

# News from Austria

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## New budget law as from 2009

The new budget law was adopted by the Council of Ministers on 8 August 2007. It provides for new budgeting rules for the Federal Republic of Austria, which are to be introduced in several stages. In the future the Minister of Finance will present an "Overall Report on Budget Implementation" for all ministries and other institutions having separate budgets (e.g. Court of Auditors) semi-annually (in May and September). Thus the "status quo of budgets and personnel" would be identified several times a year", explained Chancellor Gusenbauer. Vice-Chancellor and Minister of Finance Molterer praised the resolution as the basis for a "sound, transparent and sustainable budget policy".

The parties represented in Parliament had already agreed on the fundamentals of new budgeting rules in 2005. The new budget law is to enter into force in two stages. From 2009 onwards the expenditure of the Federal Republic is to be assigned to categories (e.g. "law and security", "labour, social affairs, health, family") and planned ahead for four years. On this basis detailed budgets will be prepared for the ministries. It will also become possible to carry forward budget surpluses to the following year. So-called "global budgets" will allow a more flexible use of resources as from 2013. On the other hand, the ministries will have to meet "performance requirements". ■

## Government agreed on tax reform stages

At the Council of Ministers held in summer the federal government agreed on a schedule for the various stages of the tax reform. Federal Chancellor Alfred Gusenbauer and Vice-Chancellor Wilhelm Molterer clearly rejected demands to speed up the tax reform and announced to stick to the planned date January 2010. In February 2009 the reform concept is to be submitted for review, the Council of Ministers and Parliament are likely to adopt resolutions in April and June, respectively.

They argued that despite the booming economy, a high tax revenue and a lower than expected budget deficit 2007 (0.7% of the GDP) it was necessary to cut costs and take advantage of the favourable economic trend so as to continue

decreasing the budget deficit. "We are not only committed to austerity but also to investments in sectors vital for future, e.g. research and development, education as well as social tasks. This is the motto of the federal government", said Gusenbauer. The aim of the tax reform was to strengthen Austria's position as a business location and purchasing power. The measures planned included a reform of the income tax rates, reducing the tax burden on mid-sized companies and fixing new income limits for the maximum income tax rate.

An agreement was also reached on the future financing of the Voluntary Social Year. Young people providing voluntary social services will continue to receive 150 euros per month (to compensate for the loss of family allowance). ■

## Minister for Civil Service Bures: code of conduct for public service

Minister for Women, Media and Civil Service Doris Bures (her department resides within the Federal Chancellery) announced a comprehensive anti-corruption code of conduct for the public service in early August. "Austria's administration currently shows very good results in international comparisons", said Bures. Nevertheless, further improvements could be achieved with various preventive measures, stressed the Minister for Civil Service, referring to the renowned annual Corruption Perception Index of Transparency International, according to which Austria was ranked fifth in the EU and eleventh at international level in 2006.

The envisaged new rules would not only boost the confidence of the population in their administration but also give security to the public sector staff through clear and transparent rules. The code of conduct agreed on in the government programme will be prepared by an inter-ministerial working group by the end of 2008.

Anti-corruption legislation was already in place in Austria (e.g. concerning the acceptance of gifts, prejudice in office, additional occupations) but the code of conduct pursued a "more comprehensive anti-corruption strategy raising the awareness of public sector employees of their responsibility towards the public", explained Minister Bures. ■

For the experts' draft amendment to the Federal Constitution Act see: [www.bundeskanzleramt.at](http://www.bundeskanzleramt.at)

## Gusenbauer at 100th anniversary ceremony of IUSY in Berlin

On 25 August 2007 the International Union of Socialist Youth (IUSY) celebrated its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary under the motto “100 Years of Struggle for Peace and Equality“ in Berlin. At the ceremony in Friedrichstadtpalast, Austrian Chancellor and Chairman of the Austrian Social Democratic Party Alfred Gusenbauer was the keynote speaker. He stated for example that the progress of European societies was mainly an achievement of the national workers’ movements and trade unions that succeeded in realising substantial improvements both at parliamentary level and in the companies. In his speech Gusenbauer also mentioned the collapse of communism in 1989 and emphasised: “There is no socialism without democracy and human rights“. The democratisation of Europe had not been achieved by war but was “the result of the power of ideas, especially the idea of freedom“. The role of the Socialist International was to stand up for an International of people and values – against an International of money and profit. It was the global task of Social Democrats to fight for fair distribution and justice in the age of globalisation. Gusenbauer reminded also of the Chile solidarity movement of the 1970s as well as of the fact that a democratic regime was established in Chile in the 1990s and that the country’s government was now led by a socialist. At a ceremony in which about 3,000 young people from Europe, Asia, Africa and Latin America participated, leader of the German Social Democratic Party Kurt Beck, German Minister for Development Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul and Kemal Dervis, Administrator of the UN Development Programme also presented statements. ■

## European Forum Alpbach under the motto “Emergence“

“Emergence“ is the general theme of the 2007 European Forum Alpbach. Up to 1 September 2007 about 500 speakers and 2,800 attendees turn the Tyrolean mountain village into a venue for political, economic and academic discussions. Numerous members of the Austrian federal government, from Federal Chancellor Alfred Gusenbauer to the rank and file, come to

Alpbach. In addition, high-ranking guests from the neighbouring countries are expected. The invitation to Alpbach was accepted by eminent personalities like President Vaclav Klaus and Foreign Minister Karl Schwarzenberg from the Czech Republic or Slovene Minister for Science and Technology Jure Zupan. The European Union is inter alia represented by President of the European Parliament Hans-Gert Pöttering and EU Commissioner for Energy Andris Piebalgs. Nobel Prize laureate in economics 2006 Edmund Phelps participates in the economic talks. The gathering was opened by Forum President Erhard Busek. ■

[www.alpbach.org](http://www.alpbach.org)

## Meeting of prime ministers from South Eastern Europe in Salzburg

The “meeting for stability in South Eastern Europe in the 21<sup>st</sup> century“ was held for the sixth time in the Mozart City Salzburg in late July. The round table talks focused on regional problems and concerns, e.g. energy policy, collaborating within the “Danube Cooperation“ (Donaukooperation), intensifying economic relations and promoting EU integration.

The invitation of Chancellor Alfred Gusenbauer had been accepted by prime ministers Sali Berisha (Albania), Ivo Sanader (Croatia), Zeljko Sturanovic (Montenegro) and Vasile Tarlev (Moldavia). Austrian Foreign Minister Ursula Plassnik and Coordinator of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe Erhard Busek had participated in the informal meeting. ■

Federal Chancellor Gusenbauer: “Austria is South Eastern Europe’s voice in the European Union.“

## Appeals for peace on Hiroshima Day

Commemorating the hundreds of thousands of victims of the first two atomic bombs dropped over the Japanese cities Hiroshima and Nagasaki (6 and 9 August 1945), Federal President Heinz Fischer addressed an urgent peace appeal to “all people committed to peace, freedom and democracy“.

On the occasion of the 62<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, Chancellor Alfred Gusenbauer called for a ban on all nuclear weapons. He also hailed the efforts of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to find a solution for the nuclear issues with North Korea and Iran. ■

Federal Chancellor Gusenbauer called on all states to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). The international community should also agree on a ban on the production of fissile material.

This year the IAEA headquartered in Vienna celebrates its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

## High tax revenue thanks to favourable economic trend

Thanks to the booming economy, considerable tax receipts keep rolling into the coffers of the finance ministry also this year. In the first half of 2007 the tax revenue rose by a remarkable 7% to about 31 billion euros. A particularly strong increase was registered in the tax yield from companies. The receipts from corporate income tax surged by more than 42% in July. A significant plus of almost 8% was recorded in the wage tax receipts. However, the value-added tax yield rose by only about 3.6%.

Due to the high tax receipts, the internal deficit for 2007 is expected to amount to 0.7%, rather than to 0.9% of the gross domestic product (GDP) projected in the Budget Act. The favourable economic situation had resulted in a lower deficit of 1.1% (instead of the estimated 1.7%) also last year. ■

## Unemployment rate continues to drop

In the wake of the continuing boom, unemployment in Austria has dropped also in July. The unemployment rate (based on national statistics) decreased from 5.5% in July 2006 to 5.1%, as Minister for Economy and Labour Martin Bartenstein announced in August. The unemployment rate registered this July has been the lowest since 2001. Hence, Bartenstein predicts full employment to be "at hand". The unemployment rates of five Länder were already below the EU's 4%-level for full employment.

The number of registered jobseekers had declined by 5.7% to 185,420 compared to July 2006. Due to seasonal factors the number of jobless had increased by almost 1% from the level of June 2007. Between June and July, the number of employed rose by almost 2% (about 64,000 persons) to 3.43 million despite the summer holiday season.

According to EU statistics, the Austrian unemployment rate stood at 4.3% in July (-0.5% compared to July 2006). Thus Austria is among the EU's top five, after the Netherlands, Denmark, Cyprus and Ireland.

As the Minister for Economic Affairs informed, Austria's economic growth, which has been responsible for the favourable labour market

situation and exceeded the EU average, is not only driven by booming exports (as in the past) but to an ever greater extent by growing domestic consumption. ■

## IHS: Austrian GDP grows faster than the euro zone in 2007-2011

As in the past five years, Austria's economy will grow faster than the remaining euro zone in the period 2007 to 2011. The gross domestic product (GDP) is expected to increase by 2.6% on annual average, while the other euro countries will register a plus of 2 ¼%. These data are based on the medium-term forecast of the Institute for Advanced Studies (IHS) of late July. Due to the boom recorded since 2006, the experts expect a further improvement of the labour market situation. According to the HIS forecast, almost 190,000 additional jobs are likely to be created by 2011 and the unemployment rate (based on the national definition) will stand at 6%.

The export sector continues to provide strong growth stimuli. The favourable business trend is not only supported by the generally increasing investment activities but also by growing private consumption. The Austrian GDP growth is, however, likely to slow down in the next years. After 3.3% last year, the GDP is expected to increase by 3.1% this year, by 2.8% in 2008 and 2.2% in 2011. ■

## Trade balance January to May 2007 shows significant plus

Austria's export companies remain the driving force behind the domestic economy. Austria's foreign trade registered a significant plus during the first five months 2007. Based on preliminary data of the Austrian Statistical Office (Statistik Austria), the total import volume of 45.25 billion euro between January and May exceeded the prior-year level by 7.8%, while exports grew by 9.9% to 45.71 billion euros.

Thus the Austrian foreign trade balance shows a positive result for the first five months of this year. The merchandise trade balance showed a surplus of 460 million euros. Austria imported goods worth 33.86 billion euros (+8.9% from the prior-year level) from the EU Member States. Austria's merchandise exports to the EU totalled 32.91 billion euros (+9.8%). ■

## Promoting art with and about socially disadvantaged people

The Federal Ministry of Education, Art and Culture offers two awards to recognise and promote art projects in the social sphere for the year 2007. Art projects encouraging the involvement of socially disadvantaged people are eligible. The deadline for entries is Sunday 30 September 2007. The "Würdigungspreis", i.e. a prize granted in appreciation of a project already realised, has been endowed with 11,000 euros. The "Förderungspreis" – the award promoting an ongoing or planned art project – offers a prize money of 7,500 euros. Eligible projects must be realised by actively involving socially disadvantaged people. Moreover, they have to promote their creative competence, highlight their abilities and aim at their long-term social participation. Entries may be submitted by artists, non-profit art and culture associations as well as non-profit groups of artists and cultural players who are resident in Austria. ■

## Chancellor Gusenbauer about the death of film director Franz Antel

"Alles Leinwand" (literally, "All is a screen" but meaning in Austrian German also: "Everything's great") was the title of an exhibition at Wien Museum in 2001 showcasing the life-time achievements of film director Franz Antel. In the early morning hours of 12 August 2007 the pioneering filmmaker passed away aged 94 in a nursing home in Vienna. The son of a post office employee and a housewife born in Vienna in 1913 started to attend Vienna's first Sound Film Academy in 1931. As early as in 1933 he shot the sports film "Vagabunden". In 1935 Antel became the head of production of the Berlin-based Terra-Film. He obtained the German nationality in 1937, which he held until 1960. After his short military service in 1939, he became head of production of the newly founded Wien-Film company. In 1941 he had to join the military services and later became a Soviet war prisoner in Berlin. In 1945 he managed to return to Vienna and the film industry. He shot the prize-winning tourist film "Österreich ruft die Welt". His first feature film "Das singende Haus", a comedy starring Hans Moser, Curd Jürgens and Susi Nicoletti, endeared him to the

film-goers. For more than 20 years, Antel remained faithful to his preferred genre of comedies set in picturesque landscapes that also advertised for Austria as a tourist destination. A series of box-office hits followed, e.g. "Der alte Sünder", "Kaiserwalzer", "Rosen aus dem Süden" and "Lumpazivagabundus". Paul Hörbiger and Hans Moser delivered a brilliant performance in 1951 in Antel's film classic "Hallo Dienstmann". Oskar Werner impressed in "Spionage", an espionage drama about Colonel Redl. Franz Antel's artistically most acclaimed project was "Der Bockerer" created in the early 1980s. With Karl Merkatz playing the main character of a butcher refusing to give in to the NS dictatorship, the film was presented at international festivals and won various awards. Three sequels of the film follow the life of the Bockerer against the background of the Soviet occupation ("Österreich ist frei", 1996), the Hungarian Uprising ("Die Brücke von Andau", 1999/2000) as well as the Prague Spring and the Soviet occupation of the CSSR ("Prager Frühling", 2003).

Franz Antel's party invitations were much sought after. The director himself cooked the "Brünner Krautfleisch" (a pork casserole with cabbage from Brno) for his guests.

Federal Chancellor Alfred Gusenbauer was deeply affected by his death: "Franz Antel was an Austrian legend. He demonstrated in the "Bockerer" series that films can be more than just light entertainment. They became comic and tragic reflections of the Austrian soul. Franz Antel was a sociable and political, a quarrelsome and loveable human being. We will miss his humour, his striving for professionalism and his unconditional commitment to filmmaking. With his death Austria has lost a great artist". ■

## Gusenbauer paid homage to deceased historian Raul Hilberg

Federal Chancellor Gusenbauer praised deceased US historian Raul Hilberg as one of the first "to break the academic silence on the great disaster of the 20<sup>th</sup> century". Hilberg's work had made a contribution to ensure that the numerous Holocaust deniers and revisionists and their publications were rejected by the academic community. "At a time when the victims of the NS racial hatred could not yet talk about their

Entries for the competition are to be addressed to the Federal Ministry of Education, Art and Culture, Division VI/7, Minoritenplatz 5, 1014 Vienna. For more details phone 0043/1/53120/7582

Raul Hilberg: The Destruction of the European Jews. 3rd revised edition. Yale University Press. 2003. ISBN: 978-0300095579

German translation: Raul Hilberg: Die Vernichtung der europäischen Juden. Revised and enlarged paperback edition in three volumes, S. Fischer, Frankfurt a.M. 1990, ISBN 3-596-24417-X

personal experiences and many perpetrators and sympathisers continued to deny the facts he was the first to start a thorough academic documentation of this tragedy”, said the Chancellor. With his death the world lost a warning conscience. Raul Hilberg was born in Vienna in 1926 and fled to the USA with his parents in 1939.

### Mourning for the former rector of Vienna University Alfred Ebenbauer

The former rector of Vienna University, specialist in older German literature and President of the Austrian Exchange Service, Alfred Ebenbauer, died unexpectedly aged 61 on 11 August 2007. Minister of Science Johannes Hahn paid homage to Ebenbauer as a “pioneer with sound judgement” who had prepared the autonomy of universities and never lost sight of the target horizons“. Rector of Vienna University Georg Winckler and Head of the Rectors’ Conference Christoph Badelt described him as a “critical thinker“ and “excellent German language and literature specialist, who unlike any other knew how to share his enthusiasm for the university and his discipline with his colleagues, the students and the public”. Social Democratic Spokesman for Science Josef Broukal praised the former rector as somebody “who used clear words based on scientific facts even in delicate matters. His clear statements on “Pernkopf’s Anatomy” broke the silence on the dark occurrences at the universities between 1938 and 1945“. The man from Upper Styria presided the country’s largest university from 1991 to 1998, was the head of the Rectors’ Conference from 1991 to 1993 and was also considered a pioneer of the 1993 University Organisation Act (UOG). He occupied the position of the head of the Department for German Studies of Vienna University until his death.

Ebenbauer caused quite a stir when he launched an investigation into an anatomy textbook by Austrian medical expert Eduard Pernkopf (died in 1955) during his tenure as a rector. The findings showed that between 1938 and 1945 the Department of Anatomy of Vienna’s Medical Faculty had used the cadavers of persons executed, among them resistance fighters and Jews.

One of Ebenbauer’s major achievements was his

commitment to the establishment of the campus on the previous site of the general hospital (“Altes AKH”). In 2005 he was awarded the Great Golden Badge for Meritorious Service to the Republic of Austria. ■

### First government grants for video and media art

The Federal Ministry of Education, Art and Culture will for the first time offer up to three government grants for video and media art (of 13,200 euros each) for the year 2008. The grants will be paid in twelve monthly instalments. All free-lance artists who are Austrians or can furnish proof that they have been living in Austria for three years may apply for the grants. Students are not admitted. Selection will be based on the proposal of an independent jury. All applicants will be informed in writing about the result of the jury’s meeting. Applications should be sent to the Division VI/3 of the Department for Art, Federal Ministry of Education, Art and Culture, Minoritenplatz 3, 1014 Vienna, by 31 October 2007 (date of the post mark). ■

### Neupölla: first Austrian Museum on Every-Day History presents “50 years of Kamp (storage) lakes”

To celebrate the 700<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first documentary evidence of Neupölla as a market town, Governor Erwin Pröll opened the cultural centre “Kulturhof“ and the “First Austrian Museum on Every-Day History“ in Neupölla near Altenburg (Waldviertel / Lower Austria) in August 1997. While the “Kulturhof“ will be the venue for numerous events (concerts, theatre performances, discussions), the regional history museum developed by art historian Friedrich Polleroß will provide insights into the every-day history and social changes affecting the rural population in the past 300 years based on the example of the region between Zwettl and Horn; the “dark sides of the local history” will not be excluded.

To mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the completion of the Ottenstein power station, the museum shows a highly interesting special exhibition on the history of the hydroelectric power plants on the river Kamp (ending on 16 September 2007), which is supported by the Lower Austrian energy

Government grants for video and media art offered by:  
[www.bmukk.gv.at](http://www.bmukk.gv.at)

[www.regional-beratung.at/mu-seum](http://www.regional-beratung.at/mu-seum)

provider EVN and the local population. The difficult situation in the Waldviertel then occupied by the Soviets is reconstructed comprehensively and impressively. The changes in attitude of the past are also highlighted: from the technology craze and the reshaping of landscapes in the 1950s and 1960s to the ecology movement of the 1980s successfully preventing the construction of new power plants in the Kamp Valley. The fascinating documentary “Beton, Schweiß und Strom. 50 Jahre Kampkraftwerke aus der Sicht der Arbeiter“ (“Concrete, Sweat and Electricity. 50 years of power stations on the Kamp river from the workers’ perspective”) by Leopold Hollensteiner and Friedrich Polleroß includes many interviews, e.g. with a mason, a carpenter and an electrician from Pölla. The construction of the power stations also took a heavy toll, killing workers when a scaffolding collapsed. ■

#### Plans to establish Pakistani-Austrian university in Lahore

Pakistan plans to establish a technical university based on Austrian know-how in Lahore (province of Punjab). With about 8 million inhabitants, Lahore is Pakistan’s second largest city and situated close to the border with India. Pakistani Minister of Science Atta ur Rahman negotiated in Vienna with representatives of Austrian universities and Minister of Science Johannes Hahn about the next organisational steps to realise the planned “Pakistani-Austrian University“.

Pakistan has made great efforts to create a state-of-the-art educational system for many years. To realise this goal, nine technical universities conforming to European standards are to be established. Austria was one of the first countries to be selected as a partner for translating these plans into reality. Pakistan has allocated 350 million euros over a ten-year period to the construction of the university. A technology park for Austrian enterprises forms part of the plans, which will be financed partly by a Pakistani joint venture fund. Austrian partners are the Austrian Exchange Service (ÖAD), a consortium consisting of the Technical Universities of Vienna and Graz, the Leoben University of Mountain Engineering and the Vienna University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences.

As the Ministry of Science informed, Austria was chosen as a cooperation partner thanks to its successful doctoral programme for Pakistani students following an international evaluation. Currently more than 200 Pakistani PhD students selected by Austrian professors work and research at Austrian universities in the framework of this programme. Minister of Science Hahn considers it a sign of “appreciation and recognition of Austrian research and universities that Austria plays a leading role in this important development project.” ■

#### Fascinating book: Bohemian nobility – family histories

In a fascinating book Czech journalist and photographer Vladimír Votýpka shed light on the destiny of aristocratic Bohemian families in the last few decades. Among them are the names of famous dynasties, e.g. Czernin, Kinsky, Lobkowitz, Mensdorff-Pouilly as well as Schwarzenberg. Votýpka conducted interviews with at least one member of each family, who often revealed painful turning points in their lives. Aristocrats were frequently among the first victims of both the National Socialists and the Communists, losing most of their possessions and suffering persecution.

The extraordinary book was translated by our colleague in the Federal Press Service Walter Reichel, who is also a brilliant historian (with a focus on the Sudeten Germans), together with his wife Simin Reichel, a professional psychologist. Both are specialists in Bohemian cultural studies. ■

#### Priessnitz Prize 2007 for Austro-American Ann Cotten

Ann Cotten was born in Iowa (USA) in 1982, grew up in Vienna and is now awarded the Reinhard Priessnitz Prize 2007, which has been granted by the Republic of Austria since 1994 in commemoration of the author who died aged 40 in Vienna in 1985. The jury including Gustav Ernst, Gerhard Jaschke and Robert Schindel praised the “highly dynamic language” and the unconventional word creations” of the writer, whose poetry volume “Fremdwörterbuchsonette“ (“Sonnets from the dictionary of foreign words”) was published this year by Suhrkamp. ■

Vladimír Votýpka.  
Böhmischer Adel.  
Familiengeschichten.  
Böhlau: Wien-Köln-Weimar 2007.  
383 pages,  
numerous  
illustrations.  
Translated from  
Czech into German  
by Walter and  
Simin Reichel.  
ISBN 3-205-77592-  
9

## EURO 2008: Austrian stadiums are state-of-the-art and barrier-free

The Austrian federal government will do its best to make the European Football Championship a football party everybody can join in. Accompanied by reporters, Herbert Haupt, Ombudsman for People with Disabilities, and Alexander Ceh, Representative of People with Disabilities, inspected the Ernst Happel Stadium in Vienna. EURO 2008 will set new standards of barrier-free access in the four stadiums of the European Football Championship. Proportionally to the number of available seats in the stadiums, the number of spaces for wheelchair users exceeds that of the Football World Cup 2006 in Germany. Barrier-free access was a major issue already at this event. While in Germany an average of 70 spaces per match was available to wheelchair users, the Austrian stadiums will offer more than 80. Vienna, Innsbruck, Klagenfurt and Salzburg even surpass the high standards of the UEFA recommendations for barrier-free access. According to the “Sustainability Concept of Austria and Switzerland for EURO 2008”, the stadiums should offer two spaces for people with disabilities per 1,000 spectators and an additional two places for the disabled per 1,000 spectators in the fan zones. The revamped Prater Stadium has been reopened with the match between Austria and the Czech Republic. The stadium constructed in 1931 will provide 100 spaces for wheelchair users at EURO 2008. As far as the quality and convenience of the facilities for wheelchair users is concerned, the “youngest” stadium in Klagenfurt boasts the highest level. ■

## Successful spinning off of federal sports facilities

Record capacity utilisation, economic efficiency and modernisation – these are the favourable consequences of spinning off the federal sports facilities in 1999. Since then the Federal Republic has saved more than 23 million euros, which were invested in general sport promotion programmes. During his visit to the Federal Sport and Leisure Centre (BSFZ) at Schielleiten Palace, Secretary of State for Sport Reinhold Lopatka and Michael Sulzbacher, managing director of Bundessporteinrichtungen GesmbH (BSPEG) were able to verify the improvements

personally. The Federal Republic of Austria subsidises Bundessporteinrichtungen GesmbH with more than 5 million euros per year. Its tasks clearly focus on the Austrian sport, especially on the promotion of young athletes and aspiring professionals, on training programmes for instructors and heads of exercise programmes as well as financially weaker sports clubs and associations. With the aid of this company in charge of the federal sports facilities, the Federal Republic today offers a sports infrastructure for training and practice that is unique in Europe as it provides both summer and winter sports facilities at low (subsidised) rates. After nine years, the spinning off of the federal sports facilities can be described as a great success. Moreover, the concept applied to federal sports facilities serves as a model for the establishment of the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) Austria, which will also be operated as a limited liability company (GesmbH). ■

## Sensational Austrian athletes at Universiade

The Summer Universiade ended with a remarkable success for the Austrian athletes. Especially the swimmers excelled, winning no less than five medals. They will be a serious threat to their competitors at the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing. Markus Rogan won the gold and silver medals for 200m and 100m backstroke, Fabienne Nadarajah received gold for 50m butterfly, Jördis Steinegger earned a bronze medal for 400m freestyle and Mirna Jukic celebrated her comeback with a bronze medal in 100m breaststroke.

Regina Time earned silver in women’s 50m rifle prone. Gerhard Mayer won the discus throw title. Just as in 2006, judoka Hilde Drexler was ranked third in the International University Sports Championship, increasing the number of medals for Austria to eight – a quite surprising result. ■

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