

# danews



## The Back to School Issue



Dear Alumnae,  
Dear Alumni,

After a splendid and seemingly "never ending" summer, Austria now shifts into full gear again for the coming business months. Economic outlooks are very positive and the optimistic trend in spring turned into a smiling reality. Austria's economy carries the torch and leads the way into a bright upcoming year.

Prosperity and stability should also motivate alumnae and alumni to open their hearts and purses to donate for scholarships of our new generation of students that is just starting at the Diplomatic Academy: Brilliant minds, who are often lacking funds for everyday student life and are very thankful for monetary support.

We congratulate the newly inducted members of the Hall of Fame and welcome Iren Borissova, Max Diener Sala and Ryszard Slomka to the noble club. The Hall of Fame members also contribute to a special "Hall of Fame Scholarship".

Fall also brings along the manifold chapter activities and I do invite all alumnae and alumni to actively participate in ClubDA life and join one or the other event out of the colourful portfolio.

I wish you all a productive and successful fall!

Yours,



Oliver Kitz  
ClubDA President

## Inside this Issue

<b>ClubDA General Assembly 2018</b> <i>The Club's board looked back at another very successful year for the DA's Alumni Association</i>	3	<b>Inauguration of the Academic Year</b> <i>Federal Minister Heinz Faßmann delivered the keynote address to open the 2018-19 academic year</i>	8
<b>Notes from the Field</b> <i>Follow the experiences of our current exchange students in Moscow, Seoul, Stanford and Beijing</i>	4	<b>DA Alumni Hall of Fame, Class of 2018</b> <i>Meet Iren Borissova, who was inducted together with Max Diener Sala and Ryszard Slomka</i>	9
<b>Introducing Professor Patrick Müller</b> <i>Meet the new Chair of European Studies at the Diplomatische Akademie Wien</i>	6	<b>Recent Alumni Meetings</b> <i>Look back at our events over the past four months, including the 20<sup>th</sup> International Alumni Meeting</i>	10
<b>Meet Our Alumni</b> <i>Teodora Bozhilova, Victor Vaugoin, Johanna Weberhofer</i>	7	<b>Event calendar / Imprint</b>	12


# ClubDA General Assembly 2018

Once again, the DA's Alumni Association is looking back at a very successful year

It has become a tradition to open the DA's annual alumni homecoming weekend a.k.a. "International Alumni Meeting" with ClubDA's General Assembly. Over the years, the Club's board was able and proud to set a positive and encouraging tone for the entire weekend as the Club has been going strong for many years now.

Here are some major achievements of ClubDA in 2017-18:

- ⇒ **ClubDA Scholarships:** Thanks to its members, the Club was able to award four scholarships of EUR 2,500 each, a total of EUR 10,000 for the first time.
- ⇒ **Events:** With 34 alumni meetings, excursions, lectures and discussions the DA and ClubDA organised as many events as never before in a single year.
- ⇒ **DA Wien Connect:** The new networking platform, a joint project developed by the DA, ClubDA and the Association for the Advancement of Teaching at the DA was presented during the General Assembly.
- ⇒ **Membership:** As of 28 June 2018, 1,430 alumni and former participants of the DA's Executive Programmes were members of ClubDA.
- ⇒ **ClubDA News:** The redesigned Summer Edition 2018 issue was introduced at the General Assembly.

Next year, ClubDA, which was founded in 1969, will celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. We are looking forward to a year full of festivities, new records and with the certainty that the Club will continue to be "Your home and anchor after graduation". 

Fotos: DA/Daniel Novotny



## Notes from the Field

The DA offers five exchange programmes with universities in the U.S., Russia, Korea, China and Israel. For ClubDA News we asked our students to keep us updated about their exchange experiences.

### Ruben Hirsch, MAIS 22

*Where are you?*

I am currently in Moscow studying at the **Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO)**.


*How long will you be there for?*

I will stay there until the end of December.

*What will you be doing?*

I will be attending regular and Russian language courses at MGIMO. Moreover, I will be participating in the many extracurricular activities that are organised by the students here.

*What are you most excited about?*

I am grateful that I have the opportunity to study at one of the most renowned universities in Russia. Apart from improving my Russian skills, I am particularly looking forward to exploring Moscow and immersing myself in the local culture. 



### Carolin Hehr and Nadine Sampl, MAIS 22

*Where are you?*

We are exchange students at the **Korea University Graduate School of International Studies**. Korea University is one of the oldest and most prestigious education institutions in the country and is located in the heart of Seoul.

*How long will you be there for?*


Overall, we stay four months in Korea (August to December 2018).

*What will you be doing?*

KUGSIS offers a great variety of courses and we are able to take courses on issues such as International Business, Business and Human Rights, Risk Management, Digital Economics, Korea-US Relations and International Political Economy. Moreover, we are involved in the Human Rights Society and East Asian Society. Next to daily university life we get to know Korea with its fascinating culture, landscape and unique political situation.

*What are you most excited about?*

It is very interesting to study at such a big campus university with 81 departments, as well as 18 graduate schools and more than 28,000 students. Given the various backgrounds of the professors and students, class discussions provide a whole new perspective on current topics.

Besides, we are of course excited about exploring Korea and its neighbouring countries. 



## Matteo Mirolo, MAIS 22

*Where are you?*

I'm at **Stanford University**, at the heart of Silicon Valley, and under the glorious Californian sun.

*How long will you be there for?*

Until December. Unless I decide to defect to the U.S. and stay there forever.

*What will you be doing?*

I am studying alongside Stanford University's Master of International Policy cohort, although I'm taking most of my courses outside their curriculum. I am indeed a frequent visitor to the law school, the graduate school of business, and Alex Stamos' (ex Facebook CSO) Hack Lab. I am also making the most of the Freeman Spogli Institute of International Studies and the Hoover Institutions' world class staff—amongst which many former Obama and Bush administrations officials—to conduct my research on counterterrorism in Northern Africa.

*What are you most excited about?*

A research trip to Washington, D.C., where I'll have the chance to interview Africa and counterterrorism experts in the DoS and DoS officials, as well as academics and think tank specialists. The other highlight, not to appear too nerdy, will be a roadtrip around California in December. 🌍



## Federico Zanotti and Guilherme Feierabend, MAIS 22

*Where are you?*

We are in Beijing at **China Foreign Affairs University – Waijiao Xueyuan**. The university was founded in 1955 and is recognised and accredited by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China.

*How long will you be there for?*

The programme will last until mid of January.

*What will you be doing?*

We study Chinese and International Relations with a focus on South and East Asia. The university offers a very multicultural environment and we are happily engaging with students with totally different cultures and backgrounds.

*What are you most excited about?*

We are very enthusiastic about learning Chinese and experiencing the authentic Beijing daily life.

China has a dynamic society that faces an ever-changing evolution and development. Being able to live and study here in this period is a great opportunity that was made possible for us by the DA, and we are both thankful for that. 🌍

# *Introducing Professor Patrick Müller*


Meet the new Chair of European Studies at the Diplomatische Akademie Wien

This year the DA's faculty is joined by Professor Patrick Müller, our first ever Chair of European Studies. This role has three dimensions: teaching, research and outreach. Professor Müller's research interests lie in the external relations of the EU, the role of the EU in global governance, and the interplay between changing national dynamics both in EU member states and in the EU as a whole. He is about to start an exciting new European research project with 20 partner countries. It is a particularly interesting time for him to be in Vienna whilst Austria holds the EU Council presidency.

With an impressive academic background which started in Munich and has led him to Washington, Paris, Berlin, Vienna, Brussels and Bilbao, Professor Müller is pleased to return to Vienna, which he says is an easy fit for him. Familiar with the scene (political and otherwise), he will be splitting his time jointly between the DA and the University of Vienna.



What interests him most about the DA is its excellent network of connections to his research: European politics. He admires the fluidity between policy-makers and academics and the possibilities this brings to enhance policies on a national and international level. He also appreciates the overlap in research interests amongst the DA's faculty and hopes very much that they will be able to work together. He sees being based at two universities as a great asset for students, who will profit from his own active research whilst they complete their research for papers or theses. Having a supervisor with his or her finger on the pulse is a huge advantage for any student setting out on a research project.

Students can look forward to Professor Müller's engaging and participatory teaching style. Having just moved here from a research-heavy position, Professor Müller is looking forward to supervising, teaching and generally being around students again. His time at the DA thus far has been promising, having already gotten to know a few faces during the annual 'Walk through the vineyards' for students and faculty members. 


# Meet Our Alumni

## Victor Vaugoin

12<sup>th</sup> MAIS (2007-09)

Victor started his career in Brussels as a political advisor to an Austrian MEP. For the next four years, he headed the Brussels office of the Austrian Federal Railways (ÖBB). Now he is the head of the Brussels office of the Austrian public affairs agency PANTARHEI ADVISORS. During the Administrative Law Conference 2018 at the Andrassy University in Budapest, he gave a presentation on the "White Paper on the Future of Europe" issued by the European Commission.



Victor's abstract reads as follows: "With only a few months to go until the elections to the European parliament, once again the 'Old Continent' is at another crucial crossroad. President Juncker himself took the bull by the horns within his state of the Union speech, on 13th September 2017. Subsequently, the European Commission issued its 'White Paper on the future of Europe', providing a compass on possible scenarios. Apart from the big political picture, whatever outcome will have consequences for an often-overlooked regulatory field-delegated and implementing acts." 

## Johanna Weberhofer

6<sup>th</sup> SPIS (2005-06), course speaker

After several years with the Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the UN in Vienna as Coordinator for UN Affairs and working on the Swiss OSCE Chairmanship in 2014, Johanna was selected as Political Adviser to the Chairperson of the Nuclear Suppliers Group, a global export control regime, for the period 2017-18. She then opted for a career change and – in July 2018 – joined the IFC, the largest global development institution focused exclusively on the private sector in emerging markets. The International Finance Corporation is one of the five member organisations of the World Bank Group, a Specialised Agency under the UN System. Johanna works out of Vienna for the time being, and supports long-term, co-financed projects in Europe, Central Asia, the Middle East and North Africa. Her role in the IFC Project Cycle includes preparing and coordinating legal documents such as retention letters for the Legal Department or managing the schedule of the Assistant General Counsel for her region (ECA and MENA). 




## Teodora Bozhilova

18<sup>th</sup> MAIS Programme (2013-15)

Three years ago, I encountered a challenging dilemma – pursue a career within the private sector or the public sector? After finishing an internship at an Austrian petroleum company during my last semester at the DA, I started my career as a Junior Financial Auditor at one of the "Big Four" consultancy firms.

From a content point of view, it was more related to my bachelor studies at the Vienna University of Economics and Business (WU) than to my master studies at the DA. However, I wanted to continue in the private sector, as it allows you to build personal, functional and technical skills quickly.

Now I am working as a Management Consultant at Accenture Austria – a global company for consulting services. One of my main responsibilities is to implement business processes that drive innovation within the banking sector. Being part of a global organisation is a great opportunity to work in an exciting, flexible and changing environment. The fast pace and the need for creativity in my day-to-day work is highly satisfying and stimulating.

My time at the DA has created a solid basis for my career. During the master programme, I gained broad knowledge in diplomacy, international relations and economics. In my opinion, these are three main knowledge pillars of crucial importance for every career, no matter which sector you choose. 




# *Inauguration of the Academic Year*

Professor Heinz Faßmann, Federal Minister for Education, Science and Research, delivered the keynote address to kick off the 2018-19 academic year at the Academy. Ambassador Emil Brix was proud to welcome students from 44 countries as well as many alumni, especially two of the three latest members of the DA's Alumni Hall of Fame.

The academic year 2018-19 was officially opened on 3 October at the DA's Festsaal with the traditional Inauguration of the Academic Year. The keynote speech was delivered by the Federal Minister for Education, Science and Research, Professor Heinz Faßmann, who emphasised that well-educated Europeans are more called for than ever before. "The European Union finds itself in challenging times. Just think of Brexit or other questions revolving around migration. On topics such as these, the European community of values has often proved to be an underestimated source, which one might call solidarity. This is the prerequisite for the realisation of our common European future. The Diplomatic Academy plays a crucial role in this and conveys a European spirit, so that students, later alumni, can contribute to the realisation of the European vision."

"We are proud to call ourselves an international family", said Director Ambassador Emil Brix, himself a DA alumnus. The Academy's 184 students come from 44 different countries and are prepared for international careers in their different study programmes, most of them in the MAIS programme. Through the quality of its education, the DA would like to "make its contribution to the strengthening of the liberal world order", Director Brix highlighted.

The newly refurbished foyer was also presented, complete with a bespoke large-sized piece of digital artwork, created by internationally renowned Austrian artist Waltraut Cooper. A pioneer of digital art, the use of light and darkness plays an important role in her pieces. 



Fotos: DA/Peter Lechner



Please visit our **YouTube-Channel** to watch the speeches of Ambassador Brix, Minister Faßmann and Iren Borissova.



# Alumni Hall of Fame, Class of 2018

Honouring the DA's most distinguished alumni and showing students what they too can achieve with excellent education and hard work was, and still is, the main idea behind the introduction of the Academy's Alumni Hall of Fame in 2010. This year, three alumni were inducted. Now meet Iren Borissova, alumna of the 33<sup>rd</sup> Diploma Programme and 1<sup>st</sup> MAIS.

*Could you tell us a little bit about yourself?*

Born in Sofia, Bulgaria, I currently live in the Washington, DC area, employed by the same U.S. publicly traded company (Verisign, Inc.) for the last 10 years. The two years at the DA (1996-98) were my first experience outside of my native Bulgaria. This experience opened my horizons, gave me confidence that I can do almost anything if I truly want it and put in the effort to achieve it. After the Academy, I got a second Master's at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service and started working in the United States. Twenty years later I am a recognized policy leader at the nexus of global public policy and business.

*Your career is an unusual one for DA alumni. How did you get into that field?*

I have always had the dream of becoming a diplomat, but instead I find myself working with diplomats and government officials in my day-to-day work. I understand them and can speak their language thanks largely to my studies at the DA. I can put myself in other people's situations and can see the policy issues at hand from many different perspectives... It all seems to click. While studying at Georgetown, I had a long internship at Verisign where I must have left some lasting positive impression. My first job after graduation was at a trade consulting firm that represented the interests of European steel exporters to the U.S. That experience taught me a lot about international trade. From there I went to the EU Commission Delegation to the U.S. where I was a trade advisor for five years. I analysed international trade and regulatory matters, developed strategies to advance the EU policy agenda, monitored U.S. legislative and regulatory activities, and cultivated a strong network

of contacts across stakeholder groups. As a consequence of doing the work, I eventually earned the respect of colleagues in the DC policy circles. When I wanted to move to the private sector in 2008, Verisign hired me immediately.

*Please tell us about some lasting memories of your time at the DA.*


I have many fond memories: the interesting conversations in class, the various languages spoken around me, the colleagues and professors from disparate backgrounds, the fun evenings at the Academy, the late breakfasts on weekends, the study

trips to Brussels and Strasbourg, the fabulous language studies during the summer (I spent a month in Alicante and another one in Paris), the Heurigen, the random epiphany moments due to the intellectually stimulating environment. These two years were a first taste of the best life has to offer condensed between the walls of the Academy.



Foto: DA/Peter Lechner

*We had the great pleasure of welcoming you back to the DA. What was it like being back again?*

I was excited, nervous and very happy to be back. A little sad that so many years have passed since 1998... 



Portraits of Max Diener Sala and Ryszard Slomka have been published in the 1/2018 and 2/2017 issues of ClubDA News respectively. They are still available at <https://club.da-vienna.ac.at/DA-News>.

# Recent alumni meetings

The Diplomatic 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:

## 20th International Alumni Meeting

29-30 June 2018

For more information see article on page 11.

## 5th Alumni-Stammtisch in Brussels

9 July 2018



Fotos: Vera Kadas

About 15 DA alumni gathered at BrewDog Brussels for the 5th Stammtisch organised by the ClubDA Brussels Chapter's heads, Alenka Jaschke (MAIS 2) and Vera Kadas (MAIS 17).

## Alumni Meeting in Kyiv: PinchukArtCentre

21 July 2018

The DA's community in Kyiv enjoyed a guided tour of PinchukArtCentre in downtown Kyiv, followed by some refreshments at One Love Coffee. Our thanks go to Miladin Bogetic (MAIS 8) for organising this event and to Florian Kohlfürst (DLG 51), who took over as Kyiv Chapter President recently.

## Reception for DA Alumni in New York

18 September 2018

Ambassador Jan Kickert, Permanent Representative of Austria to the United Nations in New York and alumnus of the DA's 30<sup>th</sup> DLG, hosted a reception on the occasion of the visit of the DA's Director, Ambassador Emil Brix.



Foto: DA/Nadja Wozonig



Foto: Miladin Bogetic

## 6th Alumni-Stammtisch in Brussels

26 September 2018

## Alumni Meeting in Kyiv

20 September 2018

## 7th Alumni-Stammtisch in Vienna

26 July 2018

## After-Work Drinks in Berlin

31 July 2018

## After-Work in Geneva

30 August 2018

## 10th Vienna Summer Meeting

3 September 2018

Almost 30 alumni came to Schweizerhaus to celebrate the 10<sup>th</sup> Vienna Summer Meeting. This cherished tradition started on 27 August 2009, when the Club's Vienna Chapter organised its inaugural meeting at the same venue.

Foto: DA/Andreas Ehrmann



## Public Lecture: Professor Markus Kornprobst on "How Diplomacy Makes and Unmakes Peace" at Istanbul Bilgi University

8 October 2018

## Alumni Meeting in Berlin

25 October 2018

## Alumni Meeting in Astana

1 November 2018



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

# 20<sup>th</sup> International Alumni Meeting


For the 20<sup>th</sup> time, the Diplomatische Akademie Wien – Vienna School of International Studies and ClubDA had the pleasure of welcoming more than 270 alumni and friends back at the Academy on the occasion of the annual alumni homecoming weekend.

On Friday, 29 June 2018, ClubDA's General Assembly (see page 3) was followed by the presentation of a record-setting donation of EUR 21,500 raised by the DA's students to St. Anna Children's Cancer Research Institute. Afterwards, more than 700 guests enjoyed the traditional DA Sommerfest.



Fotos: DA/Daniel Novotny

On Saturday, 30 June, a group of 28 alumni boarded a historic Badner Bahn tram which took them to the lovely city of Baden bei Wien, where they enjoyed guided tours of the city itself as well as the Arnulf Rainer Museum.

The 20<sup>th</sup> International Alumni Meeting was concluded with a dinner at Casino Baden. 

Fotos: DA/Andreas Ehrmann



## On the calendar ...




13 November 2018	Conference "1918–2018. Why History Matters"
20 November 2018	Bank Austria Kunstforum Wien: "Fascination Japan"
28 November 2018	Open House of the Diplomatische Akademie Wien
November 2018	Thanksgiving Dinner in Berlin (tbc)
November 2018	Alumni Meeting in Chicago (tbc)
7 December 2018	10 <sup>th</sup> St. Nicholas Party & Meet and Greet (tbc) More information will be announced soon.
2 February 2019	Charity Ball at the Diplomatische Akademie Wien
28-29 June 2019	21 <sup>st</sup> International Alumni Meeting 28 June: ClubDA General Assembly, DA Sommerfest 29 June: Alumni Excursion

For exact dates and additional events please check out our online event calendar at <https://club.da-vienna.ac.at/Events> or log in to our new networking platform at <http://connect.da-vienna.ac.at>.

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