

## Preface



The European Union currently finds itself at a crossroads: the asymmetrical structure of the euro – in a nutshell, “European” monetary policy versus national economic and fiscal policies – is being mercilessly exploited by the markets. The scope for speculation has also been widened by the liberalisation of the financial sector over the past two decades. These are issues that affect us all.

And that is why it is also imperative for us all to overcome the systemic causes of the crisis. The structural solution can only lie in a better coordinated Europe. The crucial decision to be made here, however, concerns the fundamental (economic) policy orientation of the EU: neo-liberal faith in the markets or clear state regulatory systems for a Europe based on ecological and social principles? The direction chosen will also define the basic framework for our policy-making at local level.

Vienna City Council’s Committee for European and International Affairs is the body in which these questions are discussed in Vienna. In its very first sessions the Committee already succeeded on reaching agreement on Vienna’s basic position vis-à-vis the EU, as well as defining concrete guidelines for the city’s EU policy in the “Vienna Declaration on Europe 2011”. This pleasing result provides a solid platform for optimum representation of Vienna’s specific interests at all levels and in all relevant (inter)national bodies, both now and in the future. I am convinced that it will also do its part to make the voice of the cities better heard in the European chorus.

**Dr. Michael Häupl**  
Mayor and Governor of Vienna



To date, the City and Province of Vienna have predominantly benefited from EU enlargement and the internal market. Nevertheless, the citizens' attitude towards the united Europe remains rather critical and the European idea is still not really strongly rooted in people's minds. Intensifying the fact-based yet highly emotional process of "communicating Europe" – not least with a view to the next elections to the European Parliament – is one of the key concerns of the Vienna Declaration on Europe 2011. The Declaration sets forth our city's role as a competence centre for cross-border and transnational cooperation.

Projects such as the Strategy for the Danube Region strengthen this European idea, especially among young people, and are intended to make the significant added value of European cohesion policy transparent to everyone. Projects like these are among Vienna's priority tasks and interests within the framework of the Treaty of Lisbon.

Even so, in order to gain the active backing of all Vienna's citizens the urban dimension of such projects has to be communicated in an appropriate way and made to come alive for the individual. The City of Vienna needs this support if it is to make optimum use of its opportunities as a people-uniting, creative force at the heart of Europe and uphold its claim to leadership as a cultural metropolis, academic and scientific centre, environmental role model and bastion of high quality of life, both now and in the future.

**Dr. Elisabeth Vitouch**

Chairwoman of the Committee for European and International Affairs,  
Austrian Social Democratic Party (SPÖ)



European policy has a direct impact on people's lives.

The need of the moment is to make the EU more democratic and European policy more broad-based, including at local level. Vienna's Social Democrat/Green City Council is tackling the latter with the establishment of the Committee for European and International Affairs and the planned initiation of a "Vienna Dialogue on Europe" with civil society.

The Treaty of Lisbon has given rise to positive developments like the upgrading of the European Parliament and the introduction of the European Citizens' Initiative, but at the same time there is a danger that European democracy will be eroded by the proposals for European economic governance.

The measures proposed so far to combat the financial crisis exacerbate social tensions and are being channelled into intensified nationalist tendencies in all member states of the European Union. In doing so they pose a greater threat to the project of a united Europe of solidarity than the crisis itself.

If we want to save Europe, we have to change it. "More Europe" is imperative in the current crisis, but care has to be taken to ensure that the decisions are not divorced from reality and made without regard for their social ramifications.

The fact that it addresses this aspect, among others, is just one of the merits of the Vienna Declaration on Europe 2011. With this Declaration, the City of Vienna is once again speaking out with a critical, forward-thinking voice.

**Dr. Monika Vana**

Vice-chairwoman of the Committee for European and International Affairs, Greens spokeswoman on labour market, Europe and civil service



The EU is currently undergoing a severe crisis, to which no end is in sight, and has suffered a massive loss of popular trust. The Austrian Freedom Party already warned about undesirable trends in the system at a very early stage, without being fundamentally opposed to the European Community. What we do not want, however, is communitarisation of the debts of individual member states and further devolution of sovereign rights to Brussels. On the contrary, we want to see national powers restored. Our aim is for Europe to develop as an association of nation states, not as a federal Europe.

We can support this Declaration because it primarily deals with key problems facing Vienna, and because our reservations on important points were addressed and amendments accepted. By giving the Declaration our support we want to help give Vienna a strong, united position for external lobbying on the future regulation of key areas such as subsidiarity and provision of services.

The “Viennese positions” outlined in the Declaration address future issues facing our city and require the support of as much of the population as possible. We therefore welcome the attempt, despite the often widely divergent standpoints, to achieve unanimity within the newly created Committee for European and International Affairs on questions of external lobbying. This can only be accomplished through compromise by all the parties involved, and we are willing to make these compromises in the interests of Vienna.

**Mag. Wolfgang Jung**

Member of the Committee for European and International Affairs,  
spokesman on European affairs and International relations, Austrian Freedom Party (FPÖ)



Today, Vienna is one of the central cities of Europe. Contemporary Vienna as we have experienced it since the dawn of the 21st century has been shaped by a multitude of European economic and cultural influences. The fall of the Iron Curtain, Austria's accession to the EU and the European Union's later eastward enlargement shifted Vienna to the very centre of Europe, both economically and socially, a development that would have been scarcely imaginable even a quarter of a century earlier. It was not until summer 1989, when the then Austrian Foreign Minister Alois Mock succeeded in gaining the federal government's approval for Austria's application for EU membership and at virtually the same time joined his Hungarian counterpart in cutting the wire fence in front of the Austrian-Hungarian border near Sopron, that the hope of a united Europe moved within grasp. The EU eastward enlargement of 2004 was a major economic policy milestone for Vienna; since that date the city has been able to actively expand its role as the hub of Central Europe. The oft-cited "Central European idea" coined way back in the 1980s by the former Austrian People's Party Deputy Mayor of Vienna and later Vice-Chancellor of Austria, Dr. Erhard Busek, has become actual reality. Today we are experiencing the major political challenge of implementing European integration and organising the coexistence of people of different cultures and faiths within the European Union. Following political and economic integration, we now need to integrate the citizens in the European project. After all, it is the citizens themselves who will ultimately shape the future of European integration.

**Dr. Matthias Tschirf**

Member of the Committee for European and International Affairs,  
Austrian People's Party (ÖVP)