



Annual report 2020/21





Contents

- 4 Preface
- 6 Introduction to our organization
- 8 Austrian Servants Abroad 1998–2020
- 10 Partner organizations
- 12 Types of service
- 14 Structure of the association
- 15 Wednesday conference
- 16 Social Media Team
- 18 Some of our volunteers 2020



26 New partner organizations

30 Understanding Israel

32 Gedenkdienst study trip to Poland

34 House of Responsibility

35 Austrian Holocaust Memorial Award

36 Austrian Servants Abroad of the Year

38 Finances

40 Support us

41 A thank you from the office

Preface



Chairman Dr. Andreas Maislinger

Looking back always means comparing, comparing the before and after. The cohort 2020 suffered from a lot of uncertainty, uncertainty whether and how many of our volunteers would be able to go abroad despite COVID-19. Finally, 56 young Austrians could be sent to their respective host organizations. This was less than the year before (then there were 62), but only slightly less. The Corona-related crisis management was continued throughout the year and worked relatively well due to our decentralized setup (we send service abroad volunteers from all nine federal states) and our affinity for digitality (we have been using online communication platforms since 2009).

Our guiding principle was and is to see the crisis as an opportunity. This meant becoming more flexible by adding more partner organizations, hiring more staff, expanding

our (online) services, increasing the quality we provide, networking even more, and seeking advice from experts. This year, for the first time, we organized cohort meetings at which experts from our partner organizations offered workshops to our candidates, organized an eight-day Gedenkdienst study trip to Poland developed by the office, a five-day Understanding Israel seminar, introduced “empathy rooms”, interest groups and a literature club, and presented the Austrian Holocaust Memorial Award to the 97-year-old survivor of six concentration camps, Dušan Stefančič.

For the courageous volunteers of the cohort 2020, their time abroad was the most difficult in the history of our organization. Many were not able to go to their preferred locations due to COVID-19. Most of their time abroad was affected by Corona measures, and many had to meet people in the country of assignment online instead of physically, and instead of going to the office, had to work remotely from home. Much of the potential of the overseas experience went untapped as a result, and the service abroad volunteers, collectively, experienced the most difficult circumstances of any year to date.

Nevertheless, the popularity of doing a service abroad has still grown considerably since then. The Austrian Service Abroad has become better known, and more and more different age groups are also entering our candidate ranks, including retirees. A comparison with the cohort 2020 shows that we will send almost twice as many people abroad in 2021. We also offer even more and higher quality preparation projects. This shows that the hard work and the many investments of all have paid off and that a service abroad can be offered to even more and better prepared people.

For the many constructive contributions to this, I say thank you.



Spokesperson of the cohort 2020 Florian Müller

Dear servants abroad of the cohort 2020,
dear readers,

As the spokesperson of the cohort 2020, I have the great pleasure of writing a short foreword for this year's annual report.

At the beginning of 2020, after our first cohort meeting, we looked forward with anticipation to the largest cohort in the history of the Austrian Service Abroad to date. However, we quickly realized that we would be greatly impacted by the COVID-19 crisis that emerged in March 2020. Our cohort began to have doubts about being sent abroad, as no one knew if we would be able to enter a foreign country then. This uncertainty of not being able to work at the desired partner organization, or even being able to do any service abroad at all, as well as personal and health concerns, unfortunately caused the cohort 2020 to shrink a bit.

Since the plans for the cohort of 2020 were thwarted by Corona, new solutions had to be found: In record time, our office staff set up new partner organizations making it possible for all those who wanted to do a service abroad despite the adverse circumstances to do so. In the end, 56 volunteers found their way abroad. Our cohort consisted of recent high school graduates, university students and already successful graduates. This diversity and mix of curiosity, passion, and experience was very well

received by our host organizations, and at the same time gave them the opportunity to make the best possible use of our volunteers and build on their strengths. As an example, I would like to mention Emilio Skarwan, who having studied molecular biology was able to work - among other things - on SARS-CoV2 diagnostics and alternative approaches to the detection of SARS-CoV2 variants as a social servant at the „Centre de Recherches Medicales de Lambarene“ in Gabon.

My time with the Austrian Service Abroad, both as a cohort spokesperson and as a service abroad volunteer in Osijek and Uppsala, had a very strong impact on me. The experiences I had in such a fast-growing organization led by mainly peer colleagues not only ignited my passion for project management, optimization of business processes and innovation in all respects, but also represents an essential part of my personal development. For this, I would like to thank the entire organization, especially Daniel J. Schuster, Astrid Brucker, Tobias Kohlberger, Felix Hafner, Claudia Hirsch and Daniel Haim.

Finally, I would like to address my cohort colleagues directly: I know that it was a demanding and eventful year, but after many conversations, phone calls and reviewing the final reports, I dare to say that this time made us grow, never let us forget the importance of our work, and our host countries became a second home to many of us. Austrian servants abroad are critical thinkers, stand up for their views and always go the metaphorical extra mile. Thank you for the great time together!

I hope you were and are aware of the specialness of your commitment! I wish you, our organization, and our partner organizations nothing but the best for the future!

All the best, Florian



The cohort 2021 at the reception hosted by federal President Van der Bellen

Introduction to our organization

The Idea

The idea for a Gedenkdienst in Austria began in 1975 with a visit by Andreas Maislinger to the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp memorial site, where he became convinced that Austria needed a „civil service in Auschwitz.“ The first Gedenkdienstler Stephan Mayer was sent to the memorial site in Auschwitz in 1992 as part of the GEDENKDIENT association. In 1998 the Austrian Service Abroad was founded by Andreas Maislinger, Michael Prochazka and Andreas Hörtnagel. In addition to the Gedenkdienst, the Social Service was added to the program in 2001 and the Peace Service in 2005.

Service Types

Gedenkdienst is a service to commemorate the victims of National Socialism. Social Servants make a contribution to support vulnerable social groups, economic initiatives and environmental protection. Peace Service involves supporting peace and reconciliation work and maintaining the memory of genocides apart from the Holocaust.

Recent developments

In recent years, the Austrian Service Abroad has enjoyed steady growth and undergone many reforms. Despite the Corona pandemic, it sent 56 people abroad last year and over 100 volunteers for the first time this year! The association currently maintains 104 partnerships in 46 countries, of which 58 are Gedenkdienst, 28 Social Service and 18 Peace Service placements.

Projects

Important projects of the Austrian Service Abroad are the idea for a House of Responsibility for the birthplace of Adolf Hitler, the Austrian Holocaust Memorial Award, the Wednesday Conference, the Understanding Israel program and the Gedenkdienst study trip to Poland.

Main focus

One of the main focuses of the association is the preparation of the volunteers for their assignment abroad. This has 2 aspects: 1. content-related studies and 2. organizational skills.

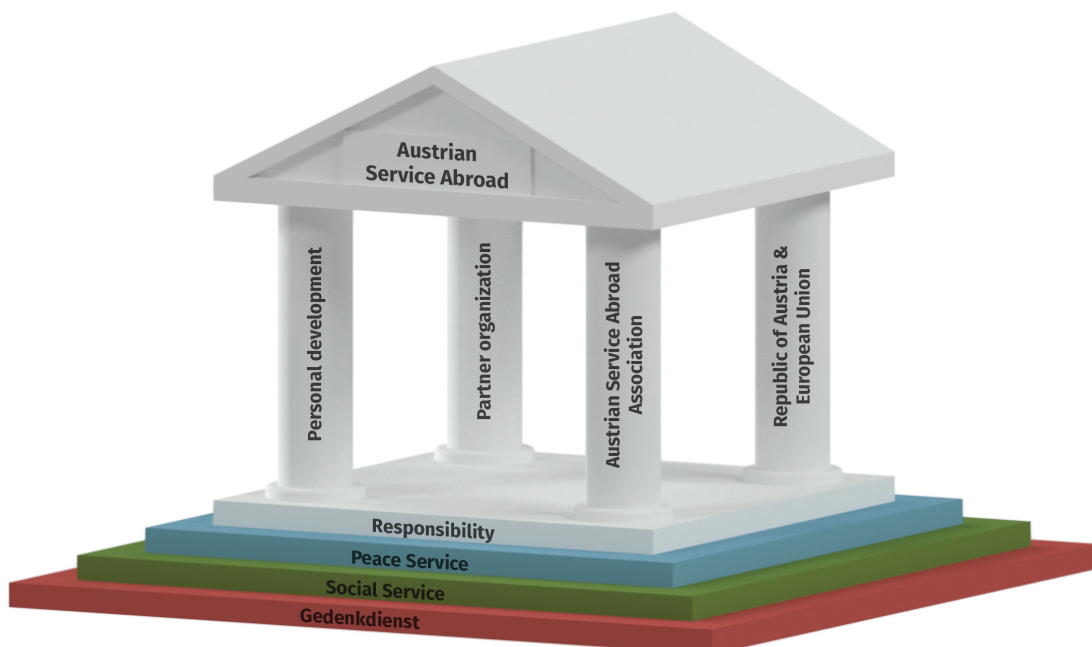
Content-related studies consist of monthly Gedenkdienst, Social Service, and Peace Service conferences (online), bi-weekly Wednesday conferences (online), semi-annual cohort meetings (one online and one physical), monthly state unit meetings (physical), and annual Gedenkdienst, Social Service, and Peace Service seminars (physical when possible). In addition, interest groups emerge dynamically to address topics of particular interest to them (e.g. China and Taiwan, Roma and Sinti, Native communities...). Once a year there is an eight-day study trip to Poland, which takes participants to places in Poland that are central to the Gedenkdienst and provides them with educational support. Once a year, the association also organizes an Understanding Israel seminar and offers so-called “Israel Academy” meetings to introduce participants to the complexity of Israel. Furthermore, Austrian service abroad candidates are encouraged to participate in external events relevant to their service. These conferences, meetings, seminars, and events serve to prepare our volunteers thematically for their service abroad.

In connection with this, organizational skills are also promoted in our association, as these are often relevant to the work at the host organizations. This takes place largely through collaboration in teams and units. This gives our volunteers the opportunity to improve their skills in organization, teamwork, leadership and communication. Once a year, our service abroad candidates are received by the Federal President of the Republic of Austria. Unfortunately,

in 2020, due to Covid-19, this event could not take place. Yet, on July 6, 2021, the cohort of 2021 was bid farewell by Alexander van der Bellen in the courtyard of the Hofburg.

The four pillars

Working for the Austrian Service Abroad as well as for the host organizations all around the world is based on four pillars: The volunteers' commitment should serve their own personal development, but also their host organizations, the association Austrian Service Abroad and the Republic of Austria and / or the European Union. Austrian servants abroad should therefore have the opportunity to further their education during their assignment and their preparation for it, and to grow personally as a result. At the same time, their work should of course be useful for the host organizations; the goal here is to be able to contribute (and expand) one's own competencies as well as possible on site. The work within the association is very valuable for the candidates and servants abroad for themselves to learn new things and indispensable for the association, because most of the structures are based on voluntary work. As „little ambassadors of Austria“, they also have the responsibility to represent Austria (and the EU) abroad and to leave a positive impression.



Austrian Servants Abroad 1998–2020

In 23 years, from a handful of Gedenkdiener to service abroad around the world. A review in numbers.

When the first year of six (male) Gedenkdiener started their service in 1998, one could hardly have imagined that in the still distant year of 2021, 102 volunteers would be performing Gedenkdienst, social and peace service at 78 locations in 44 countries.

The Austrian Service Abroad grew not only in terms of the number of volunteers and alumni, but also in terms of deployment opportunities and diversity.

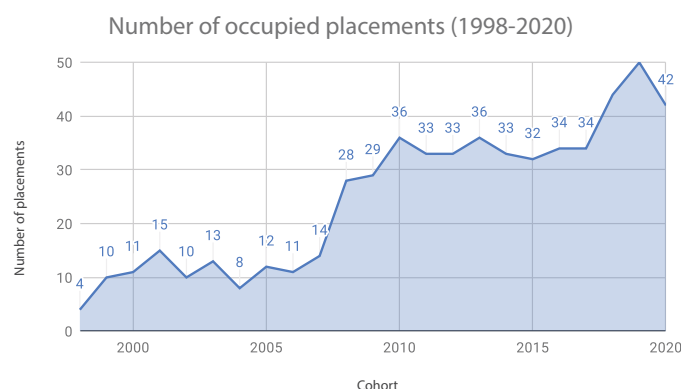


Andreas Maislinger as a volunteer for ASF in Poland in 1981

Expansion

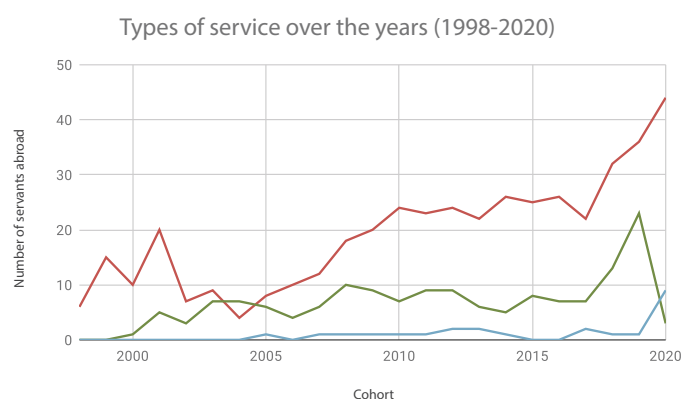
Whereas the first cohorts of 6 to 25 volunteers were still subject to strong fluctuations and the cohorts 2008 to 2017 counted a roughly constant number of service abroad volunteers with about 30 each, the cohorts from 2018 onwards (even including the absolute „Corona cohort“ 2020) were by far the largest with 46, 60 and 56 Austrian servants abroad. In 2021, significantly more people will start their service abroad. As there were more volunteers each year, the number of partner organizations

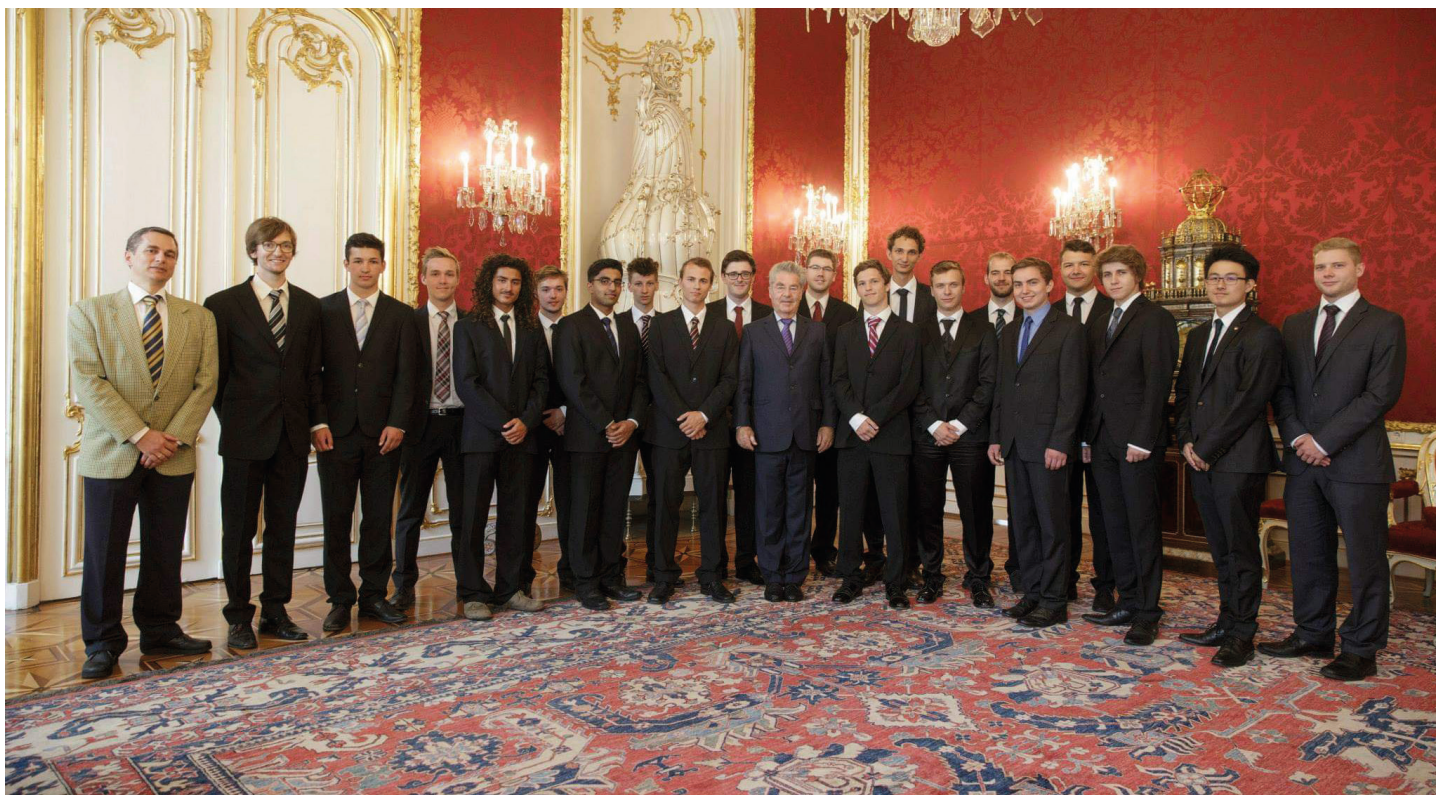
and countries receiving our volunteers increased steadily too, reaching highs of 50 partner organizations in 26 countries in 2019 and 2020, even if the 2020 pandemic briefly reduced the sites.



New types of service

In addition to the Gedenkdienst, which has been performed since 1998, the opportunities to perform Social Service and Peace Service, respectively, were added in 2001 and 2005. Analogous to the total number of service abroad volunteers, the number of those sent to each type of service grew as well. The number of male and female Gedenkdiener, who today as in the beginning make up the largest part of the service abroad volunteers, decreased significantly between 2001 and 2004 - for a short time they were even overtaken by the Social Servants - but then increased again significantly, especially since 2017. In 2019, the Social Service reached the highest number of volunteers with 23, after it had long ranged between 5





The Gedenkdienst cohort of 2008 with federal president Dr. Heinz Fischer

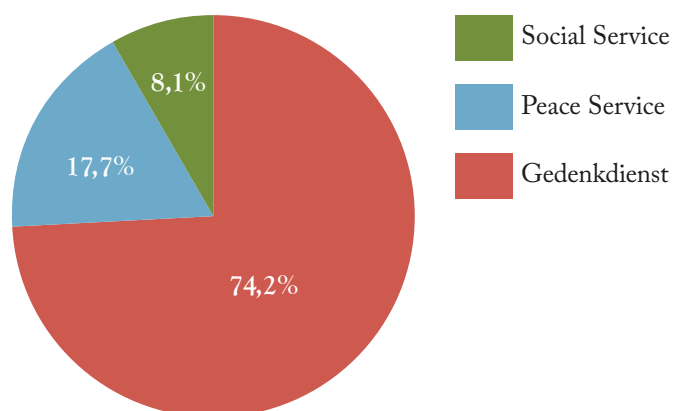
and 10. Only in 2020, the Covid pandemic unfortunately made it impossible to send more than 3 Social Servants. The Peace Service, which until then had provided a maximum of two Peace Servants per year, experienced the strongest relative growth in 2020 with 9 volunteers.

Volunteers and women

After a long period of mainly men doing a service abroad as a replacement for the (in Austria) mandatory civil service, the number of volunteers and especially women has increased significantly in recent years. It was not until 2016 that the Volunteers Act was introduced, which has since made it possible for women (and others not required to do civil service) to apply to the Ministry of Social Affairs for funding. In the cohort of 2019, 16 female volunteers already accounted for over 26% of those sent - a significant increase from the previous year's figure of 17%. Both the absolute and relative proportion of women - after a maximum of two female servants abroad in each of the previous years - increased significantly with 2018, peaking at 13 women in 2019. However, despite growing figures, men still represent the clear majority of the volunteers.

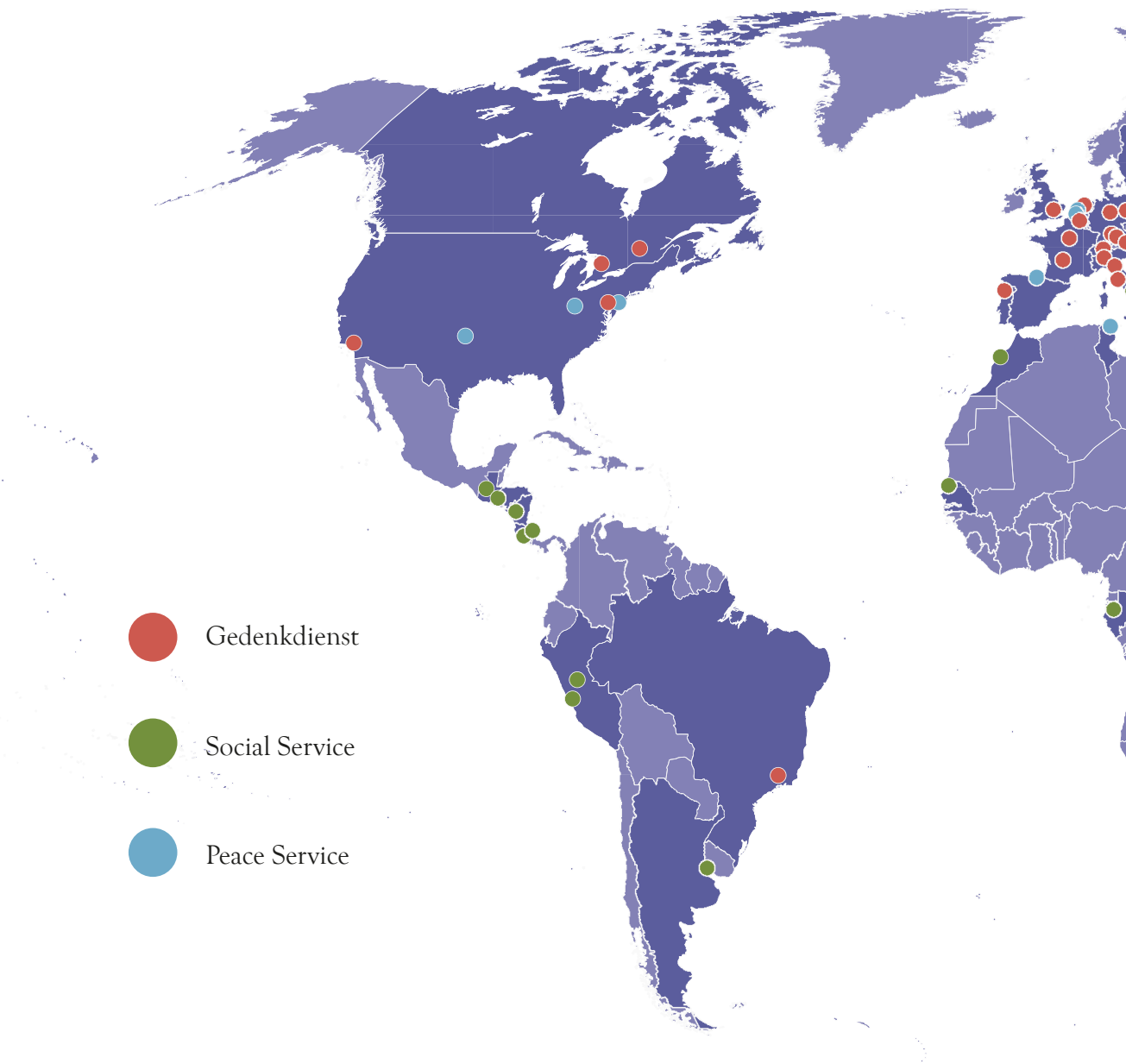
The cohort of 2020

The volunteers of the cohort of 2020 served in 42 different host organizations in 38 cities and a total of 26 countries. The average age of entry for this cohort was 20 years and 75 days. The 56 servants abroad of the cohort are made up of 5 women and 51 men. This results in a share of women of 8.93%.



After 23 years, the Austrian Service Abroad can look back on 621 alumni, on new types of service, partner organizations and countries of assignment, and on a growing number of volunteers and women in the association. A path that will hopefully continue to be just as successful.

Partner organizations



- Gedenkdienst
- Social Service
- Peace Service

South America

Casa Stefan Zweig, Petrópolis (Brazil)
 Freundeskreis für Pozuzo - Círculo de amigos de Tirol, Pozuzo (Peru)
 Fundación CONIN / Asociación ACER, Buenos Aires (Argentina)
 Offenes Herz Argentinien - Asociación Puntos Corazón, Buenos Aires (Argentina)
 Offenes Herz Peru - Asociación Puntos Corazón, Lima (Peru)
 United Through Sports Argentina, Buenos Aires (Argentina)

Central America

Casa Estudiantil ASOL, Guatemala-Stadt (Guatemala)
 Finca Sonador - Europäische Kooperative Longo Mai, Puntarenas (Costa Rica)
 Fundación Casa de los Tres Mundos, Granada (Nicaragua)
 Offenes Herz El Salvador - Asociación Puntos Corazón, San Salvador (El Salvador)
 Tropenstation La Gamba, La Gamba (Puntarenas, Costa Rica)

North America

American Jewish Committee (AJC), New York City (USA)

Aristides de Sousa Mendes Foundation, New York City (USA)
 First Americans Museum, Oklahoma City (USA)
 Holocaust Education and Genocide Prevention Foundation, Montreal (Canada)
 Holocaust Museum of LA, Los Angeles (USA)
 International Peace Institute, New York City (USA)
 Montreal Holocaust Museum, Montreal (Canada)
 Museum of Jewish Heritage - A Living Memorial to the Holocaust, New York City (USA)
 Museum of Tolerance, Los Angeles (USA)
 Sarah and Chaim Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre, Toronto (Canada)
 The Dayton International Peace Museum, Dayton (Ohio, USA)
 USC Shoah Foundation - The Institute for Visual History and Education, Los Angeles (USA)
 World Jewish Congress, New York City (USA)

West Europe

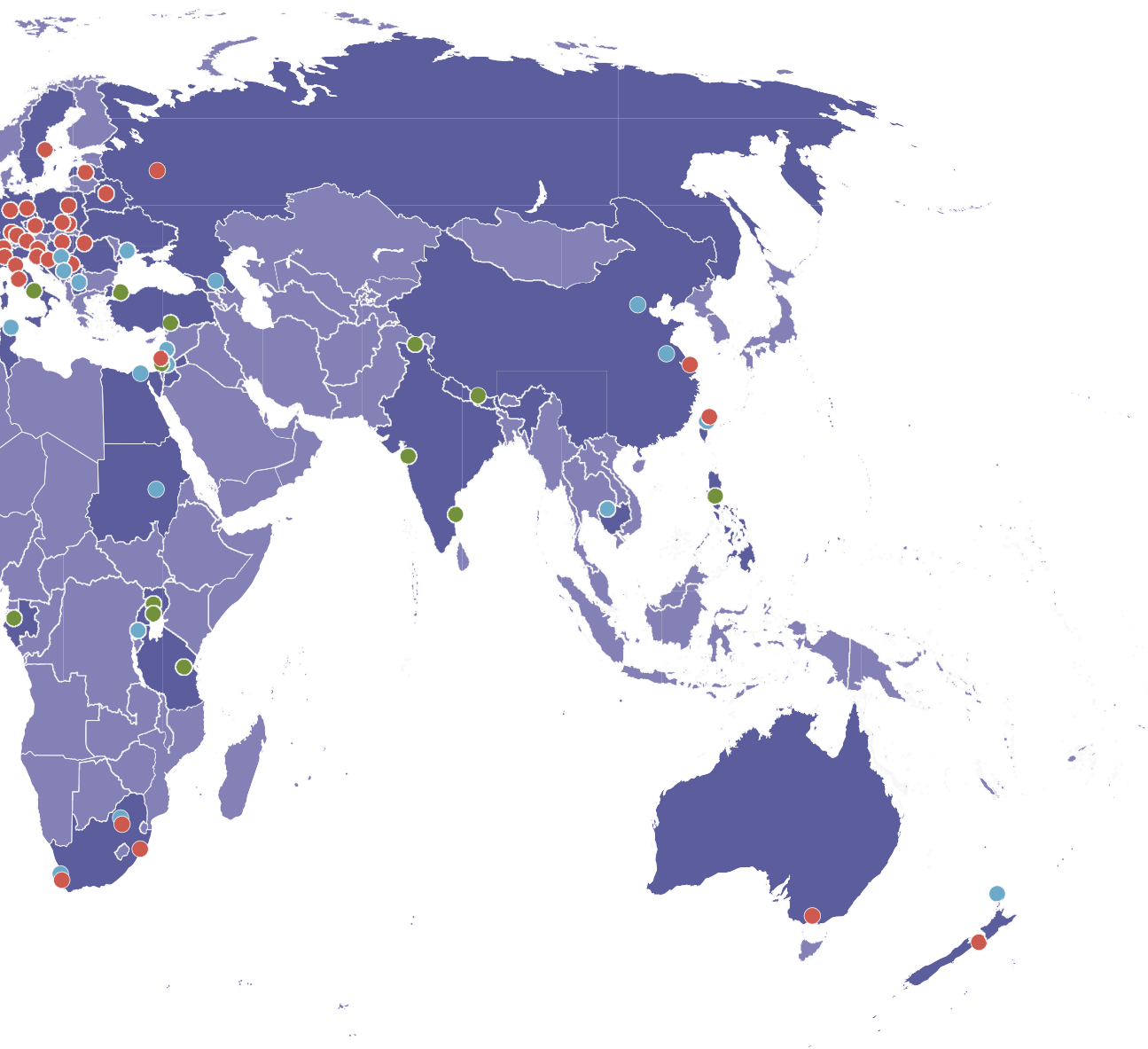
Amicale de Mauthausen, Paris (France)
 B'nai B'rith International, Brussels (Belgium)
 Bibliothèque de l'Alliance israélite universelle, Paris (France)

CEGESOMA - Centre d'Étude Guerre et Société, Brussels (Belgium)
 Carnegie Foundation Friedenspalast, Den Haag (Netherlands)
 Centre de la mémoire d'Oradour, Oradour-sur-Glane (France)
 European Peace Institute, Brüssel (Belgium)
 European Union of Jewish Students, Brussels (Belgium)
 Fondation pour la mémoire de la déportation, Paris (France)
 GAMARAAL Foundation, Zurich (Schweiz)
 Holocaust Museum of Oporto, Porto (Portugal)
 Hugo Valentin Centre, Uppsala (Sweden)
 Institut für Zeitgeschichte - Dokumentation Obersalzberg, Berchtesgaden (Germany)
 Jewish Care - Holocaust Survivors Centre, London (UK)
 Jüdisches Museum Augsburg Schwaben, Augsburg (Germany)
 Jüdisches Museum München, Munich (Germany)
 Nightingale Hammerson - Hammerson House, London (UK)
 Nightingale Hammerson - Nightingale House, London (UK)

Stiftung Jüdisch Historisches Museum - Jewish Cultural Quarter, Amsterdam (Netherlands)
 The Wiener Library for the Study of the Holocaust & Genocide, London (UK)

Eastern Europe

Act for Transformation Caucasus Office, Tiflis (Georgia)
 Auschwitz Jewish Center, Oswiecim (Poland)
 Galicia Jewish Museum, Krakau (Poland)
 Holocaust Museum in Nordtransilvanien, Nussfalau (Romania)
 Internationale Bildungs- und Begegnungsstätte Johannes Rau Minsk, Minsk (Belarus)
 Jewish Community Prague, Prag (Czechia)
 Jewish Museum and Tolerance Center, Moskau (Russia)
 Jüdisches Museum Berlin, Berlin (Germany)
 Latvijas Okupācijas Muzejs - Museum of the Occupation of Latvia & Muzejs Ebreji Latvija, Riga (Latvia)
 POLIN - The Museum of the History of Polish Jews, Warschau (Poland)
 Past/Future/Art - forumZFD Ukraine, Odesa (Ukraine)
 Russian Research and Educational Holocaust Center, Moskau (Russia)
 Stiftung Neue Synagoge Berlin - Centrum



Judaicum, Berlin (Germany)
 Stiftung niedersächsische Gedenkstätten -
 Gedenkstätte in der JVA Wolfenbüttel, Wol-
 fenbüttel (Germany)
 Tom Lantos Institute, Budapest (Hungary)
 Zanis Lipke Memorial, Riga (Latvia)

Mediterranean

Center for the Srebrenica-Potocari Memorial
 and Cemetery for the Victims of the 1995 Ge-
 nocide, Potocari (Bosnia und Herzegovina)
 Centre for Peace, Nonviolence and Human
 Rights Osijek, Osijek (Croatia)
 Fondazione Centro di Documentazione
 Ebraica Contemporanea (CDEC), Mailand
 (Italy)
 Fondazione Museo della Shoah, Rom (Italien)
 Fondazione Museo e Centro di Documenta-
 zione della Deportazione e Resistenza, Luog-
 hi della Memoria Toscana, Prato (Italy)
 Gedenkhaus von Mutter Teresa, Skopje
 (North Macedonia)
 Gernika Gogoratuz Peace Research Associa-
 tion, Gernika (Spain)
 Haver Srbija, Belgrad (Serbia)
 Jasenovac Memorial Site, Jasenovac (Croatia)
 Jewish Museum of Greece, Athen (Greece)
 Kareemat Merkez, Kilis (Turkey)

Loewenstein Medical Center (Beit-Cholim
 Loewinstein), Ra'anana (Israel)
 Maritime and History Museum of the Croa-
 tian Littoral - Memorial Centre Lipa Remem-
 bers, Sapjane (Croatia)
 NAAMAT Children Day Care Center Kfar
 Saba - Understanding Israel (Israel)
 National Museum of Contemporary History,
 Ljubljana (Slovenia)
 Offenes Herz Italien - Punto Cuore Italia,
 Procida (Italy)
 SosyalBen Vakfi, Istanbul (Turkey)
 The Liebling Haus - White City Center, Tel
 Aviv (Israel)
 Verband der jüdischen Gemeinden Serbiens
 - Jüdisches historisches Museum Belgrad, Bel-
 grad (Serbia)
 Wiener Library for the Study of the Nazi Era
 and the Holocaust - Elias Sourasky Central
 Library, Tel Aviv (Israel)
 Yad Vashem, Jerusalem (Israel)

Africa

A chance for children, Mityana (Uganda)
 Aegis Trust Rwanda, Kigali Genocide Memo-
 rial, Kigali (Rwanda)
 Auslandsbüro Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Kairo,
 Kairo (Egypt)

Auslandsbüro Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Khar-
 tum, Khartum (Sudan)
 Auslandsbüro der Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung
 Amman, Amman (Jordan)
 Auslandsbüro der Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung
 Beirut, Beirut (Lebanon)
 Auslandsbüro der Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung
 Tunis, Tunis (Tunisia)
 Bbanga Project, Kalangala (Uganda)
 Cape Town Holocaust & Genocide Centre,
 Kapstadt (South Africa)
 Centre de Recherches Medicales de Lambare-
 ne, Lambarene (Gabon)
 Durban Holocaust & Genocide Education
 Centre, Durban (South Africa)
 Enda Graf Sahel, Dakar (Senegal)
 High Atlas Foundation, Marrakesch (Morocco)
 Johannesburg Holocaust and Genocide Edu-
 cation Centre, Johannesburg (South Africa)
 NIROX Foundation, Krugersdorp (South
 Africa)
 Simon's Town Museum, Kapstadt (South
 Africa)
 Step by Step, Madarka Morogoro (Tanzania)

South Asia

Ashraya Foundation for Children, Pune (India)
 Auroville Institute of Applied Technology

(AIAT), Irumbai (India)
 Nepal Water for Health, Kathmandu (Nepal)
 Nishtha Rural Health, Education & Environ-
 ment Centre, Sidhbari (India)
 Svaram, Auroville (India)
 Tibetan Settlement Office, Kangra (India)

East Asia and Oceania

Beijing International Peace Culture Founda-
 tion, Peking (China)
 Center of Jewish Studies Shanghai, Shanghai
 (China)
 Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, Siem
 Reap (Cambodia)
 Holocaust Centre of New Zealand, Welling-
 ton (New Zealand)
 Jeffrey D. Schwartz & Tang Na Jewish Taiwan
 Cultural Association, Taipei (Taiwan)
 Jewish Holocaust Centre, Melbourne (Aus-
 tralia)
 John Rabe and International Safety Zone Me-
 morial Hall, Nanjing (China)
 Offenes Herz Philippinen - Tahanang Puso,
 Manila (Philippines)
 Taiwan Association for Truth and Reconcilia-
 tion, Taipei City (Taiwan)
 Waitangi Treaty Grounds, Waitangi (New
 Zealand)

Types of service

Gedenkdienst

The Gedenkdienst deals with the crimes of National Socialism and commemorates the victims of the Shoah.

Gedenkdieners work at:

- Holocaust memorials
- museums
- research institutions
- nursing homes
- cultural organizations

with reference to the Holocaust, Holocaust survivors, antisemitism, and/ or the support of Jewish culture and Jewish life. The work at the host organizations consists largely of designing and organizing guided tours, events and workshops, archival work, giving lectures at universities and schools, talking to contemporary witnesses and documenting them, and caring for survivors.

Role models of the Gedenkdienst are Willy Brandt falling to his knees in Warsaw and Simon Wiesenthal.

The key concept of the Gedenkdienst is memoria (remembrance).

Social Service

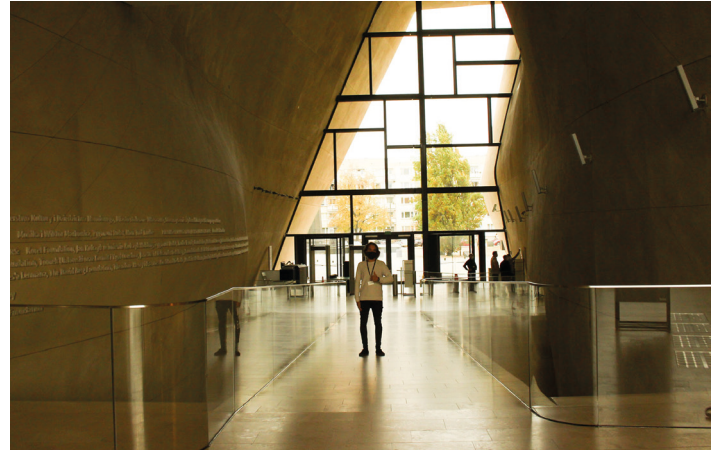
The Social Service supports people in need, environmental projects and the economic development of the host country. Social servants are active in:

- schools
- hospitals
- rehabilitation centers
- nursing homes
- art centers
- rural communities

that support children, women's rights, impaired, elderly, sick or homeless people, economic development of communities or ecological initiatives.

Role models for the Social Service are Mother Teresa and Ute Bock.

The key concept of Social Service is misericordia (mercy).



Andreas Jesse at the POLIN Museum in Warsaw, Poland



Haris Hadzimejlic at the Centre d'Oradour in France



Anna Kleemair for Open Heart in Procida, Italy



Raffael Winkler and Jonas Mackowski at the Tropical Station in La Gamba, Costa Rica



Florian Kössler and Maximilian Pröll at the traditional reception in the Austrian embassy in Brussels

Peace Service

Peace Service assists to achieve and secure peace. Peace servants work in:

- museums
- educational centers
- non-governmental organizations
- libraries
- research institutions
- institutions

active in the fields of peace education, peace research, reconciliation work and remembrance of genocides outside the Holocaust.

Goals include strengthening minority rights, non-violent resolution of conflicts, promoting intercultural communication, anti-racism, remembering cultures of native communities (Maori, Aboriginal...), and more.

Role models of the Peace Service are Bertha von Suttner and Nelson Mandela.

The key concept of Peace Service is pax (peace).



Sascha Baumann at the Centre for Peace, Nonviolence and Human Rights in Osijek, Croatia



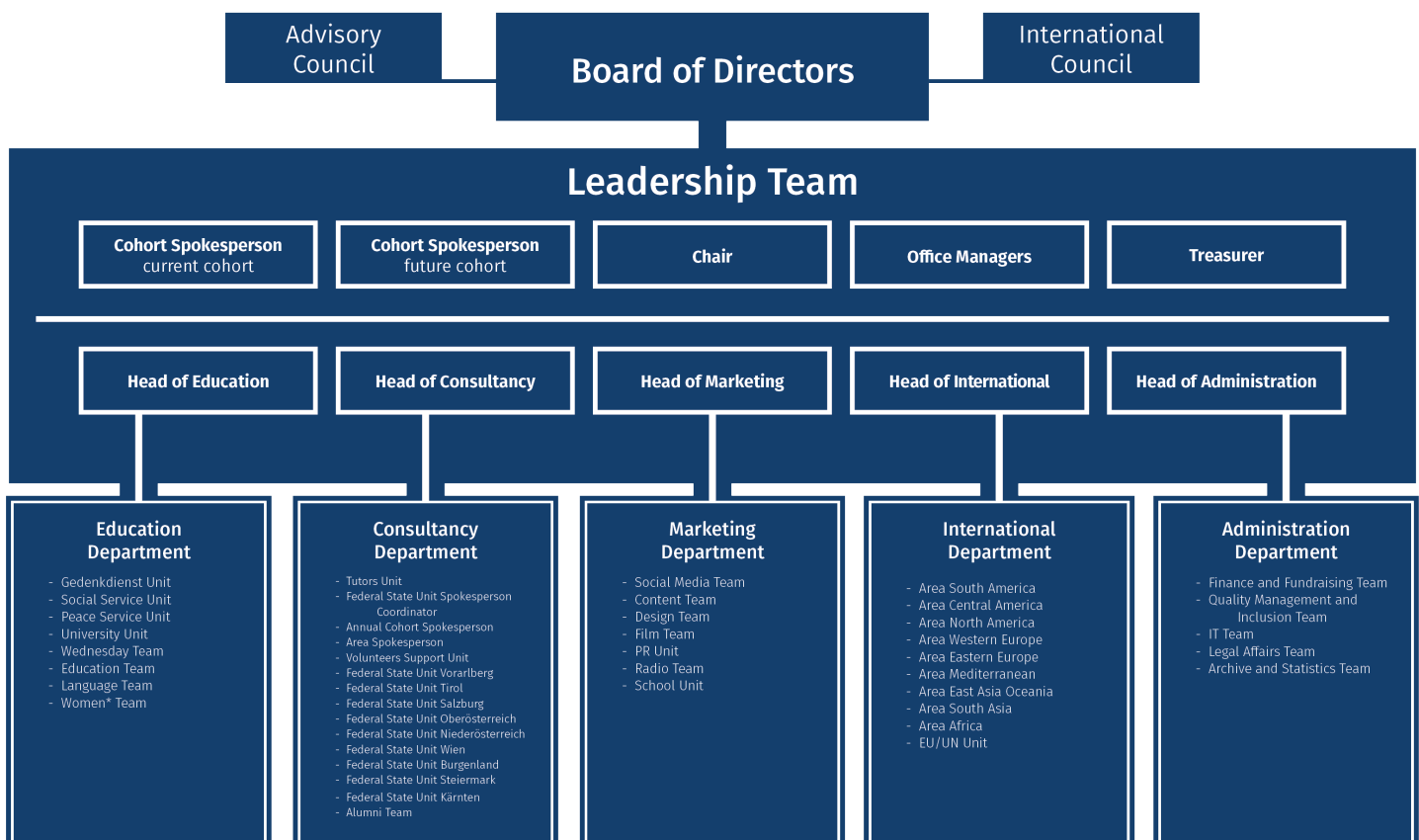
Amanda Eisenhut at Act for Transformation Caucasus Office in Georgia

Structure of the association

The three types of service - Gedenkdienst, Social Service and Peace Service alone are by far not sufficient to fully explain the activities, structure and organization of the Austrian Service Abroad. The board of the association is formed by a team around chairman Dr. Andreas Maislinger. However, most day-to-day decisions are taken by the leadership-team, which consists of the cohorts' spokespersons and the five department heads, plus Andreas Maislinger, representing the board. Those five department heads - candidates or servants abroad themselves - take care of all the teams and units in the departments of marketing, consultancy, administration, international affairs as well as education. All volunteers of the Austrian Service Abroad have the freedom to choose two suitable teams or units from a variety of activities and tasks. The voluntary commitment within the association distinguishes the Austrian Service Abroad.

In addition, a total of 9 specific areas from South America via Africa to East Asia and Oceania cover all of the association's partner organizations. In regular online-conferences, exchange takes place within the areas between servants abroad and future candidates or newcomers. Besides information about the activities at the partner organizations, political, social and cultural topics are also discussed.

In order to maintain an overview despite the constant growth, there are now a few permanent employees in addition to the volunteer structure, who form a constant contact point in the Viennese office. They take care of administrative and financial issues, and maintain the communication with the partner organizations and the Ministry of Social Affairs.





Mittwochskonferenz

Österreichischer Auslandsdienst
Leitung: Prof. Dr. Andreas Maislinger

Wednesday conference

Another important component of our association is the Wednesday Conference, an online event that takes place regularly on Wednesday evenings, is chaired by Andreas Maislinger and in which the entire association participates. For this, the Austrian Service Abroad achieved the second place of the Emperor Maximilian Award of the state of Tyrol this year. On October 14, we were received in Innsbruck for the award ceremony by Governor Günter Platter. At most of these conferences, an external person is invited as a guest who has special expertise in a particular field relevant to Gedenkdienst, Social, or Peace Service. The guests are asked questions by newcomers, candidates, servants abroad and alumni from all over the world.

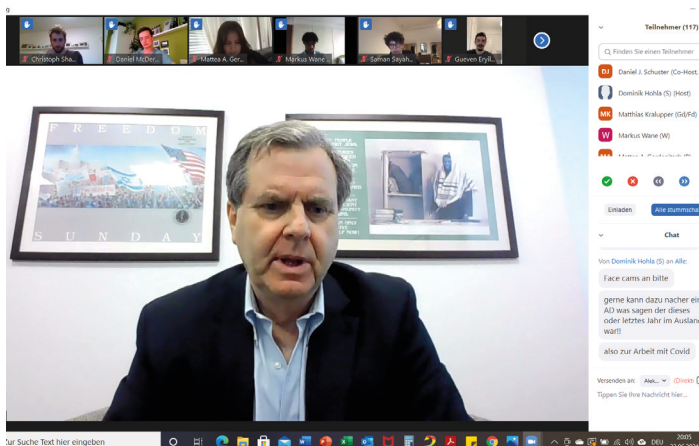
Organization

The MK team (in German Wednesday conference is Mittwochs-Konferenz) is responsible for the organization and smooth running of the conferences. This includes making sure that the technical equipment is working properly and that guests and other people presenting somet-

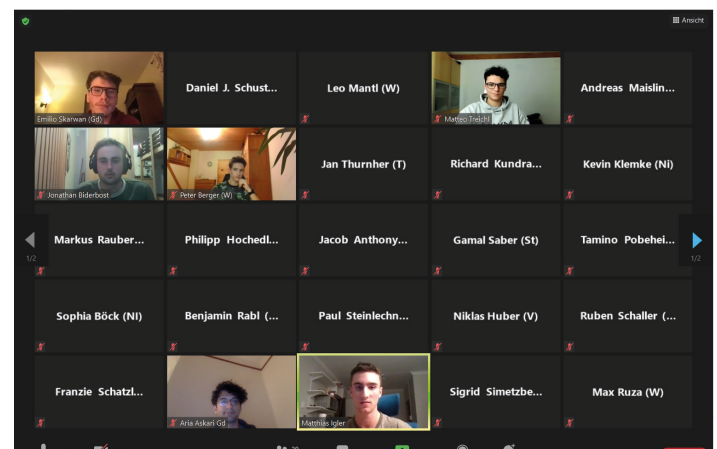
hing are selected, invited and instructed. Furthermore, an infomail is created and sent out, which contains all the relevant information about the upcoming guest. During the conference itself, the team members also contribute to an interesting process by asking questions, being active in the chat and animating other people.

Personalities

One of the special features of the Wednesday Conference is that personalities from areas such as politics, journalism, literature, history and many more are almost always guests. For example, Matthias Strolz (entrepreneur and former politician with the Austrian political party NEOS), Rudolf Anschöber (former Austrian Minister of Health), David Harris (CEO of our partner organization American Jewish Committee), Peter Launsky-Tieffenthal (Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs), Nikolai Atefie (journalist and former Gedenkdienstler), Beatrice Heuser (historian and political scientist) and Wolfgang Sobotka (President of the National Council) have already been guests.



MK with David Harris, CEO of the American Jewish Committee on June 23, 2021



Area conference Africa on January 19, 2021

Social Media Team

Another team we would like to present at this point is the Social Media team. Our volunteers there are responsible for designing, producing and posting content for the social media presence of the Austrian Service Abroad. In order to meet this broad profile of requirements, this team now consists of 33 members.

Due to the size of the team and the variety of content that is produced, the team is divided into seven „editorial teams“ or departments, most of which work independently.

Content preparation

Posts are created here to provide information about historically relevant personalities (e.g. Winston Churchill) or events and special days (e.g. Holocaust Remembrance Day). These are posted every other week.

MK – presentation

This team creates Wednesday conference announcement videos and also posts them. This editorial team alternates weekly with the „content preparation“ team.

Servant abroad of the week

Every week, this team presents an Austrian servant abroad. In addition, photos of the activities and a small description of the life on site are sent to the team, who make a post out of it.

Partner organization of the week

This team presents one of our many partner organizations each week. Photos of the site and a description of the tasks there and the history of the organization are compressed into a post and posted on our pages.

News/Stories

The staff members of this editorial team take care of the stories on our social media pages. If there is something to announce spontaneously, or a reminder for one of our events, it will be taken care of by them.

LinkedIn

Since we recently started to try to be present on LinkedIn together with the finance and fundraising team, a new editorial team was founded within the social media team. This team produces content tailored to LinkedIn, with which we as an association can also generate reach on this up-and-coming platform.

Innovation team

In addition, the social media team was expanded to include the so-called innovation team. This team develops new concepts for our social media presence and tries to optimize existing ones. The ideas drafted by the innovation team are then discussed together at the social media team conferences.

What makes our association so special are our many wonderful volunteers, some of whom have been with us for years before their service abroad and keep everything running with their commitment and know-how, as well as bringing unbelievable progress with their constantly new impulses and ideas.

Links

If you are curious about our servants abroad, our partner organizations and host countries, feel free to also visit our youtube channel. Our film team has recently started a project called „7-minute-insights“ with short clips giving both a lot of information and also beautiful impressions of our volunteers' lives and work abroad.

On spotify you can find the most interesting quotes of the latest Wednesday Conferences as well as interviews with our servants abroad.



facebook.com/auslandsdienst



youtube.com/channel/UCxthcj82jHjVuJX99brXPQA



instagram.com/auslandsdienst



linkedin.com/company/-sterreichischer-auslandsdienst



spotify.com/show/13LUBpplmBWtHQNPzFQmaK



**Anders, weil:
wir nicht nur reden,
sondern auch helfen.**

Oberbank
Nicht wie jede Bank

Jedes Unternehmen hat auch eine soziale Verantwortung.

Darum unterstützen wir ein breites Spektrum an sozialen, karitativen und öffentlichen Einrichtungen.
Übrigens: reden hilft auch immer. Sprechen Sie mit uns! Jetzt.

Some of our volunteers 2020

The big goal of our volunteers is, of course, their assignment abroad. Therefore, we would like to briefly introduce three of our many servants abroad from the cohort of 2020 and give an insight into their work and their lives at their respective host organizations.

Gedenkdiener Anton Lu

I am 21 years old and since October 2020 I have been doing my Gedenkdienst at the Center of Jewish Studies Shanghai (CJSS). Founded and directed by Prof. Pan Guang, CJSS is the best and most influential institute in the field of Jewish Studies in China. Since the last century, the city has been under massive influence from the West. After the November pogroms, Shanghai became the last refuge for about 20,000 Jewish refugees from Europe. It was the only city that did not require a visa to enter. Many people in Shanghai or aid organizations like JDC provided vital assistance to Jewish refugees. The Jewish ghetto in Shanghai has even been nicknamed „Little Vienna.“ The Shanghai Jewish Refugees Museum, the former Ohel Moshe Synagogue, is one of the most popular tourist attractions in Shanghai.

My work on site

My job at the CJSS consists of assisting with research, organizing and participating in various events, and translating foreign language documents. Because Chinese is my native language, my expertise in translation/research work is highly appreciated. On November 4 2020, it was a special honor to receive the Austrian Ambassador Friedrich Stift at the CJSS. It was a great opportunity not only to present the activities or research results regarding Austrian Jews in Shanghai, but also to promote the exchange between Austria and China, especially in these difficult times. Prof. Pan Guang and I had the opportunity to talk a lot. The conversation was very profound and inspiring.



Reception of ambassador Friedrich Stift at the CJSS



Visit to the Austrian Wine Center in Qingtian



Handing over the cohort book to Prof. Pan Guang



Solomon Forum 2020

Tasks at the partner organization

- Establishing contact with former Shanghai refugees
- Representative tasks, especially assisting the head of the office at conferences,
- Guiding visitors to Holocaust memorial sites in Shanghai
- Assistance in the “Shanghai Jewish Refugees Museum”
- Assistance at Austrian events and association work
- Research work on behalf of the Shanghai Center of Jewish Studies

in the morning. Besides, in Shanghai you also have a so-called „smartphone life“. You are required to download many apps on your cell phone so that you can save time doing many activities. Some examples are paying with your cell phone (there are hardly any people who pay in cash), showing tickets on your cell phone, ordering food, showing health codes, etc.

Leisure activities

In my free time, I like going out to restaurants. I enjoy numerous delicacies in Shanghai. I also like to go for walks, a little „sightseeing“ is also part of it. The night-life in Shanghai is enchanting, otherwise I meet up with friends to get together and play board games.

Lifestyle compared to Austria

I actually lived in Shanghai for almost 14 years, so it is not a new city for me. Nevertheless, I have to honestly say that “settling back in” was not easy. Shanghai is a metropolis. That kind of “proper” big city life is something you don’t really have in Vienna.

I had to get used to the fact that there is a lot of noise, that there are a lot of passengers on public transportation

Social Servant Raffael Winkler

I am 21 years old and come from Vienna. My goal has always been to go abroad right after school to live, gain experience and work in faraway countries for a while, to leave my comfort zone and get to know foreign cultures. Therefore, the service abroad was the ideal opportunity on the one hand to complete the (mandatory) civil service abroad instead of in Austria and on the other hand to gain new experiences. That's why I decided to do a Social Service at the La Gamba Tropical Station in Costa Rica, where I have been living and working since December 1, 2020.

My work on site

Current tasks include processing spices such as: chili, turmeric, etc., watering and bringing up trees, making short films about the station and helping to film a "Universum" feature [note: Universum is a nature documentary series by the Austrian national television station ORF], writing cookbooks but also walking borders with GPS devices to update maps and much more. Additionally, we also have to do administrative duties in the office.

Tasks at the partner organization

- Support the reforestation
- Coordination of the sponsored children project
- Assistance in school activities in La Gamba
- Support the acquisition and supervision of development cooperation projects
- Organizational and coordinating activities at the tropical station
- Assistance in the production of local products with locals from La Gamba
- Presentation of the Tropical Station to the outside world,
- Collaboration in research projects and
- Linguistic and cultural mediation between visitors and locals

Lifestyle compared to Austria

I was brought up as a city kid and the first thing I experienced here the day I arrived, was our neighbor, who



Completing the daily tasks at Finca Modelo



Returning from Finca Alexis (reforestation project in the mountains)



Cleaning out the bee house



End of the day in the tarzan swing

gave me a ride in the night with his actually licensed „junk car“ that he started with a screwdriver, and said: „Welcome to the jungle. The nearest supermarket is at least 18 km away and oh, watch out for the poisonous snakes. Pura Vida!“. At first it was all a big shock, but over time I settled in and now after a good six months my Spanish has improved tremendously and I've gotten used to life here.

In Costa Rica everything works very differently, much slower than in Europe. Here, people have no sense of time, no feeling for numbers and stress is largely a foreign concept. What is hardly imaginable to us, everything is just „pura vida“ (note: pura vida literally translated means „simple life“ and stands for the Costa Rican optimistic attitude or way of life). People are much more relaxed and in general everyone here is much more cheerful and doesn't nag about anything. The weather is typically hot and humid every day. It is also incredibly rainy.

Leisure activities

After the often physical work, I like to relax in the hammock.



A city dweller feeding the chickens

Social Servant Anna Kleemair

I am 20 years old and come from Seckau in Styria. For a long time I have been longing to give more to my fellow human beings and to actively live charitably. When I started looking for an opportunity to put this into action, I found what I was looking for at „Open Heart Procida“. The charity Open Heart (Italian: Punto Cuore) is an international association of believers in the Roman Catholic Church and advocates for a culture of compassion. The association was founded in Argentina and is active in 20 countries worldwide. In September 2020, my journey to the south of Italy began.

My work on site

We live together in an international residential community with other volunteers and try to organize our daily lives together. Our life is built on three pillars: communal life, prayer and compassion. Together with the other volunteers I visit individuals and families of the neighborhood every day, especially people who are lonely and in need of special attention. As with the children, we simply want to offer an open ear and heart and assist people in their difficult life situations through our simple and unconditional friendship.

Tasks at the partner organization

- Weekly visit to a hospital for women with AIDS,
- Visit to a home for the elderly on the island of Procida,
- Visit to a center for disabled people on the island of Ischia,
- Reception and care of children who play, talk, paint or do homework in the Open Heart House,
- Organization and accompaniment of cultural and educational excursions for children, single mothers and young people.

Lifestyle compared to Austria

Since Procida is a 4km² small island in the Gulf of Naples, many things are different from what we are used to. Firstly, because our main means of transportation is the



The island of Procida



Vincenzo shows me how to make a "bella pizza alla napoletana"



Antonietta, after telling me how she met her husband



Children's camp on Procida for the children from Afragola

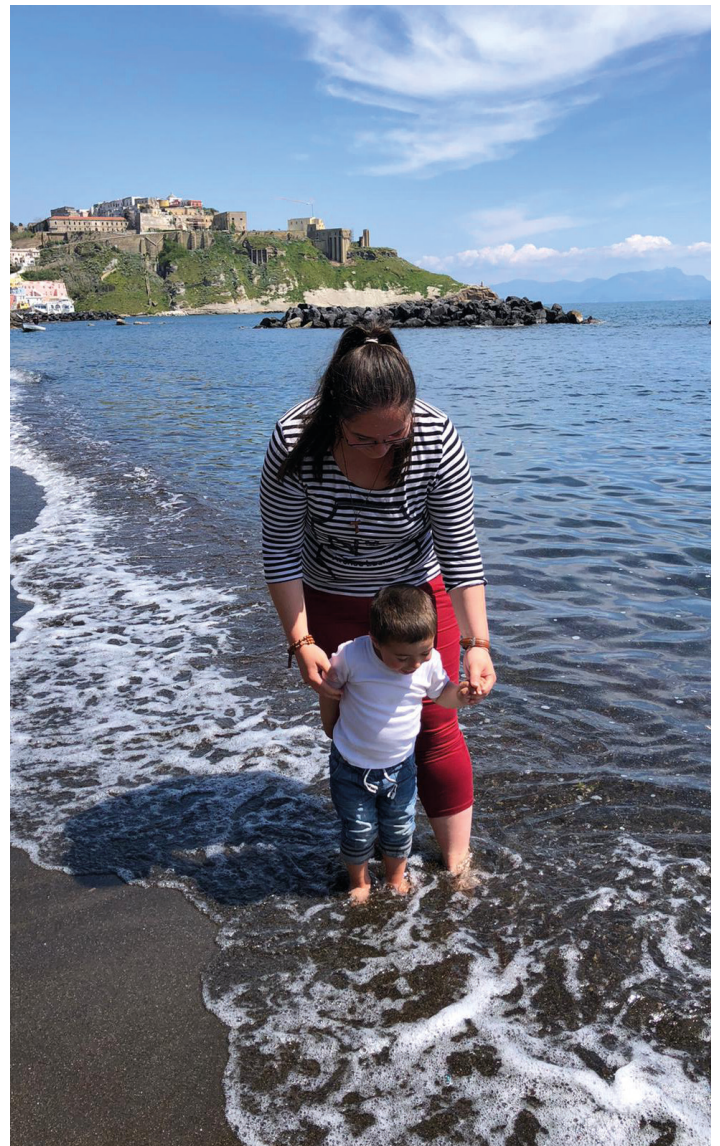
ferry, which takes an hour to get to Naples. Although the island measures only 4km², you can still find almost everything: there are small stores, a hospital for primary care, schools, a post office, etc.

Especially important to the Procidans is sharing meals. Thus, a Sunday lunch that starts at 1pm may well end at 6pm, after an espresso, with a homemade limoncello.

Leisure activities

Living in a community with other volunteers, one never gets bored. On free days we make trips to Naples, Pompei or to the neighboring island Ischia. However, it is also especially nice to stay on Procida, which has also been named the 2022 City of Culture of Italy, and take a walk on one of the beaches.

I am very grateful for the opportunity to do a Social Service on this island where I could enrich people's lives who oftentimes are lonely, have no one to talk to and who need support. Becoming friends with these people was not only rewarding for them but for me equally so. Listening to the elderly and playing with children made me smile daily which, in return, brought a smile to them.



By the sea with Domenico for the first time after the lockdown

Peace Servant Matthias Kralupper

Hello, I'm 19 years old, I'm from Vienna and I also grew up there. I've known for a long time that I would rather not stay in Vienna, so the service abroad was very convenient for me to discover new countries, new cultures and languages, but also new people. Especially in this crazy (Corona) year, I am very grateful to the Austrian Service Abroad for making it possible for me to do my Peace Service at Act for Transformation in Georgia despite the pandemic, where I started my service abroad (in quarantine) on October 1, 2020.

My work on site

Together with my colleagues from Austria, Germany and Georgia, we prepared seminars and workshops to be presented throughout the country after the pandemic. I did a first test run in Zugdidi in the west of the country, where I was able to talk to young people about Bertha von Suttner and her life in rural Georgia - a great experience that I still remember fondly today! I also established contacts with the Austrian embassy and met the ambassador a few times.

Tasks at the partner organization

- Peace projects and education at schools
- Workshops on non-violent conflict resolution
- Information events about Bertha von Suttner, ecology, peace and human rights at schools and universities
- Projects such as the Bertha von Suttner Peace House and the memorial room in Zugdidi
- Youth meetings and youth exchange programs between Georgian and European partners
- Support in administrative matters
- PR support, especially via social media

Lifestyle compared to Austria

A clear change was the language - in Georgia they use a different alphabet, which does not exist anywhere else. Although street signs are also in Latin letters. The language is difficult to learn and even more difficult to master.



Christmas in the Caucasus ages you...



At the cross pass covered in deep snow



At the Georgian Black Sea coast



A ruin at the Armenian boarder

Fortunately, I spoke some Russian, which often saved me. I was very surprised by the friendliness of the people, invitations and great hospitality is ubiquitous in Georgia - maybe the Viennese crabbiness was sitting a bit too deep. In the countryside Corona hardly existed - a mask here and there, but people continued to live their lives as in the years before. That did surprise me (and I have to admit, it scared me a little too!).

Leisure activities

In my free time, I enjoyed getting to know the city - Tbilisi is truly a fascinating place with many sides and great sights to see! The rest of the country also has places that take your breath away. The Caucasus is sensational - even if you grew up in a country with the Alps.



The way you smile after finishing quarantine

New partner organizations

As many of you may already know, we are continuously working on expanding our network of partner organizations and making it even more attractive and extensive. Especially since Corona can cause countries to shut down from one day to the next, we are very happy to have 104 partners in 46 countries on all continents of the world except of Antarctica by now. This broad and worldwide positioning enables us to manage crises effectively, as we can usually accommodate candidates elsewhere if they are unable to enter their first choice country. We would like to present three of our partners added within the last 12 months.



Gedenkdienst: Johannesburg Holocaust & Genocide Centre

Established in 2008 and officially opened in 2019, the JHGC, along with its sister centers in Cape Town and Durban, forms part of the South African Holocaust & Genocide Foundation association. As a place of remembrance and education, the JHGC explores the history of genocide in the 20th century, with a focus on Jews murdered in the Holocaust and the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. The Centre's mission is to educate (especially) young people about the consequences of racism, discrimination and antisemitism in order to prevent the repetition of mass atrocities and genocide in all its forms. The dangers of indifference, apathy, and silence are also

taught, and visitors are encouraged to actively speak out against instances of human rights violations in their own communities.

Tasks of our Gedenkdienst on site:

- Supporting the education team with schools and adult groups to prepare and conduct workshops
- Filming events, especially exhibitions and talks at schools, universities and public events
- Preparation of reports
- Carrying out administrative tasks
- Translation work, especially of survivors' manuscripts and documents
- Public relations, especially with social media and website maintenance, writing articles and publications

Our 2020 Gedenkdienst Matthias Igler reports about his service abroad:

As a Gedenkdienst, you are integrated into the dedicated team at the host organization from the very beginning and are given the opportunity to advance your individual strengths and interests. As a result, the day-to-day work is usually very exciting and varied. Due to the strong international network of the center, you often cooperate with other, international NGOs, through which you gain a clo-



Matthias Igler at the JHGC



The impressive architecture of the JHGC)

ser insight into the most diverse work regarding human rights, commemoration or peacekeeping.

Through the close cooperation of the three sister centers in South Africa, you also stay in contact with the other Gedenkdiener:innen.

More information on www.jhbholocaust.co.za



Social Service: Nepal Water for Health in Kathmandu

Nepal Water for Health (NEWAH) is a Nepalese non-governmental organization working to improve the quality of life in Nepal by improving and facilitating access to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services. The cooperation between the Austrian Service Abroad and Nepal Water for Health came about through Felix Wimmer. He graduated with a bachelor's degree in Architecture - Green Building and is currently studying Building Technology and Facility Management. After his studies he would like to participate in development cooperation abroad. The Social Service in Nepal combines development cooperation very well with his acquired knowledge in (sustainable) architecture.

The sanitary and hygienic conditions in rural regions of Nepal are not comparable to those in Austria. Many households do not have proper toilets and fresh water has to be fetched from wells that are often several kilometers away from the homes. It can also happen that these are already empty when one is too late. For this reason, NEWAH has made it its goal that every household should

have a well with fresh water within a 5-minute walking distance.

However, NEWAH does not build the WASH services itself, but in cooperation with the population. NEWAH contributes the financial resources and technical expertise for the construction of the facilities, but the people have to build the facilities themselves. This is to ensure in the long term that the population has the know-how to provide water, sanitation and hygiene themselves. NEWAH also engages in research and studies in these areas and advocates for reforms. In collaboration with the government and other organizations, it advocates for equitable and sustainable access to WASH services for the population.

More information at www.newah.org.np

Tasks of our Social Servants on site:

- Researching WASH (Water Supply, Sanitation, Hygiene) conditions of people in rural areas of Nepal
- Observe, learn from and participate in the different phases of WASH projects
- Support in data and website management
- Support in fundraising activities



Hygiene (handwashing with soap) Workshop



Clean water for the dishes and for washing hands



**MEMORIAL
CENTER
SREBRENICA**

Peace Service: Srebrenica-Potocari Memorial Center

The Srebrenica-Potocari Memorial, officially known as the Center for the Srebrenica-Potocari Memorial and Cemetery for the Victims of the 1995 Genocide, is a memorial site in Potocari that commemorates the victims of the 1995 Srebrenica massacre.

The Srebrenica massacre was a war crime during the Bosnian War (1992 - 1995), in which more than 8,000 mainly male Bosniaks were systematically segregated and murdered in July 1995. By burying and reburying the bodies, attempts were subsequently made to conceal the atrocities, so that to this day some victims have still not been found. The massacre is now considered the largest genocide in Europe since World War II.

In order to commemorate the victims and to come to terms with the events, the Srebrenica-Potocari Memorial Center was founded in 2000 based on the decision of government representatives. By now, it has built up a network of several aid organizations, NGOs and projects in Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as internationally.

The goals and orientation of the institute are clear. Emir Suljagic, the president of the Srebrenica Memorial Center, wants to do his best to identify every single victim and find the cause of death. A considerable collection of literature on the internal political events of Bosnia and Herzegovina should help to achieve this. The aim is to become the center of gravity of this genocide.



Our Peace Servants 2021 Aleksandar Petrovic and Dennis Miskic being interviewed

In 2021, the Austrian Service Abroad will send Peace Servants to the Srebrenica Potocari Memorial Center in Bosnia and Herzegovina for the first time. The relationship of the two volunteers to Bosnia and Herzegovina is particularly noteworthy. Aleksandar Petrovic is ethnic Serb, Dennis Miskic is Bosnian; this contrast has been crucial to their choice as servants abroad. The tensions are still there after a quarter century. Aleksandar Petrovic expects some spiteful comments from extreme individuals on both sides. However, the goal of both Peace Servants is the same: „to make the people from the Balkans, who point fingers all the time, aware for once that the past should not be denied, so that one can learn from mistakes.“ Dennis Miskic has always been aware of the past of his family and says, „You have to remember that it was only 26 years ago, and therefore there are constantly new newspaper articles and reports that are very informative in terms of content.“

Above all, he has prepared himself mentally for his service abroad in Srebrenica, because, as even the director of the organization says, it will not be easy to warmly welcome a visitor to the Memorial Center. We wish both of them every success in their Peace Service.

More information on www.srebrenicamemorial.org

Tasks of our Peace Servants on site:

- Support peace education in schools to raise awareness about the genocide in Srebrenica.
- PR work, especially through social networks
- Technical and administrative support for peace and scientific research projects
- Organization of events and meetings
- Communication with external collaborators
- Reporting on project activities
- Translations





Understanding Israel

Understanding Israel is a program that was launched in 2017 by the then Ambassador of the Republic of Austria, Martin Weiss. Thanks to the cooperation of the Austrian Service Abroad and the Israeli Volunteer Association (IVA), volunteers have been sent to Israel every year since then. Israel is a melting pot of cultures, traditions, beliefs, history and ideas and therefore a particularly exciting country for young adults, where there is an infinite amount to discover.

The Understanding Israel program works with two partners:

- The Loewenstein Rehabilitation Center is located in the city of Ra'anana, about 20 kilometers north of Tel-Aviv. It carries out rehabilitation measures for particularly severe cases and is a well-known and recognized rehabilitation clinic. Valuable and special relationships are usually formed between staff, patients and family members. The professional staff supports and encourages patients on the challenging road to recovery.
- Na'amat is the largest women's organization in Israel. Na'amat's mission is to improve and strengthen the situation of women in the family, the workplace and society. Na'amat provides support for women, children and families in villages and towns throughout Israel. To this end, Na'amat operates a network of 280 daycare centers for over 20,000 babies and toddlers between the ages of three months and four years. The educational program in the daycare centers includes enriching activities as well as special programs for physical development and awareness. The daycare centers are located throughout Israel.

Understanding Israel Seminar

Due to the pandemic, the Understanding Israel program 2020 was unfortunately canceled altogether, as well as for this year's cohort. Nevertheless, all candidates were

received at the Israeli Embassy on August 3, 2021 and the association organized this year's Understanding Israel seminar in St. Gilgen am Wolfgangsee from August 08 - 12. Guests were the President of the Jewish Community of Linz Charlotte Herman, Rabbi Schlomo Hofmeister, Ben and Daniela Segenreich and Rose Penhasi (online from Israel).

The seminar was packed with conversations about literature, Israeli breakfast, small introductions to the Hebrew



Israeli breakfast with Charlotte Hermann

language, meetings with alumni, workshops and presentations. Still there was also plenty of time for hiking, sight-seeing and having fun with the other prospective service abroad candidates. The Understanding Israel seminar was attended by all 14 Israel candidates of the cohort of 2021, including the prospective Gedenkdiener at Yad Vashem, the Vienna Library for the Study of the Nazi Era and the Holocaust at Tel Aviv University, and the Liebling House - White City Center. Although neither Na'amat nor Loewenstein could accept our servants abroad in 2021, five of our volunteers eventually managed to get a visa for other host organizations in Israel, others decided for different countries and some put their service abroad on hold for the time being.

Reframing Understanding Israel

Currently, the program Understanding Israel is undergoing a reframing. In the future, not only Social Servants will be included in this term, but all Israel volunteers (Gedenkdienst, Social Service and Peace Service).

Starting next year, the association Austrian Service Abroad will offer monthly Israel evenings or Israel days within the framework of an "Israel academy", where, for example, rabbis will be met, Jewish museums visited, synagogue services attended, and much more. This preparatory program will also be open to all Gedenkdienst candidates.



Conversation with Rabbi Shlomo Hofmeister)



Presentation



The participants together with Ben and Daniela Segenreich



Concentration camp Auschwitz-Birkenau from a distance

Gedenkdienst study trip to Poland

To deepen the preparation of the Gedenkdienst, the Gedenkdienst study trip to Poland was implemented for the first time this year as a pilot project with 24 participants. The well-filled program from July 24-31, 2021 was a complete success and we are already looking forward to being there next year with additional Taiwanese and South African students. Already in the run-up everyone prepared by reading a literature list independently and on July 23rd a Zoom conference on „Poland before and during World War II“ took place together with historian Florian Graf.

The actual trip started on July 24 and 25 in Krakow with a guided tour of the „Galicia Jewish Museum“, which has been our partner organization for many years. We visited the Jewish Community Center, a meeting place for people of Jewish descent and open to anyone interested in Judaism. The program also included a guided tour of Jewish Krakow with a focus on Kazimierz, including visits to two synagogues and the Remuh (cemetery). Florian Graf provided another fascinating lecture with „Losing IT - Hitler in the Summer of 1942“.



Reception at the Austrian Cultural Forum in Warsaw



In front of the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw

The visit to the state museum Oskar Schindler's Enamel - Factory was as interesting as it was detailed. Much could be learned about the fates of Jews in the Krakow Ghetto and Plaszów forced labor camp in comparison to the workers in Schindler's factory. The two days ended with a reflection round on the literature list, during which historian Florian Graf and Daniel J. Schuster discussed content-related as well as psychological and personal aspects of the texts read.

On July 26, the study tour continued in Auschwitz. There, Florian Graf lead the discussion on „Auschwitz in the Context of the Nazi War Industry“. A visit to the Auschwitz Jewish Center (another of our partner organizations) - including a Jewish Museum and a synagogue - followed. Of course, the concentration camps Auschwitz I & II were also competently visited by means of guided tours lasting several hours and then reappraised.

The trip continued to Warsaw from July 27 - 29. We began with a guided tour of the Jewish Historical Institute, which houses one of the most important collections on Jewish history in Poland (permanent exhibition: Jewish Life in Poland and its Destruction in the Holocaust). The group was also given an insight into the life of the late pediatrician Janusz Korczak. This was followed by a guided tour of Jewish Warsaw, which included a conversation with Lukasz Niesiolowski-Spano, head of the Institute of History at the University of Warsaw. In the course of this, there was also a meeting with Polish students, who were happy to share their everyday life with the group. Afterwards, the POLIN - Museum of the History of Polish Jews was visited (another of our partner sites). It continued with a free walking tour of Jewish Warsaw and was finally followed by a visit to the Austrian Cultural Forum Warsaw.

The last two days, July 29-30, were spent in Lublin. There was an introductory city tour and a visit to the former Majdanek concentration and extermination camp, including a guided tour. The end of the study trip was marked by a workshop: „The role of Majdanek in Aktion Reinhardt“. This was led by Julia Witkowska-Sledz.

The intensive study of the Holocaust over several days was not only extremely instructive for everyone, but the

time spent together was also perceived as very positive. Despite undergoing many emotional and sad episodes, the group also had fun together, formed deep connections with one another, enjoyed many interesting conversations and debated the meaning of life.



Visit of the POLIN museum in Warsaw



In Auschwitz-Birkenau

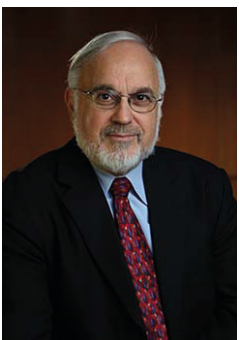
be PART of
HISTORY!
#houseofresponsibility



House of Responsibility

The project House of Responsibility Braunau (HRB) is the idea of establishing an international meeting place and learning venue in the house where Adolf Hitler was born in Braunau am Inn. People from all countries, backgrounds, religions and cultures are to meet to discuss, learn and develop projects revolving around the concept of responsibility in the dimensions of past, present and future. The demographic focus is to be young people. The idea for a House of Responsibility came from the founder of the Gedenkdienst and Chairman of the Austrian Service Abroad, Dr. Andreas Maislinger. This idea was first publicly communicated on February 7, 2000 in a non-partisan supported appeal as part of the initiative „Braunau sets an example“. Currently, however, the Austrian Ministry of the Interior has plans to turn Hitler's birthplace into a police station.

Some well-known people of the supporters added in the last year are:



Rabbi Abraham Cooper, Associate Dean of our partner organization Simon Wiesenthal Center in Los Angeles writes:

“It is not an appropriate idea to turn the birthplace of Adolf Hitler into a police station. It should be a dynamic center where people with

different views come together to learn about democracy and antisemitism. A House of Responsibility would be very important and valuable from the perspective of the Simon Wiesenthal Center.”

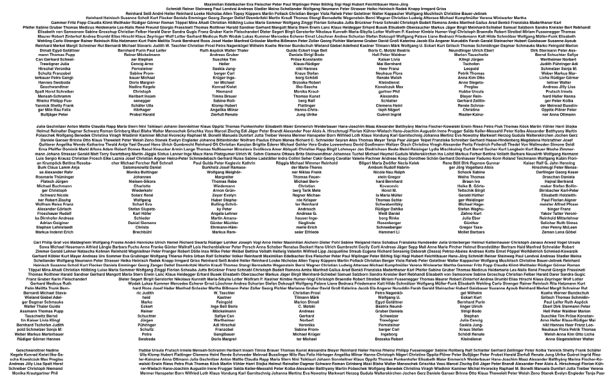


Tali Nates, director of our partner organization Johannesburg Holocaust & Genocide Centre in South Africa, comments:

“Turning the house where Adolf Hitler was born into a police station seems a most inappropriate designation and a very poor and thoughtless choice, especially since the genocidal Nazi regime led by the person born there actually created a police state. I support the alternative idea of establishing a House of Responsibility as a place to promote democracy, social justice, cultural diversity and inclusive society in this place of such great symbolic importance. Similar to South Africa, where the infamous apartheid-era prison complex number 4 was transformed into the country's Constitutional Court, the seat of the country's highest court, this house should be transformed into a place of education and critical thinking where lessons from the past can be learned. It is a unique opportunity that should not be missed!”



Chris Harris, executive director of our partner organization Holocaust Centre of New Zealand, supports the HRB “as it gives young people the opportunity to explore ways they can combat hate and antisemitism as global citizens.” The point, after all, is not to perpetuate Hitler’s role, but to “show that some good can be found in the darkness of the 1930s and 1940s; and that together we can remember, learn and act in the face of evil to do some good for the world”.



Austrian Holocaust Memorial Award

The Austrian Holocaust Memorial Award has been awarded annually since 2006 by the Austrian Service Abroad to a person or organization that has made special contributions to the memory of the Holocaust. In 2020, the laureate was Dušan Stefančič, survivor of 6 concentration camps and long-time president of the International Mauthausen Committee. Laudator Univ. Prof. Dr. Peter Gstettner congratulated Dušan, who “not only opened eyes to the inhumanities and crimes of the Nazi era, but also opened hearts to what courage in resistance and compassion and solidarity with the victims mean [...] As a teacher and as a human being, you reached minds and hearts, made a lasting difference to many and ‘educated’ them in the best sense of the word.”

The award was presented by the Austrian Ambassador to Slovenia Mag. Elisabeth Ellison-Kramer on November 26, 2020 together with our local partner organization, the Slovenian Museum of Contemporary History.



Certificate and trophy



Dušan Stefančič in conversation

Austrian Servants Abroad of the Year

The award Austrian Servant Abroad of the Year designates the „best“ servants abroad of the respective cohort. It is intended to encourage candidates and volunteers who are already abroad to go the extra mile and to recognize their achievements. It is based on contributions made by servants abroad regarding the 4 pillars of the Austrian Service Abroad: 1. How much did they develop in their personality during their time in the association? 2. How well did they work for their host organization? 3) How did they contribute to the Austrian Service Abroad? 4. How much did they improve the image of Austria and the European Union?

Austrian Servants Abroad of the year 2020 are:

- **Raphael Faul:** Gedenkdienster at the Fondazione Centro di Documentazione Ebraica Contemporanea in Milan, Italy, from September 01, 2020 to April 30, 2021 and Peace Servant at Haver Srbija in Belgrade, Serbia, from May 01, 2021 to July 31, 2021. Within the Austrian Service Abroad Raphael worked in the Wednesday Conference team and in the Radio Team. He was also Area Coordinator for Central America. Raphael stood out especially for his creativity, reliability, vision, leadership skills and social skills. Raphael always led everything to success.
- **Florian Müller:** Peace Servant at the Centre for Peace, Nonviolence and Human Rights Osijek in Osijek, Croatia, from December 01, 2020 to April 30, 2021, as well as Gedenkdienster at the Hugo Valentin Centre in Uppsala, Sweden, from May 01, 2021 to September 30, 2021. Florian was the cohort spokesperson 2020 and led his cohort through the Corona and other crises in an exemplary way. Florian won great esteem as a calming influence in difficult times, as someone who never loses his nerves, who gives confidence, as a diplomat par excellence, as a great manager, and as the most likable of all servants abroad.

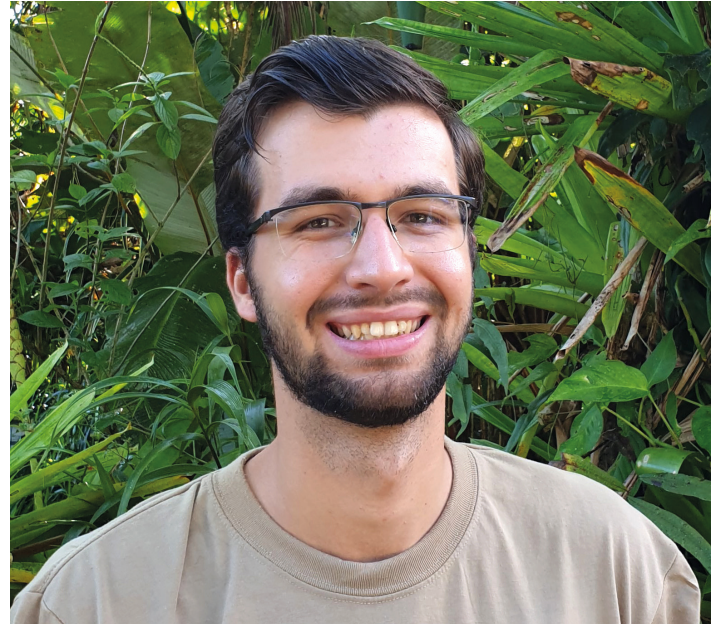


Raphael Faul at the Fondazione Centro di Documentazione Ebraica Contemporanea



Florian Müller at the Centre for Peace

- **Raffael Winkler:** Social Servant at La Gamba Tropical Station in Costa Rica from December 01, 2020 to September 03, 2021, and at Casa Estudiantil ASOL in Guatemala from September 04, 2021 to September 30, 2021. Within the Austrian Service Abroad Raffael worked in the finance and fundraising team as well as in the office team. Raffael became popular for his openness, communication skills, flexibility, vigor in everything he does and helpfulness. Also, as the one who represented Central America in Area roll calls in Wednesday Conferences from Costa Rica.



Raffael Winkler at the La Gamba Tropical Station

- **Matthias Kralupper:** Peace Servant at Act for Transformation Caucasus Office in Tiflis, Georgia, from October 01, 2020 to February 28, 2021, and Gedenkdiener at the National Museum of Contemporary History in Ljubljana, Slovenia, from March 01, 2021 to July 31, 2021. Matthias was Peace Service Speaker 2020 and part of the Peace Service and EU unit. He is remembered as the servant abroad with the most professional demeanor. As the one who even impressed National Council President Wolfgang Sobotka and National Council members. He is also remembered as someone who could always be relied on, who wrote brilliant e-mails, had impressive ideas and who often joined conferences from Georgia.



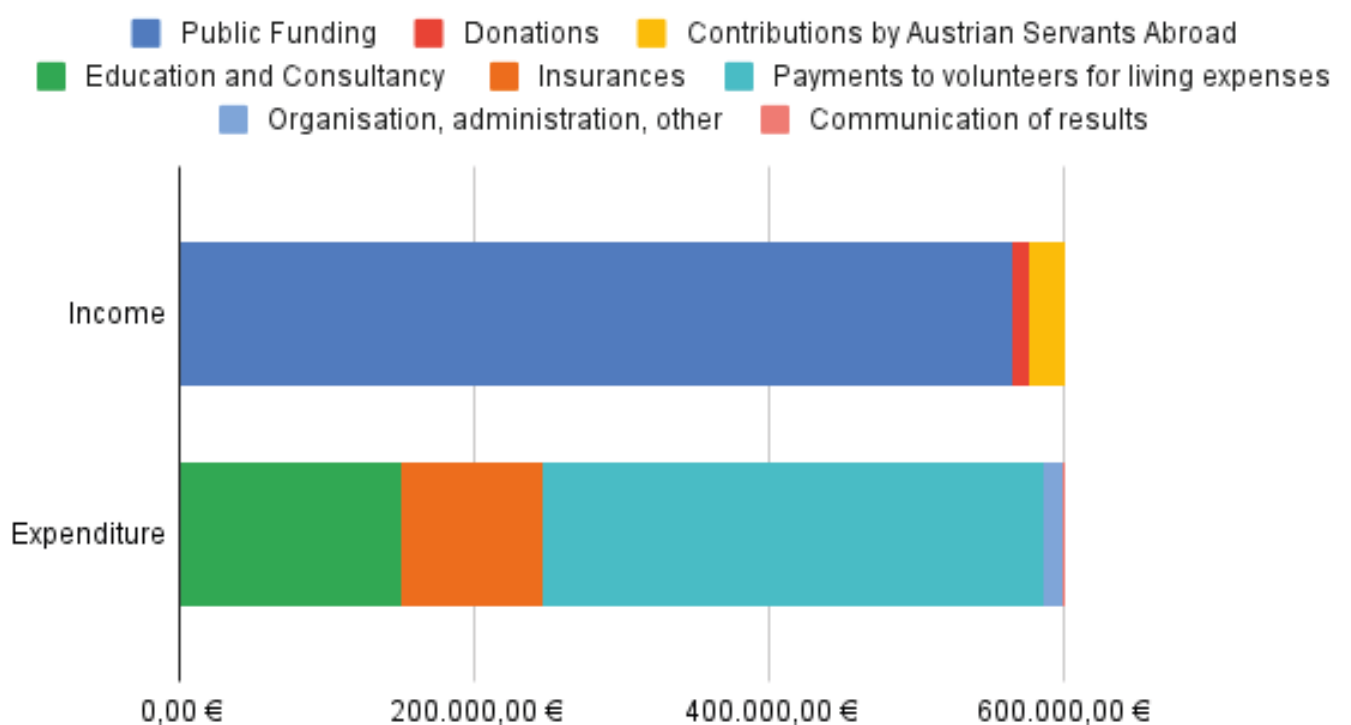
Matthias Kralupper meeting the president of the national council, Wolfgang Sobotka, in Slovenia

- **Haris Hadzimejlic:** Gedenkdiener at the Centre de la mémoire d'Oradour in Oradour-sur-Glane, France, from September 01, 2020 to June 30, 2021. Within the Austrian Service Abroad Haris worked in the volunteer department and in the film team. He impressed with his work at the host organization, his seriousness, his ability to turn ideas into reality, his contributions to the Austrian Service Abroad's development and the conviction with which he was a Gedenkdiener. He embodied the idealism that is desired from all servants abroad.



Haris Hadzimejlic at the Centre de la mémoire d'Oradour

Cohort 2020: Income and expenditure



Finances

Raising and use of funds

Generally, the Austrian Service Abroad receives €720 per servant abroad per month from the Austrian Ministry of Social Affairs. Additionally, the office team applies for extra funding for preparatory projects such as seminars and meetings. Thus, 2020, the majority (over 97.5%) of the financial resources from the Ministry of Social Affairs immediately benefited the cohort of 2020 - as direct payments, insurance, content-related preparation and support of the volunteers. Due to the flat and largely voluntary structure of the association, we manage to keep the additional structural costs low. Additionally, the Ministry of Social Affairs has contributed to the improvement over the previous year through its unbureaucratic concessions in the year of crisis. For this we say thank you!

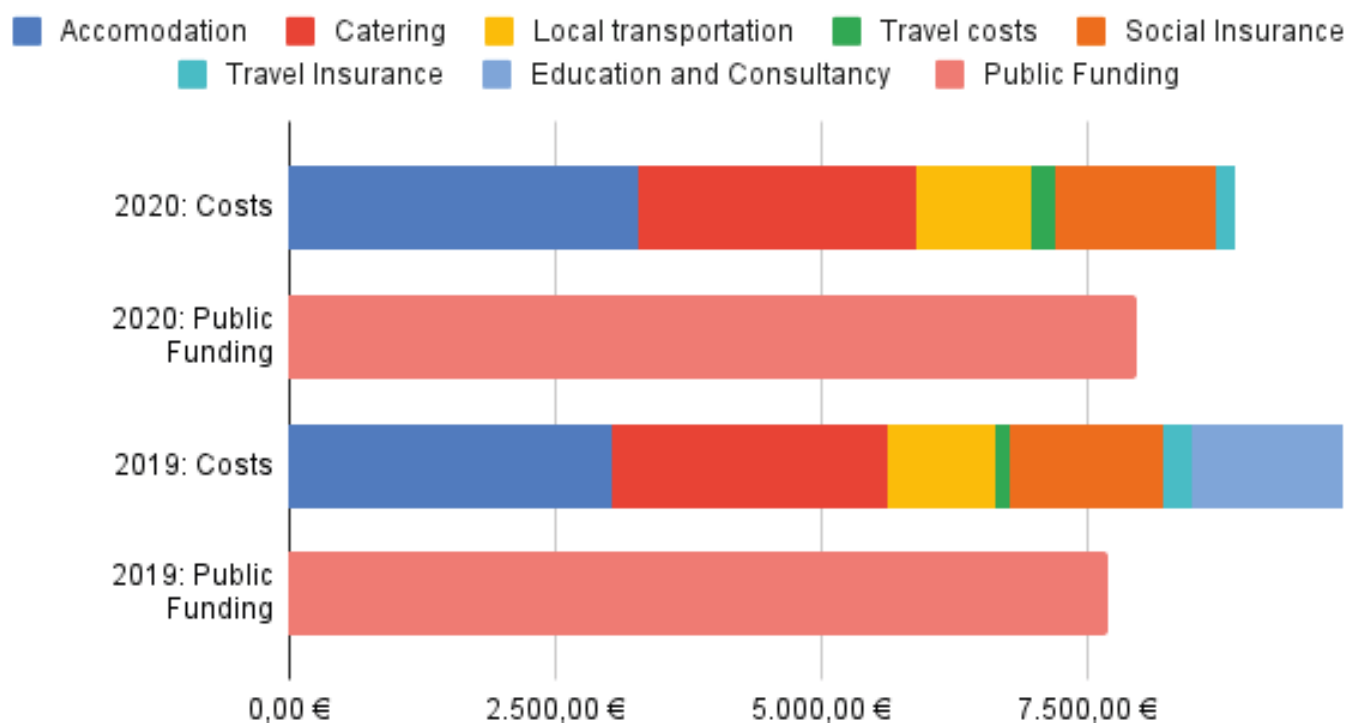
Association projects such as the Austrian Holocaust Memorial Award or unexpected costs resulting from terminations of service cannot be covered by the funding.

Costs per servant abroad

In 2020, the proven* costs per volunteer in the case of a ten-month service abroad were just under €9,000 for accommodation and meals, mobility and travel costs, insurance and preparation of the content as well as support for the volunteer abroad. On average, the Austrian Ministry of Social Affairs and ERASMUS+ provided €795 per month in funding. The additional costs for the stay abroad had to be borne by the servants abroad themselves. Thanks to the support of the Federal Ministry of Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection, it was possible to reduce the deductible compared to previous years, although not all costs could be covered.

* proven means that all receipts have to be presented in a certain format - a flight confirmation without a boarding pass for instance cannot be accepted. The actual costs are thus generally a lot higher

Costs per Austrian Servant Abroad 2019 & 2020



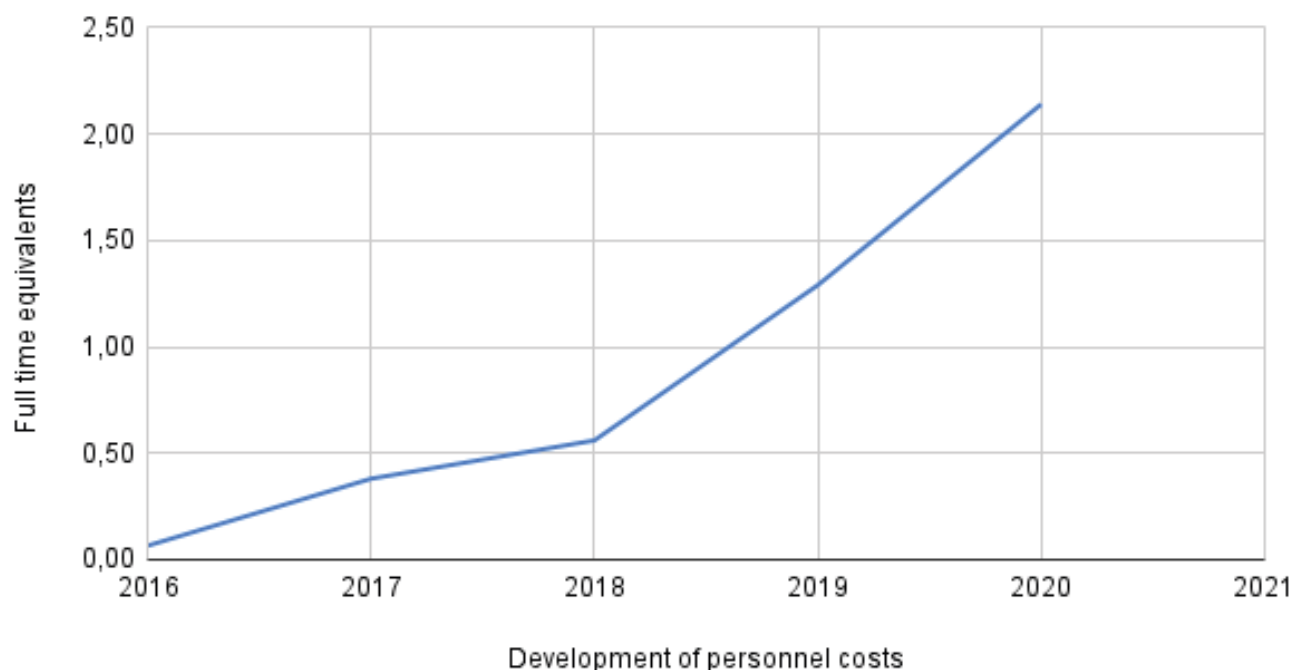
Personnel development

Every year, we send volunteers all over the world as part of a Gedenkdienst, Social or Peace Service. For several years we have been growing steadily, trying to offer more and more young people the experience of doing a service abroad, contributing to a better world and helping them to assume their own responsibility. This and the high quality requirements of the association as well as the new

Austrian Volunteer Law can be seen in the development of our staff costs.

There has been an additional increase especially in the year 2020 in connection with the global pandemic due to the more intensive care of the servants abroad, which will be balanced out again in the year 2021.

Development of personnel costs 2016 - 2020



Support us

As the funding is unfortunately not sufficient to cover the costs of our volunteers, we are very grateful for your support. After all, service abroad should be affordable for everyone! At the same time, we are always working to become even more professional and to set up even more quality projects. If you would like to help us, we would be very happy!

Supporting membership

As a supporting member of the Austrian Service Abroad you can support our work with an annual (or monthly) financial contribution. In return, you will receive insights into our activities and an annual report. Once a year we invite you to an evening event where you will meet association staff and many other people connected to the Auslandsdienst - our community. On this evening we present our achievements & visions and you are invited to talk with us about them.

www.auslandsdienst.at/en/supporting-membership

Amazon Smile

When activating the Smile function and setting the Austrian Service Abroad as an organization to be supported, Amazon takes 0.5% of the purchase price for future purchases and forwards it to the Austrian Service Abroad. This happens without any additional cost for the buyer, which means that the purchase price does not change. If you already have an Amazon account, you can easily activate this feature via smile.amazon.at. Attention: search for Oesterreichischer Auslandsdienst.

Affiliate Links

In addition to Amazon Smile there is also a Link Library for our volunteers which can be found in the plenum on Podio (our intranet forum). Here you can find numerous affiliate links, which are connected to the service abroad. Thus, when purchases are made through the existing links, the association receives a certain commission of the sales price. The affiliate links range from books to clothing to travel.



First cohort meeting 2020 in December 2019 in Tulln

A thank you from the office

Dear cohort of 2020,
dear readers,

as the Vienna office team, we would like to extend a big thank you to all alumni, servants abroad and volunteers of our association. It is our great pleasure to work with so many different, wonderful, dedicated and interesting people. It's great to have you on board!

The long preparation time and working in different teams and units make our association special - sometimes exhausting, but enriching and instructive. What keeps us together is the common goal of being able to do an unforgettable service abroad. We wish all our candidates and volunteers to grow with the challenges, to make a valuable contribution to a better society, to have a great time, and to return home satisfied and full of interesting experiences and new acquaintances.

In March 2020, no one would have imagined that Corona would keep disrupting all our plans for almost two years now. Changing or even permanent travel restrictions, months in the home office, spontaneous changes of host organizations - all this has become almost the norm. And despite all this, there are more and more young (and also older) people who are prepared to take on all these adverse circumstances, make the best of them and come back satisfied at the end. We have great respect for this! For us in the office, it was and is of course not easy to keep conjuring up new (possible) partner organizations and to keep track of all the changes. We hope that we can support all of you as best as possible with the decision making, with the necessary information and during your time abroad. In any case, you can always contact us if you need help.

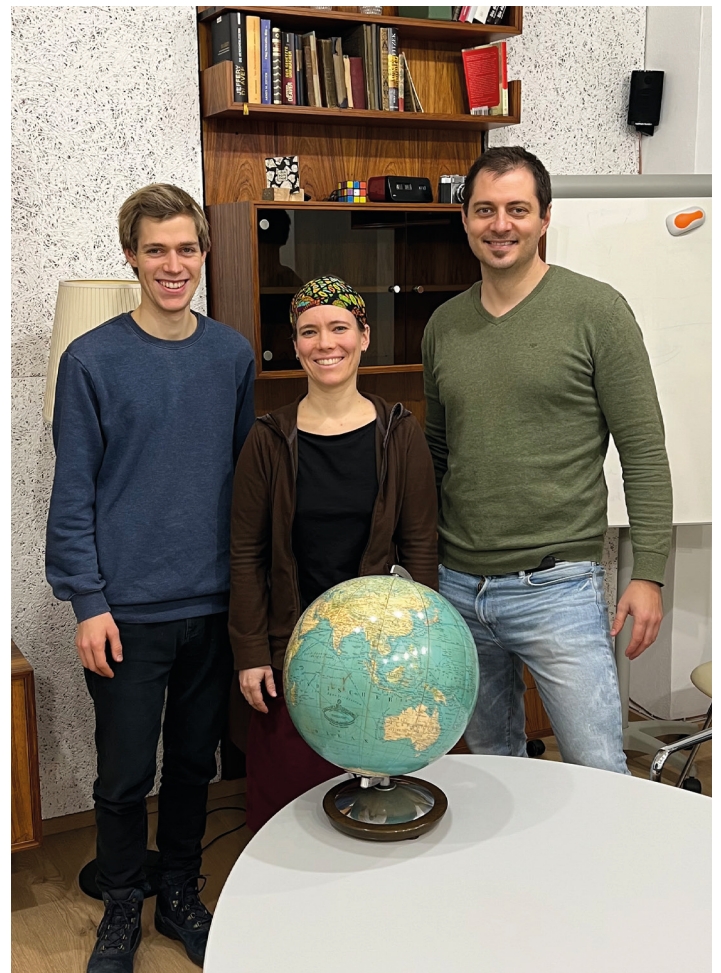
Dear cohort of 2020,
it was an honor for us to accompany you on your way. We have felt with you, rejoiced with you over your successes and sympathized with you when things did not go as you had hoped. We are impressed by what you have achieved:

despite the many difficulties, all 56 of you successfully completed your service. You gave your best, were highly motivated and represented Austria (and the EU) as "little ambassadors" in a great way. We are happy that you were able to contribute your professionalism and your skills, but also your compassion in many places; your experiences touched us and we are very happy that we were able to share them with you (a little bit).

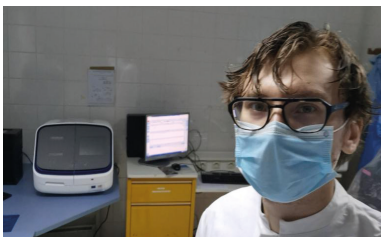
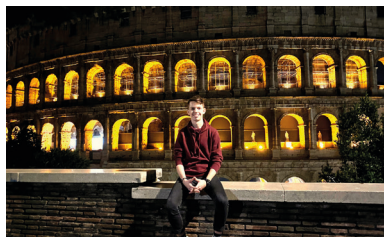
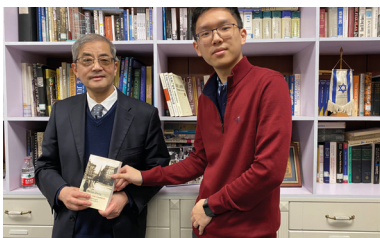
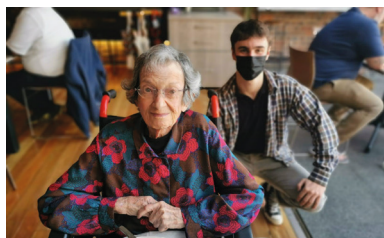
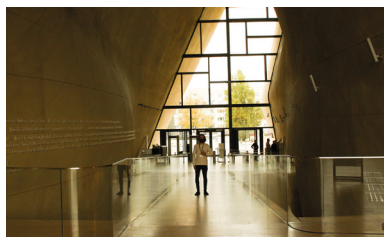
A very special thank you goes from us to cohort spokesperson Florian Müller, without whom the organization would never have worked so well. Tirelessly, you were always on the spot, always kept the overview, but also an open ear for everyone's problems and concerns. Really impressive!

We wish you all only the best; good luck in everything you do, take care of yourselves and keep in touch!

Your Vienna office



The office team in Vienna: Tobias, Astrid & Daniel



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