

Vienna, 29 May 2018

More than 100,000 international participants at the Austria Center Vienna for the first time

In 2017, Austria's largest congress centre brought more than 100,000 international participants to Vienna for the first time. The venue also once again exceeded the record revenue figure from the previous year. With a total of 18 congresses and Austria's rotating presidency of the EU Council as well as the danubeSAIL modernisation project waiting in the wings for 2019, there are already further major projects on the horizon.

Vienna is one of the leading destinations for international congresses – last year Barcelona was the only city in the world to host more. The Austria Center Vienna, which brought more than 100,000 international visitors to the capital last year for the first time, has a significant hand to play in the city's standing as destination. "Our focus on large-scale congresses is paying dividends – over the past four years we have almost doubled the number of international participants at the venue," explained Management Board Spokesperson Susanne Baumann-Söllner. Last year around 105,000 international participants attended events hosted at the nation's largest congress centre. This represents a 13% year-on-year increase, and a jump of 104% compared with 2013 when Baumann-Söllner first assumed responsibility for the venue's congress business.

International congress guests secure more than 3,000 jobs

A typical congress attendee spends around twice as much as the average visitor to Vienna – EUR 538, to be precise. As a result, international competition is extremely strong in the congress tourism sector. The latest analysis published by the Institute for Advanced Studies (IHS) confirms the positive economic impact of conferences on the tourism industry, hospitality trade and wider infrastructure. The 105,000 international participants that came to the venue during the year generated induced economic impact of around EUR 455m. When the employment effect is extrapolated into person years, events at the Austria Center Vienna accounted for more than 3,000 year-round jobs in Austria in 2017 alone.

Revenue record set last year exceeded once again

The high number of participants is also reflected in revenue, with the all-time high set by the company in 2016 immediately surpassed in 2017. With EUR 12.3m in revenue from events, the year-on-year rise amounted to 2.9%. Since Susanne Baumann-Söllner arrived in 2013, revenue attributable to events has jumped 48%. "For us, 2017 marked a seamless continuation of the positive development in recent years. In addition to maintaining a high level of quality when it comes to organising and hosting events, numerous other factors had a hand to play. Ongoing global acquisitions, infrastructure modernisation activities and a highly motivated team were all factors. Close cooperation with the Vienna Tourist Board under Norbert Kettner and the Vienna Convention Bureau under Christian Mutschlechner were also key to our

Seite 1 von 2

success.” When it comes to acquiring international congresses, the destination is forging even closer ties with Austrian research institutions through its ambassadors programme, initiated in 2016 – for example in its cooperation project with the Medical University of Vienna.

Second half of the year to be shaped by Austria’s presidency of the EU Council

At present, preparations are in full swing ahead of Austria’s rotating presidency of the EU council. During the second half of 2018, the Austria Center Vienna will be the main venue both for conferences attended by Council functionaries as well as political meetings hosted by high-ranking politicians. As at past events such as the 2015 Iran Talks, heightened security measures will be in place in and around the Austria Centre Vienna on certain days. A comprehensive security strategy has been drawn up in close cooperation with the authorities, aligned with the needs of congresses that will take place in parallel at the venue, and with the interests of local residents.

danubeSAIL: largest modernisation project in venue’s history launches in 2019

In March 2018 the Austria Center Vienna unveiled the largest construction project at the venue since its opening around 30 years ago. A new access building with skywalk and three additional entrances will make it more convenient to use the different levels for separate events held in parallel. An attractive canopy – the DanubeSAIL – will also be added to the square outside the building. By the time work is completed in 2022, this area will be transformed into a public space that brings people together, and adds a further 4,200m² for events in either closed or open formats. As the owner of the Austria Center Vienna, the federal government will cover 65% of the EUR 32m project costs, while the City of Vienna will pay for the remaining 35%. This investment will help underpin the venue’s long-term competitiveness as an international congress destination Susanne Baumann-Söllner commented: “The positive developments at the Austria Center Vienna over the past few years have given us the momentum we need – we cannot wait to get on with tasks ahead of us!”

Contact

IAKW-AG – Austria Center Vienna

David Scheurich, Press Officer

Tel: + 43-676-4392579

Mail: david.scheurich@acv.at

About IAKW-AG

Internationales Amtssitz- und Konferenzzentrum Wien, Aktiengesellschaft (IAKW-AG) is responsible for maintaining the Vienna International Centre (VIC) and operating the Austria Center Vienna. The Austria Center Vienna is Austria’s largest conference centre, with 24 halls, 180 meeting rooms, and some 22,000 m² of exhibition space, and is one of the top players on the international conference circuit. Visit www.acv.at for additional information.