

News from Austria

No. 19/07

HOME AFFAIRS | EUROPE

Chancellor Gusenbauer hails social partners' employment package

EUROPE | INTERNATIONAL

Federal Chancellor Gusenbauer received Mongolian PM Enkhbold

ECONOMY

Wifo/IHS: Austria's economic boom peaks in 2007

CULTURE | MEDIA | SCIENCE

A great European: celebrating Franz Vranitzky's 70th birthday

SPORTS POLICY

Vienna: visitor record and great enthusiasm on the "Day of Sport"

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Chancellor Gusenbauer hails social partners' employment package

Federal Chancellor Gusenbauer: "The government will do its best to support and implement the labour market qualification campaign of the social partners."

1.3 billion euros are available for the employment package of the social partners up to 2010.

In the future parents can choose between three childcare allowance models. The discretionary earnings cap is increased to 16,200 euros.

The driving license of offenders infringing the blood alcohol concentration limit of 0.05 percent for the third time will be suspended for three months. Heavy fines will be imposed for using mobile phones during driving instead of hands-free phones and exceeding speed limits by more than 30 km/h.

The social partners agreed on a reform package focusing on the training of skilled workers and jobs for young people. On 2 October 2007 the respective proposals were submitted to Federal Chancellor Alfred Gusenbauer and Vice-Chancellor Wilhelm Molterer by four presidents, i.e. Rudolf Hundstorfer (Austrian Federation of Trade Unions), Christoph Leitl (Economic Chamber Austria), Herbert Tumpel (Chamber of Labour) and Gerhard Wlodkowski (Austrian Chamber of Agriculture).

Federal Chancellor Gusenbauer hailed the package as "again, an excellent job" and "important stimulus". The project "improved the opportunities for jobseekers, in particular young people, guaranteed high-quality education and training" and made available urgently required skilled workers to industry, stressed Gusenbauer. The social partners agreed that the demand for skilled workers should first be covered in Austria. Under the motto "investing in the future", a programme has been conceived for companies training apprentices; the subsidies will be based on quality and demand criteria – in contrast to the previous quantitative model (the so-called "Blum bonus") promoting the creation of open positions. Incentives are to be provided for training programmes offering new opportunities (e.g. women in typical male jobs, programmes for young people with learning disabilities, additional qualifications), informed the social partners. Young people not finding an apprenticeship place are to be guaranteed training at supra-company level ("rescue network").

Foreign workers are to be granted access to individual sectors of the labour market only when the demand for skilled workers cannot be met in Austria. In this case, the admission requirements for foreign nationals to the labour market should be relaxed. Legal measures will be taken also against wage dumping. In cooperation with the Public Employment Service (AMS), the list of occupations with a labour shortage will be updated on a quarterly basis. The quota for top-qualified key labour force from non-EU Member States will be raised.

1.3 billion euros will be made available for this set of measures up to the year 2010. ■

New childcare allowance scheme taking effect on 1 January 2008

On 3 October 2008 the Council of Ministers adopted the new Childcare Allowance Act, which will take effect on 1 January 2008. The key change is a new payment model. Eligible parents have a choice between three options. Option 1: 436 euros/month during three years if one parent cares for the child for 30 months and the second for six months (30+6). Option 2: childcare allowance entitlement of 800 euros/month for 18 months if one parent is responsible for childcare for 15 months and the second for three months (15+3). Option 3: 624 euros/month during 24 months, with one parent being eligible for 20 months and the second for 4 months.

Under the new Act, the discretionary earnings cap is increased from 14,600 euros to 16,200 euros. The maximum income entitling to the supplement to the childcare allowance is raised to 16,000 euros (from previously 5,500 euros). Another innovation is the "transition rule", stipulating that if the income threshold is exceeded, the amount in excess has to be repaid but not the entire childcare allowance.

Parents of children born before 1 January 2008 are also eligible for the new childcare allowance. However, the child must be younger than 15 or 20 months – depending on which of the two models (15+3 or 20+4) they opted for.

The new system will be subject to ongoing monitoring to evaluate it after one year and to make the necessary adjustments. ■

Stiffer penalties for traffic offenders

Traffic offenders will face stiffer penalties already next January. In the Council of Ministers on 3 October 2007 Minister of the Interior Günther Platter and Minister of Transport Werner Faymann agreed to introduce stricter penalties for drinking and driving, using mobile phones as well as speeding. First-time offenders not observing the blood alcohol concentration limit of 0.05 percent face re-training measures and a fine. The driving license of repeat offenders can be suspended from one to three months. Fines for using mobile phones instead of hands-free devices will be doubled. The minimum fine for exceeding the speed limit by 30 km/h is increased to 72 euros. ■

Federal Chancellor Gusenbauer received Mongolian PM Enkhbold

Federal Chancellor Alfred Gusenbauer met with Mongolian Prime Minister Miyegombo Enkhbold in Vienna on 2 October 2007. Gusenbauer underlined the necessity of global cooperation in the combat against climate change. Austria was a “leading country” in the production of renewable energies, both in the EU and internationally. Moreover, Austrian companies were “global leaders” in the field of environmental technology, the Federal Chancellor praised the know-how of domestic enterprises in a press conference held jointly with his guest from Mongolia. A memorandum on intensified cooperation in the field of environmental technology and agriculture as well as an aviation agreement were signed.

Other topics discussed were the intensification of the good bilateral relations between Austria and Mongolia, especially at economic level. Gusenbauer also asked the Mongolian Prime Minister to back Austria’s efforts to become a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council. Enkhbold asked Austria to lend its support to young people from Mongolia wishing to study in Austria.

In the framework of his official visit to Austria lasting several days, the Mongolian head of government also participated in an economic forum organised by the Economic Chamber Austria (WKÖ). ■

Vietnamese President pays state visit to Austria

On 11 October 2007 Vietnamese President Nguyen Minh Triet will arrive in Austria for a four-day state visit. He returns the official visit of late Federal President Thomas Klestil 12 years ago. Nguyen Minh Triet is accompanied by his wife Tran Thi Kim Chi and a trade delegation. Among the items on the agenda are talks with Federal President Heinz Fischer and Federal Chancellor Alfred Gusenbauer. ■

Minister of Defence Darabos on a fact-finding mission in Chad

According to Minister of Defence Norbert Darabos, the planned EU mission in Chad is

“absolutely necessary to ensure security and stability along the border with (the Sudanese civil-war region) Dafur“. In a press release of 6 October 2007 the Minister informed that the aim of the mission was to allow “displaced persons to return to their villages”. Darabos had been on a fact-finding mission in the Central African country from 4 to 5 October 2007 to obtain first-hand impressions of the situation.

“Poverty in the refugee camps is of unimaginable dimensions. We have to give these people – especially the numerous children – hope for a better future“, stated Darabos. The Minister expressed his wish to discuss the feasibility of a mission with the members of government in the next days.

The EU plans a humanitarian mission in the east and north of Chad under the lead of France to protect the refugees and to support the relief organisations. Austria was examining the possibility of deploying 50 to 70 soldiers in the region for restoring the supply with potable water and other purely humanitarian actions. The UN-mandated EU mission will be realised in cooperation with the joint UN-African Union force UNAMID in Dafur and is limited to one year.

Based on estimates of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Chad currently provides refuge to about 240,000 persons displaced from the neighbouring western Sudanese civil-war region Dafur. About 170,000 internal refugees have to be added to this number. ■

Total ban on cluster munitions

On 3 October 2007, the Council of Ministers adopted a bill banning cluster munitions. This makes Austria the second country in the world initiating legislation to tackle this issue. ■

Vienna: first EU-wide Black Women’s Congress

Under the patronage of Austrian Speaker of Parliament Barbara Prammer, the first Black European Women’s Congress took place in Vienna from 27 to 29 September 2007. The event was organised by the International Centre for Black Women’s Perspectives (AFRA). ■

Federal Chancellor Gusenbauer: “We want to intensify cooperation with Mongolia at economic and political level but also in the field of climate protection.“

Minister of Defence Darabos: “Poverty in the refugee camps in Chad is of unimaginable dimensions. We have to give hope to these people, above all the numerous children.“

Austria is the world’s second country to adopt a law on a total ban of cluster munitions.

Wifo/IHS: Austria's economic boom peaks in 2007

This year the Austrian economy is growing unexpectedly fast but is likely to slow down significantly in 2008. In late September the Economic Research Institute (Wifo) and the Institute for Advanced Studies (IHS) presented their upward revisions of the real economic growth forecasts for 2007: Wifo 4.4% and IHS 3.2%. Compared to the forecast of June, this corresponds to a minor plus of 0.2 (0.1) percentage points. However, the experts also re-adjusted their estimates for 2008. The real gross domestic product (GDP) 2008 will probably grow only by 2.4% (Wifo) or 2.6 % (IHS).

"The current cyclical peak is higher but less broad than we expected", explained Wifo boss Karl Aiginger. One reason was the sluggish domestic demand.

Although both institutes state in their autumn forecasts for 2007 and 2008 that growth in Austria will be clearly above the euro-zone average, substantial cyclical risks were expected. The main factors of uncertainty were the financial markets crisis and the strong euro. In 2007 exports and construction investments continued to be the driving force behind the domestic boom. The experts stated that in 2008 domestic consumption will not expand markedly, predicting an increase in private consumer spending of 1.9% in 2007 and 2.1% in 2008. ■

Unemployment in Austria decreases for the 19th time in a row

In Austria the number of unemployed persons has decreased for the 19th time in a row. In September 2007 186,147 persons were registered unemployed (a minus of 5.2% or 10,301 jobseekers). A year-on-year decrease by 0.3 percentage points (to 4.3%) was registered in September. The number of training programme participants dropped by 15.4% or 9,092 to 50,136 persons.

Thus, it was a realistic goal to achieve full employment by 2010, stressed Minister for Economics and Labour Bartenstein at a presentation of the latest labour market data on 1 October 2007. Five of the nine Länder boasted full employment already now. Based on the Ministry's estimates, the number of employed

rose by about 42,000 (+1.3%) to 3,378,300 persons from the prior-year level. Vacancies increased by 41,942 positions or 9.8%. ■

Agreement on fiscal revenue redistribution system

The federal government, Länder and municipalities agreed on the fundamentals of a new fiscal revenue redistribution plan in the night from 26 to 27 September 2007. While some details still need to be fixed by 10 October 2007, an agreement has been reached on the financing of care services around the clock as well as the new guaranteed minimum income. Furthermore, the transfers to the Länder are increased by 100 million euros annually to finance regional hospitals. Additional tax revenue will also be made available for expanding childcare facilities and German language tuition.

However, the most important change in the new fiscal revenue sharing plan is the term of validity. While the redistribution of the several-billion tax revenue was previously negotiated at four-year intervals (or in this case after just three years), the next negotiations will take place only in six years. According to Minister of Finance Wilhelm Molterer, this measure has been taken to facilitate planning. ■

"New severance pay system"

The new severance pay system will also cover persons holding service contracts, self-employed persons, free-lancers and farmers, announced Minister of Labour Martin Bartenstein on 27 September 2007. For free-lancers, farmers and foresters a voluntary opt-in model will be offered with effect 1 January 2008, for others participation is compulsory. About 500,000 persons are affected. ■

EURO 2008: social partners agree on Sunday shop opening

The social partners agreed on Sunday shop opening during the European Football Championship "EURO 2008". On the four Sundays in June 2008 shops will be open from noon to 6 p.m. Working is voluntary and governed by a temporary collective agreement. ■

Autumn forecast: the Austrian economy grows by 3.2 to 3.4% in 2007.

The new fiscal revenue redistribution plan guarantees the financing of care services around the clock and a new minimum income.

In September 2007 unemployment in Austria decreased by 5.2%, while employment rose by 1.3%.

A great European: celebrating Franz Vranitzky's 70th birthday

On 4 October 2007 former Federal Chancellor Franz Vranitzky celebrated his 70th birthday. Federal President Heinz Fischer hosted a luncheon, in which – besides Vranitzky – Federal Chancellor Alfred Gusenbauer and other officials participated. Fischer thanked Vranitzky in a letter of congratulation for the “outstanding and comprehensive services rendered to the Austrian economy, in politics, the federal government and many other functions“. During many years, and in particular during his term in office as a Chancellor, he had shaped and favourably influenced the development of the Second Republic, especially by deciding in favour of Austria's EU accession. “Your reliable and superior way of dealing with all issues concerning the demon of National Socialism should also be highlighted in this context”, said the Federal President. In the evening the Federal Chancellery hosted a party for Vranitzky at Hofburg. Among the attendees were numerous representatives of business and the media.

On 3 October 2007 a publication in his honour “Ein großer Europäer“ (“A Great European”) had been presented in Bruno Kreisky's former house in Armbrustergasse in Vienna, which today houses the Kreisky Forum founded by Franz Vranitzky. 45 “companions and friends” co-authored the book consisting of 264 pages. Among them are politicians like Federal President Fischer, Federal Chancellor Gusenbauer, Vranitzky's predecessor Fred Sinowatz, his close companion former Minister of Finance Ferdinand Lacina, artists including André Heller and Erika Pluhar as well as the scholars Oliver Rathkolb and Dieter Stiefel. Co-authors presenting festive statements were former President of the Federation of Industrialists Herbert Krejci and former Manager of the Austrian Broadcasting Corporation and current CEO of the RTL Group Gerhard Zeiler. In his brilliant speech Krejci emphasised that the social partnership still played an important role in Austria and highlighted Vranitzky's achievements regarding the tax reform, “denationalisation” and Austria's EU integration. In his congratulatory statement Zeiler drew attention to Vranitzky's reconciliation efforts during the difficult Waldheim crisis. ■

Vienna Albertina: Art after 1970

From 12 October 2007 to 6 January 2008 Vienna Albertina stages the exhibition “Art after 1970”, showcasing about 150 works from its comprehensive contemporary art collection. The exhibition focuses on the juxtaposition of different artistic positions, e.g. of Georg Baselitz and Gerhard Richter, Sigmar Polke and Markus Lüpertz, Alex Katz and Roy Lichtenstein, Christiane Baumgartner and Franz Gertsch. But also individual approaches to contemporary art as developed by Maria Lassnig, Arnulf Rainer, Robert Longo and William Kentridge are presented.

Contemporary art has been one of the priorities of Albertina in acquiring new works for its collection since the 1950s. Today its contemporary art collection comprises more than 20,000 masterpieces. ■

Franz Liszt Festival in Raiding

Franz Liszt was born in Raiding, a small village in Burgenland. He is celebrated as the creator of a novel type of piano music and a pioneering style of composition. In 2007 the Franz Liszt Festival focuses on the antagonisms in the life and oeuvre of the genius. It takes place in the newly built concert hall next to the house where he was born from 12 to 21 October 2007. Under the motto “Half Gypsy – Half Franciscan“, performances of highly emotional gypsy music characterised by great virtuosity and artistic improvisation on the one hand and profoundly religious vocal works on the other hand will be given. The festival stars high-calibre musicians such as the piano duo Eduard & Johannes Kutrowatz, pianist Cyprien Katsaris or violinist Benjamin Schmid, who will pay “A Tribute to Django“ Reinhardt. A concert titled “Franz Liszt and the music of the gypsies“ – with Feri Janoska (piano), a “Romabanda” and a string ensemble of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra – will provide another fascinating experience. Together with pianist David Lutz, bassist Robert Holl will give a “gala night“ of songs by Franz Schubert and piano transcriptions of Franz Liszt. His “Via crucis. Les 14 Stations de la Croix pour Choeur et Soli“ will be interpreted by the Chorus sine nomine and Istvan Matyas, conducted by Johannes Hiemetsberger. ■

A book about Vranitzky, “a great European”: Ein großer Europäer - Weggefährten über Franz Vranitzky. Löcker-Verlag. Vienna 2007. ISBN 978-3-85409-471-5

Vienna Albertina: Art after 1970. Up to 6 January 2008. www.albertina.at

Liszt Festival Raiding: www.franz-liszt.at

25 years of Wiener Musik Galerie: Atypical Jazz – Structured Emotions

Wiener Musik Galerie – actively promoting the work of Franz Koglmann – celebrates its 25th anniversary with a three-day festival titled “ATYPICAL JAZZ – structured emotions“ at ORF RadioKulturhaus (9 to 11 November 2007). Its aim is to offer a relief from commercialised drab and dreary jazz, focusing on high-quality music which cannot be classified as “jazz” in the strict sense of the word – but as “music admitting jazz“, as Christian Baier once described Koglmann’s artistic intention. Manager Ingrid Karl offers six concerts and five premiers – a rare and exquisite programme, including a performance by jazz composer and arranger Bob Zieff and his Chamber Jazz Ensemble, a septet. Cooperating with the brilliant cool jazz trumpeter Chet Baker he set new standards already in the 1950s. Zieff’s approach is similar in nature to that of his colleague Bob Graettinger, who is responsible for some of the most beautiful recordings of Stan Kenton and André Hodeir, founder of the spectacular experimental Jazz Groupe de Paris. Both were presented in Vienna by Wiener Musik Galerie at the “Incident in Jazz“ festival. Other highlights of ATYPICAL JAZZ: the String Trio of New York, pianists Richie Beirach and Steve Kuhn (with a trio and guest singer Sheila Jordan), the “4“ of clarinettist Harald Koelbl & Koehne Quartet and the Franz Koglmann Pipetet. The programme of the Viennese composer and flugelhorn player includes two premiers, i.e. a composition inspired in Francis Scott Fitzgerald’s novel “Tender is the Night“ as well as the piece ”Winterreisig“ dedicated to Franz Schubert and based on a text of Julian Schutting (the author himself will present the text). A bilingual book (German/English) edited by Ingrid Karl and Bernhard Kraller is published on the occasion of the festival. The contributions are by (inter)national authors such as Brian Morton, Bob Blumenthal, Bill Shoemaker, Klaus Nüchtern, Bernt Noglik, Jack Chambers, Peter Ruedi, Heinz Steinert and, last but not least, Bernhard Kraller, who had promoted Franz Koglmann’s “Third Stream” works with excellent articles in the trendsetting Viennese cultural magazine “wespennest“. ATYPICAL JAZZ has been realised with

substantial support, inter alia by the Federal Ministry of Education, Art and Culture and the Department of Culture of the City of Vienna. ■

Mourning the death of Marianne Fritz

Austrian writer Marianne Fritz – an outstanding representative of Austrian contemporary literature – died aged 58 from a severe illness on 1 October 2007. Since 1970 she has been writing on her prose work “Die Festung“ – whose main subject is Austria in the 20th century. In 1996 and 1998 she added two new mammoth novels to the “Fortress” project: “Naturgemäß I und II“, consisting of a total of about 5,000 pages.

Fritz was born in Weiz (Styria) in 1948 and moved to Vienna in the 1960s. In 1978 “Die Schwerkraft der Verhältnisse“ was published, for which she received the Robert Walser Prize still in the same year. The 550-page novel “Das Kind der Gewalt und die Sterne der Romani“ (1980) and the epoch-making three-volume novel “Dessen Sprache du nicht verstehst“ (1985) – her opus magnum – followed. The author told the story of the proletarian family “Null“ (Zero) in the small market town “Nirgendwo“ (Nowhere), starting in the year 1914. On more than 3,000 pages, Marianne Fritz developed a historically founded but at the same time mythically abstracted complex image of society, practically an alternative concept to the “bourgeois novel“, which she dedicated to those often overrun and crushed by the onrushing avalanche of events.

With her highly individual prose, Marianne Fritz continues the stylistic traditions of the post-war avant-garde movement “Wiener Gruppe“ (“Vienna Group”) and Austrian language-critical literature. By omitting auxiliary verbs and articles, using unusual word combinations and changing punctuation, the writer places high demands on her readership. In an interview with the Viennese magazine “Falter“ in 2003 later Nobel Prize laureate in literature Elfriede Jelinek expressed admiration for her colleague, describing her work as “singular“.

Marianne Fritz received several awards for her outstanding achievements in literature, e.g. the City of Vienna’s distinction (1994), Peter Rosegger Prize (1999) as well as the Franz Kafka Literature Prize (2001). Vienna’s City Councillor for Culture Andreas Mailath-Pokorny

25 years of Wiener Musik Galerie:
ATYPICAL JAZZ
9 to 11 November
Tickets:
ORF RadioKulturhaus – Großer Sendesaal,
Argentinierstraße
30a, 1040 Vienna
Tel.: 0043/1/50170-377.

www.wmg.at

Franz Koglmann’s contribution to the European Capital of Culture Sibiu (Romania), which has connections to Joseph Haydn and E.M. Cioran, is based on the theme of Haydn’s Symphony No. 27: Koglmann-Haydn: Nocturnal Walks. col legno 2007.

www.col-legno.com

Regarding Marianne Fritz, see also large-scale project “Fritzpunkt“ managed by Anne Mertin and Fred Büchel of Stadt Theater Wien
www.fritzpunkt.at

reacted to the death of the great writer by emphasising that she had been an “exceptional personality in the world of literature“ leaving a legacy of revolutionary dimension and unique intellectual bravery“. ■

Bioethics Commission appointed

After its third term expired, Federal Chancellor Alfred Gusenbauer appointed the members of the new Bioethics Commission set up within the Federal Chancellery. The new chairwoman is legal expert Christiane Druml of the Ethics Commission of the Vienna General Hospital (AKH). She succeeds to cancer specialist Johannes Huber, who held this office since 2001. Secretary of State Heidrun Silhavy presented the new members at a meeting of the Commission on “Gerontological Research” on 5 October 2007 in Vienna. The Bioethics Commission is now composed by 25 persons (previously 19). The 13 former members were re-appointed. For the first time a representative of organisations for people with disabilities will be on board: Klaus Voget, President of the Austrian Association for Civilian Disabled Persons (Österreichischer Zivil-Invaliden-verband) and the Austrian National Council for Rehabilitation (Österreichische Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Rehabilitation). The Bioethics Commission had been established as an advisory body for social, scientific and legal questions arising in the field of human medicine and human biology from an ethical perspective in 2001 by then Federal Chancellor Wolfgang Schüssel. ■

EU Cultural Agenda: Schmied wants to strengthen culture

The “European Agenda for Culture in a Globalising World” was the topic of a meeting of EU Ministers of Culture in Lisbon on 28 and 29 September 2007. In this Agenda the European Commission proposed for the first time a comprehensive strategy to develop cultural policies at European level. It lists priorities such as “promoting cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue”, “promoting culture as a catalyst of creativity” (e.g. in economic affairs) and “promoting culture as an important element of international relations”. Austrian Minister Schmied explained that it was important “to

strengthen the position of cultural policy at EU level and to promote culture and creativity“. In the forthcoming European Year of Intercultural Dialogue she wanted to launch relevant initiatives in Austria “as cultural policy must also give a socio-political stimulus for deeper integration and peaceful co-existence”. Schmied supported a European working party for culture statistics (to be set up in 2008), which will provide detailed data about the role of culture in promoting growth and employment in Europe. ■

UNESCO: award for Austrian Audiovisual Research Archives

UNESCO awarded the Jikji Memory of the World Prize 2007 to the Austrian Audiovisual Research Archives (Phonogrammarchiv) of the Austrian Academy of Sciences (ÖAW) in Cheongju City (South Korea) on 5 September 2007. The prize is named after the oldest known book printed by Buddhist monks of the city with movable metal letters in 1377, i.e. 78 years before Gutenberg. It forms part of UNESCO’s Memory of the World Programme promoting the preservation of documents of all types. At the award ceremony the pioneering role of the Austrian archives in introducing low-cost models for the digital preservation of audiovisual collections was stressed. The Audiovisual Research Archives of ÖAW were founded as research sound archives in 1899 and are the world’s oldest institution of this kind. ■

Lower Belvedere and Orangerie: Great exhibition “Vienna – Paris”

Lower Belvedere and Orangerie in Vienna present the exhibition “Vienna – Paris, Van Gogh, Cézanne and Austria’s Modernists“. The show – an overview of the modern art movement as a pan-European project – comprises about 250 works juxtaposed and presented based on a highly instructive concept.

The exhibition spotlights masterpieces of French Impressionism and Classical Modern Art in France. In addition to works of the above-mentioned artists, paintings by Gauguin, Picasso, Léger, Mathieu can be admired. Austrian Modern Art is represented with works by Klimt, Kokoschka, Boeckl, Engelhart, Schuch and Lassnig. ■

About the increasing significance of culture for employment and growth see also: Richard Florida: The Rise of the Creative Class. New York. Basic Books 2002. Paperback 2004.

www.belvedere.at

Vienna: visitor record and great enthusiasm on the "Day of Sport"

350,000 sports enthusiasts crowded Heldenplatz, setting a new visitor record for the "Day of Sport". Austria's greatest sports event taking place for the seventh time was a huge success also this year. It was a unique experience both for the visitors and the about 300 world and European champions in numerous sports celebrated on this day. Among the highlights of the event were a show dedicated to the achievements of Austrian sport including a presentation of the sports clubs and sports organisations, a special EURO 2008 programme, a presentation of "Fit for Austria" (an exercise and health campaign) and the award ceremony for top athletes. The public could also inform themselves about a promotion scheme for young talents. The non-profit organisation for Austrian athletes "Österreichische Sporthilfe" won the support of Samsung as an important partner. At the "Samsung Running Festival", a total of 20,000 euros was raised for fledgling track-and-field athletes. The next "Day of Sport" will take place on 27 September 2008. ■

School sport: basis for elite sport

School sport and intensive support programmes for basic sports such as gymnastics, track and field or swimming are the foundation of a successful Austrian elite sport. To this end it is necessary to grant sports clubs access to nurseries and schools, to professionalise training programmes for instructors and teachers and to network upper secondary academic schools for top athletes ("Sport-Oberstufen-Realgymnasien"). Therefore, Chancellor Alfred Gusenbauer and Secretary of State for Sport Reinhold Lopatka plan to strengthen cooperation between sports clubs and schools. Professional exercise and sports programmes offered by the sports clubs have to be introduced in schools, especially in the context of expanding all-day school types, without infringing on the competencies of the teachers. The Secretariat of State doubled the resources earmarked for school sport in 2008 from 1.8 to 3.6 million euros. Investments are, however, also necessary in the "Sport-Oberstufen-Realgymnasien" that lays the groundwork for elite sport. ■

EURO 2008: training for the security forces in Tyrol

256 days before EURO 2008 an emergency drill was staged for the security forces. When about two million football fans are expected in Austrian stadiums and public viewing zones next year, all emergency organisations have to pull together. The higher echelons of the Regional Police Command, the Security and Police Directorate as well as representatives of UEFA, the Federal Army, Red Cross, the Regional Alarm Centre of Tyrol, the District Administrations and the Fire Brigade participated in the nine-day training based on a drill scenario for this mega-sports event in Innsbruck. Besides international cooperation in the field of security, fan programmes of the individual host countries and legal measures, emergency drills have become an international standard practice. Under the lead of the Security Academy, the scenario was developed for the four venues of EURO 2008 in Austria – Vienna, Klagenfurt, Salzburg and Tyrol. ■

"Fit for Austria" plays golf

Under bright sunshine, the "3rd Fit for Austria Golf Trophy" was staged at Golf Club Ernegg Palace in the presence of sports celebrities and VIPs of the economic and political arenas. In the framework of the Federal Chancellery's exercise and health campaign "Fit for Austria", golf is promoted as a sport that can be practised also in old age.

Among the participants were double Olympic winner Michaela Dorfmeister, cycling world champion Franz Stocher and European champion in figure skating Claudia Kristofics-Binder. The sports clubs were represented by Managing Director Anton Schutti, Secretary-General Walter Pillwein and Sports Director Matthias Bogner. ■

IMPRINT

Owner (publisher) and producer: Federal Chancellery, Federal Press Service, A-1014 Vienna, Ballhausplatz 1.

Editor: Dr. Franz Putz, tel. ++43/1/53115-2579, fax ++43/1/53115-4274, e-mail: franz.putz@bka.gv.at.

Dispatch: Division VII/2, Ms. Irene Bucher, tel. ++43/1/53115-2958, fax ++43/1/53115-2880, e-mail: irene.bucher@bka.gv.at.

Website: <http://www.bundeskanzleramt.at>. Excerpts from this text may be reprinted. Published by the Federal Press Service – Vienna.