

irenews



Top-Event: Opening of the IRE

The opening of the Institute of the Regions of Europe at the Office of the Federal Chancellor became a top event with high ranking persons from politics and economics putting in an appearance. **(From page 3)**

Jakovcic wins Regional Election

Istria belongs to those regions of Europe which have demonstrated particularly dynamic development in the past few years. President Ivan Jakovcic has been politically responsible for this. **(Page 7)**

The IRE Working Programme

The Institute of the Regions of Europe is above all a source of information; it offers support as well as political and economic contacts for the regions and communes of Europe.

(From page 8)

The Regions are the Future of Europe



The first issue of IRE News was already available at the first general meeting and conference of the European regions. In this newsletter, we aim to provide information on the various activities of the institute, and give particular attention to the breaking news from the different regions of Europe. We also encourage you to send us any information from your region which you think could be of interest to others.

The Institute of the Regions was introduced at a ceremonial opening at the Office of the Federal Chancellor on 4 May 2005. Since then, our work has been focused on the preparations for the summer event in Salzburg. In this context, I would like to extend my thanks to those founders, patrons, sponsors and members for their continuing support.

We would like to invest all of our strengths to ensure that our work lives up to your expectations, in the knowledge that the future of our Europe lies in the strength of the regions.

Franz Schausberger

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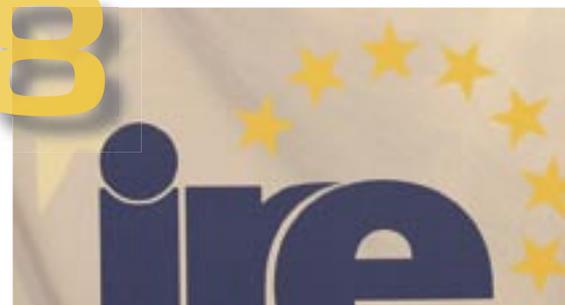
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The IRE Introduces Itself

Working programme,
aims, founders, members,
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IMPRESSUM

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Federal Chancellor opens the Institute of the Regions of Europe

On the evening of the 4 May 2005, the Federal Chancellor, Dr. Wolfgang Schäuble ceremonially opened the Institute of the Regions of Europe in the Congress Hall of the Office of the Federal Chancellor, receiving numerous political representatives from the regions of Europe. Presidents, heads of government and ministers from 22 regions of Europe, as well as a number of ambassadors from states of the EU assembled for the opening ceremony of the institute which is so important for the regions of Europe.

During the ceremonial opening, Chancellor Schäuble placed particular emphasis on both the meaning and the necessity of strengthening the regions of

Europe: “The European Union must be supported from grass-roots level of the regions. The Union may not be subjected to a dictatorship from on high. In this sense, the IRE has a very important contribution to make.”

EU Supported by the Regions

Within the framework of the event, City Councillor Rudolf Schicker (representing Dr. Michael Häupl, Mayor of the City of Vienna and president of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) as well as Peter Straub, president of the regional parliament of Baden Württemberg and president of the Committee of the Regions (CoR) of the European

Union, gave words of welcome to the 250 guests present at the Office of the Federal Chancellor.

Dr. Kurt Biedenkopf, minister president of the free state of Saxony made a celebratory speech on the theme of “The Meaning of the Regions in a Common Europe” and reiterated that “the contribution of the regions to Europe is enormous. The regions are the backbone of the identity of the European project and form the decisive source of its coexistence. The problem of unemployment and social security may be solved most efficiently on a regional level and not by means of national action plans and most certainly not on the European level.”



**Federal Chancellor
Dr. Wolfgang Schäussel**

*present at the opinion
exchange with three prefects
of Romanian regions.*



*Dr. Thomas Fischer
Member to the Board
of Bertelsmann Foundation*

**Lively discussions within
the seminar event:**

*the presidents of the regions of
Moravia-Silesia, Evzen Tosenov-
ky discussing the development
of the regions from the Czech
point*



*City Councillor DI Rudolf Schicker
(representing Dr. Michael
Häupl, mayor of the city of Vienna)*



Politics and economics

*as a general theme from the
point of view of the regions:
Federal minister Dr. Martin
Bartenstein with Riccardo Illy,
president of the region of
Friuli-Venezia Giulia.*

Riccardo Illy,

*Dr. Franz Schausberger,
Dr. Stefan Eder and
Mag. Ernst Rosi (RZB)
discussing common
interests.*



Acknow



**The board presents the
institute to the public**

The chairman of the institute, Dr. Franz Schausberger, presents the newly established institute together with his deputy Dr. Stefan Eder (the regional manager of the international law firm DLA Weiss TESSBACH, main sponsor of the IRE) and member to the board Karl Popp, general director of Melitta Austria and CEE (off duty).



*Giovanni Di Stasi
President of Local and Regional
Authorities of Europe*



*Riccardo Illy
President of the Regions
of Friuli-Venetia Giulia*



*Univ. Prof. Dr. Kurt Biedenkopf
Minister president of the Free
State of Saxony*



*Jonathan Said
Economist at the centre for
economics and business research*



*Peter Straub
President of the Regional Parliament
of Baden-Württemberg and President
of the Committee of the Regions*



*Ing. Evžen Tošenovský
President of the region
Moravia-Silesia*

acknowledging of the Regions

On the morning of the ceremonial opening, the IRE staged a seminar in the Raiffeisen Hall of the Raiffeisenzentral Bank for numerous participants from Austria and the regions of Europe on the theme of “the Political and Economic Significance of the Regions of Europe”. A variety of prominent speakers appeared at the seminar.

Professor Dr. Franz Schausberger, former governor of the state of Salzburg, chairman of the Institute of the Regions of Europe and president of the Commission for Constitutional Affairs and European Governance of the CoR, opened the seminar by saying a few words on the theme of the “Significance of the Regions in the European Integration Process”. Evzen Tosenovsky, president

of the Moravian-Silesian region (Czech Republic), and chairman of the Czech conference of regional leaders, dedicated his especially engaging presentation to the theme of the “Strengthened Role of the Czech Regions, Case Study Moravia-Silesia”.

Giovanni di Stasi, president of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe (CLRAE), concerned himself with the problem of “The Regions

in the New European Democracy”.

Riccardo Illy, president of the region of Friuli-Venezia Giulia and internationally renowned entrepreneur, discussed his opinion of the significance of the regions in the transposition of the Lisbon strategy.

Mr. Thomas Fischer, project leader of the board project “Modern Political Guidance” of the Bertelsmann Foundation, illuminated new aspects on the theme of the European constitution and regions.

Jonathan Said, MSc. B Comm., of the Centre for Economics and Business (CEB) in London gave a speech on “Which are the EU’s Sunrise Regions (The EU Regional Investment Index).

Regionalisation in Moravia – Silesia



Upon the invitation of the president of the Czech region of Moravia-Silesia, Franz Schausberger and Stefan Eder discussed the structure and function of the regional administration as well as the financial forms of communal and regional projects in Ostrava with political and economic representatives. Regional president and IRE member Evzen Tosenovsky highlighted the rapid advances made in the regionalisation of the Czech Republic.

First European Conference in Dubrovnik



As the first EU organisation, the EDU fraction of the Committee of the Regions of Europe (CoR) held their annual conference in the Croatian city of Dubrovnik. The lady mayor of the city, Dubravka Suica, only recently sworn into her new office, placed emphasis upon the city's hopes that Croatia would soon accede to the EU in her conversation with the chairman of the Constitutional Committee of the



Portrait of Adalbert Stifter by Bartholomäus Szekely, 1863.

Foto: OÖ. Landesmuseum

A Year of Culture upon the Birthday of Adalbert Stifter Soft Sensations – Stifter 2005

Adalbert Stifter was born 200 years ago. Upon the occasion of this birthday, Upper Austria has taken centre stage as part of the jubilee celebrations. A total of 130 cultural events have been staged, at various landmarks in Stifter's life (some of which cross over into South Bohemia and East Bavaria) to which significant literary figures, painters, men of culture and pedagogues were invited.

Stifter's nature observations were at the core of Stifter year, "From the Earth of All Things" (until 26 October 2005) and were placed in the Meierhof of the Schlägl monastery. More exciting exhibitions are due to take place in the Metz Villa Kirchschlag ("Signs of Life"), in Traunkirchen monastery ("Only

a fool! Only a poet!") and in the Cistercian monastery of Vyssi Brod /Hohenfurth ("Rose and Sword").

Further information and events programmes and folders on the Stifter year 2005 available at: Tel. +43/(0)732/7720-14875 bzw. www.stifter2005.at – PR –



Meierhof of the Schlägl monastery, location of the exhibition „From the Earth of All Things“. Foto: Preisinger



Introduction:

The Region of Istria

Istria is a region of Europe which has taken on a particularly rapid pace of development in the past couple of years, particularly in those matters affecting democratisation as well as the opening up of a market economy to international firms. Investments in tourism, infrastructure and agriculture have

all reaped success.

President Ivan Jakovcic, who was Minister for European Integration in the Croatian government 2000-2001 and has now been sworn in once again as regional president, leads the political elite within the region into a European future.



IRE president Schausberger presents the patronisation certificate to the president of Istria, Dr. Ivan Jakovcic.

Results of the Regional Elections 2005

| | | Mandate |
|-------------------------------|-------|---------|
| IDS | 41,9% | 20 |
| HDZ | 11,6% | 5 |
| SDP | 10,5% | 5 |
| HSU | 9,2% | 4 |
| IDF-FDI | 8,5% | 4 |
| HNS, ZELENI, LS, HSLs, HSS | 7,6% | 3 |

Ivan Jakovcic

born in Porec 15. 11. 1957,
married, 3 children

Languages: Croatian, Italian,
German, English, French

Education: Degree in International
trade at the University of Zagreb

Experience: Entrepreneur, member
of Croatian parliament,
Vice-president of the AER

2000-1: Minister for European
Integration for the Republic
of Croatia.

Since 2001: President of the
Region of Istria.

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Planned Activities of the IRE

1. Events, Expert Conferences, Seminars, Expert Discussions

Expert Conference "Problems of the Health Policies and Alternatives to the State Health System on a Regional Level" (Autumn 2005)

Expert Conference "Rail- and Road Networks from the Baltics to the Mediterranean from the Point of View of the Regions Affected." (May 2006)

Symposium "The Regional Dimension of European Culture" (Monday, 10 April in Salzburg)

General Assembly of the IRE and the Conference of the European Regions (Monday 21 and Tuesday 22 August 2006 in Salzburg) Salzburg Festival

2. Information Exchange for the Regions of Europe

Construction of an information network on the internet for the current political, economic, cultural facts and events in the regional and local areas of Europe. In addition to this, the regions and communes of the European states are invited to become members of the IRE.

- Current election results and political events
- Data on the regional governments
- Important economic data
- Information on the larger projects in progress and

innovations in the regions, project exchange

- Information on the promotional opportunities for the EU within the regions.

3. Raising the Regions' Wishes

In September, the institute will send out a questionnaire to all of the regions of Europe, in order to raise any wishes or initiatives of the regions. The results of those questionnaires shall be used in the development of a working programme together with the members of the institute and then advisory board.

4. Publications of the IRE

Volume 1: (in progress – to be published in Autumn 2005):

The EU Constitution and the Regions of Europe (in both German and English with documents included as attachments)

Producer: Dr. Franz Schausberger

Volume 2: (in preparation)

Financing of Regional Infrastructure Projects (Producer: Dr. Stefan Eder)

Publication series of the IRE:

Short Studies on the Regions of Europe

We are pleased to be able to give our support to the Institute of the Regions of Europe



DLA Weiss-Tessbach is part of DLA Piper Rudnick Gray Cary, a global legal services organisation. A full list of offices across Asia, Europe and the US can be found at www.dlapiper.com

IRE – A Source of Information and Innovation Exchange for the Regions of Europe

The Institute of the Regions of Europe (IRE) sees itself as a source of information, as a particular supporter of the regions and as an organisation for economic research for all of the regions of Europe (going beyond the borders of the EU). It has its headquarters in both Salzburg and Vienna.

The background for the establishment of the institute is formed by the following six points:

- The significance of the regions as well as those responsible for political matters within the regions is increasing in Europe in both political and economic respects;
- In Europe, there is a clear development towards regionalisation and decentralisation;
- This development is promoted by the European integration, the new Constitution for Europe, the greater emphasis placed upon proximity of the political process to the citizens and by (constitutional) reform within the individual states with the transfer of competences from the national level to the regional and local levels;
- From now on, foreign investors will not be able to circumvent the responsible persons on the regional level;
- Cross-border cooperation between the regions is becoming ever more important;
- The state of the regional and communal autonomous administration and democracy shall be taken into consideration to a greater degree in future accession negotiations with candidates for EU membership.

It may be assumed that the process of regionalisation across the whole of Europe is gathering speed – especially in the ten new member states and the candidates for membership. The EU constitution will also lend the regions and communes a strengthened significance in the EU's actions in both economic and political respects. The IRE sees itself as being a pan-regional, pan-party body, which sets itself the task (both practically and academically) of removing the existing information deficit on the

regional level and to push forward the potential of regional and pan-regional development which has not yet been exploited.

The IRE represents an operative enhancement and support mechanism to the Organizations of Regions and Communes throughout Europe such as the Committee of the Regions (CoR), the EU, the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR), the Assembly of European Regions (AEE), and others whose task is the political representation of the interests of the regions and communes of Europe.

The specific task of the IRE is to promote economic relationships between the regions and communes in Europe, to transmit information and to strengthen the connection to the European Union. The development of infrastructure within individual regions and communes will play an important role in this process. The European regions and communes should therefore be supported by the IRE in all important areas – practically, organisationally and academically.

The IRE is a body which is based upon membership. The members are those regions and larger towns as well as other bodies under public law and economic enterprises with particularly regional interests. The members are offered a whole range of services, such as specialist lectures on themes of special relevance or topicality for the regions, information services with a regional emphasis and publications which are geared to the needs of the regions.

The IRE is a non-profit organisation and finances itself by means of contributions made by its members, supporters and sponsors.

Dr. Franz Schausberger, chairman of the IRE's board of directors: "Whoever has been infected by regionalism, can never be cured. It is a particular pleasure to dedicate myself to the promotion of the regions of Europe – a cause which I have supported for many years."

Dr. Stefan Eder, regional managing partner of DLA Weiss-Tessbach: "We are convinced that the significance of the regions shall spread rapidly over the next few years and we are pleased to be able to give our support to these activities."

Founder, Supporters and Members of the Institute of the Regions of Europe

The Republic of Austria, represented by Federal Chancellor Dr. Wolfgang Schäussel, (Founder), www.austria.gv.at

The Federal Ministry for Economy and Labor of the Republic of Austria, represented by Federal Minister Dr. Martin Bartenstein, www.bmwa.gv.at

Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Austria, represented by Federal Minister Dr. Ursula Plassnik, www.bmaa.gv.at

Regions

Regional Government of Baden-Württemberg (Germany), represented by Regional President Peter Straub

Free State of Bavaria (Germany) represented by Minister of State Eberhard Sinner

Autonomous Province of Bolzano (Italy), represented by Regional President Dr. Luis Durnwalder, www.provinz.bz.it

Bosnian-Podrinje Canton Gorazde (Bosnia), represented by Regional President Salko Obhodjas, www.bpkgo.ba

Region of Istria (Croatia), represented by Regional President Ivan Jakovic, (Founder), www.istra-istria.hr

Province of Lower Austria, represented by Governor Dr. Erwin Pröll, www.noel.gv.at

Moravian-Silesian Region (Czech Republic), represented by Regional President Evzen Tosenovsky, www.moravskoslezsky.cz

Region of Pilsen (Czech Republic), represented by Regional President Petr Zimmermann, www.kr-plensky.cz

Region of South Tyrol-Trentino (Italy), represented by Governor Dr. Luis Durnwalder, www.suedtirol-it.com

Province of Tyrol (Austria), represented by Governor Dr. Herwig van Staa, (Founder), www.tirol.gv.at

Province of Upper Austria (Austria), represented by Governor Dr. Josef Pühringer, (Founder), www.ooe.gv.at

County of Virovitica-Podravina (Croatia), represented by Regional President Ivan Begovic, www.viroviticko-podravaska-zupanija.hr

Province of Vorarlberg (Austria), represented by Governor Dr. Herbert Sausgruber (grantor of subsidies), www.vlrl.at

Canton of West-Herzegovina (Bosnia and Herzegovina), represented by Regional President Viktor Lasic, www.zzh.com

Regional Development Agency Westpannonia (Hungary), represented by President Dr. Imre Szakacs and Gabor Gyorffy, www.westpa.hu

Enterprises

DaimlerChrysler AG (Germany)
www.daimlerchrysler.com

DLA WEISS-TESSBACH Rechtsanwälte GmbH (Austria), www.dlapiper.com

Investkredit Bank AG (Austria), represented by General Director Dr. Wilfried Stadler
www.investkredit.at

Raiffeisen Zentralbank Österreich AG, (Austria) represented by Senior Adviser of the board Mag. Ernst R. Rosi, www.rzb.at

Schieneinfrastrukturgesellschaft (SCHIG), (Austria), represented by Dr. Helmut Falschlehner

SIEMENS AG Austria (Austria), represented by General Director DI Albert Hochleitner, www.siemens.at

Uniqqa Versicherung (Austria), represented by General Director Dr. Konstantin Klien, www.uniqqa.at

Wüstenrot Bausparkasse (Austria), www.wuestenrot.at/m_die_bausparkasse.php

Wüstenrot Versicherung (Austria), www.wuestenrot.at/m_die_versicherung.php

Personen

Dr. Stefan Eder, DLA Weiss-Tessbach Rechtsanwälte GmbH, Managing Partner (Austria), (Founder)

Donald Kahn, Publisher

Former Governor Prof. Dr. Franz Schausberger (Austria), (Founder)

Dr. Wieland Schmid-Schmidfelden, DLA Weiss-Tessbach Rechtsanwälte GmbH, Partner (Austria), (Founder)

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The IRE-Team: Working for the Regions



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EU Activities in Westpannonia

Upon the occasion of his visit to Győr on 26 May 2005, Dr. Franz Schausberger presented the certificate of IRE membership to Dr. Imre Szakacs, the President of the Committee of Győr-Ménfőcsanak. Dr. Szakacs is also president of the planning region of Westpannonia. As one of the first regions of Hungary, Westpannonia

(along with the committees of Győr-Ménfőcsanak, Vas and Zala) opened its own EU office in the International House in Brussels together with Styria and the Polish region of Kujawien-Pommern. The region of Lodz as well as that of Vojvodina in Serbia are shortly to follow these regions with their own respective representations.



Deputy Secretary General (Austrian Industry) Peter Koren in Conversation with the IRE

“We could be trailblazers for the whole of Europe”

Can Austria exist as an industrial location in the context of global competition?

Koren: Yes, Austria has been a special winner in terms of both general globalisation and the enlargement of the EU. Austria's industry is very strong and competitive. It suits the social market economy in which services are remunerated and the social security of the individual is acknowledged.

Where do our strengths lie?

Koren: Austria is an industrial land with exemplary businesses. They do not just experience globalisation but experience it with success. We have an excellent educated and motivated workforce. That is a real strength.

How can the location be made even more attractive?

Koren: In order to make Austria an even more competitive as both a location and a capital market, investments in the extension of the infrastructure

are necessary. Further improvements should be aimed for in the areas of the law of tax and duties (for example in the upper income brackets) and cartel taxes in terms of workforce flexibility, commercial organisation and dismantling of the bureaucracy. This should be done by means of administrative reform. A capital market which is more flexible and efficient is still more important. Finally, we need an increased rate of focused investment in innovation, education and qualification- as well as the transposition of the education reform proposals which have just been suggested. The extension of the infrastructure in the widest sense remains an enduring objective for the IV. This encompasses efficient transport links, electricity and telecommunication networks, in particular the extension of broadband networks.

Which projects have the priority?

Koren: A project which is a



Mag. Peter Koren, Deputy Secretary General, Federation of the Austrian Industry (IV)

particular indication of the future for IV and will set an example for other projects is that of the “Twin City Vienna-Bratislava”. The functioning cooperation between the closest two capital cities in the European Union is resulting in a considerable growth spurt for the whole Vienna region. It has also had the result that Austria and Slovakia have become trailblazers in terms of pan-regional and transnational cooperation within the EU.

