



Act.Now

CONNECTING THE DOTS

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OUR CONCERNS AND COMMITMENTS

Promoting collaboration, thinking across international borders, developing solutions, and working with the utmost commitment – in order to safeguard social cohesion. We encourage and support children and young people to live up to their potential and make their dreams come true.

INTERNATIONAL MAYORS' CONFERENCES NOW

Over the past three years, the *NOW Conferences* held in Vienna, Athens and Kampala have attracted over 400 mayors, civil society initiatives, NGOs, public institutions and experts from both the national and international sphere as well as children and young people from Europe, Turkey, the Middle East and Africa. See the back cover for more information on NOW conferences.

Act.Now also organised other conferences, workshops, thematic excursions, and public events in Amman, Athens, Beirut, Catania, Chios, Hameln-Pyrmont, Kampala, Pristina, Vienna and Zagreb.

NETWORKS AND WORKING GROUPS

The *NOW Mayors' Network* connects more than 25 mayors and municipal experts from Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, Italy, Greece, Sweden, Slovenia, Serbia, Germany and Austria. The members of the network meet regularly to share experiences; most recently in Vienna, on the Greek island of Chios, and in the district of Hameln-Pyrmont in Lower Saxony, Germany.

More than 50 international academic experts and practitioners work together in five active *NOW Working Groups* and develop joint projects in the fields of Children's Rights, Education and Diversity, Exploitation & Human Trafficking, Gender Equality, and Trauma Surviving.

The *NOW Map* (www.now-map.org) is a database to visualise more than 200 actors, organisations, projects and networks active in the field of social cohesion in Europe and the MENAT region (Middle East, North Africa, Turkey).

PUBLICATIONS

The video series "*MENSCH*" comprises more than 60 portraits of outstanding personalities who work for a better future, each in their own way (<https://now-mensch.org>).

The psychoeducational booklet series "*Trauma Surviving and Hope*" addresses emotional injuries, such as anxiety, anger and aggression, grief and concentration problems in picture booklets. The series consists of 10 editions available in seven languages.

In the video series "*Pathways to Educational Resilience and Inclusion*", educational experts and students describe examples of promising practices in the education sector and provide background information on their implementation. The series is planned to feature nine issues based on models from nine different countries.

PARTICIPATION

The Innovation in Politics Institute: a European service organisation for politicians with the goal to improve politics in Europe. Established in 2017, the annual "*Innovation in Politics Awards*" with 80 nominated projects are presented in eight categories.



INTERNATIONAL MAYORS' CONFERENCES

NOW 6 - VIENNA, JANUARY 2019

Returning to our motto of the 1st International Mayors' Conference NOW in January 2016, "Listen, Learn, Ask, Answer", the 6th NOW Conference "*Promoting Social Cohesion – Youth Participation in our Communities*" provides ample space for dialogue – frank, open, uncensored, and on equal terms – around the main topics of participation and education. Our aim is to co-create and develop bold ideas and projects, jointly led by young people as well as municipal and educational institutions, to shape the societies they are going to live in.

- Under the auspices of the Federal President of the Republic of Austria, Dr. Alexander Van der Bellen
- In cooperation with the City of Vienna, Executive City Councillor Mag. Jürgen Czernohorszky
- Participants: over 200 participants from 28 countries

NOW 5 - VIENNA, JANUARY 2018

Social cohesion has become a burning issue for communities across Europe. The constant increase in social inequality, resulting in a rising polarisation of society, has recently been accentuated by the issue of integration of refugees and migrants. For the 5th time, the International Mayors' Conference "*Shaping the Future – Social Cohesion in our Cities*" in Vienna brought together almost 200 participants to discuss and promote new political visions, public discourse, and impactful policies in order to improve social cohesion from a human rights perspective.

- Under the auspices of the Federal President of the Republic of Austria, Dr. Alexander Van der Bellen
- Curator: Viola Raheb, researcher at the Department of the Study of Religions, Faculty of Protestant Theology, University of Vienna
- Participants: 190 participants, mayors, NGO representatives, experts, local as well as newly arrived children and young people from 27 nations
- Cooperation: Bruno Kreisky Forum for International Dialogue

NOW 4 - KAMPALA, SEPTEMBER 2017

Africa is the youngest continent in the world with the largest population under 18 years of age. About 2 per cent of all Africans leave the continent, often risking their lives. Africa's youth need perspectives and support to become actors of change. The participants of the 4th NOW Conference "*African Youth and Migration*" discussed the situation of young people in Africa, their chances and challenges as well as the issues of migration and flight both within and beyond Africa.

- Curator: Hannes Swoboda, former Member of the European Parliament
- Participants: 45 participants from more than 10 mostly Sub-Saharan and some European countries
- Cooperation: International Institute for Peace, Bruno Kreisky Forum for International Dialogue

NOW 3 - VIENNA, JANUARY 2017

The major challenges refugee children but also local children and young people in our societies face are violence, exploitation, trauma and lack of access to education. They all need protection, safe spaces for discovery, personal development, real chances for experiencing community, and access to quality education and health. The third NOW Conference "*Children under the Radar*" offered space to discuss key problems and share solutions in an area all too often overlooked, even though children make up half of all current refugees.

- Curator: Viola Raheb, researcher at the Department of the Study of Religions, Faculty of Protestant Theology, University of Vienna
- Participants: 160 participants, mayors, experts, local politicians, MEPs, refugees and NGO representatives from 22 nations
- Cooperation: Bruno Kreisky Forum for International Dialogue, Respekt.net





NOW 2 - ATHENS, JULY 2016

The NOW Conference in Athens focused on the *EU-Turkey-Agreement* as well as the effects and consequences of its implementation for local communities. Mayors from affected municipalities in Greece, Turkey and Italy met to assess the agreement together with representatives of NGOs, members of the European Parliament, experts and refugees, and to talk about their conclusions for future approaches and agreements concerning refugees both in the MENAT region and Europe.

- Curator: Hannes Swoboda, former Member of the European Parliament
- Participants: 45 mayors, NGO representatives, Members of the European Parliament, experts, individuals concerned
- Cooperation: Bruno Kreisky Forum for International Dialogue, Respekt.net

NOW 1 - VIENNA, JANUARY 2016

The first NOW Conference was initiated and developed on the occasion of the massive refugee movement from civil war-torn Syria during the summer of 2015 as well as the striking cluelessness of national governments and the EU. As the basic idea was that living together takes place on a communal level, numerous mayors, experts, civil society representatives, and refugees from affected regions in ten countries – from Syria across the first host countries, Lebanon and Jordan, along the transit route (Turkey, Greece, Italy) to the receiving countries, Austria and Germany – were to be given an opportunity to discuss feasible solutions for living together based on the values of democracy and human rights, to present good practices, and to exchange experiences in a two-day conference.

- Patronage: Michael Häupl, Mayor of Vienna
- Curator: Robert Misik, author and journalist; Viola Raheb, researcher at the Department of the Study of Religions, Faculty of Protestant Theology, University of Vienna; Hannes Swoboda, former Member of the European Parliament
- Participants: 130 participants, mayors, experts, local politicians, MEPs, refugees and NGO representatives
- Cooperation: Bruno Kreisky Forum for international Dialogue, Respekt.net

Find out more:

www.act-n-o-w.com

www.now-conference.org

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www.facebook.com/nowconf

www.youtube.com/channel/UCMcwdowgUXM2pK-DZLm2CaQ

