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FROM AUSTRIA

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HOME AFFAIRS**Council of Ministers adopted “euro rescue umbrella” and fiscal pact**

On 20 March 2012 the federal government gave the go-ahead for measures implementing the permanent European Stability Mechanism (ESM) – also referred to as “euro rescue umbrella” – in Austria. Moreover, the Council of Ministers adopted the fiscal pact and gave the green light for Croatia’s EU accession.

The government had taken a number of important decisions, stated Federal Chancellor Werner Faymann at the press conference after the Council of Ministers’ meeting. The fiscal pact alone was not enough to give fresh impetus to employment and business in Europe “but without this basis a permanently stable euro-zone will not work”, stressed Faymann.

An amendment of Article 136 of the EU Treaty was a prerequisite for introducing the European Stability Mechanism. The ESM could enter into force only on the basis of an international agreement. In Austria a two-thirds majority in the National Council was required. Therefore two working groups would be set up together with the Greens (opposition) to deliberate on the involvement of Parliament and on fundamental positions on a European policy, explained the Chancellor. “We have to ensure that Austria will be able to decide quickly and flexibly in an emergency and that Parliament will still be involved comprehensively in decision-making“, said Faymann. The ESM is expected to take effect on 1 July 2012.

The fiscal pact provides for a maximum structural deficit of 0.5%. A deficit up to 1% of the GDP is only permissible if the debt ratio is below 60%.

Austria will participate in the ESM with cash funds totalling 2.23 billion euro as well as guarantees amounting to 17.3 billion euro.

Federal Chancellor Faymann: “Memorial Service is of symbolic importance“

According to Federal Chancellor Faymann, the continued funding of the Holocaust Memorial Service has been secured and the federal budget resources will not be cut. At the Council of Ministers’ session on 13 March 2012, a “clear common position” was adopted. The Holocaust Memorial Service in Yad Vashem and at other memorial sites was “of symbolic importance and vital for the youth of Austria“, stressed Faymann. At present 110 young people were participating in this programme instead of doing civilian service. To ensure that this would not change in the future, the federal govern-

ment would not cut the amount of about 100,000 euro earmarked for this purpose, Faymann stated emphatically. A possible lack of funding due to austerity measures in the Ministry of the Interior (catchword: stability pact) would be remedied in a different way by the government, assured the Chancellor. Vienna’s Jewish Religious Community noted this with satisfaction. “The Holocaust Memorial Service of Austrian conscientious objectors abroad is crucial for Austria’s international reputation“, said IKG President Oskar Deutsch.

Commemoration of victims of “South East Defensive Wall“ construction

Since 1995 commemorative ceremonies have been held in Rechnitz (southern Burgenland) for the victims of the “South East Defensive Wall” construction. The main remembrance venue is the “Kreuzstadl“, a barn where 180 Jewish forced labourers had been murdered in March 1945. In the framework of the ceremony on 25 March 2012 under the aegis of President Heinz Fischer an open-air museum was opened. Funding was inter alia provided by the EU and the National Fund of the Republic of Austria for Victims of National Socialism.

The layout of the museum represents a section of a dam symbolising the South East Defensive Wall. 13 large glass panels inform visitors about the construction of the South East Defensive Wall and the massacre in Kreuzstadl.

Reform of Jewish Religious Community

On 13 March 2012 the Council of Ministers adopted an amendment of the Israelites Act passed 120 years ago. The rights of the Jewish citizens living in Austria – e.g. religious holidays and kosher foodstuffs – are anchored more firmly in the Austrian law, while obsolete provisions which have become unconstitutional are repealed. Moreover, the amendment grants extensive autonomy to the Jewish Religious Community (IKG). In the future, the IKG may for example determine independently whether a school is a religious school or not.

Federal Chancellery: women’s support is a prerequisite for contract awarding

Minister for Women’s Affairs Gabriele Heinisch-Hosek issued a decree stipulating that the Federal Chancellery may award contracts of up to 100,000 euro only to companies with programmes for women. The companies have to sign a statement of commitment. If they fail to comply with this requirement, they face fines of up to 10,000 euro.

EUROPE INTERNATIONAL**Federal President Fischer in Belgrade**

On 23 March 2012 Federal President Heinz Fischer held talks in Belgrade. In a meeting with Serbian President Boris Tadic, Fischer congratulated Serbia on “this major step towards European integration”, referring to the fact that Serbia had recently been granted the status of an EU candidate country. It had not been easy to achieve an unanimous decision in the European Council but it “was the logical result of Serbia’s great efforts and the courageous policy pursued by President Tadic“, emphasised President Fischer.

According to Tadic, Austria was among the countries attaching great importance to Serbia’s coming closer to the EU. He stated: “Austria is a friend of Serbia“.

With regard to the “sensitive” Kosovo issue and the EU-mediated dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina, Fischer said that the situation was better than only half a year or one year ago. He had encouraged both sides to engage in a fair negotiation process and to comply with the agreements, said Fischer.

The Federal President described the bilateral relations as good and intense – both at political and economic level. Austria had been the largest investor in Serbia for many years, and this should not change in the future. However, Fischer requested improved framework conditions for investing in Serbia, including legal certainty and anti-corruption measures.

Turkish Foreign Minister Davutoglu pays an official visit to Vienna

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu met with his Austrian counterpart Michael Spindelegger in Vienna on 22 March 2012. Both ministers underlined the strong bilateral trade relations and the vital importance of cooperation between the two countries. Davutoglu described the Austrian-Turkish relations as “excellent“, Spindelegger highlighted the numerous common interests, e.g. the neighbourhood policy for the Balkans. The sensitive issue of Turkey’s EU membership efforts was also addressed. Minister Spindelegger stressed that Austria would not stand in the way to Turkey’s EU accession efforts.

Jordanian Foreign Minister Judeh in Vienna

Jordanian Minister for Foreign Affairs Nasser Judeh paid an official visit to Vienna from 15 to 16 March 2012. Items on his agenda were meetings with Federal President Heinz

Fischer, Speaker of Parliament Barbara Prammer and Foreign Minister Michael Spindelegger. The main subjects for discussion were the situation in Syria, Jordan’s mediation efforts in the Middle East conflict as well as the reform process in Jordan.

Judeh stressed vis-à-vis reporters that a political solution of the conflict in Syria was necessary to end the bloodshed. Jordan would do its utmost to host Syrian refugees but capacities were limited, said Judeh.

The political reform process in Jordan was described as “irreversible“ by Judeh. The settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was a major concern of Jordan. An agreement between the parties to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was to be reached by the end of 2012. Spindelegger underlined Austria’s willingness to support Jordan’s efforts.

Federal President Fischer invited Jordanian King Abdullah II. to Austria. In turn, Fischer received an invitation to visit Jordan.

Spindelegger at EU meeting in Berlin

Foreign Minister Michael Spindelegger participated in a meeting with eight counterparts from the EU in Berlin on 20 March 2012. Host Guido Westerwelle had invited to an informal exchange on the future of the European Union. After the talks, Spindelegger emphasised that the group definitely did not want to kick off a new debate on a European Constitution but that it was necessary to create a new image of Europe and to find different answers to the question what defined Europe’s identity. A major concern was that the institutions were not very efficient and quite cumbersome and that procedures were too lengthy, said Spindelegger.

The next two meetings of the nine foreign ministers (Germany, Austria, Belgium, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal and Spain) will take place in Brussels (mid-April) and in Vienna (mid-May).

Slovenian Foreign Minister Erjavec in Vienna

Foreign Minister Michael Spindelegger and Slovenia’s new Minister for Foreign Affairs Karl Erjavec highlighted the importance of the fact that the Western Balkan countries were coming closer to the EU at a meeting in Vienna on 20 March 2012. Both sides praised the “excellent relations” between Austria and Slovenia and reaffirmed their intention to intensify cooperation at EU level.

ECONOMY

Austrian National Bank: no recession in sight

According to the Economic Indicator of the Austrian National Bank (OeNB), the economy was stabilising – at a low level, with growth rates of 0.2 and 0.3% for the first and second quarter of 2012, respectively. The favourable prospects for growth were mainly due to a significant improvement of sentiment in the Austrian enterprises.

The data of the OeNB's Export Indicator published in March show that the sideways movement of commodity exports observed in 2011 has also continued in January and February of the current year.

A slight upward trend of investments likely against the background of improved order books and favourable financing terms. In view of the excellent employment situation and the currently declining inflation, a stable development of real income is expected.

Substantial increase in Austrian exports to Italy in 2011

Despite the low economic growth and the critical situation regarding Italy's government debt, the flows of goods between the two neighbouring countries increased last year. According to the latest economic report of the Foreign Trade Department of the Austrian Economic Chamber, Austria's exports to Italy rose by 8.6 per cent to 9.3 billion euro. In contrast, Austria's imports from Italy grew by 10.6 per cent to a volume of 8.5 billion euro. They were dominated by the export category engineering products and vehicles.

Trade in services between Austria and Italy is also of growing importance.

Reinhold Mitterlehner plans to promote photovoltaics and energy efficiency

Advocating the further development of photovoltaics, Minister for Economic Affairs and Energy Reinhold Mitterlehner drew attention to the new Eco-Electricity Act as the basis for 6,000 additional photovoltaic systems. "By passing the new Eco-Electricity Act, we have taken the right step to promote the development of this technology towards market maturity."

Currently a bill on energy efficiency is being drafted, which will introduce uniform rules for enterprises, the public administration and energy suppliers across Austria.

Number of full-time jobs has increased for the first time in three years

Since the crisis year 2008, the number of full-time jobs has decreased annually. Last year the economic upturn provided impetus for a trend reversal. Based on data of the Austrian Statistical Office (Statistik Austria), in 2011 the number of full-time positions exceeded that of the previous year but did not yet reach the pre-crisis level.

Labour law: new Act makes temporary work fairer but also more expensive

A newly adopted law aims at granting temporary workers the same rights as long-term employees. "Equal rights for equal work" was the motto of the new Temporary Agency Work Act, informed the Ministry of Social Affairs. The law complied with the requirements of the European Union. Concerns were, however, voiced by temporary employment agencies. According to them, pay was not the issue at stake – as temporary staff had already been guaranteed income equality under collective agreements – but fringe benefits such as company nurseries or cafeterias. The bill also provides for a term of notice of two weeks.

Austrian model companies achieved record results in 2011

Some Austrian top enterprises succeeded in achieving extraordinary results. In 2011 the hospital and thermal spa group Vamed increased its revenue and profit for the fourteenth time in a row. Vamed is the globally leading equipment supplier for hospitals and other health institutions, e.g. thermal spa resorts. The enterprise is currently working on 167 projects around the world.

Fruit juice and ice tea producer Pfanner from Vorarlberg boasted similar remarkable increases. Last year Pfanner posted a record revenue of 245 million euro. The Vorarlberg-based family company was founded in 1856 and is one of Europe's largest fruit processing and fruit juice producing companies.

2011 was a record year also for the Austrian fibre group Lenzing. Its net profit surged by almost 63 per cent to 258.7 million euro. Increasing by at least 21 per cent, Lenzing's sales revenue also hit a new all-time high.

CULTURE MEDIA SCIENCE**Vienna Architecture Centre (Az W) focuses on “bottom-up” urbanism**

The spring exhibition “Hands-On Urbanism“ (running until 25 June 2012) is devoted to the history of ideas of settlement in urban areas – starting in 1850 when cities faced new difficult challenges in the wake of industrialisation and ending with present developments. Based on international research over many years, curator Elke Krasny presents current exemplary cases of urban development showing how self-organised, collective and informal movements developed – and thereby transformed – urban space. In addition, the show explores the question how town planning institutions and architects respond to these bottom-up developments.

One of the numerous international examples presented in the exhibition is the allotment garden estate “Zukunft auf der Schmelz“ in Vienna’s densely populated 15th district. It was influenced by the so-called “Schreiber Garden Movement” in Leipzig, which was popularised in Vienna by the lawyer Franz Dinghofer. During WWI. these gardens helped to combat famine, in 1920 the gardeners finally formed an organisation.

The exhibition also provides insights into the “Wiener Siedlerbewegung” (“Vienna Settlers Movement”) founded in 1918: a radical grassroots and self-help group establishing cooperative organisations. It founded about 50 community gardens for independent cultivation and gardening. Some of them have been privatised, while in others the idea of a cooperative movement is kept alive.

A more recent example is “Macondo”, a housing project in the 11th district of Vienna named after the venue of Gabriel García Márquez’ novel “One Hundred Years of Solitude”. It accommodates more than 3000 refugees from over 20 countries. The socially committed art project “Life on Earth“ was started in Macondo in 2009 and has been continued as a community garden. www.azw.at

Verbund Collection stages exhibition on Cindy Sherman’s early work

The art collection of the Verbund Group presents about 50 early works (1975-1977) by US artist Cindy Sherman on its premises “Am Hof” in Vienna until 16 May 2012. The exhibition titled “That’s me – That’s not me” turns the spotlight on role models and female identities. Sherman’s little known early work created before the famous Untitled Film Stills (1977-

1980) playfully revolves around transformation. Especially the photos of this period incorporate a large number of elements from theatre.

The Verbund Collection concentrates on specific artistic periods and artists’ positions after 1970. Its thematic focus is on the construction of identities and the feminist avant-garde (e.g. represented by Eleanor Antin, Renate Bertlmann, Valie Export, Ana Mendieta, Hannah Wilke, Francesca Woodman and Birgit Jürgenssen). The Verbund Collection is also active in academic research and issues publications. Within the Board of Curators, the head of Verbund Collection Gabriele Schor has been supported by Jessica Morgan from the Tate Modern and Camille Morineau from Centre Pompidou since October 2011.

State Prize for “Austria’s Most Beautiful Books 2011“

Minister of Education Claudia Schmied and Gerald Schantin, President of the Federation of Austrian Booksellers, presented the prizes (each worth 3,000 euro) for “Austria’s Most Beautiful Books” at Radiokulturhaus on 22 March 2012.

The prize-winning books were “Ernst Logar. Invisible Oil“, the architecture yearbook “Raum, verschraubt mit der Zeit“ and the paediatric cancer research report “St. Anna Kinderkrebsforschung“. 15 titles out of a total of 233 books participating in the contest were awarded commemorative certificates.

www.bmukk.gv.at

Birthday celebrations in March: Ambros – Heller – Hollein – Schuh

On 19 March 2012 singer **Wolfgang Ambros**, whose song “Hofa“ (lyrics: Joesi Prokopetz) marked the beginning of a new era in Austrian songwriting in 1971, celebrated his 60th birthday with a concert. Just in time for his birthday, the retrospective edition “Alt & Jung” was launched, which will be followed by a new album in April.

In 1972 the first major album of the unconventional young Ambros had appeared: “Alles andere zählt net mehr...“ (including the popular song “Du bist wie die Wintersun“) as well as the original version of the musical “Watzmann“ created in cooperation with Joesi Prokopetz and Fredi Tauchen. After doing compulsory military service, he wrote the anti-army hymn “Tagwache“, which was boycotted by the Austrian broadcasting company. He made his final breakthrough with the song “Es lebe der Zentralfriedhof“ and tours with his

band “No.1 vom Wienerwald“. Other classics created in his turbulent career are “Schifoan“, “Zwickts mi“, “Gezeichnet fürs Leben“, “Weiß wie Schnee“, “Schaffnerlos” and “Heite drah i mi ham” (together with Georg Danzer) as well as “Wie im Schlaf“, an album with Viennese versions of Bob Dylan hits. Ambros’ songs provide profound insights into the Austrian soul.

André Heller celebrated his 65th birthday on 22 March 2012. On this occasion, Viennese journalist and author Christian Seiler presented a comprehensive biography of the versatile artist. It gives an overview of Heller’s diverse life stages, showing him for example as a poet, songwriter, actor, circus director, political activist, exhibition maker, fireworks creator, globetrotter and garden artist. The book allows the readers a glimpse into Heller’s soul and the different developments of his life.

Within this wide creative spectrum, Heller’s songwriting spans a period of more than 15 years; his first LP (“Nr.1“) appeared in 1968. The paths of André Heller and Wolfgang Ambros crossed in a duet, singing “Für immer jung“ (Stimmenhören, 1983), a cover version of the Bob Dylan song “Forever Young” that became a classic of Austro-Pop.

Hans Hollein, architect and universal artist, will celebrate his 78th birthday on 30 March 2012. Homage is paid to his work characterised by a combination of all visual arts – from architecture to exhibition design, from painting to sculpture, from fashion to typography – in the exhibition at Neue Galerie in the art precinct “Joanneumsviertel” in Graz. The show curated by Peter Weibel (running until 9 April 2012) does not only feature architecture projects but also presents Hollein as an architectural theoretician and visionary. A monumental bilingual monograph was published by Verlag Hatje Cantz for this show.

Franz Schuh, critic, essayist and award-winning culture journalist celebrated his 65th birthday on 15 March 2012.

Schuh received numerous awards, including the Austrian State Prize for Culture Journalism (1985) and the Austrian Art Prize 2011. The book “Der Krückenkaktus“ is the most recent of his numerous publications.

There seems to be no subject on which the specialist in German language and literature, philosopher, essayist and literary critic could not philosophise on a most sophisticated level: He gave a speech “About Literature and Alcohol” to the Graz Academy one day before his birthday. The much-sought-after speaker Schuh holds and has held teaching assignments

at different universities. Last but not least, he authors contributions for broadcasting stations and journals in Austria and abroad.

Judenplatz Museum presents “Jewish Geniuses – Warhol’s Jews”

The series of portraits was created by Andy Warhol in 1980 at the suggestion of his friend Ronald Feldman. It sparked interest in the history and achievements of those portrayed who had been selected from a list of 100 deceased personalities.

25 years after Warhol’s death, the portraits are presented from a new perspective. The exhibition is rounded off with an interview of Danielle Spera with Ron Feldmann, portraits of Warhol himself and of André Heller, to whom Warhol had paid a visit in Vienna. On show until 2 September 2012. www.jmw.at

Restitution decisions in March

On 2 March 2012 the Advisory Board on Art Restitution recommended restitution in four cases, i.e. the Anton Romako water colour painting “Liegender Hund“ from the Albertina museum, the oil painting “In der Klosterbibliothek“ by Eduard Grützner from Belvedere, two frames from the Museum of Applied Arts (MAK) as well as two artefacts from the Museum of Ethnology. No evidence of a forced sale had been found in the cases concerning the archives of Wiener Werkstätte from MAK, the work “Auf der Ligethi Puszta“ by Theodor Hörmann and a fruit still life by Jakob van Es.

Renovation of 43 Jewish “honorary graves” in Vienna has been completed

The renovation of the tombs of personalities such as Friedrich Torberg, Arthur Schnitzler or department store founder Alfred Gerngross started two years ago pays tribute to the contributions of Jewish citizens to Vienna’s cultural life. By renovating the Jewish cemeteries, the City of Vienna has taken an important step, which also includes the restoration of the building of the cemetery’s gatekeeper at the Währing Cemetery. Funding has been provided by the City Conservation Fund.

Hans-Peter Metzler was appointed President of the Bregenz Festival

On 19 March 2012 the technology entrepreneur from Vorarlberg Hans-Peter Metzler took the helm of the private foundation of the Bregenz Festival (“Bregenzer Festspiele”), succeeding to long-term Festival Director Günter Rhomberg, who retired on grounds of age.

Vienna School Board plans to make truancy “uncool”

Susanne Brandsteidl, President of the Vienna School Board, presented Horst Tschaikner as the administrator of an ambitious anti-truancy project. It should no longer be tolerable “to turn a blind eye” to truancy as this was a matter determining the pupils’ “opportunities in life”. “With each school day lost to truancy, the likelihood that a pupil would drop out increases by five per cent”, Susanne Brandsteidl quoted from the research findings of the US National Dropout Prevention Center. Tschaikner had worked as a teacher in secondary and vocational schools for many years and plans to bring together all school partners “to reflect together on possible action” still in this academic year. This project was launched following different initiatives, e.g. by Secretary of State for Integration Sebastian Kurz.

Ethics education: Ministry launches analysis of school pilot projects

The Ministry of Education will present an analysis of current school pilot projects on the introduction of the subject “ethics” by autumn. The aim of the pilot projects is to identify a feasible model which could be realised countrywide. The main problem in introducing this new subject is, however, that no budget has been earmarked for this purpose.

Intensifying research at universities of applied sciences

In the framework of a pilot project of the Ministry of Economy, the first three Josef Ressel Centres were founded at universities of applied sciences in 2008. The aim of the Josef Ressel Centres is to strengthen practice-oriented research at universities of applied sciences and to intensify cooperation between business and the universities of applied sciences. The first JR Centres were set up in Vorarlberg, Upper Austria and Burgenland, where they cooperate with 15 small and medium-sized enterprises. So far, the centres have remained at the pilot project stage. But now new centres are to be established as the Christian Doppler Research Society will provide the necessary funding. Three new Josef Ressel Centres will be set up in 2012. The Ministry of Science will make available 600,000 euro in the current year.

Four new female professors at the Graz University of Technology

Since 2010 the Graz University of Technology has appointed four women scientists as full professors. They are experts in mechanical

engineering, mathematics, electrical engineering and computer science. At the Graz University of Technology a total of seven chairs has been filled with female professors, Harald Kainz, Rector of the University of Technology, was pleased to inform.

Quantum computer pioneer from Innsbruck receives German award

Quantum researcher Rainer Blatt from Innsbruck will be awarded the Stern Gerlach Medal for his work in the field of metrology and quantum information processing with electromagnetically stored ions. The medal made of pure gold is considered to be one of the highest distinctions in experimental physics. It is granted by the German Physical Society, the globally largest association of this research discipline. Experimental physicist Rainer Blatt is the first Austrian scientist to be honoured with a Stern Gerlach Medal.

Research internships are to kindle interest in research and technology

From school to the research lab – under this motto 1,400 pupils from all over Austria served research internships last summer. “Since the launch of the initiative in 2008, 4,000 fledgling researchers have been granted paid internships in Austria’s most innovative enterprises, universities and institutions. And I am proud of the fact that last year the share of girls in these teams of promising talents was more than 30 per cent”, Minister of Technology Doris Bures expressed her satisfaction. Now the go-ahead has been given for the research internships for 2012. As from now, pupils aged 15 plus may register with a domestic enterprise for an internship funded by the Ministry of Transport, Innovation and Technology.

IT prize for creative pupils: looking for outstanding individual or team work

The contest “computer talents Austria ‘12” is staged for the 27th time by the Austrian Computer Society and the Ministry of Education. It calls for submissions by creative talents in computer science. The categories of the contest will cover a wide range of topics also in 2012, e.g. websites designed by the candidates, the application of programming skills, the development of new games or applications and projects applying informatics in any other form. The young participants of the age group 6 to 20 years may enter individual, team or class projects until 13 April 2012.

SPORTS**Minister Darabos watched Hirscher's triumph and great "final rehearsal" live**

The long ski season culminated with the World Cup finals in Schladming from 14 to 18 March 2012. About 50,000 spectators, including Minister of Sport Norbert Darabos, watched the final races in Schladming in wonderful weather. "What we saw here was almost unbelievable", the new overall World Cup winner Marcel Hirscher stated admiringly.

Hirscher's small crystal ball trophy in the men's giant slalom as well as Klaus Kröll's World Cup downhill title and Marlies Schild's World Cup slalom title were also cheered enthusiastically. According to Norbert Darabos, who congratulated Hirscher on his first big crystal ball trophy directly at the World Cup venue, Schladming had prepared optimally for the World Championships in 2013: "I am convinced that in eleven months we will have the best World Ski Championships of all times in Schladming!".

The winter sports season 2011/2012 was highly successful for Austria's athletes. The members of various teams of the Austrian Ski Association (ÖSV) won 54 World Cup titles, surpassing the previous record of the season 2010/11. Earning 25 gold medals, Alpine skiing was the most successful discipline, followed by ski jumping (19), snowboarding (7), ski cross (2) and Nordic combined (1). Attention should not only be drawn to the once again outstanding achievements of the Austrian Alpine team but also to the first overall World Cup triumphs of Andreas Promegger (snowboarding) and of the Linger brothers (luge). Last but not least, the Austrian team won gold at the Ski Jumping World Cup in Vikersund.

RED-WHITE-RED TEAM Campaign Days offered high-level information

After the huge success of the first three events of this initiative, the fourth RED-WHITE-RED TEAM Campaign Days took place in Schladming on the sidelines of the World Cup finals from 15 to 16 March 2012. Athletes of 15 different disciplines – including World and European champions such as Michaela Gigon (mountain bike orienteering), Christian Schopf (luge natural track), the jiu-jitsu twins Mirneta and Mirnesa Becirovic but also track-and-field athlete Andreas Vojta (who qualified for the Olympic Games 2012) – participated in the Campaign Days.

This year the event, to which all medal winners of the Youth Olympic Games 2012 were invited, was moderated by three-times winner of the title "Athlete of the Year" Mirna Jukic. The Campaign Days took place in a workshop-like atmosphere and covered numerous topics of practical relevance for elite athletes. Former European beach volleyball champion Nik Berger held for example a lecture on motivation, while KADA chief Roswitha Stadlober and former world-class skier Christiane Mitterwallner organised an information module on basic and further training. Another item high on the agenda was team spirit. Team-building was practised in a summer curling tournament and a joint excursion to the World Cup team competition.

The RED-WHITE-RED TEAM is the federal government's programme for promoting high-performance sports. This team consists of Austria's best 470 athletes (about 320 summer sports disciplines and 150 winter sports disciplines; 265 men and 205 women). The RED-WHITE-RED TEAM receives an annual subsidy of about 4 million euro from the federal government. The go-ahead for the initial campaign "We Are Winners" was given in November 2009. As a next step, an anti-doping spot was produced in February 2010. Other campaigns were "Don't Petrify – Move!" (2010) and "Join in the Game" (2011).

Stephanie Brunner won gold at Alpine Junior World Ski Championships

The young athletes of the Austrian Ski Association (ÖSV) had to content themselves with two medals at the Alpine Junior World Ski Championships in Roccaraso (Italy). Stephanie Brunner from Tyrol won gold in the slalom competition and Johannes Strolz from Vorarlberg was ranked third in the Super-G at this event in the Italian Abruzzo mountains. The ÖSV members left empty-handed in the remaining eight competitions.

Gerhard Milletich unanimously elected President of the BFV

On 3 March 2012 Minister of Sport Norbert Darabos attended the annual general meeting of the Football Association of Burgenland (BFV). Minister Darabos took advantage of the opportunity to thank numerous BFV officials for their excellent work.

Gerhard Milletich was unanimously elected new President by the 143 BFV members with voting rights. Norbert Darabos expressed his appreciation to outgoing BFV President Karl Kaplan.