Slovakia and Sweden visited MD-BD to gather first-hand information about the initiative.

MD-BD staff participated in the 39th session of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee in Bonn in connection with the UNESCO World Heritage site “Historic Centre of Vienna”. Vienna’s new Central Rail Station and the urban development zone that surrounds it were presented at a conference under the headline “Private Development for a Shared City” in Prague and at the “Railway Real Estate” congress in Vienna. Fourteen delegations comprising a total of 327 foreign visitors from places as diverse as Singapore, the Czech Republic and Turkmenistan were welcomed by MD-BD.

The Eurocities working group “Barrier-free City for All” met in Lisbon.

Gender-sensitive planning approaches were presented to visitors from Brussels and Macedonia, as well as at the conference “Meccaniche urbane. Fare città.” in Trieste and in talks at the Faculty of Architecture of the Technical University of Valencia, in Essen and in Stuttgart. The German Academy for Spatial Research and Planning in Hannover hosted a meeting of the working group “Gender in Spatial Development”. A World Bank delegation with participants from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal and Pakistan visited MD-BD to learn about gender and safety aspects in public transport.

FINANCE, ECONOMIC AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

The Mercer Quality of Living Survey again ranked Vienna in first place, with Zurich, Auckland, Munich and Vancouver as runners-up. The survey is published annually and ranks 230 cities according to 39 criteria.

The Financial Affairs Department (MA 5) refunded 50 per cent of the cost of rent for the offices of OPEC to the Austrian federal government and made a contribution towards the cost of asbestos clean-up works at the Vienna International Centre. Co-financing to the extent of 35 per cent of rent cost was provided for the OSCE, the Wassenaar Arrangement office, the European Space Policy Institute (ESPI), the Energy Community, 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 several developing countries.

MA 5 received visitors from the British and Swiss banking sectors and from international rating agencies for discussions about Vienna’s financial situation and needs. Members of the finance committee of the State parliament of Sachsen-Anhalt were welcomed for talks about budgetary issues, representatives from Podgorica met with MA 5 officials to discuss public-private partnerships, and visitors from Brussels and Macedonia were interested in gender aspects. MA 5 also participated in expert talks in the Belgian capital.

Municipal Department 23 (MA 23 – Economic Affairs, Labour and Statistics) regularly engages in international exchanges with other European cities on common issues. Meetings in 2015 included a series of discussions hosted by Vienna about the concept of a “Sharing Economy”. A meeting on gender-sensitive statistics was organised with OECD participation. A strategy for research, technology and innovation was developed in collaboration with international experts. The resulting strategy paper *Innovatives Wien 2020* will also be made available in English. MA 23 produced a significant number of publications in English, including a brochure on the framework for the city’s economic policy and the publications *Gender-sensitive statistics* and *Vienna in Figures*. The latter overview of statistical data for Vienna was also issued in French.

An important though non-traditional part of the activities of the Fire Services and Disaster Relief Department (MA 68) in 2015 was assisting in the provision of services for refugees entering Austria. MA 68 provided transport and helped to organise and prepare emergency accommodation, installed emergency power systems and supplied fuel.

Municipal Department 27 (MA 27 – European Affairs) is responsible for Vienna’s relations with the European Union, overseeing the Vienna House in Brussels and representing the city vis-à-vis the Council of Europe and CENTROPE. Its remit also covers the wide area of EU co-financing, coordination and strategy. MA 27 represents Vienna in international networks, including Eurocities, 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.)

The department represented Austria’s nine Federal Provinces on the European Committee on Democracy and Governance (CDDG), a body of the Council of Europe. At its autumn meeting the CDDG discussed the new committee mandate for 2016/2017 and appointed a new chair, as well as several new members of its Bureau. The CDDG also discussed reforms at the municipal and regional levels in Norway, a research study on the factors influencing democratic governance at the regional level in Europe and a report on the World Forum for Democracy.

The fire-fighting museum at the fire brigade headquarters was the venue for an international meeting which had been convened by Austria’s Central Institute for Meteorology and Geodynamics (ZAMG) to discuss dispersion modelling to predict the spreading behaviour of toxic substances, a question of great significance for fire-fighters. The transfer of information to fire-fighter teams via new media was discussed in the context of the EU project EmerGent in Vienna. A meeting of the European Union Fire Officer Association took place in Vienna at the invitation of MA 68, which also represented the Austrian fire brigades at the International Association of Fire and Rescue Services (CTIF), an interest group speaking for more than five million fire-fighters. CTIF working groups discussed toxic substances, new technologies and the employment of women in fire brigades. A working group was also set up to deal with the standardisation of emergency service maps and instruction manuals in accordance with ISO standards. The CTIF is based in Stockholm.

Austrian officers participated in training exercises organised by the EU, UN and NATO whose main focus was on...
cooperation following catastrophes; regular exercises were held in this context. NATO officials expressed particular appreciation for the efforts made by MA 68 in co-organising an important exercise in Ukraine.

**WIEN HOLDING**

**Cultural and Event Management**

**Vereinigte Bühnen Wien – theatre group**

With stage events in 21 countries and combined audience figures of more than 22 million, musical productions of the **Vereinigte Bühnen Wien** group have been worldwide export hits since 1996. The first production to travel abroad was the historical drama **Elisabeth**; with audiences totalling more than ten million to date, it is the most successful German-language musical ever staged. Initial performances in Tokyo and Seoul were followed by a tour of South Korea. Shanghai was the starting point of a 2014 tour of **Elisabeth**, which continued the following year in Germany and Austria.

The musical **Der Besuch der alten Dame**, which premiered at Vienna’s Ronacher theatre in 2014, was performed in Japan for the first time in 2015 and continued on a tour of several cities. Other performances included **Dance of the Vampires** in theatres in France, Japan, Germany and St. Petersburg, **Mozart** in Hungary and South Korea, **Rebecca** in Serbia and South Korea, and **Rudolf**, likewise in South Korea.

**House of Music**

Based on a licence agreement with Vienna’s House of Music, a “Casa de la Música Viena” opened in the Mexican city of Puebla. A large audience of visitors from the fields of culture, the arts and politics joined Austrian Ambassador Eva Hager and Wien Holding Director Peter Hanke for the opening. The music centre is modelled on the House of Music and was developed on the premises of what used to be the biggest textile factory south of the USA. In addition to its museological focus on music and sound it is also home to a youth orchestra. Visitors to the “Casa de la Música Viena” can enjoy replicas of Vienna’s unique installations, such as the “virtual conductor”, the Mozart name game “Namadeus” and the multimedia music theatre “virtostage”.

**Mozarthaus Vienna**

The Mozarthaus Vienna will celebrate its 10th anniversary in 2016. The museum and visitor centre is located in a building in downtown Vienna where Austria’s musical genius lived from 1784 to 1787. It has received more than 1.3 million visitors in the ten years of its existence. The Mozarthaus programme includes exhibitions, symposia and concerts.

**Jewish Museum Vienna**

Exhibitions featuring works by Erich Lessing and Andrew M. Mezvinsky were opened by Austrian President Heinz Fischer and Foreign Minister Sebastian Kurz at the Austrian Cultural Forum in New York and were then also shown at the Austrian Cultural Forum in Washington, D.C. The exhibition “**Jewish Geniuses**” was loaned to the Jewish Museum Australia in Melbourne, and the very successful show “**All meshuggah? Jewish wit and humour**” continued its international tour with stops in Zurich, Trier and Bernburg/Sachsen-Anhalt in 2015. Visitor numbers at the Jewish Museum Vienna hit a new record high of 120,000 in the year under report.
Kunst Haus Wien

Japanese artist Rinko Kawauchi presented a series of works created in Vienna, and an international photography workshop was hosted in the Hundertwasser apartment. The œuvre of US-born photographer Joel Meyerowitz was the subject of an impressive retrospective. The preparations for the show also involved a trip to Italy, where the artist lives. For 2016 Kunst Haus Wien is planning an exhibition of photographs with typical Viennese scenes shot by *Magnum* photographer Martin Parr. Works by Friedensreich Hundertwasser were on loan for exhibitions at the Schirn art centre in Frankfurt/Main and the Prague National Gallery in 2015. The solo retrospective “Hundertwasser – Lifelines” at Osthaus Museum Hagen attracted a record visitor turnout. The exhibition “The Third Skin – organic architecture of Hundertwasser and Alberts & Van Huut” at the Museum Buitenplaats in Eelde/Netherlands highlighted Hundertwasser’s architectural style.

Furthermore, the Wien Holding museums engaged in numerous tourism marketing activities, participating in trade fairs and workshops organised by the Austrian Tourist Board.

Wiener Stadthalle

The 2015 Eurovision Song Contest was the single most important event at the Stadthalle entertainment complex in the year under report (see separate chapter, p. 99).

Logistics and Mobility

Hafen Wien – port facilities

About one hundred container trains per week transport goods between the Port of Vienna and Europe’s major coastal ports, such as Hamburg, Rotterdam, Antwerp, Bremerhaven, Koper and Rijeka, as well as continental cargo hubs, among them Debrecen, newly added in May 2015. The first train on this route was 535 metres long, with 33 carriages and 75 containers. The port offers trimodal container handling (ship, train and truck), and container business has grown rapidly in recent years to annual handling volumes in the range of 13 million tonnes. Covering an area of about three million square metres, the logistics centre is Austria’s biggest cargo handling operation.

Hafen Wien participated in major international structural funds projects in 2015: INWAPO (Upgrading of Inland Waterways and Sea Ports) aims at developing the cargo transport and handling capacities of ports. The lead partner is the Port of Venice, with Viadonau also among the project partners. A pilot project was carried out to develop a neutral Internet platform for shippers, forwarders, shipping lines, ship brokers and ship owners, industry and port management companies on the basis of the outcome and recommendations of a “Feasibility study for new links along the Danube”. A neutral Internet platform of this kind already exists for the Rhine, where it facilitates the bundling of consignments and helps to strengthen awareness of the
important role of inland waterway shipping. A project named IMPALA examined the potential of intermodal hubs, such as inland ports and rail terminals, as regional centres of small-scale distribution, using electrically powered vehicles. The project made an important contribution towards the development of CO₂-free urban logistics.

The Port of Vienna was at the centre of a case study in the context of the project “Optihubs”, which aims at developing standardised optimisation systems using innovative simulation algorithms for multimodal logistics hubs. The project objective is to come up with the best possible options for combining logistic, operational and administrative processes and frameworks. Moreover, the future potential of various goods segments for inland waterway shipping was analysed with a view to fully utilising the capacities of the safest and ecologically most desirable transport mode available.

A meeting of EDINNA, the educational network of inland waterway navigation schools and training institutes, was hosted aboard the MS Negrelli.

**DDSG Blue Danube**

DDSG Blue Danube is Austria’s leading passenger shipping line and offers the most extensive range of services on the Danube. With a staff of about 80 and six vessels on the Danube, DDSG runs regular services in and around Vienna and in the Wachau region, as well as about 200 themed river excursions per year. The shipping line also engages in apprentice training in inland navigation to ensure the continued availability of highly skilled nautical staff for the future. A special highlight in 2015 was a training cooperation with the French river cruise line CroisiEurope, which gave the DDSG apprentices an opportunity to get to know the cabin cruisers MS L’Europe, MS Vivaldi and MS Beethoven on river cruises across Europe lasting several months.

**Central Danube**

2015 was the 10th year of the Twin City Liner river boat shuttle service between Vienna and Bratislava. The shuttle line ran up to ten services per day, and 128,000 passengers took a trip on one of the two modern high-speed catamarans. The Twin City Liner Adventure Card offered special rates at 35 key tourist attractions in Austria and Slovakia at a price of only ten euros per season.
DEPARTMENTS AND INSTITUTIONS

Real Estate Management

Vienna’s urban development company WSE (Wiener Standortentwicklung) participated in Europe’s leading real estate trade fair, Expo Real in Munich. As co-user of the “Central Europe” stand, WSE presented its development projects, such as Neu Marx, where 370,000 m² of floor space are being developed for media companies, research institutions, creative industries and start-ups.

Media & Service

EU-Förderagentur GmbH

EuroVienna EU-consulting & management GmbH

EuroVienna presented its new website https://euro-access.at with 30 EU support programmes which may be used by Viennese institutions up to 2020. The EuroAccess Danube Region data base is scheduled to follow in 2016. The EU-Förderagentur (EUFA) is a service organisation that supports the City of Vienna in the implementation of EU projects, especially through fiduciary finance management.

The pilot initiative for a “Technical Assistance Facility for Danube Region Projects” was carried out for Priority Area 10 of the EU Danube Region Strategy. The objective was to provide expert consultancy services to local communities, companies and NGOs in the preparatory stages of their projects in areas such as the environment, education and tourism. The initiative was founded because applicants for EU projects often lack the necessary expertise in handling the processes involved in project activities. Three project calls were organised in two phases. EuroVienna also managed the pilot initiative START–Danube Region Project Fund, which aims to support the preparation and implementation of projects in the Danube region (EUR 10,000 to 40,000 per project). Even before this stage project applicants receive seed money, an approach that especially benefits small organisations. 25 out of the 871 proposed projects were selected. 205 applications were received in response to the second call, of which 24 were selected. The subjects were mobility, education and research. EuroVienna coordinated the organisation of the calls (drafting of guidelines, preparation of forms, dissemination of information about the call) and supported interested organisations in drafting their project proposals. After the selection process EuroVienna continued to support the project lead partners for the term of their project.

EuroVienna helped organisations and businesses in drafting papers for projects with European partners and conducted numerous consultancy meetings. Some examples of successful cooperation projects are the “museum village” Niedersulz and the open air museum in Strážnice/South Moravia, and Modra/Slovakia and several communities in Burgenland. A project with the Association of Local Communities in Montenegro is scheduled for implementation in 2016.

TINA VIENNA GmbH

TINA Vienna is active under the umbrella of Wien Holding and is responsible for Vienna’s Smart City Agency and its Competence Centre for Energy.

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. TINA Vienna serves as point of contact and connecting link for all initiatives and programmes that are under way in Vienna in this context.

As in previous years, the Smart City Agency and the Energy Centre presented Vienna’s Smart City Strategy and its specific fields of action at numerous international events, including meetings in China, Amsterdam, Berlin and Bratislava. TINA Vienna was present at the Metropolitan Solutions Fair in Berlin and the Smart City Expo in Barcelona and supported collaboration and exchange with Deva/Romania, Brno, Berlin and Budapest. More than 20 international delegations, including visitors from Colombia, Taiwan and Singapore, were informed about Smart City topics, and TINA Vienna gave interviews and prepared materials for publication in international media.

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. The United Nations Human Settlements Programme UN-HABITAT, which has its seat in Nairobi, carries out programmes and projects to improve living conditions in cities worldwide.

The TINA Vienna Energy Centre participated in various projects: The EU project “Urban Learning” involved exchanges with other European cities about governance in integrated energy planning. Vienna’s Municipal Department 25 was a project partner in “Smarter Together“, a project under the programme “Horizon 2020 Smart Cities and Communities“, and received support from the Energy Centre in this context. The Smart City Agency provided expert input for the projects “Transform” and “Optihubs”, the follow-up project “Smart Hubs 2.0” and the project “Skopje Urban Road Management”.

The cooperation project “Donauhanse” ended in 2015. A follow-up project was launched under the name “CapaCities” so that successful event formats for the dissemination of Vienna’s Smart Cities technologies and approaches can be continued in 2016 und 2017.
VIENNA EMPLOYMENT PROMOTION FUND (WAFF)

The City of Vienna offers assistance and support to workers, employment-seekers and businesses to promote skill-building and the employability of Viennese people. As labour market policy is a national policy field in Austria, the City of Vienna and “waff” cooperate closely with the Vienna branch of the national labour market service and all other relevant institutions. These collaborative efforts are used to prepare policy strategies, such as the skills-building strategy *Qualifikationsplan Wien 2020* and Vienna’s “vocational training guarantee” for young people. With its *Qualifikationsplan Wien 2020* Vienna hopes to significantly reduce the share of low-skilled persons in the local labour force by 2020. The “vocational training guarantee” was introduced in 2010 to ensure that every young person in Vienna has access to the local labour market through vocational training. It comprises a raft of measures to help young people access further education after the end of compulsory schooling at age 15. The target group of the programme comprises young people aged 15 to 21. Institutions that offer education, vocational training, information, counselling and assistance to young people work together to meet the policy objectives. Other cities and regions were interested in learning about this coordinated approach in the year under report. “waff” and MA 23 were invited to Berlin to present Vienna’s skills-building programme and its business strategy at a conference that showcased successful approaches in the fight against unemployment – especially youth and long-term unemployment – in major European cities. Visitors from the British labour market institution Staffline, a delegation of visitors from Croatian cities and a group from South Tyrol were welcomed at information events in Vienna.

VIENNA BUSINESS AGENCY

A core activity of the Vienna Business Agency (VBA) is to present and promote Vienna abroad as an attractive location for international businesses, work that has proven its effectiveness. Every year about 150 international companies decide to establish a presence in Vienna. The year under report saw new record highs in the number of newly established international businesses and the volume of direct foreign investment. More than 200 international corporations are currently using Vienna as a coordination centre for their CEE activities.

Together with ABA–Invest in Austria, the Federal Economic Chamber (WKO) and its international Foreign Business Centres, VBA organised events to present Vienna as a business location in London, Bratislava, Warsaw, Moscow, Novosibirsk, Hong Kong,
The VBA activities also extended to the South American cities of Brasília, São Paulo, Belo Horizonte and Rio de Janeiro. The main focus of the presentations was on information and communication technologies, life sciences, Smart City & urban technologies, as well as creative industries. The start-up sector was covered with a panel discussion in New York, followed by company meetings in Boston, the Silicon Valley and Atlanta.

In China and South Korea, roadshows presented Vienna as a business location and investment forums were hosted with a special focus on the opportunities offered to ICT companies and researchers; the itinerary was rounded off with company meetings. Real estate and urban development projects were presented at the international trade fair Expo Real in Munich, the real estate trade show MIPIM in Cannes and the CeBit in Hannover. A roadshow aimed at start-ups was organised in collaboration with Speedinvest and toured Nova Gorica in Slovenia, Zagreb, Sofia and Prague in the latter half of the year.

The team at VBA’s Expat Center provided consultancy services in about a thousand personal conversations and responded to many incoming telephone enquiries. As in previous years, most enquiries came from U.S. citizens, 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.

Many visitors also enquired to find contact persons, often multilingual ones, in various areas of the public administration and other organisations and companies. Among the informative events organised by the Expat Center were “Tax Lunches” in collaboration with the company Deloitte and evening events with NPOs such as SIETAR, the Young Leaders Forum, the Professional Women’s Network and the Russian Networking Community Vienna, among others. Four “StartWien” events were hosted in collaboration with Municipal Department 17.

Moreover, the VBA’s “Expat Club Vienna” offered a networking platform for its 1,000 or so international and local members. 2015 was the Expat Club’s third year of activities. In all, it hosted eleven exciting and entertaining events. Among the most popular events were a guided tour of the Belvedere Palace and galleries outside official opening hours, a visit to the Kagran training garden of the Parks and Gardens Department and a Christmas celebration for the Club’s members. The total number of events hosted by the Center or organised at other venues for the Expat Club came to 50, with a combined number of participants in the range of 1,400. Service activities for the human resource departments of international companies with a presence in Vienna were another focus of activities.

The “Vienna Start-up Welcome Package” programme took place for the second time. It offers a service and support package that includes a three-month stay in Vienna, use of shared office space and one-on-one coaching on growth and internationalisation. Start-ups from the EU and from Seoul were invited to compete for the package, establish contacts with the growing start-up scene in Vienna and add their input to the networks. Deputy Mayor Renate Brauner (centre) and (to her right) VBA Managing Director Gerhard Hirczi symbolically presented the packages to the five winners at the Pioneers Festival in May. (Vienna Business Agency/David Bohmann)
The full range of the Vienna Business Agency’s services was presented in personal meetings with HR managers, and areas of possible support were discussed. Among the services provided to companies were information sessions for groups of newly arrived staff and their families.

The VBA’s Start-up Services unit offered consultancy and skill-building activities in 15 languages for founders and young entrepreneurs. The coaching services were complemented by French and Latin American-themed evenings. Moreover, the Start-up Services unit prepared and carried out visitor programmes for delegations from abroad, including one from Prijedor in Bosnia-Hercegovina. The “Vienna Start-up Welcome Package” competition took place for the second time. The winners of the eponymous service and support package were invited to Vienna for a three-month stay, including use of shared office space and one-to-one coaching on growth and internationalisation. The programme targeted high potentials among start-ups from the EU region and from South Korea, who were invited to Vienna to establish contacts here and share their own experience with others. The five winners of the package were presented at the Pioneers Festival in May.

The VBA also collaborated with the Central Europe Start-up Awards, which were presented in Vienna for the first time in 2015. A symposium under the headline “The key to the Start-up City: New ways to support and attract talent!” was held at the MuseumsQuartier.

The Brussels field office supported these activities through the provision of information and monitoring of all relevant areas at the EU level. The Brussels office also worked to promote the internationalisation of Viennese businesses. It prepared and hosted a study tour by the Smart City steering group and an anniversary event for the WU (Vienna University of Economics and Business) alumni hub at the Vienna House in Brussels, as well as contributing to a panel discussion on “Innovation Ecosystems: Start-ups, Incubators and Venture Capital in Europe”. The VBA joined the European Regions Research and Innovation Network, a group of research and innovation stakeholders with a presence in Brussels. Their objective is to expand regional research and innovation capacities, facilitate access to information about the EU’s research and innovation policies and assist in the development of EU projects. The expert know-how of the Vienna Business Agency was much in demand in connection with EU projects and initiatives. These included the programme “Diversity in the Economy and Local Integration” and a programme with representatives from Central and Eastern European organisations which was being planned under the heading “Go! SME” in 2015.

Through its creative industries centre Departure, the VBA hosted and/or acted as project partner in many expert meetings, presentations and other events with international audiences from the creative industries. Moreover, Departure deployed self-developed event formats, such as the programme “curated by_vienna”, the Content Award and an ideas competition on “Manufacturing in the City” to further develop Vienna’s position as a creative industries hub.

Taking place for the seventh time in 2015, the Departure programme “curated by_vienna” support-
ed systematic cooperation between galleries in Vienna and international curators. The 2015 programme was inspired by ideas at the interface between art and capital. It took its title from the essay “Tomorrow Today”, in which philosopher and literary scholar Armen Avanessian discusses artistic strategies for a post-capitalist era. Working on this theme, international curators presented related works in 20 Viennese galleries.

VBA’s Departure Studies programme provided support for four designers at the international design trade fair Blickfang 2015 at Vienna’s Museum of Applied Arts (MAK). The Blickfang show, which took place for the 12th time in 2015, not only showcases innovative design, but also offers it for sale to interested visitors.

Another of VBA’s activities was its involvement in the International Fashion Showcase in London, where presentations by Austrian fashion designers were organised under the headline “Another Austria: Writing Fashion”. The event was featured on the Internet platform www.austrianfashion.net to further strengthen the national and international standing of Austria’s fashion industry.

Through its Technology Services unit, the VBA runs 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 between players from different industries. Several international industry meetings were hosted in Vienna. They included the B2B Software Days under the motto “The Future of Digital Business”, which focused on new technologies and trends in the ICT field and were attended by more than 500 experts from 35 countries. More than 10,000 international visitors and 420 exhibitors from the smart energy sector gathered at the European Utility Week to discuss future trends and potential consequences.

The tech team participated in the Smart City Expo in Barcelona, the lead event in the field, and organised several meetings for international audiences. Presentations and match-making events with international participation, including visitors from France, Germany, Great Britain, China and Russia complemented the range of activities.

LISAvienna, a joint life sciences initiative by VBA and the national development and financing bank Austria Wirtschaftsservice Gesellschaft, focused its activities on China, Europe, Israel, the USA and the United Arab Emirates in 2015. The team was present at many international trade fairs, among them the Arab Health Dubai and CMEF Spring in Shanghai. In the spring, Vienna became a meeting point for the international life science scene when LISAvienna hosted “BioEquity Europe”, the most important investor meeting in the field, in Vienna for the first time. LISAvienna also organised a joint Austrian stand at the Bio Europe trade fair in Munich. More than 3,500 participants from 55 countries brought attendance at this leading trade fair of the biotech and pharmaceutical industries to a new record high. More than 1,880 companies from all parts of the biotech value chain participated in the event.

VIENNA FILM COMMISSION

The Vienna Film Commission is the central contact point for all film shoots in the city, providing free support for film and TV productions of documentaries, feature films and commercials. It assists film-makers in obtaining permits for film shoots, finding locations and identifying local partners. The Film Commission assisted 176 international productions in 2015; the film projects came from all over the world, including Australia, Thailand, Brazil, Armenia, Georgia, the United Arab Emirates, Belarus, Iran, Kazakhstan, Lebanon and South Africa, as well as Canada, Malta, Serbia, Iceland and Spain. The Bollywood production Ae Dil Hai Mushkil was especially noteworthy. The Film Commission also hosted location tours in Vienna for major international film productions and was actively involved in the organisation of the Eurovision Song Contest in Vienna. Another key event was the world premiere of Mission: Impossible – Rogue Nation; 80 film critics were invited to celebrate the first screening at Vienna’s State Opera together with the cast and producers.

The Vienna Film Commission was present at the Berlin and Cannes film festivals, as well as at the Sundance Film Festival in Utah. Presentations about Vienna as a film location were offered in Los Angeles and London.

Productions from India, Belgium/Netherlands and Ireland won awards at the 27th International Children’s Film Festival.

PUBLIC HEALTH, SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND GENERATIONS

City Councillor for Social Affairs Sonja Wehsely was responsible for managing the influx of refugees in the year under report. Peter Hacker, the managing director of the Vienna Social Fund, was appointed coordinator for refugee issues. www.fluechtlinge.wien

The Youth and Family Welfare Office (MAG ELF) continued its international contacts at the European Network of Social Authorities (ENS), of which it has been a member since 2000. ENSA promotes exchanges of experience and collaboration between social policy experts from municipal and regional administrations. The platform Special Youth Care, whose mission is the transfer of knowledge needed to meet the present chal-
Challenges in services for children and young people, held its annual meeting in Klagenfurt. Discussions focused mainly on the shift from institutionalised in-patient care to individualised mobile care and assistance services.

A delegation from Israel visited for three days to learn about services and programmes for “difficult” young people. The meetings during the visit generated intense and fruitful exchanges on two approaches to the issue that differ in many respects. Students from the Catholic University of Applied Sciences in Münster visited a crisis intervention centre and a group of young
people in a residential programme. Visitors were also welcomed from Moldova and Azerbaijan. Visitors from the University of Psychotherapy came to discuss risks to children’s well-being, and a group from Poland was interested in learning about inter-disciplinary and cross-institutional networking in cases of severe domestic violence.

Children and young people under the care of MAG ELF and their group leaders again travelled on the “mirno more fleet for peace” and participated in the Vogalonga boat race in Venice. These experiential learning projects are seen as very useful; they promote team spirit and a feeling of belonging and are unforgettable experiences, as comments from the participants show.

Physicians from the tuberculosis prevention unit of the Public Health Services Department (MA 15) visited Wolfheze in the Netherlands to discuss epidemiological data and treatments for tuberculosis in children and resistant bacteria strains. Questions from all areas of pulmonology were discussed at a congress of the European Respiratory Society in Amsterdam, and the world congress of the International Union against Tuberculosis and Lung Diseases took place in Cape Town with support from the WHO. The biggest pulmonology congress in the German-speaking region was held under the headline “Migration and tuberculosis” in Berlin.

An allergy garden was developed by Municipal Departments 15 and 42 in collaboration with the Medical University of Vienna. Located in Oberlaa in southern Vienna, the garden has been furnished with display boards featuring information about allergens, pollen loads and cross-reactions. The texts were prepared in several languages and can be retrieved online via a web app (www.allergiegarten-oberlaa.wien.at).

The legal situation of genitally mutilated women was discussed at a meeting in Brussels. The Commissioner for Women’s Health, Professor Beate Wimmer-Puchinger, led a working group on “women and violence” at a three-country meeting of the International Society of Psychosomatic Obstetrics and Gynaecology in Munich and participated as national expert in a meeting in Copenhagen which aimed at preparing a global action plan to eliminate violence against women and children. The European Report on Women’s Health was prepared at a WHO Europe meeting in Trieste. Vienna hosted a number of expert meetings in the field, among them a conference under the headline “Gewalt macht krank” (“Violence makes you sick”) that was attended by about 250 participants. A group of students from Berlin and a delegation of Ukrainian MPs were welcomed and informed about services offered to patients in Austria.

The Health Care and Social Welfare Planning Department (MA 24) provided information about Vienna’s social and health services to visitors from Ukraine, Croatia and Azerbaijan. Talks on social security systems were given by MA 24 to consular officials stationed in Vienna.

MA 24 also coordinated exchanges between care experts from Berlin and Vienna. At the invitation of the Berlin Senate’s Department for Health and Social Affairs, the first meeting took place in the German capital. At a follow-up meeting in Vienna, officials from Berlin were informed about care and assistance services in Vienna and about the policy programme “Care and assistance in Vienna 2030”. The new partnership continued with further joint activities. MA 24 officials took part in expert talks about social aid in Basel and a meeting in Hamburg which discussed young people in the transition phase between school and work. The itinerary there included a tour of a job agency for young people and a vocational training school. Officials in Vienna are drawing on the information gathered at these meetings in preparing youth support policies here.

Vienna is a member of the European Social Network (ESN), a pan-European platform of public social services institutions. At present, more than 120 member organisations from 35 countries belong to the ESN. Its main areas of interest are assistance to children, young people and persons with disabilities, life in old age and social innovation. The annual conference of the ESN took place in Lisbon in 2015. The ESN’s Social Protection Committee (SPC) acts as an advisory body to the EU Commission and held several meetings in this context in the year under report.

A delegation from the Department of Social Welfare, Social and Public Health Law (MA 40) participated in the 23rd European Social Services Conference in Lisbon. Presentations and workshops there focused on the development of partnerships for an inclusive Europe, collaboration between different social service providers from the international, national and local perspectives and life-span social service approaches that extend from infancy to old age.

A large number of expert delegations from all over Europe and as far afield as China visited the headquarters of the Department for Ambulance and Patient Transport Services (MA 70) and were informed about the operation of ambulance services in Vienna. MA 70 representatives visited the headquarters of emergency medical services in the Czech Republic and other countries with a view to deepening cooperation and partnerships in the future. Officials from Vienna’s control centre for medical emergency calls participated in international conferences in Hamburg, Bremerhaven and Leiden, where the latest advances in the fields of medicine and control centre management were presented.
The Homeless Support Unit participated in an international project on homelessness and migration which aims at pooling city administrations’ experience as a basis for new and innovative strategies. Lead partner is the University of Oxford. Delegations from Baku, Belgrade, Incheon, Kiev, Oslo, Plovdiv, Skopje, Rome, Seoul, Warsaw and several German cities were welcomed for on-site visits of institutions and discussions about social services in the context of care for the elderly, assistance to newly arrived refugees and homelessness. The United Nations Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons visited the Senior Citizens’ Bureau.

The FSW was very active in the Eurocities Social Affairs Forum, which held two networking meetings in Osmangazi and Brussels to discuss demographic change and the promotion of inclusive labour markets. What cities can do to create liveable environments for older people was discussed by the working group on ‘Active and Healthy Ageing’ and the WHO network “Age-friendly Cities”. Vienna presented its home visit outreach programme and the city’s health objectives for 2025 at the meetings. Brno and Ghent were among the participants in the “homelessness” working group. A number of cities have introduced the “Housing First” policy model, whereby the provision of affordable housing takes precedence over other measures, i.e. the homeless person does not have to meet other requirements before being housed. In this context, a visit was made to a low-threshold night shelter in Nantes.

Collaboration and partnerships in the fields of education, housing and health promotion were the main areas of interest of FSW officials at the 23rd European Social Services Conference in Lisbon. Australia contributed a presentation on its disabilities insurance programme, which has been created as a unique partnership between persons with disabilities, public authorities, social service providers. “Active Ageing” was the topic of another ESN meeting in Seville, and Vilnius hosted talks by ESN experts on the active integration of persons with learning disorders in the labour market, for example through job coaching or by transitioning from sheltered to regular employment. The annual conference of FEANTSA, the European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless, was held in Paris. Finland presented its approach at the conference, which is based on the provision of
affordable housing and support by mobile teams. The European Union of Supported Employment (EUSE) presented examples of successful employment of persons with disabilities.

Staff from the FSW gathered information at the meetings and also spoke about the services provided in Vienna. Delegates from the umbrella organisation of Vienna’s social service institutions visited the “senior citizens’ council” of Munich; the members of this body are elected by direct vote at the district level, with all citizens over the age of 60 eligible to vote. Knowledge transfer between Austria and Macedonia in the social services field was the goal of a meeting in Skopje; relevant information and case studies were presented by representatives from Vienna and Salzburg. Viennese experts met their counterparts from Berlin during “Care-giving Relatives Week”; follow-up discussions in Vienna centred on public subsidies and the range of services provided by FSW. Case studies on how to prevent inadequate housing were presented at a meeting of Eurofound, the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions. These included the renovation of social housing complexes with the help of residents in Amsterdam and the granting of microcredits for renovation works in Riga and Slovakia. The Russian-Austrian working group for collaboration in the social field met in St. Petersburg, a symposium on dementia was hosted in Berne, the use of air-supported structures for refugee accommodation was discussed in Taufkirchen/Bavaria, and an informative event on management accounting systems was held in Frankfurt/Main. Effective administration was discussed during a study tour to Aarau/Switzerland.

THE VIENNA HOSPITALS ASSOCIATION (KAV)

The Vienna Hospitals Association (Krankenanstaltenverbund – KAV) runs eleven hospitals, four geriatric centres and eight nursing homes providing healthcare and social services, as well as seven nursing and healthcare schools, making it one of Europe’s biggest healthcare institutions.

Its international activities include membership of the European Hospital and Healthcare Federation (HOPE) in Brussels. HOPE was founded in 1966 to promote the exchange of knowledge to help healthcare providers learn from each other and improve cross-border cooperation. The HOPE exchange programme “Hospitals 2020” brought KAV staff to Germany and France. Visitors working for healthcare organisations in several European countries in the fields of finance, hygiene, care and administration were welcomed in Vienna. The annual meeting of HOPE took place in Warsaw. KAV also continued its activities as a member of the European Hospital and Healthcare Employers’ Association (HOSPEEM), participating in the European sectoral social dialogue along with representatives from the Austrian public servants’ trade union. A conference on the prevention of work-induced musculoskeletal disorders was held in Paris, and Helsinki hosted a meeting on the assessment of risks posed by psychological stresses in the workplace.

Founded over eight years ago, the Vienna Open Medical Institute offers international exchange programmes in the medical field. Since its inception, more than 800 physicians from 29 countries have been welcomed at hospitals in Vienna for one-month study vis-
its. The positive results of the programme are somewhat reminiscent of the historical “Vienna School of Medicine”. In 2015, 90 doctors from very different parts of the world, including Tajikistan, Kazakhstan and Slovakia, participated in the programme. The Austro-Chinese exchange programme established in 2007 also continued, bringing 50 physicians from China to Vienna for nine-week internships in KAV institutions; conversely, KAV experts visited healthcare institutions in China.

The KAV institutions are generally much sought-after destinations for international delegations. In the year under report, no fewer than 185 international visitors, some of them as far afield as Singapore, were interested in learning about the new Vienna North Hospital complex; the topics ranged from medicine to organisational issues and technology to the architectural design of the complex. The 19th summer holiday and treatment programme for child leukaemia patients from abroad took place at a treatment centre in the Lower Austrian town of Ybbs. The Internal Auditing Unit welcomed visitors from public healthcare institutions in Slovenia.

Among the physicians, psychologists, teachers, students and trainee nurses who toured the facilities of Vienna’s General Hospital (AKH) were visitors from Clarkson College in Omaha/Nebraska, a training college in St. Gallen and institutions in Germany, as well as from Košice and Žilina. Other visits included: Innerfavoriten nursing homes: China; Liesing: Hebei; Meidling: Brussels; Donaustadt and SMZ-Ost nursing school: Trnava; Rudolfsheim-Fünfhaus: Kiev; SMZ Ost: Doha; Wilhelmenspital: Moscow, Istanbul; Favoriten geriatric centre: Seoul; Hietzing hospital: Vinnytsia/Ukraine.

Staff from the KAV hospitals and other institutions travelled abroad on study tours and attended conferences. The team from intensive care unit 13H1 at the AKH received an award for excellence in care in Weimar. A staff member from the Danube Hospital SMZ Ost was Visiting Psychiatrist at Oakland/Alabama, and staff from the histology unit of the Baumgartner Höhe hospital complex visited Bamberg and attended a pulmonology conference in Chicago. Thoracic surgery experts went to Lisbon and psychiatrists to Neuchâtel, Basel, several cities in Germany, Pordenone, Athens, Prague and Los Angeles. Staff members from the Wilhelmenspital hospital complex participated in a trauma surgery congress in Cancún and a conference on malign lymphoma in Lugano, as well as travelling to meetings in Davos and Rome.

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**HEALTH PROMOTION**

Visitors were received from the Landtag (regional parliament) of the German state of Baden-Württemberg. The group were members of the Landtag’s committee for labour and social order, family, women and senior citizens and were interested in learning about health promotion policies at the municipal level. Presentations and discussions focused in particular on activities pursued in Vienna’s seven “Healthy Districts”.

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**RETIREMENT AND CARE HOMES**

The City of Vienna’s provider of retirement and care homes for the elderly (Kuratorium Wiener Pensionisten-Wohnhäuser, KWP) regards international and regional networking and exchanges with other experts in the fields of care and assistance for older people as an important part of its institutional culture. In 2015, KWP staff participated in a conference in Montreux on the benefits and potential of networking in long-term care. KWP cooperated with the Council of International Fellowship Austria, which runs a study exchange programme for social workers from all over the world. Moreover, KWP staff were among the social workers from Austria and Germany who participated in the EU project “Inclusion Chart 4 – EU”.

Vienna’s 30 residential homes for the elderly were visited by many international delegations, among them members of the Berlin City Senate and staff from the German capital’s care centres, who went on a tour of the new residential home “Haus Liebhartstal”. A point of particular interest was KWP’s “Day Family” programme for persons who are no longer able to organise their daily schedule on their own.
A delegation from an 800,000-inhabitant district of Shanghai visited the Mariahilf residential home to learn about care and assistance services offered to residential home inhabitants. In addition to gathering information about how the City of Vienna assists and cares for the elderly, visitors were also interested in the funding and financial management structures of the local institutions.

**DEPARTMENTS AND INSTITUTIONS**

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**SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND DRUG POLICY COORDINATION (SDW)**

Vienna’s Substance Abuse and Drug Policy Coordination Office (Sucht- und Drogenkoordination, SDW) represented Austria’s nine federal provinces in the Horizontal Drugs Group of the EU Council. In the year under report, discussions mainly focused on a regulatory proposal for effective and EU-wide action to combat the spread of new psychoactive substances in the European Union. SDW is a member of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Suchtforschung und Suchttherapie (German Society for Addiction Research and Therapy) and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Suchtpsychologie (German Society for the Psychology of Addiction) and attended the annual meetings of both organisations in Hamburg. The International Addiction Prevention Forum met in Mattsee. SDW gave presentations at several events: Vienna’s collaborative model, which involves assistance for addicts, youth welfare services and the KAV healthcare institutions, was presented in Hamburg, a presentation in Cologne outlined Vienna’s strategies in dealing with elderly addicts; and in Münsterlingen/Switzerland an SDW expert spoke about addiction problems among young migrants searching for their identity.

In Vienna, SDW welcomed delegations from Bavaria, Georgia and Berne. A presentation on the activities of the Institute for Addiction Prevention was given to the wife of the Iranian Foreign Minister. Bregenz in western Austria was the venue of a meeting of experts from Germany, Switzerland and Austria, who discussed challenges to psycho-social health. SDW representatives spoke about addiction prevention work in Vienna and presented case studies at a meeting of the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs. Renowned experts from the Beethoven Group–Critical Research Approaches towards Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs met at the Sigmund Freud University in Vienna. Family-oriented addiction prevention was the focus of another expert meeting.

SDW staff participated in an interdisciplinary congress for addiction medicine in Munich and a conference on “Trauma and addiction prevention” in Brixen, discussed methamphetamine use in Berlin, neurological approaches to addiction disorders in Zurich and relapse issues in Münster, as well as attending many other international meetings. Changes in addiction treatment over the last 20 years were the central theme of the Tübingen Addiction Treatment Days. Foetal alcohol syndrome was discussed in Leipzig.

**WOMEN’S ISSUES, EDUCATION, INTEGRATION, YOUTH AND PERSONNEL**

Municipal Department 10 (MA 10 – Vienna Children’s Day Care Centres) ensures high-quality pre- and after-school education and care. It runs about 40 per cent of all day care centres in Vienna, with privately owned institutions accounting for the other 60 per cent. In addition to managing the publicly owned centres, MA 10 supports and promotes other kindergartens and parent-organised children’s groups, registered childminders and afternoon day care centres to ensure diverse and demand-oriented services for children from early infancy to school age.
As in 2014, students from the University of Tübingen visited Vienna to learn about kindergarten teacher training in Vienna. Pre-school education was the main area of interest of visitors from Greece, and a Japanese delegation gathered information about the City of Vienna’s education policies and how they translate into education work in kindergartens. The practicalities of gender-sensitive teaching were at the centre of a visit by delegates from Macedonia, who toured the new Sonnwendviertel education campus.

Municipal Department 13 (MA 13 – Education and Out-of-School Activities for Children and Young People) received several delegations for talks about its activities. The visitors from youth institutes and universities, as well as politicians and public administration officials hailed from Stuttgart, Basel, Helsinki, Tübingen, Munich and Seoul. A group from Kristiansand visited the “wienXtra” kids’ info point and the Zoom children’s museum. MA 13 welcomed youth representatives from South Moravia, the Moravian-Silesian Region and the cities of Tábor and Náchod; youth information services, secondary school clubs and the Czech Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports also gathered information about Vienna’s youth services in the context of the German-Czech youth exchange programme Tandem. The Youth Section went on a fact-finding trip to Helsinki and continued its long-standing cooperation with Jerusalem with a visit to that city. Karl Ceplak, Head of the Youth Section, participated in a conference hosted by the network of Professional Open Youth Work in Europe (POYWE) in Birmingham. Four students from the academy of public administration in Ludwigsburg visited Vienna on three-month internships at the public libraries, the Hetzendorf Fashion School and the Music School.

International activities are very much a focus of the Fashion Design School at Schloss Hetzendorf, whose students benefit from this background when they enter the fashion industry or continue training abroad; moreover, these activities also help maintain the school’s own excellent international standing. Visitors from the city of Çaycuma in the Black Sea region of Turkey were welcomed for tours of the Fashion School workshops. The student exchange with Eastbourne College in East Sussex was continued for the third year with a visit to England by Hetzendorf students. The textile design class visited the Art Academy in Bratislava. A stand-out success was the students’ participation in the 2015 international British Feltmakers Design Award in London, where one of the hat designs from Vienna received the Prize for Commercial Appeal.

The Vienna Public Libraries organised a rich and varied programme of events over the course of the year, offering book presentations, panel discussions, exhibitions and readings for people of all ages. Presentations of new books from other language regions were a special focus, with works coming from many European countries as well as Syria, Senegal, Congo and the USA. A children’s “library of world languages” was opened in Vienna’s 15th district on the European Day of Languages. With books, audio and other materials in more than 30 languages, the library helps children learn their mother tongues. A highlight for children aged two to 14 years was the 30th edition of the annual “Lesofanten” festival: over 18 days, it brought more than one hundred readings, musical performances, dance and puppetry events to 38 venues. Theatrical productions from several European countries were shown, and films came from as far afield as Colombia, Australia and Belarus.

Vienna’s adult education institution Wiener Volkshochschulen (VHS) GmbH ran a programme in conjunction with the Eurovision Song Contest: among other things, presentations of the 40 participating countries were hosted at the VHS Urania education and film centre.
Film screenings and national culinary specialties were offered there with the support of the countries’ local embassies. VHS staff met with a counterpart institution in the German state of Rhineland-Palatinate and participated in other international events. VHS completed four projects under the EU programme Grundtvig and launched a new project on multilingualism in the education sector. Moreover, three Erasmus+ projects started in 2015. The topics are: access to higher education by disadvantaged groups through adult education and the entry into the labour market of former prisoners after their release.

Four national public projects in the education field were co-financed by the European Social Funds, learning partnerships with adult education institutions in Cologne and Gothenburg focused on integration and education, and VHS hosted an international conference under the motto “We want to learn a lot, and we can do it”. Literacy programmes were the focus of collaborative projects with counterpart institutions from Finland, Norway and Hamburg, as well as with the association Danaida in Graz.

To underscore its position as a university, the City of Vienna’s conservatory was renamed Musik und Kunst Privatuniversität der Stadt Wien (MUK – Music and Arts University of the City of Vienna). Its beginnings as the city’s centre for music and performing arts education date back to the 1920s. It was re-established in 1945 and re-organised as a stand-alone entity in 2005.

Many students and teachers at the Music and Arts University were involved in the programme activities centred on the 2015 Eurovision Song Contest in Vienna, so that the MUK was firmly in the grip of Song Contest fever throughout the month of May. The MUK Symphony Orchestra performed at the opening of the Eurovision Village in front of Vienna City Hall, and a MUK teacher played at the official opening of the grand finale.

MUK continued its activities under the European education programme Erasmus+, fostering and expanding its ongoing strategic partnerships with more than one hundred institutions of excellent international standing. A new partnership was launched with the Taipei National University of the Arts.

With master classes at leading European centres of musical learning, including the Conservatoire national supérieur de musique et de danse de Paris, the Koninklijk Conservatorium in The Hague, the Conservatorium van Amsterdam and the Bulgarian National Academy of Music in Sofia, MUK worked to bring Viennese musical traditions to other European countries. Conversely, visiting lecturers were welcomed at MUK. As in previous years, more than one thousand young people from over 60 nations travelled to Vienna to take the MUK entrance exams.

MUK students participated successfully in international competitions, winning first place in the Joseph Joachim Violin Competition in Hannover – one of the most generously endowed violin competitions worldwide – and second place in the piano duo category of the ARD competition in Munich. Sponsored by the German TV station ARD, the competition enjoys high international standing. The European Concert Halls Organisation (ECHO) selected a cello student from MUK as the “Rising Star” of the 2015/16 season.

The successful Vienna Charter project of the Municipal Department for Integration and Diversity (MA 17) was presented at an event on “Participatory governance in the social economy”, which was hosted by a working group on administrative management at the Bundeshaus building in Berlin. MA 17 participated in meetings of the European Coalition of Cities against Racism (ECCAR) in Liège and Karlsruhe which discussed how to foster a culture of welcome for refugees as a key to anti-racist policies in the cities.

At the invitation of the Croatian Center for Peace Studies, MA 17 presented Vienna’s Integrations- und Diversitätsmonitor, a report on the status quo and progress in integration and diversity policies, at a conference under the general headline “Collecting data on (in)equality” in Zagreb. An MA 17 official took part in a meeting of experts from countries that receive Roma migrants. The meeting under the banner “Cooperating to integrate the most deprived people at the local level” was held in Brussels.

The Vienna Schools Department (MA 56) organised tours of the newly built Sonnwendviertel school complex near the new Central Rail Station for delegations from Turkmenistan, the USA and Germany; visitors from South Korea toured the Gertrude Fröhlich-Sandner school centre and were informed about the organisation of kindergarten and school meals there.
The Municipal Department for the Promotion and Coordination of Women’s Issues (MA 57) organised Vienna’s Daughters’ Day for the 14th time in 2015. The programme included a backstage tour for twelve- to 16-year-old girls at the Stadthalle entertainment complex during the run-up to the Eurovision Song Contest there. MA 57 welcomed 88 international expert visitors, among them delegates from seven Polish cities whose visit to Vienna had been organised by the NGO WAVE, and a World Bank delegation with 22 participants from India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Pakistan and Nepal. Within Europe, visitors came from several districts of Brussels and from Macedonia, among other places. The main areas of interest were Vienna’s 24-hour helpline for women, measures to protect victims of domestic violence and promotion policies for women.

MA 57 engaged in networking at a conference on balancing work and family life. More than 200 participants from 40 European countries attended 32 workshops dedicated to different issues around sexuality, intimacy and work. A pilot project for the development of equality indicators carried out in the context of the European Charter for Equality and the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CERM) was completed in the year under report. A toolkit of 76 indicators that can be used to measure and support the development and promotion of equality policies was presented at the final conference. The Women’s Issues Department presented the Vienna “Equality Monitor” to small expert groups and gathered information for the further development of equality indicators at the local level.

MA 57 also prepared expert opinions on several legislative proposals for the EU level, as well as issuing a significant number of legal opinions on matters within its sphere of expertise. A number of groups and projects received support of up to EUR 5,000 under the international grant promotion policy for small projects. These included: IG Geschichte, an association that supports and promotes historical research; working group OBRA: preparation and staging of One Billion Rising on 14 February 2015; Culture2Culture: animated film festival “Tricky Women”; super.nova theatre: “clownin 2015”, international women clowns festival; and Enterprise Z: “Phonofemme festival for experimental art and music by women for women”.

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

WAST hosted an event that focused on the human rights situation of LGBTIQ persons in Turkey, continuing its series of discussions about the situation of lesbian, gay and transgender persons. Officials from the Labour and Social Affairs Ministry of Montenegro visited WAST on two occasions to gather first-hand information about the unit’s work.

City Councillor Sandra Frauenberger and WAST invited Viennese LGBTI initiatives to a Round Table to discuss how the city and its LGBTI community would present themselves in the context of the Eurovision Song Contest. WAST organised six bilingual queer city girls’ day celebrations with City Councillor Sandra Frauenberger, Ljubomir Stanisavljev and Ljiljana Lazarevic from the Serbian town of Zrenjanin, Autonomous Province Vojvodina (Astrid Knie)
tours, three bilingual queer tours of the City Hall, a Meet and Greet, an event under the banner “It gets better” at the America House and two panel discussions, all of which met with strong media interest, both nationally and internationally. The 1st “Inter*Conference” in Vienna revolved around the medical, legal and social implications of intersexuality. At the annual conference hosted by WAS, 140 participants discussed LGBTIQ as an educational mission for schools, the workplace and society at large.

The annual meeting of the “Rainbow Cities” took place in Geneva and focused on LGBTIQ refugee issues. A preparatory meeting for the EU project “Improving the accessibility of domestic abuse services to LGBT*” brought together delegates from organisations in Germany, the UK, the Netherlands and Austria in Frankfurt/Main.

Moreover, WAS continued its established and regular formal and informal contacts with the lesbian, gay and transgender communities, as well as with experts in Austria and abroad, to discuss relevant issues and networked with local, national and international organisations to fight homophobia and discrimination.

CULTURAL AFFAIRS, SCIENCE AND SPORTS

The Cultural Affairs Department (MA 7) joined the World Cities Culture Forum in 2015 as Vienna’s representative in this platform, which unites more than 30 cities with important cultural activities. Its members include Amsterdam, Austin, Bogotá, Brussels, Buenos Aires, Dubai, Edinburgh, Hamburg, Hong Kong, Istanbul, Lagos, London, Los Angeles, Madrid, Melbourne, Montréal, Moscow, New York, Paris, Rio de Janeiro, Rome, San Francisco, Seoul, Shanghai, Shenzhen, Singapore, Stockholm, Sydney, Taipei, Tokyo, Toronto and Warsaw. The Forum, which has its seat in London, aims to help cities share their cultural interests and facilitate exchanges about the handling of cultural activities under the different conditions that exist in its member cities.

Vienna participated in the EXPO in Milan, offering several cultural events over the Whitsun weekend. The Vienna Symphony Orchestra played a concert of Mozart works at the Conservatorio Giuseppe Verdi, and opera and ballet fans were able to enjoy a live broadcast from the Vienna State Opera, enhanced by the pleasant atmosphere on Piazza degli Affari in front of the stock exchange building. For a somewhat younger clientele, well-known Austrian DJs worked the turntables at the Dude Club.

The Armenian State Youth Orchestra played a concert in the “glass hall” of the famous Musikverein building in Vienna. Under the banner “Roots of Revival”, the performance was expressive of the rich Armenian musical tradition, underscoring its historical evolution and present-day position. The event was organised in commemoration of the genocide suffered by the Armenian people a hundred years ago. The Mayor of Zabrze, Ms. Małgorzata Mańka-Szulik, was present as guest of honour at a concert by the international Chopin Society. The online radio station “LiteRadio” was granted funding for live transmissions of readings from the Frankfurt Book Fair.

Scientific research is conducted in an international network intent on exploring, analysing and explaining the world. The Vienna Lectures Series is the City of Vienna’s dialogue programme with this world of science and research. Headed by Vienna’s Science Adviser Hubert Christian Ehalt for the past 29 years, the Lectures Series programme launched collaborative formats with the TV stations ORF III and OKTO TV in 2011 and 2012, respectively. The Vienna House in Brussels hosted its 19th Vienna Lecture in the year under report. Professor of Political Science Anton Pelinka discussed “Refugee flows to and through Europe: a Central European perspective” with Professor Ehalt at the event. An event on remigration was organised in collaboration with ORF III, featuring talks by writer and film director Georg Stefan Troller, a Viennese by birth, and by the German historian Marita Krauss about their “returns” to their original home countries.
Shalini Randeria, the newly appointed Rector of the Institute for Human Sciences, spoke about how marginalised groups can fight the powerful combination of international organisations, multinational corporations and “cunning states”. “Ukraine: Europe’s ‘frontier’ – a journey into an unknown land” was the title of a lecture given by Karl Schlögel, a writer and historian specialising in Eastern Europe. 23 years after his first, legendary lecture on “500 years of Latin America – no cause for jubilation”, bishop Erwin Kräutler presented an updated analysis of the political, legal and cultural situation of Brazil’s indigenous peoples today. In a conversation with Christina von Braun, Hubert Christian Ehalt discussed the role of the media in the emergence and development of fundamentalism.

Information exchanges about digitisation strategies were a focal point in the international contacts of the City Archives Department (MA 8), whose director Brigitte Rigele gave a presentation on this topic at the conference of Slovakian archives in Liptovský Mikuláš. MA 8 participated in the International Congress of the International Council of Archives in Reykjavik and the German archives conference in Karlsruhe. Other opportunities for information exchanges about the digital conservation of films and resolution of copyright issues arose at a meeting at the Berlin Archives, and the “Wien Geschichte Wiki” online platform about Vienna’s history was presented at the Vienna House in Brussels.

The City Archives prepared expert opinions and other papers for foreign institutions, most of them related to acts of expulsion and dispossession in the Nazi era; enquiries originated from the Jewish Claims Conference Tel Aviv-Yafo and from the International Tracing Service at Bad Arolsen, Germany, among others. In cooperation with the city of Rovinj and the Historical and Maritime Museum of Istra, MA 8 showed a small exhibition in Vienna in commemoration of the City of Vienna’s seaside hospice at San Pelagio-Rovinj (1888–1947). The turbulent history, now largely forgotten, of what used to be a well-known sanatorium for children on the Adriatic was brought to mind thanks to research in Croatian and Viennese sources, even resulting in a meeting of witnesses with living memories of the hospice.
The Vienna City Library (MA 9) hosted an international symposium on the return of exiled Austrians in the post-war period and its effect on culture and science. Researchers from Poznań, Como and as far afield as São Paulo were among the participants. An expert from the ETH Zurich participated in a panel discussion about the development of Vienna’s Ringstrasse boulevard as a result of an open competition to which Emperor Francis Joseph gave his consent. A professor from the Ohio State University, Columbus spoke about The Kraus Project by U.S. author Jonathan Franzen, who translated texts by Karl Kraus and catapulted them into the 21st century. An exhibition of objects from the estate of the pianists Rosi and Toni Grünschlag was on show at the City Library. Forced into exile in 1939, the two sisters went to live in America. Their legacy is a rich source of materials on the escape and exile of Jewish musicians fleeing Nazi rule, as well as on the foundation of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra. The Vienna City Library also contributed to exhibitions in Moscow, Frankfurt/Main, Berlin and at the Czech National Gallery in Prague.

As in previous years, numerous groups of visitors enjoyed guided tours of the City Library, among them students from the Czech Republic, from Miskolc/Hungary and Mainz/Germany, teachers from Slovakia, librarians from the Boris Yeltsin Presidential Library in St. Petersburg, staff from the Polish Academy of Sciences and the youth section of the German public officials’ association in Kiel. The exhibition “The Makart of Music – Carl Goldmark, composer par excellence of the Ringstrasse era” was presented at a conference of the Austrian Libraries.

Municipal Department 14 (MA 14 – Automated Data Processing, Information and Communications Technologies) participated in international conferences on e-government, open government data, GIS (geographical information systems) and traffic telematics in 2015. The Open Government Data conference took place in Vienna; Liechtenstein was among the participants in the year under report. The regular meetings of the “Major Cities of Europe – IT Users Group” are a key platform for cross-border exchanges of information. The annual conference in Hamburg focused on e-government, governance of Smart Cities, new technologies and the connection between social media and transparency.

Implementing ICT projects is an important area of activity at MA 14, and skill-building in this field is a sustainable contribution to high-quality project management for Vienna. Against this backdrop, a research workshop with participants from the German-speaking region was hosted for the first time in Vienna to bring together researchers and project managers for exchanges on best practices. Under the banner “Next Practices ... in times of complexity and uncertainty” project management approaches and methods were presented, considered and discussed by about 80 participants.

In addition to participating in international conferences and workshops, MA 14 also contributed to two projects with EU co-financing. Providing routing information for persons with special needs was the purpose of the “iScope” project, which was concluded in 2015 (http://www.iscopeproject.net/). The City of Vienna supplied basic data for a pilot application covering the city centre of Vienna. The second EU project “TIDE” enabled European cities to exchange their experiences with intelligent traffic systems (http://www.tide-innovation.eu/en/Events/TIDE-final-conference-15-16-September-2015/) – a welcome opportunity for MA 14 to compare technologies and outcomes in Vienna to those of other cities.

42,000 runners competed in the Vienna City Marathon in April. The fastest man at the event, which was co-organised by the Sports Office (MA 51), came from Ethiopia, and the fastest woman from Switzerland.

International contacts and activities brought special challenges for the City of Vienna’s Press and Information Service (PID – MA 53) in 2015, given the strong media interest in the Eurovision Song Contest, the local elections and the refugee crisis. The PID responded to numerous enquiries and assisted the media, as well as monitoring international media reactions to events in Vienna.

As in previous years, the PID was also involved in the organisation of the popular Viennese Balls which were hosted by local institutions and initiatives in the following cities in the year under report: Prague (two balls), Milan, Zurich, Basel, Halifax, Brussels, Noordwijk, Berlin, New York, Sofia, Boston, Bucharest, Cyprus, Luxembourg, Athens, Beijing, Helsingor/Denmark, Bangkok, Ulan Bator, Moscow, Shanghai, Opatija, Rome, London, Montréal and Timișoara. An Austrian-Czech Ball took place in Brno.
Months before the actual event, the Eurovision Song Contest was presented to the public in collaboration with the Austrian Broadcasting Corporation ORF and other partners. The support provided by the City of Vienna was highlighted at these events as well as in press briefing materials supplied to about 1,700 media people who came to Vienna to cover the Song Contest. Their welcome packages from the PID contained information about Vienna, writing materials, a USB stick and a brochure which highlighted Vienna’s excellent quality of life under the title *Vienna–12 Points*. A similar package was prepared in the run-up to the Vienna elections in the autumn.

The PID collaborated with other departments of the city administration, as well as emergency services, charitable organisations and volunteers to cope with the challenges posed by the influx of refugees. In close cooperation with the Refugee Coordination Office and the crisis team, multilingual welcome and information posters were prepared for refugees arriving at Vienna’s major railway stations.

Vienna maintained a high profile in the international media in 2015. Coverage of the refugee crisis was especially extensive in the German press, where the commemorative service in honour of singer Udo Jürgens at Vienna City Hall was also a prominent item. International media interest in Vienna’s diversity-themed “traffic light couples” continued unabated, and a concert organised at the central Heldenplatz square under the banner “Voices for Refugees” was also widely reported abroad.

Responding to enquiries from the international media was a major activity within PID’s active management of media contacts, proving once again that regular cooperation will bring positive results. Journalists who have had positive experiences with local contacts will also be interested in other news stories from Vienna. Prominent topics in the year under report included the 150th anniversary of the Ringstrasse boulevard and present-day urban planning, architecture and housing, as well as traffic infrastructure. Moreover, PID officials regularly gave presentations about the Department’s activities for international delegations. 2015 saw the 70th anniversary of the Foreign Press Association Vienna. It has about 2,000 members, representing some 400 media from about 60 countries.

The international communication unit of PID collaborated with other sections of the city administration to produce reports and feature stories of international interest for print and online publication in the “wien.at” media. Moreover, PID expertise supplied input for a number of projects implemented in Vienna. One of these was dedicated to students from elsewhere in Austria and from abroad. A slideshow was produced on questions of relevance to this group and published on the pages of the website www.wien.at.

The translation and interpreting unit managed written translation and interpreting services, provided both in-house and via outsourcing, at a rate of some 90 translations and 15 interpreting assignments per month.

**Municipal Department 62 – Elections and Specific Legal Affairs** participated in a conference in Stuttgart to discuss practical problems arising in the management of democratic processes. A special focus there was the digitisation of communication. The conference was attended by officials from all levels of government of the participating countries, both from the legislative and the executive branches.
WIEN MUSEUM

As of 1 October, Wolfgang Kos was succeeded as artistic and scientific director of the museum by Matti Bunzl, who had already been actively involved in programming and started to put into practice his vision of the Wien Museum as a “laboratory of civil society” during his period as designated director in the months before the official handover. Internationalisation is a priority for the new Wien Museum director, who underlined in his inaugural speech that Vienna should be presented “in a global context, from a global perspective, both historically and in the present”, a position that inspired Mr. Bunzl’s activities in the first few months of his tenure. In the same vein, new appointments to the Wien Museum Academic Advisory Board include experts from Florence, Geneva, Dublin, Zurich and New York, in addition to members from the universities of Vienna and Salzburg.

A major special exhibition at Wien Museum in the year under report was “The Myth of Galicia”, developed in collaboration with the Kraków International Cultural Centre. The territory of Galicia was nearly as large as that of present-day Austria, and around 1900 its capital Lvov was the fourth-biggest city in Austria-Hungary. The region conjures up images of a land lost to the world, the very essence of remoteness; a core area of Eastern European Jewry, and the multicultural poorhouse of the Habsburg Empire. The exhibition was the first to take up the different historical perspectives – Polish, Ukrainian, Austrian and Jewish – on Galicia and juxtapose them with the historical facts. Images of poverty and backwardness were contrasted with images of progress and development. Around 1900, Galicia’s rich oil deposits in the area of Drohobych and Borislav turned it into “Austria’s Texas”.

An association of ‘American Friends of the Vienna Museum’ was founded in 2015, bringing together individuals and companies that share a love for Vienna, Austria and Central Europe with the aim of supporting Wien Museum in its mission to keep alive the history of Vienna. The US counterpart to Vienna’s long-established Friends of the Wien Museum association seeks to help in the maintenance and expansion of the museum by raising public awareness and financial support in the United States. Through the provision of support with acquisitions and restorations of significant historical objects and/or works of art, American Friends of the Vienna Museum hopes to make a valuable contribution to the preservation of Vienna’s rich cultural heritage for generations to come. Headquartered in Chicago, the association also serves as a forum for American-Austrian cross-cultural education.

The painting Kokusaustoß (“Coke output”, oil on canvas, 112 x 81 cm), created by Austrian Paul Kirnig between 1935 and 1944, was donated to the Wien Museum by the painter’s family in Oxford. Another major acquisition in 2015 was the photographic estate of Robert Haas (Vienna, 1898 – New York, 1997). Haas was one of Austria’s leading photojournalists in the period between the World Wars. He created moving photographic essays featuring Vienna’s everyday life and depicted social issues, but also produced portraits, advertising and landscape photography as well as technical documentations and architectural photography. In 1936 he moved to Salzburg, where he worked as the Salzburg Festival’s official press photographer for several years. Although his photographs were popular and widely disseminated in Vienna during his lifetime, Robert Haas was largely and unjustly forgotten by later generations. A major exhibition of his photographs will be presented to the public for the first time in 2016.


The long-standing collaboration between the Nagoya City Museum and Wien Museum, which includes staff exchanges and tours of special exhibitions, was continued in the year under report. A delegation from Japan was welcomed in 2015 to discuss new
collaborative projects and visit the newly established central storage facility of Wien Museum.

THE HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICE OF THE CITY OF VIENNA

The first seminar on fundamental rights in the European Union took place in Brussels in October, led by European Commission Vice-President Frans Timmermans. Human Rights Coordinator Shams Asadi presented Vienna’s Human Rights City policies and activities at the meeting. Politicians, experts and activists met at the seminar to work together for a culture of tolerance and respect in the EU. Encounters with victims and witnesses resulted in profound and inspiring talks about anti-Semitic and anti-Muslim hatred.

“Unity in Diversity” was the motto of a conference in Florence where mayors from cities all over the world discussed culture as a promoter of peace, the media, democracy and social policy issues. Participants from crisis spots such as Diyarbakir/Turkey, Kobanê/Syria, Afghanistan and other regions met European decision-makers at the conference.

The project “Diversity in the Economy and Local Integration” was concluded. It had brought together project partners from ten cities, businesses and start-up companies for discussions about economic challenges which resulted in the drafting of public support policies tailored to the diverse needs of the entrepreneurs. (More than 40 per cent of entrepreneurs in Vienna have an immigration background.)

The policy process headlined “Vienna – City of Human Rights” and the establishment of the Human Rights Office also aroused international interest. Delegates from the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions participated in a workshop there just three months after the official opening of the Human Rights Office; other participants came from MA 17, the Austrian Association of Cities and Towns and the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Human Rights.

URBAN DEVELOPMENT, TRAFFIC & TRANSPORT, CLIMATE PROTECTION, ENERGY AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The expertise of the Urban Development and Planning Department (MA 18) was as always much sought after by national and international delegations. 800 visitors were welcomed in 2015. MA 18 took the lead in organising the “Walk21” conference with more than 600 participants from the fields of politics, academia, the healthcare sector and, of course, urban planning, building and architecture.

Vienna’s urban planning experts attended the Smart City Expo in Montréal and other international conferences. MA 18 officials also represented Austria in an OECD working group that discussed spatial planning instruments to control the development of metropolitan regions and were active in the Economic Development
Forum of Eurocities. The department continued its membership of the 50-member Network of European Metropolitan Regions and Areas (METREX) and participated in the United Nations’ HABITAT Programme.

“Smart City development” was the title of an exhibition mounted by MA 18 that focused on topical issues of smart urban planning. The exhibition was on show in Munich and Prague, as well as at the Expo Real trade fair in Munich and the Smart City Expo in Barcelona.

MA 18 was among the most active participants in EU programmes, including: CITYKEYS (development of performance indicators, project partners were Tampere, Zaragoza, and others); “Making Migration Work for Development” (effects of demographic change in Southeast Europe); PASTA (Evaluation and promotion of active mobility); PUMAS (airport region mobility concept); BRAWISSIMO (household surveys on transport preferences in Slovakia and Austria); UrbanAPI (analysis of mobile phone mobility data and development of a 3D city model); SMART. MONITOR (progress monitoring on the way to Smart City objectives); “Agenda for Low Carbon Cities”; TRANSFORM+ (development of Smart City strategies and measures for neighbourhoods and cities in Austria); LOS DAMA (upgrading of cultural landscapes in the transition zone between Alpine foothills and the agricultural landscape of the Marchfeld plain), as well as six other projects.

Municipal Department 20 (MA 20 – Energy Planning) participated in the EU project “Urban Learning” with the Vienna Energy Center as lead partner and energy agencies and other project partners from Berlin, Stockholm, Amsterdam, Paris, Warsaw and Zagreb. The project objective was to help local administrations grow their skills and competences in integrative urban energy planning to allow them to respond appropriately to new challenges posed by EU directives on building construction and renewable energies, as well as technological advances and changing market conditions, and to cope with the pressure of creating sufficient affordable housing. The main focus was on innovative technological solutions, instruments and tools to be deployed in compliance with the principles of good governance.

Big cities cover just two per cent of the earth’s surface, but they account for 75 per cent of total energy consumption and 80 per cent of all greenhouse gas emissions. With constant urban expansion, the development of “Smart Cities” is a crucial topic which is also at the heart of one of the most important programmes of the European Energy Research Alliance (EERA, www.eera-set.eu). The mission of the EERA is to optimise and strengthen energy research in Europe, and 60 research institutions from 14 countries worked together in the programme to help raise the quality of urban life and develop sustainable energy supply systems. The Austrian Institute of Technology (AIT) acted as programme coordinator, and Vienna’s Municipal Department 20 sat on the Alliance’s Advisory Board. Meetings took place in Trondheim and Barcelona in 2015.

MA 20, the Austrian Federal Ministry for Transport, Innovation and Technology and other partners co-organised the first international conference on small wind power plants. About 200 participants came to learn about wind energy use in general and small wind turbines in particular.

Municipal Department 21 (MA 21 – District Planning and Land Use) continued its collaboration in the project “CUPA – Co-operative Urban Planning Approaches” with TINA Vienna in Tartu/Estonia. Better integration of the new National Museum in the urban land-use planning was an important aim of this project.
scape was the objective of the eighth Implementation Lab there. The ninth Implementation Lab took place in Gdansk, where the topic was integration of the university campus into the urban fabric.

A presentation on Europan, an initiative aimed at building knowledge and promoting the exchange of ideas in the fields of housing and urban design, was given to members of the European Parliament. MA 21 officials spoke about Smart City topics at the Festival of Regions in Brașov, Transylvania, and about subsidised housing projects, participatory projects and planning processes at a meeting in New York. Together with MA 18, MA 21 participated in a Eurocities conference entitled “Reclaiming the inner city fringe” in Oslo. Officials from the city administrations of Graz, Salzburg and Vienna went on an excursion to energy planning units in Winterthur and Freiburg im Breisgau. Urban design, architecture and the shift to renewable energies were the key topics at the “Bauwelt” conference in Berlin.

The Standpunkt Liesing neighbourhood management scheme received a European Enterprise Promotion Award in the category “Supporting the development of green markets and resource efficiency”. The steering group of Standpunkt Liesing – which includes MA 21 officials and representatives of the Vienna Economic Chamber and the Vienna Business Agency – accepted the award at the SME Assembly in Luxembourg. The Standpunkt Liesing project even made the shortlist for the three best projects of its kind in Europe.

The 2015 edition of the “Walk21” conference took place in Vienna after the Road Management and Construction Department (MA 28) had invited the conference to Vienna at the previous year’s edition in Sydney. Planning approaches, opportunities for action and research in the field of walking were discussed in the conference’s 240 discussion forums, workshops and urban labs.

Furthermore, MA 28 welcomed a 25-strong delegation from Macedonia for talks about road construction and participated in the Congress on Intelligent Transport Systems in Bordeaux, the biggest event worldwide in this field, which offered presentations of state-of-the-art transport technology and self-driving cars.

The Bridge Construction and Foundation Engineering Department (MA 29) presented Vienna’s new Central Rail Station project at the Capital Summit in Belgrade. The Capital Summit, a meeting of Central and Southeast European cities, was dedicated to urban infrastructure and urban development in 2015.

The Public Lighting Department (MA 33) introduced diversity-themed traffic lights in conjunction with the Eurovision Song Contest, garnering much international media attention with these so-called “traffic light couples”. The International Year of Light was marked with several events in Vienna’s historic city centre.
Three-dimensional city models are an important tool for the spatial analyses and simulation models needed to cope with the challenges of modern urban planning. This includes visibility analyses, calculations of shadow zones and capturing data to model the spread of noise and pollutants. Municipal Department 41 (Surveyors) engaged in exchanges with other European cities about these issues and attended workshops on 3D urban modelling in Bonn and Rotterdam.

In the context of the Skopje Urban Transport project of TINA International, officials from the traffic planning and road management departments of the City of Skopje visited Municipal Department 46 – Traffic Management and Organisation together with a team from a Macedonian consulting company. State-of-the-art methods and best-practice examples from Vienna in the fields of traffic management, including automated traffic management systems, were presented and discussed at the meeting with a view to helping administrators in Skopje with the introduction of such systems and the repositioning of the city’s transport enterprises, as well as improving administrative and operational conditions.

Officials from Municipal Department 65 – Legal Affairs: Traffic and Transport (MA 65) met their counterparts from other cities in Sarajevo for talks about traffic organisation and legal issues. An interview on parking space management was given to the Russian online publication utro.ru. The same topic was presented in meetings with delegations from Bulgaria and Slovenia, which also discussed parking space monitoring in Vienna.

**VIENNA MOBILITY AGENCY**

2015 was the Year of Walking. To mark the occasion, the Mobility Agency prepared a map of Vienna for walkers, of which 80,000 copies were distributed, as well as an online walking app. Two festivals were organised and attracted combined audiences of 32,000. The embassy of the Netherlands hosted a Slow Bike Contest at the Streetlife Festival. These pioneering activities received much international interest. Vienna also hosted “Walk21”, the leading conference worldwide in the field of walking, quality of life and urban development. In recognition of these initiatives and campaigns to promote walking, cycling and public transport use, the European Commission awarded the European Mobility Week Award to Vienna.

International delegations from Poland, Hong Kong, Linköping/Sweden and Singapore were welcomed.

The international Velo-City conference took place in Nantes. The Mobility Agency and MA 28 presented case studies from Vienna on the topic “good solutions to prevent conflicts between cyclists and pedestrians”
to experts from all over the world. Another presentation topic was a crowdsourcing project by the Mobility Agency, which invited the cycling community to mark points of conflict between cyclists and pedestrians on an online map. The information thus acquired is being used in the development of Vienna’s network of bicycle routes. A conference under the banner “Bicycle culture in European metropolises” was held in Hannover, and “Open Days” with a focus on walking policy took place in Brussels.

ENVIRONMENT AND VIENNA PUBLIC UTILITIES

December saw a ‘Miss Earth’ competition in Vienna. From a field of more than 90 candidates, a contestant from the Philippines was picked as a champion of environmental concerns. ‘Miss Earth’ initiatives exist in many countries and rely on funding from private sponsors. The competition winners engage in environmental education and activities, such as tree planting campaigns, in which the predecessor of the current Miss Earth took part in Sri Lanka and La Réunion.

The Environmental Protection Department (MA 22) gave presentations on Vienna’s air quality policies in Brussels and Berlin. Vienna came in third in a ranking of 23 European cities produced by the LIFE+ project Clean Air. The implementation of EU programmes such as Natura 2000, which aims at preserving flora, fauna and natural habitats, continued apace in the year under report. Monitoring and other activities in connection with infringement procedure 2013/4077 were also carried out. A package of measures from the Noise Action Plan 2013–2018 was implemented to ensure compliance with EU Directive 2002/49/EC on environmental noise as well as national environmental noise legislation. MA 22 relies on information from the public to find quiet areas and identify what is decisive in making them so. To this end, large-scale surveys on traffic noise were conducted in Vienna’s 9th district. A priority placement list for noise protection walls was prepared, and MA 22 worked on a geodata infrastructure (INSPIRE) on the basis of EU Directive 2007/2/EC, which will also include nature data. The process of data harmonisation was continued.

Projects under the Rural Development Programme were concluded in 2015. At the same time, the Austrian Programme, which runs until 2020, continued with a first round of calls for nature conservation project proposals, to be submitted by year-end. MA 22 ended its participation in the Eurocities working group “Greening the Local Economy”, but continued its activities in the working group on waste. MA 22 serves as Vienna’s expert authority for the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES); together with the CITES Animal Committee experts, it represents Austria in the EU’s scientific control group. Binding positions on international trade in animal and plant species were prepared. Reptiles, hunt-

The first map of Vienna for pedestrians was on show at the Urban Village in front of City Hall in the run-up to the “Walk21” conference. (MobAg/Christian Fürthner)
ing trophies and tropical timber were frequent topics of discussion in this context.

MA 22 officials gave interviews on air quality management for the papers *Gazeta Krakowska* and *Moskovskaya pravda* and for a Romanian TV station, and informed delegations from Prague and Macedonia about the same topic. Visitors from Singapore, China and Turkey were interested in Vienna’s waste management systems and efforts undertaken as part of its Model Ecological City policy.

The Parks and Gardens Department (MA 42), which supplied the flower arrangements for the New Year’s Concert by the Vienna Philharmonic in the Golden Hall of the Musikverein building, made its annual summer trip to the Italian town of Cervia on the Adriatic coast, whose mayor had already been among the dancers at the 93th Flower Ball at Vienna City Hall the previous winter. The association Amics d’Austria from Barcelona paid its annual visit to the “Catalan oak” at Stadtpark on the Friday preceding Palm Sunday. MA 42 chaired the 58th urban gardens expert committee meeting, which took place in conjunction with the centennial of the Austrian Association of Cities and Towns celebrated in Merano, the place of its foundation. Officials from the Parks and Gardens Department also participated in the “Smart Park” conference in Ponte de Lima/Portugal and in the EXPO 2015 in Milan.

MA 42 welcomed visiting experts and students from Switzerland, Tunisia and the Czech Republic, as well as from the Polish Society for Arboriculture and Preservation of Old Trees. A Chinese delegation visited the Rosenfeld commemorative ground plaque in Kagran.

Municipal Department 45 – Water Management continued the implementation of a 3.6-million-euro project to ensure the water quality of the *Alte Donau* (“Old Danube”) stillwater lake. The project received 50 per cent co-funding from the EU Programme LIFE+ to expand near-natural shore areas, protect biodiversity and the natural landscape and optimise the management, by mowing, of underwater plants. The recreational value of the Alte Donau was also enhanced in 2015 when the City of Vienna took over a formerly privately owned beach area. After some minor adaptations, the grounds are now accessible for free use by the public. The project was presented at the Dialogue Forum and at meetings in Bristol and Munich. www.life-altedonau.wien.at

The EU project LIFE Sterlet was launched to ensure the continued survival of this small sturgeon species and to re-introduce sterlet populations to the Danube. The sterlet is the smallest of the six sturgeon species native to the Danube and lives exclusively in
freshwater. It is only very rarely found in the Austrian stretches of the Danube today. To re-populate the river with sterlets, a breeding container will be installed on the Danube Island in 2016 so that the fish can be bred and raised in Danube water. Http://life-sterlet.boku.ac.at/

Talks with international visitors revolved around questions of flood protection and the preservation and management of bodies of water, including measures to return them to a more natural state and enhance recreational use. MA 45’s “Inselinfo” information centre on the Danube Island was a popular venue for receptions and lectures and served as a meeting point for guided tours.

Municipal Department 48 (MA 48 – Waste Management, Street Cleaning and Vehicle Fleet) works in Vienna to provide services for the Viennese. It may therefore be somewhat surprising that good international relations form part of its activities. But international exchanges are indispensable in order to learn from others. Moreover, many rules and regulations governing waste management and other relevant areas are no longer national matters, but are adopted at the European level.

MA 48 has traditionally maintained regular contacts with its counterpart organisations in major German cities. In 2015, Vienna hosted a meeting of managing directors from the municipal cleaning and waste disposal operations of 13 cities. The main topics of discussion were sustainable municipal waste management and the challenges of waste collection in densely built-up areas. Collaboration among cities also works to support basic research. Examples include an ongoing study at the Humboldt University in Berlin about changing perceptions of cleanliness in cities. A working group meeting was held to discuss the logistics of waste collection schemes, recent developments in the design of container locations and transport routes and how they can be influenced.

International congresses, such as the ISWA World Congress in Antwerp, offered compact fora for expert exchanges. The Winter Service working group of the World Road Association (PIARC) met in Helsinki. In each working period, the working group prepares reports for the Snow and Ice Databook; three such reports were finalised at the meeting.

The 5th Beacon Conference of the International Solid Waste Association (ISWA) took place at Vienna City Hall in May. Hosted by ISWA and the Austrian Water and Waste Management Association (ÖWAV) in cooperation with MA 48, the conference brought together about a hundred waste management experts from 27 countries and three continents for talks about waste minimisation, reuse, recovery and recycling. The concept of “extended producer responsibility” was presented in a keynote speech by its author Thomas Lindhqvist from the University of Lund. At the “Walk21” conference, MA 48 presented its winter services for pedestrians, as well as action taken for cleaner pavements.

National and international visitors were very interested in touring the MA 48 facilities. Presentations and tours of the Rinterzelt waste sorting facility, the Rautenweg landfill, the Lobau composting station,
the waste logistics centre, the biogas plant and the “48er-Tandler” second-hand shop resulted in lively exchanges about waste collection, recycling and disposal, as well as measures to keep the city clean. MA 48 welcomed 48 international delegations from 39 countries and 75 groups of visitors from Austria in the year under report. All in all, the number of visitors came to 1,903. In addition, staff of the Wiener Kommunal Umweltschutzprojekt GesmbH welcomed 43 international delegations for tours of the Pfaffenau waste incinerator. The “48er-Tandler” second-hand shop was a new highlight for visitors. Senior officials from Hamburg and Munich were among the first to visit this new waste minimisation facility.

Regulations adopted by the European Parliament inform many national legislative acts. In the waste management sector, the so-called Circular Economy Package is an issue of topical importance and has the potential to change the rules under which waste management organisations operate (e.g. collection quotas). MA 48 therefore observed the draft development and participated in the discussion process with proposals for best practice solutions. These were made by an MA 48 representative at a stakeholder conference hosted by the European Commission in Brussels.

MA 48 and the umbrella organisation of Austrian waste management associations (ARGE Österreichischer Abfallwirtschaftsverbände) represent the interests of Austrian municipal waste management operators at the organisation Municipal Waste Europe (MWE) in Brussels. MWE is an officially registered NGO with the right to delegate representatives to the EU bodies. In this context, MA 48 participated in expert meetings charged with the drafting of Best Available Techniques Reference Documents for urban development project “Aspern Seestadt” and the “Naturkulinarium” project at the Bio Forschung Austria research centre for organic farming. Numerous events and educational programmes were hosted by the environmental education organisation “UmweltBildung Austria – Grüne Insel” in partnership with MA 49, among them an international youth camp in the Lobau National Park, where the Lobau National Park Centre was established in 1999 to inform and educate the public about the natural wealth of the Danube wetlands. The YES (Young European Solidarity) Initiative Vienna, a platform that works to support and develop a common European identity with respect to ecology, social policy and culture, organised no fewer than 40 events in the year under report.

Vienna is home to 1,000 ornamental Japanese cherry trees which were presented by Japanese partner districts in the context of Austria’s millenary celebrations in 1996. In the spring, the annual cherry blossom festival in commemoration of the gift was celebrated on the Danube Island with many Japanese-themed performances and activities. A two-hectare cherry blossom park modelled on Japanese gardens was opened in the district Donaustadt. At the opening ceremony in April, a commemorative stone was unveiled with an appeal for a world without arms and nuclear power.

For one hundred years, the City of Vienna has been running its own winery (Weingut Cobenzl), which manages 60 hectares of vineyards. The remarkable wines produced there attracted a great deal of interest at the trade show “ProWein” in Düsseldorf. Wine sales in the main export markets Germany, the Netherlands, Japan and the US accounted for about ten per cent of total sales.
OMBUDS OFFICE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (WUA)

As Vienna’s representative body in all matters concerning nuclear power policy, the Ombuds Office maintained numerous contacts abroad. Under the terms of the relevant bilateral nuclear information agreements, regular meetings were held with experts from Slovenia, Slovakia, Poland and the Czech Republic, among others. A workshop with the management of the Mochovce 3&4 power plant focused on control technology. Cross-border Environmental Impact Assessments concerning the nuclear power plants at Paks and Bohunice were an important component in the pursuit of Vienna’s anti-nuclear policy.

Membership in the organisation “Cities for a Nuclear Free Europe” (CNFE) continued to grow, the most recent of its 27 members are from Greece. The CNFE network was founded by City Councillor Ulli Sima in 2012 to mobilise opposition against government subsidies for nuclear power plants. In this context, WUA presented its study “Renewable Energy versus Nuclear Power” to MPs in the House of Commons at Westminster. Later in the year, the Republic of Austria filed a lawsuit with the European Court of Justice over the Hinkley Point C nuclear power project, which is being developed with the help of state guarantees and subsidies from the British government.

Vienna and the CNFE received support in the UK from the “Nuclear Free Local Authorities” platform, as well as from the international city network “Mayors for Peace”, whose 4,000 members (130 in Austria) are working to eliminate all nuclear weapons worldwide. At the instigation of the WUA Office, Mayors for Peace, which is chaired by the Mayor of Hiroshima, added advocacy against the peaceful use of nuclear energy to its agenda. The directors of the Vienna University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences met on the fringes of the IAEA’s Nuclear Abolition Conference, and a meeting of the International Nuclear Risk Assessment Group took place in Vienna.

Vienna’s Database for Disinfectants (WIDES) received much international attention (www.wides.at and www.wides.at/en). WUA heads the working group on disinfectants under Vienna’s “EcoBuy” programme for ecological procurement; in this capacity, it developed the WIDES database in collaboration with leading experts in the field. WIDES was presented at the “Biocides Europe 2015” conference in Vienna. New York’s Healthy Living Magazine carried an article about it, and suitable surface disinfectants were discussed in meetings with visitors from hospitals in Västra Götaland. In its EU COM Report, the European Commission expressly commended the WIDES database as a model to follow. About 50,000 biocides are available in the European Union, most of them disinfectants. The EU’s Biocidal Products Regulation subjects new biocides to an authorisation regime and requires them to be entered in the Register for Biocidal Products.

WIEN KANAL – sewage system management

Wien Kanal engaged in international contacts, both at home and abroad, with sewage system management bodies from other big cities. International visitors to Vienna were especially interested in innovative flood protection measures. Staff from Høfor, a utility company from Copenhagen, visited Wien Kanal to gather information about the use of sewers as conduits for glass fibre networks. Talks about sewage technology were held with a delegation from Moldova, and a group from the Beuth University of Applied Sciences toured the Wien river valley sewer and the underground stormwater retention basin being built in Simmering. A wide range of topics were covered in meetings with a delegation from the Bavarian Ministry of Interior Affairs, Construction and Transport.

Wien Kanal participated in the 51st conference of the German Association for Water, Wastewater and Waste Management (DWA) in Ludwigshafen, where discussions focused mainly on microplastics in wastewater, detection of unexploded ordinance and health management for sewer workers. “Rain Water Days” were hosted in Hamburg to discuss future strategies in dealing with rainwater runoff. Land data management in SAP systems was discussed in Cologne, and the public relations officers from sewage system management organisations in Germany, Switzerland and Austria met in Bremen. Wien Kanal participated in meetings of the European Committee for Standardization in Dublin and Saarbrücken and provided expert input for the technical committees CEN/TC 165N 2605 (Wastewater Engineering) and CEN/TC 165/WG 10 N91 (Installation of buried pipes for gravity drain and sewer systems).
1,500 international government representatives and experts met at the Vienna Energy Forum 2015. The biennial Energy Forum events were initiated by the Austrian federal government and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), who were also co-organisers of the 2015 Forum. Wien Energie presented its innovative business segments and the Viennese energy supply model as an important building block for an energy-efficient city. Excursions to the Simmering power plant and the Spittelau waste-to-energy plant underlined Wien Energie’s position as a sustainable energy supplier. Also in collaboration with UNIDO, the management of Wiener Stadtwerke AG and its mobility think tank NeuMo hosted a seminar for a group of visitors from China. The Chinese government plans to bring five million “new energy vehicles” to China’s roads by 2020. NeuMo and Wien Energie presented the City of Vienna’s electromobility strategy, spoke about ongoing projects and showed the visitors an electric vehicle charging station.

Vienna’s public utilities welcomed about 1,400 visitors in 2015 – a daily average of about six visitors from all regions of the planet. As in previous years, the Simmering power plant was the most popular destination.

Wiener Stadtwerke Holding AG
The management of the Vienna utilities group holding company Wiener Stadtwerke Holding AG hosted working meetings on all aspects of state-of-the-art mobility and questions of efficient service provision. About half the meetings focused on transport-related topics, including a visit by a fact-finding mission from Mongolia. Against the backdrop of the reorganisation of public transport in Ulan Bator, the delegation was interested in learning about pricing, e-ticketing and in-house capacity building. There are plans to expand cooperation to the areas of energy efficiency and e-government in years to come. Exchanges of information and experience continued with the public utilities of Budapest under their newly appointed director, and officials from Berlin on tour to Vienna were impressed by the committed work and professional service provision of Wiener Stadtwerke.
**Wien Energie group**

Interest in the activities of Wien Energie was especially strong among visitors from Asia, as well as from Central and South America. A delegation from Singapore and experts in training from an Erasmus+ programme toured renewable energy production sites and were particularly impressed by the photovoltaic energy projects. Vienna’s energy supply model with its reliance on innovative and climate-friendly power and heat production was presented to about one hundred interested MEPs at the European Forum for Renewable Energy Sources. Fitting in with the focus on renewable energies, the Călineşti 1 hydro power plant in the Romanian region of Wallachia came on stream in 2015. With 290 m gross head, it is Wien Energie’s first high-head hydro power plant.

**Wiener Netze – distribution networks**

Wiener Netze co-hosted the “Smart Grids Week”, which took place in Vienna in May 2015. The event brought together 350 national and international experts to discuss the most recent developments in intelligent electricity infrastructures. Wiener Netze organised an interactive expert dialogue with the Seestadt Aspern urban development project. The Smart Grids Award was presented to Vienna’s distribution networks organisation in recognition of its committed and sustained efforts in the field.

In view of the upcoming liberalisation of the gas market in Switzerland, the management of the Romanshorn AG gas utility from Thurgau on Lake Constance visited Wiener Netze to discuss the challenges this will involve. Wiener Netze also organised a tour to its natural gas dispatcher through which about 1.6 billion cubic metres of gas were delivered and distributed in 2015. Placed in a row, these volumes would reach 41 times around the equator. A delegation of local politicians and experts from Zurich were interested in learning about tariff structures and pricing, also with a view to the expected liberalisation of the Swiss energy market.
Wiener Linien – public transport

The fourth European Tramdriver Championship was hosted by Wiener Linien in conjunction with the 31st Tramway Day in Vienna. Staff members from 23 transport organisations from all over Europe competed in six different categories. The young team of Wiener Linien won second place in the Championship. The Eurovision Song Contest posed special challenges for the companies of the Vienna utilities group. Wiener Linien trams and underground trains carried Song Contest posters, and multilingual taped announcements by Conchita Wurst, winner of the 2014 ESC, put passengers in the mood for the event. Electric buses were used to shuttle VIPs, otherwise the high-frequency services on Vienna’s well-developed public transport network were well able to cope with the extra passenger flows.

Wiener Linien continued its participation in major associations such as the International Association of Public Transport (UITP) and the German Association of Transport Providers (VDV) in 2015, contributing to fruitful exchanges of information on a wide array of topics. The UITP sub-committee on safety and the tram committee were chaired by Wiener Linien at a meeting in Munich. The World Congress took place in Milan. The final event concluding a working session of the Organization for Standardization on programme and project portfolio management was hosted at the “Remise” tram museum. Vienna’s public utilities group participates in one of the ISO project management groups.

Wiener Lokalbahnen

Wiener Lokalbahnen (WLB group) was internationally active in rail cargo transport, running these operations via its subsidiary Wiener Lokalbahnen Cargo GmbH (WLC). 2015 was a successful year. The total distance travelled by WLC trains outside Austria was 2.6 million kilometres, or about 75 per cent of the entire length of track covered by WLC cargo trains in 2015. The year also brought recognition at the European level, as WLB managing director Franz Stöger was appointed chairman of the Transport Task Force of the European Centre of Employers and Enterprises providing Public Services (CEEP).

WiPark

The City of Vienna’s car park operator WiPark and the management of the utilities group co-hosted a meeting with a group of public officials from Ljubljana to exchange information and experiences.

B & F Wien – funeral services and cemeteries

Bestattung und Friedhöfe GmbH (B&F Wien) continued its active participation in international platforms, including the European Federation of Funeral Services, the Association of Significant Cemeteries and the International Federation of Thanatologists Associations. A second bilateral working meeting was held with Marianum, the municipal funeral services operator of the City of Bratislava, which manages 18 cemeteries in the Slovakian capital, continuing efforts to maintain good neighbourly relations. The subject matter discussed at the meeting was the management of crematoria.

HOUSING, HOUSING CONSTRUCTION AND URBAN RENEWAL

Given Vienna’s internationally recognised housing policy, many visitors are interested in meeting, networking and establishing cooperation initiatives with decision-makers in the housing field in Vienna. City Councillor Michael Ludwig received delegations near-
ly every week in the year under report. Among them was the City of Stockholm’s housing committee, who were keen on learning about the masterplan for the “Seestadt Aspern” development project which is creating housing for 20,000 inhabitants. Talks also focused on what social housing models in Sweden and Austria have in common. Practice examples and housing data were provided for politicians from Buenos Aires, who also expressed an interest in future collaboration. The Argentinian delegation visited the Karl-Marx-Hof, probably Vienna’s best-known public housing complex, and an exhibition about “Red Vienna”.

In addition to welcoming visitors at home, City Councillor Michael Ludwig gave presentations abroad, for example at the Stadtforum Berlin, where he spoke about social sustainability in new housing construction. Vienna’s housing policy model was also discussed at a meeting in Stuttgart.

Networking at the EU level will be crucial to ensure the future of social housing. With this in mind, Vienna joined the Housing Partnership of the EU Urban Agenda. Other members include the European Commission, the European Investment Bank and Housing Europe, the European Federation of Public, Cooperative & Social Housing, as well as other cities and cities’ networks. Forging alliances such as this at the European level is of paramount importance in view of the TTIP and CETA negotiations, whose outcome will affect the future of housing. Should international corporations gain dominance over the housing supply, there is a risk that having a place to live may become a luxury. Such a development would be unacceptable for the City of Vienna, which is therefore strongly engaged in this field. Social housing exists throughout Europe, having grown from a strong historical tradition and

taken diverse forms. Joint efforts are needed to preserve, protect and further expand provision of social housing in Europe.

The Housing Research Unit of Municipal Department 50 – Housing Promotion and Arbitration Board for Legal Housing Matters (MA 50) engaged in international networking as chair of the Eurocities working group “Housing”. Discussions focused primarily on the instruments and strategies used by cities to cover rising housing demand; one point was the so-called “golden investment rule”, which to a certain extent would exclude net investment in housing from the calculation of government debt. A position paper demanded that disadvantaged or socially weak population groups should not be the only ones eligible to benefit from subsidised housing. A similar demand was already made in 2013 in a resolution on social housing addressed to the European Commission. The resolution was proposed by Vienna’s Mayor Michael Häupl and signed by 30 mayors of cities across Europe.

The Housing Research Unit of MA 50 acted as Austria’s representative at the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) in Geneva. The “Charta on Sustainable Housing” called for support for the development of socially sustainable housing, and preparations were under way for the next HABITAT II conference, scheduled to take place in Quito in 2017. Moreover, MA 50 officials attended meetings in Frankfurt/Main and Dortmund and participated in a seminar on “Accessible housing as an element of urban development policy – innovations in urban governance” in Wroclaw.

At home, the Housing Research Unit of MA 50 welcomed twelve delegations from nine countries for
DEPARTMENTS AND INSTITUTIONS

expert talks and excursions in 2015. Presentation materials in German and English were developed specifically for these meetings. In addition to overviews and general information about social housing, the materials deal with the legal aspects and financing structures, cyclical impacts on the economy and on employment, rent levels and procedural questions.

Vienna’s housing projects were presented at an expert meeting for urban design and housing in Frankfurt/Main in May, a seminar in Wrocław in June and at the 8th housing policy colloquy in Dortmund, which also took place in June. The Housing Research Unit was also present at the 3rd Europe Housing Forum in Berlin in November.

The “Smarter Together” project was implemented with project partners from Munich, Lyon, Santiago de Compostela, Venice and Sofia, as well as from the fields of business and research. Led by Municipal Departments 25 and 50 (Housing Research Unit), a project proposal was successfully submitted under the EU programme “Horizon 2020 Smart Cities and Communities”. Of a total co-financing volume of 27 million euro, seven million will be allocated to Vienna over the project period 2016–2020.

Vienna’s neighbourhood urban renewal offices, which are run by Municipal Department 25 (MA 25 – Urban Renewal and Assessment in Matters of Housing Construction and Promotion), were popular points of contact for international visitors with a special interest in Vienna’s policy of soft urban renewal. Delegations from Buenos Aires, Oslo, Copenhagen and South Korea visited the urban renewal office for districts 7/8/16 to gather information about neighbourhood improvement processes.

The urban renewal office for districts 2/20 welcomed groups from the University of Bochum for tours of the Nordbahnviertel development zone and the “Dandelion” community garden; the office for districts 6/14/15 offered an excursion to urban renewal projects in Vienna’s 15th district. A Czech delegation was interested in learning about climate-related aspects. Students from the urban design department of the University of Stuttgart visited an urban development zone in Vienna’s 11th district (former Mautner Markhof company premises), and the Sonnwendviertel in the 10th district was toured by visitors from Dortmund, Utrecht, Madrid, Aschaffenburg, Bochum and Linköping. Artists and film-makers from Belgrade visited the urban renewal offices to learn about their involvement in connection with the Danube region.

Smarter Together – In mid-December, the European Commission signed the contracts for EU co-financing of the project “Smarter Together – gemeinsam gschüehter”, which provides more than seven million euro for a project to be implemented in Vienna’s Simmering district. (GSD Gesellschaft für Dorf- und Stadterneuerung)
Municipal Department 34 (MA 34 – Building and Facility Management) welcomed a delegation from Podgorica.

Delegations from Yerevan, Prague, Warsaw and from the Chinese cities of Beijing, Guizhou and Henan visited Municipal Department 37 (MA 37 – Building Inspection) to discuss building construction procedures.

wohnfonds_wien

As every year, the wohnfonds_wien fund for housing construction and urban renewal was a popular contact point for international delegations. Discussions were held on a broad range of topics, from energy efficiency in building renewal to social housing, and from the “passive house” standard to housing research. Mayors, city councillors and experts from Buenos Aires, Antwerp, Šabac/Serbia and from the German cities of Hamburg, Heilbronn, Aschaffenburg, Würzburg, Schweinfurt and Hannover visited the Wohnfonds. Visitors from Berlin went on a guided tour of the newly developed Sonnwendviertel.

Wohnfonds presented a paper on its housing policy at the Museum for Architecture and Engineering in Düsseldorf and participated in a “passive house” meeting in Leipzig. Its officials gave interviews to a Bulgarian business magazine, a Bavarian TV station and the technology department of the University of Applied Sciences of Mainz.

With five international jury members, the Vienna Housing Award underlined the Wohnfonds’ international outlook.

WIENER WOHNEN – public housing administration

Wiener Wohnen is the City of Vienna’s enterprise in charge of the day-to-day administration and management, including repair and renovation, of public housing in the city. It has some 220,000 apartments, 6,000 business premises, and garages and parking facilities for 47,000 vehicles under management. Vienna’s public housing complexes are tourist attractions as well as international good practice models for urban design.
This fact is underlined by frequent articles in the international press which illustrate the city’s leading position in housing-related matters. Wiener Wohnen welcomed delegations from the Swedish tenants’ association and from Beijing and Singapore, who also toured the “Waschsalon” museum, and discussed strategic planning issues with visitors from the Czech Technical University in Prague.

Contacts abroad included a visit to “degewo”, which manages 75,000 apartments in Berlin, making it the leading housing management entity in the German capital, and talks with Paris Habitat, France’s biggest social housing landlord.

Wohbservice Wien

Subsidised housing construction and the organisation of tendering and contracting procedures are perennial themes which continued to be of critical interest to foreign visitors in 2015. Stockholm’s Vice-Mayor for Housing Ann-Margarethe Livh visited Wohbservice, which also welcomed representatives from counterpart institutions in Germany and Norway and from as far afield as Kyrgyzstan and India. Wohbservice Wien staff assisted journalists from Germany and Spain reporting about film shoots and seeking interviews.

The Wohnpartner diversity management service attended an international conference on “Civil society between professionalisation and volunteer work” at the University of Magdeburg, and a Wohnpartner employee toured social work institutions in Greece. Wohnpartner supported the activities of the Council of International Fellowship Austria and offered internships. The study programme aims at fostering exchanges in the social work arena and promoting better understanding between different cultures.

COURT OF AUDIT

2015 saw a continuation of the Court of Audit’s long-standing information exchanges and cooperation with auditing institutions abroad. Auditors from the City of Hamburg paid a return visit to Vienna. Audit processes in the two cities are structured along different lines, so that expert exchanges mutually provide fresh ideas for the organisation of the auditors’ respective tasks. The third meeting of municipal auditors from Bratislava, Ljubljana and Paris was hosted...
in Vienna, with internal auditing as one of the main topics on the agenda.

The European Organisation of Regional External Public Finance Audit Institutions (EURORAI) hosted a seminar on "Audit of public procurement at regional and local level" in St. Petersburg, which also discussed implementation of public-private partnership projects. About one hundred people attended the annual meeting in Dresden, to which the Vienna Court of Audit contributed a presentation on auditing grants and subsidies in the fields of culture and the arts.

Court of Audit Director Peter Pollak presented a paper on risk management at a conference in Paris and was invited to give a presentation at the University of Leipzig, where he spoke about "Controlling public administration and finance – the nature and impact of the auditing process", including a discussion on the publication of audit results. Delegates from Vienna participated for the first time in a working meeting of auditors from the German Association of Cities and Towns, which took place in Dresden and focused inter alia on simplified procurement protocols in connection with the provision of emergency accommodation for refugees.
International Guests at Vienna City Hall

21 January
Petr Dolínek
Deputy Mayor of Prague

26 January
Sophie Haestorp Andersen
President of the Copenhagen Region

28 January
Petr Vokřál
Mayor of Brno

16 February
Roberto Maroni
President of Lombardy

24 February
Gianluca Galimberti
Mayor of Cremona

1 April
Ivo Nesrovnal
Mayor of Bratislava

21 April
Meeting of mayors from EU cities
Eberhard van der Laan
Mayor of Copenhagen

Giorgos Kaminis
Mayor of Athens
Hella Dungner-Löper
Commissioner for European Affairs, Berlin City Senate

Ivo Nesrovnal
Mayor of Bratislava
Geoffroy Coomans de Brachêne
Deputy Mayor of Brussels
Alexandra Szalay-Bobrovniczky
Deputy Mayor of Budapest
Sorin Mircea Oprescu
Mayor of Bucharest
Carlos Castro
City Councillor for International Affairs, Lisbon
Zoran Janković
Mayor of Ljubljana

Sir Edward Lister
Deputy Mayor of London
Lydie Polfer
Mayor of Luxembourg
Soula Kollakidou
City Council Member, Nicosia
Patrick Khugman
Deputy Mayor of Paris
Juris Radzevičs
Executive Director, Riga
Ignazio Marino
Mayor of Rome
Jordanka Pandakova
Mayor of Sofia
Taavi Aas
Mayor of Tallinn
Michał Olszewski
Deputy Mayor of Warsaw
Milan Bandić
Mayor of Zagreb

The Mayor of Bratislava, Ivo Nesrovnal LL.M., met Mayor Dr. Michael Häupl and also attended the Vienna Opera Ball 2016 at his invitation. (PID/Christian Jobst)
Japan’s former Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama was presented with a "Goldener Rathausmann" figure. (PID/Christian Jobst)
INTERNATIONAL GUESTS AT VIENNA CITY HALL

Corina Crețu
European Commissioner for Regional Policy

Markku Markkula
President of the European Committee of the Regions

Annemarie Jorritsma
President of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions

Ana Lisa Boni
Secretary General of Eurocities

30 April
Nils Schmid
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Baden-Württemberg

7 May
László Papp
Mayor of Debrecen

27 May
Roberto Cosolini
Mayor of Trieste

9 June
Michal Hašek
Governor of South Moravia

17 June
Yukio Hatoyama
Former Prime Minister of Japan

22 June
Barbara Hendricks
Federal Minister for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety, Germany

24 June
Primorje-Gorski Kotar County
Zlatko Komadina
County Prefect
Vojko Obersnel
Mayor of Rijeka
Ivo Dujmić
Mayor of Opatija

29 June
Traian Orban
Chairman of the association “Memorial of the Revolution of Timișoara”

11 September
Ullrich Sierau
Mayor of Dortmund

18 September
Martin Schulz
President of the European Parliament
Stefan Löfven
Prime Minister of Sweden

Dr. Margareta Grießler-Hermann, Deputy Director of the Executive Office of the Mayor, and Chinese star tenor Xiduo Jiang at the Chinese New Year Concert in Vienna. Dr. Grießler-Hermann, who is in charge of the Mayor’s international agenda, is a sinologist and has acted as moderator of the Chinese New Year Concerts for 16 years. In 2015 the concert was broadcast to an audience of millions by the TV station CCTV. (Ismail Gökmen/PID)

The Governor of South Moravia, Dr. Michal Hašek (Christian Jobst/PID)
International Guests at Vienna City Hall

Manuel Valls
Prime Minister of France

Sigmar Gabriel
Vice Chancellor of Germany

9 October
Zoran Janković
Mayor of Ljubljana

29 October
Hannelore Kraft
Prime Minister of North Rhine-Westphalia

1 December
Bishop Tikhon of Podolšk
Administrator of the Russian Orthodox Eparchy of Austria and Vienna

15 December
Michal Hašek
Governor of South Moravia

Entry in the City of Vienna’s Golden Book

8 April
Andris Bērziņš
President of the Republic of Latvia

The President of the Republic of Latvia, Andris Bērziņš, signed the City of Vienna’s Golden Book. (PID/David Bohmann)

Bangladesh’s Ambassador Mohammed Abu Zafar on his first visit to Professor Harry Kopietz, Speaker of the Vienna Provincial Parliament. The People’s Republic of Bangladesh opened its first Embassy in Vienna in late 2014. (Thomas Kluger/PID)
2015 was a year of intense activities at the Vienna House in Brussels. The year started with the presentation of a festschrift entitled *Wir sind 20/Turning 20* that was published to mark the 20th anniversary of Austria’s accession to the European Union. The publication’s ten young authors were invited to join Deputy Mayor Renate Brauner and Ambassador Walter Grahammer, Austria’s representative to the EU, at the event. Vienna’s public utilities group Wiener Stadtwerke established an office at the Vienna House, which was opened by management board member Gabriele Domschitz. Intensive work on the planned new urban agenda for Europe and social housing issues were major items on the agenda for the year. The TTIP negotiations and related matters as well as Smart City themes were major focal areas for expert meetings and visitor programmes. The traditional annual event marking International Women’s Day in March was dedicated to "Women and the social media" in 2015. The Vienna House also dealt with a large number of enquiries, which started coming in during the summer, regarding Vienna’s emergency assistance measures for refugees.

A great success for Vienna was the “Urban Partnership on Housing”. The EU urban agenda will be implemented, starting in 2016, through twelve urban partnerships. EU institutions, member states, cities and other major stakeholders will collaborate on critical analyses of topics of importance for the cities and develop proposals for legislative measures and improvements in the area of funding. Vienna wants to provide input on housing and is represented in the relevant urban partnership by Susanne Bauer, a housing expert of international standing from the Housing Research Unit.
of MA 50, and by Michaela Kauer, Director of the Vienna House and an expert on European urban policies. Vienna’s Liaison Office has been preparing the ground for this development over several years, most recently with an expert workshop on the “Future challenges of social housing in Europe”. The legal and financial frameworks of social housing in Europe were discussed in depth and proposals for improvement developed. At the conclusion of the meeting, the representatives of the European Council and the Commission assured the organisers that they had provided the blueprint for the first EU urban partnership on housing.

Among the cultural highlights of the year were the presentation of Belgium’s European Song Contest entry by Loïc Nottet to an audience of Belgian journalists and an “unplugged” concert played by blues musicians Hermann Posch and Christian Sandera with support from the “MusicLine” of Casinos Austria. In June, the Vienna House offered a reading by Mercedes Echerer and events with MEP Evelyn Regner and Vienna’s Coordinator for the Danube Region Kurt Puchinger, giving centre stage to the cultural aspects of the EU’s Danube Region Strategy. MEP Ulrike Lunacek was among the audience at a reading given by actor Cornelius Obonya, who presented excerpts from the book 1000 Lashes – Because I Say What I Think by Sakharov Prize Laureate Raif Badawi. In the autumn, visitors to the Vienna House enjoyed lectures on the Congress of Vienna and Vienna’s Ringstrasse boulevard, as well as an edition of the Vienna Lectures Series with Professor of Political Science Anton Pelinka, who discussed “Refugee flows to and through Europe: a Central European perspective”. The traditional “Vienna crime night in Brussels” completed the series of cultural events with a presentation of Der Henker von Wien (“The Hangman of Vienna”) by popular author Gerhard Loibelsberger, who takes his readers back to the year 1916 in his book. Many of the cultural events at the Vienna House were hosted in cooperation with the Austrian Cultural Forum.

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

With the expiry in 2015 of the contract under which Compress had performed international communication activities on behalf of the City of Vienna, Compress’s activities in this area came to an end. On 16 December 2015, the Vienna City Council adopted a resolution to place these responsibilities with Eurocomm-PR GmbH, a subsidiary of Wien Holding, as of 1 January 2016.
For 19 years, Compress ran Representative Offices of the City of Vienna in Belgrade, Bratislava, Budapest, Bucharest, Ljubljana, Kraków, Moscow, Prague, Sarajevo, Sofia and Zagreb, acting on behalf of the City of Vienna Press and Information Service (PID). They worked to communicate Vienna’s messages to an international audience, served as points of contact and hosted and supported events, visitor programmes and projects in the target cities. Moreover, the Representative Offices provided up-to-date information on events in the target cities and countries and managed programmes for Viennese delegations there and vice versa.

**Media coverage – steep growth**

A total of 11,493 favourable news items on Vienna were published in the target cities between January and December 2015. This is a daily average of 2.86 positive articles about Vienna in each of the eleven target cities.

The year’s absolute highlight was the European Song Contest, which was covered in 3,589 articles. The lead-
ing countries in this respect were Serbia, Romania and Bulgaria, where 852, 489 and 388 relevant articles respectively were published. This translated into an incredible growth of 279.58% as compared to 2014 coverage of culture and music.

719 press items on politics and administration amounted to a similarly high plus of 228.31%. In the political arena, the two most important events of 2015 were the refugee crisis and the local elections in Vienna. 346 news items were published on the refugee situation in Vienna, and 285 on the elections, which were a dominant theme in October. Coverage of the education, youth and sports sector grew by 28.87% year on year to 183 articles.

A number of other specific topics also enjoyed great popularity in 2015. With respect to presentations of Vienna and cooperation projects, the most reports by far (502 in all) were published about the Viennese Ball in Sofia. Vienna’s transport organisation Wiener Linien appeared in 176 press items, taking first place in the field of urban development and transport. The Mercer Survey on liveable cities was the subject of 197 press items, making it the most popular topic in the health and social policy field.

Networking events – Eurovision Song Contest 2015

Networking events were organised in the seven target countries which participated in the European Song Contest, featuring live performances by Austria’s ESC contestants “The Makemakes” and their fellow local competitors. The events took place in Ljubljana, Budapest, Moscow, Kraków, Belgrade and Prague. Under the motto “Song Contest City Vienna: quality of life #12 points”, English texts about themes such as “Smart City Wien”, “social housing”, “Vienna’s water supply system”, “diversity and lifestyle”, “Bicycle City Vienna” and others were presented on display columns, along with additional information about environmental protection, public transport and culture. Press conferences were organised jointly with the Austrian Broadcasting Corporation ORF in the run-up to the events to inform local media about the ESC in Vienna.

An image film and other materials were used to present the technical and organisational backstage details behind the ESC, which was certified as a “green event”, as well as the venue Wiener Stadthalle. The networking events and press conferences were designed with uniform branding reflecting the look and feel of the 60th Eurovision Song Contest. Events in Sarajevo, Bratislava, Zagreb and Sofia retained the previous year’s format. The networking event in Bratislava focused on cycling, the one in Sarajevo on parking space management.

Inter-community networks

The upbeat mood surrounding the European Song Contest in the first half of 2015 contrasted sharply with the sobering events of the mounting refugee crisis in the second half of the year. Activities in this context included daily research and reporting as well the provision of assistance. Staff from the Representative Office in Budapest were able to respond quickly and help with the distribution of donated goods. The efforts were mainly directed towards help for children waiting in front of the Budapest rail station during periodic close-downs of the station. After the refugee routes had shifted to Slovenia, assistance was given there as well – hygiene articles, clothing and blankets were supplied to those in need quickly and non-bureaucratically.

Starting in September, the Representative Offices in the countries through which the refugees travelled filed daily reports about the latest developments. The results of day-to-day research were reported back to the City of Vienna’s crisis task force, whose members drew on this extremely useful information in their efforts to plan for and cope with the influx of refugees. The number of research papers filed increased by more than 60 per cent over the previous year’s level and reached a record high. In all, 132 research reports were dispatched to Vienna in 2015.

18 delegations were looked after by Compress in the target cities in 2015, and assistance was also provided to 24 delegations travelling to Vienna. Together with 49 press tours, the sum of delegations supported by Compress came to 91.

The 4th Danube Financing Dialogue took place at the Croatian State Archives in Zagreb. The conference was organised in the context of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region. As in previous years, Compress acted as co-organiser of the event.

In the context of the dialogue fora in Vienna, Compress assisted with the organisation of the 13th conference on the EU project “LIFE+ Alte Donau” with participants from Bratislava, Brno, Budapest, Kraków and Ljubljana. Exchanges of information between Vienna’s Chief Executive Office and Court of Audit and their counterpart institutions in the target cities were continued and expanded in the year under report.

In January 2015, Mayor Michael Häupl welcomed Prague’s Deputy Mayor and City Councillor for Transport Petr Dolínek. Kraków Deputy Mayor Magdalena Sroka met City Councillor Mailath-Pokorny in Vienna at the opening of the exhibition “The Myth of Galicia”, and City Councillor Elisabeth Vitouch participated in the European Congress of Local Governments at the invitation of the City of Kraków. Media studies students from
Belgrade and other EUSDR countries visited Vienna in July to produce a portrait of the city. In December 2015, members of Sofia’s market inspectorate visited pre-Christmas markets in Vienna and met with officials of Vienna’s Municipal Department 59 (Market Service and Food Safety).

The cooperation between Compress and the Austrian Embassies, Foreign Trade Centres, Cultural Forums and local decision-makers was continued in 2015.

Economic cooperation

The year 2015 did not bring any substantial changes as compared to 2014. The partner cities’ budget revenues from taxes, fees and other levies remained more or less at prior-year levels or increased slightly. Converted to euro, they were slightly lower, however, due to exchange rate variations. The partner cities within the EU worked to utilise as much as possible of the EU grants that had already been committed under the 2007–2013 programme period. They succeeded in completing all the important projects that had received funding from this budget by year-end 2015. EU co-finance made up more than half of the cities’ investment volume in 2015.

The investments made by the cities in the network amounted to a total of slightly under eight billion euros in 2015. More than 60 per cent of the funds were used for transport projects. These included the construction and upgrading of roads, bridges, tunnels and conflict-free intersections, as well as the development of traffic control systems and the construction of new underground railway, light rail and tram lines. The cities’ public transport operators bought new rolling stock for underground lines, trams and buses for electricity-, diesel- and gas-powered operation. Small consignments of e-buses were ordered with increasing frequency. Other main areas of investment were the construction and/or renovation of kindergartens, schools and hospitals, waste treatment plants and waste incinerators, the development of new urban neighbourhoods, energy efficiency, parking space management and public car parks, water supply and sewage disposal systems, etc. Exchanges of experience in these fields took place with representatives from Vienna.

The real estate market in Southeast Europe has become somewhat saturated. The cities were therefore redoubling their efforts to improve local conditions for relocation of manufacturing operations. In this context, preparations were under way in Belgrade, Kraków, Moscow and Sofia for the development of new industrial and commercial zones and technology parks, as well as redevelopments of brownfield sites. These preparations were most intense in Moscow. However, the Russian economy continued on its downward trajectory for the second year in a row. Low oil and gas prices, as well as a general decline in commodities prices, hurt Russia’s economic performance and its currency and also put a damper on foreign companies’ appetite for investments in Russia.

As a special service for Vienna-based entrepreneurs, Compress made calls for tender available on its website www.compresspr.at. In 2015, a total of 4,458 calls for tender in the fields of municipal infrastructure and urban economy were listed on the website.

In August 2015, wieninternational celebrated its 500th edition. About 6,300 events and 168 prize competitions were published in the online calendar of events, which lists events in Vienna and in the network cities. Until November, the start page of wieninternational.at featured daily “City News” – every day, five topical news items from the media of the network cities were published in German and English (in all, about 1,100 mini-feeds). The Facebook page of wieninternational.at had 2,085 friends.

The Enjoy Vienna incoming magazine is distributed at Vienna International Airport every month. It is also on offer in dispensers at the stops of the City Airport Train (CAT) and available at hotels, cafés and museums as well as at tourist information offices. Enjoy Vienna is also popular with readers in Vienna’s twin city of Bratislava, where it is available at 40 hotels. Additionally, it is sent to a mailing list of 10,000 VIPs in the target countries and has 735 online subscribers. In December 2014, Enjoy Vienna was awarded the Austrian Ecolabel.

VIENNA REPRESENTATIVE OFFICE TOKYO

1,400 dancing couples competed in the Super Japan Cup in Chiba, which attracted an audience turnout of 16,000. The cup for the winning couple, which was sponsored by the Mayor of Vienna, was presented by Michael Tauschmann, head of the local Representative Office as well as of the local branch of the Austrian National Tourist Office. A film about the 150th anniversary of Vienna’s Ringstrasse boulevard that had been shown at Tokyo’s main rail station in 2014 was award-
ed a “Prize of Excellence” at the Transit Advertising Awards 2015. The 30-second-long film was shown 1,330 times in December 2014 and also played on 7,072 screens in underground trains. The Ringstrasse was also presented by TV Asahi in a music programme which the station has been broadcasting since 1964. Several TV stations aired footage of the pre-Christmas season in Vienna, which was also presented on YouTube. On 23 December, a public holiday in Japan, a two-hour programme about the life of Empress Elisabeth was shown by the satellite TV station BS Fuji.

A women’s magazine included Gustav Klimt’s Kiss in its art calendar and carried an article about Viennese balls. Vienna was one of a hundred destinations featured in a special supplement, with a focus on the many events which the ball season offers. Viennese themes were also present in other media. Research done by the news agency Kyodo News resulted in a series of articles which were carried by numerous media outlets.

Staff from the travel agency Hankyu Express International visited the Representative Office. Presentations of Vienna and Austria were carried in the March edition of the agency’s tour catalogue. Travel agents from Tokyo, Nagoya and Osaka were invited on a study trip to Vienna, which included tours of event venues. Visits to the pre-Christmas markets were at the centre of a study tour by six travel agents from the Kansai region and other areas of Japan. The Representative Office and the Austrian Tourist Board participated in a “super workshop” for the Austrian travel industry. Vienna as a tourist destination was also presented in a series of calls on travel agents catering for a younger clientele. About one hundred business partners accepted an invitation to a New Year’s Eve party in Tokyo.

A New Year’s Eve Concert of operetta music was performed to an audience of about 7,700 by the Volksoper Wien Symphony Orchestra at the Suntory Hall in Tokyo. An online campaign with a prize competition was organised in conjunction with the first visit to Japan by Conchita Wurst. 70 paintings from Vienna’s Kunsthistorisches Museum were on display at the Bunkamura Museum. The ensemble “Philharmonics”, in which young musicians from the Berlin and Vienna Philharmonic orchestras play, toured Japan.

“Vienna in Films” was the title of a press event at the Eurolive cinema. 32 journalists attended to find out more about the 2015/2016 film season. Moreover, press dinners were hosted for a number of lifestyle magazines. “Gemütlichkeit” – good cheer and a pleasant atmosphere – were at the centre of a joint advertising campaign with the Austrian Tourist Board and Austrian Airlines, comprising press events, campaign websites and publicity boards at underground and bus stations. The pop & rock group Quruli talked about their Viennese experiences between sets on the stage of the Cotton Club. The band also played a gig in Yokohama. The Gay & Lesbian Guide to Vienna was presented at the “Tokyo Pride”, which was attended by 55,000 people. Information about the Rainbow Parade in Vienna was also distributed at a joint stand representing several EU countries at the event.
MARGARETEN – 5th District

District Chairwoman Susanne Schaefer-Wiery and her counterpart Birgit Monteiro from Berlin-Lichtenberg signed a partnership agreement during a visit by a delegation from that borough of Berlin to Margareten. The main focus areas of the partnership are youth, culture and sports, economy and tourism, education and schools, as well as collaboration between the local administrations.

Tours of social housing complexes and innovative urban projects were organised for the visitors, who also met with organisations participating in the “Week of work and continuing education”, which coincided with the visit. Concrete proposals for collaboration were made with respect to youth centres, parks and neighbourhood management activities to get the partnership off to a lively start.

One outcome of the partnership is the 1st Margareten Entrepreneurs’ Prize. Elements from the Lichtenberg Prize were incorporated in the presentation ceremony to facilitate know-how exchanges in the field of business promotion, as well as knowledge transfers among the award winners. Moreover, the joint prize adds visibility to the partnership.

Documentaries from Margareten about the development of the shared public space at Wehrgasse and the first Wien valley terrace were shown at an international film festival in Lichtenberg.

OTTAKRING – 16th District

District Chairman Franz Prokop welcomed the Mayor of Hiroshima and his delegation at Richard-Wagner-Platz, where the Ottakring district administration has its seat. The group visited the Hiroshima monument in front of the building. Made from rubble from the city hall of Hiroshima, which was destroyed in the 1945 nuclear bombing, the monument was unveiled on 9 September 2009. It commemorates the horrors of the atomic bomb attack, but also serves as a reminder of Austrian writer Karl Bruckner (1906–
1982), author of the moving book Sadako will leben (published in English as The Day of the Bomb). First published in 1961, the book tells the story of Sadako Sasaki, a young girl who was a victim of radioactive poisoning and hoped to regain her health through folding gold-coloured origami paper cranes, a symbol of health and peace.

**FLORIDSDORF – 21st District**

The annual Japanese Cherry Blossom Festival was celebrated on the Danube Island in April in collaboration with the Japanese Information and Culture Centre in Vienna. Katsushika is Floridsdorf’s partner district in Tokyo.

Since 1989, Vienna’s 21st district has also maintained a partnership with Angyalföld, the 13th district of Budapest. Both districts are situated on the river Danube, and another common feature are islands – in the case of Budapest, the Margit-sziget (Margaret Island). A delegation from Floridsdorf visited the Hungarian capital for talks in June.
2015 is Vienna’s 6th successive record year for overnight stays

Following the stand-out success of 2014, Vienna managed another record year in 2015. Vienna registered 14,328,000 overnight stays, a rise of 5.9% over 2014, 11,710,957 of which (approx. 82% of the total) were by foreign visitors. The net sales generated in the hotel and accommodation sector rose by 15.3% year on year to 736.7 million euro.

Unconventional marketing formats in major cities worldwide

In 2015, 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 collateral marketing activities ranging from digital and social media campaigns through PR work to classical advertising, a mandatory component being the distribution of flyers promoting travel packages to Vienna with major local tour operators.

“Visions of Vienna” on the roof of Sydney Opera House

Sydney Opera House was the venue for a very special premiere on 4 February, when parts of a live concert screening – “Greatest Hits from Vienna”, interpreted by the Sydney Symphony Orchestra – were projected onto the building’s iconic, sail-shaped roof for the first time ever. The orchestral performance was accompanied by Vienna-inspired 3D animations to produce a unique show entitled “Visions of Vienna”. The Vienna Tourist Board invited Sydneysiders to watch the spectacle in a special public viewing area in Sydney Harbour. While the audience inside the Opera House enjoyed masterpieces by Mozart, Strauss, Beethoven and Schubert,
the second part of the concert was broadcast live in real time and projected onto the building’s famous roof. Over 3,000 people flocked to Sydney Harbour to watch, while the whole world was invited to join in via online live stream at visions.vienna.info. The one-and-a-half-hour show began with images of Vienna accompanied by the Blue Danube Waltz, giving the audience a clear idea of where to spend their next holiday. The media interest was huge, starting in the lead-up to the event. During the show itself the Vienna Tourist Board hosted a VIP reception for selected media representatives and travel industry contacts at the Quay Restaurant overlooking the Opera House. The evening’s events were closely followed in the social media via hashtag #VisionsOfVienna. The show was directed by Grammy winner Tony David Cray, Head of Recording and Broadcast at Sydney Opera House, whose 20-strong team captured the concert from different angles on 14 cameras and projected the results onto the roof. 3D animations of Viennese landmarks and artworks lent the finishing touch to the show.

“ViennaSphere” tour reaches 619 million

A spectacular campaign to promote two tourism highlights of 2015 was the touring “ViennaSphere”, a 22-metre globe with projection screens inside and out which made three-day appearances in public spaces in Barcelona (19–21 March), Paris (26–28 March), London (2–4 April), Milan (10–12 April) and Berlin (17–19 April). The giant sphere, which holds 500 people, was used to showcase the Eurovision Song Contest and the 150th anniversary of the Ringstrasse. Daytime visitors to the ViennaSphere were able to experience the “Vienna Ring View” at two stations equipped with interactive screens and virtual reality headsets, allowing them to take a virtual stroll along the Ringstrasse boulevard viewing impressive, high-res panoramic images of the sights and zooming in to the most famous buildings. After dark, elaborate multimedia projections incorporating 360° shots and spectacular
3D effects appeared on the inside and outside of the ViennaSphere, giving real and virtual impressions of the Ringstrasse and of Vienna as the host city of the 2015 Eurovision Song Contest. In the grand finale of the projection sequence a huge image of iconic central figure Conchita Wurst appeared before the eyes of the audience.

Conchita also made personal appearances at receptions for media and travel industry representatives held on the eve of the respective public open days. The receptions were all hosted by Vienna Tourist Board Director Norbert Kettner, sharing the honours with Mayor Michael Häupl in Paris. A total of 916 invited VIPs attended the receptions in the five cities, with over 21,000 people visiting the ViennaSphere during the public appearances. Altogether, the promotional activities in the lead-up to the tour (offline, Internet, social media, etc.), individual views during the tour itself and documented print, online media, radio and TV coverage generated a total potential reach of around 619 million contacts.

"Vienna Art Sessions" and 3D cube puzzle of Vienna City Hall in Warsaw

To coincide with "Museums Night" in Warsaw on 15–16 May the Vienna Tourist Board showed impressions of Vienna on a four-by-five-metre relief wall and promoted the events marking the 150th anniversary of Vienna’s Ringstrasse on Warsaw’s Skwer Hoovera. Passers-by were invited to complete a 3D cube puzzle of Vienna City Hall, one of the iconic buildings lining Vienna’s famous circular boulevard. Virtual reality headsets and Microsoft Kinect stations also allowed members of the public to take a virtual interactive stroll along the Ringstrasse, zooming “inside” selected buildings and calling up fascinating facts and figures. The campaign also featured a prize competition to win tickets to the Eurovision Song Contest finale in Vienna, including flights and hotel accommodation for the winner and a companion. Like the virtual stroll along the Ringstrasse, the competition could also be accessed online via ringview.vienna.info. A further “show effect” revealed itself to the Warsaw public after dark: in the “Vienna Art Sessions” projection painters from the agency OMAi used tablets to project images of the magnificent buildings on and around Vienna’s Ringstrasse boulevard – the State Opera, City Hall, Kunsthistorisches Museum and the Secession building – onto a wall and modify them using various animations, colours and shapes. An “open session” allowed passers-by to try their hand as projection artists. 500 pairs of cardboard glasses with the Vienna logo, convertible into virtual reality glasses with the help of a smartphone, were distributed as giveaways together with info material including travel offers.

Exclusive VIP evening in Bucharest showcases de-luxe Vienna

As in the previous year, the Vienna Tourist Board again showcased Vienna as a top destination in the high-end segment at a VIP event in Bucharest co-hosted with the Romanian lifestyle magazine Viva. On 28 May, Viva and the VTB invited around 1,000 VIPs from the worlds of fashion, society and the media to the event at Mogosoaia Palace, some 15 kilometres from Bucharest city centre. Large-format screen presentations, tasting of Viennese wines and a photo booth with the Secession building as the backdrop helped promote Vienna as a premium destination. To draw their attention to the
150th anniversary of the Ringstrasse boulevard, the opinion leaders were also presented with Vienna bags containing various Ringstrasse-themed giveaways, jars of exclusive “Ringstrasse edition” Staud’s jam and plenty of background information, including a special travel package offer. The cooperation with Viva was highly effective in terms of media coverage: the magazine itself, which has a monthly readership of 300,000, and its sister magazines from the Ringier publishing house, Elle, Unica and Avantage, all carried articles on the event itself and Vienna in general. The event was also covered by journalists from various Romanian broadcasters (e.g. “Romania TV”, “Antena1”) and a number of local bloggers, who took the opportunity to produce items featuring the Romanian film and music scene celebrities attending the party.

**Talk performance at Art Basel**

2015 saw the Vienna Tourist Board’s third cooperation with the Basel edition of Art Basel, one of the world’s premier fairs for modern and contemporary art, which offers a wide-reach platform on which to present the contemporary side of Vienna. At the fair’s Collectors’ Lounge, which took place from 18 to 21 June, the design studio EOOS showed a modern reinterpretation of the Viennese coffee house. The installation played with the core ideas of comfort, densification and flexibility, as well as with the opening out of the space by mirrors, a recurring element in Viennese coffee houses. Interactive café tables with dark glass tops equipped with smart technology by design studio Strukt impressed visitors with a special effect: the table tops came to life when used, with the coffee cups serving as “keys”, inviting café guests to explore the Vienna-themed content. The VTB’s catering partner for the promotion, café Markusplatz, served Viennese speciality coffees that blended perfectly with the multimedia presentation in the Lounge to produce an immersive “Vienna experience”.

To coincide with the preview days ahead of the fair’s official opening to the public, Norbert Kettner held a press conference on 17 June together with Museum of Applied Arts Director Christoph Thun-Hohenstein, EOOS designer Harald Gründl and Markusplatz café owner Markus Muliar, where the concept of the Vienna Lounge and details of the Vienna Biennale, taking place in Vienna at the same time, were presented to journalists. A VIP event on the same evening served as a platform for networking and exchange with key accounts from the Swiss travel industry. The Vienna Lounge also left a lasting impression as the venue for panel discussions featuring international guests: the first round, entitled “Vienna Biennale 2015: Ideas for Change”, was chaired by Christoph Thun-Hohenstein, initiator of the Vienna Biennale. Round two, devoted to “The Viennese Crossover of Art, Architecture and Design”, was chaired by Elizabeth von Guttmann, publisher of the art publications System Magazine and EverManifesto. Vienna’s presence at Art Basel was publicised in ads on a total of 90 info screens in railway stations all over Switzerland.

**Shadow-dancing shows in Moscow and Istanbul**

Following the success of similar shows in Zurich, Bregenz and Salzburg in 2012, the VTB put on shadow-dancing performances featuring popular Vienna attractions in Moscow and Istanbul in 2015. Eight dancers from the Flowmotion Dance Company performed their elaborately staged shadow-dancing show as part of the “Cosmo Live” festival hosted by the lifestyle magazine Cosmopolitan in Moscow’s Gorky Park on 12 September, and on Istanbul’s Beşiktaş Square on 2 October. The eight-minute performance can only be shown to advantage after dark, when it was performed several times in each city. Waltzing lessons were offered during the daytime in Moscow, where they proved very popular. Passers-by in Istanbul dur-
ing the daylight hours had the opportunity to have a “shadowgram” of themselves taken using a special camera. Media and travel industry representatives were invited to the respective dress rehearsals on the evening before the shadow-dancing performances.

In Moscow the event was attended by 22 journalists, including representatives of the city’s highest-circulation daily Kommersant, the newspaper Metro, which is distributed free in the Moscow underground, the listings magazine Time Out Moscow and the local TV channel “Moskva 24”, which aired a backstage report showing what goes on behind the scenes of the shadow theatre. Comprehensive follow-up coverage was secured by a cooperation deal with Cosmopolitan and its numerous partner magazines (print circulation of 1.47 million copies, online editions attract approx. 23.6 million unique users per month). In Istanbul, some 60 journalists and travel industry contacts accepted the VTB’s invitation to a party at the recently opened Soho House hotel and event space. Representatives of FOX TV, the dailies Sabah and Hürriyet, the online journal Turizmde Bu Sabah and Grazia magazine were among the guests. After getting a taste of Vienna from the shadow-dancing show, they were presented with an overview of tourism highlights of the coming year before enjoying a pleasant evening accompanied by Viennese wines.

Vienna calls the tune in Beijing

The Vienna Tourist Board played on Vienna’s reputation as the global capital of classical music in an effective one-week marketing initiative in Beijing. The three-dimensional interactive installation engaged with the playful side of passers-by in the luxurious shopping mall Raffles City Beijing and was widely publicised via collateral advertising on the radio, Internet and the Chinese equivalent of Facebook. The focus of the installation was a giant cube, on one side of which was a 6-m² LED screen combined with the hollowed-out body of a real grand piano. The screen showed videos of male and female pianists from the “top shot” perspective, making it look as if a real person was sitting playing the instrument, while the hollowed-out body gave a view of the movements of the hammers and strings inside the piano. Passers-by decided what was on the concert programme by means of a sound board on the floor in front of the installation showing the piano keys of a musical scale. By tapping a foot on the correct starting notes they could choose from the Blue Danube Waltz, Mozart’s Turkish March, a Schubert impromptu or a Haydn sonata. Promoters were on hand to provide assistance, as well as handing out flyers advertising travel package offers to Vienna and information about the city’s attractions. The installation, which was open
from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily from 16 to 22 November, also featured a replica Viennese coffee house. Brave souls who “had a go” on the sound board were treated to a free cup of coffee and presented with a Vienna Tourist Board espresso cup. The promotional week was launched with an appearance by a very well-known Chinese pianist, Sun Jiayi, who demonstrated how to activate the sound board before giving a live performance of the programmed pieces on a real grand piano.

Classical and online advertising: high circulations, broad reach

In classical advertising, a total of nine million newspaper copies in 13 countries carried ads for Vienna in 2015. Poster and billboard advertising in various formats, from megaboards to illuminated display cases and projector ads, was placed in a wide range of different sites in 17 cities in nine countries. Radio ads were broadcast in the United Kingdom, Spain, Switzerland, Poland, Romania, in the Arab region and in China. Outdoor advertising included, among other activities, 105 buses carrying advertisements for Vienna in Milan, Venice and Bologna, as well as two trams, 190 bus stops and 68 LCD screens in underground trains featuring Vienna ads in Milan. To coincide with the Life Ball, an Austrian Airlines plane in specially designed brand livery carried the message to New York, Tokyo and Bangkok, as well as to Vienna itself.

98 online and social media advertising campaigns were run in 19 countries, complemented by search engine marketing in 17 countries and search engine optimisation in four countries. Two campaigns were devoted to the 2015 Ringstrasse anniversary: 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.
In the lead-up to the Eurovision Song Contest, visitors to Vienna were encouraged to make an online declaration of their love for the city via the hashtag campaign #WeLoveVienna. All those taking part were entered in a prize draw to win tickets for the Song Contest finale, sponsored by the Vienna Tourist Board. The VTB also ran the following campaigns on its YouTube channel: three new videos covering the thematic areas Imperial Vienna, Contemporary Vienna and Musical were added to the "MYPERFECTDAY in Vienna" series of interactive videos, which show a perfect day in Vienna from the point of view of various protagonists. Conchita Wurst also gave a virtual tour of her favourite places in the city. "Vienna Now" is a new, multi-part YouTube series launched by the Vienna Tourist Board hosted by the English-born, Vienna-based TV presenter Chris Cummins. In the series Chris introduces viewers to his chosen home city and gives away one or two insider tips for visitors. The hashtag campaign #ImperialTalk adopted a humorous approach to introduce social media users to the VTB's theme for the year 2016 – "Imperial & Co(ntemporary)". Users could hear their posts being read out by Emperor Franz and Empress Elisabeth and share the results with friends. In 2015, the annual online Advent calendar in German, English and Italian was devoted to the traditional Advent theme of biscuit baking; each day, users were able to cut out a virtual Christmas biscuit, thus starting an animated video containing fascinating facts about Vienna.

Vienna in the international headlines

The media management unit of the VTB hosted visits by a total of 972 journalists – 323 representatives of print and online media, 46 TV and ten radio crews – from 40 countries in 2015, assisting them in their research and organising visitor programmes for them. It also organised 48 press events in 21 countries.

Working closely with the Austrian Broadcasting Corporation ORF and the City of Vienna, the VTB pulled out all the stops to make the 60th anniversary edition of the Eurovision Song Contest, hosted by Vienna, a milestone in the event’s history: according to the European Broadcasting Union (EBU), the accompanying programme was the most comprehensive in the history of the ESC. Under the headline "Trips for Free", VTB and ORF took care of some 1,700 accredited journalists, 1,300 official delegates and 400 accredited fans from the participating countries. The Vienna Tourist Board and the Austrian National Tourist Office additionally invited some 70 non-accredited journalists and 30 travel industry executives from 20 countries to Vienna in the period around the ESC finals on 20 to 24 May. In the press centre at Vienna’s Stadthalle venue, a service desk under the banner “Your Host City Vienna” staffed by the VTB, the City of Vienna’s Community Services Department (MA 55) and the Vienna Film Commission acted as the main port of call for information about the city, assistance and tips for visitors and organising permission for film shoots. Goody bags containing give-aways from the VTB, the City of Vienna and ORF as a welcome gift for ESC-accredited guests, snack boxes containing a changing selection of Viennese culinary treats for TV commentators on live broadcast days and a special edition of the Vienna Journal also helped ensure that the visitors would retain good memories of the 60th Eurovision Song Contest and its host city for a long time to come. There are no statistics on the full extent of media coverage of Vienna in connection with the ESC, though surveys jointly commissioned by the Vienna Tourist Board, the City of Vienna’s Press and Information Service and the ORF provide minimum figures for online coverage abroad (exclusively in the online news media, and not including reports in the print media or on TV, radio, social media, etc.).
According to the latter, 35,822 online items referencing Vienna in the context of the ESC appeared in 116 countries in the period from 1 May to 14 June, which represents a media advertising value equivalent of 796 million euros.

Vienna also received extensive coverage in the December issue of Monocle, a magazine that ranks among the world’s most influential media in the travel, business, politics, lifestyle and design segments, which came with a 40-page “Vienna Guide” supplement produced in cooperation with the VTB. The magazine’s global readership was presented with striking, informative pieces on Smart City Vienna, the city’s business scene, urban infrastructure, imperial and contemporary arts, design, architecture and Viennese cuisine.

A high profile in the global travel industry

Working to maintain and build Vienna’s profile within the global travel industry, the market management team visited 27 countries on 93 business trips abroad. Altogether, the team went to 14 trade shows, 31 workshops for foreign travel agencies and 55 special presentations; moreover, the VTB also organised the participation of industry players from Vienna in many of these events. In Vienna, the VTB assisted some 2,300 representatives of travel agencies and tour operators from 30 countries. The 2015 Eurovision Song Contest also featured in the activities of the market management team. The VTB’s evening event for around 70 business partners and media representatives, held at Berlin’s Meistersaal venue on the eve of the Internationale Tourismusbörse trade fair on 3 March, was entirely devoted to the ESC under the headline “Wir sind Song Contest” and featured an impressive performance by Conchita Wurst.

As the year progressed, activities promoting the 150th anniversary of the Ringstrasse, the headline theme for 2015, began to be complemented by activities in connection with the 2016 motto, “Imperial & Co(ntemporary)?”, which juxtaposes Vienna’s historic heritage with the modern-day face of the city. The Vienna Tourist Board presented both themes in all its markets through promotional activities and press talks, workshops and product placements, joint campaigns with tour operators and prize competitions, as well as via its customer newsletter, which is distributed to some 150,000 recipients. The 2016 edition of the Vienna Journal was published in seven languages in October 2015 and contained in-depth coverage of events associated with this year’s headline theme. The publication of the Journal was accompanied by events held between 28 October and 10 December in eight cities – Geneva, Hamburg, Milan, Palma de Mallorca, Madrid, Bucharest, Warsaw and Lyon – for selected travel industry and media contacts, who were informed about the interplay between the historic and modern facets of Vienna in a series of presentations and panel discussions.

First-class rankings for Vienna as a conference venue

The Vienna Convention Bureau is the conference tourism arm of the VTB, operating worldwide to bring congresses as well as incentive trips and other corporate events to Vienna. In 2015 it presented Vienna as a conference venue at 49 trade shows and industry meetings and coordinated the participation of Viennese businesses in these events. Highlights of the year were appearances at the leading industry trade fairs IMEX Frankfurt, IBTM Barcelona and IMEX Las Vegas. In the year under report, the Vienna Convention Bureau was awarded “Green Meeting” certification for a further four-year period. Granted to the Bureau for the first time in 2011, the Green Meetings licence has to be reapplied for at regular intervals and is a strong selling point in the international conference and congress sector.

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 2014, published in 2015, shows Vienna in second place behind Paris and ahead of Madrid, while the UIA ranking placed it in third place behind Singapore and Brussels.

Best practice with a global beacon effect

While working on its Tourism Strategy Vienna 2020, unveiled in October 2014, the Vienna Tourist Board 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. This open strategy approach earned the Vienna Tourist Board second place in the 2015 “Awards for Excellence and Innovation in Tourism”, presented annually by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), as well as an impressive first place in the “Innovative Destination Award” presented by the International Federation for IT and Travel & Tourism (IFITT). In the year under report the VTB also significantly raised its profile in the global tourism research network: at the UNWTO General Assembly in September 2015 it was officially recognised as an Affiliate Member, thus becoming the only official Austrian institution in the UNWTO beside the Federal Ministry of Science, Research and Economic Affairs.
The Vienna Economic Chamber launched the WIEN PRODUCTS export initiative in 1995 to support Viennese companies and cultural institutions in establishing their products on the international markets. For over 20 years now, a select group of Viennese enterprises have formed a cluster under the auspices of the WIEN PRODUCTS export concept.

Vienna is world famous for a number of things: the city’s architecture, music, cuisine and an array of other specialties all form part of the overall picture. A number of these unique Viennese products and services have found a common home on the WIEN PRODUCTS platform. It all began with three founder members – today, the Delicacies, Culture, Jewellery, Style and Living clusters encompass 51 WIEN PRODUCTS enterprises and cultural institutions whose products and services satisfy the most exacting quality criteria and manufacturing standards and convey the unique flair of the Austrian capital far beyond the national borders.

In 2015, WIEN PRODUCTS were showcased at the following presentations, trade fairs and exhibitions:

**Presentations abroad**

“Austrian Weeks” under the motto “Austrian joie de vivre” were held in the gourmet food halls of 23 branches of the German Galeria Kaufhof chain. Gourmet food store Meinl am Graben, Wieninger winery, Schlumberger sparkling wines, Heindl confectionery and Staud’s pickles and preserves took part as “ambassadors for Viennese quality”. WIEN PRODUCTS Style cluster representatives Mühlbauer Hutmanufaktur millinery, rosa mosa shoes and accessories, Florian Jewelry and Eva Blut handbags made their debut appearance at the Premiere Classe fashion fair at the Jardin des Tuileries in Paris. Two further events were organised in response to the positive feedback. The Luxury of Vienna event at the Rolls Royce Motor Cars showroom in St. Petersburg presented fine bedding and table linen from Zur Schwäbischen Jungfrau, the world’s oldest luxury household linen supplier, complemented by exquisite silver cutlery and tableware by silversmiths Jarosinski & Vaugoin. Extra sparkle was added by crystal and chandeliers from J. & L. Lobmeyr. Further highlights of the exhibition included bespoke craftsmanship from shirtmaker Gino Venturini and R. Horn’s leather handbags and briefcases. The special “Grand Guglhupf” cake from Vienna’s Grand Hotel was served to guests in a replica Viennese coffee house. Austrian wine is very well known in Russia – and excellent vintages from Wieninger winery and exquisite sparkling wines from the house of Schlumberger further cemented its reputation. Piano makers Bösendorfer treated guests to a performance on their exclusive Frédéric Chopin Edition grand piano by rising star pianist and Bösendorfer scholarship holder Sergei Redkin.

Over 700 exhibitors displayed their wares on 15,300 m² of exhibition space at the International Contemporary Furniture Fair in New York. L. Bösendorfer, Lichterloh design, art & antiques, J. & L. Lobmeyr, Rauminhalt contemporary design gallery and Wiener Silber Manufactur silverware presented specialties and new products to a trade audience during the four-day event. As in previous years, WIEN PRODUCTS was an essential component of the Austrian group stand at the US East Coast’s major furniture and design fair.

Featuring over 3,000 exhibitors on 250,000 m² of exhibition space and attracting more than 67,000 international visitors, Maison et Objet in Paris is currently the leading B2B design fair on European soil. This year, WIEN PRODUCTS was represented for the first time at both the January and September editions of the fair, with J. & L. Lobmeyr, R. Horn’s, rosa mosa, Augarten porcelain, Jarosinski & Vaugoin, Rauminhalt, Woka Lamps Vienna, Wiener Silber Manufactur and Zur Schwäbischen Jungfrau sharing the group stand at this major trade event. Heldwein jewellers, Zur Schwäbischen Jungfrau, Jarosinski & Vaugoin, J. & L. Lobmeyr, Augarten and R. Horn’s showcased their wares in Abu Dhabi, where a jewellery presentation and luxury tableware display featured on the margins of the Pink Polo Tournament held at the Polo Club under the patronage of Sheikh Falah bin Zayed. The WIEN PRODUCTS members Augarten, Jarosinski & Vaugoin, J. & L. Lobmeyr, Schlumberger, the Austrian Mint and Friedrich Otto Schmidt home furnishings participated in presentations at the Austrian Embassy in Tokyo and subsequently in Osaka, where they took the opportu-
nity to intensify their contacts with Japanese importers and their major clients and distribution partners.

**Presentations in Austria**

The **Masterpiece Collection** was held for the third time at the Novomatic Forum on Vienna’s Naschmarkt market. This year’s event focused on artisan producers and their crafts, as well as on designers and creatives – a successful blend of traditional and modern. Among the hand-picked exhibitors presenting their wares were the WIEN PRODUCTS companies Augarten, Jarosinski & Vaugoin, Schau Schau eyewear, Chlada pewterware, R. Horn’s and the Grand Hotel.

Marking the tenth anniversary of the WIEN PRODUCTS Collection and the 20th birthday of WIEN PRODUCTS itself, this year’s WIEN PRODUCTS Collection, comprising newly designed products by A.E. Köchert jewellers, J. & L. Lobmeyr, Jarosinski & Vaugoin, Mühlbauer, R. Horn’s, Schullin jewellers and Chlada, was unveiled in the evocative setting of the Museum of Art History (KHM). The anniversary collection retained the original underlying concept of traditional Viennese companies collaborating with external designers to create a new product.

“Maison et Objet” in Paris is Europe’s leading B2B design fair. (Wien Products)

The 20th anniversary of Wien Products and the 10th anniversary of the Wien Products Collection were celebrated at the Kunsthistorisches Museum. (Kollektiv FischkaKramar)
The 65th Städtetag, the general assembly of the Association, took place at Vienna City Hall under the banner “Smart Cities: People Make Cities”. About 1,300 participants, many of them from abroad, discussed how people will live together in cities in the future in view of continuing urban population growth. The keynote speech was given by US economist Mariana Mazzucato, who argued that only states can ensure economic progress. Austrian Finance Minister Hans Jörg Schelling discussed the Stability Pact with the Vice President of the German Association of Cities and Towns and Mayor of Nuremberg, Ulrich Maly.

At the international level, the Städtebund represented the interests of Austrian cities and towns in several European bodies. Services of general interest, procurement and concessions were frequent items on the agenda and were discussed at different political levels. Workshops in these fields were organised regularly in collaboration with Municipal Department 27. Städtebund also hosted networking meetings in Innsbruck and Klagenfurt to exchange information with representatives from other European cities and maintained an office at Austria’s Permanent Mission in Brussels.

A major work focus was the EU Strategy for the Danube Region and the role of cities and towns in this context. The programme BACID (“Building Administrative Capacities in the Danube Region”, www.bacid.eu) was initiated in collaboration with the Austrian Development Agency and the KDZ–Centre for Public Administration Research. With funding from Austria’s development cooperation budget, the programme aims to support small-scale collaborative projects to strengthen good governance in the region. The most important international programme partner is NALAS, the Network of Associations of Local Authorities of South-East Europe, which Austria’s Städtebund joined as an associate member.

The meeting of the Secretaries General of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) took place at Vienna City Hall. In addition to statutory agenda items and general European topics, integration issues were a major focus of the meeting, with special attention paid to the integration of young people.

Two delegations from the Czech Republic and the Israeli association of municipal finance directors visited the Städtebund.

Together with the Gemeindebund, the national organisation of smaller local authorities, the Städtebund represents the interests of local governments vis-à-vis the national government and the provinces (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.

Städtebund Centenary

The 100th anniversary of the foundation of the Städtebund was celebrated on 24 September at the Hofburg palace with Austrian President Heinz Fischer and about 200 other guests. The Städtebund was founded in 1915 to help mitigate the misery that prevailed in the cities and towns as a result of the First World War. Among the 58 founding members were Brno, Maribor and Merano.

The centenary was also marked by the publication of a book (100 Jahre kommunale Interessenvertretung – Österreichischer Städtebund 1915–2015), which was presented at the celebration.

Recent research findings concerning the historical development of cities’ and towns’ associations were discussed at a meeting of national and international scholars hosted by an Austrian study group in the field. The conference was held in two parts: one of them dis-
cussed developments from antiquity to the early modern era, while the other was dedicated to the 19th and 20th centuries. Radio station Ö1 aired a programme about cities’ and towns’ associations in its Dimensionen series.

Stadtmenschen, a book of urban photographs and stories by prominent city dwellers (the titular “Stadtmenschen”) was published in 2015. In it, forty well-known Austrians talk about their relationship to urban environments, from small towns to suburbs to metropo-

The 100th anniversary of the Austrian Association of Cities and Towns (Städtebund) was celebrated at the Hofburg palace on 24 September in the presence of Austrian President Dr. Heinz Fischer (centre). Among the participants were also (from left) Helmut Mödlhammer/President of the Association of Local Authorities (Gemeindebund), Städtebund President Dr. Michael Häupl, Sonja Stell/State Secretary for public administration and digital agenda in the Federal Chancellery, Professor Renée Schröder/University of Vienna and Städtebund Secretary-General Dr. Thomas Weninger MLS. Professor Schröder gave the keynote address at the event, discussing the development of urban settlements in a broader evolutionary context. (Markus Wache)
"PaN – Partner of all Nations" is the umbrella organisation of Austria’s 120 bilateral friendship societies. The organisation 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, to study tours. Some of its activities in Vienna in 2015 are listed below.

The “Curtain Call for Friendship Societies” took place once again at Vienna City Hall, focusing attention on humanitarian projects of three of PaN’s member societies: The Myanmar Eye Project was launched to reduce the incidence of blindness in the country, a support project for Ethiopian street children was run in Bahir Dar, and an initiative was started to assist in the purchase and delivery to Cuba of salbutamol sulphate, a pharmaceutical agent needed in the production of asthma medication.

The PaN Award was presented for the third time in the year under report; the recipients were the Austrian-Bulgarian and Austrian-Brazilian Societies, both of which celebrated their 60th anniversary in 2015. Awards were also presented to Jutta Unkart-Seifert from the Austrian-Argentinian and Theodor Kanitzer from the Austrian-Polish Society for their efforts to promote international understanding.

Vienna’s Chief Executive Office/Executive Group for European and International Affairs and PaN co-organised a visit to the United Nations Office at Vienna on International Women’s Day on 8 March. A guided tour there was followed by a presentation by the United Nations Women’s Guild (UNWG).

The City of Vienna, PaN and the supreme command of the Austrian Army co-hosted the presentation of a book about Vienna’s military history. Coming as the fourth volume in a series entitled *Wien – 2000 Jahre Garnisonstadt* ("Vienna – Garrison city for 2,000 years"), the book on *Die vier Alliierten 1945–1955* ("The four allied powers 1945–1955") was published in the anniversary year 2015. It was presented by retired Brigadier Rolf M. Urrisk-Obertyński in the presence of international guests and members of the diplomatic corps. The book outlines the organisation of the Allied Control Council and of the inter-allied and national military police forces of the four occupation powers, describes how the troops and officers were accommodated in Vienna, and discusses family contacts, the supply situation, military hospitals and pastoral care for the soldiers, as well as their off-duty lives.
Conchita Wurst’s victory in 2014 brought the 60th anniversary edition of the world’s biggest musical extravaganza back to Austria after a 48-year absence. The Eurovision Song Contest took place from 18 to 23 May at Vienna’s Stadthalle in front of a live audience of 100,000 people. 200 million viewers worldwide watched the three live shows broadcast in the ESC week, 5.9 million of them at public viewing events in Austria.

The eye-shaped show stage at the Stadthalle was 44 metres wide, 14.3 metres high and composed of 1,288 LED pillars. 26 cameras captured the spectacle for TV, including spidercams tracking diagonally on a ceiling-mounted gantry, a technique that made its European debut at the event. Besides Conchita flying through the auditorium on a wire, the show programme featured the world-famous Salzburg-born percussionist Martin Grubinger as the interval act as well as the Vienna Boys’ Choir and the Arnold Schoenberg Choir. The biggest event ever staged by the Austrian public broadcaster ORF, the Song Contest took the theme “Building Bridges” and saw Australia taking its place in the starting line-up for the first time. The ORF collaborated with 140 partner companies and organisations, with 3,000 personnel involved on finals day alone. 1,565 journalists provided media coverage and 1,269 delegates from the 40 participating nations travelled to Vienna, escorted by 800 volunteer helpers. The Contest was also the first to be staged as a green event: reusable beakers were cleaned in solar-powered washing machines; 4.5 tonnes of waste, 440,000 litres of diesel and 40 tonnes of CO₂ emissions were saved, and the electricity required to run the event came entirely from renewable sources. Almost 85 per cent of the audience at the shows travelled to the venues by public transport. According to a study, no less than 35,822 online articles about Vienna and the Song Contest were published in 116 countries between 1 May and 14 June, with an equivalent advertising value of several hundred million euros. Some 120,000 people visited the “Eurovision Village” on Rathausplatz during finals week.

A special exhibition at the Haus der Musik looked back on the Austrian Song Contest entries of the past 60 years, accompanied by live performances by some of the participating singers. The city’s Cobenzl Winery produced a special wine, the “12 Points Edition”, for the Eurovision Village, and six manhole covers in busy locations throughout the city centre were fitted with loudspeakers playing three of Austria’s previous Song Contest entries.

The 61st Eurovision Song Contest will be held in Sweden in 2016.
City Council (100 members)

District Council Committees → District Councillors → District Chairpersons

City Senate
Mayor and 12 City Councillors *

Administrative Group Women’s Issues, Education, Integration, Youth and Personnel
Executive City Councillor: Executive City Councillor
Municipal Departments
1 General Personnel Matters
2 Personnel Services
3 Occupational Safety and Health
10 Vienna Children’s Day Care Centres
13 Education, Out-of-School Activities for Children and Young People
17 Integration and Diversity
35 Immigration and Citizenship
44 Municipal Swimming Pools
69 Procurement
66 Vienna Schools
58 Promotion and Co-ordination of Women’s Issues

Administrative Group Finance, Economic and International Affairs
Executive City Councillor: Executive City Councillor
Municipal Departments
5 Financial Affairs
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23 Economic Affairs, Labour and Statistics
27 European Affairs
63 Commerce and Trade, Legal Aspects of Food Safety
68 Fire Services and Disaster Relief
53 Press and Information Services
62 Elections and Specific Legal Affairs

Administrative Group Cultural Affairs, Science and Sports
Executive City Councillor: Executive City Councillor
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40 Social Welfare, Social and Public Health Law
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19 Architecture and Urban Design
20 Energy Planning
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28 Road Management and Construction
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67 Supervision of On-Street Parking

Legend:
- Authority to give instructions
- 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 of the City of Vienna Court of Audit to carry out an examination
- *) of whom 7 Executive City Councillors
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Executive Group for European and International Affairs

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

English translation:
Vera Ribarich and Angela Parker

Artwork:
Headquarter Strnat & Strnat GmbH, 1030 Wien

Cover photographs by: mikecphoto / Shutterstock

Printed by: Gerin, 2120 Wolkersdorf
Printed on eco-friendly paper from the “Ökokauf Wien” sample portfolio

Editorial closing date: 29 February 2016