

21/22 January 2016
Vienna

International Mayors Conference

Listen – Ask – Learn – Answer
Concerned mayors – People on the run – Experts – NGOs

Patronage: Michael Häupl, Mayor of Vienna

Patricia Kahane, André Heller and Andreas Babler cordially invite to the International Mayors' Conference N-O-W.

Mayors – from the countries most affected by the refugee crisis – experts, civil society representatives and refugees will try to find ways and means for a responsible refugee policy and work out potential solutions and guidelines for politicians. Based on the values of democracy and human rights and involving guidance for action this initiative is addressed to national, European and international policy.

ANDRÉ HELLER

“Large areas of our populous world are currently experiencing turmoil, chaos, fear and upheavals. Men, women and children in dozens of millions are fleeing from wars, economic and ethnic tragedies as well as natural and climate disasters. As in the case of Syria, refugee movements have already assumed the proportions of a mass migration.

To these individuals who are in total despair, painfully uprooted and seeking help to escape life-threatening dangers, the European Union appears as the number one destination in offering hope. This irresistible hope has given rise to the biggest moral, logistic and political challenge since the establishment of the European Union confronting many European countries today. It thus puts the entire EU, as a community based on solidarity and common values, to a merciless test.

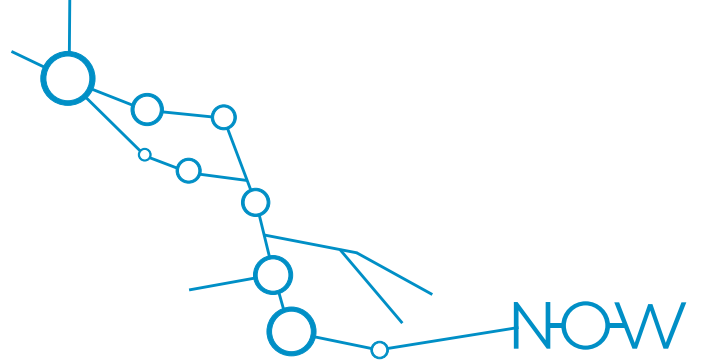
We are becoming witnesses to, and players in, a game of powerful polarity between cynical cruelty versus energetic efforts by noble-hearted individuals, between hatred, agitation and contempt for the individual versus a spirit of mercy in addition to an untiring readiness to help on the part of tens of thousands of members of civil society. We are caught between the most primitive, populist stultification and disinformation campaigns, serving as a prerequisite for vote-catching in muddy waters for radical nationalist egomaniacs, and initiatives struggling to find subtle, responsible, well-balanced solutions.

In the face of this historic challenge there is a shocking lack of knowledge across all, a sense of being overwhelmed and a feeling of confusion at the different levels of various factions.

N-O-W, a private initiative of women and men from the worlds of science, arts, journalism, politics and NGOs, coordinated by the renowned Bruno Kreisky Forum for International Dialogue in Vienna, is circulating questions relating to the different aspects of this drama to highly skilled experts and hopes to find feasible answers thereby, being fully aware that these may well be uncomfortable.

The results of this survey will be made available as food for thought and practical stimuli for action to politicians, the media, religious communities and the largest possible number of citizens via a You Tube channel as well as through major public events.

We take the fears of the large number of European fellow citizens seriously and want to help them find practicable ways to overcome these in line with the ambitious humanitarian standards of an enlightened society guided by forward thinking wisdom in the 21st century. NOW!”



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AGENDA

Wednesday, January 20, 2016

Venue: *Bruno Kreisky Forum for International Dialogue,
Armbrustergasse 15, 1190 Vienna*

7.00 pm Welcome reception for international participants

Thursday, January 21, 2016

Venue: *ÖBB Werkstättenhalle, Spittelauer Lände 33, 1090 Vienna*

9.00 am **Opening and Welcome**

Sonja Wehsely, Executive City Councillor for Public Health and Social Affairs and Generations, City Government of Vienna,
Andreas Babler, Mayor of Traiskirchen,
Christian Kern, Chairman ÖBB (Austrian Federal Railways),
André Heller and Patricia Kahane

9.30 am **Introduction:**

Ebru Sonuc and Michael Patak

9.45 am **The Neighbours - Lebanon and Jordan**

Chaired by **Viola Raheb**, University of Vienna

Contributors:

Mohammad Al Kilani, Deputy Secretary General, The Jordan Hashemite Charity Organization for Relief & Development (JHCO)

Yusef Al-Shawarbeh, Deputy Mayor of Amman, Jordan

Mai Aleid, Syrian activist, asylum seeker in Austria

George Antoun, Mercy Corps, Lebanon

Christian Berger, EEAS - European External Action Service

Marwa Boustani, UN-Habitat, Lebanon

Laurence Hengl, ADA - Austrian Development Agency

Udo Janz, former director of the New York office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

Margaretha Maleh, Médecins Sans Frontières, Austria

Ali Mattar, Mayor of Sahel El Zahrani, Lebanon

Walid Abed Rabboh, The Jordan Response Platform for the Syria Crisis (JRPSC), Jordan

Hassan Ruhaibeh, Mayor of Um Al Jimal, Jordan

Nazem Saleh, Mayor of Marej, Lebanon

11.45 am Coffee break

12.00 am World Café

1.00 pm Lunch

2.00 pm Highlights

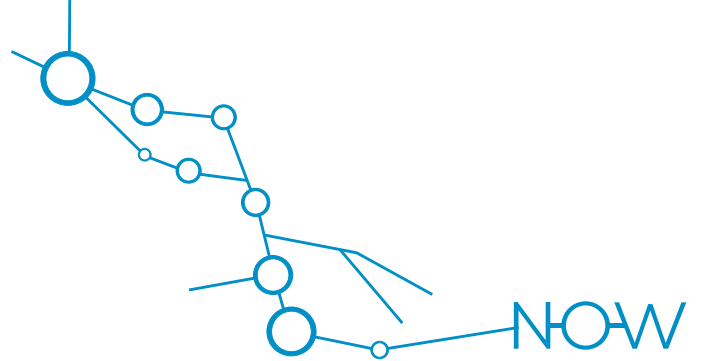
2.30 pm **On the Road – Points of Transition – Turkey, Greece, Italy**

Chaired by **Hannes Swoboda**, MEP ret., Board member of Bruno Kreisky Forum

Contributors:

Luigi Ammatuna, Mayor of Pozallo, Italy

Firat Anli, Co-Mayor of the Metropolitan Municipality of Diyarbakır



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Kristof Bender, ESI – European Stability Initiative
Erkan Erenci, City Council Member in charge of the Refugee Camp Diyarbakir, Turkey
Spyros Galinos, Mayor of Lesbos, Greece
Giorgios Kyritsis, Mayor of Kos, Greece
Domenico Lucano, Mayor of Riace, Italy (tbc)
Giusi Nicolini, Mayor of Lampedusa, Italy (tbc)
Manfred Nowak, Professor of International Law and Human Rights, Vienna University
Möstafa Noori, Afghan Activist, asylum seeker
Harun Öztürkler, Economy advisor at Center for Middle Eastern Strategic Studies (ORSAM), Kırıkkale University, Turkey
Lefteris Papagiannakis, Athens City Council and President of the Athens Council for Immigrants, Greece
Heinz Patzelt, Amnesty International, Austria
Christine Schörkhuber, Activist, Artist and Musician, Austria
Ahmet Türk, Co-Mayor of the Metropolitan Municipality of Mardin
Manolis Vournous, Mayor of Chios, Greece

4.30 pm **Coffee break**

5.00 pm **World Café**

6.00 pm **Highlights & Talk:**

“More humanity, more assistance, more immigration”: **Tjark Bartels**, District Administrator Hameln-Pyrmont/Germany, talking to **Robert Misik**, Author and Journalist

6.45 pm *Music performed by refugees* conducted by **Marwan Abado**, Austrian-Palestinian musician, composer and oud player

7.30 pm **Dinner**

Friday, January 22, 2016

Venue: ÖBB Werkstättenhalle, Spittelauer Lände 33, 1090 Wien

9.00 am **Welcome**

9.15 am **Arrived? Between Asylum and Integration - Austria, Germany, Sweden**

Chaired by **Robert Misik**, Author and Journalist

Contributors:

Nour Alsoliman, Syrian Filmmaker, asylum seeker in Austria

Andreas Babler, Mayor of Traiskirchen, Austria

Georg Bürstmayr, Human Rights Lawyer, Austria

Marlene Burwick, Mayor of Uppsala, Sweden (tbc)

Michael Chalupka, Diakonie, Austria

Jürgen Dupper, Mayor of Passau, Germany

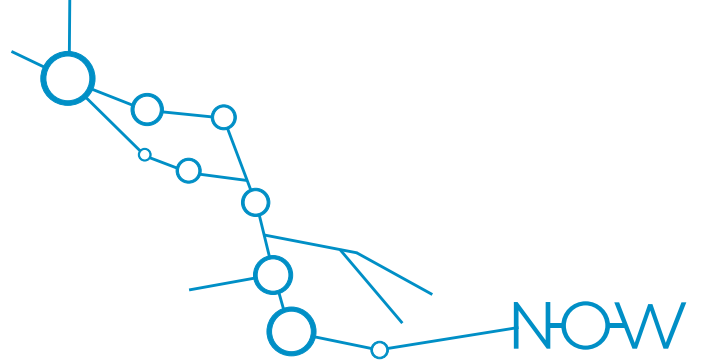
Erich Fenninger, Volkshilfe, Austria

Peter Hacker, Fonds Soziales Wien (FSW), Austria

Reinhard Hundsmüller, Arbeiter Samariterbund, Austria

Dieter Posch, Mayor of Neudörfel, Austria

Klaus Schwertner, Caritas Vienna, Austria



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Peter Stradner, Mayor of Wagna, Austria
Anahita Tasharofi, Flucht nach Vorn, Austria

11.15 am Coffee break

11.45 am World Café

1.00 pm Lunch

2.00 pm Sli.do Highlights

2.20 pm Summary of World Cafés

3.00 pm Group photo

3.15 pm Networking and exchange in working groups

4.00 pm Summary, André Heller, Andreas Babler, Patricia Kahane

4.30 pm Farewell Reception

**International Mayors Conference NOW
a private project initiated by Patricia Kahane, André Heller
and Andreas Babler**

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Sponsored by:

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