



# 10 years ...

... working to achieve a fair balance between the interests of the economy and those of the population.



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# Foreword

## Leopold Winkler

Representative of the Vienna Airport Dialogue Forum Association  
Mayor of the Kleinneusiedl municipality



Ten years ago, mayors of the communities living near Vienna Airport, citizens' initiatives and province representatives reached an agreement with the aircraft industry to continue dealing with conflicts from the Vienna Airport Mediation Process. This marked the birth of the Vienna Airport Dialogue Forum Association.

The association was given the task of dealing with issues relating to air traffic including its regional impact, implementing measures against the effects of air traffic, evaluating them and monitoring the enforcement of the agreements. New measures against the effects of air traffic that do not hamper the sustainable development of the Vienna Airport region were another key focus of the association's work. If a sustainable third runway is built at Vienna Airport, the Dialogue Forum will have the task of reaching a consensus on the entire arrival and departure system in good time and wherever possible before the third runway becomes operational.

After the end of the mediation process, mayors of the communities near Vienna Airport reached a joint decision to alternate functions and duties assigned at the Dialogue Forum every three years. As a representative of the Dialogue Forum elected at the end of 2014, I would like to thank all the members of the Dialogue Forum for their trust and fair, open and constructive teamwork in the last ten years.

This anniversary publication gives an overview of the ten years of work that have been dedicated to a fair balance between the interests of the aircraft industry and those of the local communities and individuals living in the Vienna Airport region/Lower Austria/Burgenland. It was compiled with the consensual approval of all members, summing up many successes and also failings and problem areas that are inevitable when dealing with complex issues related to air traffic.

The Dialogue Forum will also continue to deal with the lasting fundamental conflict between the economic interests of the aircraft industry and the legitimate desire of citizens to live and work in regions with a high quality of life and environmental quality in a constructive, fair and transparent manner. In accordance with the sustainability required for everything we do as defined in the Brundtland report "Our Common Future", it is crucial that we seize development opportunities that are now available without destroying areas for development for future generations and the high quality of life and environmental quality of our regions. From my experience at the Dialogue Forum, I am confident that we will overcome future challenges together.

# Greetings

Dr Erwin Pröll

Governor of Lower Austria



It is Lower Austria's declared aim to safeguard and develop the airport as a key site factor. In this further development, it is also important to include the facet of its spatial and environmental impact in a particular way. Participating in the Vienna Airport Mediation Process, signing final contracts and actively getting involved in the Vienna Airport Dialogue Forum are key measures here.

The special care that is taken in the discussion and problem-solving process at the Dialogue Forum is the only viable way to take into account the broad spectrum of interests and develop and implement sustainable solutions in the long run. The successes that have been achieved and the international interest in the Dialogue Forum's work have shown that the path that we have embarked on is the right one.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the companies, organisations, (regional/local) authorities and citizens' initiatives involved, who have all played a part in this process in an exemplary manner, adhering to a jointly defined objective and making compromises if required. I would particularly like to highlight the involvement of the citizens' initiatives who have been voluntarily performing this activity at the Dialogue Forum in their free time for ten years now. Their involvement cannot be taken for granted and deserves special thanks on behalf of the state of Lower Austria.

In the future, Lower Austria will also remain a trustworthy and reliable partner at the Dialogue Forum. For me, this means action based on the existing contracts in which an agreement between all the parties involved is a top priority.

With this in mind, I would also like to wish the Dialogue Forum and its members a lot of success in performing their responsible duties in the future.

**Dr Michael Häupl**  
Mayor of the City of Vienna



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On the occasion of this 10-year anniversary, I would like to congratulate and thank all those who have participated in the Dialogue Forum project.

Your work is deemed remarkable and referred to as best practice in Europe. We are pleased to see a high level of acceptance among the city's population. This is attributable to the consistent integration and participation of citizen groups whose proponents often spend considerable amounts of their free time in consultations at the Dialogue Forum and but also for needed collaborations. This is why I would particularly like to thank them for their involvement in the people's interest.

I would also like to thank the Aviation Group, employees working for the states, communities and federal services as well as all the other people involved who have often had to face new challenges in the process and still succeeded in tackling them at all times.

These ten years have demonstrated that it is possible to responsibly reconcile interests if the problems and concerns of others are understood and if there is a response, depending on the powers and possibilities at hand. Responsible growth and ecological action should not be at odds in areas where people live together in large numbers to the highest standard. On the contrary, we will continue to be one of the top regions worth living around the world only if we are capable of rising to the challenges associated with modern life in an ecological and socially acceptable way.

I wish you a lot of energy and success in the work you shall undertake in the interest of our region.

## Alois Stöger

Federal Minister for Transport, Innovation  
and Technology (BMVIT)



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As the Supreme Civil Aviation Authority (OZB), the excellent integration of Austria into international air traffic networks is particularly important to the Federal Ministry for Transport, Innovation and Technology (BMVIT). In the eyes of the BMVIT and Austro Control as a subsidiary aviation authority, aviation and the environment are not contradictory elements. We see this as our duty to ensure profitability and efficiency in air traffic and minimise the negative impact on the population and the environment as much as possible.

With Austro Control's participation in the Vienna Airport Dialogue Forum Association, the BMVIT supports this important work for the economy and society in order to reconcile the interests of the aircraft industry and citizen concerns. A fair and transparent discussion and negotiation process is focused on in the mediation process and the Dialogue Forum. This Austrian method has attracted international attention and recognition.

I would like to thank all those who have been setting themselves difficult and complex tasks for many years, starting with the mediation process at Vienna Airport, and who have done so now for ten years at the Dialogue Forum in order to implement the agreements that have been reached, to discuss every issue and conflict in connection with air traffic and Vienna Airport, to agree on further measures and to ensure their implementation.

The BMVIT will also continue to support Austro Control's involvement as a reliable partner at the Dialogue Forum to enable this important work for Austria to be continued. This is because we need both of the following: good framework conditions for the aircraft industry and long-term protection of the high quality of life and environmental quality for citizens.

I wish all members of the Dialogue Forum a lot of success, strength, courage, confidence and perseverance in this responsible task in the future.

# Prologue – How it all began ...

The Vienna Airport Mediation Process has its roots in the publication of the 2015 master plan by Flughafen Wien AG in April 1998.



In the 2015 master plan, Flughafen Wien AG described its plans to expand Vienna Airport into a highly modern and functional hub between the East and the West, as this was deemed necessary at the time due to an increase in air traffic. The central part of this master plan was the construction of an additional runway in order to continue handling the rise in air traffic smoothly. In addition to the runway, a range of other expansion measures, such as terminal extensions, were also mentioned in the master plan.

However, residents living in the vicinity of Vienna Airport expressed their concerns shortly after the master plan had been published. Great uncertainty was spreading in the airport region, particularly because the exact location of this additional runway remained unclear. Furthermore, opposition among local residents and neighbouring communities of Vienna Airport was growing.

It was established relatively quickly that both the economic interests of the airport and the interests of local residents to lead a healthy life in a region with a high quality of life had to be considered on an equal footing in further planning if the airport region were to positively develop. Newly appointed members of the Management Board of Flughafen Wien AG took these objections seriously and thought new ways to communicate the 2015 master plan and the necessity of an additional runway for Vienna Airport in particular. They also tried to find new ways to handle the inevitable conflict of interests with neighbouring communities and the regional population.

Attorney Dr Thomas Prader acknowledged that, in this situation, a mediation process would offer opportunities to deal with the growing conflict of interests in a fair, open and transparent manner. Considerable credit must be given to Dr Thomas Prader because he convinced board members Kaufmann and Schmid of Flughafen Wien AG in particular – who in a parallel move sought new methods and were also ready to explore them – of the necessity and appropriateness of a mediation process in the end. Subsequently, in many discussions with the representatives of potential parties to the conflict, he also fathomed their great readiness to voluntarily participate in a mediation process and represent their interests there. The first step towards the greatest mediation process ever undertaken had been made ...

# From initial discussions to the mediation agreement ...

At the start of 2000, Flughafen Wien AG, the platform of citizens' initiatives against the third runway, mayors of the most affected communities, the environmental protection authorities of Vienna and Lower Austria as well as representatives of the City of Vienna and the province of Lower Austria proceeded with preparatory work for a mediation process.





On 17 July 2000, the parties to the conflict publicly announced that they were preparing a mediation process and that Dr Thomas Prader had assumed management of a preparatory group.

### **The dialogue process begins ...**

After an agreement on a mediator team had been reached in September 2000, a kick-off event for the Vienna Airport Mediation Process took place in November 2000. On 18 January 2001, the mediation forum held its first meeting, in which around 50 parties to the process were represented. Flughafen Wien AG's environmentally-relevant expansion plans and noise pollution in the two-runway system were identified as key issues in the mediation agreement. In addition, rules on collaborative work were established. In addition to numerous working groups dealing with various topics such as "noise" or "development scenarios", a process control group was formed to coordinate the course of the process.

### **... leading to the first agreement: the mediation agreement**

On 1 March 2001, the mediation agreement was concluded. This is to be considered as the first result achieved by consensus. Parties to the process agreed on the main concerns and issues of the two major conflict groups, namely the expansion plans of the aircraft industry on the one hand and equally handling measures against the existing noise pollution of the two-runway system for the population and local communities on the other. The mediation agreement specified the way in which the discussion and negotiation process should be conducted. Defined working groups and other bodies formed the basic organisational structure of the conflict management process. The mediation forum was also established as the highest decision-making body of the mediation process.

As a result, the first step towards building a basis of trust had been made. With the support of a mediator team elected by all parties as part of a consensus, the joint search for viable solutions began. Two of the three elected mediators, Dr Ulrike König and Dr Horst Zillessen, made a considerable contribution to handling the conflict during the entire mediation process in their role as all-party mediators under the direction of Dr Thomas Prader ...

# From the mediation agreement to the partial contract ...

The mediation process is under tremendous time pressure to quickly achieve results. The terror attacks in New York on 11 September 2001 halts the rapid growth of air traffic at the time. As a result, this pressure to succeed slightly decreases ...

### **All beginnings are difficult ...**

At the beginning, there was distrust. Mahatma Gandhi once said: *“Distrust is a sign of weakness.”* The first step towards trust was made thanks to the availability of extensive information about planning and requirements. Flughafen Wien AG displayed its expansion plans and citizens’ initiatives presented their requests in order to minimise the effects of air traffic. Austro Control presented the arrival and departure process in detail and a first step was made.

### **... but sharing knowledge builds trust ...**

The basis of trust was strengthened by agreeing on methods and issues. The FANOMOS system (flight track and noise monitoring system) was also acknowledged, as well as the principles of long-term development based on the following three pillars: the “economy”, “ecology” and “social issues”. In the “scenarios” working group, fifty topics were agreed in order to assess the regional impact of a third runway on various areas. Dr Hans-Peter Hutter, as an expert in environmental medicine, Dr Heinrich Vana, as an attorney, and Christian Woborsky, as an Austro Control representative, made a considerable contribution to successfully building trust. The agreement on new noise zone maps, the application of the Sydney model to include the maximum sound level in the overall discussion and the agreement on eight scenarios to be investigated with different runway variants and expansion measures followed. After a year, positive results were achieved together and it was agreed that the discussion and negotiation process would continue.

### **... and requirements and measures against the prevailing negative effects of air traffic were agreed**

The anticipated measures were negotiated in a differentiated manner. In “Batch I”, requests that did not depend on the runway’s configuration were discussed. Requests in “Batch II” were associated with capacity-increasing measures and opportunities for the Aviation Group’s economic development. The first partial success became apparent and the scepticism voiced by parties to the conflict such as politicians, interest groups and the public with regard to the mediation process slowly began to decrease... The website [www.viemediation.at](http://www.viemediation.at) fostered transparency for the parties to the conflict and the public regarding the discussion in the mediation process.

## **The partial contract on “Current Measures” as the first joint positive result ...**

On 27 May 2003, the partial contract on “Current Measures” was concluded. The objective of the measures agreed was to reduce the number of people affected by aircraft noise and relieve the burden for the settlement areas most affected. 47 out of the 50 parties to the process signed the partial contract.

By laying the contractual foundation of monitoring, evaluation and consultation mechanisms, an independent complaint and information centre was created. An evaluation group was also formed as the contract guardian and permanent regional conflict management relating to “air traffic and the effects of air traffic” was established for the first time in the Vienna Airport region/Lower Austria/Burgenland. Special respect and recognition were already paid to those who had consciously accepted disadvantages in order to find solutions in the interest of the entire airport region.

### **... which also led to amended departure routes and corridors ...**

Measures in the partial contract particularly concern air traffic movements in the vicinity of Vienna Airport. The entire system of departure routes was changed, many departure routes were adapted and departure corridors were established. The aim of these measures was to prevent flights from flying directly above settlement areas surrounding the airport as much as possible.

### **... a new distribution of traffic ...**

The partial contract regulates the number of take-offs and landings that can take place on each runway direction within a calendar year. Target values were agreed as annual values taking into account long-term wind and weather conditions and influence runway management in particular with regard to wind and traffic conditions.

### **... and new rules on flyovers at night**

The partial contract also regulates the amount of time that runways and departure and landing routes can be used. As a result, several settlement areas are now clear of overflights from 9:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. Exceptions apply to medical flights and special wind conditions etc.



**The implementation of the partial contract has reduced the significantly negative effects on the settlement areas. However, some settlement areas, which were experiencing a low level of pollution, were more affected by this. Air traffic controllers have had to make an increased effort since then ...**

### **Implementation of the partial contract starts immediately ...**

The new processes for air traffic management were submitted to the Supreme Civil Aviation Authority (OZB) for approval and were approved. Publishing these new processes worldwide made them liable for all pilots flying to Vienna Airport.

Measures taking into account all deadlines were concretely implemented at the beginning of 2004. Since then, there have been no landings above the western part of Vienna between 9:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m.

### **... Austro Control's "proximity to citizens" as a key factor ...**

Austro Control was not able to sign the contract due to statutory provisions and functions and tasks officially assigned by legislation. Although many agreements in the partial contract were directly related to these official tasks, Austro Control still implemented the agreements of the partial contract – quasi on a voluntary basis – as authorities in addition to many other measures that have been added to this day. This "Austrian" method and Austro Control's constant commitment as authorities faced the concerns, desires and requests of those affected by aircraft noise have remained effective to this day.

### **... The Aviation Group's courage and the fairness of other parties to the conflict pave the way for the mediation contract**

With this partial contract, Flughafen Wien AG, Austro Control and Austrian Airlines as a home carrier showed a great deal of courage. However, the partial contract failed to include any agreements on expansion plans such as the planned third runway. Nevertheless, all citizens' initiatives, local communities and regional politicians demonstrated a great deal of courage by keeping their promise and continuing the negotiation process on issues in connection with the planned third runway ...

# From the partial contract to the mediation contract ...

Concluding the partial contract on “Current Measures” on 27 May 2003 was the first milestone in the Vienna Airport Mediation Process. Parties to the mediation reached a consensus about measures for the first time. Since then, it has contributed to minimising the effects of air traffic resulting from flight operations in the two-runway system at Vienna Airport as much as possible. From this point in time, negotiations to conclude the binding mediation agreement under civil law were at the forefront of this process ...

After the partial contract had been signed, it was entirely uncertain whether it would lead to the conclusion of a mediation agreement or whether everyone would be held responsible for its failure.

### **Implementation of the measures – Beginning of the observation and evaluation process ...**

The partial contract on “Current Measures” was implemented. The time had come to analyse the effects, evaluate compliance with the measures and draw conclusions on additional options for action and necessary tasks. Measures that failed to fulfil the desired improvements and measures that created new concerns triggered heated protests. The authorities made the newly created complaint and information system available for concerns. Suggestions made here found their way into the evaluation group's work.

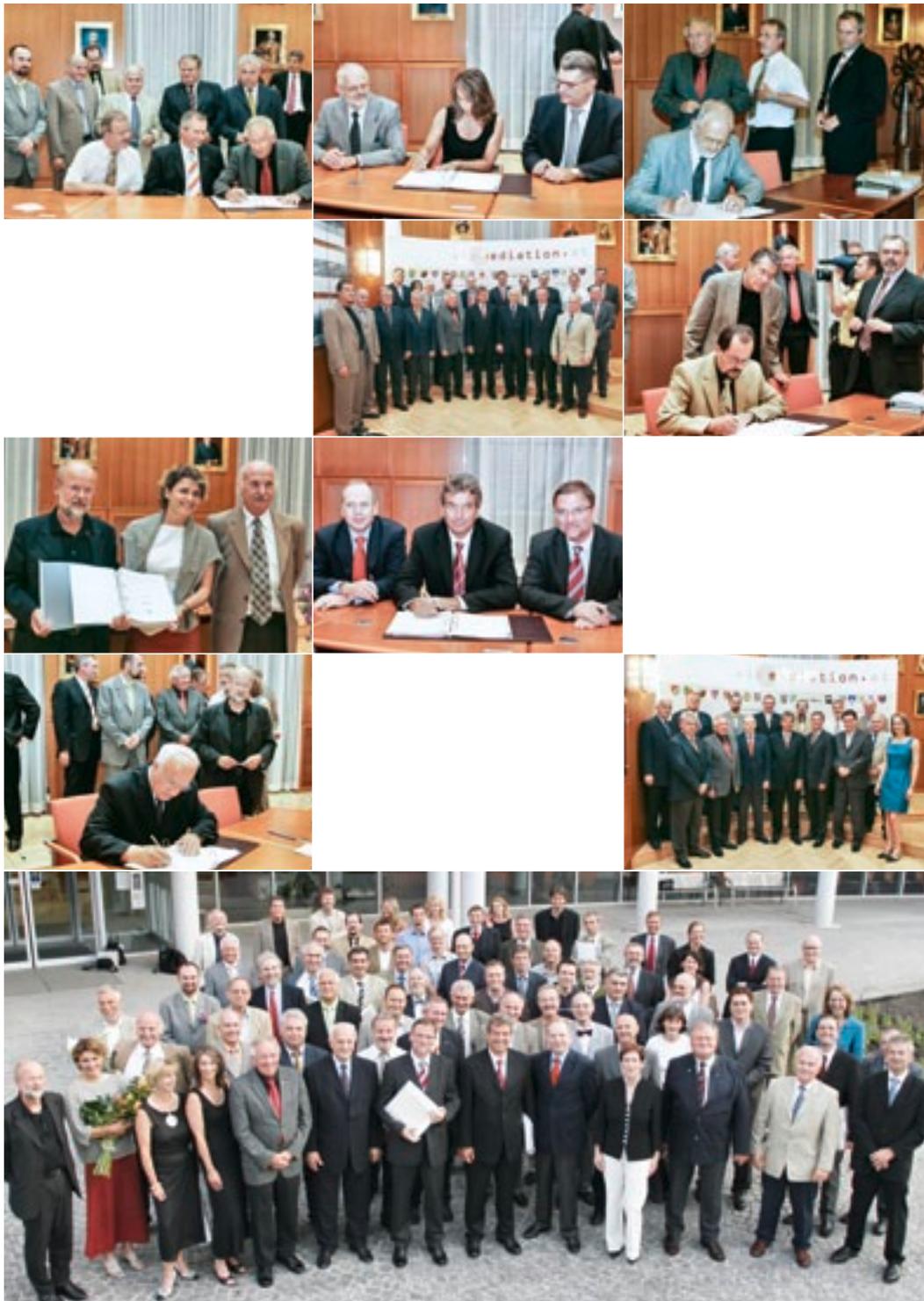
### **... People newly affected by amended departure routes request opportunities to have their say ...**

The mediation process reacted to the fact that the implementation of the partial contract had led to a change in the impact of air traffic, thus creating newly affected individuals. District conferences were held as a reaction to protests and newly created citizens' initiatives. In this way, the newly affected communities and new citizens' initiatives became part of the discussion and negotiation process.

### **... The mediation process escalates**

The mediation process reached a turning point in 2004. Issues began to run together. The discussions focused on key issues of the environment fund, technical noise protection, the location of a third runway and the regulation governing night flights. The sustainable development of the entire region was agreed as a guideline for all suggestions and mutual decisions. As a result, every issue to be considered had to strive for a balance between economic, ecological and social issues. The key question on how environmental pollution from the airport could be limited in the medium and long term to an acceptable extent without endangering the development of the airport that is important to the business location and the region had to be answered. Although many tricky and controversial issues had already been amicably resolved, there is still no consensus about the regulation governing night flights ...

# Closing event at the town hall of Schwechat



## Closing event at the town hall of Schwechat

Those who had negotiated many things and reached numerous agreements also needed a lot of time to sign the contracts, the final statements and the summary of the results.

The fact that so many party representatives got together for a group photo after several years of intensive and conflict-laden discussions and negotiations in the Vienna Airport Mediation Process shows that they succeeded in building a strong basis of trust over the years despite divergent views and stand-points ...



**The mediation contract and the final statement clearly illustrate the parties' commitment to the mediation and the extensive results of the mediation contract ...**



# The mediation contract as the result of the mediation process

## **The Vienna Airport Mediation Process is finally successfully concluded ...**

After five years, the mediation agreement was signed at Schwechat town hall on 22 June 2005, ending the conflict handling process, which was unique in its dimension in Austria and Europe. The non-legally binding summary of results with the presentation of the process results, which also reports the results of the partial contract, was signed by 55 parties.

## **... The “General Mediation Contract” defines measures for a high quality of life ...**

The “General Mediation Contract” was concluded between Flughafen Wien AG, Federal States, local communities, the association of citizens’ initiatives and residents’ associations in the area surrounding Vienna Airport. In addition to process agreements, the binding contract under civil law also regulates night flights and the implementation of technical noise protection. Agreements on the location of the third runway and guidelines on the way in which Flughafen Wien AG’s third runway project must be submitted in an environmental impact assessment process were also included. The contract also relates to a noise zone ceiling in a future three-runway system.

## **... The greatest success of the “Vienna process” ...**

The greatest success of the mediation process lies in the fact that it has been proven that it is possible – also in highly controversial infrastructural projects – to conduct a participative, transparent and fair process leading to binding contracts in the end with the involvement of all direct stakeholders and particularly non-institutional representatives of the population and the citizens’ initiatives.

## **... Respect must be paid to all parties to the conflict**

Respect must be paid to all those involved: the Management Board of Flughafen Wien AG who joined the process as well as mayors and citizens’ initiatives who courageously took on responsibility. Respect must also be paid to those who got involved but could not agree in the end and those who still consistently tried to implement their interests in another way.

In addition to the final statement, which includes the basic commitment to the results of the mediation process and mediative conflict management, the mediation process has led to several other legally binding outcomes in addition to the “General Mediation Contract” already mentioned.

### **Cooperation agreement of the Vienna Airport Dialogue Forum Association**

With the so-called “Cooperation Agreement”, which was concluded between the Vienna Airport Dialogue Forum Association and Flughafen Wien AG, Flughafen Wien AG undertakes to finance the Dialogue Forum and thus continue the conflict management process at least until a third runway is opened at Vienna Airport. As a registered association, the Dialogue Forum has its own legal personality.

### **Service agreement between the environment fund and Flughafen Wien AG**

The service agreement was concluded between the environment fund under public law and Flughafen Wien AG. The environment fund is managed by a three-man Management Board and Dr Thomas Prader has been the Chairman since the very start. The Advisory Board is made up of community representatives, the citizens’ initiative against aircraft noise (ARGE gegen Fluglärm) and Flughafen Wien AG. The Chairman is Mayor Ernst Schüller. The environment fund has an annual budget of approximately € 5 million to € 6 million.

### **Individual agreements between the communities and Flughafen Wien AG**

The individual agreements, which were bilaterally concluded between the communities and Flughafen Wien AG, regulate the noise zone ceiling, noise zones and settlement borders. The individual agreements are legally binding.

### **Arbitration agreement**

The arbitration agreement regulates the further approach to be taken if there are any disputes regarding the legally binding contracts that cannot be resolved between the respective parties to the contract.

### **Contracts create safe framework conditions**

With these results, Vienna Airport, the airlines, Austro Control and others holding economic and traffic-related interests in the airport’s expansion were given the guarantee

that the expansion plans of the contract partners would be accepted. Those living in the airport region were assured that suitable measures would be in place in the future as well so that the quality of life would be affected as little as possible. The location of a third runway, night flight regulations, the noise protection programme, the noise zone ceiling etc. have ensured this since then in combination with the environmental impact assessment on the expansion plans, which is stipulated by law.

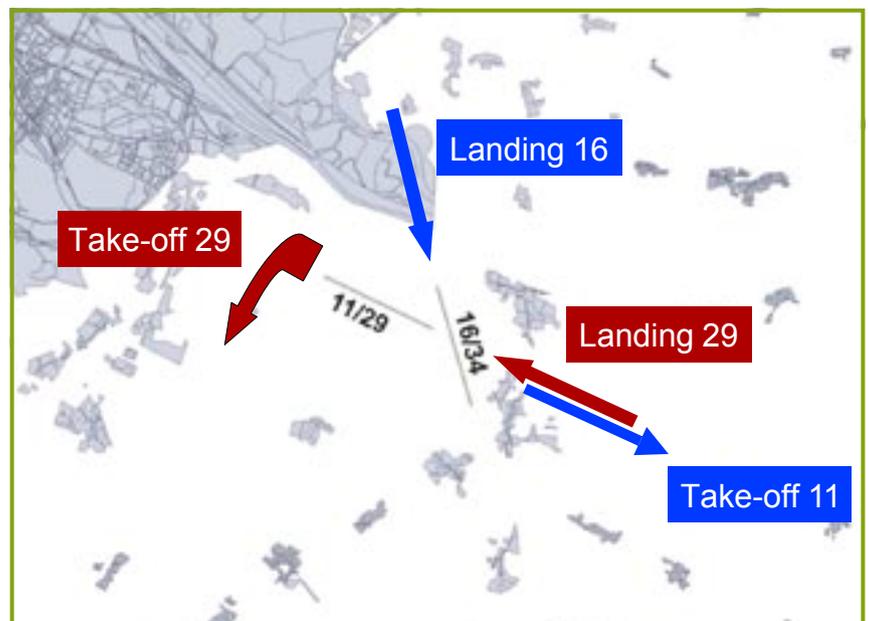
Measures and agreements to minimise the effects of air traffic as much as possible (also in the future) were important for local communities, states and citizens' initiatives. Several key requests were implemented, night flight regulations were introduced and a noise protection programme for the three-runway system was implemented.

### Night flight regulations

The night flight regulations are made up of two components. Firstly, the single runway operation, representing a restriction on the use of the runway and arrival and departure routes (cf. figure).

Secondly, the absolute cap on take-offs and landings within the calendar year including all exceptions (medical flights, security requirements, unavailability of alternative runways and special weather conditions) during the so-called night time core period between 11:30 p.m. and 5:30 a.m. to a maximum of 4,700 take-offs and landings in the two-runway system. If a sustainable third runway is built at Vienna Airport, a maximum of 3,000 aircraft movements will be allowed as soon as the three-runway system becomes operational. The night flight regulations are part of a bundle of measures that have relieved many settlement areas and compensated for highly negative effects during the day.

However, it must be made clear that there are settlement areas that could not be relieved by the night flight regulations for technical air traffic reasons. These areas are still affected by numerous take-offs and landings during the day.



Night flight regulations – restricted use of the runway:  
RED: take-offs and landings between 9:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. in WESTWIND;  
BLUE: take-offs and landings between 9:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. in SOUTH/EASTWIND  
Source: Vienna Airport Dialogue Forum Association (2015)

## Technical noise protection

The noise protection programme was agreed for the future three-runway system. It provides for technical noise protection measures in all the settlement areas that are exposed to aircraft noise at a continuous noise level of more than 54 decibels during the day and 45 decibels at night. This noise protection programme has already been fully implemented in the two-runway system. It received advance funding from Flughafen Wien AG in addition to funds from the environment fund of over € 11 million in total. As a result, noise protection is now a reality that guarantees a higher level of protection than national and European threshold values.

## Noise zone ceiling

By defining settlement borders, the noise zone ceiling has created framework conditions for the development of communities and air traffic. The objective of the noise pollution ceiling was to unbundle settlement areas and noise zones at a continuous noise level of more than 54 decibels.

## Environment fund

The environment fund under public law finances charitable projects. It indemnifies communities for unavoidable noise pollution and restrictions on development opportunities. The endowment of the environment fund is linked to developments in passenger volume.

## Runway distribution plan

Depending on the given framework conditions, the runway distribution plan has the obligation to contribute to an acceptable distribution of the effects of air traffic. Since then, target values and their compliance have been constantly observed and are one of the most conflict-laden issues at the Dialogue Forum. This is because violations often occur as a result of the many years of varying average wind and weather conditions.

## Many parties to the conflict have benefited from this – but not all of them

It can be concluded that the negotiations have paid off for many parties. Agreements, which would not have been enforceable as particular interests, were reached. However, it must be made clear that not all settlement areas have benefited from this. There are still residential areas and communities that are even more affected today.

**The aircraft industry benefits in particular from the possibility of voting on Vienna Airport's planned third runway project beforehand with the region, thus reducing the scope and extent of objections and appeals in the environmental impact assessment process and increasing local acceptance of the project.**

# From the mediation process to the Dialogue Forum

Members also agreed to continue the dialogue and negotiation process in the mediation contract. As a result, signing the mediation contract simultaneously marked the birth of the Vienna Airport Dialogue Forum Association. After the summer break in 2005, preparatory work to expand the Dialogue Forum began ...





### **Implementation of the mediation agreements begins ...**

After the mediation contract was signed and the summer break had ended, several working groups, which were already active in the mediation process, resumed their activities to continue their substantive work under the new umbrella of the Vienna Airport Dialogue Forum Association. Meetings with the evaluation group and the environmental impact assessment advisory group took place. Signatures from some communities that were still needed for the bilateral contracts with Flughafen Wien AG were obtained, after the outstanding resolutions of the municipality council had been drafted.

### **... Work at the Dialogue Forum begins**

The very first meeting under the umbrella of the Vienna Airport Dialogue Forum Association took place on 27 September 2005. The citizens' initiative against aircraft noise filed a request to increase the number of members/representatives to six delegates. At the meeting, no consensus about this issue had been reached. This was not achieved until the following meeting. Franz Jöchlinger was appointed Manager of the Dialogue Forum and Burgenland was allocated a seat in the district conference in Bruck an der Leitha. In addition to organisational questions and the appointment of representatives for the defined bodies, key issues in the transition phase of the mediation process regarding the Dialogue Forum also included questions regarding the documentation of the discussions and the meeting minutes.

The dates and participants for the PR and evaluation working group, the environmental impact assessment advisory group and the working group on agriculture, the noise protection wall and technical noise protection were established. Transition arrivals were an important topic and assigned to the landings working group along with the topic of "visual approaches". In November, the first round of district conferences took place, which were organised by the Dialogue Forum. The results of the mediation contracts were a key issue in reporting. Preparatory work was undertaken in order to implement the first city conference in Vienna, which was organised by the City of Vienna.

After all the voters had been nominated, the constitutive session of the extended Management Board of the Vienna Airport Dialogue Forum Association took place on 18 January 2006.

## **The Dialogue Forum as the result of the mediation process ...**

Thanks to the signed contracts, local communities and citizens' initiatives were convinced that it made sense to continue the discussion and negotiation process. As early as the mediation process and based on experiences implementing measures in the partial contract, it also became apparent that it would be necessary to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the agreements. As a result, citizens' initiatives and local communities used the mediation contract to require Flughafen Wien AG to appoint an institution in order to permanently manage the regional conflict. The Dialogue Forum is thus the result of the mediation process.

### **... Extensive issues and responsible issues and tasks at the Dialogue Forum**

In accordance with the statutes, the Vienna Airport Dialogue Forum is a non-profit association based in Schwechat and serves charitable purposes only. Its actions cover the entire Austrian federal territory and particularly the Federal States of Vienna, Lower Austria and Burgenland (sections 1 and 2 of the statutes). The association provides suitable communication processes in issues and conflicts that are relevant to air traffic and the activities of Vienna Airport and the surrounding area so that all interests can be voluntarily taken into account and solutions can be found in a participative, transparent, cooperative and fair manner (section 3).

On this basis, the association has the following duties in particular:

- Introducing, organising and managing a suitable communication process aimed at monitoring and evaluating the agreements pertaining to air traffic in a two-runway system and a three-runway system, particularly with regard to traffic distribution on runways and SIDs, arrival and departure routes, corridors and the regulation governing night flights.
- Supporting members of the association in their role as contact points and their duty to support the results of the association's work.

**The Vienna Airport Dialogue Forum reached full working capacity in the first half of 2006, in which all the established activities were also fully initiated. The extremely dynamic growth of air traffic and its effects directly led to the implementation of the agreements in the mediation contract at the Dialogue Forum and the discussion and negotiation on ongoing further measures against the effects of air traffic, right from the very start ...**



# Dialogue Forum 2005–2015

## **The Dialogue Forum starts working on the air traffic's dynamic growth phase in 2005/2006**

In addition to organisational and infrastructure development work and preparatory work to implement measures, the transition phase from the mediation process to the Dialogue Forum was shaped by a key subject in the second half of 2005 – the discussion on introducing transition arrivals.

Mayor Leo Heuber/Enzersdorf an der Fischa was the first chairman of the Dialogue Forum. Mayors agreed to take turns with the duties and functions at the Dialogue Forum on a three-year basis.

In January 2006, the discussions on transition arrivals were continued and completed with positive results in March 2006. As of May 2006, transition arrivals were flown in addition to changed departure routes.

At Flughafen Wien AG, people were working hard on the environmental impact declaration and project documents in order to submit plans on the third runway for an environmental impact assessment. During the night time core period between 11:30 p.m. and 5:30 a.m. agreed in the night flight regulations, around 6,400 take-offs and landings took place with a steadily strong demand for additional slots in 2006.

In September 2006, Wolfgang Hesina was appointed as the new manager of the Vienna Airport Dialogue Forum Association. Together with Dr Thomas Prader, he is in charge of process control. Franz Jöchlinger became the representative of the interests of Flughafen Wien AG at the Dialogue Forum.

The discussions and preliminary work to implement the night flight regulations and the start of the noise protection programme were in full swing.

Air traffic was experiencing dynamic growth, passenger growth reached 6.3% and the number of transfer passengers increased by 4.3% in 2005/2006.

## **Air traffic also continues to grow in 2007/2008**

In January 2007, the implementation of the night flight regulation began. The challenge was lowering the number of take-offs and landings in the core night time period including all exceptions to the agreed value of 4,700 in the calendar year in three annual steps by 2009. In March 2007, Flughafen Wien AG submitted the environmental impact declaration and project documents to the authorities in charge of the environmental impact assessment, which was the RU4 regional planning department of the office of the province government of Lower Austria, and the environmental impact assessment process on the third runway began. The Dialogue Forum's website [www.dialogforum.at](http://www.dialogforum.at) also went online in March 2007.

In September 2007, Flughafen Wien AG's visitor centre opened. In the VISITAIR Center, the topics, contents and activities of the Dialogue Forum were presented in the airport region info-station. In October 2007, the Dialogue Forum decided to use the noise protection programme for a potential three-runway system, which was agreed in the mediation contract, for settlement areas affected by the current air traffic issues in the two-runway system. The number of passengers at Vienna Airport increased by 11.3% in 2006/2007. The number of take-offs and landings rose by 7.5%. In February 2008, the Euro 2008 working group started its work to support smooth flight operations during the European Football Championship. The Dialogue Forum seized the opportunity to slot GAC aircrafts ("private aircrafts") for the first time. As of June 2008, the implementation of the regulation governing night flights was then supported in the long term. In May 2008, the environmental impact declaration for the planned third runway was presented for public inspection as part of the environmental impact assessment process.

The show room for the noise protection programme opened in Fischamend in October. In November, the environmental impact assessment authorities confirmed the legal standing of the citizens' initiative against aircraft noise and other members of the Dialogue Forum in the environmental impact assessment process pertaining to the third runway. In November 2008, the noise protection programme environment fund working group began its work and subsequently handled all social, hardship and special cases that occurred in connection with the implementation of the noise protection programme. In the second half of 2008, signs of an economic crisis became increasingly significant although the number of passengers had risen once again by 5.2% and the number of take-offs and landings had increased by 4.5% from 2007 to 2008.

## **Air traffic development takes a hit in the recession year of 2009**

In January, Deputy Mayor Gerhard Frauenberger assumed office as chairman of the Dialogue Forum. In February, the Berlin-Brandenburg airport region attended the Dialogue Forum and obtained information about the work and results of the Vienna Airport Mediation Process. In May, Austro Control and Vienna Airport introduced the website [www.flugspuren.at](http://www.flugspuren.at). Members of the Dialogue Forum welcomed this step but demanded additional information that could not be published under data protection law. At the beginning of July, an agreement was reached to introduce noise fees based on the noise emissions of each plane. This was implemented immediately.

In the last quarter of 2009, signs of fatigue became apparent among members and the meaningfulness of the discussion and negotiation process at the Dialogue Forum becomes an issue. At the end of the year, a spot-on landing in the reduction of night flights was forecast for the first time following initial difficulties. The recession year of 2009 led to a strong decline in aircraft movements and the development in passenger volume. From 19.7 million passengers in 2008, passenger numbers dropped to 18.1 million in 2009 (down 8.3%). Moreover, the number of aircraft movements fell by 22,000 to a figure slightly above 243,000.

## **The aircraft industry reacts to the crisis – 2010**

In January, the Dialogue Forum reacted to the emerging identity crisis by ordering an intervention study and the task of evaluating the Dialogue Forum from Alpen-Adria University of Klagenfurt. In February, topics and processes further developed at the Dialogue Forum. In May, the noise protection programme was ramped up. After the elections, new mayors of the local communities got to work.

In September, the helicopter of the Federal Ministry of Internal Affairs was stationed at Vienna Airport with the Dialogue Forum's consent. In Schwadorf, the population obtained information about details of the noise protection programme. In November, the results of the evaluation of the Dialogue Forum were made available and discussed at length. At the end of 2010, the trend towards the use of larger aircraft and better seat occupancy became clearly visible. After the slump in passenger numbers in 2009, the decline in the number of passengers was made up for again and the number of aircraft movements increased at the same time to just over 1% in 2010.

## **New challenges due to amended framework conditions**

After around 130 sessions, nearly 70 district conferences and countless other meetings with press and media representatives, members of the Dialogue Forum and people interested in the Dialogue Forum from Austria and abroad, the Forum's work entered into a decisive phase at the beginning of 2011 and the time had come to make an interim assessment. In 2005, the parties assumed that it would be clear in 2011 if a third runway would be approvable – and if that were the case, they assumed that it would also be clear when the runway would be built. Reality indicated that air traffic could and would take place in the two-runway system for a much longer time than expected.

## **Meeting in Schwechat brings about change at the Dialogue Forum**

At the end of January 2011, the Dialogue Forum reacted to the new situation, taking into account the evaluation results of the University of Klagenfurt and setting the course for the future. This was triggered by growing difficulty in complying with the agreements on the two-runway system. The new forecast for transport development required by the environmental impact assessment authorities also influenced the process, having an effect on runway distribution and flight noise zones and thus initiating new topics for discussion. Action was also required because it could not be foreseen whether and when a third runway would be built. The environmental impact assessment process was proceeding slowly and it was therefore unclear whether or when a 3-runway discussion would even begin at all.

The Dialogue Forum faced the challenges and amended framework conditions by focusing on organisational adjustments with a new process control group and new working groups that were expected to deal with issues pertaining to air traffic, visual approaches, the curved approach, traffic (ground handling) etc. Alongside the implementation of measures on the discussion on options, future focus was then placed on ways to deal with the effects of the high-volume two-runway system. The subject of the focus defined in 2005, which was starting the discussion on the entire arrival and departure system for a three-runway system soon in addition to the implementation of measures, became less important. The environmental impact assessment process on the planned third runway continued to be observed. However, after the recession year of 2009, the stagnating or even declining number of take-offs and landings reduced the possibility that bottlenecks would occur and the runway project could be swiftly implemented.

## **In 2011, the Dialogue Forum focused on questions pertaining to the two-runway system**

In February, the results of the meeting in Schwechat were implemented and the focus of substantive work was increasingly placed on issues associated with the two-runway system. In May and at the request of the local communities, the Dialogue Forum answered the population's questions and provided information about the work and results achieved as part of a Flughafen Wien AG info-tour about the third runway and noise protection programme. At the beginning of July, the environmental impact assessment authorities took a long-awaited next step in the environmental impact assessment process and published the environmental impact report for the planned third runway.

In September, a public discussion on the environmental impact report and the runway project took place. Both the discussion and reports in the media were shaped by the views of the members of the Dialogue Forum until the last day of negotiations. In October, long-term violations of the target values for landings on runway 34 opened the discussion on potential compensatory measures. The working group on landings 34 & compensatory measures was created and a new approach was adopted to solve problems in visual approach issues. Throughout 2011, many national and international groups and institutions attended the Dialogue Forum. In November, the working group known as "Curved Approach" was created. In December, the General Assembly adopted representation rules and included them in the Articles of Association of the Dialogue Forum.

## **New passenger record in 2011 but fewer aircraft movements ...**

For the first time ever, Vienna Airport counted more than 21 million passengers, a 7.2% increase compared with 2010. The trend towards larger aircraft and better utilisation continued and the number of take-offs and landings remained unchanged as against 2010.

## **... Settlement negotiations on the violation of target values dominate talks in 2012**

The intense negotiations on "landings 34" and "visual approaches" continued at the beginning of 2012. Members of the Dialogue Forum prepared for a discussion in a citizen advocacy broadcast on the Austrian TV channel ORF. In February, the Dialogue Forum's first aviation expertise event took place. The aim was to align and further develop the level of knowledge among all members of the Dialogue Forum on issues relevant to air traffic.

## Implementation of measures

In the first half of 2012, pensioners, local residents, groups of pupils as well as politicians and citizens' initiatives attended the Dialogue Forum, informing themselves about the development of air traffic and its regional impact.

## The environmental impact assessment decision in the first instance approved construction of a third runway

In July, the environmental impact assessment authorities published the environmental impact assessment decision on the third runway – according to this decision, the runway was environmentally sustainable. Members of the Dialogue Forum interrupted their summer break to discuss the environmental impact assessment decision. The environmental impact assessment decision showed that measures from the mediation process and the Dialogue Forum offered a higher level of protection than measures established in the environmental impact assessment decision in order to fulfil minimum statutory standards. None of the citizens' initiatives negotiating at the Dialogue Forum appealed against the decision. The City of Vienna brought one of the 28 appeals against the environmental impact assessment decision to the authorities. The discussions on the environmental impact

**The location of the planned third runway was not determined by Flughafen Wien AG alone: Citizens' initiatives and local communities were also involved in the decision. All parties to the conflict finally agreed on the location illustrated below ...**



Location of the third runway

Source: VIE (2012)

assessment decision in the press and in the media as well as the work and topics of the Dialogue Forum were increasingly in the public eye.

2012, the busiest year to date, ended with more presentations and discussions in December about the experiences of the Dialogue Forum to handle the conflict process in front of a national and international audience. Vienna Airport recorded around 22.2 million passengers, breaking another record. But at the same time, the number of take-offs and landings decreased. This confirmed the trend towards larger aircraft and higher utilisation in 2012 as well.

## **The discussion on conflict-laden issues shapes 2013 and 2014**

Two focal points dominated the Forum's work in the first half of 2013: negotiations on "landings 34" and "visual approaches" and the Dialogue Forum's numerous presentations at international events. In June 2013, measures were finally taken to compensate for target values applicable to landings 34 that had been exceeded as well as the set of problems related to the visual approach. Members of the Dialogue Forum started the discussion on ways to compensate for exceeded target values in take-offs from runway 29 in the "Runway 29" working group.

In the last quarter of 2013, the "Structure", "Curved Departure" and "Margarethen am Moos" working groups got to work. At year-end, the number of passengers amounted to 22.0 million, which was almost the same as in 2012. However, 5.5% fewer aircrafts were taking off and landing at Vienna Airport in 2013 as against the previous year.

## **2014 – Conflict-laden negotiation topics and implementation problems**

In March, members of the Dialogue Forum participated in a meeting of the citizens' initiatives in Frankfurt. In April, a large delegation from the airport region in Stockholm attended the Dialogue Forum. In May, the discussion on new night SIDs was initiated at the Dialogue Forum. This was triggered by the European Union's guidelines on the organisation of air routes. In June, the "Structure" working group agreed on the board's rules of procedure for district conferences, minimising the amount of barriers to entry in the discussions on air traffic for non-members.

In the second half of the year, mobile noise measurement stations were consolidated in order to understand curved approaches on runway 16 and their noise effects. In 2014, no measures seemed to be suitable enough to maintain target values in take-offs towards the west and the distribution of take-offs on runways 29 and 34. Problems in the implementation of the agreement terms on landings 34 became increasingly clear. Discussions on the two issues were more and more difficult. Clarifying discussions on the approach to be used led to a new problem-solving approach. Hopes to reduce the distribution of aircraft in the right-hand bend with a radius-fixed-turn after the beginning of runway 34 were not fulfilled for technical reasons. Two radius-fixed-turns were adopted to organise take-offs from runway 16 in an acceptable manner.

In December, a South-Korean television crew filmed a report about experiences from the mediation process and the Dialogue Forum that were related to air traffic.



**In 2015, the Dialogue Forum's focus was still on the implementation of terms in the mediation agreement and the negotiation of further measures to minimise the effects of air traffic as much as possible. Complicated issues, such as night SIDs and the elimination of implementation problems linked to a number of agreement terms, continue to shape current work. The appeal decision in the environmental impact assessment process on the third runway is no longer anticipated for 2015 ...**



# Dialogue Forum – Interim result

Henry Ford once said: *“Coming together is a beginning, staying together is a progress, and working together is a success!”*

Members of the Vienna Airport Dialogue Forum have been working hard for ten years and it would be easy to say that the Dialogue Forum has been a success. However, these successes should not belie the fact that alongside a lot of light, there have also been a number of dark moments and times that collaboration did not work as well and the interests of the members collided more than usual. Around 330 meetings of the various bodies and working groups and 120 district conferences have taken place in the last 10 years. Here, special thanks must go to all the members of the Dialogue Forum and those who took part in district conferences, particularly the citizens’ initiatives, whose members sacrificed precious amounts of their free time without pay to reconcile the interests of the aircraft industry, local communities and states.

## **Problem areas and irresolvable basic conflicts – Experiences**

The greatest problems occurred in areas where it was not possible to achieve at least minor improvements at regional level and in places where agreement terms had not been complied with for years. Conflicts also emerged more considerably in areas where the effect of measures could not be ‘felt’. A voting process, regardless of the type, time and location increasingly had the effect that the harsher tone of the political discussion has also affected the atmosphere for talks at the Dialogue Forum. In addition, it has been impossible so far to resolve the fundamental conflict on how to pursue two goals at once: minimise the overall effect and help the local residents who suffer the most serious quantifiable effects. The level of knowledge has also reduced the scope of action because it is less controversial to distribute the negative impact of air traffic on the overflowed areas than to create newly affected areas.

The main problem has always been compliance with runway distribution plans. Regardless of whether it was due to the target values for three of the four landing directions, take-offs towards the west or other issues, the additional impact on the affected settlement areas inevitably led to a discussion on additional measures to observe target values.

## **Successful implementation of measures – A few examples**

The results are still impressive although they are considered to be better from the perspective of other international conflict resolution processes than from a national perspective. The fact is that flight noise zones have grown a lot less than the number of passengers in the last ten years, despite the distinct trend towards larger aircraft. Many agreements on air traffic management are almost fully complied with (such as flight corridor rules, turning heights and a single runway operation).

The regulation governing night flights has significantly reduced the negative impact of aircraft noise. Many settlement areas are generally free of overflights between 9:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. During the night time core period between 11:30 p.m. and 5:30 a.m., the absolute cap on the number of take-offs and landings to 4,700 within a calendar year has become a reality. At the moment, there are already extensive noise protection programmes for settlement areas affected by air traffic from the two-runway system at continuous noise levels exceeding 54 decibels during the day and more than 45 decibels at night. As a result, a higher level of protection than what is prescribed by law is already a reality for the people affected by aircraft noise. In addition, there have been numerous changes in arrival and departure routes to improve flights around the settlement areas. The introduction of transition arrivals and rules on visual approaches were negotiated at the Dialogue Forum and successfully implemented. Measures such as the introduction of noise fees, slotting private aircraft, radius-fixed turns, giving the population a say and opportunities to participate in institutionalised decision-making in the form of the Dialogue Forum etc. should not be overlooked.

Among the most recent success, several measures to improve compliance with the agreement terms (waypoint for visual approaches, 40% reduction, reaching target values for take-offs on runway 29, compensatory measures if target values are exceeded in landings on runways 11 and 34 and many more) can be mentioned. In the last ten years, the Dialogue Forum has made a contribution to prevent the effects of air traffic from growing alongside the development of passenger numbers. It must be noted that there are areas that could be relieved and have had to accept additional pollution. However, the main focus of action has always been the distribution of the unavoidable negative impact in such a way that the quality of life and environmental quality in the airport region can be maintained for the population while always keeping in mind the objective of making improvements.



10 years since the mediation agreement was signed – 10 years of the Dialogue Forum.

Even if this is a reason to celebrate, the discussion and negotiations always come first at the Dialogue Forum to then build trust in a somewhat more relaxed atmosphere as well ...



## Air traffic situation at the end of 2014

In 2014, there were 22.5 million passengers at Vienna Airport. The number of aircraft movements amounted to around 231,000 at the same level as in 2005. The surface of the 66 dB(A) zone was approximately 11 km<sup>2</sup> in 2013.

### Development of air traffic 1995–2014

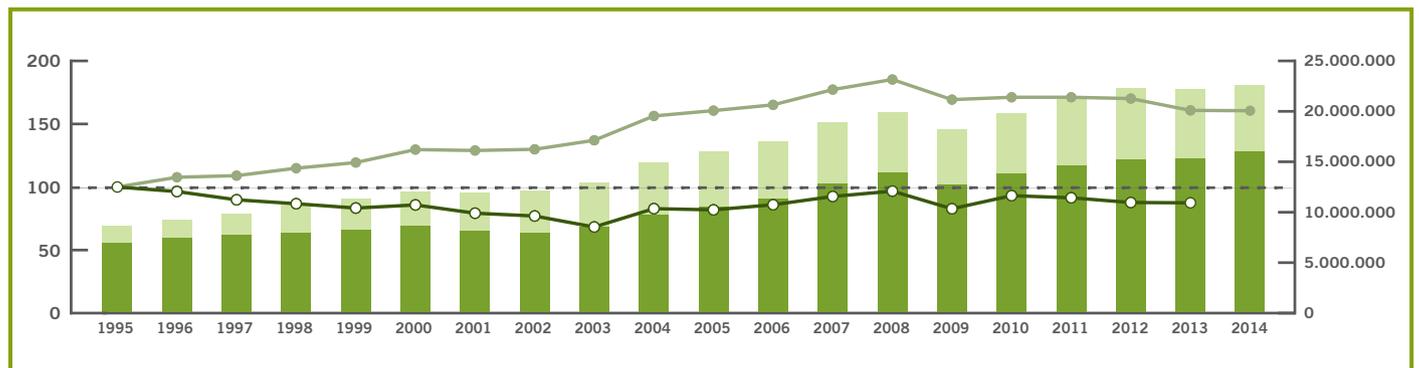
Index 1995 = 100%:

- L/C movements overall
- 66 dB zone in km<sup>2</sup>

in absolute terms:

- Transfer passengers
- Passengers without transfer

As a result, the number of passengers rose by 14.2% as against 2010, by 41.8% as against 2005 and by 88.3% as against 2000, while the dB(A) zones have only slightly changed (+2.0%) since 2000.



Development of air traffic 1995–2014

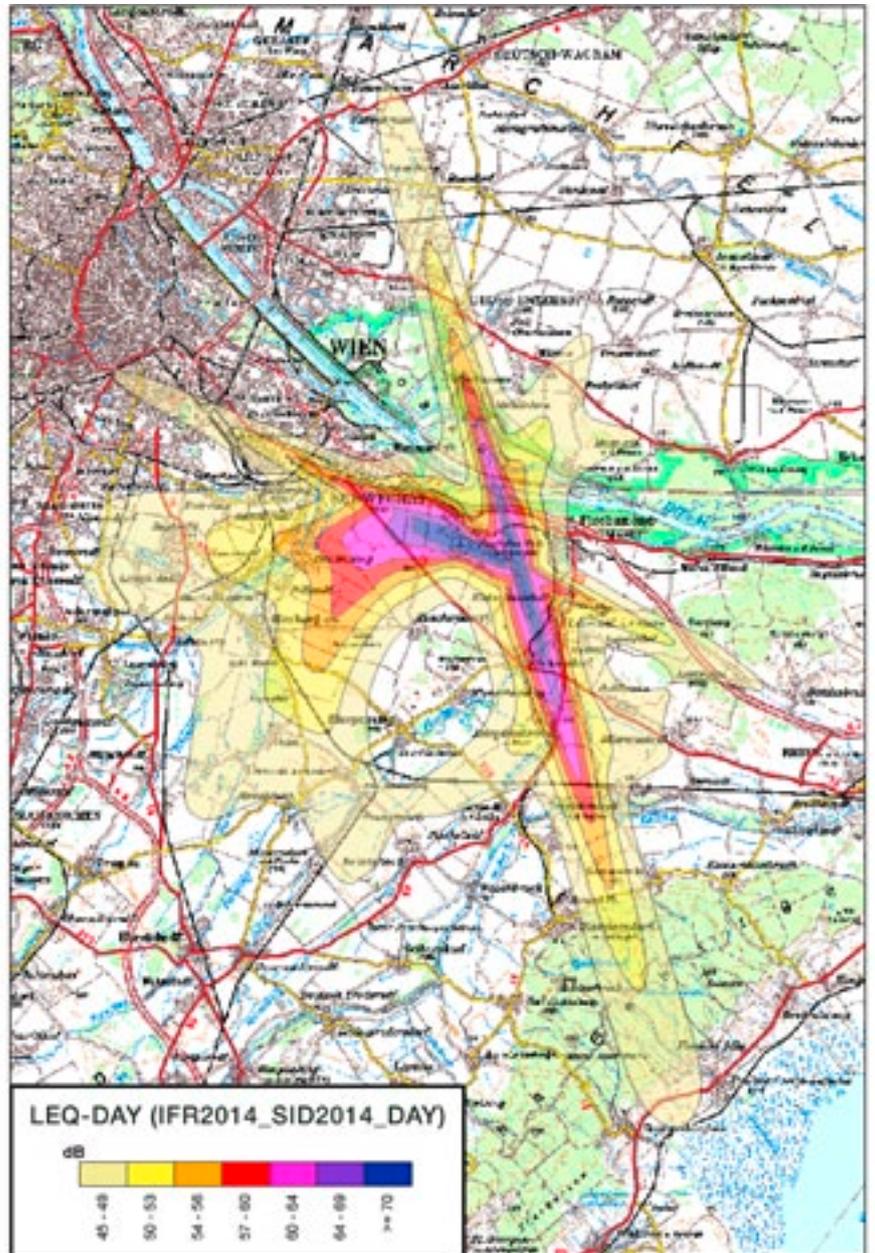
Source: VIE (2015)

## Air traffic situation in 2015

Air traffic experts anticipate a passenger record for 2015 if the number of take-offs and landings stagnates again. The trend towards higher seat utilisation in larger aircraft may continue as a result. At the end of 2015, it was also evident that the maximum number of take-offs and landings allowed during the night time core period between 11:30 p.m. and 5:30 a.m. had been underlined again and that the regulation governing night flights had been successfully implemented for another year.

## Impact of the development of air traffic in 2014/2015

In the annual evaluation report of the Dialogue Forum, flight noise zones illustrate the respective prevailing effects of air traffic in the Vienna Airport region. The representation of day flight noise zones (cf. figure) shows that large parts of the densely populated settlement areas in the Vienna Airport region/Lower Austria-Burgenland were outside of flight noise zones in 2014 as well.



In the Dialogue Forum's evaluation reports, noise zones of 45 decibels or more during the day and 40 decibels or more at night are demarcated to avoid accusations of a "fudged" representation. The Dialogue Forum has already been identifying flight noise zones for ten years already, while they are being discussed in studies today ...

*“I am more interested in the future than in the past because that is where I intend to live.”*

**This quote by Albert Einstein is the Dialogue Forum’s main guideline. Despite several difficult issues, many members are confidently looking towards the future ...**

# Work at the Dialogue Forum to continue in the future ...

After an interim assessment of the successes and failings, work at the Dialogue Forum shall continue. The Federal Administrative Court's decision on the appeal in the permit process for the third runway is anticipated for 2016. This will not lead to a new situation since it is not assumed that a decision on the construction of a third runway will swiftly be made due to existing trouble spots worldwide and global economic framework conditions.

For the Dialogue Forum members whose settlement areas are in the extension area of runway 16/34 and who assumed in 2005 that they would be relieved in 2012/2013 at the latest with a three-runway system, this means that they will still have to wait for years for a third runway to be built at all. If the number of passengers increases, the number of take-offs and landings will also start to rise again after a number of years. With an increasingly overloaded two-runway system, members in the following years – construction go-ahead aside – will have to discuss this in the future. Conflicts will become more frequent and intense with the rise in the effects of air traffic. Continuing the Dialogue Forum will depend on whether this basis of trust can be maintained.

The decision to build a third runway would somewhat mitigate the discussion on measures to minimise the effects of air traffic in the two-runway system as much as possible. This is because this perspective would suddenly be real again after a few years, especially for the members who would be relieved thanks to a three-runway system. The substantive focus would be orientated towards arrival and departure routes for a three-runway system. The administration of results and observation of compliance with the agreements would lose significance. A larger audience would then strongly observe work carried out at the Dialogue Forum again. The future shows that work at the Dialogue Forum will be important for peace in the region, regardless of whether there will be a two- or a three-runway system at Vienna Airport. Only members can determine whether this will successfully continue or not. This is because the Dialogue Forum will only continue to exist if they succeed in working up the courage and readiness to voluntarily deal with conflict-laden and emotionally charged issues and continue working on reconciling interests.

# Opinions on the mediation process and the Dialogue Forum



**Erich Valentin**  
Member of the Landtag  
(Vienna City Parliament)  
and the local council,  
Chairman of the Environmental  
Committee in Vienna

Listening, accepting and understanding other opinions and remembering the task and desires of one's own group at the same time. If there is another equal consensus, reconciling interests would be simple. The last ten years of work at the Dialogue Forum and the five years prior to that in the mediation have proved that this is mostly not the case and that a tough struggle for positions is rather part of everyday life.

The fact that it was possible to look people straight in the eye despite difficult discussions and to achieve results together that we could present as best practice in a European context is testament to the quality of the discussion and the negotiations.

Work will also be exciting in the future. Framework conditions in European and national legislation have changed and continue to change. It is important to keep this objective in mind. In order to sustain the responsible growth that we need in the region under ecological framework conditions.

As a representative of Vienna who has had the opportunity to be on board for 15 years already, I would like to thank you for the great collaboration we have had, the enthusiastic dialogue and our joint success. I wish you all the very best for the future.



**Christian Popp**  
Representative of the Province  
of Lower Austria at the  
Dialogue Forum

Those who speak of the Dialogue Forum also imply the Vienna Airport Mediation Process, in which substantial and organisational changes were presented for the development of the airport site in Schwechat. Retrospectively, it was primarily not the substantial breakthroughs that have made the entire process a success but rather the way in which interaction took place, making such successes possible in the first place.

This spirit of collaboration and will to achieve consensual solutions, also in difficult and controversial situations, makes the future optimistic also with regard to solution expertise at the Dialogue Forum. This is also urgently necessary as the low hanging fruits have already been largely picked.



**Peter Zinggl**  
Traffic coordinator of Burgenland  
and representative of Burgenland  
at the Dialogue Forum

Traffic infrastructural projects such as Vienna Airport's expansion measures are a key site factor that safeguards Austria's accessibility. At the same time, the quality of life and environmental quality have to be maintained and the negative impact on the population has to be minimised. At the Dialogue Forum, I saw how difficult and time-consuming it was to achieve a fair balance between the interests of the aircraft industry, those of politicians and those of the population. To this day, the Dialogue Forum has carried out this difficult task not only fairly but also in an open and transparent way. As the representative of Burgenland, I will therefore continue to bring forward the interests of the state to the Dialogue Forum.



**Dr Manfred Peter**  
Representative of the Working group of the citizens' initiatives against aircraft noise

In the Dialogue Forum's negotiations, the citizens' initiative against aircraft noise represents people who live under the arrival and departure routes of Vienna Airport and are burdened every day and certain nights by aircraft noise. The guideline here is to make concessions to enable the airport to function properly by coping with aircraft noise on a daily basis. In turn, they expect the aircraft industry to implement every possibility to minimise noise pollution, even if this restricts the airport's operation or costs airlines a few extra miles. Work in the next ten years will focus on observing compliance with existing contracts and particularly developing the partial contract on the operation of the two-runway system.

As we are marking the 10th anniversary of the conclusion of the mediation contract regulating the operation of the three-runway system, we find ourselves in a peculiar situation since we are sure that we will continue with the two-runway system in the next ten years. In order to continue with this two-runway system, it is true that the situation triggered by the European football championship in 2008 cannot become a permanent state.



**Manfred Schweighart**  
Viel zu laut!!! citizens' initiative

A dialogue that continues for years without bringing any improvements for the population concerned is meaningless. Constantly creating new threat scenarios to force citizens' initiatives to participate is not enough to present the dialogue as a success.



**Susanne Rynesch**  
Representative of the Austrian platform against aircraft noise

Affected citizens have become involved in the Vienna Airport region. After the mediation agreement had been concluded, citizens were also involved in the decision-making. Their concerns have been shaping flight operations to a large extent for ten years now. The lively international interest in the mode of operation of the Vienna Airport Dialogue Forum shows that exemplary standards have been set to settle the conflict in infrastructural projects.



**Johannes Stöckl**  
Pro Margarethen citizens' initiative

Margarethen am Moos is one of the areas most affected by aircraft noise in Austria. This is why it was extremely important to be represented first in the mediation process and now at the Dialogue Forum. The aim is to prevent the situation from getting worse and improving the noise situation. Introducing technical innovations such as RF turns have made minor relief a possibility. Due to the rising number of airlines and measures to increase passenger numbers at Vienna Airport, we are pleading in favour of the quickest way possible to build the third runway. This would allow the negative impact of air traffic to be resolved more efficiently, to secure the site and ensure and implement expansion plans.



**Jürgen Maschl**  
Mayor of Schwadorf

The Vienna Airport Dialogue Forum has an extremely important role in the development of our entire region. Evaluating and complying with all articles of the contract voluntarily agreed with regard to the construction of the third runway at Vienna Airport is key. It is only possible to combine the opinions of all the interest groups involved and unanimously agree on issues in a dialogue. The Dialogue Forum guarantees this. I am delighted to give my opinion in the forum and I congratulate you on the first ten years of its existence!



**Ernst Nevrivy**  
Mayor of the 22nd municipal district of Donaustadt in Vienna

Vienna is growing, particularly Donaustadt. Global flight connections are important for any dynamically growing metropolitan area. But for every settlement area, aircraft noise and the effects of air traffic are undesired and this applies to Donaustadt. As Mayor, I represent the interests of the population in Donaustadt in order to minimise aircraft noise as much as possible in often difficult discussions at the Dialogue Forum. This forum has been working on the key issue of reconciling interests in the region for ten years now.



**Thomas Ram**  
Mayor of Fischamend

The Dialogue Forum is unique in its own way and enjoys international recognition. For the airport's local communities, this is an optimal platform to safeguard the quality of life for the people in our region. It has proven to be a hub and interface between the airport, citizens' initiatives and the communities. I am confident that the Dialogue Forum will gain even more importance in the interest of the population and the entire region in the years to come.



**Ernst Schüller**  
Mayor of Rauchenwarth

It is only when decision-makers at Flughafen Wien AG are aware of the desires, needs and emotions of the population and representatives of the communities and citizens' initiatives and understand the technical and economic framework conditions of air traffic that there can be a mutual constructive basis for discussion.

The Dialogue Forum has been this platform for ten years and is a place where knowledge is transferred, interests are exchanged and good solutions are often found.



Dr. Günther Ofner,  
Julian Jäger  
Members of the Management Board  
of Flughafen Wien AG

The Dialogue Forum and the path we have chosen to collaborate with all those involved, from citizens to aviation companies, are unique in Europe. In the last ten years, numerous measures were agreed only as a result of the high level of commitment among all dialogue partners and the willingness to look for consensual solutions together despite divergent views. Results were achieved far beyond the scope provided for by law. We congratulate the Dialogue Forum on ten successful years and wish it all the best for the future.



Kay Kratky  
CEO of Austrian Airlines AG

For many years, Austrian Airlines has been striving to reduce unavoidable noise emissions produced by air traffic by investing in quieter aircraft, converting existing models and introducing flight processes that reduce noise. Here as well, the mediation process in the Dialogue Forum is of vital importance. This prime example of an efficient communication and discussion platform between the aviation industry and the population shows that it is possible to find acceptable solutions together for all those concerned.



Dr Heinz Sommerbauer  
CEO of Austro Control,  
Management Spokesman

The Dialogue Forum builds the foundation for a reasonable reconciliation of interests that equally takes into account legitimate requests for as little air traffic noise pollution as possible and development opportunities for Austrian aviation. An objective and fair dialogue is the key to sustainable solutions to support both the economy and the population. Austro Control has taken part in this dialogue with citizens for many years on an equal footing and will also remain a reliable partner at the Dialogue Forum in the future.



Franz Jöchlinger  
Airport region coordinator  
of Flughafen Wien AG

Many people are responsible for the success of the mediation process and the Dialogue Forum – ‚The right people were in the right place at the right time.‘ But in my opinion, it must be highlighted that the members of the citizens’ initiatives at the Dialogue Forum have made use of their free time to sustainably develop the region with exemplary civil courage. I have great respect for your willingness to dedicate up to 50 evenings a year for the common good!



**Alfred Höllrigl**  
Representative of the Haslau-  
Maria Ellend citizens' initiative

When the Vienna Airport Dialogue Forum was founded in 2005, the citizens' initiative against aircraft noise, an association of 16 citizens' initiatives, got to work at the Dialogue Forum. I had the opportunity to manage the citizens' initiative against aircraft noise for approximately eight years as a representative and I consider the Dialogue Forum as an essential guarantor to minimise aircraft noise pollution as much as possible for the local population. International recognition has also given us the confirmation that we are on the right track.



**Herbert Hofmann,  
Viktor Horak**  
Liesing and Stop Fluglärm  
Vienna-Südwest citizens' initiatives

The basic principle of uniting aircraft economic activity, politics, the authorities and burdened individuals in a mediation process was good – particularly for the airport's expansion plans.

Establishing new air routes via Vienna without involving those newly affected by “unrestricted air traffic growth” as a guideline and introducing partially opportunistic regional policies have led to new pollution and maximum irritation. Approaches for change automatically occur at the expense of others, making no-win situations permanent.



**Erich Kohlhauser**  
Götzendorf/Pischelsdorf  
citizens' initiative

Compared with the act against aircraft noise and the environmental impact assessment process, the improvements with regard to threshold values for noise protection, which are up to 10 dB lower, are remarkable. As a result of the regulation governing night flights, only one runway is used from 9:00 p.m. Take-off routes are restricted and a cap on aircraft movements is in place during the night time core period. A noise fee system reduces the number of loud aircraft. The environment fund helps those concerned. There is still a lot of room for improvement and the spirit of the mediation should be maintained in the future.



**Franz Süß, Gerald Stumpf**  
Trautmannsdorf Direkt!  
citizens' initiative, (Trau.Di!)

We see the Dialogue Forum as a tool to put forward, discuss and consensually implement our interests and concerns. As a founding member of the citizens' initiative against aircraft noise, we have negotiated a number of improvements for our municipality in the last ten years of this dialogue. Even if this continues to be our main goal, we will need to make sure that we maintain what we have already achieved in the future.



**Werner Herbert**  
Member of the Bundestag (Upper House of the Austrian Parliament) and representative of the municipality of Enzersdorf an der Fischa at the Dialogue Forum; Deputy Chairman of the Data Protection Council

Future work at the Dialogue Forum will entail the greatest challenge with regard to future developments between the airport’s priorities as the largest employer in the region and the justified noise protection interests of the affected local communities in order to make the right future-oriented decisions.



**Monika Obereigner-Sivec**  
Deputy Mayor of Groß-Enzersdorf

According to Karl Popper, the value of a dialogue particularly depends on the variety of rival opinions – this is the case in the airport region. The ten-year path was clearly defined to openly and objectively discuss priority interests and find consensual solutions. At the Dialogue Forum, I see even more opportunities for the future and the region. It can/ will be possible to make improvements for those affected by aircraft noise – especially in the Groß-Enzersdorf region only if the discussion is continued with those concerned.



**Karin Baier**  
Mayor of Schwechat

As the new mayor of Schwechat, I am pleased to voice my impressions on the work of and with the Dialogue Forum.

In recent months, I already had the possibility to attend several meetings of the Dialogue Forum. I considerably expanded my knowledge about diverse projects and current events at the airport and I greatly appreciate the expertise and detail with which I now have the possibility to hold discussions in a pleasant environment with representatives of other surrounding communities and experienced experts as the new mayor.



**Christian Woborsky**  
Supervisor Tower, Representative of Austro Control at the Dialogue Forum

The Dialogue Forum in Vienna is clear proof that citizen involvement can be successfully implemented even with complex and highly specialised issues. The long-term will to constructively collaborate with one another leads to solutions even exceeding expectations in many areas. The path that we have embarked on has been rightly internationally recognised and appreciated. In the future, it will also be a guideline to shape the region together. As part of the Aviation Group, Austro Control has made an essential contribution to the successful work of the Dialogue Forum.



**Gerald Bischof**  
Mayor of the 23rd municipal district  
of Liesing in Vienna

As Mayor, I represent the interests of the people of Liesing. From Liesing's and every settlement area's point of view, aircraft noise is undesired. Vienna's global air traffic network is still a significant site factor. As a result, the question on where air traffic can and may take place has to be answered. The discussions and negotiations at the Dialogue Forum are therefore important and often extremely difficult and tedious due to the conflict-laden and emotionally charged key topic of aircraft noise.



**Bernhard Fischer**  
Representative of the Province  
of Lower Austria, Bruck an der  
Leitha district conference

Having discussions with states, communities, citizens' initiatives on a level playing field and in a constructive and targeted manner is an objective that Vienna Airport set itself more than ten years ago for the population's well-being in the airport region. Thanks to the considerable dedication of all the interest groups involved, a lot has happened at the Dialogue Forum after ten years. Together, we have achieved a lot – this is perhaps food for thought in other prevailing issues in society today!



**Andreas Hacker**  
Urban Region Management Vienna –  
Lower Austria, Representative of  
the State of Lower Austria, Wien  
Umgebung Süd district conference

Ten years of existence of the Dialogue Forum represent ten years of willingness to reach a binding agreement beyond state, district, municipality and party frontiers. In addition to the numerous improvements achieved in air traffic, the "inter-human" element cannot be forgotten. We are all benefiting from work carried out at the Dialogue Forum, which is also the result of collaborations with different groups of players. This creates understanding and acceptance – which are two key factors for a good collaboration in the future.



**Werner Toppel**  
Representative of the Province  
of Lower Austria, Mödling district  
conference

It is not always easy to have a dialogue in a larger forum where divergent interests exist. The exchange of thoughts and ideas already represents a step to better understand other parties and reconcile interests – working together on a future that is acceptable to everyone. Small steps are also positive. It is essential not to stay in one place.



### Wolfgang Hesina

Regional scientist and spatial planner, independent mediator. He has been the manager of the Dialogue Forum and responsible for process control since 2006.

### Dr Thomas Prader

Attorney and mediator. He has initiated and headed the Vienna Airport Mediation Process and also been in charge of process control at the Dialogue Forum since 2005.

The Vienna Airport Mediation Process “viemediation.at” was a daring experiment and still became one of the largest successful mediation processes to be discussed at international congresses and meetings. Members of the Dialogue Forum such as Susanne Rynesch (citizens’ initiative), Franz Jöchlinger (Flughafen Wien Group – FWAG) and process control have spoken at many events abroad. Recently, Thomas Prader gave a talk on the permanent disposal of atomic waste in front of a top-level committee of the German Bundestag and Bundesrat in Berlin. The forum has enjoyed international recognition because it has succeeded in concluding a range of binding, implementable contracts under civil law, establishing the Dialogue Forum as a place of permanent, institutionalised, regional conflict management, injecting new life into the Forum thanks to collaborative work.

Credit should be given to Flughafen Wien AG for making many concessions and undertaking to comply with them under civil law. Without the courage of Flughafen Wien AG and all the parties to the conflict, far-reaching social peace in the region would not have lived on to this day. Special thanks go to Austro Control, whose official duty is air traffic management and security. Since 2003, Austro Control has been voluntarily taking part in discussions with states, citizens’ initiatives and over 100 communities. To this day, it has implemented all the agreed changes pertaining to air traffic activities. Calling on municipality and state representatives was already appreciated and the voluntary involvement of the citizens’ initiatives remains outstanding, without which this process would not have been possible. A small group of individuals from civil society have achieved a great deal for society as a whole, without any legal claim and have done so with the support of institutions and outstanding and unwavering commitment, without the third runway being a reality.

These results were achieved based on trust, respect and the acknowledgement of frequently divergent interests, solidarity, consensual willingness and empathy. The mediation process and the Dialogue Forum function beyond a political, economic and civil logic of action such as power, hierarchy, party affiliation, solutions at the expense of third parties and unclear decisions. Today, there are not many people who have been there since the beginning in 2000. Therefore, we think it is important to continuously embody and maintain the spirit and mode of operation of mediative conflict management. We know that we fully depend on the parties’ will to continue on this path. Resources and powers are unequally distributed, which is why we are fighting for a balance in power because the process can only be successfully arranged in this way. It makes us proud to have had the opportunity to be part of this “basic democratic experiment” of the mediation process and the Vienna Airport Dialogue Forum for fifteen years. We hope that we will continue in this way together in the future with members as an all-party process controlling entity in a constructive, fair, transparent and open manner.

Despite the problems and conflicts and the highs and lows that we have experienced and will continue to experience, it would be nice to give future generations an example of ways to involve civil society in the decision-making process with politicians, economists, the authorities, project applicants and other stakeholders when undertaking major projects with an economic dimension as the third runway project.

**In the five years of the mediation process's existence and the ten years of work at the Dialogue Forum, we were not only able to reach many agreements – we also accompanied many process steps in the environmental impact assessment process on the third runway, took further measures against the effects of air traffic, dealt with many issues and implemented numerous presentations ...**

# Milestones – The mediation process and the Dialogue Forum

In the Vienna Airport Mediation Process, the preparation phase was undoubtedly already a key component of the success achieved in the form of the binding mediation agreement under civil law. This is because it was possible in the preparation phase to include all the existing and active stakeholders at the time in a potential conflict management process and to convince people to get involved in the mediation process. With regard to its content, the mediation process was also decisive because the aircraft industry had the courage to agree to a partial contract and thus agree on many measures that would contribute to minimising the negative impact of noise in the actual situation as much as possible without having achieved concrete agreement terms on the planned third runway. Local communities and citizens' initiatives have proved themselves worthy of the aircraft industry's trust and the mediation contract was thus created in the end.

In the mediation process, it was also important to quickly launch the dialogue with new citizens' initiatives and communities who were affected by changes in air traffic management by introducing district conferences. At the Dialogue Forum, it has always been crucial that members continue to work on these problems despite all sorts of issues relating to the implementation of measures to get to grips with and develop complementary measures against the effects of air traffic. In addition to the implementation of many precise control agreements on air traffic, the successful implementation of the regulation governing night flights and the 2-runway noise protection programme in particular can be considered as milestones here.

It was important that the members of the Dialogue Forum also recognised that measures against the effects of air traffic, which may be found in an environmental impact assessment decision on the third runway, only pertain to compliance with minimum requests defined by law. Therefore, they ultimately only define a lower level of protection than what had already been achieved in the form of measures in the mediation contract and the Dialogue Forum for several years. All Dialogue Forum members demonstrated their courage by focusing on measures and suitable issues in the discussion and the negotiation process for years to minimise the negative impact of the current two-runway system as much as possible. It remains to be seen whether and when a decision would establish the environmental impact of a third runway and whether it would be built at all.

<b>April 1998</b>	Flughafen Wien AG publishes the 2015 master plan. The main element of the plan is the construction of an additional runway. Shortly after publishing the plan, people express their concerns and doubts, particularly because the location of the planned runway remains unclear.
<b>Beginning of 2000</b>	Under the direction of the Viennese attorney Dr Thomas Prader, initial preparatory work for a mediation process begins.
<b>17 July 2000</b>	Representatives of Flughafen Wien AG, the citizens' initiatives, mayors of neighbouring communities and representatives of the City of Vienna, Lower Austria and Burgenland and environmental protection authorities announce that they are preparing a mediation process. Dr Thomas Prader is commissioned to head the preparatory group.
<b>27 September 2000</b>	Dr Ursula König, Prof. Horst Zillessen and Gerhard Fürst are commissioned to head the mediation process as the mediation team. Dr Thomas Prader assigns control of the process in close collaboration with the mediator team.
<b>November 2000</b>	The mediation process is presented to interested members of the public during the kick-off event of the mediation taking place in the Körnerhalle in Schwechat.
<b>18 January 2001</b>	As the highest decision-making body of the mediation process, the mediation forum meets for the first time.
<b>1 March 2001</b>	The mediation agreement is signed. This establishes the expansion plans of Flughafen Wien AG and current aircraft noise pollution in the two-runway system as topics of the mediation process.
<b>27 May 2003</b>	Signing the partial contract on "Current Measures" leads to measures against the current effects of air traffic in the two-runway system. The topic of "current aircraft noise pollution" is concluded.
<b>Autumn 2003</b>	The mediation process continues with the "expansion plans of Flughafen Wien AG" and related issues such as the "regulation governing night flights, technical noise protection, regional conflict management, noise zone ceilings, establishing inscription borders and the environment fund."
<b>Spring 2004</b>	As a result of the partial contract "Current measures", the evaluation process begins, leading to amendments to the partial contract.
<b>Autumn 2004</b>	The establishment of district conferences is resolved.
<b>12 May 2005</b>	Amendments to the partial contract are implemented.
<b>22 June 2005</b>	The signing of the mediation agreement ends the Vienna Airport Mediation Process and preliminary work on the implementation of the Dialogue Forum begins.

27 September 2005	Work on the implementation of the Dialogue Forum begins.
18 January 2006	Constitutive session of the extended Management Board of the Dialogue Forum.
11 May 2006	Transition arrivals resolved by the extended Management Board of the Dialogue Forum are flown for the first time.
1 January 2007	Implementation of the regulation governing night flights begins. Take-offs and landings between 11:30 p.m. and 5:30 a.m. are capped to 4,700 per year. The use of runways and arrival and departure routes are restricted between 9:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.
1 March 2007	The environmental impact assessment of the third runway begins. Members of the Dialogue Forum start with a brief official process.
October 2007	Members of the Dialogue Forum agree in the advisory board of the environment fund that the noise protection programme for a three-runway system needs to cover settlement areas affected by air traffic in the two-runway system.
1 June 2008	GA aircraft (“private aircraft”) are slotted for the first time.
9 July 2009	Members of the Dialogue Forum agree on the introduction of noise fees and their immediate implementation.
21 September 2010	The resolution of the Dialogue Forum to approve the stationing of the helicopter of the Federal Ministry of Internal Affairs at Vienna Airport becomes valid.
28 January 2011	During the meeting in Schwechat, it is decided that the focus of the Dialogue Forum’s work would be placed on questions and issues pertaining to the two-runway system. The strong decline in the development of air traffic due to the recession triggered this.
7 July 2011	The environmental impact assessment on the planned third runway carried out by the environmental impact assessment authorities is available for inspection.
10 November 2011	Preliminary work on the discussion and implementation of curved, instrument-supported landings on runway 16 begins.
13 July 2012	The environmental impact assessment decision in the first instance classifies the third runway as environmentally acceptable. ARGE gegen Fluglärm citizens’ initiatives and local communities in Lower Austria decide not to appeal.
5 June 2013	The extended Management Board of the Dialogue Forum passes resolutions on “landings 34 & visual approaches.”
18 June 2013	The “Runway 29” working group gets to work.
14 June 2014	The extended Management Board of the Dialogue Forum resolves the board’s rules of procedure for district conferences.
7 January 2015	28 appeals against the environmental impact assessment decision in the first instance are dealt with publicly by the Federal Administrative Court.
22 June 2015	Signature of the mediation agreement celebrates its tenth anniversary.

**Legal notice**

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## We are the Dialogue Forum

Flughafen Wien AG

Austrian Airlines AG

Austro Control Österreichische Gesellschaft für Zivilluftfahrt mbH (ACG)

### Local communities:

Enzersdorf an der Fischa, Fischamend, Groß-Enzersdorf, Himberg, Kleinneusiedl, Rauchenwarth, Schwadorf, Schwechat, Wien, Zwölfaxing

### “Working group of citizens’ initiatives and residents’ associations in the area around Vienna Airport”

#### (Citizens’ initiative against aircraft noise – ARGE gegen Fluglärm):

Fischamend citizens’ initiative, Liesing citizens’ initiative against aircraft noise, GFG-Gramatneusiedl Fluglärm Gegner, Götzendorf/Pischelsdorf citizens’ initiative, Pro Margarethen citizens’ initiative, Stop-Fluglärm Wien Süd-West citizens’ initiative, Schwa/Rau citizens’ initiative, Trautmannsdorf Direkt! citizens’ initiative (Trau.Di!), Viel zu laut!!! citizens’ initiative Groß-Enzersdorf, Haslau-Maria Ellend citizens’ forum, Velm village association, Österreich-Plattform Fluglärm, Lobau Kultur- Bildungs- und Informationszentrum residents’ association, Neu-Essling residents’ association, Himberg residents’ association, Velm citizens’ initiative  
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More informationen on our website [www.dialogforum.at](http://www.dialogforum.at)

