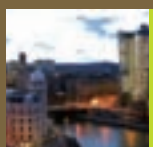




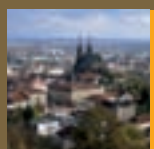
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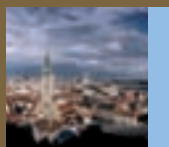
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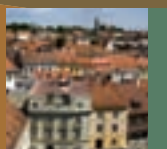
Czech Republic

On Track: Towards a New Identity in the Centre of Europe.



Slovakia

In the Running: Bratislava and Trnava, the Region's Pacemakers.



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Before the Curtain: Unlimited Opportunities in Sight.

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SIX YEARS AGO, political officials in the four bordering countries of the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Austria decided to initiate the development of a transnational, multilateral European region: CENTROPE, the Central European Region, was born. By now, this ambitious concept has become a reality and has turned into a committed flagship project, the goal of which is to transform CENTROPE into one of Europe’s leading economic regions.

CENTROPE NEWS, THE magazine at hand, was designed in close cooperation with the City of Vienna. This cooperation allows for a comprehensive overview of the area as a business location, providing all the essential facts about the region and presenting the numerous positive economic initiatives by the public authorities. At the same time, CENTROPE News is also a platform for businesses that are already active in the promising region of Central Europe and can report on their successful projects and experiences.

THE CENTRAL EUROPEAN Region does not only lie in the heart of Europe; it is also close to the heart of all parties involved. Therefore, throughout 2010, this first issue of CENTROPE News will be presented and made available to participants at various marketing events by the City of Vienna and the VBA, as well as at the international exhibitions of MIPIM, EXPO Real and REAL Vienna.

Sincerely yours,



Elisabeth Della Lucia
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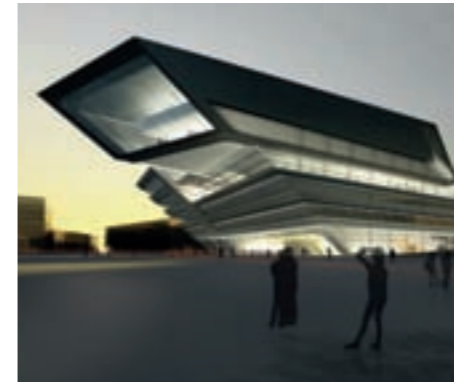
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For the new building of the University of Economics, located right next to the new exhibition centre, numerous international star architects could be commissioned. The library and study centre is being planned as the central point of the new campus by Iraqi architect Zaha Hadid.



Twin City Liner. Since 2006, the Twin City Liner connects the two EU capitals situated closest to each other - Vienna and Bratislava - via the Danube. The ride only takes 75 minutes and goes directly from Vienna's Schwedenplatz to the banks of the Danube in Bratislava's Old Town.

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Successful Business Location and Great Quality of Life – Not an Antagonism in Vienna



VIENNA UNITES ECONOMY, ecology and culture of life in an exemplary way. Year after year, this has been proven in international rankings regarding quality of life.

WITH A RANGE of targeted measures (various economy and technology funding programmes, education initiatives, acceleration of permit procedures, settlement support for foreign businesses and much more), Vienna is intentionally and continuously strengthening its attractiveness as a business location for domestic and international companies. Since entering the EU in 2004 as one of the 10 new member states, our geographic location in the heart of the “new” Europe has been an

additional advantage. Vienna's new position as the largest city in a region of four countries, four cultures and approximately six million inhabitants within a 100 kilometre radius is unique worldwide. Therefore, the political forces of the whole region have united under the name “Vienna Region” or “Centrope”, a term coined by the European Union, to jointly create the best economic and infrastructural premises.

ALTHOUGH VIENNA - particularly in the cultural sector - benefits from its tradition, in economic matters we strongly rely on future trends. To be a worldwide magnet as a “City of Knowledge” is our declared goal. We are convinced that the best scientists and the best-trained labour force need to be available to the local economy. We are deliberately focusing on quality, sustainability and development. Areas that we are supporting in particular are high technology and biotechnology, medical technology, the complete sector of Life Sciences, private as well as university-based research, creative industries and communication technologies, to only name a few.

AMONG ALL THIS, quality of life does not fall short. This begins with the mountain spring water coming from our tap, and goes on to include a dense public transport network, top medical care for all of Vienna's residents, professional care for our city's elderly and youth, and great residential, cultural and recreational offerings.

VIENNA IS IN the enviable position of not having to choose between being a business location and offering a first-class quality of life. This is good for the city, the people who live in it, and for the region the city is located in.

Michael Häupl
Mayor of the City of Vienna

How to build a city? How to build a place where private needs and professional requirements meet, and where success in business and responsibility for our society interlink? A place for 21st-century lifestyles that is not only grey but also green? **The answer can be found in aspern** Vienna's Urban Lakeside.

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CENTROPE - Region of the Future



LOWER AUSTRIA'S DEVELOPMENT throughout the last years has been remarkable. Formerly a frontier to the Iron Curtain, Lower Austria has become a successful province at the centre of European developments. And in fact, since the fall of the Iron Curtain 20 years ago, the European movement has almost nowhere been as noticeable as in the four-country region that is united under the name of CENTROPE. I would even go as far as to say that CENTROPE is one of the most dynamic and most exciting regions on the entire continent. In this region, two capital cities lie within immediate proximity of each other - with a unique National Park in between. Approximately 6.5 million people live here. And the region offers a number

of advantages: On the one hand, it is home to a total of 25 universities and more than 300 non-academic research institutions, which provides great potential for innovation. On the other hand, there is the right balance of a highly skilled workforce and excellent economic conditions. At the same time, the region also has the needed areas of retreat, offering a high quality of life.

UNDER THE NAME CENTROPE, we want to promote and establish this region of the future at an international level. The goal of this cooperation is to encourage coalescence as well as co-existence. There is a fairly simple idea behind CENTROPE: In a bigger Europe, we can only grow stronger together, not separately. A false competitiveness would be out of place here - it could lead to all of us falling behind. All competition aside, in the CENTROPE region in particular, we need to create cross-border projects that are of mutual benefit. This stretches across the areas of economy and innovation, research, labour market, infrastructure, flood protection, tourism and culture. Lower Austria itself has taken on a special responsibility for matters of economy and innovation within CENTROPE - after all, being a strong and successful location in this field, we can bring a lot of experience and know-how to the table.

IN CENTROPE, DIFFERENT languages, cultures and living spaces converge. Jointly and transnationally, we want to develop this region so it will be a hub in the heart of Europe, henceforth attracting people, businesses and ideas from all over the world.

Erwin Pröll
Governor of Lower Austria



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Promoting Continued Integration of the Regions



THE FACTS SPEAK for themselves: Prior to EU membership, 3,500 Viennese companies were internationally active; today, the number has grown to over 6,500. Since Austria's accession to the EU, Vienna's economy has almost tripled its exports. Two thirds of Vienna's exports are going to other EU member states. Foreign Direct Investments have skyrocketed; Vienna has established itself as a business location for international headquarters. The CEE region is becoming more and more important for Vienna. Numerous multinational corporations are now managing their business in Eastern Europe from Vienna; additionally, exports from Viennese companies to these countries have increased by 74 percent since 2002. The eastern European expansion of the EU has brought growth for all industries, from which Vienna has benefitted above average. This success story has to be continued throughout the coming years, as Eastern Europe – despite the current economic situation – still is the most important growth market for Vienna.

EVEN IN TIMES of economic difficulty, Vienna's position as the leading business location in Central and Eastern Europe remains undisputed. Vienna is an attractive location offering an internationally renowned quality of life and safety standard, an excellent connection to the Eastern European markets and a great number of qualified skilled workers, as well as benefits regarding corporate income tax. In some areas however, Vienna also has to make up leeway. While we are strongly perceived as a culture and tourism metropolis, our image as a modern R&D location leaves plenty of room for development.

A SPECIAL FOCUS also needs to be set on the future role of the Vienna Airport. Its attractive connections from Vienna to the CEE region are an asset, which should be maintained and strengthened even after Lufthansa's successful takeover of Austrian Airlines. This matter is of great significance for Vienna as a business location, since the intensive business relations between Vienna and the CEE region require adequate international transport connections – not to mention the airport's importance for incoming tourism.

Brigitte Jank
President of the Vienna Chamber of Commerce



We are Building the New Europe

With 7 million well-funded and well-educated inhabitants and a dynamically growing economy, the Central European Region is one of the most important growth zones within the EU. With **innovative projects**, the region wants to secure its top position in the new Europe, even during the crisis.

FOR THE LAST seven years, the most exciting economic project Europe has seen since the Marshall Plan is happening in Austria's eastern region, Southern Moravia, the Bratislava region and Western Hungary. Since these four

regions from four countries joined forces six years ago to become the Central European Region / Centrope, this former frontier area has seen an astonishing boom. Because the new EU member states of Slovakia, Hungary and the Czech Republic had to make up enormous leeway, the economy of the Central European Region – and, in particular, Austria – has for years experienced a continuous upswing. While the economic and financial crisis brought setbacks in growth to this thriving European region too, its effects were considerably weaker here compared to the old EU member states. Even though Austria's GDP in 2009 will decrease by 3.4 percent compared to the previous year, experts from the Institute of Economic Research (WIFO) are already expecting a growth of at least one percent for the following year. According to the experts, growth in Slovakia and Southern Moravia will be significantly stronger in 2010; some institutes are expecting an increase of three percent or more.

The economy of Western Hungary, which was - like the Hungarian economy in general - hit hardest by the financial crisis, will need a little longer to recover; but even there, the existing backlog demand in all areas of everyday life is still not satisfied, say the experts. Private consumption and important infrastructure projects will therefore get the economy running again quickly in the coming years.

Kurt Puchinger, Leader of the Planning Group of the City of Vienna's Municipal Directorate, is optimistic: "When we began working towards the Central European Region after the Kittsee Conference in 2003, the neighbouring countries were not EU member states yet. Today, they are members of the EU, and the Schengen border, which used to divide the entire region, has moved further to the east. Despite the current economic crisis, the conditions for a positive joint development are better today than they were only a few years ago." Private consumption should also contribute to this; after all, the GDP per capita of the entire Central European Region has increased significantly in the last few years. In Vienna, Lower Austria and Bratislava, it is well above the average of the EU-27; in the other regions, like Burgenland and Southern Bohemia, it has in part increased by up to 40 percent since 2003. This means that private equity definitely exists in many regions, which can be used for a speedy recovery of the economy. Aside from private

consumption however, many officials in all four countries of the Central European Region rely on targeted economic stimulus programmes, which should actively "build up against" the recession with million-euro infrastructure and residential building projects. On the following pages of this issue, Centrope News presents you the most important infrastructure projects in the Austrian part of the Central European Region.



"Housing development is an important addition to our portfolio. The housing market is very stable and offers reliable development opportunities."

Thomas Jakoubek, Director of BAI



"The City of Vienna is massively favouring housing developments. This of course has positive effects on the general situation of the construction industry."

Wolfgang Hesoun,
General Director of PORR Group

Christian Neuhold



Interview with Deputy Mayor **Michael Ludwig**

“By 2050, Vienna will have Two Million Inhabitants.”

Michael Ludwig, Vienna’s Deputy Mayor and City Councillor for Housing, about the significance of the Central European Region for the city’s development.

How important is the Central European Region for Vienna’s development?

The Centrepe Region is a strong driver for Vienna’s development. According to the latest calculations by experts, Vienna will have around two million inhabitants by 2050. And by the same year, Vienna will have the youngest population



“The Central Station project is the City of Vienna’s first large housing project where we will incorporate life styles of the future into public housing development.”

Michael Ludwig,
Deputy Mayor and City Councillor for Housing

of all Austrian provinces. The immigration factor, especially from Germany, but also from the Central European Region, plays a big role in this. There will be greater migration movements within this region, and the demand for high-quality living space in Vienna is rising accordingly.

Which projects of the City of Vienna are already geared towards this common future?

The Central Station project is the City of Vienna’s first large housing project where we will incorporate life styles of the future into public housing development. We focused mainly on cross-generational living and Construction Focus Groups, who are actively involved in designing their living environment together with architects and developers. The Aspern Urban Lakeside project in particular is tailored to the Central European Region and its expected migration movements. From here, you can be in Bratislava within 30 minutes by train, and just as quickly reach Vienna’s Karlsplatz station on the U2 metro line. These fast connections make the location attractive beyond the city limits for many residents of the entire region.

You are emphasizing the factor of cross-generational living; why will this become so important?

Life expectancy continues to grow. In only a few years, people will still be in the prime of life at 65, which means that even at an advanced age, they will still move residences more frequently. In our housing plans, we need to accommodate for these needs combined with the increasing number of single-person households in Vienna. Accessibility and social integration therefore are part of the dogma of Vienna’s public housing – just like low rents that are affordable for everyone. This is also not going to change in the future.

UNESCO Award for Centrepe Exhibition

High Honours for Joint Exhibition by Twin-City Partners **Bratislava and Vienna.**



UNESCO Certificate for the Centrepe Exhibition as a UN Project of the Decade.

THE EXHIBITION “EUROPEAN Region – People in Centrepe”, produced on behalf of Vienna’s Municipal Department for Urban Development and Planning (MA 18) and the Planning Community East (“Planungsgemeinschaft Ost” / PGO), was honoured by UNESCO as a UN Project of the Decade. At the awards ceremony, Vienna City Councillor for Planning, Rudi Schicker, and Bratislava Deputy Mayor Tomas Korcek underlined the excellent cooperation of the Twin Cities in

the European region of the future, Centrepe. Schicker: “Bratislava and Vienna form the centre of a region that is being noticed in Europe and beyond – not just because of the number of inhabitants, but also because of its network of excellent universities and great jobs. This is of great importance especially in economically challenging times.” In the next few months, Schicker and Korcek want to lobby with the EU commission to form a strategy for the Danube area, in order to further promote the advancement of the Central European Region.

Remax

Matthäus Jiszda, Director of the Remax Commercial Group, wants to offer customers in the Central European Region all real estate services in all participating countries from one source: “In the future, clients will be able to cover all their needs for commercial properties in the Central European Region with just one phone call to Remax Commercial Group. We offer a one-stop-shop principle, where the client benefits from the know-how of the entire group.”



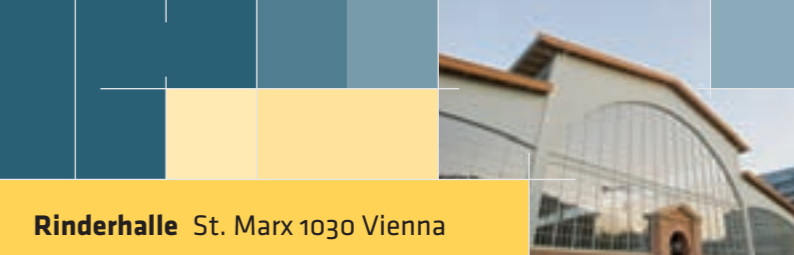
Building the Future



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Campus WU – New University at the Vienna Prater

At the Vienna Prater, the motto is “bigger is better”. For the new building of the University of Economics, located right next to the new exhibition centre, international star architects like Zaha Hadid and Hitoshe Abe could be commissioned. 250 million EUR will be invested in the construction of the spectacular university campus, which is currently Austria’s largest educational building project.



WIEN MITTE

Large-Scale Project in Inner-City Location

The multifunctional building complex **WIEN MITTE** is not only the largest development project in a central location in Vienna’s inner city; it is also a tremendous challenge with regards to structural engineering.

WIEN MITTE IS a multifunctional building complex, emerging at one of Vienna’s most frequented traffic hubs and in close proximity to the historic Old Town. The construction of this approximately 130,000 square metre large multifunctional building complex over top of the train station is the currently largest and most elaborate inner-city development project in Vienna. By 2012, 61,700 square metres of office space and a shopping centre with another 30,300 square metres of space for retail and food services will be built.

The total investment volume amounts to approximately 400 million EUR. Architects Wien Mitte, Ortner & Ortner and Neumann + Steiner are in charge of planning this large-scale project. A perimeter block concept will be implemented, consisting of a U-shaped building, a group of properties on the inside, with a 35 metre high building, and a 70 metre high tower on the Marxergasse side. At its centre, WIEN MITTE presents itself as a transparent glass hall with covered out-

door areas. The station concourse, generously opening up towards Landstraße, leads to the elliptical foyer, also made from glass. A three-storey mall will stretch across the area from here to Marxerbrücke Bridge, offering access to attractive shopping facilities as well as the City Airport Terminal.

A special challenge: It is not just its size, location and design that make WIEN MITTE a remarkable construction project – it’s also the area’s manifold uses and the high traffic volume on its lower levels that pose special challenges of technical, legal as well as logistical nature to the developers and builders, often requiring elaborate solutions. For the entire duration of the project, service on all public transport lines (metro lines U4 and U3, S-Bahn and CAT) will continue as usual, which significantly limits the possibilities for construction activities. In the track areas for example, construction is limited to only two hours per day.

A special location: Built on top of the platforms of two metro lines, two municipal railway lines (S-Bahn) and the City Airport Train (CAT), the WIEN MITTE project is located directly at the interface between Vienna’s inner city and the Landstraße district. It is one of the highest-capacity and therefore most important hubs of public transport in Vienna, with direct access to metro and S-Bahn lines, regional bus lines as well as CAT (the direct express line to the Vienna Airport). Even now, Wien Mitte is already frequented by 25,000 people each day; after completion of the new structure, the number should increase to more than 50,000.



Green Living at Vienna’s Gasometer

The striking Ville Verte residential towers in Vienna’s Simmering district are an addition to the attractive residential location of Gasometer City. For Porr, the construction company in charge, these residential buildings are a typical example of the city’s positive investment politics. Porr’s General Director Wolfgang Hesoun: “The City of Vienna is massively favouring housing developments. This of course has positive effects on the general situation of the construction industry. This makes Vienna a positive pioneer in all of Europe.” Hesoun also considers it important that the city attaches great importance to energy efficiency and good architectural design in the form of developer competitions. Hesoun: “This way, trend-setting buildings can also emerge in the housing sector – and the construction companies are continuously gaining know-how.”



Railway Station Wien Mitte – Vienna’s Most Challenging Construction Site

The discussions and planning for the long-overdue reconstruction of the traffic hub took 15 years. In 2009, construction of this 400-million-EUR project finally began. By 2011, 40,000 square metres of office space, a 20,000 square metre large hotel and 20,000 square metres of retail space will be developed here in the immediate vicinity of the historic Ring Road and Vienna’s inner city, and built on top of a railway and metro line with direct connections to the new City-Center.

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Eurogate – The Environmental Model City

In Vienna's Erdberg neighbourhood, on the grounds of the former Aspeng railway station, Europe's largest Passive House project with 740 apartments is being created. Eurogate is developed by BAI, ARWAG, Heimbau, Österreichisches Siedlungswerk and Austria's most renowned architects such as the energy specialists Krischanitz & Frank. BAI boss Thomas Jakoubek: "Housing development is an important addition to our portfolio. While the economic crisis has made it much more difficult to finance and develop office buildings, the housing market is very stable and offers reliable development opportunities." Vienna Deputy Mayor and City Councillor for Housing, Michael Ludwig, wants to not only stimulate the economy through targeted use of the latest building technologies, but also "contribute to achieve the Kyoto climate goals through the targeted promotion of Passive House buildings in Vienna."

St. Martins Thermal Spa and Lodge- New Wellness Temple in the Seewinkel Region

Exactly on the name day of its eponym, November 11th, the St. Martins Thermal Spa and Lodge will be opened in Burgenland's Seewinkel region. On an area of 23 hectares, the Central European Region's most spectacular recreational facility to date is being built on 26,000 square metres. The thermal spa stretches over 2,000 square metres of water, while the lodge offers 150 rooms as well as three seminar rooms with space for up to 200 people each. Furthermore there is a fine restaurant with a lakeside terrace, a wine bar and a kids activity area. All rooms and most of the thermal spa areas have an unobstructed view of the 8 hectare large steppe lake which is integrated into the premises. The province of Burgenland and spa operator Vamed invested 83 million EUR in this project, which should attract 300,000 visitors every year.



Media and Biotechnology Centre in St. Marx

Biotechnology and Media should enable the venerable Viennese industrial location of St. Marx to take off. For this purpose, Wien Holding is creating a centre for electronic media on the premises of the former abattoir. At the same time, private real estate developers like S + B Group are investing millions of Euros in the development of new offices and laboratories for Vienna Biotech Center, the leading biotechnology location of the Central European Region. S + B boss Reinhard Schertler: "Despite the crisis, there still is plenty of demand for spaces of this kind. Especially medium-sized companies appear extremely crisis-proof."

centrope news

“Breathing Life into Retail Locations”

The services offered by KROCON Holding go far beyond the mere operation of a retail park: The organization brings their retail parks to life.

The company is a specialist in retail properties at all stages of the value creation chain, from project development to centre management. The business areas of KROCON Group include development of retail properties, administrative and technical operations, asset management and matching retail spaces with tenants.

Your services are based on your own operation and development concept. What makes it so special?

The special thing about our retail parks is the marketing concept. We believe that it is important to distinguish ourselves from other retail parks and “bring life to” every retail centre. We want our customers to feel comfortable in our centres. Part of this, besides the architecturally distinct arch shape that can be found everywhere in the KROCON Centres, is the creation of the “SHOPPING” brand and other marketing elements.

Are you also active in other countries?

Besides our existing big centres like Horn and Bruck, there is a number of new domestic projects, like Shopping Seewinkel (5,500 m²) and Shopping Eisenstadt (20,000 m²). In addition to that, KROCON Holding is also expanding into foreign countries, where we are planning the Oradea retail park in Romania with 8,500 m² and the Pecs retail park in Hungary with 13,000 m².



“We want our customers to feel comfortable in our centres.”

Thomas Kronsteiner,
Director of Krocon Holding

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“EU Intensifies Support for Centrope.”

Interview with **Kurt Puchinger**, Leader of the Planning Group of the City of Vienna’s Municipal Directorate and one of the masterminds behind the Centrope idea.

Are you satisfied with the progress that the Central European Region has made in the last few years?

When we began to implement the idea of Centrope after the Kittsee Conference, the eastern neighbouring countries were not EU member states yet and Austria was separated from them by the strictly controlled Schengen border. Today, the border is located much further east and the neighbours are members of the EU as well. These improved conditions of course accelerate the concentration process. Centrope is one of the most important cross-border projects in the EU today. Therefore, the Central European Region will also be allocated more funds during the current EU subsidy period.



What should be a priority to be improved with the EU aid money?

The most important project is to establish a long-lasting, transnational organizational structure that will further the economic

and societal progress of the Central European Region independently from EU programmes. A region that can certainly serve as a role model is the Baltic Region around the Baltic Sea, where the neighbouring states have been demonstrating for eleven years what a successful economic and integrative development can and should look like. Due to the language barriers, the situation in the Central European Region is of course a little more challenging, but the younger generation in particular proves that those issues can also be overcome successfully.

Where in the Central European Region do you expect fast integrative progress?

Definitely in the flexibility of the labour market, where the experiences of the last few years have shown that the anxiety many Austrians had regarding their jobs turned out to be unfounded. Meanwhile, many Austrian citizens now work in the neighbouring countries, and people from the neighbouring regions positively supplement our labour market in areas where there is great demand, such as the healthcare sector. A common labour market would clearly improve the dynamics of the Central European Region. Collaboration will also intensify quickly in the automotive sector as well as the field of biotechnology.

“Centrope is one of the most important projects in the EU today.”

Martin Roth, Director of Immobilien Rating GmbH, in an interview with Centrope News.

Which countries of the Central European Region is Immobilien Rating GmbH (IRG) active in?

Immobilien Rating GmbH is active in all CEE countries that are serviced by UniCredit Bank Austria from Vienna, which includes the Central European Region / Centrope with the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary.

Does IRG operate individual subsidiaries in the neighbouring countries, or is business exclusively conducted via the headquarters in Vienna?

IRG operates headquarters in Vienna and branches in Salzburg, Graz, Linz and Innsbruck. In the countries of the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary, we are working with colleagues who have over ten years of appraisal experience with our group. In near border regions like Slovakia, assessments are also conducted directly by IRG appraisers.

How does the economic crisis affect IRG's activities in the Central European Region?

The countries of the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary were part of the first round of the eastern enlargement and their real estate markets have therefore been at a relatively stable level for many years. The economic crisis has had the effect that – due to our reputation as a renowned expert appraisal company - clients increasingly commission IRG with assessments in the Centrope region, instead of contracting local appraisers who they cannot gauge in terms of quality. The advantage for our clients is that we can rely on the market-specific know-how of our local appraisal partners, as well as the reporting quality of our own employees. Due to the current market conditions caused by the crisis, a substantiated analysis of properties is of even greater importance, where weaknesses and risks must be included in greater detail.

Interactive 3D Project Visualisation Using ALS Data

Visibility of High-Voltage Lines



Landfill Sites and Volume Calculation



Gas / Oil Pipelines



Routing





A City within the City

On the grounds of the former Asperm airfield, the Central European Region will by 2020 receive a new addition in the form of **asperm Vienna's Urban Lakeside** – a new, ultra-modern centre, offering 8,500 apartments for 20,000 people as well as room for 20,000 new jobs and numerous education and research facilities.

IT IS BY far the City of Vienna's largest construction project in this century. On the 200 hectare large area of the former Asperm airfield in Vienna's Donaustadt district, surrounding a 9 hectare large man-made lake, a new city will emerge within the city, and it will be a strong motor for the entire Central European Region. Through multiple construction phases, 8,500 apartments for 20,000 people will be built around the lake, while office and commercial properties creating around 20,000 new jobs are also planned for this location. The area of asperm Urban Lakeside will be larger than Vienna's 7th and 8th district combined. By the 20's of the current century, numerous schools, polytechnics, university institutes and research facilities will have made asperm Lakeside the dominant research and development location of the Central European Region.

Vienna-Bratislava Axis

Rainer Holzer, Director of the project company Wien3420 AG: "Through the development of an urban focal point on the railway line to Bratislava as well as a fast connection to Vienna's inner city using the U2, we are taking advantage of the opportunity to further nurture the regional partnership along the Vienna-Bratislava axis, with its great economic potential and high quality of life." Come 2020, inter-city trains will take passengers from the train station in asperm Lakeside to Bratislava's Central Station in only 28 minutes. At the same time, the metro line U2, which by 2015 will be extended by three more stops, will reach asperm Lakeside and take riders to the local traffic hub Karlsplatz in central Vienna in just under 30 minutes. Holzer: "This is what makes this location attractive for people beyond the Vienna



"We will turn Asperm into a centre for development of energy-efficient buildings and environmentally-friendly mobility."

Rainer Holzer,
Director of the project company Wien3420 AG

city limits - as a workplace but also a residence and schooling location for many inhabitants of the Central European Region. We are anticipating that many Slovakian nationals will settle in asperm Lakeside too; comparing the rent levels of both capital cities, there is not much difference even today."

New Vienna "Ring Road"

The main attraction of the project is a new "ring road", which will connect all parts of asperm Lakeside. Thanks to its circular layout, the lake and its surrounding recreational area, which is located in its centre, will remain intact as a relaxation and leisure area. From this ring road, the wide business and shopping streets will lead in a star-like shape to the area's periphery. The planners are attaching great importance to the area's mixed use for residential, professional, educational and recreational purposes. Holzer: "We don't want a sleeping city that is empty throughout the day, and we are also not interested in a pure working zone that turns into a dead landscape after 6 p.m. – we have the unique opportunity to plan the city of the future, where working, leisure and living becomes possible within close proximity." The plan envisions a city of short distances that can preferably be travelled using public transport.

Ecology as Central Focus

asperm Vienna's Urban Lakeside could at the same time be Europe's largest research project for ecologically sustainable building. All buildings that are constructed here should meet the strict criteria for low-energy consumption or even the Passive House standard. Special research institutes are planned for development on a dedicated campus. Holzer: "This situation – the possibility of a completely new construction on a green field without having to consider old building structures – is a great breeding ground for new ideas. This is why we will turn Asperm into a centre for development of energy-efficient buildings and environmentally-friendly mobility." For this purpose, the subsidiary Research-to-be-GmbH was founded together with the Vienna Business Agency and the University of Vienna, in order to ensure a smooth know-how transfer between the industrial sector and the Vienna University of Technology, including the acquisition of research businesses for the Lakeside location. Holzer: "It is in asperm that Vienna's urban development department will prove that there is truth to future-oriented ideas." Holzer definitely sees a demand in the market for adequate energy solutions: "Calculations for all construction projects are tighter. Lowering the operating costs is the main concern. Financially viable solutions will quickly find interested parties in the market; this is what we are looking to develop in Asperm."

Cluster Town Asperm Lakeside

Thanks to the Opel gearbox manufacturing plant, located in the area since the 70's, asperm Lakeside is also set to play

a central role in the automotive cluster of the Central European Region. Situated at the interface between the Slovakian automotive plants of Bratislava and Stupava and the strong automotive supply industry of Lower Austria, Burgenland and Vienna, asperm is planned to become the location of a research and competence centre for "green" traffic solutions of the future. Holzer: "Here, research does not only happen in the form of theoretical models, it also gets implemented practically immediately. I'm thinking about building an underground parking garage with power outlets for each parking space, where electrical vehicles can be charged. Here, this can be planned on the drawing table, while existing garages in the urban area would first have to undergo cumbersome renovations." The integration of the automotive and supply industry should create a local research cluster that can rival traditional automotive locations in Germany, Italy and France. The focus on research and development in two very promising economic areas, complemented by further development of the already strong biotechnology sector in Vienna and Lower Austria, is intended to attract many companies active in one of these three fields to establish branches in Asperm Lakeside. Holzer: "The research and development park is meant to ignite the spark and become the starting point for many new business settlements."

Construction of this megaproject is scheduled to start this year. By the end of the year, the environmental impact study should be completed, at which point construction of the man-made lake and the road network will begin, as well as preparations for the extension of the U2 metro line. Holzer: "In Asperm Lakeside, we have the unique opportunity of completing the public transport project at the same time as the buildings, so the residents and users of this district will not have to face inconvenient gaps in the local traffic network."

Christian Neuhold

Public Transport Network

LINKING ASPERN LAKESIDE TO THE PUBLIC TRANSPORT NETWORK

- 2010:** Opening of U2 metro station Aspernstraße
- 2013:** Opening of two U2 metro stations in the area of Asperm Lakeside
 - Connection to two tramway lines
 - Opening of Park & Ride facilities at metro and train station Flugfeld
 - Completion of Flugfeld train station; connection to municipal railway lines and Intercity to Bratislava
- 2015:** Connection to regional railway line S80/R80
- 2016:** Connection to A23 motorway

Interview with **Rudi Schicker**, Vienna City Councillor for Urban Development

“By 2020, a train ride from Vienna-Aspern to Bratislava will take as little as 28 minutes.”

Rudi Schicker, Vienna City Councillor for Urban Development, Traffic and Transport, about the importance of the Central European Region for the future of the four neighbouring countries and the two capital cities of Vienna and Bratislava.

How important is it for the four countries of the Central European Region to present themselves as one common EU region?

In Europe, it has become customary to no longer think in the context of nation-states, but regions. Especially in Western Europe, besides the urban metropolitan centres of London and Paris, the Amsterdam-Brussels-Maastricht-Düsseldorf area has formed a region of approximately 25 million peo-



“These countries, which before had mostly focused on themselves, now realize the advantages that a common region with joint representation brings in the international business location competition.”

Rudi Schicker, City Councillor for Urban Development

ple, which is among the most prosperous in Europe. Compared to this, Vienna with 1.7 million inhabitants is not very strong. The approximately seven million inhabitants of the Central European Region and the two capital cities located there however are distinctly noticed throughout Europe and beyond. This is what makes Central Europe sexy and unique in a tough competition between the European agglomeration areas.

To what degree do the still-existing language barriers complicate the mutual development of the Central European Region?

The multilingualism within this small region is still an obstacle, but there are also many areas - science, for example - where collaborations are already very successful, in spite of this. More challenging than the language barriers however are the barriers that still exist in many people's minds, caused by the decades-long border condition. The example of South Tyrol shows us that it takes approximately three generations until historic notions disappear from people's minds. The borders of the Central European Region have only been open for 20 years, and the neighbouring countries have only been EU member states for five years. But the situation improves with every year that we live together. And the long-standing borders were also what made natural beauty like the Donauauen National Park or the landscapes surrounding March and Thaya possible in the first place. Without the borders, these rivers would probably not have remained so unspoiled throughout the last 40 years. This, of course, provides an unparalleled quality of life for the entire region today.

However, there still are quite large differences regarding income and standard of living. Does this inhibit the mutual development?

Schicker: It is true; Vienna is the fifth-wealthiest region in Europe, while our eastern neighbours still have to make up leeway in regard to income. On the other hand, there also is a greater dynamic due to the affordable wage level in those countries.

To what extent does the current economic crisis hinder the progress in the Central European Region?

The economic crisis is a great opportunity for the Central Eu-

ropean Region because it accelerates the integration process, especially for the neighbours in the east. For years, the Western-Hungarian counties and the regions surrounding Bratislava and Brno have been on a fast-paced journey to make up economic and social leeway, which abruptly came to a halt in the fall of last year. These countries, which before had mostly focused on themselves, now realize the advantages that a common region with joint representation brings in the international business location competition. Due to the crisis, projects that have until now progressed only slowly are suddenly set in motion - for example, the mutual development of the Danube waterway. The best example for this is the success of the Twin City Liner, which made regular passenger boat service on the Danube attractive again.

Have the countries of the Central European Region grown closer in the last few months?

Due to the crisis, even those countries in the Central European Region that were still struggling with historically caused resentment have now grown closer, like Austria and the Czech Republic. The many preconceptions from the past have for the most part been dismantled. Even the most populist parties in the individual countries are not shaping their political agenda at their neighbours' expense anymore. Ethnicity plays a much lesser role today than it did in the past. The younger generation in particular has barely any issues in this regard.

In the Amsterdam-Brussels-Maastricht-Düsseldorf region that you mentioned earlier, there is already a common labour market. Is this also conceivable for the Central European Region?

I assume that there will be a common labour market in this region within only a few years. The provinces of Vienna, Lower Austria and Burgenland are already working closely together in the labour market sector. A common labour market for the entire region could only be advantageous for all parties involved, including employees and enterprises. In the competition of business locations, the Central European Region already is at an advantage thanks to its well-trained workforce. Even today, many Austrian nationals are working in automotive companies in the Bratislava region, and many Czech, Slovak and Hungarian nationals are working in the service and healthcare industries in Lower Austria and Vienna. At the same time however, all parties responsible in the region are advised to avoid unnecessary duplication, for example in hospitals or certain infrastructure facilities.

“In Europe, it has become customary to no longer think in the context of nation-states, but regions.”



Aspern Vienna's Urban Lakeside is a very attractive residential and work location, also for our neighbouring countries.

Despite the language barriers, can the countries' common past under the k.u.k. monarchy be considered an advantage?

The common history not only connects, it also separates. To this day, there are issues between Hungary and Slovakia. And even in recent times, there are great differences of opinion; let's just think about nuclear power, which the eastern countries strongly believe in, but we in Austria have disapproved of for many years, with good reason. Mutual action of the four partners is possible regardless, since they are on par with each other and no single region claims an exclusive leadership role.

Nonetheless, Vienna as the region's largest urban centre is still a great magnet. Will Slovaks and Hungarians also increasingly move to Vienna in 10 to 15 years?

For many years, Vienna has grown slowly, but steadily. In order to meet the requirements for more space, the city will launch the Aspern Vienna's Urban Lakeside project this year - a new quarter located on the former airfield in Vienna's 22nd district, which by the year 2020 will provide approximately 8,800 new apartments for 30,000 people and just as many workspaces. We are also expecting people from the neighbouring regions to move in, given that in 28 minutes, a train ride from Bratislava to Aspern will take just as long as a ride on the U2 metro line to Vienna's inner city. This also makes this new residential location in Vienna very attractive to our neighbours.



"We have made it our business to convince architects that design is not everything when renovating old or building new buildings."

Andreas Hopf,
Director of Wien Holding subsidiary Central Danube

Smart Energy Savings

The energy specialists from Wien Holding subsidiary **Central Danube** are known in the Centrope region for squeezing every last drop of efficiency out of the energy systems. As of this year, the energy sleuths have an additional focus: energy-efficient construction and renovation.

ANDREAS HOPF, RESPONSIBLE for the energy department in his company, does not think much of the green energy label that is being attached to everything these days: "You do not increase your energy efficiency by launching alibi initiatives. To simply turn the old heating system down to a smaller setting is not a concept for saving energy. In matters of energy efficiency, too many people are still focused on individual measures rather than adapting a comprehensive concept."

Central Danube has turned this situation into a business. The main activity of Central Danube's energy agents is summarized under the title "Energy Contracting". Behind this technical term is a consistent idea: Optimizing the energy efficiency of industrial and economic facilities, corporate buildings, administrative buildings and even municipally-owned residential properties. In short: They are assessing where energy can be saved in operations. Andreas Hopf: "It is amazing how much savings potential we can identify, sometimes even in very new and modern buildings."

Not a Cent of Own Resources Required

Here is the best part: The customer does not have to contribute one cent of their own resources to pay for the project. The energy savings achieved by the technical and organizational improvement measures will refinance the investments made, which on average is accomplished within five to ten years. Generally however, the actual effective-

ness of the improvement measures goes far beyond this. The requirements for a successful implementation are met if the object is of substantial size. In general, this means heating energy costs of more than 40,000 EUR per year. The Dianabad public pool in Vienna's second district, built in 1999, was subject to a detailed analysis back in 2006. Around 350 tonnes of "unnecessary" CO2 emissions were found during the assessment. After introducing heat recovery from air and water as well as improvements to the water treatment, this is now being saved on a yearly basis. Technologies used in Energy Contracting include modern boiler plants, interconnected regulation systems, regenerative energies like thermal solar collectors, heat pumps, biomass and much more.

Central Danube operates at an international level: Besides Austria, the energy optimizers are also increasing efficiencies in Hungary and Slovakia. One example for a successful project abroad is the Hajos Alfred Aquatic indoor pool in Budapest. In this historic facility, built in the 30's of the previous century, CO2 emissions are now being reduced by approximately 500 tonnes per year. Andreas Hopf: "Recently, the demand for our innovative services in Austria has been particularly great; certainly also because as a small company, we can offer maximum flexibility. There is a wide scope when drafting contracts, and we provide customized solutions for each client." As a 50% subsidiary of Wien Holding, Central Danube also benefits from the City of Vienna's many years of experience. The other 50% shareholder, Raiffeisen Bank, is a solid financing partner in case there is a requirement.

Energy Contracting

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aspern
Vienna's Urban
Lakeside

aspern Urban Lakeside – A Location for Ambitious Partners

aspern Vienna's Urban Lakeside is situated in the northeast of the capital city, in the heart of CENTROPE. As one of Europe's largest urban development projects, its goal is to provide a working and living environment at a new level of quality. The Urban Lakeside will offer Viennese flair and an optimal connection to international regions.

FROM THE WORKPLACE and your own four walls to the Vienna International Airport in fifteen minutes, in less than half an hour to Vienna's inner city as well as Bratislava - and in only five minutes to the Donau-Auen National Park: This promises a great quality of life and best conditions for a business location, for international headquarters and small start-up offices alike. aspern Vienna's Urban Lakeside will combine what elsewhere is considered a contradiction: Business location and recreation area; city and nature; living in Vienna and working in Europe.

"aspern is aimed at companies and investors looking for an urban and dynamic environment," explains Rainer Holzer, CEO of the development company for Vienna's Urban

Lakeside, Wien 3420 AG. "Particularly for research-oriented companies as well as R&D institutions, Vienna's Urban Lakeside will be an ideal location thanks to its excellent working and living conditions." As a stimulus project for an R&D park in aspern, a technology centre is being built. It will offer high-quality office space, well-equipped facilities and common recreational spaces for start-ups, production companies and office partnerships, as well as a centralized management infrastructure. "Companies in the technology centre should be able to fully focus on their core business," says Holzer.

The architectural competition for the technology centre has been launched, and the first tenant has been determined as well: research TUb GmbH, a co-operation between the Vienna University of Technology, the Vienna Business Agency (VBA) and Wien 3420 AG. "The company operates at the interface between research and economy, providing services for businesses that want to benefit from a strong partnership with research institutions like the Vienna University of Technology." The thematic focus lies in the subject areas of energy and environment. Results will also be applied in the urban development process, for example regarding energy efficiency in buildings or findings in the field of mobility. "In Vienna's Urban Lakeside, the market for innovative companies is practically at their doorstep," as Holzer points out. More information about Vienna's Urban Lakeside: www.aspern-seestadt.at

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High-Speed Internet For Everyone

Two million Austrians, most of them in the Central European Region, will benefit from the greatest infrastructure initiative of the last few years.

125 YEARS AFTER the invention of the telephone, the Austrian telecommunications system is - regardless of the crisis - about to undergo its most radical change since copper cables were laid. Over the next four years, Telekom Austria, market leader in fixed line networks as well as - through their subsidiary mobilkom austria - mobile communications, will invest 1.5 billion EUR in upgrading the old phone lines to a high-capacity fibre optic network. The goal: Every household and every business in Austria, especially in the urban centres, should get faster internet access. As a first step, 150,000 connections are being upgraded to modern fibre optic lines, guaranteeing data transfer rates of 100 megabit per second.

Expansion of Networks and IT Infrastructure
Cable network providers like UPC and technology companies like IBM and Hewlett Packard are also investing millions of Euros in the expansion of networks and IT infrastructure. For business and politics, the development of a high-capacity data highway is an important initiative, which will contribute to strengthening the advantages of the region as a business location - not only for Austria but for the whole Central European Region. Telecommunications companies in the Czech Republic and the Bratislava area as well as Western Hungary are also moving forward with the network expansion. While economic times are still tough, this is intended to lay the digital foundation that should give Centrope's businesses a considerable advantage during the challenging phase of the upcoming economic boom. The accelerated development of e-Government offerings should provide additional competitive advantages for businesses in the Austrian part of the Central European Region. Thanks to the creation of a one-stop-shop portal, business owners for example will soon be able to search for all relevant information in a targeted manner, enabling them to quickly and efficiently meet their obligations to public authorities like the tax office.  Christian Neuhold

Centrope News spoke with Telekom Austria boss **Hannes Ametsreiter** about the broadband initiative



How much is Telekom investing in creating a high-speed data network over the next few years?

Hannes Ametsreiter: In the next four years, we are going to invest one billion EUR in the upgrade of the fixed line network, as well as 500 million EUR in the enhancement of mobilkom austria's mobile communications network.

What does "high-speed" mean in this case?

Ametsreiter: The high-speed data network is the most important infrastructure investment of the 21st century. We are replacing 125-year-old copper cables with modern fibre optic ones. In the first expansion

phase, we are laying fibre optic lines for 150,000 households and businesses, offering data transfer rates of up to 100 megabit per second to our customers. This makes it possible to watch digital movies in real time, make phone calls and surf the internet all at the same time.

Is really every household and every business going to have broadband internet access?

Ametsreiter: We will not be able to lay fibre optic cables to every single apartment, but thanks to VDSL-2 technology, we will be able to offer data transfer rates of up to 30 MB per second, even in rural areas. That is an enormous increase compared to the current connection speeds.

"Success through Cooperation"

Friedrich Gruber, spokesperson for the management of PORR Solutions in an interview with Centrope News about the economic significance of the Central European Region.

How important is the Central European Region for PORR Solutions?

In the public eye, "Eastern Europe" is often perceived as a homogenous group of countries that face similar economic challenges. It is forgotten that every country has specific requirements and conditions. Companies that are present in some or all countries of the Centrope region therefore need to individually adapt to each market. The "Centrope" project leads to a gradual geographic and economic convergence of the countries. Businesses can take advantage of a number of synergy effects thanks to this union. As a project developer, PORR Solutions benefits from this cooperation in more than one way. On the one hand, the region has long been a focus of our business operations, and closer coordination allows for easier access to interesting projects beyond the border limits. On the other hand, cross-regional projects are easier to finance when the partners know and trust each other. Secure financing for infrastructure and real estate projects is the basis of every major construction project - not only in times of crisis.

What percentage of total business volume originates from the region?

In 2008, more than two thirds of PORR Solutions' project volume was generated in other European countries, the major-

ity of this in Austria's neighbouring countries. Due to anti-cyclical economic stimulus measures and the high backlog demand of infrastructure in the fields of transport, energy and environment, there was also a secured and stable demand for projects in the region in 2009.

What is the volume of PPP projects in Centrope?

As a partner in a consortium, PORR Solutions was awarded an approximately 65 kilometre long section of the Hungarian M6 motorway in 2008, with a PPP project value of close to 520 million EUR. This is a follow-up order, rewarding PORR Solutions for our good work on already completed motorway sections. Besides development, construction and financing, PORR Solutions will also handle the maintenance and operation of the motorway for the next 30 years.

In Austria, the ground-breaking ceremony for the new education centre Nordbahnhof in Vienna was held in early May of 2009 - the first PPP project in the education sector, and one of Austria's first PPP projects in general. Furthermore, PORR Solutions was also able to pre-qualify for two PPP projects in the areas of building construction infrastructure and sports venue construction.

Which infrastructure tasks does PORR Solutions devote itself to in the region?

In the past few years, PORR Group has contributed to the development and expansion of the basic infrastructure in the new EU member states. PORR Solutions Immobilien- und Infrastrukturprojekte GmbH, the project development team of PORR Group, is an important player. PORR Solutions' core business is the development of real estate and infrastructure projects as well as the provision of services during all phases of a project's life cycle, in Austria as well as Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe. As mentioned earlier, in the Centrope region, PORR Solutions has contributed significantly to the expansion of the Hungarian transport network through the development of the Duna and Tolna sections of the neighbouring country's M6 motorway. Despite the worldwide economic crisis, the need for infrastructure is unabated. PORR Group has the experience, the know-how and the regional networks that enable us to continue contributing an important share to the development of this region which is so important for Europe.

Does the union help the participating countries during the crisis?

An economic network between European regions is of course helpful. This has already been proven by the successful model of the European Union. Ultimately, an economic cooperation also generates new stimulus.



"PORR Solutions' core business is the development of real estate and infrastructure projects."

Friedrich Gruber,
Spokesperson for the management of PORR Solutions



Logistics Giant on the Danube

With 12 million tonnes of goods handled annually, the **Port of Vienna** is the largest logistics centre in the Central European Region. With swift upgrades and specific plans for expansion, the Port of Vienna is looking to further develop this leading position.

AFTER MID-2010, FLOODING will not be an option anymore at the Port of Vienna. As of then, a giant gate weighing several hundred tonnes will protect the Freudenua basin from overflowing. At that point, the Port of Vienna will not only be the largest logistics centre in the Central European Region (with a revenue of 48 million EUR), but also the most modern and safest. This million-euro investment, which also includes improving the flood protection along the quay walls, is only one part of the master plan that is meant to maintain the Port of Vienna's position as the region's most important cargo handling terminal throughout the coming decade.

Rudolf Mutz, appointed to Director of the Port of Vienna half a year ago: "The Port of Vienna is Austria's only tri-modal logistics centre, where goods can be distributed using rail, water and road. We are looking to further boost these advantages through targeted expansion and reconstruction measures." The next important development step besides the completion of the flood-proof gate is to directly connect the

"The Port of Vienna is looking to further expand its leading position as Central Europe's largest container terminal."

Port of Vienna to the motorway network. The construction of the Lobau Tunnel, which will run underneath the Port of Albern, also will include a connector to the Austrian motorway network. This way, access will be significantly easier for trucks, which transport as much as 50 percent of the goods handled at the Port of Vienna. Furthermore, there are land reserves of up to 70,000 square metres at the Port of Albern, which in the coming decade will be offered as an attractive business location to foreign companies.

The Port of Vienna is looking to further expand its leading position as Central Europe's largest container terminal. Even now, the port can offer over 7,000 container storage spaces on an area of 100,000 square metres, as well as being Austria's most modern container terminal connecting water, rail and road. In the past year, 335,000 containers (TEU) were handled. After the end of the current economic crisis, experts expect that number to quickly rise to around 500,000 TEU. Mutz: "Containers can be loaded to individual trucks and distributed in the Vienna area without losing

time through consolidation shipments using rail or ship." In order not to lose valuable transport time, three container crane bridges ensure smooth operations. Mutz: "We also offer our customers daily block train connections to Europe's most important seaports such as Hamburg and Rotterdam." The central focus of container traffic still is on the large European ports of the North Sea and the English Channel, although at the Port of Vienna, the continuous expansion of the Black Sea port of Constanța is also kept in mind. At the moment however, the majority of containers destined for the Central European Region

are still delivered by rail and above all by truck. Mutz: "This is also because the Danube was blocked for freight through-traffic for a long time, due to the conflicts in former Yugoslavia. It will certainly take some more time until the Danube achieves a freight volume comparable to the Rhine or the Main." But since the North Sea ports are slowly starting to reach their capacity limits, the Black Sea as an additional gateway to the European market is becoming more and more important in international freight traffic. Mutz: "At the moment, only 20 percent of the freight is arriving by ship, so there is great potential for development."

Just as important for the Port of Vienna as the modern container terminal is their car terminal. Thanks to the direct connection to the road and rail network as well as a high-capacity roll-on/roll-off ramp for direct loading from rail to ship, the Port of Vienna has developed into one of Austria's largest car handling terminals with 60,000 vehicles per year. Therefore, investments into the car terminal will continue. Mutz: "As part of the port expansion, we want to significantly increase the number of covered parking spaces." This will on the one hand eliminate the risk of soiling, for example through seabirds; on the other hand, the vehicles will be protected against the elements, unlike in many other auto logistics centres in Austria. Mutz: "Through these important building activities, we want to prevent things like the hail damage that occurred at many auto centres this year."

The expansion of the Port of Vienna is made possible by the technological advancements in shipping traffic. Since cargo ships and barges don't have to manoeuvre using tugboats anymore but can also dock independently, the Port of Vienna will soon be able to operate using a much smaller basin than today. 70,000 square metres of additional space will therefore be available soon for rebuilding and expanding the port. The most important part of the project will be to reduce handling time within the car terminal. Mutz: "At the moment, the layout is not yet ideal; we will make the location even more attractive for car importers by shortening the handling channels."

The Port of Vienna is however not only investing in its logistics centres, but is also playing a leading role in the urban development of the right banks of the Danube in Vienna. Just recently, the Vienna Marina, a private yacht marina with a restaurant and boathouse, was purchased. Mutz: "We want to link Vienna to the Danube for good." The first steps towards implementation have already been made. The Catamaran Building on Handelskai road, in the immediate vicinity of the South-East connector motorway (Südost-Tangente), is one of Vienna's most modern office buildings and will be turned over to its tenants within days. Right next to it, the U2 metro station is in the process of being completed. As of mid-2010, it will only be a short 15-minute ride from the city centre to the banks of the Danube. Around this metro station, residential and office buildings are currently being developed. Thanks to the future metro connection, the Marina is also set to be upgraded for additional visitors. Mutz: "We will certainly be very careful with



"We want to link Vienna to the Danube for good."
Rudolf Mutz, Direktor des Wiener Hafens

regards to building activity, but there are many ways to create noise protection from the Handelskai road and to offer recreational facilities that include an unobstructed view of the Danube as part of their attraction."

The Port of Vienna is of course also coordinating its expansion plans with the other Danube ports in the Central European Region. Vienna has a 26-percent share in the Port of Krems, as well as a share in the Port of Győr. There is also a constant exchange with the Port of Bratislava. Mutz: "Bratislava has a very different focus than Vienna. For example, there is a large dry dock for vessel repairs, an area that Vienna has no operations in at all."

Christian Neuhold

The Port of Vienna in Numbers:

Area	350 hectares
Dock Length	5,000 metres
Crane Capacity	10 – 160 tonnes
Covered Storage Space	70,000 square metres
Material Storage Capacity	36,000 tonnes
Outdoor Storage Space	200,000 square metres
Car Terminal Capacity	10,000 vehicle parking spaces
Container Terminal Capacity	7000
Total Handling Volume 2008	12 million tonnes
Container Handling Volume 2008	335,000
Revenue 2008	48 million EUR
Employees 2008	247



New Power (Plants) for Central Europe

Eastern Austria's **energy suppliers** are increasingly focusing on the expansion of renewable energies - and most of all, wind power. They also are extending their know-how into neighbouring countries.

IT WAS A symbolic event in a symbolic place. On June 25th, 2009, a new area began in Zwentendorf on the Danube: 30 years after the popular vote against the start-up of the nuclear power plant, electricity is now flowing from the much disputed power plant location in the Tullner Feld Plains. This time, of course, there were no protests from opponents when Governor Erwin Pröll and EVN's General Director Burkhard Hofer ceremonially activated the first part of the new power plant: It is a photovoltaic system, generating 100-percent sustainable, environmentally-friendly energy. Instead of nuclear power, Zwentendorf is now producing green electricity from the power of the sun. A variety of technical principles is being used for this purpose - from a system on the roof of the never-operated nuclear reactor, to a system on the facade, to an open-space solar farm. After its last reconstruction phase, the Zwentendorf solar plant will have a maximum output of 180 kilowatt (kWp). EVN boss Hofer: "We see Zwentendorf as a symbol for a future of renewable energies, and we also want to use the location to familiarize our customers with all the possible usages of electricity and heat from renewable energies."

New Energy Boost through EU Climate Goals

Not only the historic power plant location of Zwentendorf, but the entire Central European Region is on the look-out for new possibilities for energy generation. The EU guidelines are a major impulse for this. With the climate change package 20-20-20, Europe wants to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 20 percent by 2020, compared to 1990. To accomplish this, green energies (from wind, water and biomass) should be expanded from a current EU-wide share of 8.5 percent to 20 percent. Furthermore, using energy saving measures, a 20-percent increase in energy efficiency should be achieved. By 2020, Austria has to increase its share of renewable energies from currently approximately 23 to 34 percent. Previously mentioned Lower Austrian energy supplier EVN (over one million customers for electricity, gas and heat) will therefore invest around 100 million EUR in projects for renewable energies between 2008 and 2010. "This brings additional jobs and contributes to overcoming the crisis," as EVN's General Director Burkhard Hofer points out.

EVN Focuses on Future-Oriented Projects

At the heart of these future-oriented projects is a biomass pyrolysis system, which generates high-quality biogas from

biogenic raw materials. In this system, straw, wood, energy plants and energy grains can be used. Approximately 190,000 tonnes of biomass are to be recycled annually. The pilot system is already in operation and supplies biogas to the adjacent thermal power plant of Dürnröhr, which uses it for the generation of green energy. In its finished state, the system will have a thermal output of 120 megawatt. Another project that is part of EVN's general concept is the upgrade of the district heat supply for the greater St. Pölten area through the Dürnröhr power plant. Via Austria's longest district heating pipeline (31 km), up to 200 gigawatt hours

of environmentally-friendly district heat per year can be supplied to approximately 200,000 customers. In the field of wind power, three wind farms with a total output of approximately 50 MW are planned in detail and already approved by authorities. What is still missing - after the new green electricity law was enacted in parliament on September 23rd, and after a 14-month delay - is the new feeding tariff regulation. "We expect this regulation to come into place before the end of 2009," EVN spokesperson Stefan Zach says optimistically. "evn-naturkraft" is already operating 63 wind power systems in seven wind farms. In addition, electricity is generated in three calorific



"With the existing 206 wind turbines alone, we are saving approximately 550,000 tonnes of CO₂ every year."

Hans Niessl, Governor of Burgenland



"We see the photovoltaic system at the historic Zwentendorf location as a symbol for a future of renewable energies."

Burkhard Hofer, General Director of EVN

"With the climate change package 20-20-20, Europe wants to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 20 percent by 2020, compared to 1990."

This young man has lots to smile about: Renewable, environmentally-friendly energy sources will bring electricity and heat in the future. And they are fun to play with, too.



plants (Dürnrohr, Theiß and Korneuburg), five reservoir power stations and 63 river power plants. Furthermore, EVN is Austria's largest biomass heat supplier. Zach: "At the moment, we are operating 44 plants. And next year, our biggest biomass project to date will go on line in Ternitz."

Wien Energie Relies on Raising Efficiency

Wien Energie, Austria's largest regional energy service provider, is mainly focusing on increasing the efficiency in existing plants. On May 22nd, 2009, the new Block 1 at the Simmering power station was opened. Approximately 300 million EUR was invested in the upgrade, and a so-called combined heat and power cycle (CHP) is now producing electricity and heat at the same time, achieving an excellent efficiency level of 81 percent. Through the use of the latest technologies, the new CHP plant in Simmering meets the strictest environmental protection and emission guidelines in Europe. Due to the plant's increased efficiency and the use of natural gas as combustible, the specific CO2 emissions are 55 percent lower than in a coal-fired power plant. Thanks to Simmering 1, approximately 75 percent of electrical

"Now, ministers of economic, environmental and consumer protection affairs need to quickly enact feeding tariffs at a European level."

energy required in Wien Energie's service area can now be generated in-house. Beyond that, Wien Energie sees great potential in the development and installation of renewable energy systems in the eastern neighbouring countries. In South-Eastern Europe, Wien Energie is a welcome partner with their know-how in small-scale hydropower. Together with the Austrian company EEE (Energy Eastern Europe), Wien Energie has over 30 concessions for the construction and operation of small-scale hydro-electric plants in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro and Macedonia; some of these projects are already under construction. In Romania, Wien Energie has successfully participated in tenders to purchase small-scale hydro-electric plants. The first sites are already in the process of being reconstructed and modernized. In Eastern and North-Eastern Europe, Wien Energie is primarily focusing on the construction of wind farms. The latest project is the wind farm in Levél, Hungary, with an output of approximately 24 megawatt. Together with AWP (Austrian Wind Power), the wind farm Sepopol is being built in the north of Poland. The facility, situated in a strong wind zone close to the coast, will achieve an output of 60 megawatt once completed. Meanwhile, Wien Energie's subsidiary Energiecomfort is expanding across borders with local heat systems for areas of high population density. Energiecomfort has two subsidiaries in Hungary and four in Slovakia. Their latest project abroad is a bio-based local heat network in Upper Bavaria.

Burgenland wants 100 % Green Energy by 2013

Burgenland is pursuing a goal that is both ambitious and exemplary: By 2013, Austria's eastern-most province wants to supply 100 percent of its own (green) energy. With wind conditions similar to those on the North Sea Coast, they are relying on the use of wind energy to achieve this. At the moment, 206 wind power systems with an output of 370 MW are already covering more than half of Burgenland's electricity needs. With this great share of wind power, Burgenland is not only a pioneer in Austria, but also one of the leading wind regions worldwide. "With the existing 206 wind turbines alone, we are saving approximately 550,000 tonnes of CO2 every year," Governor Hans Niessl rejoices. "With approximately 150 systems in ten wind farms and 248 MW of installed wind power output, Austrian Wind Power (a subsidiary of Burgenland's regional energy supplier BEWAG) is the by far the largest wind power provider in Austria." But the groundbreaking decision by the provincial government - "Energy Autonomy from Renewable Energy Sources by 2013" - proves that Burgenland does not stop there. Johannes Horvath, CEO of AWP, proudly says: "In the next four years, we are planning to add a further 200 MW of wind power." In the last few years, Bur-

genland's green energy pioneers have also been very active outside the country. BEWAG's subsidiary International Wind Power GmbH already developed one wind farm in the Czech Republic (18 MW) and one in Hungary (8 MW). Further projects were developed in six other countries (Italy, Croatia, Slovakia, Poland, Romania and Bulgaria). Aside from BEWAG's subsidiary IWP and evn-naturkraft, many other renowned Austrian energy suppliers like Raiffeisen Energy & Environment, WEB Windenergie AG, Windkraft Simonsfeld and Verbund Renewable Power are also focusing on one country in particular: Bulgaria. On the Black Sea Coast, between Varna and the Romanian border, five wind farms with a total of 100 megawatt of actual power output are being built. The investment volume during the first phase amounts to 170 million EUR. In a second phase, project expansions and new wind farms with an output of

300 megawatt are to follow. The total investment comes to approximately 700 million EUR.

Waiting for Better Feeding Tariffs

After the Green Electricity Law doldrums, the wind industry in Austria is now at last waiting for some tailwind from the political side. Stefan Hantsch, Director of the Austrian Wind Energy Association, insists: "Now, ministers of economic, environmental and consumer protection affairs need to quickly enact feeding tariffs at a European level. For wind power, that would be 9.8 cents per kilowatt hour." This way, further development of green electricity systems could be accelerated, and investments in the amount of 3.8 billion EUR could flow. Hantsch: "In the field of wind power alone, projects with an output of 150 megawatt could be developed within one year." ■ Gottfried Haslinger

Interview with **Johannes Horvath**, Director of Austrian Wind Power GmbH

"A Success Story of Wind Energy Use"

Why was Austrian Wind Power (AWP) founded as a 100-percent subsidiary of the regional energy supplier BEWAG?

Johannes Horvath: Burgenland's provincial government has determined the goal to accomplish a 100-percent independent electricity supply from renewable energy sources by 2013. This means that Burgenland should generate as much green electricity from its own renewable sources as is being used. And we at Austrian Wind Power will ensure that Burgenland can cover its electricity needs without relying on imports.

What does AWP's interim status on the way to 2013 look like?

Horvath: With ten wind farms, comprising approximately 150 wind turbines with an actual power output of 248 megawatt, Austrian Wind Power is the largest wind energy supplier in Austria - and an example for how successful the use of wind energy can be in a certain region. The economic stimulus for the region from wind energy use amounts to approximately 150 million EUR. The wind farm projects play an important role in environmental protection and therefore also provide a significant contribution to the achievement of international environmental guidelines, like the Kyoto Protocol. Thanks to the generation of wind energy, approximately 35 million litres of crude oil are saved every year in Burgenland - which corresponds to CO2 emissions of approximately 365,000 tonnes.

Can Burgenland's 100-percent goal be achieved using only wind energy?

Horvath: Yes - particularly in Burgenland, we are still seeing great potential in wind energy use; not only on the Parndorf Plate in the north, but also in Central Burgenland. Until 2013, we are planning to add approximately 80 new wind energy

systems with approx. 200 MW. By only using wind power, it is possible to expand the output capacity for clean electricity production in a fast, cost-efficient and at the same time environmentally-friendly way. The experiences of the past few years motivate us to make even more use of the positive, inexhaustible powers of the wind, and to integrate our experiences into the planning, construction and operation of wind farms. We want - and have to - reduce our energy dependence, which includes the dependence on the import of fossil fuels. In Burgenland, wind is our primary energy source - and we need to take advantage of that.



"Thanks to the generation of wind energy, approximately 35 million litres of crude oil are saved every year in Burgenland."

Johannes Horvath,
Director of Austrian Wind Power GmbH



The Strong Heart of the Central European Region

Vienna is not only the world's most liveable city; it also is the main business location of the Central European Region, and the gateway to Central and Eastern Europe for 300 international high-profile companies that have offices here.

VIENNA IS NUMBER 1 – worldwide. At least this is the conclusion of the publishers of the renowned Mercer study, which named Vienna the world's most liveable city in 2008. With 108.6 points, the Austrian capital is a marginal winner over Zurich and Geneva, but is clearly ahead of Vancouver, Auckland and Düsseldorf. This of course makes Vienna attractive for many people in the Central European Region. By 2030, according to the experts from Statistics Austria, Vienna's population will have grown by almost 200,000 people, from currently 1.7 million to over 1.9 million inhabitants. For Vienna Mayor Michael Häupl, prognoses such as these are a clear sign that the city – despite the continuous eastern European expansion of the EU – has not lost its function as an important economic bridge to Central and Eastern Europe. Häupl: "At the moment, more than 300 international corporations have established their headquarters for

"Despite the crisis, WIFO is expecting a growth of 1.6 percent in real gross value added for the fiscal year of 2009."

their European or Eastern European affairs in Vienna. And many signs point to a further growth of this number in the next few years." According to Häupl, among Vienna's assets in the international competition of business locations are its high quality of life and the city's safety record, as well as the local human resources, high per-capita productivity and the capital city's excellent infrastructure.

Vienna's Economy is Crisis-Proof

Especially in times of economic difficulty, Vienna's economy seems to be crisis-proof. According to Peter Huber from the Economic Research Institute (WIFO), while the real-economic consequences of the crisis in the financial markets in early 2009 did affect Austria as well, the crisis only reached Vienna at a later point in time and is running a fairly moderate course. Despite the crisis, WIFO is expecting a growth of 1.6 percent in real gross value added for the fiscal year of 2009. Contributors to this are the energy and transport sectors, as well as the regional industrial and city tourism sectors. Even though there are losses in these areas too, they are rather moderate in Vienna compared to other regions. An almost two-billion-EUR economic stimulus programme initiated by Vienna's provincial government is also showing positive effects. It allowed employment numbers in the construction industry to remain stable, especially in building construction and infrastructure projects like the expansion of the metro network or the construction of the new Vienna Central Station.

Research Location of International Calibre

In order to maintain its good position in the international location comparison, Vienna is strongly investing in research and innovation. As many as 35,000 people are already working in Vienna's research sector, in universities, competence centres and research companies. Vienna is currently supporting research activities with funding of approximately 80 million EUR. Early in 2009, the city presented an additional research stimulus package with a further 60 million EUR injection. In the next few years, this will not only be used to invest in research infrastructure like the Campus Vienna Biocenter or the Arsenal Research centre, but also to support brilliant young scientists and Vienna's competence

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Nobel economics prize winner Joseph Stiglitz attended the 10-year celebrations for Tech Gate Vienna. In this photo, left to right: Thomas Jakoubek, Werner Faymann, Joseph E. Stiglitz, Michael Häupl.

“Support activities for Vienna as a biotechnology location are bundled in the Life Science Austria (LISA) initiative.”

centres. In early October, Tech Gate Vienna celebrated its 10th birthday. Located beside the Danube, close to Reichsbrücke Bridge, around 800 employees from approximately 60 technology companies in the fields of telecommunications, information technology, bio and nanotechnology as well as telematics are at work there today. Thanks to this and other initiatives, Vienna has in the last few years developed into the IT and telecommunications capital of Central and Eastern Europe; every tenth person in Vienna is employed with a company in this sector. Created by the City of Vienna specifically for this purpose, the organization Vienna IT-Enterprises (VITE) supports research activities in this innovative field in a targeted manner.

City of Young, Creative Entrepreneurs

The City of Vienna also formed a special organization to support the Young Creatives. “Departure” supports entrepreneurs and founders in the Creative Industries of fashion, music, audio-vision, multimedia, design, publishing, arts and architecture, who want to make an impact on the urban scene and contribute to the prosperity of the metropolis of Vienna. Since Departure was launched in May of 2004, 213 projects were successfully supported. To further strengthen the media sector which is so important for Vienna - after all, it includes 2,000 companies with around 50,000 employees in this metropolis - the Media Quarter Marx in Vienna’s third district has continuously been expanded since 2003. At its heart are modern film and TV studios, which by the end of 2010 will be complemented by multimedia-suitable office buildings with a space of 40,000 square metres.

Life Science Austria, which bundles the support activities for medical technology and biotechnology at the Vienna location, also promotes start-up companies and subsidiaries of international corporations. Approximately 140 companies, most of them from the pharma and biotech industries, have settled in Vienna with around 9,700 employees. These companies also working in close cooperation with Vienna’s universities and the research institutions of the Central European Region.

Cooperation to Protect the Business Location

In order to further strengthen Vienna’s position, transnational cooperation is promoted as well. In the next few years, 75 million EUR will be invested in the enhancement of collaborations between Vienna and Slovakia, both from EU subsidies and national sources managed by the City of



Media Quarter Marx is turning into Austria’s largest media location. On the premises of the former St. Marx abattoirs, a technologically and organizationally ideal environment is being created for representatives of the media and the creative industries.



Tech Gate Vienna is the city’s top location for high-tech developments, offering all tenants an ideal platform to strengthen collaborations and informal contacts, which contributes to the dynamization of the technology and knowledge transfer process.

Vienna. Specialty projects that unite people in the labour market as well as the educational field will be funded, for example, the school initiative EdTWIN, which allowed 500 students from Vienna and Bratislava to spend a day in each other’s city in the spring of 2009. Vienna Deputy Mayor Renate Brauner: “Exchanging experiences, getting to know each other and benefitting from each others’ strengths and competences is important for the positive development of the entire region.”

Christian Neuhold

Business Location Vienna: Technology Centres • Clusters

BRC – Business & Research Center Höchstädtplatz
www.brc.co.at

ENERGYbase
www.energybase.at

Media Quarter Marx
www.mediaquarter.at

TECHbase Vienna
www.techbase.at

VBC – Campus Vienna Biocenter
www.viennabiocenter.org

ACVR – Automotive Cluster Vienna Region
www.acvr.at

LISA – Life Science Austria Vienna Region
www.lisavr.at

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Interview with **Gerhard Hirczi**,
Director of the Vienna Business Agency

Urban Development as a Driver for Growth

Which target areas in the city of Vienna is the Vienna Business Agency currently focusing on?

As the largest property owner, the VBA is closely connected to the development of the new district "asperm Vienna's Urban Lakeside". asperm Lakeside will be the new place of residence for 20,000 people, and will bring just as many jobs. This urban development area is important for the further growth of Vienna as well as the whole Centrope and Twin-City region. For businesses, asperm Lakeside will become a new gateway into the CEE region, where we will focus on research and development. Vienna and the whole Centrope region will benefit from this project long term.

In which areas of Vienna's economy do you see the greatest potential for growth at the moment (i.e. biotechnology, etc.)?

After its dynamic development in the recent years, the field of biotechnology certainly holds further growth potential in the future. The media industry is also showing highly positive developments. Energy technologies, environmental tech-



"In 2009, the City of Vienna allocated approximately 37 million EUR for the funding programmes of the VBA and its subsidiaries."

Gerhard Hirczi,
Director of the Vienna Business Agency



The VBA offers workspace in various office centres for start-ups, SPOs (single-person operations) and small-scale enterprises. Their latest project: A loft for the Creative Industries sector, located on Zinckgasse.

nologies and urban technologies as well as the ICT sector are further examples for industries with potential for growth. In the future, Vienna has to - and is going to - focus even more on the technology and research sectors.

Are there special services for single-person operations and small enterprises in Vienna? If so, please name a few examples.

With our platform "Mingo Services", we are specifically targeting SPOs and small businesses. We offer affordable office space of 15 square metres and up, and support these organizations with numerous services. This includes free-of-charge workshops on general subjects of everyday business life, as well as incorporation coaching and support in innovation management matters. The services are intended for start-ups, entrepreneurs, and newly self-employed individuals as well as - especially important in my opinion - businesses with an immigrant background.

With which amounts is the VBA currently funding which initiatives or economic sectors in Vienna?

The funding programmes of the Vienna Business Agency are quite diversified. VBA's funding programmes support entrepreneurs as well as Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises; for example, local suppliers or businesses looking to enter international markets. The material goods production sector was a funding priority in the last few years. In 2009, three million EUR were allocated for this sector alone. Furthermore, our subsidiaries ZIT and Departure are offering funding in the areas of technology and research as well as the creative industries. In 2009, the City of Vienna allocated approximately 37 million EUR for the funding programmes of the VBA and its subsidiaries. This is supplemented with our services in the field of property development.

The VBA is providing special services in order to support female entrepreneurs on their way to autonomy. What initiatives are there, what is being funded, and in which way do women receive additional support?

The VBA has operated a special service centre for female entrepreneurs for ten years. At VBA's Female Entrepreneur Centre, we offer free consulting, funding advice, sourcing of affordable start-up office space, workshops, networking opportunities, a mentoring programme and much more.

In your opinion, how important is the Central Europe / Centrope region for a positive development of Vienna as a business location?

One of our opportunities for growth lies in cooperation and integration across our borders. Vienna is the centre of the economic region of Centrope. Therefore, a strong Centrope region is also important for Vienna as a business location.

In which areas will the economic cooperation between the states of the Central European region become even stronger?

Economic cooperation in the Centrope region is characterized by a long-term orientation and already extends into many different sectors like technology, education and research. A current initiative is working on establishing a transnational ICT Cluster. An MBA study programme in the automotive field was already implemented successfully by the Vienna University of Technology and the Bratislava University of Technology. And within the Vienna region, Vienna is also collaborating with the provinces of Lower Austria and Burgenland in matters of international location marketing.

Harald Greger about sustainability in general, and aluminium.

Building material of the future

Is sustainability merely a trend, or rather a trend-setting development?

Greger: First of all: In the near future, nothing will go without sustainability. The term sustainability, initially a doubtlessly positive notion, has had its original ecological meaning and message diminished in many places. This has led to the point where the term evokes disaffirmation in renowned experts, because it is more and more degenerating into a buzz word. Navigating through the jungle of sustainability, today's definition needs to include ecological, economical and social aspects.

How will the topic of sustainability affect the construction of buildings in the future?

Greger: The holistic perception of sustainability establishes itself more and more. Today, it is already being demanded by developers and users alike. Building sustainability is the order of the day. It's important to understand that sustainability is never about an isolated perception, but a holistic one. Heat insulation for example is certainly important - however, passive house standards alone will not save the real estate world. People need environments worth living in, good air - or, to say it another way, expressible intelligent architecture. And that is originally sustainable.

Which aspects of sustainability does aluminium offer?

Greger: Aluminium's ecological factor includes two aspects. One, the material itself: Aluminium can be recycled completely. Re-melted aluminium has the same quality as primary aluminium. When a building is demolished, aluminium is separated and re-melted. You will receive the same quality as in primary aluminium, only with 95 percent less

energy consumption. This is why re-melted aluminium has the same price on the world market as primary aluminium, and this equality ensures that it will be recycled again.

... and the second aspect of sustainability?

Greger: Using these aluminium profile systems, you can build in an energy-optimized way. The aluminium construction is an incredibly flexible building system, in which glass and other modules can be integrated - even photovoltaic elements, which are shaped like fins. At the end of the day, sustainability shows in the long-lasting performance of the building, the room temperature and the operating costs - in short, in the high value of the building itself.



Harald Greger,
CEO, Aluminium-Fenster-Institut

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Andreas Rechberger, Director of Immoresult Property Development GesmbH, about the development of the Central European Region's real estate market.

Everything under One Roof

Vasko+Partner, with 250 employees, are one of Austria's largest civil engineering companies offering their complete service portfolio domestically and internationally. The range of services includes project management, general planning, structural planning, building services engineering and building physics as well as controlling, construction site management, completion reports and permit reviews.



"Especially in times like these, opportunities for future projects arise, and we want to seize some of them."

Andreas Rechberger,
Director of Immoresult Property Development GesmbH

THROUGH THEIR LOCAL branches in Belgrade, Bratislava, Brno, Budapest and Sofia, Vasko+Partner utilize their comprehensive know-how in the complete planning and development of building construction directly on site. For several years, Vasko+Partner together with their sister company Immoresult Property Development have also been active as a successful project developer. In the interview with Centre News, Andreas Rechberger, Director of Immoresult Property Development explains how to establish oneself as a (comparably) small player in the international Big Business.

At the moment, no conversation can bypass the current financial and economical crisis. How do you assess the current state of our domestic real estate market, as well as the situation of our Eastern and South-Eastern European neighbours?

Real estate developers have had better times. The current situation in the market is not very pleasant, but to be scared to death because of the crisis is certainly the wrong concept. Regarding the markets in the Central European Region, it is important to differentiate. The Austrian market for example has remained very stable in spite of the crisis. Our domestic market has always been characterized by certain inertness when it comes to rent prices, vacancy rates and returns – there has never been such extreme deflection, up or down, as it has been the case in other countries. During the crisis, this stability has proven to be a virtue. Of course the Austrian real estate market cannot completely distance itself from the current economic situation, and therefore there are also numerous real estate projects in Austria – especially commercial ones – that have been put on hold for the moment. The neighbouring countries in the east have been hit much harder by the crisis. The markets there will only start to recover once there are strong signs of relief in the real economy. However, we have to differentiate between the Eastern European markets as well. I expect Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovakia to recover much faster than, for example, Ukraine or Hungary.

As an option to boost the economy, there is a strong increase of investments in infrastructure projects at the moment. Could this also be a potential recipe for Immoresult?

We are specialized in real estate project development of building construction, like office buildings and hotels, and therefore will not invest in infrastructure projects. In this regard, I rather see the public authorities as the party responsible. However, looking at such investments and considering the public budget situation, I think that Public-Private-Partnership models could be a possible form of project implementation. In this field, we want to strengthen our presence in the future, using our know-how as a service provider and consultant. A pilot project is currently being developed in Vienna, where we supported the City of Vienna in the successful realization of a school and kindergarten project. PPP models are a viable way to quickly and efficiently apply the investment capital of the public authorities. We are also planning to become active in this field in neighbouring countries.

Aside from the technical performance, the implementation of large-scale projects also requires an organizational masterstroke. How do Vasko+Partner manage to efficiently coordinate their expertise?

Vasko+Partner are present with our own offices in those markets where we want an effective market cultivation to occur. The know-how centre is located in Vienna, and we also direct everything centrally from here. However, there is an active exchange of employees, know-how and information – both ways, from Vienna to the branches and the other way around. Without this exchange, and especially without the local know-how, our international projects could not be implemented successfully. And on the other hand, it is from this information and know-how that Immoresult benefits in the field of project development. It is always an interplay of all forces.

At the moment, Vasko+Partner have five offices abroad. Are there plans for further expansion?

Currently, there are no specific plans for expansion; we are in a consolidation phase. However, especially in times like these, opportunities for future projects arise, and we want to seize some of them. A further expansion with new branches of course depends on the long-term recovery of the Central and Eastern-European markets. In the medium and long term however we are confident in this regard, since the backlog demand in these countries has not disappeared because of the current economical situation.



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Business Location
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Dürr Technology Group, here at its Zistersdorf location, is one of the world's leading providers of production systems for the automotive industry.

Technology as Driver for Growth

The province of Lower Austria is increasingly focused on the expansion of technology-oriented business locations, which work closely together with the enterprises and research facilities of the Central European Region. Two further locations are to be added to the existing 16 ecoplus business parks.

THE BUSINESS SETTLEMENT strategy of the province of Lower Austria is clear: Throughout the next ten years, the expansion of innovative technology locations will continue to be the main focus, in order to place the province at an even more attractive position among the European economic players. In late September of 2009, the provincial government consequently presented "Wirtschaftspark 2020" ("Business Park 2020") - a new concept for the future strategic direction of Lower Austria's business parks. "The direction certainly goes towards further quality improvements and creating an even more attractive position for Lower Austria among the European economic players. We can now offer entrepreneurs - our customers - even more individual service," says Petra Bohuslav, Provincial Councillor for Economic Affairs in Lower Austria. The province wants to focus primarily on soft skills like childcare facilities and traffic management systems, but also on important infrastructure improvements like district heat, better inter-

net connections and the thermal renovation of commercial buildings and office buildings. According to Bohuslav, by the end of 2010, a total of 18.5 million EUR will be invested in infrastructural measures at the ecoplus business parks. In Wolkersdorf in the Weinviertel area, ecoplus has already launched its first pilot project of the "Wirtschaftspark 2020" strategy, which aims at exploiting potential logistics synergies to save costs for all participating companies, most of them in the courier, cleaning and waste management sectors.

Expanding the Successful Business Park Concept

Besides improving existing locations, the province of Lower Austria is also planning to develop two new business settlement districts. "We are considering establishing two new ecoplus locations in the region surrounding Vienna and the Mostviertel region," says Provincial Councillor Petra Bohuslav. One of the new locations being planned for development is north-east of Vienna in the Deutsch Wagram-Gänserndorf area, which is an important crossroad between the automotive clusters of the Bratislava-Vienna region. Together with the regional administrations of Bratislava and Trnava, new bridges across the March River should ensure the location's optimal connection to Slovakia's industrial zones. The Governors of Lower Austria and the Bratislava region, Proell and Bajan, are both in favour of this plan. Another new location is planned in the town of Scheibbs. Bohuslav: "We are only in the exploratory stage at the moment, but we know that these regions can use business locations. In the Mostviertel area, our space capacity for business locations is already at their limit." The basis for the planned expansions is a demand analysis of businesses. The province wants to expand its ecoplus locations not only quantitatively, but also qualitatively. Bohuslav: "A business location is not only characterized by its geographical position. It is also by its transport connections and infrastructure - and what the situation is like with regards to schools and childcare facilities for staff members."

New Flagship Enterprises in Lower Austria

This comprehensive perspective has turned out to be a strategy for success, especially in economically difficult times. After all, 40 companies have been convinced to settle in Lower Austria during the first half of 2009, creating 830 new jobs. The flagship project among them is certainly the settlement of the Kwizda group in Leopoldsdorf outside Vienna, where Austria's most modern pharma logistics centre is emerging on an area of 15,000 square metres. Kwizda invested 15 million EUR in this showcase operation. Another large-scale project can be found in the Mostviertel area: Kormann Rockster Recycler GmbH, an internationally operating producer of recycling and crushing facilities, has moved their location from Enns in Upper Austria to Ennsdorf, investing 2.4 million EUR in the development of their new headquarters. Bohuslav: "Despite the economically



The strategic concept „Wirtschaftspark 2020“ was presented by ecoplus Director Helmut Miernicki; Provincial Councillor for Economic Affairs, Petra Bohuslav; Director of Salesianer Miettex, Andreas Philipp; and Director of Mangold Kovac GmbH, René Mangold.



MedAustron will be one of Europe's first centres for proton and carbon ion therapy. Begin of the 200-million-EUR project is scheduled for 2014.

challenging times, we have been able to secure existing jobs and create new ones with different projects in the individual regions of the province."

International Research Centres in Lower Austria

This will also be accomplished at the Technology and Research Centre Wiener Neustadt. The province is currently investing 16 million EUR in building additional research laboratories for companies in the field of medical research around the MedAustron Cancer Research and Therapy Centre. This is another subsequent step in the province's expansion of locations with a strong focus on technology and research. By 2010, 55 million EUR will be invested in creating technopoles in the fields of medical research, biotechnology and bioenergy in Wiener Neustadt, Tulln, Krems and

Wieselburg. At the same time, the existing regional clusters in Lower Austria will be fortified, and the networks between businesses and research facilities will be strengthened. Dedicated cluster managements are set to assist companies in the search for collaboration in ideas and partners and to see projects through to the successful end. For this purpose, Lower Austria together with other areas of the Central European Region have already formed six cluster initiatives: the Automotive Cluster Vienna Region for all divisions in the automotive industry; the Wellbeing Cluster of Lower Austria for businesses in the health and recreational sector; the Green Building Cluster of Lower Austria for all activities in the field of environmentally-friendly and energy-efficient building; the Plastics Cluster for all areas of materials technology; the Logistics Cluster of Lower Austria for all areas of transport; and the Foodstuff Cluster of Lower Austria for the production of regional products. Bohuslav: "Together with the technopol programmes, the clusters form a strong backbone for a positive development of the economy of Lower Austria and the entire Central European Region."

Christian Neuhold

Business Location Lower Austria: Business Parks • Technology Centres • Clusters

Business Park Poysdorf, Business Park Marchegg, Business Park Walkersdorf, WWE Residential and Business St. Pölten, Business Park Ennsdorf, Business Park Schrems, Business Park Heidenreichstein, Business Park Kematen, CCK Craft Center Kottlingbrunn, Business Park IZ NÖ-Süd, Business Park Bruck/Leitha	www.ecoplus.at/wirtschaftsparks
Business Park Strasshof	www.gjp.at
Access Industrial Park Gmünd - České Velenice	www.access.co.at
Biotechnology Centre Krems	www.ecoplus.at/technopol_krems
Technopol Tulln - Agricultural and Environmental Biotechnology	www.ecoplus.at/technopol_tulln
TFZ - Technology and Research Centre Wiener Neustadt	www.tfz-wienerneustadt.at
Green Building Cluster	www.bauenergieumwelt.at
Logistics Cluster of Lower Austria	www.logistikcluster.at
Foodstuff Cluster	www.lebensmittelcluster-noe.at

Interview with Provincial Councillor **Petra Bohuslav**

"Lower Austria is Benefitting from Centrope"



"Lower Austria benefitted from the increase in exports, a considerable growth in productivity, and investments in new manufacturing technologies and product innovations."

Petra Bohuslav, Provincial Councillor of Lower Austria

The advance in growth caused by the expansion effects can be numbered with an annual average of 1.25 percentage points for the time period between 2001 and 2009. Especially remarkable are the growth dynamics in the Waldviertel area with its proximity to Southern Bohemia and Southern Moravia, as well as the development of the Industrieviertel area with its proximity to Western Hungary.

Does the project of a Central European Region facilitate the access to subsidies for Lower Austria's entrepreneurs; whether from the province, the state or the EU?

At the beginning of the 90's, Lower Austria's subsidy environment adapted to the new challenges and opportunities with numerous support programmes. The province itself as well as ecoplus and other Lower Austrian institutions provide support in exploring new markets, subsidised personnel resources through the "Export Assistant", advice for market entries, subsidised representation at foreign exhibitions, local assistance when establishing branches, training seminars in legal and marketing matters, language courses and information about the "Do's and Don'ts". These support offers resonate very well with business; the number of supported projects is increasing considerably each year.

Is the Central European Region also an incentive for international groups to settle at the business location of Lower Austria?

Centrope is characterized as a transition region between the established economic centres in the west and the new, booming economic regions in the east. This comes with know-how of both cultures and a large amount of potential as a business location, which makes the region attractive for investors. The development of Foreign Direct Investment in Austrian provinces is showing a strong positive trend in the period between 1995 and 2006. Without exception, the number of passive direct investments has increased in all provinces.

In which areas do you see the greatest chances for growth of the Lower Austrian economy in the next five to ten years?

Above all, I see these chances in environmental technologies for energy efficiency in the fields of energy, mobility and construction; in the metal industry and mechanical engineering; and in foodstuffs and innovative health management. Generally, there will be a stronger focus in the areas of Innovation, Research and Development in the next few years.

How important is the Central European Region for Lower Austria as a business location?

Through the Centrope initiative, the business location of Lower Austria receives a new "inwards & outwards" perspective as a global business location. From a global point of view, the business location of Lower Austria as part of a European region of 6 million people can share in a multitude of know-how and available resources, which gives it the international visibility and size that is crucial for the location decisions of international investors.

Does Lower Austria's economy benefit from the economically strong Central European Region?

In the 90's, Lower Austria began a dynamic economic development process, which was strengthened by the launch of the CENTROPE initiative in 2003 and then again by the eastern European expansion of the EU in 2004. Lower Austria benefitted from the increase in exports, a considerable growth in productivity, and investments in new manufacturing technologies and product innovations. For Lower Austrian companies, CENTROPE provides an ideal entry market with an additional 2.5 million consumers.

"Generally, there will be a stronger focus in the areas of Innovation, Research & Development in the next few years."

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Fotos: Geschäftsführer Ing. Thomas KRONSTEINER, Mag. Alexander KOLLER

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The Big Winner of the New Europe

A brand new study proves that Burgenland is among those Austrian provinces that have benefitted the most from the expansion of the EU. Today, the former frontier is presenting itself as a top business location for innovative companies.

BURGENLAND IS AMONG those Austrian regions that in the last 15 years have benefitted the most from the fall of the Iron Curtain and the eastern European expansion of the EU. Since 1995, according to a recent study by the economic researchers from Vienna's *Economica* Institute, Burgenland has shown significantly greater economic dynamics in gross value added as well as economic growth than other provinces. The experts say that Burgenland's gross regional product has grown by 3.1 percent annually in this time period. This awards the eastern-most province – in a tie with Vorarlberg – the top position in the comparison of Austrian provinces. Even during the economically difficult phase since September of 2008, Burgenland was able to noticeably dampen the effects of the crisis due to its close connection to the growth regions in the neighbouring Eastern EU member states. Although real growth shrank by 2.9 percent, the authors of the study claim that without the expansion effect, that number would be at minus 4.1 percent.

Burgenland has Benefitted the Most

For Deputy Governor Franz Steindl, this is clear evidence that the province's economic strategy is correct and that the work of their business settlement agency, WIBAG, is successful. Steindl: "In more than a few areas, we have improved our previous rank in comparison with the other Austrian provinces and could achieve a good position in the provincial ranking. We have benefitted from the eastern enlargement and the EU membership to a great extent. However, we cannot rest on what we have achieved; the existing potential has to be exploited even more. Specialization in niches, flexibility and promptness as well as the high level of quality from our enterprises are a competitive advantage, which also needs to be maintained in the future by setting targeted measures." To that effect, Burgenland is mainly relying on the Central European Region



The Technology Centre of Central Burgenland is located in Neutal, in the Oberpullendorf district. Siemens Business Services has settled here as a flagship enterprise.

with its comprehensive cluster and research initiatives. Steindl: "Networking and collaboration between science and economy is the order of the day." The drastic structural change that Burgenland has undergone in the past decade is set to result in a research initiative, which will be an additional innovation boost, especially for the province's technology centres.

Technology Centres as Drivers for Development

One of the core areas of the positive economic development is the Eisenstadt Technology Centre – the main location of the information and communication technology cluster ICT-Burgenland, where IT companies also work closely together with the University of Applied Sciences for Information and Communication Technologies, also located in Eisenstadt. The Plastics Cluster of Burgenland is a showcase project as well; after all, the participating companies were among the first ones to establish collaborations and promote joint projects with Hungarian companies.

GEOSERVICE – Interview with Director Wolfgang Trimmel

3D-Airborne Laser Scanning An Exact Image of the Earth

BEWAG Geoservice, a subsidiary of BEWAG group, provides high-precision ground surveying in 3-D from a helicopter.

THE ELECTRONIC EYE on the bottom of the Eurocopter does not miss the smallest detail. From a constant altitude, the highly complex Airborne 3-D laser scanning system is surveying the ground during a flyover, enabling project planners to access exact data of the surveyed area. Wolfgang Trimmel, Director of BEWAG Geoservice: "Our service is used by planners of power lines, power plants, torrent and avalanche control, as well as developers of various corridor-based infrastructure projects - roads, railway lines or gas pipelines, for example."

Thanks to the system, which was independently developed in Burgenland, reality can be projected onto a highly precise and complete 3-D terrain model. Complex areas like the run of rivers and streams or objects like existing buildings can be displayed in exact detail. Based on these models, planners can develop exact CAD animations and engineers have perfect surveying data

available for their work. The advantage of aerial surveying: It is fast, uncomplicated and accomplishable without great labour costs. Trimmel: "According to our customers' wishes, our specialists are flexible to process the collected data in either digital computer programmes or CAD models – a service that is in great demand in the fields of real estate development and pipeline planning." Geoservice's data can also be used for flooding or avalanche calculations.

BEWAG Geoservice currently employs six expert geospecialists and up to four freelance geoinformatic scientists. Geoservice's primary target market is Central Europe. Their high-precision equipment in the form of a modular surveying platform can be mounted and ready for use on all Type AS350/AS355 Eurocopters within only an hour. This way, Geoservice can cost-effectively and efficiently take off from any given helicopter base without the need for expensive repositioning flights, which makes it significantly less costly than elaborate surveying that needs to be conducted from the ground. Trimmel: "In part, we still need to convince some skeptical suitors of our service; comparing total cost, Airborne Laser Scanning is more cost-efficient than traditional surveying services."

Burgenland Fund to Create Jobs

To effectively counteract the economic crisis and give business owners additional incentives for the creation of new jobs and the modernization of their facilities, the province of Burgenland initiated a fund for labour, growth and innovation in July of 2009, for which 100 million EUR was allocated. Governor Hans Niessl: "This fund represents an aggressive labour and growth policy with a focus on research and innovation. It will bring new momentum to Burgenland's continued advancement." Revenues from the province's most important shares (in companies like the Bad Tatzmannsdorf Spa, energy supplier BEWAG, and WIBAG) should be made available to subsidise the settlement of flagship projects in structurally weak regions and the creation of jobs. Niessl: "As the Goal 1 subsidy period comes to an end, the subsidy scenarios in Burgenland are being redesigned. Therefore it is essential that additional funds be available to the province for economic stimulus actions."

Christian Neuhold

Business Location Burgenland: Business Parks • Technology Centres • Cluster

A3 Business Park Müllendorf
www.a3-businesspark.at

Business Park Kittsee
www.businesspark.co.at

Business Park Neusiedl am See/Parndorf
www.businesspark.co.at

Business Park Heiligenkreuz-Szentgotthárd
www.wibag.at

Gewerbezone Ost Siegendorf
www.gewerbezone-ost.at

6 Technology Centres (Neusiedl, Eisenstadt, Neutal, Pinkafeld, Güssing, Jennersdorf)
www.tze.at

ICT Information and Communication Technology Cluster
www.tz-burgenland.at/ict

Plastics Cluster Burgenland
www.kunststoff-burgenland.at

So(u)lnetwork Burgenland
www.soul-network.at



Besides Vienna, Brno (top and bottom right), Bratislava (top left) and Győr are part of the borderless clover leaf of cities in the Central European Region.

A Unique Business Location

In the near future, it will not be countries that are considered important business locations, but rather individual **regions** – worldwide. How innovative and how well-connected an economy is will be an essential factor.

ON A POLITICAL level, the concept of a “Europe of the Regions” has been discussed for some time. Changes aimed at eradicating nation-state boundaries and limitations which are affecting the coexistence of the European people should be implemented and supported. The concept of the nation, employed throughout the past three centuries, is in many cases considered a structure of the past: Microstates are the true homes of all Europeans. The region is replacing the nation-state as a territorial unit. Regions receive political functions in order to implement territorial decentralization. In the context of European regional politics, the establishment of municipal and regional cooperation across the borders has become a provincial-political goal as well. Here, it is less about the political goals themselves rather than the ecologic, economic and location-planning advantages of those collaborations. Eco-

nomie tendencies of globalization and Europeanization in particular have resulted in not only the quality of location of a single municipality being essential, but rather the one of the whole region.

Centrope - A Very Special Region

Centrope is one of those regions - a very special one however, as four languages and four nationalities converge in it. Nonetheless: The system works. Despite existing obstacles in the infrastructure and labour market areas, transnational economic activities have increased strongly in the last few years. According to the latest polls, almost one third of companies in Centrope are entertaining economic relations with neighbouring countries in the form of subsidiaries, distribution or other kinds of cooperation. The parties responsible in the individual states are operating in the background, creating economic centres, competence centers and clusters, thereby enabling an integration of the economies and, above all, an exchange of information and know-how. These are the fundamental requirements for persisting in the competition of regions in the future. The regions of the individual countries therefore are working for themselves, but also together. The success speaks for itself: The economies of the Centrope countries have grown much faster than the average of the EU-15. Each of the countries is relying on its own strengths to add to the region. The advantages of Centrope as a business location are a solid industrial basis (particularly in the supply industry), a focus on niche markets and specialized products, and - especially in the Centrope regions of the new member states - a fast technological catch-up process and relatively low labour costs. Among the strong areas of the Central European region are: in Western Slovakia: automotive, financial services, oil and gas, transportation, communications, footwear, lighting and electronics and energy generation and supply; in Eastern Austria: economy-related services, communications, financial services, transportation, construction, foodstuffs, mechanical engineering and tourism; in Western Hungary: automotive, communications, foodstuffs, mechanical engineering, construction, tourism, IT, leather goods, lighting and electronics; in Southern Moravia: mechanical and device engineering, IT and electro technology, textile and footwear industry, foodstuffs, chemical and pharmaceutical industry and energy generation and supply.

Cluster Initiatives in Centrope

Since the year 2000, a number of cluster initiatives have been started in Centrope. Currently, there are 22 cluster initiatives in the region, the first of which was founded in 2001: The Pannon Automotive Cluster (PANAC) in Western Hungary. The

main focus areas of the 22 clusters are in the fields of automotive/mechatronics/synthetics, sustainable building methods/wood/renewable energies/environmental, and health/health technology/well-being/health tourism, as well as cross-sector industries like information and communication technologies (ICT) and design. One of the latest initiatives was started in the field of ICT: The FP7 project “Centrope ICT Technology Transfer” (CITT). The goal of the parties responsible is to develop approaches and models to optimize the technology transfer between businesses (especially SMEs) and research institutions in Centrope. The project was initiated by the Vienna Business Agency and VITE/Vienna IT Enterprises Platform (www.vite.at), in light of the following circumstances: Within Centrope, there is limited communication and interaction between businesses and research, resulting in a lack of information and awareness among decision makers. Together with Centrope partners from the neighbouring regions in Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, the project is looking for solutions in order to dismantle these blockades in technology transfer. Furthermore, the project aims at identifying and connecting relevant stakeholders in the ICT industry as well as in the field of research and development. Project activities are complemented by mentoring and coaching elements as well as a knowledge database. The goal is to prepare a strategy for a transnational ICT network in Centrope in order to support the region’s dynamic development in the future. Establishing such networks is of great importance, especially considering the large number of SMEs in the Centrope region.

Centre for Automotive Cluster

A similar initiative exists in the automotive industry. The “Automotive Cluster Vienna Region” (ACVR) is a comprehensive technology network for innovative businesses in the automotive supply industry. In late 2001, the automotive cluster was founded jointly by the Vienna Business Agency and ecoplus, Lower Austria’s Business Agency. Close to 40 percent of automotive sales in Austria are achieved in this region. The ACVR’s main goal is to connect the existing automotive competences in the Vienna region and to initiate innovative projects. With the project “AC CENTROPE 2009+”, a similar concept is set to be implemented for the whole region. The main goal of the region’s automotive clusters working together in AC CENTROPE is to further strengthen the region’s position as an internationally well-connected top automotive business location in Europe. Part of this is the promotion of an intensified growing-together of the regions on one hand, and the improvement of corporate structures on the other, both through an exchange of expe-

Almost one third of companies in Centrope are entertaining economic relations with neighbouring countries in the form of subsidiaries, distribution or other kinds of cooperation.

periences among the region's businesses, as well as the support of primarily small and medium-sized enterprises by means of employee training and development. Even though it might sound paradox, the mutual USP is most likely the complexity of the automotive region of Centrope: Wages are still low, the level of innovation and financial power is high, and the people are extremely well-trained - all this within only a small area.

In a region that continues to grow closer and closer together, it is particularly important that all jobholders work together. For this reason, measures to bring qualifications to the same level are being promoted. As part of the project, the need for employee training in Slovakia's automotive sector is being assessed. The Automotive Cluster Vienna Region is also working on implementing an „Au-



Stronghold in the automotive industry. The 1. European "Hyundai Motor Manufacturing Czech" plant in Nosovice was ceremonially opened in September of 2009. After its final completion in 2011, 300.000 cars will roll off the assembly line every year.

tomotive Academy" for skilled workers. This is intended to provide a long-term solution to an industry-wide concern - the lack of well-trained skilled workers in the automotive sector - and to create an additional advantage for the location. Furthermore, the synergy potential of adapting the offers of the "Automotive Academy Vienna Region" to Slovakia should be seized. Analyses of strengths and weaknesses of Austrian and Slovakian companies can contribute to fast-tracking their development in a targeted manner. A further goal is to initiate collaborations across borders in order to generate synergies between businesses that complement each other. The results of this assessment will also be presented in the form of a digital "map" of the Centrope region's automotive sector. As part of this project, the Benchmarking Club AC CENTROPE, founded

earlier together with Hungary, is being extended to include Slovakia. The goal is to optimize the "site selection" for participating companies in Centrope's automotive and supply industry by giving them an even wider platform. Due to recent developments, ACVR is currently also in the process of compiling an eMobility technology map, showing where in the region activities already exist, who is dealing with the topic of eMobility, and where the tendencies regarding interest and research lie. For this purpose, a competence survey on the topic of eMobility has recently been launched.

Urban Development Project Brno

A highly interesting development is happening in the city of Brno, or rather to the city itself. A group of experts has recently embarked on the quest for a strategy to bring the city prosperity and wealth in the future. Fields like economics, human resources, science and tourism should hold opportunities for Brno to become a successful 21st-century metropolis. The Centrope city also is counting on valuable input from Vienna. Not for nothing, as the federal capital has pulled off a feat contrary to the nationwide trend: The Vienna Business Agency and ABA Invest in Austria recorded a significant increase in international business settlements in Vienna in the first half of the year 2009. In total, 54 international companies established new offices at the Vienna location, compared to 45 over the same period in the previous year. Some 50 experts from different fields such as economics, science, tourism and marketing are set to present a comprehensive and innovative "Concept for Economic

Development" (KERM, for short) for the city of Brno by December of this year, which is intended to become an interpretive document for local politicians.

Stronghold in Research and Development

With over 2,000 active research and development institutions, there is significant potential in the R&D sector in Centrope. In Brno, a new Centre for Biotechnology will be established soon. Masaryk University is investing in building a biotechnology campus - an interdisciplinary research and development centre. Directly on campus, the South Moravian Innovation Centre is offering space to interested companies in the field of biotechnology. In close cooperation with 13 other partner organizations from the four

countries of Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Austria, the business agency ecoplus and the South Moravian Innovation Centre have established the "centrope_tt Consulting Network" for technology transfers in the Centrope region. The goal is to provide fast access for companies to the four countries' research activities. As part of the project, the over 2,000 active research and development institutions in the Centrope region are currently being analyzed regarding their resources and fields of research. This information will be available online by the fall of 2009 in the form of the "centrope_tt Map", a tool for businesses and consultants to search for suitable providers. Furthermore, in 2010, companies from Lower Austria will have the opportunity to gain first experience in small-scale projects with the research and development providers of the neighbouring regions, thanks to the "centrope_tt Voucher" and a stimulus grant of more than 5,000 EUR. The "centrope_tt Voucher" enables companies to shop for consulting and research services in the neighbouring countries. In order to strengthen the mutual knowledge of research and development structures in the Centrope region, the "centrope_tt Academy" will be offering seminars on the subject of "Technology Transfer in Centrope", starting in summer of 2010.

Walter Senk

The Audi plant in Győr is an important economic factor in the development of the Hungarian part of the Central European Region.



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All Roads Lead to Centrope

Situated in the heart of Europe, Centrope is ideally connected by **rail, air, road and water**. The expansion of the transport network is being worked on in all countries.

FUNCTIONING TRANSPORT CHANNELS are an indispensable requirement for a functioning economic region. Centrope's advantage is that all essential transport channels are accommodated: Air, rail, road and waterways. By 2015, Centrope will be quickly and easily accessible from all directions, and a well-developed transportation network will ensure fast travel within the region. However, it is still a long way until then, and the region is facing some great challenges. In other economic regions of Europe, those transport channels have grown throughout the decades, and have continued to expand based on joint decisions by the parties responsible. In Centrope however, this form of cooperation regarding these essential transport connections has only been possible for some 20 years, since the fall of the Iron Curtain. Further hindering circumstances were that the neighbouring countries of Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia had to fall back on poor or outdated transport networks, in both the rail and road sectors.

Enormous Efforts

In the past years however, enormous efforts have been made here – on the one hand, to make the different systems compatible with one another; on the other hand, to build up the missing infrastructure in the neighbouring countries. The existing gaps in the most important transport channels which connect the sub-regions to each other as well as to the European urban centres should be narrowed. One well-known example is the Twin City Liner, which commenced operations in 2006 and connects the two EU capitals situated closest to each other - Vienna and Bratislava. It practically travels from inner city to inner city using the

waterway. Leaving from Schwedenplatz in downtown Vienna, and within 75 minutes, passengers arrive at the banks of the Danube in Bratislava's Old Town.

Attribute for the Twin City Liner's uniting element and the encompassing activities is that it is also serves as part of cultural events. During Vienna's "Long Night of Museums" on October 3rd for example, guests could take the Twin City Liner to visit the museum in Bratislava. The idea of being able to go from city centre to city centre via the Danube also resonated with experts at the water authority of Győr: There are plans to build a passenger boat connection between Vienna and Győr, similar to the Twin City Liner. Details still have to be worked out; the first steps however have been taken.

Danube Waterway

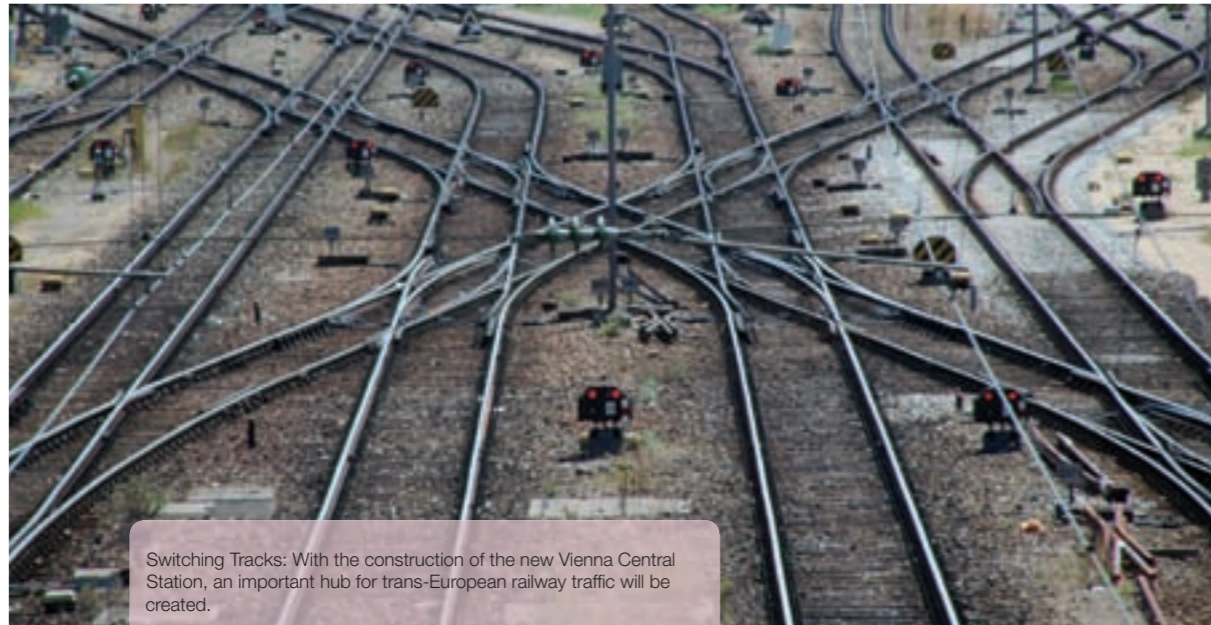
This is only one of many examples – the Danube waterway also offers high capacity reserves for the transport of large quantities of cargo. With comparably small investments, Danube shipping is in the position of contributing considerably to solving the transportation issues of the Danube corridor in the short term. The Port of Vienna is situated close to the halfway point between the North Sea and the Black Sea. The transport policy's goal is to at least double the twelve million tonnes of goods transported on the Austrian Danube in 2007 to reach 25 to 30 million tonnes by 2015. For this purpose, three major ports in the Centrope region are being expanded or developed. Due to the expansion of the Freudenau freight terminal, the Port of Vienna is becoming one of Europe's most efficient logistics hubs. The four-track cargo handling centre, built by ÖBB in cooperation with the Port of Vienna, is equipped with extra container storage space, an elaborate traffic management system and a continuous track connection. With an area of 3.5 million square kilometres, the Port of Vienna is the largest public Danube port as well as Austria's most important cargo handling centre. Due to its geographical position, its connection to rail, water and road carriers, and its proximity to the Vienna Schwechat airport, it functions as an efficient hub for



international trade and transport channels. Other Centrope countries are also working on expansions. A little further to the East, the Danube port of Bratislava holds a key position for all of Slovakia's economy. Thanks to the country's EU accession, the amount of cargo transport on the Danube has increased. In order to keep up with the now greater competition in the field of port services, the Slovakian shipping company SpaP is looking to build an international logistics centre. The Hungarian Port of Győr-Gönyű, founded in 1992, has been expanded several times since then, in part with financial support by the EU. With the current expansion efforts, this port too is planned to be developed into a major logistics centre, offering a comprehensive service package in the area of transport, storage and customs clearance of goods. With its ideal connection to the European rail and road network, the Port of Győr is an important traffic hub and cargo handling centre for the whole region.

Everything on Rails

According to calculations by ÖBB, in the year 2020 approximately 40,000 people will commute daily between the urban areas of Vienna and Bratislava, 10,000 of which will be going to one of the cities' airports. To accommodate the expected amount of traffic, it requires renovation, expansion, modernization and investments. By expanding the railway line between St. Pölten and Vienna, the "Magistrale" (the railway axis Paris-Stuttgart-Vienna-Győr) is being upgraded to a traffic corridor of European significance. The development of the new four-track system on the route St. Pölten-Vienna is scheduled for completion by 2012/13. Furthermore, the construction of a second high-capacity railway connection between Vienna and Budapest (or rather Szombathely) through the areas of Eisenstadt and Sopron is planned. On the North-South axis, the Baltic-Adriatic corridor will be another central European transport connection that leads



Switching Tracks: With the construction of the new Vienna Central Station, an important hub for trans-European railway traffic will be created.

through Centrope. Expansions are planned for the passage Brno-Vienna-Semmering as well as the passage between Trnava, Bratislava and Szombathely. Railway stations in Vienna, Brno and Győr will also be developed accordingly. The new Vienna Central Station, located in the area of the South Railway Station, is one of the largest construction projects in the Centrope region for the next few years – and probably one of the most significant ones in terms of transportation too. At the moment, the South Railway Station houses two terminal stations: The South Station and the East Station are located right next to each other, but are operated separately. Instead of these two terminal stations, ÖBB will be forming one central through station by 2013, creating a central point for trans-European railway traffic and an important hub for international and national passenger traffic. The City of Vienna is expecting a partial commencement of operations at the new railway station in 2012. Furthermore, a new district will emerge in the area around the Central Station, between Gürtel, Arsenalstraße, Gudrunstraße and Sonnwendgasse streets – offering 550,000 square meters of gross floor space for offices and 5,500 new apartments for approximately 13,000 people.

In Brno, things are about to change too. The historic railway station is being relocated, and trains will now arrive in the centre of a new district at the new train station, Europoint Brno. The new station will be able to accommodate much more frequent train traffic, and the railway line, leading past the inner city, will be part of the trans-European high-capacity line Berlin-Prague-Vienna-Budapest. In Bratislava, a new planned railway station is part of the development of the new North-South railway connection with the Filiálka station. The railway line will run under-

ground for several kilometres, underneath the city and the Danube, significantly shortening the passing time through Bratislava. The new railway station is planned to be built in immediate proximity to the city centre, with an optimal connection to the city's public transport network. Bratislava Filiálka connects the railway line of the Trans-European Corridor V (from Venice to Ukraine) with the former station Bratislava Petralka. From Vienna's new Central Station, passengers will then be able to reach Bratislava's city centre without great detours. The project is scheduled to be implemented between 2010 and 2014.

Walter Senk

A Slightly Different Route

"Route Centrope – Wine and Architecture" – this guidebook's name says it all:

Its exciting route leads wine aficionados and architecture fans to 24 destinations in the Central European Region – to Southern Moravia, Western Slovakia, Lower Austria, Vienna, Burgenland and Western Hungary. Traditional places of sociableness and cosiness like medieval cellar vaults, baroque wineries and snug wine cellar alleys, the Viennese "Heuriger" restaurants and the rustic wine cellars in Bratislava, Trnava and Znojmo are introduced, as well as modern wineries designed by contemporary architects.

Claus Stadler, Director of
ÖBB-Immobilienmanagement GmbH

Everything on Rails

The construction of the new Vienna Central Station is ÖBB's largest building and urban development project. How much will be invested in this new traffic hub?

The new Central Station will be much more than just a traditional train station. Surrounding the main station hall, a completely new district will emerge on the former railway property. This large inner city area is being developed by ÖBB-Immobilienmanagement GmbH in close coordination and cooperation with the City of Vienna. All in all, approximately two million EUR will be invested in Vienna's future Central Station and the adjacent urban region. With revenues generated from the land development around the station area, ÖBB-Immobilienmanagement GmbH provides an important contribution to the financing of the new Central Station.

Besides the station itself, a number of other buildings are planned as well. Which ones exactly?

The Vienna Central Station project covers a tremendously large area. On 59 hectares, a new district will emerge – a multifunctional centre with space for offices, retail, services, gastronomy and a health and finance centre. Surrounding an eight hectare large park, an attractive residential quarter with 5,000 apartments is planned. Additionally, the City of Vienna is building a school campus and a kindergarten. In a place where until recently trains were loaded and unloaded, a new attractive district will emerge over the course of the next few years – right in the middle of Vienna.

What does the schedule for the project's implementation look like?

In December of 2009, the South and East Stations will be closed, and construction of the railway infrastructure project will commence in 2010. Construction of the first apartments and office buildings will begin in 2011.

Will ÖBB also have offices of its own at this location?

Yes, the new ÖBB headquarters will be built at the south plaza outside the future Central Station. They will provide modern office space for 1,600 employees from different departments within the ÖBB group. In January of this year, we launched an EU-wide, 2-phase open architecture competition. The Vienna-based architectural office Zechner & Zechner ZT GmbH emerged the winner of the competition.

The Vienna West Station is also undergoing a complete reconstruction these days. What is happening there?

The West Station is being transformed into the new BahnhofCity Vienna West. Flanking the heritage-protected station concourse, we are erecting two multi-storey buildings.



"A completely new, attractive district will emerge on the former railway property."

Claus Stadler, Director of
ÖBB-Immobilienmanagement GmbH

One of them will be an office complex, the other a hotel – Vienna's first Motel One design hotel. At the bottom, there will be a shopping centre with 17,000 m² on three levels. Within the station building itself, the waiting area is being upgraded and expanded significantly, and will be complemented by a food court offering a wide range of restaurants.

All this will make BahnhofCity Vienna West much more than just a regular train station – it will be a hub for travel, shopping, leisure and work. BahnhofCity and Motel One are scheduled to open by the end of 2011.

Which projects are planned with regards to other existing or former train station properties in Vienna that are not needed anymore in their current dimensions?

On the 65 hectare large grounds of the Vienna North Station, the first residential buildings have already been completed. Rudolf Bednar Park was inaugurated as the green lungs of this new quarter one year ago. By 2025, around 10,000 apartments and just as many jobs will be created on the premises of the North Station. Another important urban development project is the 44 hectare large Vienna North-West Station. While today there still is cargo being transferred from road to rail, throughout the next decades, an urban district with manifold offerings will be developed in this location. Together with the City of Vienna, we have launched an urban development competition for this area. The results were very exciting and innovative – and they proved just how much potential this railway property has.

Full Speed Ahead into the 21st Century

As of 2014, the new Vienna Central Station will ensure fast connections within the Central European Region. At the same time, a new district is emerging around the BahnhofCity, providing 5,000 apartments and 20,000 new jobs.

IT IS ÖBB'S and the City of Vienna's greatest infrastructure investment of the next four years – and one of the most important investments for the entire Central European Region. A total of approximately 2 billion EUR will be invested in the new Vienna Central Station and its surrounding new district, built on the grounds of the former South and East Stations, 900 million of which will be dedicated to the new railway station alone. The goal: Instead of the two outdated terminal stations, a new central through station will ensure interruption-free travel across the Central European Region. This will not only reduce the travel time for transit passengers, since tedious transfers from one terminal station to the other will become obsolete; it will also provide more comfort for rail travellers who stop over in Vienna.

One of Europe's Most Important Railway Hubs

Vienna will eliminate a bottleneck that had been hindering international railway traffic, and at the same time create one of Europe's most frequented railway hubs where three important trans-European railway lines (TEN) will meet. TEN 17 will connect Paris and Bratislava, TEN 22 runs from Athens and Constanța by the Black Sea via Budapest and Vienna to Dresden and Nuremberg, and TEN 23 connects Gdansk and Vienna as well as - once the expansion of the southern railway line is completed - Trieste and Bologna. Every day, 1,000 international and domestic trains will stop at the Vienna Central Station, and approximately 145,000 passengers will arrive or depart from here. Vienna Mayor Michael Häupl sees this as a great development opportunity for the Austrian capital: "With this project, we are laying the foundation for the city's further development into a

multifaceted economic centre for the Central and Eastern European area. The second positive effect is the enormous upgrade this represents for the entire expansion area. In only a few years, European transport connections will be linked to the city's own transport network, while a new, premium district with plenty of space for working and living will emerge."

Construction Starting in December of 2009

The future of the exciting urban development area around Belvedere and Schweizer Garten Park begins in 2009. As of December 13th, the South and East stations will be closed, and the demolition will begin at full speed. Aside from the actual railway station project, developed by architectural team Hotz/Hoffmann-Wimmer, and the directly attached shopping and recreational area with approximately 100 shops and restaurants, a new, attractive district with an excellent connection to the public transport network is being developed in the area surrounding the station. Directly at the railway station, beside the earlier-mentioned shopping centre, a banking and office centre with room for 20,000 new jobs is planned to be built. The Vienna Central Station will therefore be an important factor for Vienna's economy as well as an exciting business location for the Central European Region.

Fascinating Social Experiment while Building New Apartments

The area between the streets of Sonnwendgasse, Ostbahnstraße and Gudrunstraße will be converted into an appealing new residential district with an eight hectare large park. Where railway tracks and warehouses once stood, around 5,000 apartments for approximately 13,000 people are now planned to be built. A local school campus will make the area even more attractive as a residential space. According to Rudi Schicker, City Councillor for Traffic and Urban Planning, "construction of the first apartments and offices on the 59 hectare area surrounding the Central Station will begin in 2011." Besides ecology, economy and architecture, the city also places a special focus on social sustainability when building these residential complexes. Michael Ludwig,



By 2014, not only the new Vienna Central Station will be completed on this 59 hectare large area: A new district with 5,000 apartments is being created as well.

City Councillor for Housing: "Participation and codetermination are not only essential elements of democracy; they are also closely tied to the issue of social sustainability. We have developed a participation model that will be employed for the first time as part of the Central Station construction project, encouraging the future tenants' involvement in the design of their buildings. This way, we can create living spaces that meet the needs of their future residents to a tee, which further increases resident satisfaction in the city." For this purpose, Vienna relies on so-called "Construction Focus Groups". Those are self-organized tenant communities that plan and build their future living space in cooperation with architects and developers. In some European cities, for example Berlin and Hamburg, such groups are already a fixture in the urban construction process. In Vienna, too, more and more people want to realize their vision of community living in a construction project and are coming together in groups. Advantages for the tenants: They have a say in the design of floor plans and architecture, and can shape their apartment from the architect's first draft. And: They can pick who their neighbours are. Ludwig: "Construction Focus Groups also offer an answer to the current socio-demographic changes, for example through family-like living structures with selected friends." The community approach is ideal for families with children as well as elderly tenants, as it offers social contact and support within the immediate living environment.

Comprehensive Metro Connection

Unlike the old South Station, the new Vienna Central Station will be equipped with

direct metro connections. The U1 line can be accessed via a new underground passage, and in the southern part of the premises, a new station for the line U2 is planned, which will also extend to the Central Station by the time construction is completed. This way, the U2 line will be linking two different points to the important railway connections to Bratislava: the Central Station in Vienna, as well as the planned new Flugfeld train station in aspern Urban Lakeside. The two metropolises of Vienna and Bratislava with a total of 2.7 million inhabitants are growing ever closer in terms of transportation, making them even more attractive as a business location for internationally operating companies.

Alternative Station during Construction Phase

Vienna residents as well as rail travellers will have to be prepared for some changes during the construction phase between 2010 and 2015. Effective December 13th, 2009, Meidling will be the new terminal station for all trains on the southern railway line. For trains arriving into Vienna from the east, a temporary station will be built at the far end of the East Station area. Municipal railway (S-Bahn) traffic will not be affected by the construction activity: Its Südbahnhof station will remain functional throughout the construction of the Central Station; however, new temporary entrances with stairs and elevators will be located at the adjacent Schweizer Garten Park. Airport buses will also stop at the Meidling train station as of December 2009 to ensure smooth transfer traffic to the airport.

"When building these new residential complexes, the city places a special focus on social sustainability."

Christian Neuhold

Doris Bures, Transport Minister

Infrastructure means Upgrades

Doris Bures, Federal Minister for Transport, Innovation and Technology (BMVIT), about the importance of transnational infrastructure projects for the Central European Region.



"A coordinated and jointly financed expansion of the infrastructure absolutely makes sense."
Doris Bures, Transport Minister

How important is the Central European Region as a driver for transnational infrastructure projects between Austria, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary?

The region's significance has already been established through its 6.5 million inhabitants. Due to historical reasons, its transport connection however is still weak compared to other European regions. A coordinated and jointly financed expansion of the infrastructure therefore absolutely makes sense. It would just be absurd if we had finally overcome the division of Europe in the political sense, only to have the expansion of transport connections come to a halt at the borders.

Which infrastructure projects in the Central European Region does the BMVIT currently focus on?

One major construction project is certainly the Vienna Central Station. For a metropolis like Vienna, a modern and innovative Central Station is a gateway to the world. It will be a central hub for railway traffic and add enormous value to the entire region. After the expansion of the Western Railway is completed, Austria will have a high-standard connection to the Western-European economic area. Other important projects are the expansion of the Vienna Airport railway station as well as the connection between the Airport and the Eastern Railway.

Which transnational infrastructure projects should be given priority in the next few years?

In the field of road construction, certainly the A5 North Motorway. By the year 2013, this will provide a high-quality road connection to the Czech Republic. In addition to the A6 Motorway, another connection to Slovakia - the S8 Marchfeld Expressway - is being developed. In the field of rail, the expansion of the Marchegg branch is an important project, which represents a further enhancement to the Vienna-Bratislava connection.

Is the Central European Region a suitable vehicle to draw more influence and attention within the EU for important infrastructure projects in the eastern region?

A mutual, well-coordinated approach by several countries of course has more weight and will award higher importance to certain projects. Good coordination and speaking with one voice noticeably increases the chances for implementation of a project. And another important factor: This way, grant programmes are more likely to be co-financed by the EU, which means lower costs for participating countries.

Are there plans to link Vienna and Bratislava more closely using high-capacity public transport, for example by connecting the municipal railway lines to the Eastern Railway?

Fast and frequent train connections between Vienna and Bratislava, via Marchegg as well as Kittsee, have been in place for years. Among them are also some express trains from Eastern Slovakia, which now connect at the Vienna West Station. The new Central Station will later be able to optimally serve this purpose.

The Danube is continuously gaining in importance as a transport connection. Which main steps for expansion can be expected in the Central European Region in this regard?

As part of the IRIS Europe II project, a tighter network of information services for inland water transportation between the Central European Region's countries will be established. Austria has taken on a pioneer role in this telematics project. The programme is intended to modernize traffic management and logistics.

Wir bewegen Immobilien Moving Real Estate



ÖBB-Immobilienmanagement GmbH
www.oebb-immobilien.at



The economic flagship of the eastern region generates two percent of total added value in Austria - more than 4.8 billion EUR.

The Airport as an Economic Centre

The Vienna Airport is an important economic factor for the region of Eastern Austria. Especially companies that manage their business activities in Central and Eastern Europe from their Austrian headquarters can rely on the **Vienna Airport** as an efficient transport link to this economic area.

THE VIENNA AIRPORT'S ideal location in the centre of Europe and its high concentration of traffic and infrastructure offerings make the airport area an optimal business location. For domestic companies, the location serves as an important connection to the international markets. The eastern region's economic flagship generates as much as two percent of total added value in Austria – this means more than 4.8 billion EUR are causally linked to the Vienna Airport today.

Employment at the Airport

At the same time, the Vienna Airport is Eastern Austria's largest employer, with approximately 18,000 people working in over 230 companies at this location. The airport operator Flughafen Wien AG employs around 4,000 people. In addition, there are another 52,200 jobs in all of Austria that are associated with the airport. In two upscale office parks located directly at the airport, companies will find over 50,000 square metres of ultra-modern office space, and additional office space is in the process of being completed.

The former World Trade Center is also being renovated completely and will soon become the third office park. Using plans by top architect Wilhelm Holzbauer, the original architecture is undergoing complete reconstruction, and a new 11-storey transverse structure will be added. The existing structure is being brought up to the latest substantial and technical standards. After the scheduled completion in 2011, a total of 29,000 square metres of additional high-quality office space will be available.

Location, Infrastructure, Punctuality

The airline business has of course not been spared from the effects of the global financial turbulences. Now more than ever, competitive advantages over other airports need to be created and exploited. One of the Vienna Airport's undisputed advantages is its geographical Pole Position for destinations in Eastern Europe and the Middle East, as well as an attractive tariff model for airlines using Vienna as a connecting airport. Furthermore, the Vienna Airport is considered Europe's most punctual connecting airport with a minimum connection time of only 25 minutes, unrivalled in all of Europe. Its infrastructure capacity is being developed too: Besides a third runway, the Vienna Airport is also in the process of building the Skylink terminal expansion. Strengthening its status as a real estate location is a further focus of Flughafen Wien AG.

A Difficult Year for the Airlines

In 2008, the Vienna Airport handled 19.7 million passengers. As expected, passenger numbers decreased in 2009 due to the current general economic situation, and are now slightly below 2007's levels. In the long term, the Vienna Airport expects passenger numbers to grow again, and Austria's neighbouring regions in particular will presumably contribute to this. After all, around 2.7 million people live and work within 60 minutes of the airport – a substantial target market. But the core competence of the Vienna Airport – its connections to Eastern Europe and the Middle East – is also planned to be developed further. Its function as a hub for Eastern Europe is - and remains - an important economic factor. The takeover of Austrian Airlines by Lufthansa strengthens this position, as well as the hopes to become the fourth hub in the Lufthansa system, serving as a gateway to Eastern Europe. Today, with 49 destinations, the Vienna Airport offers the largest number of connections to Eastern Europe. Overall, connections to and from 214 destinations are offered. Due to its hub function for the CEE and SEE areas, the Vienna Airport is of fundamental importance for the Central European Region. Accordingly, the airport's future development is crucial to the whole region.

Isabella Neuhold



Work in Progress

The Centrope region is in an excellent position, as it not only connects the former East to the West, but also consists of four countries, of which its inhabitants speak various languages. In the area of **«Employment Services and Qualifications»** however, this is an exceptional barrier on the way to an integrated labour market.

THE LABOUR MARKET administrations of the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary have existed for approximately 15 years now. Throughout these years, the labour market administrations in these new member states as well as in Austria have undergone fundamental restructuring and reforms, with the goal of improving internal structures and processes as well as gradually aligning the individual countries' systems. Targeted measures regarding cooperation and infrastructure between the four Centrope countries in combination with regional structural changes will not only ensure a controlled development of the labour markets, but will also counteract negative effects like brain drain, wage dumping and social tensions.

Despite all efforts, there still is a strong need for adjustment, and the mutual basis of information is still incomplete. The differences between the individual administrative offices and their organizational structures remain considerable; however, all countries are keen to adapt them in the foreseeable future. A logical step, since a functioning labour market administration that integrates all four countries will be an essential advantage for the region. Gerhard Grundtner from AMS Vienna: "There also needs to be cooperation between the employment centres - this is where the actual placement activity begins. We are working on creating a structured data flow system. Similar systems have existed for some time in the Lake Constance region, where we already have cross-border partnerships, but those systems are not comparable." The reason is that there is one big challenge to overcome in Centrope: "The language," says Grundtner. While in the Lake Constance region all processes, job postings and communications (although with

slight dialect variations) are exclusively held in German, the complete agenda of the Centrope region has to be managed in four different languages. Grundtner: "All our events and workshops are conducted using simultaneous translation." At first glance, the multilingualism of the region and the communicating offices appears to be an issue, but it is with overcoming challenges such as these that a region can grow.

Particularly noticeable in the Centrope region is the fact that unemployment rates within Centrope show much smaller differences compared to each other than the national unemployment figures. An issue in the entire region is the lack of skilled personnel, and a job training initiative as a flexible reaction to the economy's needs poses a great challenge. The universities are also working together on different projects. A new international post-graduate master programme was introduced for the first time on March 6th, 2009, in cooperation between the Vienna University of Technology and the Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava. With this new post-graduate programme, ACVR and the partner universities reacted to the continuously growing competitive market in the region around Vienna and Bratislava, as well as the resulting increase in demand for well-trained skilled personnel and managers in the automotive and supply industry. Quite simply, cooperation between the labour markets and especially a joint preparation for labour mobility are a necessity. A number of projects relevant for a sustainable cooperation and the creation of transnational institutions are already in place. "There are many different cooperation structures and partnerships," Grundtner explains: "Numerous collaborations exist between Austria and the other three countries, where a wide range of topics are being handled and discussed." "Transnational Personnel Management" offers consulting with regards to employee training and intercultural learning to Austrian companies with subsidiaries in the Czech Republic or Slovakia. The project "IGR Burgenland Western Hungary", which will run until the end of 2014, is intended to contribute to a positive, integrative and smooth formation as well as a purposeful and efficient development of the labour market in the border region of Burgenland and Western Hungary. Since individuals with a foreign background often encounter higher difficulties trying to gain a foothold in the Austrian labour market, they are being supported in their integration into the labour market, which at the same time contributes to the internationalization of Austrian companies. "Mentoring for Migrants" is the title of the project, which



At first glance, the multilingualism of the region appears to be an issue, but it is with overcoming challenges such as these that a region can grow.

is complemented by the pilot project of an information centre for market entry, credential recognition and continuing education. It provides basic information about the Austrian labour market, credential recognition processes, supplementary courses, financial aid opportunities and similar topics. In order to facilitate the entry into the neighbouring countries it is essential to establish connections as early on as possible. An apprentice exchange is therefore no big deal anymore. Grundtner: "They are coming to Vienna to work, and the other way around." In the process, apprentices do not only visit companies, but also attend seminars to learn about the local job possibilities.

The integration of the markets within the Central European region is proceeding at a fast pace. Despite existing obstacles in the infrastructure and labour market areas, transnational economic activities have strongly increased in the last few years. According to the latest polls, approximately one quarter of companies in Centrope are entertaining economic relations with neighbouring countries in the form of subsidiaries, distribution or other kinds of cooperation. The old economic demarcation line of the Iron Curtain is still noticeable; however, Bratislava for example achieves a GDP at purchasing power parity per capita that is already above the EU-25 average. And that's not all: Bratislava is continuously looking for manpower, and by now, people are also commuting to the Slovak capital from Austria. The pay in the automotive industry there is not much lower compared to the one in Austria.

Walter Senk

"There also needs to be cooperation between the employment centres – this is where the actual placement activity begins."

Knowledge Hub for Europe

With 22 Universities and 21 Universities of Applied Sciences and Academies, the Central European Region is one of the EU's best-equipped regions when it comes to educational institutions. The skilled labour force being trained here is an important advantage for the region as a business location.



SINCE JUNE OF 2009, top-level international research has a new home in the Central European Region. The "Institute of Science and Technology" (IST) Austria in Gugging, located on the premises of the local hospital, has commenced operations after only 18 months of construction. This also made a lifelong dream come true for internationally renowned Austrian quantum physicist and IST inventor Anton Zeilinger, who had always wished for a research facility in the Central European Region that would be comparable to the likes of Israel's Weizmann Institute or Zurich's ETH. By the year 2016, the province of Lower Austria will have invested approximately 130 million EUR in this research and training location; the federal government will contribute approximately eight to nine million EUR in subsidies each year. By the end of 2009, four to five theoretical research groups will already have started their work on campus in the field of Computer Science and Quantitative Biology. By the end of 2016, 500 people are expected to work in research and teaching in Gugging.

Half of all Academic Educational Institutions are in Austria

IST Austria is only the latest example of the comprehensive academic educational possibilities in the Central European Region. Within a radius of just under 150 kilometres, there are 22 Universities and 21 "Universities of Applied Sciences" and Academies in the Central European Region. This makes Centrope one of the EU's best-equipped regions when it comes to top-level educational institutions. The Austrian provinces of Vienna, Lower Austria and Burgenland have the greatest share in these educational institutions: With a total of ten Universities and thirteen "Universities of Applied Sciences", nearly half of all science and research facilities are located in Austria. Currently, there are approximately 150,000 students, trained and taught by 5,000 professors. With 60,000 students, the University of Vienna is the largest university in the Central European Region. And Austria invests in its academics: As much as 5.5 percent of the gross domestic product is spent on education in this country - significantly more than in Great Britain, Italy and Japan for instance. The Universities of Applied Sciences, which offer a very practice-oriented approach, play a particularly important role in academic



The Universities of Applied Sciences, which offer a very practice-oriented approach, play a particularly important role in academic education.

education. The Burgenland University of Applied Sciences with approximately 1,000 students is the largest institution of its kind in the Austrian part of the Central European Region. In addition to the universities, the Austrian part of the Central European Region is also home to 51 of the 58 research facilities of the Austrian Academy of Sciences. More than 100 institutes of the Ludwig Boltzmann Society (active in the field of human medicine, among other areas), as well as the Austrian Research Centre in Seibersdorf and Arsenal Research in Vienna - the two largest technology- and economy-oriented research institutions - call Austria home as well. A further 250 institutions in the non-academic research field demonstrate the exceptionally high density of the research network.

Intellectual Centre of Slovakia

The intellectual centres of the Central European Region are also located in neighbouring countries. In Slovakia, the university cities of Bratislava and Trnava are the hotspots of science and research. Eight of the country's 20 public universities are located in the capital city, among them the renowned Comenius University with approximately 22,000 students and the Slovak University of Technology with 15,000 students, which is an important source of young, qualified people for the expanding automotive industry in the Central European Region. The Slovak Academy of Sciences operates 45 of its 54 institutes in these two regions.

Southern Moravia - Knowledge Centre of Great Tradition

Southern Moravia, and especially its capital city of Brno, is the Czech Republic's other intellectual centre besides Prague. Six public universities in Brno offer educational possibilities for a total of 60,000 students, the best-known among them being the Masaryk University and the Mendel University of Agriculture and Forestry. In addition, the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic operates 15 research institutes in Brno with a focus in Natural Sciences. Three private universities and 13 technical colleges that are currently being developed into Universities of Applied Sciences complement the academic education offerings in and around Brno.

Western Hungary's Academic Race

In the Hungarian part of the Central European Region, academic education is concentrated in two places: the Szechenyi University in Győr, the region's largest academic institution with 7,000 students, and the University of West Hungary in Sopron with its agricultural faculty in Mosonmagyaróvár. Further to that, the Hungarian Academy of Sciences operates a few research centres in Western Hungary, like the Geophysical Research Institute in Sopron.

Cooperation across Borders

For many years, the academic exchange between the universities and academic training & research institutes of the



From top to bottom: Institute of Science and Technology (IST) Austria in Gugging; Campus Vienna Biocenter, one of the top locations for life sciences; IMC University of Applied Sciences in Krems, an internationally renowned school with more than 1,800 students; Vienna University of Economics and Business, not only the largest economics university in Europe, but also one of the best.

four EU member states in the Central European Region has traditionally been very close. Special projects are to further deepen this cooperation in the future. One of these initiatives is DUO**Stars, a co-operative technology project between Lower Austria and the neighbouring Slovak region of Trnava, which was launched in January of 2009. One of its main focus areas is the development of Green Technologies, for example, in the area of hybrid-powered cars. Sonja Zwazl, President of the Lower Austrian Chamber of Commerce: "With this system, we want to bring large and small companies from both regions together, and offer them a platform for their visions."

Christian Neuhold

Universities - Universities of Applied Sciences - Co-operatives

UNIVERSITIES + POST-GRADUATE PROGRAMMES

University of Vienna	www.univie.ac.at
Vienna University of Technology	www.tuwien.ac.at
Vienna University of Economics and Business	www.wu-wien.ac.at
University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences	www.boku.ac.at
University of Veterinary Medicine Vienna	www.vu-wien.ac.at
Medical University of Vienna	www.meduniwien.ac.at
Webster University Vienna	www.webster.ac.at
IMADEC University Vienna	www.imadec.ac.at
IST - Institute of Science & Technology	www.ist-austria.ac.at
PEF Private University Vienna	www.privatuni-wien.at
Danube University Krems	www.donau-uni.ac.at
Private University of Creative Industries St. Pölten	www.ndu.ac.at
Comenius University Bratislava	www.uniba.sk
Bratislava University of Technology	www.stuba.sk
Trnava University	www.truni.sk
University of St. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava	www.ucm.sk
University of Economics in Bratislava	www.euba.sk
Széchenyi István University in Győr	info.sze.hu
University of West Hungary in Sopron	www.uniwest.hu
Mendel University of Agriculture and Forestry in Brno	www.mendelu.cz/en
University of Veterinary and Pharmaceutical Sciences Brno	www.vfu.cz
Brno University of Technology	www.vutbr.cz
Masaryk University Brno	www.muni.cz

RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS + CO-OPERATIVES

AIT - Austrian Research Centre	www.arcs.ac.at
IMBA - Institute for Molecular Biotechnology	www.imba.oeaw.ac.at
Technology Cooperation Project DUO**Stars	www.duostars.eu

UNIVERSITIES OF APPLIED SCIENCES

Eisenstadt University of Applied Sciences	www.fh-eisenstadt.ac.at
Pinkafeld University of Applied Sciences	www.fh-pinkafeld.ac.at
St. Pölten University of Applied Sciences	www.fhstp.ac.at
Tulln University of Applied Sciences	www.tulln.fhwn.ac.at
FHWien University of Applied Sciences of WKW	www.fh-wien.ac.at
University of Applied Sciences Wiener Neustadt	www.fhwn.ac.at
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"Conquer & Discover" - under this working title, the Römerland-Carnuntum region is already preparing for the Lower Austria Provincial Exhibition 2011.

Rich Heritage

Centrope is one of Europe's most culturally rich regions. Its eventful history has left clear marks across many borders and throughout the centuries. With great tact and ambition, officials from the political and cultural circles dedicated themselves to the task of presenting **old and new pieces of art and cultural treasures** to inhabitants and visitors of the Central European Region.

A LARGE NUMBER of fortresses, monasteries and castles line the way to Vienna, the former imperial city and residence of the Habsburg family, as well as to Bratislava, former coronation city of the Hungarian kings, and on to Brno and Győr. Situated in the midst of enchanting natural landscapes and gardens, these stone-made witnesses of glamorous times past have proven to be ideal advertising vehicles for the tourism regions. One of them is without doubt the Valtice Castle, one of the Czech Republic's most beautiful baroque palaces. Together with the nearby Lednice Castle, it was designated a UNESCO World Heritage site as part of the Lednice-Valtice Cultural Landscape.

For centuries, Lower Austria's Marchfeld was considered "the" summer residence region par excellence. Castles in Orth by the Danube (today's site of the Donauauen National Park), Eckartsau and Niederweiden served as classic hunting and country estates. And of course there is the Hof Castle, taking an undisputable leading role as the first and main project in the touristic devel-

opment of Marchfeld besides being an important factor in the region's economy. This became possible thanks to many years of extensive renovation and restoration work, which today allows the large 50 hectare premises to shine in new, old splendour.

Conquer & Discover

Under this working title, the Römerland-Carnuntum region is already preparing for the Lower Austria Provincial Exhibition 2011. Petra Bohuslav, Provincial Councillor for Tourism, sees Lower Austria's Provincial Exhibitions as a proven concept of success and a unique opportunity for the hosting regions. "By 2011, the province of Lower Austria will have invested approximately 26 million EUR in the Provincial Exhibition in the Römerland-Carnuntum region. All cultural and economic developments will benefit from 'Conquer & Discover' long term," says Bohuslav. A region of such historic importance is of course predestined for a major event like the Provincial Exhibition. Besides the well-known cultural locations situated amidst lovely natural landscapes, the region is especially advantageous due to its proximity to the two capital cities of Vienna and Bratislava. Approximately 2.7 million people live within a 60-minute radius, which of course makes for an enormous visitor potential. And there will be lots to see for the hundreds of thousands of visitors: In the three locations of Hainburg, Bad Deutsch Altenburg and Petronell-Carnuntum, the "Conquer" aspect will be covered, spanning from the Roman, Huns and Avar Conquests to the Ottoman Wars as well as Napoleon and Hitler. Besides cultural, economic and settlement history, inventions and discoveries - from nature and its laws to nanotechnology and microbiology - play an important role as the second central element of the Lower Austria Provincial Exhibition 2011.

Isabella Neuhold



Hof Castle, a masterpiece of the European baroque era and Austria's largest countryside castle, has returned to its old splendour thanks to extensive renovation work.



The Green Centre

In few other European regions, pristine natural landscapes and urban metropolitan areas are situated as closely to each other as in Centrope. It is in the interest of its inhabitants to conserve these green lungs as spaces that improve the quality of life for people, flora and fauna, but also to make use of them as a sustainable development for the region.

THE PARTIES RESPONSIBLE know very well how to make the most of the abundance of natural beauty in the transnational region around Southern Moravia, Vienna, Lower Austria and Burgenland, as well as Western Hungary and Western Slovakia. Environmental protection and the conservation of natural heritage are a priority in Centrope, as demonstrated by the numerous national parks and nature reserves. The Donau-Auen National Park, which is the last great water-meadow landscape in Central Europe, stretches from Vienna all the way to the Slovakian border. This unique gem of nature is not only a retreat and habitat for a diverse flora and fauna; the green lung outside the gates of Vienna also is one of the region's most popular day-trip destinations. In the two cross-border national parks Lake Neusiedl-Seewinkel/Fertő-Hanság and Thaya Valley/Podyji, conservation and careful use of the natural landscapes is ensured jointly by the two respective countries involved. The Lake Neusiedl-Seewinkel/Fertő-Hanság reserve received a special award: In 2001, UNESCO's World Heritage Commission declared the landscape around Lake Neusiedl a World Heritage Site – an "area of outstanding universal value", as described in the UNCESCO Convention. The fourth national park in the Central European Region, Órség National Park in Hungary, was created by combining the landscape conservation areas of Órség, Szentgyörgyvölgy and the Rába Valley. This hilly area, distinctly formed and partitioned by numerous creeks and rivers, borders Burgenland to the west and Slovenia to the south.

Besides the national parks, numerous landscape and nature parks also leave an impression of the beauty and diversity of the cultural and natural landscapes in Europe's green centre. From the Lednice-Valtice area in the Czech Republic, named a UNESCO World Heritage Site, to the March-Thaya meadows in the east of Austria; from the Záhörje reserve north of Bratislava to the natural landscapes of Szigetköz, Pannonhalma and the Sopron mountain range: The list of conservation-worthy, unique natural spaces in Centrope includes all these and many more.

Wellness Temple in the Seewinkel Area

The region of Lake Neusiedl is drawing attention these days with yet another attraction; this time, a man-made one. Situated right on Pimezlacke, a revitalized eight hectare

large lake, St. Martins Thermal Spa & Lodge - one of Eastern Austria's most spectacular thermal spas - will commence operations in November. Its 23 hectare large premises are located within walking distance to the Lake Neusiedl/Seewinkel National Park – in the midst of one of Europe's most pristine and enchanting natural landscapes. The thermal spa and lodge was developed by the renowned architect's office of Holzbauer & Partner. The lodge concept, implemented in Central Europe for the first time, offers 300 beds; the thermal spa can accommodate 1,000 day visitors. This unique wellness oasis upgrades the region to a year-round travel destination. At the same time, it is an attractive offer for locals living in the region and the surrounding cities of Vienna, Bratislava and Győr.

Isabella Neuhold



At St. Martins Thermal Spa & Lodge in Burgenland's Seewinkel area, the recreational offerings of the thermal landscape are complemented by an attractive outdoors programme. The Lodge offers possibilities for retreat, including a spa and a gourmet restaurant.

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Two Cities – One Map

With the Central European region, a mutual living space and economic area is emerging, which should grow together into a strong and attractive region. From a European integration viewpoint, the resurrection of a Central European region along the Danube will be the most important and effective development of the last years and possibly decades besides the German reunification. Since the fall of the Iron Curtain, Vienna's natural proximity to its neighbours was seized in a positive and cooperative way, benefitting all parties involved.

The map enclosed on this page will help you to remove borders that may still exist in your mind. It will show you at one glance just how close all the important centres of the Central European region are situated to each other, and which magnificent natural and cultural landscapes you can discover between Brno, Bratislava, Vienna, Győr and Szombathely. You will also find an overview map of the two European capital cities of Bratislava and Vienna, the most important economic and cultural hubs of the Central European region.

Experience the fascination of this historically developed cultural and natural landscape, and come see for yourself the economic capability and innovative power of the businesses of the Central European region.



Your map of the Central European region is attached here.
Just peel it off carefully – and you will have a reliable guide to one of the EU's thriving regions.

