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NON-GOVERNMENTAL  
ORGANISATION

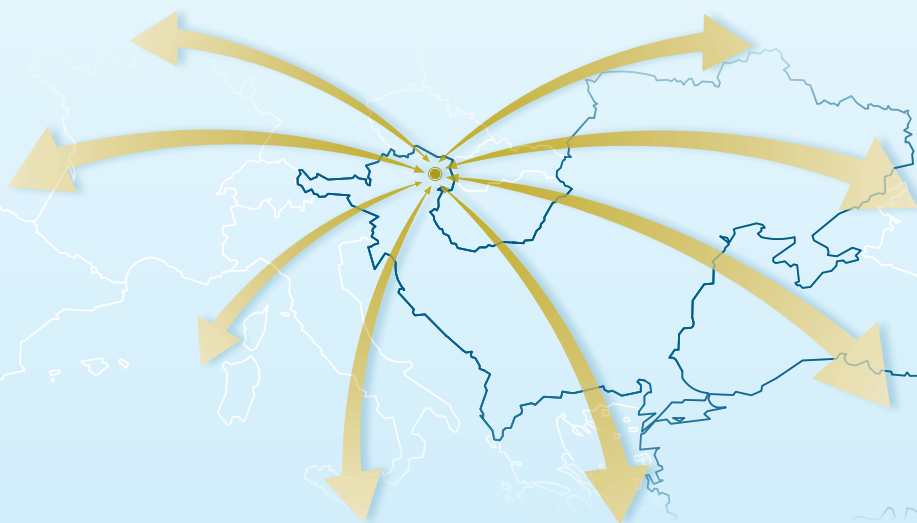


CONSULTATIVE STATUS  
WITH THE ECONOMIC AND  
SOCIAL COUNCIL OF THE  
UNITED NATIONS (ECOSOC)

Go South East

REGISTERED IN THE  
TRANSPARENCY REGISTER  
OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT  
AND EUROPEAN COMMISSION

# VIENNA ECONOMIC FORUM



## REVIEW 2020

# Vienna Economic Forum has the honor to cooperate for a better understanding in the region with



Anatolian Businessmen Association, Istanbul



Bled Strategic Forum, Bled, Slovenia



Bled School of Management, Slovenia



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Organisation (B.I.O.), Athens



Bulgarian Chamber of Commerce  
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Business Advisory Council for  
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business ladies club

Business Ladies Club  
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Central European Initiative (CEI),  
Trieste



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Industrialists in Bulgaria (CEIBG), Sofia



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International Foundation for Sustainable Peace  
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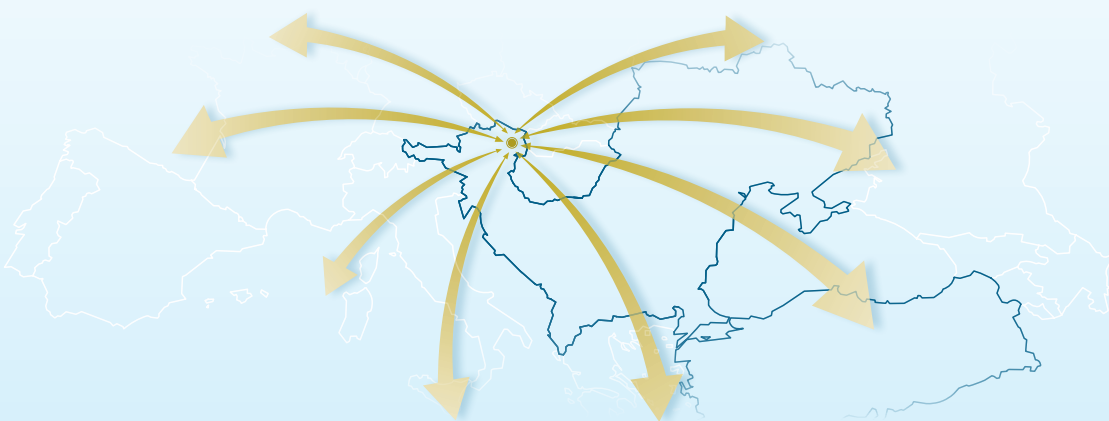
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# VIENNA ECONOMIC FORUM



**REVIEW 2020**

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Bundesministerium für europäische  
und internationale Angelegenheiten

DVR: 0000060

Wien, am 7. Jänner 2011

GZ: BMeiA-N9.8.19.12/0036-I.2/2010

An das

Vienna Economic Forum (VEF)  
z.Hd. Fr. Dr. Elena Kiricheva  
Stubenring 16/3  
1010 Wien

#### BESCHIED

Der Bundesminister für europäische und internationale Angelegenheiten als Behörde gemäß § 1 des Bundesgesetzes über die Einräumung von Privilegien an nichtstaatliche internationale Organisationen, BGBl. Nr. 174/1992, entscheidet wie folgt:

#### Spruch

Dem Vienna Economic Forum (VEF) wird die Rechtsstellung einer Organisation im Sinne des Bundesgesetzes über die Einräumung von Privilegien an nichtstaatliche internationale Organisationen (NGO-Gesetz), BGBl. Nr. 174/1992, eingeräumt.

...

Für den Bundesminister:  


(Ges. MMag. Gregor Schusterschitz)  
Leiter der Abteilung I.2 – Allgemeines Völkerrecht

United Nations  Nations Unies

Non-Governmental Organizations Branch  
Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination  
Department of Economic and Social Affairs

DC1-1480, 1 U.N. Plaza, New York, N.Y. 10017 • Tel. (212) 963-8652 • Fax (212) 963-9248  
Website: [www.un.org/ecosoc/ngo](http://www.un.org/ecosoc/ngo) • Contact: [www.un.org/ecosoc/ngo/contact](http://www.un.org/ecosoc/ngo/contact)

27 July 2012

Dear NGO Representative,

I am pleased to inform you that the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) at its Substantive Session of July 2012 adopted the recommendation of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to grant **Special** consultative status to your organization **Vienna Economic Forum**. On behalf of all staff of the Non-Governmental Organizations Branch, please accept our heartfelt congratulations.

Consultative status for an organization enables it to actively engage with ECOSOC and its subsidiary bodies, as well as with the United Nations Secretariat, programmes, funds and agencies in a number of ways. In order to better understand this relationship, we take this opportunity to provide some critical information about the **privileges** that consultative status with ECOSOC confers on your organization, as well as the **obligations** that your organization will be required to meet under this relationship. **We therefore urge you to take the time to carefully review the information we have provided below.**

#### Privileges and benefits of consultative status

##### 1) ECOSOC Resolution 1996/31

- Arrangements for consultations with NGOs are regulated by ECOSOC resolution 1996/31, adopted by the Council on 25 July 1996. Please review the entire resolution at: <http://csonet.org/content/documents/199631.pdf> for detailed information. It provides information on ways to participate in the work of the Council, including opportunities to organizations such as yours to consult with Member States and the United Nations system at large, based on the nature and scope of work that your organization undertakes. Consultative relationship with NGOs also enables the Council or one of its bodies to seek expert information or advice from organizations with special competence in a subject matter.

- Consultative status allows you to be informed about the provisional agenda of the Economic and Social Council;

...

Vienna Economic Forum

## DEAR MEMBERS, PARTNERS AND FRIENDS OF VIENNA ECONOMIC FORUM!



The time has come to look back at the past year – the 17<sup>th</sup> since the founding of VEF. 2020 challenged us in the most unexpected ways by suddenly imposing a restriction on the global community pulse of interaction on a scale reaching out far, even into our daily routine and sadly at the cost of many lives.

Nevertheless, the powerful teachings of history are pointing out that such periods of hardships are usually followed by times of hope and new opportunities for further development. In this sense we need to emphasise our gratitude to all of you for staying behind Vienna Economic Forum and for demonstrating faith in our common aim to bring together and to stimulate the dialogue between economy and politics by approaching these opportunities in a more open and efficient way.

It is only with your firm support that the year 2020 actually turned out to be a successful year for VEF, an year of change – even in regard to the physical office space of Vienna Economic Forum that is now settled in Vienna's "Embassy Quarter" at Prinz Eugen Strasse – right next to the beautiful Belvedere Baroque palaces.

In the spirit of time the adjustment also applied to the 17<sup>th</sup> **Vienna Economic Forum – Vienna Future Dialogue 2020**. In a **special online edition – Economy Meets Politics in a Digital World**, with great success VEF demonstrated that traditional experience and powerful current processes like digitalisation can go hand in hand by benefiting from each other and setting the course to bright future initiatives. With the **strong support of the Team of Austrian Post** the hybrid event took place both onsite - in the Trumpet hall of Österreichische Post AG and online – under the **guidance of EU Commissioner Mariya Gabriel**, with portfolio for Research, Innovation, Education, Culture and Youth.

The interesting discussions between high ranked politicians and representatives of the economy from the VEF-member countries and worldwide on the **“challenges and opportunities for the regional economy”** as well as the **“new types of mobility in a digital world”** reached out to more than 1200 viewers from 32 countries – regionally, Europe – and worldwide and received a great positive response.

Dear Members, Partners and Friends of Vienna Economic Forum, we would like to **sincerely thank you on behalf of the Board of Vienna Economic Forum for your constant and trusting support**. The challenges of 2020 set stronger focus on the economic development of the VEF region as an European region and even managed to clearly define the most crucial directions of this development. This not only reaffirms the importance of the path that VEF-Family has been walking on during the last 17 years, but also gives us confidence to stay on the pulse of time and continue to write together the success story of Vienna Economic Forum!

Yours,

DI Peter Umundum  
President

Amb. Dr. Elena Kirtcheva  
Secretary General

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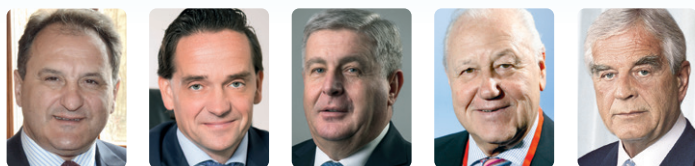
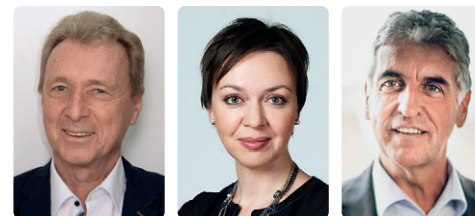
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Photo H.E. Mr. Ceyhan © Wikipedia, Raimond Spekking

The Board of Vienna Economic Forum is honoured to have the **elected Prime Ministers of the Vienna Economic Forum Member Countries**, as well as **Dr. Heinz FISCHER**, former President of the Republic of Austria (2004–2016), as **Members of the Vienna Economic Forum Patrons Committee** and to call them **Patrons of Vienna Economic Forum!**



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**Ms. Sheila EHM**, brennheiß serviert: Grafikdesign & Fotografie



**Mag. Peter KYSELA**, Managing Partner, DATANET Solutions GmbH  
*IT Consultant*



**Mr. Nikolay A. PETKOV MA**, CEO, nikoweb.net(works), web Support



**KR Prof. Mag. Gertrud TAUCHHAMMER**, Magazine Society, Publisher,  
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Vienna Economic Talks behandelt spezifische Themen, Regionen und Wirtschaftssektoren, die nicht nur für die Mitgliedsländer des Vienna Economic Forum von großem Interesse sind, sondern auch für andere Interessierte in der Region.

Vienna Economic Talks deals with specific topics, regions and economic sectors, which are of great interest not only for the member countries of the Vienna Economic Forum, but also for other interested parties in the region.

FOR A BETTER UNDERSTANDING



## YOURS, VIENNA ECONOMIC FORUM TEAM



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*Senior Project Manager, Executive Assistant to the Secretary General*



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**Irena PAL, BBA**  
*Project and Office Manager*



**Mag. Thomas ARNOLDNER**

*Member of the Board  
of Vienna Economic Forum*

*CEO  
A1 Telekom Austria Group*

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“As A1 Telekom Austria Group we are at the epicenter of digitization and we are a reliable partner for business, people and society, even in particularly challenging times. Our strategic leitmotif “Empowering digital life” took on an even more decisive significance as a result of these developments. We are a leading provider of digital services and communications solutions in the CEE region with around 25 million customers and more than 17,000 employees in seven core markets. Our Group offers telecommunications, broadband internet, integrated ICT and business solutions, payment, multimedia and entertainment services as well as wholesale and payment solutions.

The digital transformation opens up enormous potential for more economic efficiency, social equality of opportunity and resource conservation in the interest of people and the environment. Cooperation and a common approach are the key to unlocking the enormous potential of digitization. Ultimately, it is always a question of how one can ensure even better living conditions for people and future generations within one's sphere of influence.”

„Als A1 Telekom Austria Group stehen wir im Epizentrum der Digitalisierung und sind ein verlässlicher Partner für Wirtschaft, Mensch und Gesellschaft auch in speziell herausfordernden Zeiten. Unser strategisches Leitmotiv „Empowering digital life“ erhielt durch diese Entwicklungen einen noch entscheidenderen Stellenwert. Wir sind ein führender Provider für digitale Services und Kommunikationslösungen im CEE-Raum mit rund 25 Millionen Kunden und mehr als 17.000 MitarbeiterInnen in sieben Kernmärkten. Unser Konzern bietet Telekommunikation, Breitband-Internet, integrierte ICT- und Business-Lösungen, Payment-, Multimedia- und Entertainment-Services sowie Wholesale und Payment-Lösungen an.“

Die digitale Transformation eröffnet enormes Potenzial für ein Mehr an Wirtschaftlichkeit, sozialer Chancengleichheit und Ressourcenschonung im Interesse von Mensch und Umwelt. Zusammenarbeit und ein gemeinsamer Ansatz sind der Schlüssel, um das enorme Potenzial der Digitalisierung zu erschließen. Denn letztlich geht es stets um die Frage, wie man in seinem Einflussbereich für noch lebenswertere Bedingungen für die Menschen und nachfolgende Generationen sorgen kann.“



Aus einer Vision  
Realität machen.

Jetzt ich.

**ALLES**  
für Ihr Business.

Ohne Sie ist unser Netz nur ein Netz –  
aber gemeinsam mit Unternehmergeist  
wird aus einer Idee eine Success-Story.

**Ich kann alles.**  
#BusinessChange





**Dr. Wolfgang POSPISCHIL**

*Member of the Board  
of Vienna Economic Forum*

*CEO  
AFRY Management Consulting  
Austria GmbH*

“AFRY Management Consulting is the leading expert for the energy, forestry and bioindustries worldwide. Our team provides strategic and operational advice across the value chain.

Industries are changing at an unprecedented pace as our world becomes increasingly interconnected. Global changes bring both challenges and opportunities for all: the shift towards fossil-free and smart systems, the transition from synthetic to biomaterials, operational excellence and digitalisation, the decentralisation of markets, as well as new strategies and products. We aim to assist our clients in this transformation phase in the best possible way. As part of the AFRY Group, our management consultants are supported by 17,000 experts from infrastructure, industry and energy.

Our Austrian branch has been focusing on decarbonisation, digitalisation, location attractiveness and the industrial region of the future, with the latter receiving a lot of attention lately. We particularly focus on "Future Industrial Regions" and have launched a unique initiative in Austria to support existing companies, attract new companies and increase resilience. What makes this project so special is the inclusion of children and young people as well as the overall accompanying technical expertise out of Northern Europe.”

*„AFRY Management Consulting ist die führende Beratung für die Energie-, Forst- und Bio-industrie weltweit. Unser Team bietet strategische und operative Beratung über die gesamte Wertschöpfungskette hinweg.*

*Die Industrien verändern sich rasant, während sich die Welt immer mehr vernetzt. Globale Veränderungen bedeuten Herausforderungen, aber auch Chancen für alle: der Wandel zu fossilienfreien intelligenten Systemen, der Übergang von Kunst- zu Biomaterial, Operational Excellence und Digitalisierung, die Dezentralisierung der Märkte sowie neue Strategien und Produkte. Wir wollen unsere Kunden bestmöglich in dieser aktuellen Phase der Transformation begleiten. Als Teil der AFRY Gruppe werden unsere Managementberater von 17.000 Fachkräften aus Infrastruktur, Industrie und Energie unterstützt.*

*In Österreich legen wir den Fokus auf Dekarbonisierung, Digitalisierung, Standortattraktivität und die Industrieregion der Zukunft, wobei letzteres derzeit große Beachtung erfährt. Wir konzentrieren uns besonders auf die „Future Industrial Regions“ und haben dazu eine einzigartige Initiative in Österreich gestartet, um bestehende Unternehmen zu unterstützen, neue Unternehmen anzusiedeln und die Resilienz zu erhöhen. Was dieses Projekt besonders auszeichnet, ist das Miteinbeziehen von Kindern und Jugendlichen sowie die begleitende fachliche Expertise aus den nordeuropäischen Ländern.“*



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AFRY is an international engineering, design and advisory company. We support our clients to progress in sustainability and digitalisation. We are 17,000 devoted experts within the fields of infrastructure, industry and energy, operating across the world to create sustainable solutions for future generations.

## Making Future



**Mag. Heinz MESSINGER**

*Member of the Board, Financial Referent  
of Vienna Economic Forum*

*Managing Director  
AME International GmbH*

“Traditionally, Austria has strong relation to the region of the partner countries Vienna Economic Forum. AME International GmbH and myself have been actively working on strengthening the healthcare systems for VEF member countries for almost 25 years, creating a sustainable benefit for patients in the region.

The social impact of our projects has resulted in strengthening clinical care in over 200 hospitals worldwide covering more than 50.000 beds, improving the health situation for over 1.7 million inpatients and over 20 million outpatients and as such extending the benefit of improved access to care for a catchment area of 165 million people.”

„Österreich hat traditionell einen starken Bezug zur Region der Partnerländer des Vienna Economic Forum. AME International GmbH und ich arbeiten seit fast 25 Jahren aktiv an der Stärkung der Gesundheitssysteme für die VEF-Mitgliedsländer und schaffen damit einen nachhaltigen Nutzen für die Patienten in der Region.

Die sozialen Auswirkungen unserer Projekte haben dazu geführt, dass die klinische Versorgung in über 200 Krankenhäusern mit mehr als 50.000 Betten gestärkt wurde, die Gesundheitssituation für über 1,7 Millionen stationäre und über 20 Millionen ambulante Patienten verbessert wurde und somit ein Einzugsgebiet von 165 Millionen Menschen von einem verbesserten Zugang zur Versorgung profitiert.“

„We improve healthcare delivery by using Cutting Edge Technology“

AME International is an Austrian healthcare company with a key specialty in hospital projects and digital health projects. As such, AME acts as an independent integrator for complex health care technology projects, providing state of the art medical

technology solutions – turn-key, upgrading of existing hospitals and implementation of nationwide digital health systems. Geographically, AME concentrates on developing emerging economies in Africa, Asia and Europe.



Digital Health



Medical Package & Turn-Key  
Solutions



Consulting & Hospital Engineering







**Mr. Emmanuel FOREST**

*Member of the Board  
of Vienna Economic Forum*

*CEO  
BOUYGUES EUROPE SA  
Brussels, Belgium*

“Bouygues Group is proud to have been working in the Vienna Economic Forum region for years, in particular in Croatia, where we operate the Bina-Istra motorway concession and where we have built Zagreb new airport terminal. Colas is also present, and keen to participate in further infrastructure development projects. We strongly believe in the future of south-eastern Europe, and we look forward reinforcing our links with these countries, within the framework of tighter links between Balkan states and the EU, with their next possible accession to full EU membership as stated recently by the European Commission.”

*„Bouygues Group ist stolz, seit Jahren in der Region des Vienna Economic Forum tätig zu sein, insbesondere in Kroatien, wo wir die Autobahnkonzession Bina-Istra betreiben und den neuen Flughafen Zagreb gebaut haben. Colas ist ebenfalls präsent und möchte an weiteren Infrastrukturentwicklungsprojekten teilnehmen. Wir sind fest von der Zukunft Südosteuropas überzeugt und freuen uns darauf, unsere Beziehungen zu diesen Ländern im Rahmen engerer Beziehungen zwischen den Balkanstaaten und der EU mit ihrem nächst möglichen Beitritt zur vollen EU-Mitgliedschaft zu verstärken, wie kürzlich von der Europäische Kommission betont wurde.“*



## Istrian Y motorway – 209 km of motorway – Concession Croatia

Under the terms of a 32-year concession contract, construction of 209 km of motorway in Istria, Croatia.

This project is part of the project for development of tourism and enhanced European integration for the Republic of Croatia.





**Mr. Wilbert VERHEIJEN**

*Member of the Board  
of Vienna Economic Forum*

*Managing Director  
Canon CEE GmbH*

“The year behind us has been turbulent, leading to a shift in how we interact with each other. While the effects of the pandemic will last, 2021 will be a year of transition, as businesses are starting to look forward to shaping their futures and build agility into their working practices. These circumstances have accelerated the need for digital transformation and the trend is likely to continue. Remote working has become a reality for a majority of workers, pushing companies to adapt their processes and workflows and ensure continuity of their business. They need to operate productively, collaboratively and work securely from anywhere.

With its advanced technologies/solutions and expertise, Canon is already supporting hybrid workspaces with a connected, automated and secure working environment.

We have the experience and expertise to guide you on swift digital transformation journeys whilst continuing to make an existing document and content environment more efficient, less costly and more compliant.”

„Das hinter uns liegende Jahr war turbulent und hat zu einer Verschiebung der Art und Weise geführt, wie wir miteinander kooperieren. Während die Auswirkungen der Pandemie noch andauern werden, wird 2021 ein Jahr des Übergangs sein. Entsprechend der neuen Realität rüsten sich Unternehmen für die Zukunft, die erfordert erhöhte Agilität in die Arbeitsabläufe zu bringen. Die Situation erfordert die digitale Transformation zu beschleunigen und dieser Trend wird sich verstärkt fortsetzen. Mobile Working ist für einen Großteil der Arbeitnehmer zur Realität geworden und zwingt Unternehmen dazu, ihre Prozesse und Arbeitsabläufe anzupassen, um die Kontinuität ihres Geschäfts sicherzustellen. Arbeitnehmer müssen von überall aus produktiv, kollaborativ und sicher arbeiten.

Mit seinen fortschrittlichen Technologien/Lösungen und seiner Expertise unterstützt Canon bereits hybride Arbeitsumgebungen mittels einer vernetzten, automatisierten und sicheren Arbeitsumgebung.

Wir haben die Erfahrung und das Fachwissen, um Sie bei der schnellen digitalen Transformation zu begleiten und gleichzeitig eine bestehende Dokumenten- und Content-Umgebung effizienter, kostengünstiger und gesetzeskonform zu gestalten.“



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44% of companies didn't allow remote work at all prior to the current global situation<sup>1</sup>



25-30% of the workforce will be working from home multiple days a week by the end of 2021<sup>2</sup>



62% of remote workers said the increase in flexibility had helped them to focus more on work<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.smallbizgenius.net/by-the-numbers/remote-work-statistics/#gref>  
<sup>2</sup> <https://globalworkplaceanalytics.com/work-at-home-after-covid-19-our-forecast>  
<sup>3</sup> <https://workplaceinsight.net/people-miss-the-office-but-most-do-not-want-to-return-full-time/>




**Mag. Stefan SZYSZKOWITZ**
*Member of the Board  
of Vienna Economic Forum*
*Spokesman of the Executive Board  
EVN AG*

Photo © EVN – Steinbach

“Since our market entry in South Eastern Europe slightly more than ten years ago, we have made a sustainable contribution to the long-term improvement of the local supply infrastructure – and also to economic development in Bulgaria and Macedonia – with our investments in the energy supply. Within the context of our environmental services business, we offer our planning and operating expertise to deliver specially designed solutions for the construction of drinking water supply and wastewater treatment plants in the member countries of the Vienna Economic Forum.”

„Seit unserem Markteintritt in Südosteuropa vor etwas mehr als zehn Jahren haben wir mit unseren Investitionen in die Energieversorgung einen nachhaltigen Beitrag zur langfristigen Verbesserung der örtlichen Versorgungsinfrastruktur und damit zur wirtschaftlichen Entwicklung in Bulgarien und Mazedonien geleistet. Im Rahmen unseres Umweltgeschäfts bieten wir zudem mit unserer Planungs- und Betriebsführungsexpertise maßgeschneiderte Lösungen für die Errichtung von Trinkwasserversorgungs- und Abwasserbehandlungsanlagen in den Partnerländern des Vienna Economic Forum.“

# Für Wachstum braucht man Sonne, Wasser und Luft.



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1) Vorschlag an die 92. Hauptversammlung am 21. Jänner 2021



**Dr. Stephan PACHINGER**

*Member of the Board  
of Vienna Economic Forum*

*Partner  
Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer*

Photo © Martina Dräger

“Central and Eastern Europe is a diverse market where investors frequently need lawyers with international perspective and experience. Freshfields operates at the forefront in the CEE region. We have advised clients on the largest transactions in CEE. This means we know the region very well and understand the regulatory, commercial and cultural environments. What sets us apart is our integrated approach combining the expertise of corporate, finance, tax and employment lawyers. Finally, our StrongerTogether network in the region enables us to select for each transaction the best lawyers in CEE.”

*„Mittel- und Osteuropa ist ein vielfältiger Markt, auf dem Investoren häufig Anwälte mit internationaler Perspektive und Erfahrung brauchen. Freshfields ist einer der führenden Berater in der CEE-Region. Wir haben Mandaten bei den größten Transaktionen in CEE beraten. Das heißt, wir kennen die Region sehr gut und verstehen das regulatorische, kommerzielle und kulturelle Umfeld. Was uns von anderen unterscheidet, ist unser integrierter Ansatz, der die Expertise von Wirtschafts-, Finanz-, Steuer- und Arbeitsrechtlern kombiniert. Unser StrongerTogether Programm mit führenden lokalen Kanzleien ermöglicht es uns, die besten Anwälte für die jeweiligen Transaktionen in CEE auszuwählen.“*

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**Amb. Victor JACKOVICH**

*Member of the Board  
of Vienna Economic Forum*

*President  
Jackovich International  
USA*

“I am honoured to continue serving as a Member of the Board of the Vienna Economic Forum and to participate actively in the Forum's activities in Austria and throughout the Southeast European region. My many years of active engagement in diplomacy and commercial activity, primarily in regions of direct interest to the Vienna Economic Forum have confirmed my belief in the strength and capabilities of the peoples of Southeast Europe and surrounding countries. The overall objective should be the full integration of all of Europe, including Southeast Europe, into Euro-Atlantic associations, including the European Union (EU). Today, we are all faced with new and unique challenges. But these challenges should not deter progress in forging strong regional, Euro-Atlantic and global relations. To the contrary, all the more reason why the work of the Vienna Economic Forum and like-minded organizations take on added tremendous significance. The keys to progress toward this objective of integration remain the same as they have always been: good governance, democracy, transparent markets, open societies and regional and global cooperation. Having celebrated its 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the Vienna Economic Forum can count on me for continued support in all of these key activities through the coming period.”

„Für mich ist es eine große Ehre, weiterhin Mitglied des Vorstands des Vienna Economic Forum zu sein und tatkräftig an den Aktivitäten des Forums in Österreich und im gesamten südost-europäischen Raum mitzuwirken. Mein langjähriges Engagement in der Diplomatie und den kommerziellen Aktivitäten, vor allem in den Regionen, die für das Vienna Economic Forum von direktem Interesse sind, hat meinen Glauben an die Stärke und die Fähigkeiten der Völker Südosteuropas und der umliegenden Länder bekräftigt. Das übergeordnete bzw. gesamte Ziel sollte die vollständige Integration ganz Europas, einschließlich Südosteuropas, in euro-atlantische Verbänden einschließlich der Europäischen Union (EU) sein. Heute stehen wir vor neuen und einzigartigen Herausforderungen. Diese Herausforderungen sollten jedoch den Fortschritt bei der Gestaltung starker regionaler, euroatlantischer und globaler Beziehungen nicht verhindern. Umso mehr, weil die Arbeit des Vienna Economic Forum und gleichgesinnten Institutionen eine enorme Bedeutung erlangt. Der Schlüssel zum Erreichen dieses Integrationsziels bleibt immer noch derselbe: gute Regierungsführung, Demokratie, transparente Märkte, offene Gesellschaften und regionale und globale Zusammenarbeit. Das Vienna Economic Forum, das inzwischen sein 15-jähriges Bestehen gefeiert hat, kann sich darauf verlassen, dass ich es bei all diesen wichtigen Aktivitäten auch in der kommenden Zeit unterstützen werde.“

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**Dr. Gabriel LANSKY**

Member of the Board  
of Vienna Economic Forum

Partner  
LANSKY, GANZGER + partner

“Since many years, LANSKY, GANZGER + partner has had a strong focus on the markets of Central, Eastern and South Eastern Europe and the deepening of the economic and political relations of these with Austria as well as with each other. The opening of our office in Skopje was another milestone in our successful activities in this region; the extensive infrastructure and green energy investment programmes in North Macedonia and throughout the Balkans open up exciting new opportunities for our clients, which they successfully develop with our support.

We are a proud partner of the Vienna Economic Forum, a leading platform for the exchange of ideas on regional economic and political issues and developments. The VEF conferences offer high-level experts and decision-makers a space for debate and networking, making them a fixture in the calendar of all stakeholders interested in the region.”

*„LANSKY, GANZGER + partner setzt seit Jahren einen starken Fokus auf die Märkte Mittel-, Ost- und Südosteuropas und die Vertiefung der wirtschaftlichen und politischen Beziehungen dieser mit Österreich und untereinander. Die Eröffnung unserer Kanzlei in Skopje war ein weiterer Meilenstein unserer erfolgreichen Aktivitäten in diesem Raum; unseren Mandanten eröffnen die umfangreichen Infrastruktur- und Green-Energy-Investitionsprogramme in Nordmazedonien und am gesamten Balkan spannende neue Geschäftsfelder, welche sie mit unserer Hilfe erfolgreich bearbeiten.“*

*Wir sind stolzer Partner des Vienna Economic Forum, einer führenden Plattform für Ideenaustausch zu regionalen wirtschaftlichen und politischen Themen und Entwicklungen. Die Konferenzen des VEF bieten hochrangige Experten, Entscheidungsträgern und Stakeholdern Raum für Debatten und Vernetzung und sind dadurch ein Fixpunkt im Kalender aller an der Region interessierter Akteure.“*

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**Mr. Vlastimir GOLUBOVIĆ**

*Member of the Board  
of Vienna Economic Forum*

*President  
Chamber of Economy  
of Montenegro*

“Chamber of Economy of Montenegro – business association with rich tradition, independent, professional, inventive and above all authoritative – dates back to 1928. It is aimed at representing interests of the entire business community before the public authorities. As a partner of the Government it gives opinions in relation to proposals for a law and other regulations and measures of the economic policy. Providing assistance to its members in introducing EU standards, participating in development of the EU association programs, international projects, development of the national education system in line with the needs of the economy, presenting business opportunities in foreign countries are just some of the activities of the Montenegrin Chamber. Thanks to the membership in international organizations, the Chamber provides support to its members in achieving their interests abroad. It is structured according to the European tradition of chamber organization, with mandatory membership and the scope of activities determined by law.”

*„Die Wirtschaftskammer von Montenegro – ein Wirtschaftsverband mit reicher Tradition, unabhängig, professionell, innovativ und vor allem zuverlässig – wurde im Jahre 1928 gegründet. Das Ziel der Kammer ist es, die Interessen der gesamten Geschäftswelt vor den Behörden zu vertreten. Als Partner der Regierung gibt sie Stellungnahmen zu Gesetzesvorschlägen und anderen wirtschaftspolitischen Entscheidungen und Maßnahmen ab. Die Unterstützung ihrer Mitglieder bei der Einführung von EU-Standards, die Teilnahme an der Entwicklung von EU-Verbandsprogrammen, internationale Projekte, die Entwicklung des nationalen Bildungssystems im Einklang mit den Bedürfnissen der Wirtschaft und die Darstellung von Geschäftsmöglichkeiten im Ausland sind nur einige der Aktivitäten der montenegrinischen Kammer. Dank der Mitgliedschaft in internationalen Organisationen unterstützt die Kammer ihre Mitglieder bei der Verwirklichung ihrer Interessen im Ausland. Sie ist nach der europäischen Tradition der Kammerorganisation aufgebaut, mit obligatorischer Mitgliedschaft und einem gesetzlich festgelegten Tätigkeitsbereich.“*



CHAMBER OF  
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MONTENEGRO



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*your partner*







### DI Ryszard PRESCH

*Vice-President  
of Vienna Economic Forum*

*Member of the Executive Board,  
COO, Novomatic AG*

Photo © NOVOMATIC, Katharina Schmitt

„The Vienna Economic Forum builds a strong network and promotes investment opportunities in regions where NOVOMATIC also has a strong presence. Due to our early commitment, we have been able to establish an excellent position in these markets – around a quarter of revenues are generated in countries where the Vienna Economic Forum is also active. The main drivers of our success are technological innovation, economic growth and positive changes in economic and regulatory conditions, which continuously open up new markets and business models. The cooperation with the Vienna Economic Forum contributes to the further expansion of our leading position.“

„Das Vienna Economic Forum bildet ein starkes Netzwerk und fördert Investitionsmöglichkeiten in Regionen, in denen auch NOVOMATIC stark präsent ist – rund ein Viertel des Umsatzes wird in jenen Ländern erwirtschaftet, in denen auch das Vienna Economic Forum aktiv ist. Die wesentlichen Treiber unseres Erfolges sind dabei der technologische Wandel, wirtschaftliches Wachstum und positive Veränderungen wirtschaftlicher und regulatorischer Rahmenbedingungen, die laufend neue Märkte und Geschäftsmodelle eröffnen. Die Zusammenarbeit mit dem Vienna Economic Forum trägt dazu bei, unsere führende Position weiter auszubauen.“



**NOVOMATIC**

In 1980, the foundation for the NOVOMATIC success story was laid in Gumpoldskirchen, Austria. During the past 40 years, NOVOMATIC became one of the largest and most innovative international gaming technology groups, with more than 22,000 employees worldwide.



**DI Peter UMUNDUM**

*President  
of Vienna Economic Forum*

*Member of the  
Executive Board  
Österreichische Post AG*

“The international strategy embraced by Austrian Post is very much in line with the focus of the Vienna Economic Forum (VEF). After all, Austrian Post has successfully been investing in SEE and Turkey for a long time. Our business activities in this region presuppose an established network which is exactly what VEF expertly provides. This network allows for good dialogue that supports and facilitates the presence of Austrian Post in many partner countries of the Vienna Economic Forum by creating synergies.”

*„Die internationale Strategie der Österreichischen Post passt sehr gut zum Fokus des Vienna Economic Forums (VEF), denn erfolgreiche Investments tätigt die Post schon sehr lange in SEE und der Türkei. Unser Engagement in dieser Region erfordert auch ein funktionierendes Netzwerk, das mit dem VEF wirklich hervorragend gegeben ist. Durch dieses Netzwerk gelingt ein guter Dialog, der die Präsenz der Österreichischen Post in vielen Partnerländern des Vienna Economic Forums durch die entstehenden Synergien unterstützt und erleichtert.“*

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**Mr. Ahmet Burak DAĞLIOĞLU**

*Member of the Board  
of Vienna Economic Forum*

*President  
Presidency of the Republic of Turkey  
Investment Office*

“Geographic proximity to the zones of opportunity is more crucial than ever in a changing economic and political environment. The region from Adriatic to the Black Sea plays a crucial role in this respect, as it lies in the heart of trade and transportation in the world. Turkey, stretching out into the region, has always been natural bridge between the East and the West. The Turkish government attaches utmost importance to the region's development. Turkey has therefore been actively involved in regional integration and cooperation enhancement initiatives. In addition, the Turkish private sector has also been actively investing in the region, particularly in infrastructure development, which is essential to regional trade and investments. As such, companies from VEF member countries can access multiple markets and expand their business by virtue of vast opportunities offered by Turkey's strategic location. As an investment promotion agency, we also share our experience with our counterparts in the region. In recent years, we have hosted experience-sharing programs with VEF members including Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo and Ukraine. I hope the Vienna Economic Forum, being held in the epicenter of Europe, will take us a step further and enable us to contribute to the economic relations between Turkey and the countries in the region.”

„Geografische Nähe zu vielversprechenden Zonen ist in einem sich verändernden wirtschaftlichen und politischen Umfeld wichtiger denn je. Die Region von der Adria bis zum Schwarzen Meer spielt dabei eine entscheidende Rolle, denn sie liegt im Herzen des weltweiten Handels und Transports. Mit ihrer Lage in genau dieser Region war die Türkei schon immer eine natürliche Brücke zwischen dem Osten und dem Westen. Die türkische Regierung misst der Entwicklung der Region größte Bedeutung bei. Deshalb beteiligt sich Türkei aktiv an Initiativen zur Verbesserung der regionalen Integration und Zusammenarbeit. Darüber hinaus investiert auch der türkische Privatsektor aktiv in die Region, insbesondere in die Entwicklung der Infrastruktur, die für regionalen Handel und Investitionen unerlässlich ist. Damit haben Unternehmen aus den VEF-Mitgliedsländern dank der enormen Möglichkeiten, die die strategische Lage der Türkei bietet, Zugang zu mehreren Märkten und können Expansionschancen nutzen. Als Investitionsförderungsagentur teilen wir unsere Erfahrungen auch mit unseren Kollegen in der Region. In den letzten Jahren haben wir Erfahrungsaustauschprogramme mit VEF-Mitgliedern wie Albanien, Bosnien-Herzegovina, dem Kosovo und der Ukraine durchgeführt. Ich hoffe, dass das Wirtschaftsforum Wien im Epizentrum Europas uns noch einen Schritt weiter bringt und es uns ermöglicht, einen Beitrag zu den wirtschaftlichen Beziehungen zwischen der Türkei und den Ländern der Region zu leisten.“

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**800,000**  
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per year

**\$223.5** billion  
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into Turkey  
2003 - 2020

**\$761** billion  
of GDP at  
current prices  
2019

**83.15 million**  
of population  
with half under the age of 32.4



The Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye Investment Office, the official investment advisory body of Türkiye, is a knowledge center for foreign direct investments and a solution partner for the global business community at all stages of investments. It provides customized guidance and qualified consulting before, during, and after entry into Türkiye.



**Mag. Peter LENNKH**

*Member of the Board  
of Vienna Economic Forum*

*Member of the Management Board,  
Corporate Banking  
Raiffeisen Bank International AG*

Photo © RBI, David Sailer IMAGES

“RBI regards Austria, where it is a leading corporate and investment bank, as well as Central and Eastern Europe as its home market – as does the Vienna Economic Forum. We are present in 13 markets of the region with subsidiary banks. In addition, we serve our more than 16 million customers through numerous other financial service providers, for example in leasing, asset management or M&A. The VEF makes an important contribution to supporting both our own international activities and the business development of our customers and has done so for many years. Accordingly, the countries on which the VEF focuses also benefit from its activities in the long term and sustainably.”

*„Die RBI betrachtet Österreich, wo sie als eine führende Kommerz- und Investmentbank tätig ist, sowie Zentral- und Osteuropa als ihren Heimmarkt – genauso wie das Vienna Economic Forum. Wir sind in 13 Märkten der Region mit Tochterbanken präsent, darüber hinaus betreuen wir unsere mehr als 16 Millionen Kunden über zahlreiche andere Finanzdienstleistungsunternehmen beispielsweise in den Bereichen Leasing, Vermögensverwaltung oder M&A. Das VEF leistet einen wichtigen Beitrag zur Unterstützung sowohl unserer eigenen internationalen Aktivitäten als auch der Geschäftsentwicklung unserer Kunden, und das seit vielen Jahren. Dementsprechend profitierten auch die Länder, auf die das VEF seinen Fokus legt, langfristig und nachhaltig von dessen Tätigkeit.“*



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**Mr. Aleksandar VLAHOVIĆ**

*Member of the Board  
of Vienna Economic Forum*

*President  
Serbian Association of Economists  
Serbia*

“Serbian Economists Association (SES) strongly cooperates with the related organizations and institutions in the country, EU member states and Western Balkan countries (such as Serbian Chamber of Commerce, Croatian Economists Association, Bled School of Management, Montenegrin Chamber of Commerce, Vienna Economic Forum etc). Through organization of joint conferences and meetings and different projects support, SES aims to contribute to the improvement in the economic system, regulation and economic policy, promotion and enhancement of regional economic connectivity, regional investment incentives, and competitiveness increase.

In the last period, Serbia's accession to the EU is being put in the context of the Western Balkans cooperation. Regional cooperation is an essential element of stabilization and association – the process guiding Serbia and the Western Balkan countries towards EU membership and a key factor for establishing political stability, security and economic prosperity.”

*„Serbian Association of Economists (SAE) pflegt eine enge Zusammenarbeit mit den einschlägigen Organisationen und Institutionen des Landes, der EU-Mitgliedstaaten und der westlichen Balkanländern (wie der Wirtschaftskammer Serbiens, der kroatischen Vereinigung der Wirtschaftswissenschaftler, der Handelskammer von Bled, der Handelskammer Montenegros, Vienna Economic Forum etc.). Durch Organisation gemeinsamer Konferenzen und Treffen sowie durch Unterstützung verschiedener Projekte, trägt SAE zur Verbesserung des Wirtschaftssystems, der Regulierung und Wirtschaftspolitik, zur Förderung und Verbesserung der regionalen Wirtschaftskonnektivität, zu regionalen Investitionsanreizen und zur Steigerung der Wettbewerbsfähigkeit bei.*

*Zur Zeit wird der Beitritt Serbiens zur EU in den Kontext der westlichen Balkan-Kooperation gestellt. Die regionale Zusammenarbeit ist ein wesentliches Element der Stabilisierung und der Assoziierung - ein Prozess, der Serbien und die Länder des westlichen Balkans auf dem Weg zur EU-Mitgliedschaft führt und ein Schlüsselfaktor für politische Stabilität, Sicherheit und wirtschaftlichen Wohlstand ist.“*



**F**ounded in 1947, the Serbian Association of Economists is a professional organization which gathers professional economists and aspires to promote the economics profession for the benefit of the society at large.

Main activities of the Association are: organization of scientific conferences and seminars, ducation and training programs, publishing activity and collaboration with academic institutions, regulatory bodies and government agencies. These activities are oriented toward the development and popularization of economic science and profession, enhancement of the quality of corporate and public governance, improvement of the economic system, regulatory framework and economic policy, strengthening of the competitiveness of Serbian economy, and promotion of ethical behavior in economic decision-making.



**T**he Kopaonik Business Forum, organized by the Serbian Association of Economists, is held in the first week of March at the Congress Center of the “Grand” hotel at Kopaonik. Over the last ten years, the Forum has been organized under the auspices of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Serbia.

The Kopaonik Business Forum gathers renowned experts and eminent individuals from the local and regional economic and political circles. The goal of the Forum is to build a platform for exchange of thought and a constructive debate with strong argumentation, thereby perceiving key reform challenges from different perspectives: political and economic, micro and macroeconomic, from the perspective of real and financial sectors, domestic and foreign investors, private and public enterprises, theory and practice. Just as the World Economic Forum in Davos is a sort of a reality check on a global level, the Forum is a place where the results of our country's economic policy between two Forums are summarized. Over the last couple of years, the Forum has acquired a strong regional dimension.



**F**oundation of the Serbian Association of Economists for Supporting Students of Economics was established in 2016 with the aim of developing and promoting economics as a science and profession, affirming talented students of economics, improving the quality of education offered to students at faculties of economics and enhancing the quality of scientific

research in the field of economics. The Foundation achieves the abovementioned targets by granting scholarships to talented students of faculties of economics, presenting awards to successful students of economics, by organising fundraising charity activities, independently or in cooperation with other similar organisations, through cooperation with state and privately owned business entities, cooperation with universities, schools, associations and other similar organisations whose primary interest is to promote economics.



Lachezar Borisov, the Minister of Economy of the Republic of Bulgaria, presented the "Mr. Economy" award to Dr. Ognian Donev, Executive Director and Chairman of the Board of Directors of Sopharma of the anniversary edition of "Mr. and Mrs. Economy" 2020.



### Dr. Ognian DONEV

*Vice-President  
of Vienna Economic Forum*

*Chairman of the Board of Directors and  
Executive Director Sopharma PLC  
Bulgaria*

"The Vienna Economic Forum builds a strong network and allows for the emergence of new perspectives for the development of regional economic cooperation, between the member countries of the Forum, while also presenting an opportunity to exchange new ideas.

The 17th annual Vienna Economic Forum – Vienna Dialogue for the Future 2020, has created a platform for sharing solutions and experiences, raising various issues related to mobility in the digital space, the challenges and opportunities for the regional economy and the role our youth plays in our digital world.

Now, VEF is digitally moving towards the goal of supporting regional economic cooperation between entrepreneurs from the member countries of the Forum and will continue on this route as a place for defining, meeting, and implementing various regional projects.

I am grateful for the involvement of all members, partners and friends for the permanent and constant support, which gives us to achieve even bigger goals and to broaden our horizons.

Sharing is becoming more important and helps save resources by finding fast and flexible solutions for improving the general wellbeing throughout Europe. In that sense the Vienna Economic Forum is an invaluable network!"

*„Vienna Economic Forum baut ein starkes Netzwerk auf und ermöglicht die Eröffnung neuer Perspektiven für die Entwicklung der regionalen wirtschaftlichen Zusammenarbeit zwischen seinen Mitgliedsländern, während VEF auch die Gelegenheit anbietet, neue Ideen auszutauschen.*

*Das 17. Vienna Economic Forum - Vienna Future Dialogue 2020 schuf eine Diskussionsplattform für den Austausch von Lösungen und Erfahrungen, die wichtigen Fragen der digitalen Mobilität nachgehen konnte und sich mit den Herausforderungen und Chancen für die regionale Wirtschaft, aber auch mit der Rolle der Jugend in der digitalen Welt auseinandersetzte.*

*Jetzt bewegt sich VEF auch digital in Richtung seines Ziels - die regionale wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit zwischen Unternehmen aus den Mitgliedsländern des Vienna Economic Forum zu unterstützen, und wird diesem Weg weiter folgen als ein Ort für Definieren, Zusammentreffen und Umsetzung von verschiedenen regionalen Projekten.*

*Ich bin dankbar für das Engagement aller Mitglieder, Partner und Freunde des Vienna Economic Forum und für die ständige Unterstützung, die uns dazu veranlasst, noch größere Ziele zu erreichen und unser Horizont zu erweitern.*

*Dem englischen Begriff „Sharing“ kommt eine immer wichtigere Rolle zu, da das „Sharing“ einerseits zum Ersparen von Ressourcen und andererseits zu schnellen und flexiblen Lösungen für die Verbesserung des allgemeinen Wohlstandes in Europa verhilft. In diesem Sinne bietet Vienna Economic Forum ein unschätzbares Netzwerk an!“*

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**Dr. Georg BUCHER**

*Cooperation Partner  
of Vienna Economic Forum*

*Member of the  
Management Board of  
Steiermärkische Bank und  
Sparkassen AG*

Photo © www.bigshot.at

“Steiermärkische Bank und Sparkassen AG was established in 1825, almost 200 years ago, to make it possible for all groups in society to make their own individual provision. Today, we are not only the oldest but also the largest bank in Styria. Our foreign holdings are of course also heavily affected by the pandemic, but overall we are very satisfied with the development. With the acquisition of a majority stake in Ohridska Banka in North Macedonia, we are strengthening our involvement on the extended domestic market greatly and can thus be an even more stable economic partner in the region. We see a lot of potential in accompanying this country and this economic area into Europe. North Macedonia is very clearly part of Europe. And with our passion we are helping to sustain and improve the country's economic cycle. We are proud to be a member of the Vienna Economic Forum. The partnership will result in possibilities for us to develop a strong network.”

„1825, vor fast 200 Jahren, wurde die Steiermärkische Bank und Sparkassen AG gegründet, um allen Bevölkerungsschichten finanzielle Eigenvorsorge zu ermöglichen. Heute sind wir nicht nur das älteste, sondern auch das größte Kreditinstitut der Steiermark. Unsere Auslandsbeteiligungen sind natürlich auch stark von der aktuellen Pandemie betroffen, aber insgesamt sind wir mit der Entwicklung sehr zufrieden. Durch den Erwerb der Anteilsmehrheit an der Ohridska Bank in Nordmazedonien, stärken wir unser Engagement am erweiterten Heimmarkt enorm und können somit eine noch stabilere Wirtschaftspartnerin in der Region sein. Wir sehen viel Potential darin, dieses Land und diesen Wirtschaftsraum nach Europa zu begleiten. Nordmazedonien ist ganz klar ein Teil Europas. Und wir sorgen dafür, dass wir Blut – und auch unser Herzblut – in den wirtschaftlichen Kreislauf des Landes bringen. Wir sind stolz ein Teil des Vienna Economic Forum zu sein. Durch die Partnerschaft ergeben sich für uns Möglichkeiten, um ein starkes Netzwerk aufzubauen.“

# Regional partner. Global solutions.







**Dr. Achim KASPAR**

*Vice-President  
of Vienna Economic Forum*

*Member of the Executive Board,  
COO, Verbund AG*

#### **“VERBUND as a shaper of the future of energy**

Ever since its founding as Österreichische Elektrizitätswirtschafts-AG in 1947, VERBUND has been co-shaping the future of energy: Even back then we set our sights on hydropower and, hence, renewable energy sources. Today, after more than seventy years, VERBUND is Austria's largest and climate-friendliest electricity producer. About 95% of our electricity are generated from renewables, primarily hydropower.

Our hydropower plants are highly efficient (pumped) storage power plants located in the Austrian Alps, and run-of-river plants situated on all major rivers in Austria and Bavaria. VERBUND operates also run-of-river power plants in Albania and wind-power plants in Rumania. A careful handling of the given resources is of utmost importance.

VERBUND is active in all steps of the value creation ladder: From electricity generation to electricity transmission to trading and sales. We are permanently working at innovative and sustainable solutions for customers in the private and business sectors in order to be able to react to changes.”

#### **„VERBUND als Gestalter der Energiezukunft**

*Seit 1947 – als Österreichische Elektrizitätswirtschafts-AG gegründet – gestaltet VERBUND die Energiezukunft mit: Bereits damals haben wir auf Wasserkraft und somit erneuerbare Energien gesetzt. Heute, mehr als 70 Jahre später ist VERBUND der größte und klimafreundlichste Stromerzeuger Österreichs. Rund 95% unserer Stromerzeugung kommen aus erneuerbaren Quellen, vor allem Wasserkraft.*

*Unsere Wasserkraftwerke sind hocheffiziente (Pump-)Speicherkraftwerke in den österreichischen Alpen und Laufkraftwerke an allen größeren Flüssen in Österreich und Bayern. VERBUND betreibt aber auch Wasserkraftwerke in Albanien bzw. Windkraftwerke in Rumänien. Dabei ist uns ein schonender Umgang mit den gegebenen Ressourcen sehr wichtig.*

*VERBUND ist auf allen Wertschöpfungsstufen tätig: Von der Stromerzeugung über den Transport von Strom bis zu Handel und Vertrieb. Wir arbeiten laufend an innovativen und nachhaltigen Lösungen für Privat- und Businesskunden um auf Veränderungen reagieren zu können.“*

## Power to the future: VERBUND offers renewable energy and innovative solutions.



VERBUND's run-of-river power plant in Vienna (Freudenau)



**VERBUND is Austria's leading electricity company and one of the largest producers of hydropower in Europe.**

Almost 100% of our electricity are generated from climate-friendly, renewable sources. VERBUND is active in electricity generation, transmission, sales and international trading.

With innovative products and energy-related services for household, commercial and industrial customers, we are continuing on our way into the clean energy future.

**[www.verbund.com](http://www.verbund.com)**

**Verbund**



**Dr. Kurt Gollowitz**

*Member of the Board  
of Vienna Economic Forum*

*CEO  
Wien Holding GmbH*

Photo © Wien Holding, Barbara Niderzky

“Wien Holding is a powerful engine for the economy. With its companies and projects, it secures the business location and numerous jobs in Vienna. As partner of Vienna Economic Forum, we benefit from their extensive expertise and supraregional network, which extends from the Adriatic to the Black Sea. This facilitates making new contacts and supports the optimal use of synergy effects.”

„Die Wien Holding ist ein starker Motor für die Wirtschaft und sichert mit ihren Unternehmen und Projekten nicht nur den Wirtschaftsstandort, sondern auch zahlreiche Arbeitsplätze in Wien. Als Partner des Vienna Economic Forum profitieren wir von der umfassenden Expertise und dem überregionalen Netzwerk des VEF, das sich von der Adria bis zum Schwarzen Meer erstreckt. Dadurch fällt es leicht, neue Kontakte zu knüpfen und Synergieeffekte optimal auszu-schöpfen.“

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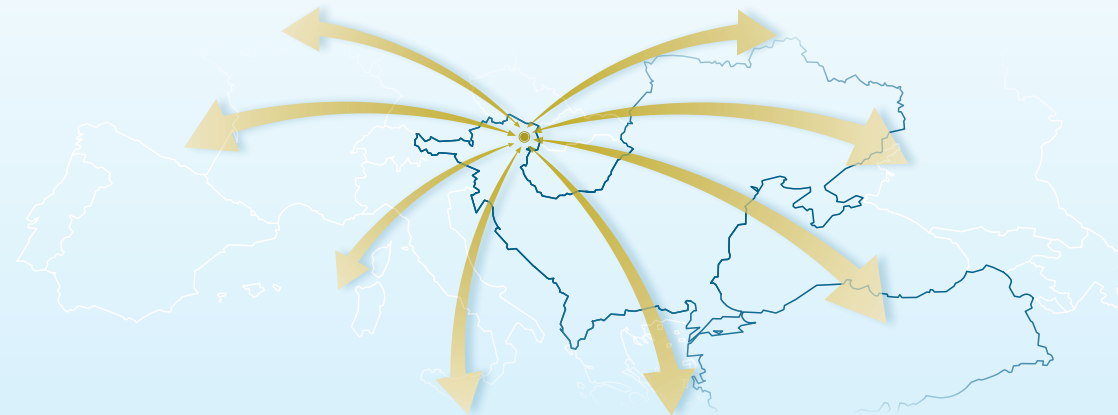
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**VIENNA ECONOMIC FORUM**

**ECONOMY MEETS POLITICS  
IN A DIGITAL WORLD  
2020**





## ANNUAL BOARD MEETING OF VIENNA ECONOMIC FORUM

### On 10 February 2020

The Annual Board Meeting of Vienna Economic Forum took place on 10 February 2020 at the premises of Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer, in Seilergasse 16, 1010 Vienna.

The host Dr. Stephan Pachinger, Member of the board of Vienna Economic Forum, welcomed the attendees and in his introductory speech spoke about the importance of international cooperation, as well as the significant role of Vienna Economic Forum.

The Secretary General Ambassador Dr. Elena Kirtcheva reported on VEF activities in a very successful year for Vienna Economic Forum 2019 and informed the Board about the planned events in 2020.

Chaired by VEF President DI Dr. Günther Rabensteiner, the VEF Board unanimously elected new VEF members – as cooperation partners, as members – legal entities and members – natural persons.

Resolutions were passed to be proposed to the General assembly, that was to reach decisions on: Changes in the Board; Election, re-election and co-opting of Board members; Updating of various VEF bodies: Honorary Committee, Ambassadors Committee, Auditors and Arbitrators. During a friendly informal reception, the Members of the board took the opportunity to discuss various ideas for further successful development of Vienna Economic Forum.



*Annual Board Meeting 2020 of Vienna Economic Forum in the premises of Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer*

*Dr. Achim Kaspar, Member of the Executive Board of VERBUND AG, Dr. Wolfgang Pospischil, CEO, AFRY Management Consulting Austria GmbH, Dr. Gabriel Lansky, partner, LANSKY, GANGER + partner, DI Wolfgang Viehauser, M.Sc, Spokesman of the Board, Hypo Noe Landesbank für NÖ und Wien AG, Mag. Heinz Messinger, Managing Director, AME International GmbH, Secretary General Ambassador Dr. Elena Kirtcheva, President DI Dr. Günther Rabensteiner, Dr. Stephan Pachinger, Partner, Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer, Dr. Willibald Plessner, Partner, Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer, Mag. Stefan SZYSZKOWITZ, Spokesman of the Executive Board, EVN AG, Mr. Wilbert Verheijen, Managing Director Canon Central & Eastern Europe GmbH, Dr. h.c. Ivo Ivanovski, M.Sc, M&A, Int. Affairs and Regulation, Group Director, A1 Telekom Austria Group*

## GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF VIENNA ECONOMIC FORUM

**On 9 March 2020**

The Annual General Assembly of Vienna Economic Forum took place on 9 March 2020 at the Headquarters of the Österreichische Post AG, Rochusplatz 1, 1030 Vienna.

The President DI Dr. Günther Rabensteiner opened the meeting, welcomed the members and gave the floor to the host, DI Peter Umundum, who in turn welcomed the guests to the Trumpet Hall of the Headquarters of the Österreichische Post AG.

The Secretary General Ambassador Dr. Elena Kirtcheva reported on the VEF very successful endeavours in the previous year 2019 and informed about the planned activities of Vienna Economic Forum for the year 2020, as well as about the relocation of the VEF office from Stubenring 16 to the Ambassadors district on Prinz-Eugen-Straße 58.

The VEF President DI Dr. Günther Rabensteiner informed about the admission of new VEF members, new cooperation partners, legal entities and natural person discussed during the Board meeting on 10 February 2020. The new VEF members were unanimously welcomed by the General Assembly.

Furthermore, according to the VEF Statute, the General Assembly reached a decision to elect the new VEF President, DI Peter Umundum, as well as to re-elect the other Members of the VEF Board for the next term of office at the duration of 3 years, and the Ambassador Dr. Elena Kirtcheva was re-elected as a Member of the board and VEF Secretary General for another term of office at the duration of 5 years.

The new VEF President DI Peter Umundum praised the network that has been built up in the past years. The new Vice President Dr. Achim Kaspar thanked DI Dr. Günther Rabensteiner for the good cooperation over the past 25 years in Verbund and stressed the foresight and the good steps always taken towards evolution and globalization by DI Dr. Rabensteiner.

DI Umundum thanked the Secretary General Ambassador Dr. Elena Kirtcheva and her team, without whom the Forum would not exist in this way.

The Secretary General Ambassador Dr. Elena Kirtcheva expressed her gratitude to all members and partners of Vienna Economic Forum for the trust and constant support. She accentuated that this is what makes it possible to continue writing the success story of Vienna Economic Forum.

The host and VEF President DI Peter Umundum invited to a small reception in honour of Honorary President DI Dr. Günther Rabensteiner, where the members had the opportunity to discuss various possibilities and ideas for further cooperation in the Vienna Economic Forum region in an informal and friendly atmosphere.



*Family photo VEF General Assembly 2020*





## NEW PERSPECTIVES FOR THE REGIONAL ECONOMY



*The President Trio:  
DI Peter Umundum  
Honorary President DI Dr. Günther Rabensteiner  
Honorary President, former Vice-Chancellor of Austria, Dr. Erhard Busek*



*Albania ...*



*Turkey ...*



*From the very beginning ...*

## TALKS ABOUT THE FUTURE

Photos © Society, Pöbisch



*... until today!*



## INTERESTING DISCUSSIONS ...

*Dr. Achim Kaspar**DI Peter Umundum**Mag. Heinz Messinger**H.E. Dr. Ivan Sirakov  
Amb. Dr. Elena Kirtcheva**KR Ing. Otto Musilek  
Mr. Ahmet Mesut Ersoy  
DI Dr. Gunther Rabensteiner**Mag. Stefan Krenn, Paul Pasquali,  
Mag. Gregor Höpler**Mr. Wilbert Verheijen, Amb. Dr. Elena Kirtcheva,  
H.E. Victor Osipov**Dr. Achim Kaspar, Dr. Willibald Plessner*



VEF President DI Dr. Günther Rabensteiner hands over the "sceptre" to the new VEF President DI Peter Umundum, Member of the Executive Board of Österreichische Post AG

The Secretary General Amb. Dr. Elena Kirtcheva is dedicated to continuing the VEF-Success-Story

## Vienna Economic Talks

Vienna Economic Talks behandelt spezifische Themen, Regionen und Wirtschaftssektoren, die nicht nur für die Mitgliedsländer des Vienna Economic Forum von großem Interesse sind, sondern auch für andere Interessierte in der Region.

Vienna Economic Talks deals with specific topics, regions and economic sectors, which are of great interest not only for the member countries of the Vienna Economic Forum, but also for other interested parties in the region.

FOR A BETTER UNDERSTANDING



Yours,  
Vienna Economic Forum Team

## TWO DECADES TRADITIONAL GARDEN PARTIES OF VIENNA ECONOMIC FORUM

**“Culinary and Musical Journey through the Member Countries of Vienna Economic Forum.”**



## THE 19<sup>TH</sup> TRADITIONAL GARDEN PARTY OF VIENNA ECONOMIC FORUM

in the particular year 2020  
was organized as a  
**Summer Cocktail in a Small Setting**

**On 19 June 2020  
in the Trumpet Hall of the Austrian Post**

On 19 June 2020, the VEF President DI Peter Umundum, Board Member “Paket & Logistik” of the Österreichische Post AG and the VEF Secretary General Ambassador Dr. Elena Kirtcheva invited to a “Summer Cocktail in a Small Setting” instead of the 19th Traditional Garden Party “Culinary and Musical Journey through the Partner Countries of Vienna Economic Forum”.

In her opening words, the Secretary General Ambassador Dr. Elena Kirtcheva talked about the beginnings and the 18-year history of the Traditional VEF Garden Party, a beloved summer event of all Member countries of Vienna Economic Forum and invited everyone to the next anniversary Garden Party traditionally planned for June 2021.

VEF President DI Peter Umundum emphasized that: “Especially in such challenging times, we must not neglect the mutual exchange. These times warrant such a lively discussion and a closer cooperation, exactly as Vienna Economic Forum has been implementing since its foundation”. The reception was not only used for face-to-face discussions, but the participants were also able to discuss the further path and the direction of the Forum.

The invited guests, the Ambassadors of the VEF member countries, Members of the Ambassadors Committee of Vienna Economic Forum, as well as Members of the VEF Board gladly accepted the invitation. They discussed the overall economic situation in the region and spoke about the further active development of regional cooperation in the unique Trumpet hall at the Headquarters of Österreichische Post.

All participants enjoyed the “little musical journey surprise” by the Wladigeroff Brothers. H.E. Mr. Victor Osipov, Ambassador of Moldova, took the opportunity to bid farewell to the Ambassadors and to the VEF representatives at the end of his mandate in Austria and expressed his gratitude for the excellent cooperation with Vienna Economic Forum.

The host and VEF President DI Peter Umundum invited everyone to the “culinary journey”, which ended the event in a friendly and pleasant atmosphere.

As a nice souvenir, all guests received a valid stamp from Österreichische Post AG with their own photo on it, produced on site. In addition to the information material from Österreichische Post AG, the new VEF Brochure Review 2019/Preview 2020 was handed out to the guests.



## PHOTO GALLERY



Family photo (f.l.t.r.): First row: Dr. h.c. Ivo Ivanovski, M.Sc, M&A, Int. Affairs and Regulation, Group Director, A1 Telekom Austria Group; Dr. Wolfgang Pospischil, CEO, Afry Management Consulting Austria GmbH; Dr. Achim Kaspar, COO, Verbund AG, VEF-Vice-President; H. E. Mag. Ksenija Škrilec, Ambassador of Slovenia; DI Peter Umundum, VEF- President; Amb. Dr. Elena Kirtcheva, VEF – Secretary General; Mag. Harald Neumann, Advisor Novomatic AG, VEF-Vice-President; Mag. Heinz Messinger, Managing Director AME International GmbH, VEF-Financial Officer and Vice-President; Second row: H. E. Bogdan Mazuru, Ambassador of Romania; H.E. Victor Osipov, Ambassador of Moldova; H.E. Lulzim Pllana, Ambassador of Kosovo; H.E. Dr. Ivan Sirakov, Ambassador of Bulgaria; Mr. Vadym Kovalivskyi, Minister-Counsellor, Embassy of Ukraine; Dr. Stephan Pachinger, Partner, Freshfields, Bruckhaus Deringer, VEF-Board Member

Photos © Österreichische Post AG, Christian Huar, Society, Pöbschnig



Family photo (f.l.t.r.): H. E. Bogdan Mazuru, Ambassador of Romania; H.E. Lulzim Pllana, Ambassador of Kosovo; H.E. Mag. Ksenija Škrilec, Ambassador of Slovenia; DI Peter Umundum, VEF-President; Amb. Dr. Elena Kirtcheva, H.E. Victor Osipov, Ambassador of Moldova; H.E. Dr. Ivan Sirakov, Ambassador of Bulgaria



VEF President DI Peter Umundum and  
Honorary President DI Dr. Günther Rabensteiner



VEF President DI Peter Umundum and  
VEF-Secretary General Amb. Dr. Elena Kirtcheva



VEF President DI Peter Umundum



VEF-Secretary General Amb. Dr. Elena Kirtcheva



## IMPRESSIONS



*Farewell words from H.E. Victor Osipov, Ambassador of Moldova*





## IMPRESSIONS



## ENJOYING THE SUMMER COCKTAIL IN A SMALL SETTING





## FRIENDLY ATMOSPHERE



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Dear Members, Partners and Friends of Vienna Economic Forum!

The 17th Vienna Economic Forum - Vienna Future Dialogue 2020  
"Economy meets Politics in a Digital World" will take place in a hybrid form

on Monday, 16. November 2020, 11:00 - 13:00 (CET)

The discussion with H.E. Ms. Mariya Gabriel,  
European Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth,  
will be focused on the topics of  
"New type of mobility in a digital world" as well as "Regional economy at the crossroads - growth or decline?".

This Special Edition of the 17th Vienna Economic Forum with the participation of high-ranking representatives of the regional, European and worldwide economy and politics aims to give important insights into the new prospects for the further development of the regional economic cooperation with and between the Member Countries of Vienna Economic Forum.

We are pleased to invite you to **digitally attend the 17th Vienna Economic Forum**  
and kindly ask you to announce your interest by filling in the

[Registration Form](#)

by **11 November 2020** at the latest.

Upon your registration you will receive an email by **13 November 2020** which contains  
the **access link** to the Microsoft Teams platform where the 17<sup>th</sup> Vienna Economic Forum will be live broadcasted.

With the kind support of:



## 17<sup>TH</sup> VIENNA ECONOMIC FORUM – VIENNA FUTURE DIALOGUE 2020

### SPECIAL ONLINE EDITION

### ECONOMY MEETS POLITICS IN A DIGITAL WORLD

Headquarters of Austrian Post  
Trumpet Hall, 7<sup>th</sup> floor  
Rochusplatz 1, 1030 Vienna

Powered by Österreichische Post AG





Regardless of the challenges posed by the year 2020, we continue writing the story of the growing Vienna Economic Forum region – an European region!

The unique Special Edition of the 17th Vienna Economic Forum - Vienna Future Dialogue 2020 took place in a hybrid form on 16. November 2020 under the challenging circumstances of 2020.

The President of Vienna Economic Forum, DI Peter Umundum, Board Member “Paket & Logistics” of Österreichische Post AG and the Secretary General Ambassador Dr. Elena Kirtcheva invited to an exciting interactive online discussion under the motto “90 minutes with EU Commissioner Mariya Gabriel”. The discussion aimed towards tackling the highly prevailing topics of the “new types of mobility in a digital world” and the “challenges and opportunities for the regional economy” from the perspective of high-ranking political and economic representatives from the VEF member countries.

Vienna Economic Forum is delighted to inform that more than 1200 viewers from 32 countries worldwide were able to follow the live online broadcast of the main interactive discussion involving EU Commissioner Mariya Gabriel, with portfolio for Research, Innovation, Education, Culture and Youth, with H.E. Avdullah Hoti, Prime Minister of Kosovo, H.E. Denys Schmyhal, Prime Minister of Ukraine, H.E. Fatmir Bytyqi, Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of North Macedonia, and Dr. Lilyana Pavlova, Vice-President of the European Investment Bank (EIB).

The following actively participated in the lively extensive debate:

- onsite in the Trumpet Hall of the Österreichische Post AG in Vienna: DI Peter Umundum, President of Vienna Economic Forum, Secretary General of Vienna Economic Forum Ambassador Dr. Elena Kirtcheva, Vice President of Vienna Economic Forum Dr. Achim Kaspar, Member of the Board of VERBUND AG, Member of the Board of Vienna Economic Forum Mag. Peter Lennkh, Board Member “Corporate Banking” of Raiffeisen Bank International (RBI), Member of the Board of Vienna Economic Forum Mr. Wilbert Verheijen, Managing Director, CANON CEE GmbH and the Member of the Board of Vienna Economic Forum and Financial Referent Mag. Heinz Messinger, CEO AME International GmbH.
- online from different countries worldwide: Commissioner Mariya Gabriel from Brussels, Prime Minister of Kosovo H. E. Avdullah Hoti from Pristina, Prime Minister of Ukraine H.E. Denys Schmyhal from Kiev, Vice-Prime Minister of the Republic of North Macedonia, H.E. Fatmir Bytyqi from Skopje, Vice-President of the European Investment Bank (EIB) Dr. Lilyana Pavlova from Luxemburg, VEF Board member and President of Jackovich International LLC, USA, Ambassador Victor Jackovich from Washington, the Members of the Board of Vienna Economic Forum, Dr. Emmanuel Forest, CEO, BOUYGUES Europe SA from Paris and Mr. Furkan Karayaka, on behalf of Mr. Ahmet Daglioglu, President, Presidency of the Investment Office of the Republic of Turkey from Istanbul.

At the end of the discussion the participants stressed the import role of the youth in today's digital time as well as in the future. Furthermore, the responsibility of the political leaders from the Member countries of Vienna Economic Forum to be aware of both the challenges, but also the new opportunities, by striving now more than ever to balance public and private interests as the most important prerequisite for good economic development of all countries of Southeast Europe was accentuated.

The traditional annual award ceremony “Partner of the Year 2020” followed at the end of the Special online edition of this year's 17th Vienna Economic Forum - Vienna Future Dialogue 2020 live. Ms. Mariya Gabriel, EU Commissioner for Research, Innovation, Education, Culture and Youth, was able to physically hold the “Partner of the year 2020” award thousands of kilometres away. In an emotional speech H.E. Commissioner Gabriel expressed her gratitude for the high VEF award.

The subsequent echo has been extremely positive and has been published on the Vienna Economic Forum website.

Vienna Economic Forum would like to express its gratitude to all members, partners and friends for the permanent and constant support which drives us to achieve bigger goals and to broaden new horizons in the new digital reality!

Special thanks goes to: A1 Telekom Austria Group, AME International GmbH, Bouygues Europe SA, CANON CEE GmbH, DenizBank AG, Ecolog International FZE, EVN AG, Flughafen Wien, Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer, HYPO NOE Landesbank, Jackovich International LLC, LANSKY, GANZGER + Partner, Novomatic AG, Österreichische Post AG, Penkov, Markov & Partner, International Law Firm, Raiffeisen Bank International, Serbian Association of Economists, Sopharma PLC, The Presidency of the Republic of Turkey Investment Office, Verbund AG, Wiener Börse AG, Wien Holding GmbH. A special thanks goes to Mag. Gertrud Tauchhammer, publisher of the Society Magazine for her media support.

Vienna Economic Forum would like to thank Österreichische Post AG in particular for the excellent cooperation, the hospitality and for the strong technical support.

## PROGRAMME

MONDAY, 16 NOVEMBER 2020, 11:00–13:00 (CET)

**ONSITE Participants Location**  
 Headquarters of the Austrian Post,  
 Trumpet Hall, 7<sup>th</sup> floor  
 Rochusplatz 1, 1030 Vienna

**ONLINE Participants**  
 via Microsoft Teams

**LIVE STREAMING LINK**  
 available on the Vienna Economic Forum Homepage:  
[www.vienna-economic-forum.com](http://www.vienna-economic-forum.com)  
 and on the TV information service of the European Union:  
 Europe by Satellite (EbS)

#### 11:00–11:30 COMMENCEMENT OF THE SPECIAL EDITION OF THE 17<sup>TH</sup> VIENNA ECONOMIC FORUM WITH A SHORT VEF-VIDEO

**Moderation**  
 Ms. Daniela PHILIPP

**Opening Words**  
 Amb. Dr. Elena KIRTICHEVA, Founder and Member of the Board of  
 Vienna Economic Forum  
 Secretary General of Vienna Economic Forum

**Welcome Words**  
 DI Peter UMUNDUM, Member of the Executive Board of the Österreichische Post AG  
 President of Vienna Economic Forum

**Greeting Words**  
 Mr. Georg KNILL, President, Association of the Austrian Industry (IV),  
 Member of Vienna Economic Forum

#### INPUT STATEMENT REGIONAL ECONOMY AT THE CROSSROADS? RECIPES FOR A SUSTAINABLE REBOUND AND THE NEXT LEG OF CONVERGENCE.

Mr. Gunter DEUBER, Senior Director Head of Economics, Fixed Income & FX  
 Research Raiffeisen Bank International AG (RBI) Raiffeisen Research

#### 11:30–12:20 MAIN DISCUSSION NEW TYPE OF MOBILITY IN A DIGITAL WORLD. REGIONAL ECONOMY AT THE CROSSROADS – GROWTH OR DECLINE?

H.E. Ms. Mariya GABRIEL  
 European Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture,  
 Education and Youth

#### Speakers of Honour

#### HIGH REPRESENTATIVES of the Governments of the Member Countries of Vienna Economic Forum

H.E. Mr. Avdullah HOTI, Prime Minister of Kosovo,  
 Patron of Vienna Economic Forum  
 H.E. Mr. Denys SCHMYHAL, Prime Minister of Ukraine,  
 Patron of Vienna Economic Forum  
 H.E. Mr. Fatmir BYTYQI, Deputy Prime Minister in charge economic affairs,  
 coordination of the economic sector and investments of the Republic of  
 North Macedonia, on behalf of the Prime Minister of North Macedonia, Patron of  
 Vienna Economic Forum

12:20–12:50 **CLOSING DISCUSSION and Q & A SESSION**  
 Dr. Achim KASPAR, Member of the Executive Board, COO, Verbund AG,  
 Founding Member, Vice-President of Vienna Economic Forum  
 Dr. Liljana PAVLOVA, Vice-President of the European Investment Bank  
 (EIB), Luxembourg  
 Mr. Wilbert VERHEIJEN, Managing Director, Canon CEE GmbH,  
 Member of the Board of Vienna Economic Forum  
 Mag. Peter LENNKH, Member of the Management Board, Corporate Banking,  
 Raiffeisen Bank International (RBI), Founding Member, Member of the Board  
 of Vienna Economic Forum  
 Mag. Heinz MESSINGER, Managing Director, AME International GmbH,  
 Founding Member, Member of the Board, Financial Referent of  
 Vienna Economic Forum  
 Mag. Stefan SZYSZKOWITZ, Spokesman of the Executive Board, EVN AG,  
 Founding Member, Member of the Board of Vienna Economic Forum  
 Dr. Stephan PACHINGER, Partner, Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer,  
 Member of the Board of Vienna Economic Forum  
 Mr. Emmanuel FOREST, CEO, BOUYGUES Europe SA, Belgium, Member of the  
 Board of Vienna Economic Forum  
 Mr. Ahmet Burak DAĞLIOĞLU, President, Investment Office of the Presidency of  
 the Republic of Turkey, Member of the Board of Vienna Economic Forum  
 Amb. Victor JACKOVICH, President, Jackovich International, USA,  
 Member of the Board of Vienna Economic Forum

12:50 **ANNUAL AWARD CEREMONY of Vienna Economic Forum**  
 Partner of the Year 2020  
 H.E. Ms. Mariya GABRIEL  
 European Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture,  
 Education and Youth

13:00 **END OF 17<sup>TH</sup> VIENNA ECONOMIC FORUM –  
 VIENNA FUTURE DIALOGUE 2020**  
**ECONOMY MEETS POLITICS IN A DIGITAL WORLD**

13:05 **END OF THE EXTERNAL STREAM**

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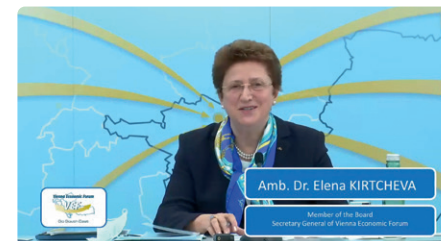
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## PARTICIPANTS IN THE INTERACTIVE DISCUSSION FROM VIENNA AND FROM ABROAD





## Members of the Board of Vienna Economic Forum



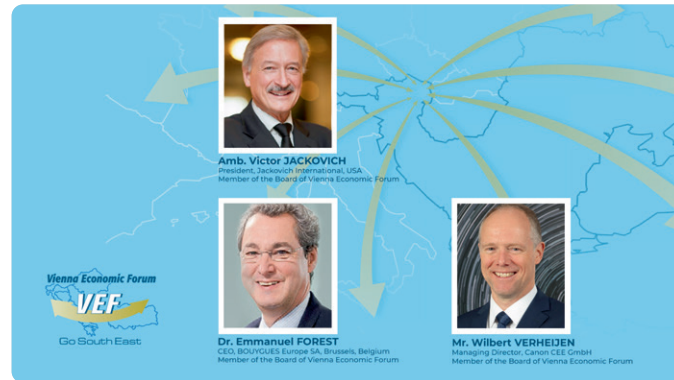
## Patrons of Vienna Economic Forum



## Members of the Board of Vienna Economic Forum



## Members of the Board



## of Vienna Economic Forum





## PHOTO GALLERY



## ON-SITE PARTICIPANTS

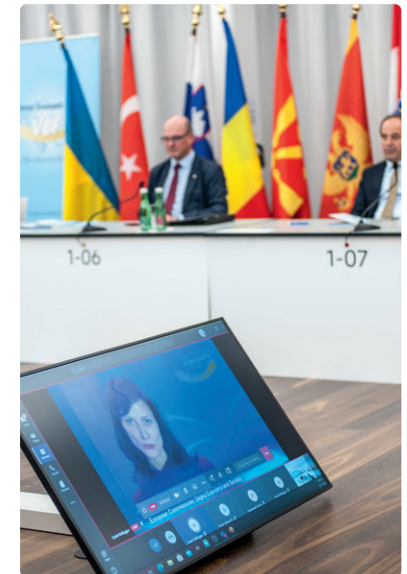




## ECONOMY MEETS POLITICS



## IN A DIGITAL WORLD



## ON-SITE AND ON-LINE

VIENNA ECONOMIC FORUM AWARD  
PARTNER OF THE YEAR 2020

During the traditional annual award ceremony which followed at the end of the **Special online edition of the 17<sup>th</sup> Vienna Economic Forum – Vienna Future Dialogue 2020** and regardless of the specific circumstances and challenges of the year 2020, the Vienna Economic Forum “Partner of the Year 2020”, Ms. Mariya Gabriel, EU Commissioner for Research, Innovation, Education, Culture and Youth, was able to physically hold her award thousands of kilometres away.

In an heartfelt speech EU Commissioner Gabriel expressed her gratitude for the high VEF award and thanked Vienna Economic Forum for this honour in the online live broadcast.





## SUCCESSFUL FIRST HYBRID EDITION OF VIENNA ECONOMIC FORUM



Vienna, 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2020

Dear Members and Partners,  
Dear Friends interested in the VEF activities,

It is our great pleasure on behalf of the Board of Vienna Economic Forum to be able to inform you that the first **Special Hybrid Edition of the 17<sup>th</sup> Vienna Economic Forum - Vienna Future Dialogue 2020**, under the motto **"Economy meets politics in a digital world"** achieved a considerable success. This can be discerned based on the high number of online participants during the live broadcast of the main session **"90 minutes with EU Commissioner Mariya Gabriel"** – with approximately 1200 participants from 32 countries worldwide. Furthermore, even after the Conference, the video recordings of the discussions on the topics: **"New type of mobility in a digital world"** and **"Challenges and opportunities for the regional economy"**, along with the highly interesting input presentation, have been repeatedly accessed by viewers on both the internet Website of Vienna Economic Forum (<https://www.vienna-economic-forum.com/index.php/en/17-vef-en>), as well as on the online Audiovisual Service Platform of the EU TV Channel EbS+ (Europe by Satellite +): <https://audiovisual.ec.europa.eu/en/video/I-198905>.

We are proud of the positive feedback that we are still receiving based on the numerous congratulatory letters from participants and viewers worldwide. This gives us the confidence that Vienna Economic Forum is well equipped for the challenges of "today and tomorrow", despite the current global circumstances.

Hence, VEF is moving forward digitally towards the goal of promoting regional economic cooperation between entrepreneurs from the Member countries of Vienna Economic Forum, and will continue on this path as a place of definition, encounter and realization of public and private interests in relation to various regional projects.

Expressing our gratitude for the support and the high level of interest, we would like to provide hereby the link to the **Press release with some ONSITE photos from the 17th VEF**: <https://www.vienna-economic-forum.com/index.php/en/events-en/399-2020>.

You can follow the activities of Vienna Economic Forum more closely and receive updates about them by regularly visiting the VEF homepage: [www.vienna-economic-forum.com](http://www.vienna-economic-forum.com).

Best Regards,

DI Peter Umundum  
President

Ambassador Dr. Elena Kirtcheva  
Secretary General

With the kind support of:







**Vienna Economic Forum** **17<sup>th</sup> VIENNA ECONOMIC FORUM**  
**VIENNA FUTURE DIALOGUE 2020**  
**SPECIAL ONLINE EDITION**  
**Economy meets Politics in a Digital World**  
 Monday, 16 November 2020, Vienna, 11:00 - 13:00 (CET)

Go South East

Thank you for your participation at the 17th Vienna Economic Forum!

The recorded video is available at [www.vienna-economic-forum.com](http://www.vienna-economic-forum.com)

**A1** Telekom Austria Group **AFRY** **AME** **BOEHA** **Canon** **DenizBank AG** **EVN** **Freshfields** **HYPO NOE** **INVESTMENT OFFICE**  
**JKU** **UNIVERSITÄT SAKHAROV** **UNIVERSITÄT SAKHAROV** **NOVOMATIC** **ORBI** **CE** **CE** **CE** **sopharma** **Steiermärkische SPARKASSE** **Verbund** **VIG** **vienna insurance group** **wiener boerse** **wienholding**

## VIENNA ECONOMIC FORUM DAILY BUSINESS 2020



### Official visit of the Ambassador of the Kyrgyz Republic, H.E. Bakyt Dzhusupov at the Vienna Economic Forum

H.E. Mr. Bakyt Dzhusupov, Ambassador to Austria and Permanent Representative of the Kyrgyz Republic in Vienna, accompanied by Mr. Kanat Tursunkulov, Minister Counselor in the Embassy, paid an official visit to the Vienna Economic Forum on 6. March 2020.

During this first meeting with the Secretary General of Vienna Economic Forum, Ambassador Dr. Elena Kirtcheva, various options for future cooperation between the countries of Central Asia and the Vienna Economic Forum member countries in the economic sector were discussed.



### Courtesy visit to the Vienna Economic Forum of the new Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey S.E. Mr. Ozan Ceyhun

The new ambassador of the Republic of Turkey, S.E. Mr. Ozan Ceyhun completed a courtesy visit to the Vienna Economic Forum on March 6, 2020.

In an intensive talk with the Secretary General, Ambassador a.D. Dr. Elena Kirtcheva discussed ways to work more closely with the embassy.

Vienna Economic Forum is pleased to see S.E. Mr. Ozan Ceyhun, as a new member of the Ambassador Committee of the Vienna Economic Forum.

## “Talks about the future” at the Vienna Economic Forum new premises in Prinz-Eugen-Strasse 58/4-5, 1040 Vienna



### Working meeting with former Vice-Chancellor Dr. Erhard Busek long-time President and Co-Founder of Vienna Economic Forum

The long-time President and Co-Founder of Vienna Economic Forum, Vice-Chancellor Dr. Erhard Busek and Secretary General, Ambassador Dr. Elena Kirtcheva met on 29. June 2020 at the new premises of Vienna Economic Forum in order to discuss the development of the mutual “VEF Vision” in the coming years.

The topic of the friendly, as always, very open discussion was also the upcoming 17<sup>th</sup> Vienna Economic Forum which is to take place on 16. November 2020 in Vienna.

The Secretary General thanked the Honorary President Dr. Busek for his constant support and his great contribution to the VEF success story.



### The series of intensive “Talks about the future” with Members of the Board of Vienna Economic Forum resumed after the quarantine period.

In a “tour d’horizon” on 30. June 2020, the Managing Director of CANON CEE (Central Eastern Europe) and Board member of Vienna Economic Forum, Mr. Wilbert Verheijen and the Secretary General Ambassador Dr. Elena Kirtcheva discussed further VEF activities during the “new mobility” period and agreed upon an even more active collaboration in the coming years.



### Working Talks between VEF President DI Peter Umundum and Secretary General Ambassador Dr. Elena Kirtcheva

During intensive working talks at the new VEF premises on 2. July 2020, VEF President DI Peter Umundum and Secretary General, Ambassador Dr. Elena Kirtcheva discussed and analyzed various possible scenarios for the organization of the 17th Vienna Economic Forum - Vienna Future Dialogue 2020, to take place on 16. November 2020 in Vienna under the motto "Economy meets Politics in a Digital World".

Under the current specific circumstances, the traditional series of "Talks about the future" with the VEF board members continued in a responsible manner.



### "Talks about the future" with Dr. Ludwig Niessen, Member of the Board of Vienna Economic Forum

Dr. Ludwig Niessen, member of The Board of Vienna Economic Forum and Secretary General, Ambassador Dr. Elena Kirtcheva discussed the topic of "Economy meets politics in a digital world" on 6. July 2020 at the premises of Vienna Economic Forum.

During the very productive talks, the organization of the forthcoming 17th Vienna Economic Forum – Vienna Future Dialogue 2020 on 16. November 2020 was discussed in detail and views for an organisation in a hybrid form of a digital rather than physical participation were shared.

The Secretary General thanked VEF Board member and representative of the Wiener Börse Dr. Ludwig Niessen for his constant and very active support.

### A series of Vienna Economic Forum "Talks about the Future" was completed

During June and July 2020, the Members of the Board of Vienna Economic Forum exchanged their views on the upcoming VEF activities under the current specific circumstances in a series of "Talks about the future".

On 15 July 2020, VEF-President DI Peter Umundum, Secretary General Ambassador Dr. Elena Kirtcheva, VEF-Vice President Dr. Achim Kaspar, VEF-Financial Referent Mag. Heinz Messinger, as well as the Members of the VEF Board Mag. Stefan Szyszkowitz, Mag. Peter Lennkh and Dr. Stephan Pachinger met each other. **A special emphasis was placed on the form of the forthcoming 17th Vienna Economic Forum – Vienna Future Dialogue 2020** planned for 16. November 2020. The Members of the VEF Board agreed that a „Special Edition“ of the 17th Vienna Economic Forum in a Hybrid form of physical and digital participation is best suited bearing in mind the ongoing circumstances at the time.







### After the summer break, the series of intensive “Talks about the future” with members of Vienna Economic Forum were continued

During a very constructive talk on 3. September 2020, Ing. Wolfgang Schaffer, Head of Customer Related Services & PMO of bit media e-solutions GmbH, Member of Vienna Economic Forum and Secretary General Ambassador Dr. Elena Kirtcheva talked about the challenges that digitalization imposes on the reality in the era of “new mobility” and discussed further regional expansion of VEF activities.



### Vienna Economic Forum “Talks about the Future” continue, this time at the Novomatic AG headquarters in Gumpoldskirchen

On 10. September 2020, the Secretary General of Vienna Economic Forum Ambassador Dr. Elena Kirtcheva visited the headquarters of NOVOMATIC AG in Gumpoldskirchen upon the invitation of the COO DI Ryszard Presch.

In a “tour d’horizon” many topics of the long-standing excellent cooperation were discussed. Particular attention was paid to the organization of the upcoming “Special Edition” of the 17<sup>th</sup> Vienna Economic Forum - Vienna Future Dialogue 2020 which took place on 16. November 2020 under the motto “Economy meets Politics in a digital World”.

Further active cooperation was discussed, underlining the broad, comprehensive and globally recognized successes of the technological giant Novomatic AG and their implementation especially for the member countries of Vienna Economic Forum in the time of great challenges of the “New Type of Mobility”.

Within the framework of this talk, NOVOMATIC Board member Dipl.-Ing. Presch, highlighted that the main focus, of the Group, from the very start has been on maintaining the health of the employees and safeguarding the jobs. Thanks to great efforts, it has been possible to secure and maintain jobs despite the COVID-19 pandemic.

### Intensive “Talks about the Future” in the premises of Vienna Economic Forum



On 24. September 2020 in the premises of Vienna Economic Forum (VEF) the President of VEF DI Peter UMUNDUM, Member of the Management Board “Paket & Logistik”, Österreichische Post AG and the Secretary General, Ambassador Dr. Elena KIRTICHEVA met the new President of the Board and CEO of DENIZBANK AG Mr. Wouter VAN ROSTE and his predecessor and VEF Board member Mr. Ahmet Mesut ERSOY for a „future-oriented talk”, a well established exchange framework.

Vienna Economic Forum is proud to have DENIZBANK AG as a long-standing VEF member and supporter of the VEF activities. We are happy to be able to further develop our excellent cooperation in new dimensions while also looking at new geographical directions.



### The Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates H.E. Ibrahim S.M. AL Musharrakh took part in a „Talks about the Future” at Vienna Economic Forum Premises

Vienna Economic Forum (VEF) would like to thank H.E. Mr. Ibrahim S.M. AL MUSHARRAKH, Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates in Austria, for the interesting exchange on future cooperation possibilities with the President of VEF DI Peter UMUNDUM, Member of the Management Board, Parcel & Logistics, Austrian Post AG, the Secretary General of VEF, Ambassador Dr. Elena KIRTICHEVA, the new President of the Board and CEO of DENIZBANK AG Mr. Wouter VAN ROSTE and his predecessor and VEF Board member Mr. Ahmet Mesut ERSOY.



The intense process of opening up of the United Arab Emirates, the vision for the future, as well as the economic development of the country were discussed.

## Further intensification of the contacts of Vienna Economic Forum with the Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates H.E. Ibrahim S.M. AL Musharrakh



The Secretary General of Vienna Economic Forum Ambassador Dr. Elena KIRTICHEVA on 19. October 2020 invited the Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates to Austria, H.E. Mr. Ibrahim S.M. AL MUSHARRAKH, to meet and exchange ideas with the partners in the Law Firm Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer, Dr. Willibald PLESSER and Dr. Stephan PACHINGER, Member of the VEF Board.

In a friendly and open atmosphere, very interesting potential opportunities for future cooperation were discussed.

The economic and social development of the United Arab Emirates is highly valued by many of the Vienna Economic Forum members and is a good prerequisite for the geographical expansion of the VEF activities.

## Working meeting with the Ambassador of the Republic of Kosovo H.E. Lulzim Pllana in the premises of Vienna Economic Forum



The Secretary General of Vienna Economic Forum Ambassador Dr. Elena Kirtcheva held a working meeting with the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Kosovo H.E. Lulzim Pllana in the premises of Vienna Economic Forum on 2. November 2020.

Several topics of the long-standing excellent cooperation were discussed. Particular attention was paid to the organization of the upcoming "Special Edition" of the 17th Vienna Economic Forum - Vienna Future Dialogue 2020 which took place under the motto "Economy meets Politics in a digital World" on 16. November 2020.

While delighted about the confirmation of participation of the Prime Minister of Kosovo H. E. Avdullah Hoti, together with other high representatives of regional politics, Vienna Economic Forum deeply appreciates the active cooperation with the Embassy of the Republic of Kosovo to the Republic of Austria.

## Vienna Economic Forum is proud to inform about the high distinction for the Vice-President of Vienna Economic Forum Dr. Ognian Donev as "Mister Economics 2020" from the prestigious rankings of the "Economics" Magazine



Vienna Economic Forum (VEF) is pleased to announce that Dr. Ognian Donev, Chairman of the Board of Directors and Executive Director of Sopharma PLC, as well as Vice-President of VEF, was awarded the highest annual business award in Bulgaria – "Mr. Economics".

This year, as per the 30th anniversary issue of the prestigious rankings from the "Economics" magazine and the Association of Employers and Industrialists in Bulgaria (KRIB), the awards were given to the five managers and entrepreneurs who have made the greatest contribution to the development of a successful and sustainable business climate in Bulgaria in the past three decades.



The prizes were awarded by five ministers of the current Bulgarian government which is a sign of recognition from the side of politics and the involved institutions.

Vienna Economic Forum is proud to have Dr. Ognian Donev in the front ranks of the Forum and wishes him many business and personal successes.



**Vienna Economic Forum is very proud to inform, that the founding member and Cooperation partner Raiffeisen Bank International (RBI) were recognized as Best CEE Bank from the Financial Times publication "The Banker"**



The Financial Times publication "The Banker" recognized Raiffeisen Bank International as the "Best Bank in Central and Eastern Europe" for the fifth time in a row.

"The awards from 'The Banker' are valuable confirmation that we are on the right track to achieve our strategic goals," emphasized RBI CEO Johann Strobl. This is a common achievement of all RBI employees and complements the primary measure of success for the bank, customer feedback.

In addition to the regional award, RBI also won "Best Bank" awards for its subsidiary banks – Tatra banka in Slovakia and Raiffeisen Bank Aval in the VEF member country Ukraine.



**New perspectives for cooperation with the Former Chairman of the Board of VERBUND AG DI Wolfgang Anzengruber Founding Member and Member of the VEF – Honorary Committee**

In a very friendly atmosphere at the Headquarters of the VEF Cooperation partner Verbund AG, on 21. December 2020, the Secretary General of Vienna Economic Forum, Ambassador Dr. Elena Kirtcheva met with DI Wolfgang Anzengruber, Chairman of Board of VERBUND AG, founding member of Vienna Economic Forum and member of the VEF Honorary Committee.

The conversation, which was focused on the scope for design of future further cooperation, allowed new perspectives to be identified.

The VEF General Secretary presented DI Wolfgang Anzengruber with the "Decoration of Honour of Vienna Economic Forum", expressing great gratitude for his services in the successful development and realization of the joint project – Vienna Economic Forum.

## Vienna Economic Talks

Vienna Economic Talks behandelt spezifische Themen, Regionen und Wirtschaftssektoren, die nicht nur für die Mitgliedsländer des Vienna Economic Forum von großem Interesse sind, sondern auch für andere Interessierte in der Region.

Vienna Economic Talks deals with specific topics, regions and economic sectors, which are of great interest not only for the member countries of the Vienna Economic Forum, but also for other interested parties in the region.

FOR A BETTER UNDERSTANDING



Yours,  
Vienna Economic Forum Team



INTERNATIONAL  
NON-GOVERNMENTAL  
ORGANISATION



CONSULTATIVE STATUS  
WITH THE ECONOMIC AND  
SOCIAL COUNCIL OF THE  
UNITED NATIONS (ECOSOC)

REGISTERED IN THE  
TRANSPARENCY REGISTER  
OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT  
AND EUROPEAN COMMISSION

**Dear Member, Partners and Friends!**

**Among other things, the year 2020  
taught us that we must be flexible  
to meet new challenges straightforwardly,  
adapt to the new circumstances and  
embrace the changes.**

**Vienna Economic Forum  
is well prepared for the digital reality and  
together with all of you is looking forward  
to yet another successful year 2021!**

With the support of



Ein Unternehmen der Stadt Wien

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**INTERNATIONAL  
NON-GOVERNMENTAL  
ORGANISATION**

**CONSULTATIVE STATUS  
WITH THE ECONOMIC AND  
SOCIAL COUNCIL OF THE  
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TRANSPARENCY REGISTER  
OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT  
AND EUROPEAN COMMISSION**

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