

News from Austria

No. 14/08

HOME AFFAIRS | EUROPE

Early national elections in Austria

EUROPE | INTERNATIONAL

Greek President Karolos Papoulias in Austria

ECONOMY

Chancellor Gusenbauer: Austria's economy is among the winners

CULTURE | MEDIA | SCIENCE

Grand Austrian State Prize goes to Josef Winkler

SPORTS POLICY

EURO 2008: great international success for Austria

Our service to our readers: quicker and even more up-to-date information by e-mail. Now available free of charge:
www.bundeskanzleramt.at/aktuell

Early national elections in Austria

On 7 July 2008 the Austrian People's Party (ÖVP) announced the end of the coalition with Austria's Social Democratic Party (SPÖ). Vice-Chancellor and ÖVP leader Wilhelm Molterer informed at a press conference that a proposal of holding early national elections would be submitted to the party's executive committee on 8 July 2008. He would present himself as the ÖVP's top candidate in the election campaign. Molterer explained that in a federal government with the SPÖ good work was no longer possible. The elections were likely to be held in September. Postal vote would be introduced and the voting age would be lowered to 16 years. Furthermore, the legislative term would be increased from four to five years.

The SPÖ's party executive committee also held a meeting on 7 July 2008. Around noon it decided to adopt a motion for new elections jointly with the ÖVP in the National Council (first chamber of Parliament) still this week. The era of Federal Chancellor Alfred Gusenbauer comes to an end after slightly more than one and a half years.

The top candidate of the Social Democrats is SPÖ chairman designate, Minister for Infrastructure Werner Faymann. This proposal was made by Chancellor Gusenbauer himself: "I suggested that the list of Social Democratic candidates should be headed by Werner Faymann so that the party's direction will be clear from the beginning. The proposal was accepted with an overwhelming majority by the executive committee. From today onwards we will concentrate on competing for another mandate in a fair election campaign focusing on the interests of the Austrian population. And Werner Faymann will lead the team", Gusenbauer explained after the executive committee meeting in a joint press conference with Faymann. The SPÖ would adhere to the coalition agreement until the new elections, Faymann underlined. It did not make sense to outvote one another in Parliament.

The SPÖ party congress, which was to be held in October to elect Faymann as SPÖ chairman and top candidate, is likely to be rescheduled for August. A meeting of the SPÖ executive committee has been fixed for 10 July 2008.

The ÖVP explained that its decision to end the coalition government was due to the change of

the SPÖ's EU policy as well as the internal leadership discussion. Gusenbauer reproached the ÖVP for "never having fully accepted" the result of the elections on 1 October 2006.

Federal President Heinz Fischer will hold talks with the heads of both parties during the next days. ■

Federal Chancellor Gusenbauer calls for a more social Europe

Federal Chancellor Alfred Gusenbauer criticised the inadequate progress the European Union had made in reaching a social union. The EU could not limit itself to issuing constantly new rules on competition, while shifting the responsibility for the social consequences to the Member States. A comprehensive EU policy was required in the future, including measures "signalling to the people: Europe does something for me", Gusenbauer said in an interview with the weekly "Format" on 4 July 2008. In the EU it would no longer be possible to refer to the "peace project Europe" without ensuring a fairer distribution of the burden. All Member States were challenged, and it was very lamentable "that the conservative governments cannot be convinced of adjusting the EU policy. This has to change because without a more social Europe it will not be possible to stop the internal erosion processes", the Federal Chancellor stated. ■

Tyrol: Günther Platter new Governor

The Tyrolian regional parliament ("Landtag") elected previous Minister of the Interior Günther Platter as new Governor of Tyrol at its constituting meeting in Innsbruck on 1 July 2008. Platter, who has succeeded to Herwig van Staa, and his team received 21 out of 36 possible votes. Van Staa is the new President of the Landtag. Although the Austrian People's Party (ÖVP) and Social Democrats (SPÖ) registered a significant decline in their share of votes, both parties agreed to continue the coalition government. It holds now more than 21 of the 36 seats in the Landtag.

Only two members of Van Staa's team are represented in the regional government of Tyrol. Six members belong to the ÖVP, two are members of the SPÖ. ■

Federal Chancellor Gusenbauer: "Without a more social Europe, the internal erosion processes of the EU cannot be stopped."

"Measures have to be taken that signal to the people: Europe does something for me."

Greek President Karolos Papoulias in Austria

Greek President Karolos Papoulias and his wife May paid a state visit to Austria from 3 to 5 July 2008. The programme included talks with Federal President Heinz Fischer, Federal Chancellor Alfred Gusenbauer, Speaker of Parliament Barbara Prammer, Vice-Chancellor Wilhelm Molterer and Vienna's Mayor Michael Häupl.

The main topic was the Irish 'no' to the EU Reform Treaty of Lisbon. "We have discussed the European situation in great detail and are both of the opinion that now it is Dublin's turn", Fischer explained after the talks with his Greek counterpart. Papoulias stressed that they discussed "how the EU could move on without drifting into idleness for several months".

Ireland had to decide for itself which steps it considered right from the Irish perspective, Fischer said. Greece and Austria would not exert any pressure; however, both countries agreed that the Treaty of Lisbon was a "reasonable and carefully elaborated compromise", the Federal President underlined. Austria and Greece have already ratified the Reform Treaty.

The bilateral relations between Austria and Greece were described by both sides as very good, in the economic area they could, however still be intensified", Fischer and Papoulias emphasised.

This aspect was also the topic for discussion of the Austrian-Greek Economic Forum at the Economic Chamber Austria (WKÖ) in Vienna, in which the two heads of state participated. The visit of the Greek president was concluded with an excursion to Salzkammergut. In Salzburg the guest was welcomed by Governor Gabi Burgstaller. ■

Prince Albert II. of Monaco pays working visit to Vienna

Prince Albert II. of Monaco paid a working visit to Austria on 30 June 2008. In Vienna he held talks with Federal President Heinz Fischer and Federal Chancellor Alfred Gusenbauer. Items on the agenda included the negative outcome of the referendum on the EU Reform Treaty in Ireland, the future development of Europe as well as issues regarding the climate change and

environmental protection. The latter is a major concern of the Prince. His first official act after ascending to the throne (in 2005) was the ratification of the Kyoto Protocol. ■

Papua New Guinea's Prime Minister Somare visits Austria

Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea Michael Somare led official talks with Federal President Heinz Fischer, Federal Chancellor Alfred Gusenbauer and other high-ranking members of government in Vienna on 7 July 2008.

One day earlier Somare had participated in the Europe Forum Wachau in the Monastery of Göttweig (Lower Austria). In his speech on "climate protection – change in politics" he highlighted the looming disastrous consequences of the global climate change and welcomed the commitment of the European Union in this area.

He also called for more far-reaching measures and stated that the developing countries were prepared to make their contribution towards achieving the common climate targets. However, all industrialised nations had to commit themselves to a more significant reduction of emissions, Somare explained.

Furthermore, the Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea proposed a "system of positive incentives" for the developing countries and demanded "full and fair market access". Ecological sustainability could not be reached through economic standstill. To achieve climate neutrality, Papua New Guinea needed help in the form of "capital and technology", stressed Somare. The island state in the Pacific Ocean with about 5.5 million inhabitants is among the countries affected most severely by the consequences of global warming and the rising sea levels. ■

Ukrainian President Viktor Jushchenko in Vienna

Ukrainian President Viktor Jushchenko pays a one-day official visit to Austria on 8 July 2008. In Vienna he holds talks with Federal President Heinz Fischer, Federal Chancellor Alfred Gusenbauer and Speaker of Parliament Barbara Prammer. The focus is on the European perspective of Ukraine, energy issues and closer economic ties with Austria. ■

Fischer and Papoulias: "The bilateral relations between Austria and Greece are excellent but could be intensified in the economic area."

PM Somare: "The developing countries are prepared to make their contribution towards achieving the common climate targets but all industrialised nations have to commit themselves to a more significant reduction of emissions."

Chancellor Gusenbauer: Austria's economy is among the winners

Austria's economy had "been relatively successful despite the worldwide economic slowdown", and – compared to the data of other European countries – this is a "remarkable achievement", Federal Chancellor Alfred Gusenbauer stressed on 30 June 2008 at the presentation of the "2008 Economic Report Austria", which he put before the public jointly with Vice-Chancellor Wilhelm Molterer and Minister for Economic Affairs Martin Bartenstein at the Vienna Stock Exchange. Top representatives of the domestic economic sector and the social partners attended the event.

However, the Federal Chancellor also stressed that the high inflation was eroding the income of the Austrians and curbing consumption. Economic analysts expected a further decrease in the wage share. "This is an alarming development which does not only entail potential social dynamite but is also detrimental in macro-economic terms", Gusenbauer said. This trend would have severe adverse effects on Austria's growth opportunities in the next years. A free economic area such as Austria depended strongly on domestic demand, especially when "the global economic engine was starting to splutter". According to Gusenbauer, these factors had to be taken into account, notably in the planned tax reform. The aim was to increase real incomes and consumption so as to strengthen economic growth and to promote the propensity to investment and innovation. This was a *sine qua non* to ensure that Austria would remain an economically strong innovation society, the Federal Chancellor underlined. It was a main priority to significantly reduce the burden on smaller and medium incomes.

The country's excellent foreign trade position provided a "good starting point for Austria to continue its economic success story", Gusenbauer stated. The Federal Chancellor also pointed out that Austria had profited enormously both from EU membership and the enlargement of the Union.

Gusenbauer considered the decrease of the unemployment rate from 5% to 4.1% and the creation of 90,000 new jobs a huge success. Thus Austria had registered the strongest increase in employment since 1955. In the next years above

all skilled workers would be needed. However, this demand could not even be met with labour force from the neighbouring countries. There was no alternative to the internal training of staff in the companies. To prevent the possible drain of excellently trained domestic personnel, more money had to be invested in education and training, Gusenbauer stressed. ■

Economic Report 2008: government expects low budget deficit

Despite the economic slowdown, the federal government expects a lower budget deficit than originally planned. According to the recently issued "Economic Report Austria 2008", the federal government deficit amounts to 0.6% of the GDP. Originally a rate of new public debt of 0.7% (2007: 0.5%) had been forecast for this year. The debt rate is expected to drop from 59.1% to 57.7% in 2008.

Based on the gross domestic product (GDP) per capita, Austria continues to be placed fourth in the ranking of EU countries, behind Luxembourg, Ireland and the Netherlands. According to the EU spring forecast, economic growth is likely to decline from 3.4% to 2.2% in 2008.

The combat against inflation is described as a "key issue in economic and social policy" in the federal government's Economic Report for the year 2008. According to the European Commission, Austria's inflation rate is to increase from 2.2% (2007) to an average of 3.0% in the current year. Therefore, amongst other measures, the envisaged valorisation of fees was suspended in 2008. The basic rents are valorised based on the average inflation rate 2007 instead of the inflation rate registered in December. Price monitoring was intensified, above all in the energy and food sectors. Austria launched an initiative in the EU to curb speculation in the food and oil markets. ■

Unemployment decreased by 6%

In June unemployment in Austria decreased for the 28th time in a row. The number of registered unemployed declined by 6% year-on-year to about 173,000 persons. At the end of June the unemployment rate stood at 4.1%. ■

Grand Austrian State Prize goes to Josef Winkler

Carinthian author Josef Winkler (aged 55) has recently been showered with prizes. After having been selected winner of the Georg Büchner Prize, the most renowned award for German-language literature, from the Academy by Language and Poetry (a detailed report was provided in the previous issue of “News from Austria”), he is awarded the Grand Austrian State Prize – the highest ranking arts award granted by the Republic of Austria. This was announced by Minister of Culture Claudia Schmid. She informed that the decision had been taken based on a unanimous proposal of the Arts Senate.

The author coming from a farmer’s family, lives with his wife, his 12-year-old son and his 5-year-old daughter in Klagenfurt (Carinthia), where he is active as a lecturer at the local university.

Winkler’s texts are characterised by the joy of living, death experiences, flourishing and putrefaction. Winkler himself prefers reading books that are “hard to decode and have to be conquered sentence by sentence“. This is also a very apt description of his own writing. He feels akin to colleagues like Jean Genet and Hans Henny Jahn. ■

Tobias Bonhoeffer is to become President of I.S.T. Austria

German brain researcher Tobias Bonhoeffer, 48, is to become the first president of the Institute of Science and Technology Austria (I.S.T. Austria). The Board of Trustees of the Institute, which is being established in Maria Gugging near Klosterneuburg (Lower Austria), decided to invite the scholar to head the postgraduate research institution. Bonhoeffer is currently director at the Max Planck Institute of Neurobiology in Martinsried near Munich and showed “great interest” in this function. The final appointment is expected to be made still in autumn.

The Institute’s aim was to fill the vacant position of the president with an outstanding scholar renowned for leadership qualities both as a researcher and a developer/organiser of a scientific institution. Bonhoeffer seemed to be the most suitable personality of a total of 100

candidates.

The Chairman of the Board of Trustees of I.S.T. Austria, Böhler-Uddeholm boss Claus Raidl, described that it was “very good news that such an extraordinary researcher had agreed to accept this great challenge and to establish an elite research institute in Austria“.

Minister for Research Johannes Hahn stated that the institute was heading in the right direction thanks to the appointment of Bonhoeffer and expects that other high-calibre researchers will follow the call to Klosterneuburg.

Tobias Bonhoeffer obviously grew up with science and a sense of great moral responsibility. His father was a neurobiologist. His grandfather as well as other family members were outstanding researchers. His great-uncle, biologist Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and other relatives were members of the German resistance during WWII. and were killed by the NS regime.

Excellence in science is also associated with his place of birth. In 1960 he was born in Berkeley (US federal state of California). He first studied physics in Tübingen, where he wrote a doctoral thesis at the Max Planck Institute for Biological Cybernetics. He then joined the Rockefeller University in New York as a co-researcher in the laboratory of Nobel Prize winner Torsten Wiesel. Back in Germany, he became active for a number of Max Planck Institutes, e.g. in the group of Wolf Singer at the Brain Research Institute in Frankfurt.

Tobias Bonhoeffer’s research interests focus on molecular-cellular processes in learning, remembering and forgetting as well as the question how these processes contribute to the development of the nervous system.

He once described the brain as “the most fascinating organ that exists“. To watch it working was “more exciting than to watch a feature film“. Thus he became the first to prove in an experiment that the brain changes morphologically while learning and remembering.

His findings could be decisive for the treatment of brain diseases and the improvement of learning and remembering processes. At present Tobias Bonhoeffer investigates how the links between nerve cells change in the Alzheimer disease. Moreover, the brain researcher further developed imaging technologies allowing the observation of sub-cellular changes. Obviously,

Maximum public recognition for Josef Winkler. The Grand Austrian State Prize will be conferred on him in Vienna on 9 October 2008, the Georg Büchner Prize in Darmstadt on 1 November 2008.

it was helpful that he originally studied physics. Hence, also the I.S.T. Austria emphasises the crucial importance of Bonhoeffer's interdisciplinary approach. The press release announcing his appointment as president informed that "as a trained physicist he devotes himself to neurobiology; he uses state-of-the-art technology as well as physics to investigate the biological and medical aspects of brain research".

Tobias Bonhoeffer is confident that in about ten years the I.S.T. Austria will be a top institute in Austria, which will prominently figure on the global map of science, "by then, we should have reached the level of the Max Planck Institutes in some fields". ■

Austria became member of the European Southern Observatory (ESO)

Minister of Science Johannes Hahn and ESO Director-General Tim de Zeeuw recently signed the treaty of Austria's accession to the European Southern Observatory (ESO) at the Federal Ministry for Science and Research in Vienna. The treaty acknowledges Austria's membership in this leading international research institution. As Hahn explained, "The fact that Austria joined ESO is a strong sign in favour of basic research. This sustainable investment gives Austrian researchers access to internationally available elite research infrastructure, is an important contribution to increasing knowledge as well as an additional stimulus to enhance the attractiveness of Austria as a research location". By signing the accession treaty, Austria ensured that it has a voting right regarding all decisions of the organisation with effect 1 July 2008. ESO membership allows Austrian researchers the use of state-of-the-art infrastructure, which is an absolute must for elite research in astronomy. In the experimental sciences the necessary equipment has reached technical and financial dimensions which can be handled and financed only jointly by several countries. In the field of observing astronomy, 13 countries had founded the European Southern Observatory (ESO) already in 1962. Thanks to this initiative, it is has become possible to develop the world's best astronomical infrastructure with "astronomy made in Europe" and to make a decisive

contribution to shaping future developments.

ESO employs about 600 staff members. Each year about 600 guest astronomers have to be added to the headcount. At present, the organisation receives approximately 120 million euros from its member states. With an annual budget of roughly 140 million euros, ESO operates numerous telescopes and other facilities for astronomical observation in Chile. The European Southern Observatory is headquartered in Munich/Garching. ■

Great theatre at the Mariensee sawmill: "The Madwoman of Chaillot"

At the Mariensee sawmill near Aspang am Wechsel tree trunks were turned into saw-timber for more than 100 years – now the sawmill has become a venue for superb theatre. Mariensee has acquired a reputation for original performances directed by Péetra Jendrzek, including Antoine de Saint Exupéry's "The Little Prince", Felix Mitterer's "Kein Platz für Idioten" ("No Place for Idiots"), Bert Brecht's "The Good Person of Szechwan" – undoubtedly the best interpretation of the play in Austria after quite a long time – as well as Jean-Paul Sartre's "The Flies".

This year the director selected the play "The Madwoman of Chaillot" by Jean Giraudoux, who had died from food poisoning in early 1944. "La Folle de Chaillot", a witty and biting satire on the shady deals of speculators and profiteers in Paris during the NS occupation, was performed only after the author's death in 1945.

Péetra Jendrzek explained that "in this poetic fiction helpless outsiders, the poor and insane form an alliance with the help of a madwoman; and they stop the money-grubbing exploiters. There is a chance that the insane and the outsiders as well as the dropouts of the system participate in shaping the world – by starting in their own small world!"

The stage production was developed in cooperation with professional actors, amateurs and people with disabilities, who are receiving residential care at the "Karl Schubert Haus". The mission of the "Karl Schubert Haus Mariensee, Gesellschaft für Sozialtherapie und Lebensgestaltung" ("Karl Schubert House Mariensee, Society for Social Therapy and Self-Determined

Mariensee sawmill near Aspang am Wechsel (Lower Austria): Jean Giraudoux: The Madwoman of Chaillot. 11, 12, 18, 19, 25, 26 July; 15, 16, 22, 23, 29, 30 August; 5, 6, 7 September, at 7 p.m. Tickets: 0043/664/8494900, www.kshm.at

Karl Schubert Haus, Mariensee 30, 2870 Aspang am Wechsel, phone: 0043/2642/7439 www.kshm.at

Living“ consists in combining the socially stabilising elements of a family with the benefits of a modern work environment. Groups of about six clients are supported by a team of four alternating carers. This means that the clients have the same contact person or coach supporting them during the day, from getting dressed in the morning and various daily chores to bedtime. To avoid routine and to facilitate an exchange of experience, both clients and staff members may change the groups.

The high-quality theatre production of the past years have shown that many clients play their roles in such a compelling way that they bear comparison with the professional actors. The joyful and difficult work on stage is invaluable for their self-esteem and personal development. The result in Mariensee: an overwhelming theatre experience in a unique atmosphere – sensational. ■

Nestroy Plays at Rothmühle Castle near Schwechat: “Umsonst“

The Nestroy Plays at Rothmühle Castle in Schwechat (Lower Austria) can be described as the most important institution promoting the oeuvre of the brilliant Viennese playwright and actor Johann Nestroy (1801-1862). His comedy “Umsonst“ (“For Free”) will be performed up to 2 August 2008 – a play that is quite topical in view of the socially difficult situation of (not only) many actors, as director Peter Gruber put it in the programme.

Arthur, a highly talented and alert young actor, and his less successful colleague, the old ham actor Pitzl (played by Nestroy himself at Carltheater in Vienna in 1857), decide to withdraw from their provincial theatre routine at the summer stage in Steyr (Upper Austria). They want to kidnap Arthur’s well-protected lover, and this is the beginning of an existentialist and emotional roller coaster journey, in which present-day situations are also criticised mockingly.

Actor-director Peter Gruber captured all this in a breathless production. The costumes by Okki Zykan are wonderful. Alexandre Collon’s stage setting is magnificent. The actors are excellent, above all Christian Graf (Arthur) and, of course, Peter Gruber (Pitzl). It is simply impossible to perform Nestroy in a more perfect way. ■

Ingeborg Bachmann Prize 2008 goes to Tilman Rammstedt

The author, trumpeter and percussionist Tilman Rammstedt (aged 33) from Bielefeld (Germany) was awarded this year’s Ingeborg Bachmann Prize in Klagenfurt (Carinthia) on 28 June 2008 for his text “Der Kaiser von China“ (“The Emperor of China”). The Bachmann Prize has been granted since 1977 in commemoration of the writer born in Klagenfurt in 1926. Rammstedt also won the Audience Prize. A total of 14 authors presented their unpublished texts in the competition that started on 26 June 2008.

The Prize of the Jury offered by Telekom Austria went to German author Markus Orths for his text “Das Zimmermädchen“ (“The Chambermaid”). The 3sat Prize was conferred on the German Patrick Findeis for “Kein schöner Land“ (“Not a beautiful country”). The only Austrian prize-winner is Clemens J. Setz. He received the Ernst Willner Prize sponsored by several publishers for his text “Die Waage“ (“The Scale”). ■

Exhibition at the Museum on Demand (MUSA): “Art and Politics“

“Museum auf Abruf“ (“Museum on Demand”, abbreviated as “MUSA”) is the name of the contemporary art collection of the Department for Cultural Affairs of the City of Vienna. MUSA presents one of the largest collections of this type in Austria. Currently it comprises 16,500 objects of all branches of art by about 3,000 artists. The works were acquired in the framework of programmes promoting artists after 1951 and offer an overview of the development of the arts in Vienna over the past decades.

Up to 10 August 2008 MUSA presents the show “Art and Politics” conceived by curator Hedwig Saxenhuber. The exhibition including key works from the estate of the legendary Executive City Councillor for Culture Viktor Matejka raises the awareness of artists of the NS resistance, e.g. Karl Wiener, the Cubist inventor of the logo of the Austrian Social Democratic Party (SPÖ).

The range of the exhibits covers the period up to 2000, including Johanna Kandl’s button against the then “black-blue coalition”, i.e. the government formed by the Austrian People’s Party and Austrian Freedom Party. ■

www.nestroy.at

www.ingeborg-bachmann.cc

Book tip: short stories by Tilman Rammstedt: *Erledigungen vor der Feier*. Rowohlt Taschenbuch Verlag. Reinbek/Hamburg. 2nd edition July 2007. ISBN 978 3 499 23648 8

Museum on Demand (MUSA). 1082 Vienna, Felderstraße 6-8 (next to the City Hall). www.musa.at

EURO 2008: great international success for Austria

Chancellor Alfred Gusenbauer and Secretary of State for Sport Reinhold Lopatka presented a favourable result of UEFA EURO 2008™. The Chancellor thanked all voluntary helpers, the police, the fire brigade, ambulance and health services, the Austrian Railways (ÖBB) and the urban transport system, the federal army, the host cities, the sports organisations and all those responsible for ensuring the “smooth organisation of EURO 2008. But first and foremost, I would like to thank you, my dear Austrians, as your support and enthusiasm helped to make Austria known as an excellent host country all over the world.” The Secretary of State for Sport supported the argumentation with a result rarely achieved in football: a 7:0 win for Austria. The country had managed EURO successfully and/or benefited from hosting it in seven key areas. Lopatka praised the security, the favourable effects on tourism, the establishment of international contacts, the good atmosphere in the country, the cooperation of national organisations, the sustainable effect on sports in general and on football in particular as well as the financial effects. “The income and positive effects clearly exceed the 150 million euros that the federal government invested in EURO. Thus the government budget and the Minister of Finance are winners.” ■

Austrian football benefits from the impetus of EURO

To ensure sustainable effects of EURO 2008, the Secretariat of State for Sport considers a “Challenge“ successor project necessary and useful to prepare for EURO 2012. A qualification programme for the Austrian national football team had been launched in 2003 under the title “Challenge08“ to achieve a favourable result at UEFA-EURO08. The new project will focus on qualification for the World Cup 2010 in South Africa and covers the period up the European Championship 2012 in Poland and Ukraine. The Republic of Austria estimates that a subsidy of 180,000 euros annually will be realistic to fund a successor project. “The aim is to continue the trend of the last years with more Austrian footballers and the promotion of young

talents. With a “Challenge” successor project and the “Österreicher-Topf” (a special fund promoting domestic footballers), young kickers are to be prepared for team integration, while the national team members should become fit for the World Cup and EURO 2012“, Secretary of State for Sport Lopatka informed. ■

Stricter anti-doping provisions adopted

With stricter anti-doping provisions and by integrating all legal regulations relevant to the combat against doping into a well-structured Anti-Doping Act, Austria has paved the way for the necessary further development of the anti-doping combat still before the Olympic Summer Games in Beijing. The unanimous decision was taken in the Sports Committee of the National Council (1st chamber of Parliament) on 4 July 2008. On 8 July 2008, the National Council will debate the proposed law. With the re-structuring of NADA Austria based on the 2007 Federal Anti-Doping Act and the envisaged amendment of this Act (including stricter rules on the marketing and possession of forbidden doping substances and blood doping), the federal government has met the requirements of a serious anti-doping policy. Another measure will be taken in autumn by the Subcommittee of the Sports Committee. It will incorporate international requirements, e.g. adjustment to the new WADA rules, technical standards for doping checks, the amended provisions of the present law as well as the experience gained from the ongoing cooperation among the relevant authorities and institutions. Andreas Schwab, a former participant in the Olympic Games, was appointed head of NADA Austria on 1 July 2008. Thus the second important step to intensify the combat against doping in Austria has been completed. ■

NADA: National Anti-Doping Agency

WADA: World Anti-Doping Agency

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.