

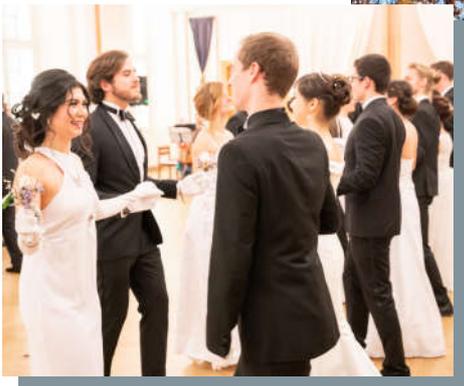
da news

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The Solidarity Issue

Stories about support and co-operation during these challenging times
ClubDA/Hall of Fame Scholarships, Charity Ball, DASICON and more ...



Photos: Society/Karakan

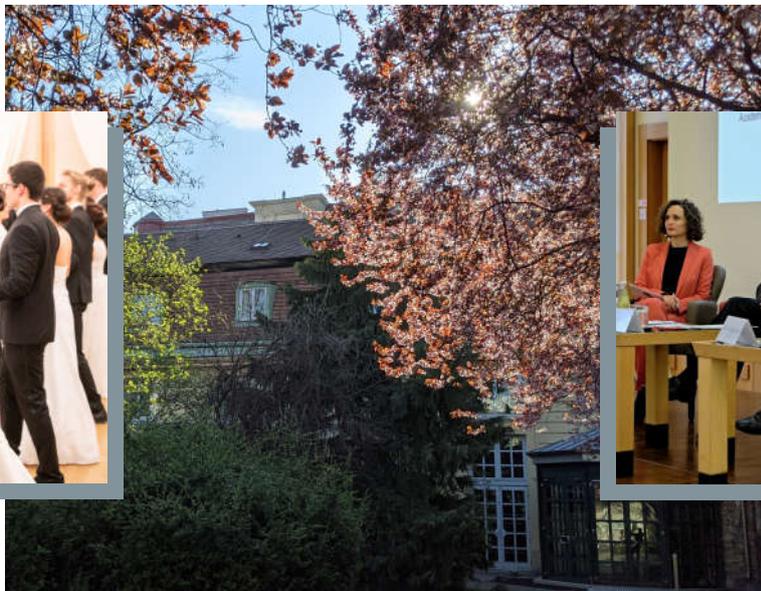


Photo: DA/Andreas Ehrmann



Photo: DASICON/Xiang Hu

Dear Alumnae,
Dear Alumni,

The COVID-19 pandemic has swept over Austria and brought the country to a standstill. The fear of mass infection followed by mass hospitalisation and high mortality rates has led to fast and rigorous measures by the government. Planes are grounded, borders closed, businesses shut down and all meetings cancelled or postponed.

Education turned to e-teaching and e-learning via the various forms the internet provides.

Many students of the DA had the chance to return back home. Yet, some—especially our international guests—are “stuck” in the Academy and suffer social as well as financial hardships for not being able to continue their part-time jobs to finance their lives. Here ClubDA's scholarships have come in handy—this year even more so than ever before.

For the 2019-20 academic year, ClubDA provided four scholarships to national and international students with the members of the DA's Alumni Hall of Fame adding two more. We are happy to introduce all six scholarship awardees in this issue of ClubDA News.

I am proud to note that ClubDA has donated € 62,500 to 25 students over the past ten years.

Additionally we were able to support two students with € 1,000 each from our Ad-hoc Fund for immediate help.

However, money can only be a band aid for a vibrant and active student community studying and living together in intellectual harmony. So, may the restrictions be lifted soon and life slowly return to normal.

Unfortunately there is more sad news during this tumultuous period. Our long-time member and friend, Ambassador Georg Znidaric, passed away in March. Let us address our heartfelt sympathy to his mourning family.

“Post tenebras lux”—dear alumnae and alumni! News reach us that the third term can be continued online. And with the beginning of summer, hopefully life will return to normal and our fall semester will start with a very optimistic outlook.

Until then please stay healthy, take good care of yourselves and your families and enjoy Easter 2020—maybe in the Austrian tradition with smoked ham, fresh horseradish, coloured eggs and gifts for your beloved ones.



Oliver Kitz
ClubDA President

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Solidarity and Co-operation

Life and work at the DA during the pandemic: #staysafe #stayathome #staystrong



Photos: DA/Andreas Ehrmann

E-Learning, online conferences and home office—terms many of us have become familiar with over the years. However, switching from the occasional use of the above to an almost deserted DA within less than a month was and is a very special situation the entire DA community—students, faculty and staff—is experiencing and dealing with right now.



Now more than ever our strong and dedicated network is on display. Therefore, we especially regret having to inform our students, alumni and friends that we will not be able to welcome you to our annual Sommerfest and International Alumni Meeting this year. These events, which are all about bringing (back) together our global DA family and showing our appreciation for your support, will be

dearly missed. Please find below a link to Ambassador Emil Brix' official letter explaining this decision.

During these challenging times, solidarity, co-operation and support are what the DA's family is all about. In this Spring Edition of ClubDA News we share stories about these values: about our students organising their 27th Charity Ball and donating the proceeds to Alzheimer Austria; about our alumni—members of ClubDA as well as our Alumni Hall of Fame—funding scholarships for students in financial need; or about this year's DASICON taking on the climate crisis by promoting climate co-action.



With two vital branches of the Academy—public events/catering and Executive Programmes—virtually shut down, several employees are working short-time and revenue is dwindling. On the other hand, additional investments, especially in IT infrastructure, are necessary. Consequently, now more than ever, we are asking for your support in these uncertain times.

Until we see each other again in person at the DA or at one of the gatherings organised by the currently 22 ClubDA local chapters, keep in touch via our networking platform DA Wien Connect (see below) and/or our social media pages. And, above all: #staysafe #stayathome #staystrong. 🇺🇸

Andreas Ehrmann is Head of the DA's Development Department and Secretary General of ClubDA.



We are deeply grateful for both our student's impressive initiatives and our alumni's unwavering support, including a very

recent major donation by one of our former DLG classes and the generous supply of protective masks for our students by a Chinese alumnus.

DA Wien Connect

DA Wien Connect is the latest addition to the DA's broad online portfolio. Since 2018, it treats students and active ClubDA members to a whole new networking experience wherever they are and whenever they want. The platform—designed like a social network and tailor-made for the DA community—is available on desktop PCs as well as any mobile device. Just go to <http://connect.da-vienna.ac.at>, log in with your DA e-mail address, LinkedIn, Google or Facebook account and stay connected!



Please visit <https://www.da-vienna.ac.at/COVID-19> to stay informed about the current measures taken by the DA concerning the COVID-19 pandemic.

Charity Ball at the DA 2020

"Der Glorreiche Augenblick – The Glorious Moment"

The students of the Diplomatische Akademie Wien—Vienna School of International Studies organised their 27th annual Charity Ball under the motto "Der Glorreiche Augenblick." 'The Glorious Moment' is the title of Beethoven's (Op. 136) cantata performed for the opening of the Congress of Vienna in 1814. The Congress itself was an important moment, but the years quickly following is also when the waltz was popularised as more than a peasant dance and composers like Beethoven and Strauss were popularised as well. On the occasion of Beethoven's 250th birthday in 2020, our students joined the celebrations of the important cultural as well as diplomatic history of Vienna.

The proceeds from the 2020 Charity Ball were donated to Alzheimer Austria, a Vienna-based volunteer organisation which the DA's student body chose to receive this year's support. 



Alzheimer Austria is a Vienna-based volunteer organisation. The founders have worked as volunteers since 1990 aiming to support people with dementia and their families with a wide range of offers.

They are members of Alzheimer Europe and ADI, Alzheimer Disease International, and the official representatives of Austria in these organisations. Along with these cooperations, they are able to offer such things as a peer counseling for and by people with cognitive disorder, for example. They act as pioneers, kicking off policy makers and NGOs to support PwD and their families in better ways.

DASICON 2020

Climate Co-Action – Joint Solutions to the Climate Crisis

"Climate change is the defining issue of our time—and we are at a defining moment. If we do not change course by 2020, we could miss our chance to avoid the disastrous consequences of runaway climate change. The time for ambitious climate action is now".

Antonio Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations

This year's DASICON, the annual conference organised by the DA's students, addressed the urgent matter of climate action to counter global warming and its devastating consequences. Under the framework of "Climate Co-Action—Joint Solutions to the Climate Crisis", the 2020 conference brought together 22 representatives from the political and diplomatic sector, public society and the economic realm, including the Austrian Federal President Alexander Van der Bellen.

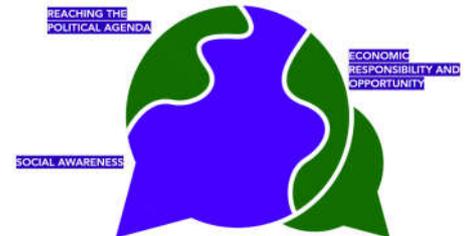


Photos: DASICON/Xiang Hu



In addition to these high-ranking panellists, more than 300 participants took part in the discussion on how to achieve significant and sustainable

solutions to tackle climate change. The overall goal was to highlight some of the various challenges and opportunities we are faced with, as well as to provide a space to portray best practices in these areas. 



The entire DASICON is still available on our Facebook page. For a playlist of individual talks and sessions visit our YouTube channel.

Every year our Diplomatic Academy Students Initiative's Conference Committee (DASICON) organises an annual international conference. Addressed to the general public, it provides a space for international experts, interested students, and relevant stakeholders to explore, analyse, and interact. More information on DASICON can be found on their website: <https://www.dasicon.org>. Input and/or support from alumni is always highly appreciated!

Fortress Europe: Exporting an inhumane border regime

A recent article from *Polemics*, the DA student magazine, by Niklas Danninger

Despite a globalized world that seems to be growing ever smaller and increasingly interconnected, more and more borders are being constructed and fortified. What is the reason for this seemingly paradoxical development?

Borders are symbols and manifestations of power. However, the demarcation of boundaries, their consolidation and management constitute performative acts that influence cultural perceptions, form social practices and therefore deeply affect the cultural psyche of a nation. The securitisation of migration discourses and the seemingly never-ending utilisation of this issue as a reliable vote-catcher are prime examples of the underlying xenophobia of such practices; borders are simply their physical manifestations.

Disputes about their demarcation are still among the most common disagreements states have amongst one another. The existence of natural resources in the Arctic and the Eastern Mediterranean, for instance, have led various neighbouring states to stake their claims to exploit these resources. Similarly, the Irish border was one of the primary bones of contention between the EU and the U.K. in negotiating a deal for Brexit. Despite the different contexts of the borders in Cyprus, on the Korean Peninsula, between Israel and Palestine, the U.S. and Mexico, Kosovo and Serbia or the deadliest European external border, the Mediterranean Sea, they all share a unifying trait: their increased militarisation. The two Spanish enclaves Ceuta and Melilla in Northern Morocco are paradigmatic of this situation. Every now and then, when sufficient numbers of mainly sub-Saharan migrants have gathered in the woods near Nador, the Moroccan town closest to Melilla, hundreds of migrants rush to the barbed wire fences in order to cross into European territory, with countless ending up dead or missing.

In view of the again increasing arrivals of refugees in Greece over the last year, the issue of migration and the protection of the European external border has regained momentum. In order to manage the flows of goods and people, the European Union will introduce in 2020 an Entry/Exit System (EES) that will monitor the movements across its external borders. On top of that, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, known as Frontex, will receive 10,000 additional border guards. This is part of a greater strategy that has been prefigured by the normalization of xenophobic discourse on migration in recent years, as the incessantly regurgitated talk on closing borders and the criminalisation of migrants indicates.

In view of the prioritised policies on migration by European countries, it is hardly surprising that the general discourse of European officials primarily surrounds two questions: (1) how should Europe cooperate efficiently in order to prevent migrants from irregularly crossing European borders? And (2) how can Europe send as many migrants as possible back to their countries of origin? For that purpose, the EU is actively collaborating with Balkan states; establishing risk-analysis centres, huge biometric data collections and patrolling the borders with planes and drones. The military industry is obviously content with the rise in public expenses on border protection.

Despite turning up in European policy briefs and papers, other aspects related to migration, such as integration, information campaigns and narratives in public discourse, hardly ever get the attention they deserve. However, migration cannot be reduced to the static movement of a person from point A to point B, but describes an ongoing social process without definite ending that requires substantial efforts on the side of both host society and migrants.



Although it is obvious that the EU cannot take in all migrants that flee disastrous conditions of poverty and war, the efforts utilized to prevent irregular migration seem exceptionally unbalanced. The tremendous costs incurred by the current European policies on migration simply do not justify the results, and even less so the means of a militarized border surveillance system. While the budget for border management amounted to €13 billion during the period from 2014 to 2020, the budget for the subsequent period rose to €34.9 billion. In contrast, the European Union Fundamental Rights Agency, which monitors compliance with human rights standards on various levels, had to make do with €22 million in 2019.

The proposal by Mitsotakis' new conservative government in Greece to erect floating barriers along the sea border between Turkey and Greece runs in the same vein. In the country with the second highest level of debt in the world, where even basic infrastructure in enormously overcrowded refugee camps is lacking, investing in a \$500,000 barrier with questionable effects is utterly absurd. As with similar policies before, this has no chance of putting an end to irregular migration as human traffickers always find ways to circumvent detection. Making it more difficult for them simply raises the price of their services and the number of dead migrants.

But even more shocking is the fact that the EU is outsourcing border control to African countries in order to stop migratory flows long before they reach Europe. This particularly affects transit countries in the Sahel region, such as Niger, South Sudan, Sudan and Chad and entails cooperation with local militias managing refugee camps, for which Libya is a notorious example. By further diverting money from the recently created Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI), the EU is using funds presumably intended as development aid to tackle the root causes of migration in order to outsource border management to regimes of doubtful legitimacy. Why should less-developed countries have the resources to deal with what the EU has been incapable and unwilling to do?

An Associated Press investigation in 2019 showed that EU funds, partly channeled through the U.N. and intended for the Libyan coast guard and refugee detention centres, often end up in the hands of local militias; according to internal documents with full knowledge of EU and U.N. officials. The question why the EU is providing Libya, a country in turmoil and with two equally dysfunctional governments, with cash injections of about €368 million that are known to end up financing local warlords is a pertinent one that cannot be answered in a morally justifiable fashion. Maybe such policies follow a certain logic, according to which training Nigerien border guards in forensic analysis to prevent illegal migration actually qualifies as development aid, even though they create further calamities by leaving the transiting migrants stuck in the host country. Undoubtedly, this runs counter to the objectives of the NDICI of furthering peace, stability, democracy, the rule of law and human rights; this unveils such intentions as blatant hypocrisy and regularly repeated phrases of "European values" as mere lip service. Europe? That's only for Europeans. 🇪🇺

Niklas Danninger, the author of this article, is enrolled in the DA's 23rd MAIS programme.

Polemics

For several years, the DA's students have been successfully publishing "POLEMICS - The Magazine of the Diplomatic Academy of Vienna" which features articles on a broad variety of topics written by the students. Since 2016, we share Polemics articles on a regular basis.

To enjoy the current issue of Polemics in its entirety, please go to

<https://www.polemics-magazine.com>.

Introducing Anja Vujaković

ETIA-2 2019-20 Alumni Hall of Fame Scholarship awardee

Anja Vujaković, a 26-year-old Bosnian student, who majored in communication and social linguistics at the University of Vienna, answered our questionnaire.

What brought you to the DA and why have you chosen ETIA?

Observing and analyzing the global political landscape, I became mortified by the fact that the vast majority of global leaders were ill-equipped and did not possess the basic knowledge to efficiently address some of the most pressing issues of this century – the environmental ones. Thinking ecologically does not mean thinking like a biologist, chemist, economist or an engineer – environmental science is an integrated science. It is very complex and ETIA programme is the solution.

What impact did the Alumni Hall of Fame Scholarship have on your "second" academic year?

It brought me a sense of security during the stressful months filled with exacting seminars and exams. I could focus solely on studying and advancing academically and did not have to worry about paying the bills for a couple of months. Additionally, it contributed to my decision to adopt a cat, which is something that has brought me a lot of joy. :-)

Photo: DA/Peter Lechner



What was your personal highlight of your time at the DA?

Personally, my most cherished memories of the DA will be those of late nights in the reading room during the exam weeks, ordering fast food and being exhausted together. What is special about the DA is this shared feeling of hunger for knowledge and everyone really wanting to be there, late in the night, learning and becoming better people. On a more professional note, extraordinary career services and the rich and engaged alumni network is also something that sets the DA apart from most other Universities.

How do you think you can contribute to changing the world after finishing your studies?

The DA and particularly the ETIA programme have given me the gift of knowledge – a kind of knowledge I did not have before I started here. I have learned so much in such a short amount of time and I believe that sharing this knowledge with others, both in my personal and professional life, is how we all can do our part in changing the world for the better. Making better decisions than the leaders before us is a responsibility we all share, and I know no better place than the DA to enable young people to do so.

If you could have one superpower, what would it be?

I would like to have the ability to control time – to stop it, stretch it, bend it, rewind or fast forward it. Who wouldn't like to be able to turn back time and prevent things from happening, or do things differently, be at two places at the same time? The possibilities are infinite.

Who are the people you would like to meet and work with in the future?

I do not have particular people in mind, but I do know that I thrive in international environments with equal opportunities. I would like to meet and work with people who are constantly learning and improving themselves and who do not seek to

compete, but to cooperate instead.

How and in which form would you want to be involved with DA's alumni network?

These past two years at the DA have been so intense that I find it hard to imagine my life without somehow being involved with the Academy. I do not know where my career will take me, but I hope to be able to participate actively in a variety of Club DA's events, gatherings and other activities. One day, when I am more advanced in my career and I feel like I have ripe knowledge to share, I would like to sign up as a mentor as well. 

Introducing Castro Amponsah-Yeboah

MAIS-2 2019-20 ClubDA Scholarship awardee

Silent and observant, in the breaks between classes, you can find him in the background of Topsy Weasel, always on the lookout, analysing. No wonder Castro Amponsah-Yeboah, already in his early days as a researcher, was the first one to identify fungal species (mycogene sp.) in dry cocoa beans in his home country Ghana. Nor is it surprising that he was hired as a field auditor for collection and analyzing agronomic data on crops. He is all about perception.

Castro holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Agriculture, and is currently pursuing a cooperative degree between Johns Hopkins University SAIS and the Diplomatische Akademie Wien—Vienna School of International Studies.

What brought him to Vienna? Though he enjoys the Viennese lifestyle, he came here for another reason. A good one, too. "My goal is to help improve the socio-economic conditions of the incredibly resilient, yet highly disadvantaged people in rural Ghana and Africa."

This interest stems from him being exposed to many concerning issues while working in the poverty alleviation sector and various development programmes. It was there that he developed a particular interest in helping sensitive groups such as women, children, the physically challenged, and other voiceless people, who, in his opinion, happen to be the majority in Africa.

Before coming to Vienna, Castro was keeping himself busy. He worked with German Development Cooperation

in partnership with G12. Since 2010, he has been a budget analyst of the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development in Ghana. In the capacity of an assistant of the Director of Election of Sunyani Municipal Assembly in 2012 Biometric Voter Registration, he

voluntarily helped enabling potential voters to be registered. An internship with the Electoral Commission of Ghana and Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice subjected him to practical cases of corruption as well as social and administrative injustices. This experience ignited his interest in public accountability, good governance, social justice and development.

To follow his passions, he realised he needed to acquire more practical skills. Thus, he went for an MBA graduate programme in Corporate Finance from University of Bologna in July 2017, eventually landing in Vienna to continue his pursuits for the applicable knowledge at

the DA. Here he deepens his understanding of gender and development policies in order to fulfil his goal, namely "to bring about real improvements to citizens' lives rather than introducing more bureaucracy".

One could easily imagine him pulling it off. Because one thing is certain: his time is yet to come. 



Ivan Pantelić, the author of this portrait, is enrolled in the DA's 24th MAIS programme.

Introducing Fabian Kracmar

ETIA-1 2019-20 ClubDA Scholarship awardee

What brought you to the DA and why have you chosen ETIA?

Since the beginning of my Bachelors, I aimed to study at the DA. Since high school, I have collected academic, professional and volunteering experiences in 8 countries, on 4 different continents. These experiences included volunteering in a day center for the homeless in London, as well as regional and multilateral representations in Brussels and NYC. All these experiences prepared me perfectly for the DA, and motivated me even more to study here. Sustainable Development and Environment were always my focus, and I truly believe that with the ETIA programme, the DA has established a crucial educational programme to combat the biggest issues and challenges the world will face in the near future.

What impact did the ClubDA Scholarship have on your first academic year?

The scholarship will help me finance the upcoming study trip to the Ukraine, and I will use the remaining amount for the tuitions. This helps me a lot in focusing even more on my studies and contributing to the DA social/societal activities.

What is/are your personal highlight(s) of the Diplomatic Academy?

My personal highlight - so far - was indeed the DA ski trip. A group of around 75 people going skiing, après-ski and occupying the only "Dorfdisco" in the village was such a great and fun experience. Another highlight are my fellow friends and colleagues at the DA, who are all so unique, with such interesting backgrounds and personalities. They are truly the DA's main assets.

Name one experience abroad which influenced and shaped you to the person you are today?

All of my experiences abroad worked to shape me into the person I am today. To name one specifically: In 2018, I

volunteered at an NGO in a village in Central India working on rural development, women empowerment and especially people suffering from the Agrarian Crisis. Living in rudimental conditions with such a colourful and interesting culture opened my mind even more and taught me to appreciate the little things in life. Helping with and working on these issues deepened my interests in Sustainable Development and Equality even more.



What are your plans after graduation and where do you see yourself in the future?

I am planning another development project during the summer after graduation somewhere in the Global South and to combine the project with travels. After that, I would like to work for an IO, the government, or an NGO, and focus on sustainable development, especially on climate change and the usage of natural resources. In the future, I would like to work in a job where I can contribute to a better, sustainable and equal future for all.

How do you prefer to spend your free time?

Friends, friends, friends. I love socialising and spending my free time with friends.

Playing sports, cooking, chatting, dancing or playing games. As long as everyone is having a good time, I am happy. To balance the intense times I am dedicating for studying, I practice piano, like to draw something, or simply take my bike somewhere green to get a clear mind.

How and in which form would you want to be involved with DA's alumni network?

The alumni network is a great possibility to stay connected with like-minded people and networking is also something I really enjoy. If my future job allows it, I would like to contribute financially to support future students with a scholarship, and I would like to become a mentor and share experiences in a career talk. 

This interview was conducted by Rudolf Schatz, who is enrolled in the DA's 24th MAIS programme.

Introducing Ivan Pantelić

MAIS 1 2019–20 ClubDA Scholarship awardee

Always busy, Ivan is an all-rounder who never sits still. Indeed, he always has a lot on his plate. During the last trimester, he directed a film, wrote several articles, managed a team of corporate writers on a daily basis, played guitar in a few performances, and still managed to attend every single lesson at the Diplomatic Academy and take all the exams.

Ivan holds a Bachelor's of Theatre Directing and is about to obtain his Master's from the University of Applied Arts Vienna. In the past decade, he has been working as a copywriter and marketing consultant for small, medium and big businesses. In between, you could have found him in various artistic residences around the globe. Before coming to the Diplomatische Akademie Wien, he did quite a few things. He was a presenter and workshop maker at many political conferences worldwide, most notably in New York, Berlin, and Budapest. His art works were exhibited or screened in 4 continents. In addition, he was on the editorial board of several literary journals and has been regularly contributing to tertiary literature publications of publishers such as Springer NY.

How did he end up at the DA? That's quite a story. He started out as a theatre director. Working as an assistant director in major theatres in Serbia and having directed several productions himself, he soon realised no stage theatre can provide a stage big enough to address the real social issues. Coming from Serbia, he has seen ramifications of wars and displacement, and over time grew ardent to contribute where he can.

His eagerness to tackle complex societal problems instead of doing art for art's sake brought him to study Social Design at the University of Applied Arts Vienna. There he realised he still has a lot to learn to truly embetter the world. How does one move from commenting politics to participating in real decision-making processes? "In order to try and change the world, we must first understand how it works". And to arrive at that point, he had to look for the right school. He believes the DA to be a place which will give him both intellectual stimulus and practical know-how to see his plans through.

What does he like best about the DA? Apart from enjoying vivid discussions with bright colleagues and knowledgeable professors in a rewarding international environment, he appreciates the multidisciplinary approach in teaching. This he finds both accommodating for his Renaissance spirit, and necessary to bring about any meaningful change in the world. "To tackle complexities we are facing in our societies, multidisciplinary holistic approach is a must."

His only regret is the lack of time. Two years is a time too short to fully enjoy the DA: to connect with its greater network, as well as attend all those insightful courses that sometimes overlap. But he is an optimist: "ClubDA will be there to keep us together after the study time is over. And what a marvelous job they do!" 🍷

Castro Amponsah-Yeboah, the author of this portrait, is enrolled in the DA's 23rd MAIS programme.



Introducing Konstantin Oedl

ETIA-2 2019-20 Alumni Hall of Fame Scholarship awardee

Konstantin Oedl, a 27-year-old Austrian student, who holds a BA in Political Science from the University of Vienna, answered our questionnaire.

What brought you to the DA and why have you chosen ETIA?

I decided to apply for the ETIA programme, as I was looking for an education focusing on the topic of sustainable development. The combination of its various dimensions, the political, the economical, the social and the environmental, embodies the foundation of what I wanted to include into my expertise. Furthermore, the dual education of politics and diplomacy as well as technological understanding allows me to work competently within this field.

What impact did the Alumni Hall of Fame Scholarship have on your "second" academic year?

The HoF Scholarship strongly supported me within a personal process of transformation. Through not worrying about my income and bills I have to pay, I certainly could put all my focus on my studies and my future career. Now, in the moment of almost being finished with my programme, I feel much more confident in successfully graduating.

What was your personal highlight of your time at the DA?

There are a few things I have to mention. First of all, interacting with my colleagues and building long lasting relationships can be seen as the centre of studying at the DA. Secondly, I see the academic input I

received as very valuable for my life. Furthermore, I have to mention that the experience of working under constant pressure during this intense study, helped me to build up a strong skill set in dealing with all sorts of tasks at the same time and dealing with them in a much more constructive way.

How do you think you can contribute to changing the world after finishing your studies?

Changing the world does not only start with the wishes and thoughts of doing something, but with the first steps of actually contributing. The knowledge I have gained throughout these two years has taught me various different ways how to approach problems and how to come up with effective solutions. Especially, the critical thinking about challenges serves me as a valuable tool how to do things differently. Wherever I will put time of my life into, it will be enriched by the knowledge and experience I gained during my studies.

If you could have one superpower, what would it be?

One superpower I would love to have is to be able to enhance and amplify the best potential and good of people in general. That we all contribute to this world in the best way possible and reduce suffering to a minimum.

Who are the people you would like to meet and work with in the future?

I see so many great people out there. Active, inspiring, strong and dynamic people. People who can adapt to various situations and develop great solutions and positive change. Even if it sometimes does not seem to be the biggest change, people should stay confident about their little impact. Even the smallest change can start a chain reaction of positive events. These are the people I want to meet and work with.

How and in which form would you want to be involved with DA's alumni network?

I see the DA alumni network as a very good possibility of connecting, supporting and exchanging between previous students. I am happy to actively take part within the network to support each other and enhance the individual and collective potential of everybody. 



Introducing Rudolf Schatz

MAIS-1 2019-20 ClubDA Scholarship awardee

What brought you to the DA and why have you chosen MAIS?

Becoming a graduate student at the DA was a goal of mine since I finished high school, when I decided that I want to pursue a career at the Austrian Foreign Ministry one day. As someone who is particularly interested in both politics and history, the DA's multidisciplinary programme was the perfect choice to develop my academic knowledge in both fields at the same time. Another important aspect for me was the prospect to be able to study and spend time with colleagues from all over the world who share the same goals and interests.

What impact did the ClubDA Scholarship have on your first academic year?

The ClubDA Scholarship was of great help to me. The main impact it had was the fact that it took the burden of financial uncertainty away, thus allowing me to focus entirely on my academic success. In addition, it allows me to join our study trips, which are an essential part of learning about and understanding events abroad.

What is/are your personal highlight(s) of the Diplomatic Academy?

After the first two terms at the DA, I already had the chance to make a lot of good memories. For me personally, I want to use my time at the DA not only for improving my academic understanding, but also especially for making long-term friendships and getting in touch with people. This is why the academy's social events are special to me. The kick-off Weinwandertag, the Brexit-themed Halloween Party and the DA Ball were my personal highlights so far, and I hope there will be more to come.

Name one experience abroad which influenced and shaped you to the person you are today?

One influential experience abroad I made was during my time in Russia, when I had the opportunity to work for a local NGO. It was my second time in Russia, but the first

time outside of Moscow, in a city called Samara. Life there was completely different, and in order to overcome the obstacles of a new life in a new country, I learned to become the positive and adaptive character I am today. Also, by becoming more outgoing, I was able to establish friendships with locals that have lasted until today.

What are your plans after graduation and where do you see yourself in the future?

After graduation, I want to take the Trans-Siberian Railway from Beijing to Moscow as a little reward to myself. After that, I will start preparing for the A-Préalable, which I hope

will be in 2021. In the future, I see myself working in remote places around the globe, pursuing, and hopefully also living, my personal dream.

How do you prefer to spend your free time?

My favourite sports activity has always been playing football. This is why I play football at the Theresianum every Tuesday with my colleagues from the DA. I also enjoy going for a run and going to the gym every now and then. Nonetheless, I also enjoy "couch potato activities" like watching series or playing games

with my flatmates. However, a good party with my friends is something I would not want to miss either.

How and in which form would you want to be involved with DA's alumni network?

Until now, I already had the chance to participate once at a DA alumni event, when we visited the House of Austrian History. Even though I am not an alumnus yet, I enjoyed the time and the event a lot. In case I will get the opportunity to work in different countries one day, I would love to join the chapter meetings and get in touch with like-minded people, sharing stories of the time at the DA and enjoying a cold beer. 🍺



This interview was conducted by Fabian Kracmar, who is enrolled in the DA's 13th ETIA programme.

Recent Alumni Meetings

The Diplomatische Akademie Wien and ClubDA would like to thank all chapter presidents, the Diplomatic Academy Students Initiative (DASI) and all other alumni, students and partners who made the following events possible:

Alumni Meeting in Nur-Sultan ▼

23 December 2019

Photo: Gerhard Sailler



Photo: Deva Zwitter



Alumni Meeting in The Hague ▲

17 January 2020

Guided Tour at the House of Austrian History (hdgö) ▼ 23 January 2020



Photos: DA/Andreas Ehrmann



Photo: DA/Alenka Jaschke Et Vera Kadas

Project kick-off "Rotary Club Vienna Maria Theresia"

29 January 2020

10th Alumni-Stammtisch in Brussels ➤

13 February 2020

18th DA Ski and Snowboard Championships (➤ see page 15)

13 February 2020



18th Ski & Snowboard Championships

More than 15 alumni, students, staff and their families joined colleagues from the Austrian Foreign Ministry and members of Club Diplomatie & Wirtschaft for a memorable day at St. Corona/Wechsel.

Go to ClubDA's web portal to find all results and champions since 2002.



Photos: David Lansky and Nicola Audibert



Please visit <https://club.da-vienna.ac.at> to see additional photos of recent meetings and find out more about upcoming events.

On the calendar ...

22 April 2020

Online discussion with Professor Anton Pelinka on "Lessons learned for International Cooperation in the face of the COVID-19 crisis. A new beginning?"

5 June 2020

BENELUX Chapters Meeting in The Hague (tbd)

August 2020

12th Vienna Summer Meeting (tbd)

September 2020

Grape harvest at Prellenkirchen (tbd)

December 2020

12th St Nicholas Party & Meet and Greet (tba)



In addition, we are planning a host of online events over the next few months, including Q&A sessions with the DA's director, Ambassador Emil Brix, and members of our resident faculty.

For up-to-date information on all our events please check out our online event calendar at <https://club.da-vienna.ac.at/Events> or log in to our networking platform at <http://connect.da-vienna.ac.at>.

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