7th ClubDA Outdoor Weekend: Wachau
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Dear fellow Alumnae and Alumni,

Summer is back in Vienna and before we enjoy our homecoming day and our traditional Sommerfest I have good news for you.

Our Alma Mater, the Diplomatic Academy of Vienna, will be entitled to participate in a Doctoral Program in International Studies of the University of Vienna. Thus the DA will be able to offer her students a PhD Program which is an excellent extension of her academic scope. For more information please visit the [DA website](#).

Due to your membership fees it was again possible to help two ambitious students, Ms. Sila Yildirim and Mr. Boris Brkovic, to master the financial challenges that studying at the DA entails.

There are also changes on ClubDA’s board to be reported. I want to thank Romana Königsbrun for her service as Vice President and wish her well for her new post as Cultural Attachée in Istanbul.

Emelie Laurin retires from the board since she is moving back to Stockholm and Astrid Aufschnaiter said farewell after many, many years of loyal and cheerful support. Thank you very much!

And welcome to the candidates for the new board!

Provided the General Assembly’s approval, Arno Dettlinger, the energetic OMV manager, will be supporting the team along with Lucia Kronsteiner from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Zachary McGuiness and David Lansky will act as next year’s liaison between the board and the DA’s students.

So after this summer a renewed board will continue ClubDA’s work and credo to serve as „Your home and anchor after graduation“.

Have a good summer,

Oliver Kitz

Oliver Kitz (DLG 19) is President of ClubDA.
The ClubDA Scholarship gave me the opportunity to hear the story of an ambitious journey. The divide in the curricula between MAIS and ETIA was overcome on a sunny afternoon in the DA garden where I got to know Sila a bit better.

Sila was born and raised in Dortmund/Germany, where she also spent her youth until high-school graduation. Since her parents are of Turkish origin, Sila would always see herself as a German-Turkish Melange, the notion of a national identity was always alien to her.

Sila decided to study Sociology in her undergraduate studies, since she was interested in the psychology, not of individuals but rather of entire societies. In that way, she hoped to contribute to the treatment of “societal illnesses”. During her first year of studies, however, she realized that she also enjoyed the political aspects of her studies a lot, so that she decided to take political science as her second subject. Until that moment Sila studied and lived in Germany and only knew Turkey from her summer holidays, but she felt like discovering the life, society and culture of her parent’s native country more closely. Hence, she did not miss the opportunity to spend one year of her studies at the Middle East Technical University in Ankara. She enjoyed the diversity of the country, its people and the exciting student life a lot. However, she also realized that her
professional future would be closer linked to Germany, and even more to Europe.

Consequently, she participated in various internship programs in the German public service with a link to EU affairs, such as in the Committee for European Union affairs of the German Bundestag, the German embassy and the section for EU Law and European Migration Network of the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees.

This also led to her choice of a master program at the University of Konstanz, a renowned German university for public affairs. However, instead of focusing on European Integration, Sila decided to choose the focus of “Conflict Management and International Administration”, to widen her horizon beyond the European Union and to be able to understand the make-up of different international organizations and international attempts of conflict management in the various conflicts erupting around the world. While she enjoyed the privileged surroundings of Lake Constance, it did not fully fulfill her and she felt like she had not yet found what she was looking for: Sila was longing for being closer to practice, closer to actual politics and international organizations. Hence, she decided for a second master program at the DA, where she particularly appreciated the interdisciplinary make-up of the program and the close ties to the diplomatic world. In that way, she hoped to gain the experience and skills to be part of the diplomatic community herself one day.

An event that had a great impact on Sila was her work as a private teacher for young students with migration background in Germany. It made her realize how privileged and fortunate she actually was that her parents and environment allowed her to never question her belonging and being part of the German society and have a good education to achieve her goals. Knowing that for many it would still take generations to get there made her even more ambitious and strengthened her wish to be a positive role model for others.

Sila lives according to the saying “the journey is the reward”. She likes to laugh a lot, enjoy life, particularly in summer, the city she is currently living in and the people she is surrounded by. She likes to travel to unknown places, meet interesting and inspiring people and visit as many cafés as possible. In the meantime, she hopes for life bringing her where she belongs. And from what I saw I believe that this will be so.

The author Boris Brkovic is enrolled in the 8th Master of Science in Environmental Technology & International Affairs (ETIA) program at the DA and received the ClubDA Scholarship for the academic year 2014-15.
The ClubDA board’s decision to grant me the scholarship was not only a financial relief but also a sign of being recognized and really being listened to. The same way I wanted to listen to my scholarship-mate Boris’ story and what he would have to tell. What follows is an inspiring and impressing insight into the life of Boris.

Boris was born in Stuttgart/Germany, raised in Toronto/Canada, and graduated high school in Cacak/Serbia. Boris never categorises himself by nationality, if asked he would say that on paper he is Canadian and Serbian, but in life he is neither.

Boris was one of those kids that used to say that they want to be president when they grow up. Unsurprisingly he decided to study Political Sciences. However, not out of his childhood presidential ambitions, but rather out of a passion towards the field. He decided to study at the University of Vienna mainly because at the time Austria was one of the only countries in Europe with an affordable tuition fee for non-EU citizen, the beautiful city was only a plus. Although Boris was working as a dishwasher and spent his summers working in a metal sheet factory in Toronto to be able to support his studies and life in Vienna, he was able to earn his Bachelor’s degree in the record time of two and a half years.
Besides studying, working on, not in but on, skyscrapers next to the CN tower and scrubbing spaghetti of pans, Boris was able to go to Kampala/Uganda. There he worked on the development of a self-sustainable community centre for a local NGO called Action to Support Orphans and Disadvantaged. I noticed that this was the point when Boris took the turn into the ETIA lane. As he said that in those three months in Uganda he realised that he does not have the background that can have an impact, that knowing the political process or legal standards does not help you in choosing the right generator or water pump. Once he returned to Vienna he started searching for Master programmes that will give him the interdisciplinary skillset he was searching for. There it was, just a couple of blocks away from his WG, the Diplomatic Academy and its ETIA MSc programme.

As a researcher at the Regional Academy on the United Nations System (RAUN) he found a new passion. Boris had the chance to be mentored by officials from the UN Office for Outer Space Affairs for whom he wrote a paper which was certified as the RAUN paper of the year in the field of International Development and Trade Research. This was not the end of his outer space odyssey. Boris got an early start and is already working on his master thesis titled “Earth Observation and Diplomacy: Accelerating Development in the Post-2015 era”.

There are more interesting facts about Boris. He was a member of the Serbian national freestyle snowboarding team, where he was national champion multiple times and ranked in the top 30 European Cup athletes. He is the main project coordinator of the Academic Council on the United Nations System, and he is currently interning at UNIDO’s energy branch.

I wish Boris all the best for his future. In any case, I am pretty sure he will do his thing!

The author Sila Yildirim is enrolled in the 19th Master of Advanced International Studies (MAIS) programme at the DA and received the ClubDA Scholarship for the academic year 2014-15.
On 18 June 2013, DA and ClubDA organized the first „DA LINK – Mentor and Career Talks”. Since then, once a year the DA invites CEOs, department heads and human resources officials from highly renowned companies, organizations and institutions to come to the Academy to talk about their sectors in general and companies in particular and to sit down and talk with DA students about their career plans.

The second “DA LINK” career day took place on 4 March 2014, the third on 10 March 2015.

The following companies and organizations were present at DA LINK 2015:

- Casinos Austria & Österreichische Lotterien
- Deutsche Bank
- Pharmig
- Teach For Austria
- VAMED Vitality World
- Wirtschaftskammern Österreichs

DA LINK 2016 will take place in March 2016.
A News: Evgeni, when did you study at the Diplomatic Academy in Vienna?
Evgeni Ivanov: I successfully graduated from the DA as member of the 20th Diploma Course (1983-1985).

How did you learn about the DA and the possibility for university graduates from your country to enrol there?
The Embassy of Austria in Sofia was very active in promoting the opportunity that the DA was offering post-graduate studies in Vienna. Advertising posters were even to be seen in the Bulgarian Ministry for Foreign Affairs. They looked very appealing – sort of an offer that I could not decline.

How do you remember Vienna, the city itself as well as the mood at the time?
Speaking frankly (as I always do) I was amazed. I had seen London, Paris, Berlin, Frankfurt am Main etc. before. Nonetheless, Vienna was striking. In a nutshell I saw a German speaking city with French legerity, visible Slavonic presence, impressing nobility of an Empire with no monarchy present. To cut it short – a cocktail of pleasantries and goodies.

Can you give us any significant personal experience or a recollection?
I think I will never forget my first encounter with the proto-Austrian version of the German language. Until that moment all my fellow students in the DA as well as the administration of the Academy were speaking Hochdeutsch to me. But Frau Putz would not. She insisted that all foreign students had to get used to her way of speaking German-Viennese. And we did. As a result, at the end of the first year I was able to understand almost 90 percent of what she said. A great lady who gave us great lessons!

Looking back from a personal point of view, what was the core benefit you took away from your studies at the DA?
What was new to me was the academic ambiance – and most of all the relationship between students and professors. I won’t forget one occasion
when all my colleagues left a class because they simply did not like it. I was the only one who stayed. I simply was not used to it. In Bulgaria this was unthinkable at that time. Something like court contempt in the USA – it would be fined one way or another.

From today’s point of view and with all your professional experience, is there anything you missed in the DA’s curriculum?
At our time the only subject that was missing in the DA was “EU affairs” – in the mid 80’s rather “EEC affairs”. I remember that even in one of the classes of Prof. Fischer he asked me to explain to the class what the concept of the Common Agricultural Policy was and how it functioned. Not many people in the DA knew about it. In Bulgaria however, this was a priority subject.

How did you start your career after graduating from the DA’s two-year programme? How did the DA contribute to enhance your career – if at all?
If you have ever seen the launch of a rocket you will realize what my career looked like after the Diploma Course in the Academy. A year after the graduation I was already promoted to the rank of Third Secretary in the Permanent Mission of Bulgaria to the United Nations, New York. Thereafter I became Ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary, Head of the Mission of Bulgaria to the European Union, Brussels. And all this at the age of 38. Thank you DA!

My impression as your classmate was that you had a diplomatic and/or political career in mind. Indeed, you made impressive leaps ahead in the wake of your studies at the Academy. How come you eventually switched to the world of business?

Nobody is perfect. So is the Bulgarian diplomatic service. Remuneration is modest and scarce – at the same time uncertainty is immense.
What are the interesting aspects of your current job compared to your experience as a former diplomat?
Actually I am doing almost the same but with comfortable income and high career security. Business approach and market conditions make it possible for a diplomat (there is no such thing as a former diplomat) to feel at ease on the job. Actually, industrial relations and social dialogue require much more diplomatic skills than a routine embassy job; let’s say in the Caribbean.

As you might know, the DA more than ever welcomes students from Central, Eastern and South-eastern Europe. How do you see the professional prospects of “returnees” from the DA in those countries nowadays?
I sincerely hope that they can enjoy something similar to my career. They deserve it after working hard in a prestigious diplomatic school as the DA is.

You were acting as advisor to various governments in your country. How would you describe the situation in Bulgaria eight years after EU accession and how do you see the future of South-eastern Europe?
Bulgaria looks completely different after eight years of EU membership. Several new highways were built (as a matter of fact in the 45 years of planned economy the country did not have a single completely finished highway from Sofia to any of the country’s border towns), clean industry and environment, modern agriculture, top level resorts (ski, spa, seaside) etc. etc. Of course once again I would say – nobody’s perfect. Still some problems exist with the judiciary and the rule of law, but we will cope. After all, this is the mission of my organization, to help the government create and maintain a business climate based on market economy and rule of law.

On the website of your organisation I found, among other topics, training programmes for young professionals. To what extent do they involve international cooperation? Are there links with the DA in Vienna, too?
As a matter of fact each year the Diploma Course students come to Bulgaria and we meet either at the Austrian Embassy in Sofia or at the headquarters of my confederation where I give a presentation for them about Bulgaria, or we do both.

Of course, I always let the young professionals who are looking for training opportunities with us know what DA offers and I do also encourage them to follow my path and example.

What advice would you give university graduates who consider a post-graduate study at an international school like the DA?
I do strongly encourage them to consider the DA as the best choice. As President of the local
ClubDA Chapter in Sofia I see it as my duty to do so. I do also wish that the administration of the DA goes back to the roots of the Oriental Academy of Empress Maria Theresa and keeps it predominantly as the Academy of South-east Europe and not as the Academy of North America and Western Europe. Recently, I received a letter by the Director of the DA inviting me as a Hall of Fame Alumni to financially support an effort by him to raise contributions for scholarships to be extended to DA students. I will certainly do so, under the condition that the money is spent for a student coming from South-eastern Europe.

Are you still keeping in touch with any of your colleagues from the Academy?
I keep a warm contact with many of my colleagues from our course. I hope you still remember our ski escape in Bansko, together with Ambassador Reiweger. This year we met with Ambassador Hauser also in Bansko at the Ski World Cup where, by the way, Austria (as always in Bansko) was the big winner. I will not mention any more names since I am afraid to miss and thus hurt someone. But as you well know my house is open for DA alumni events and all of our colleagues are warmly welcome.

Do you have any nice or funny memories from your study days in Vienna?
Yes, I have quite a few but one I remember particularly well. It has to do with my birthday party in December 1983 after which my colleagues stated: “Evgeni, your birthday party changed the history of the Academy”. The reason for this statement was the following: In the small hours of the party our German colleague Wolfgang Dreusch left us with the excuse that he was tired and will go jogging the next day. When he left, those of us who were still on the move decided...
to glue off the door of his room with newspapers so that when he’d leave the room for his run he would come out of the door as the lion of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer’s Pictures cutting through the paper with his mighty, roaring head. And Wolfgang really did it. We were there to witness the breakthrough and then the party restarted. This act of ours was not very academic, but it was great fun.

Ambassador Dr. Evgeni Ivanov
CEO and Member of the Managing Board of the Confederation of Employers and Industrialists in Bulgaria – KРИБ

Mr. Ivanov is former Ambassador of Bulgaria to the European Union (1993-1997). His diplomatic career includes also the positions of Third Secretary in the Permanent Mission of Bulgaria to the United Nations; Director in the Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations; National Coordinator of the EC PHARE Programme for Bulgaria; Coordinator of all assistance programmes of Japan for Bulgaria.

Mr. Ivanov was Executive Director of the Bulgarian Business Leaders Forum affiliated to the Prince of Wales Business Leaders Forum, UK (1998-2000); Secretary General and Member of the Board of the Employers Association of Bulgaria (2000-2006); Vice-chairman of the Bulgarian National Committee of the International Chamber of Commerce – ICC (2007-2011).

Hermann Hagspiel, alumnus of the 20th Diploma Course,
is treasurer of ClubDA.

ClubDA Sofia Chapter
Garden&Pool party in my house with Wolfgang Dreusch and Ambassador Gerhard Reiweger (both DLG 20)
Since ClubDA implemented its chapter strategy in spring 2009, fifteen local chapters have organized 150 alumni meetings in Vienna and around the world. More than 4,500 graduates and students as well as friends of the Diplomatic Academy took part.

Recently, the following meetings took place:

16 January:
Berlin Chapter New Year’s Meeting
For the second time ClubDA Berlin Chapter organized a New Year’s Meeting at restaurant Felix Austria in Berlin-Kreuzberg.

25 January:
13th DA Ski and Snowboard Championships
(see article on page 18)

17 February:
Curling and Skating at Wiener Eistraum
Fifteen DA alumni and students joined us for ice skating and curling at the “Wiener Eistraum” in front of Vienna’s city hall. The Club organized this event for the fourth time.
19 February:
8th Alumni Hall of Fame Talk
(see article on page 19)

3 March:
ClubDA Berlin Chapter Crêpes Night
DA alumna Iphigenia Moraitini
invited to this event.

10 March:
DA LINK 2015
(see article on page 8)

25 March:
Alumni meet Students in Brussels
More than 50 alumni and students first met
at the Austrian Permanent Mission in Brussels,
followed by an informal gathering at Kitty
O’Shea’s Irish pub.

7 April:
Alumni meet Students in Bucharest

On the occasion of the first DA study trip to
Romania, DA alumnus Gerhard Reiweger,
Austrian ambassador to Romania, invited the
group of students and local alumni for a
reception at the Austrian Embassy in Bucharest.

4 May:
Frauen im Gespräch: Sophie Karmasin
(see article on page 20)
7 May:
Alumni Reception at the Austrian Embassy in Brussels
DA alumna Bernadette Klösch, Chargé d’Affaires a.i. of the Austrian Embassy in Brussels, invited fellow alumni for a reception at Bastion Tower in the heart of Brussels.

7 May:
ETIA Student & Alumni Meeting on Climate Change
On the initiative of DA alumnus Gregor Kofler, 20 ETIA students and alumni met to discuss the key issue of the evening as well as get to know each other and enjoy a glass of wine at the DA.

7 May:
Austrian Knödelfest at Warsaw
DA alumnus Christian Autengruber and Silke Pixner Autengruber invited fellow alumni to their place for a memorable Austrian evening in Warsaw.

7 May:
Alumni Meeting in Berlin

14-16 May:
7th ClubDA Outdoor Weekend: Wachau
(see article on page 21)

The Diplomatic Academy and ClubDA thank all chapter presidents, the Diplomatic Academy Students Initiative and all other alumni, students and partners who made these events possible.

Please visit our website www.da-vienna.ac.at/alumni/events to see additional photos of recent meetings and find out more about upcoming events organized by the DA and ClubDA as well as its local chapters.
On 25 January 2015, 9 DA alumni and staff participated in the 13th annual DA Ski and Snowboard Championships, which the DA again had organized together with the Austrian Foreign Ministry as well as the „Club Diplomatie & Wirtschaft“.

The DA thanks all participants for making this ski trip such a successful and memorable event and hopes to see many of you again next year.

Alumni Champions Alpine Skiing Men
1st Gregor KOFLER, AUT, ETIA 2
2nd Jürgen ANGLEITNER, AUT, ETIA 1
3rd Ernst G. WALTER, AUT, DLG 7

DA Champions Faculty & Staff
1st Andreas EHRMANN, AUT
2nd Gerhard SAILLER, AUT
3rd Markus KORNPROBST, GER

In addition, two DA alumni took part in the Austrian Foreign Ministry’s race, finishing in first and fifth place respectively:

BMEIA Alpine Skiing Men
1st Jan STADLER, AUT, DLG 50
5th Thomas PRASTHOFER, AUT, DLG 50
On 19 February 2015, ClubDA invited to its 8th Alumni Hall of Fame Talk.

After opening remarks by DA’s Director Hans Winkler, Wendelin Ettmayer, former Member of Parliament and Austrian ambassador, gave a keynote speech on the foreign policy concepts of Europe, the Russian Federation and the United States in light of the current crisis in Ukraine.

For a discussion on this topic, Mr Ettmayer was joined by panellists Hans Winkler; Eva Nowotny, former Austrian ambassador to France, the United Kingdom and the United States; and Christian Stadler, professor of legal philosophy at the University of Vienna.

More than 250 guests participated in this event.

Please go to the Diplomatic Academy’s YouTube channel to re-watch the whole discussion online.


Sophie Karmasins Rezept für Zufriedenheit mit der beruflichen Karriere ist, sich für etwas einzusetzen, von dem man tatsächlich überzeugt ist.

Romana Königsbrun, Absolventin des 31. Diplomlehrgangs, ist Vizepräsidentin des ClubDA.
On the 2015 Ascension Day weekend, ClubDA organized its 7th Outdoor Weekend for DA alumni and students. This year, 10 participants travelled to the UNESCO World Heritage Site Wachau to enjoy the scenic landscape along the Danube River. During the weekend, the group visited the cities/villages of Krems, Stein, Dürnstein, Spitz and Willendorf.

On Thursday, 14 May, the group followed the “World Heritage Trail” from Krems – including the picturesque historic old town – to Dürnstein.

On Friday, 15 May, the group climbed more than 800 metres from the valley to reach the top of Jauerling mountain, Wachau’s highest peak. There the group enjoyed a scenic view of the Wachau valley.

We thank all participants for a memorable weekend!
Alumni Meetings reviewed
7th ClubDA Outdoor Weekend: Wachau Andreas Ehrmann

Nicht weniger als 57 Nationalitäten waren im diesem akademischen Jahr an der Akademie vertreten, was den internationalen Charakter der DA einmal mehr unterstreicht. Die Mitgliedstaaten der Europäischen Union waren dabei 139 mal und somit am stärksten repräsentiert.

**Studierende nach Lehrgängen**

- DLG 51: 25
- ETIA 7/2: 23
- ETIA 8/1: 25
- MAIS 18/2: 74
- MAIS 19/1: 62

**Studierende nach Regionen**

- Europäische Union: 139
- USA & Kanada: 12
- UdSSR-Nachfolgestaaten: 8
- Asien: 6
- Südeuropa: 19
- Afrika: 13
- Lateinamerika & Karibik: 37
- Westeuropa: 14
- Australien & Ozeanien: 19

*… Die genannten Nationalitäten summieren sich auf 239, da 28 Studierende mit Doppel- oder Mehrfachstaatsbürgerschaften berücksichtigt sind.*
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ON THE CALENDAR ...

26 June 2015 17th International Alumni Meeting in Vienna: ClubDA General Assembly, DA Sommerfest
27 June 2015 17th International Alumni Meeting in Vienna: Alumni Excursion, Heuriger
20 July 2015 Tour of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development in Berlin
August 2015 7th Vienna Summer Meeting
2 December 2015 Open Day of the Diplomatic Academy of Vienna

For exact dates and additional events including interesting talks by DA alumni in Vienna as well as alumni meetings organized by ClubDA’s local chapters please check out our online event calendar at www.da-vienna.ac.at/alumni/events.

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