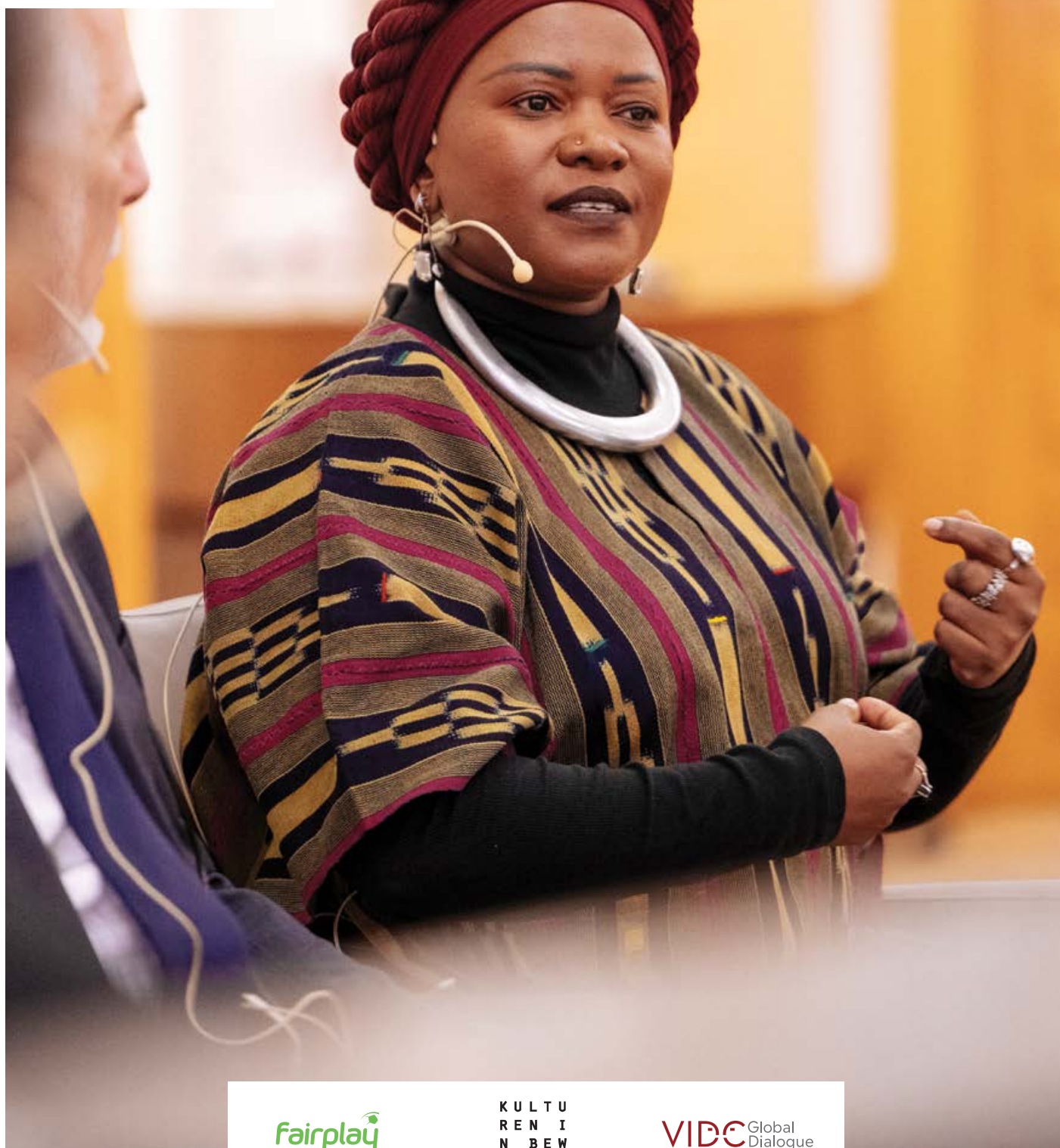


# 2025

ANNUAL REPORT

## VIDE

Vienna Institute for  
International Dialogue  
and Cooperation



fairplay

KULTU  
REN I  
N BEW  
EGUNG

VIDE Global  
Dialogue

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# Dear readers!



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Sybille Straubinger  
Director

Challenging geopolitical developments and increasing budget cuts have characterised the past year. Government austerity measures are also affecting our areas of work – development policy, culture and sport. The consequences are clear: valuable expertise is being lost, anti-discrimination work for disadvantaged groups is coming under pressure, and a lack of investment in prevention will lead to significantly higher costs in crisis management in the foreseeable future.

At the same time, global figures show that it is not a lack of funds but a lack of priorities. In 2025, global military spending reached a record level of 2.9 trillion US dollars – as did the number of armed conflicts. Rearmament clearly does not mean greater security or peace.

Now, more than ever, we need different approaches: the courage to strengthen common ground, to engage in dialogue on equal terms, and to incorporate the perspectives of the Global South. Such approaches create a lasting impact – particularly in relation to the resources deployed.

This annual report shows how we put this commitment into practice. It provides an insight into the work of our three departments – Global Dialogue, kulturen in bewegung and fairplay – and highlights the impact of our work. A new design places even greater emphasis on why we do what we do.

Visually presented figures and a guest commentary offer additional perspectives. Let yourself be inspired – and stay in touch with us.

Yours

Sybille Straubinger

PS: The German version is available to download on our website.

# About the VIDC

**The Vienna Institute for International Dialogue and Cooperation has been committed to global justice, international solidarity and social change since 1962.**

The VIDC was founded in 1962 by Bruno Kreisky together with prominent politicians from the so-called Global South as a think tank for development policy issues, making it the oldest civil society development organisation in Austria.

As an independent civil society think-and-do-tank, we promote critical public discourse, strengthen dialogue on an equal footing, and rely on political discourse, culture and sport as effective tools for understanding and participation.

The three departments of the VIDC – Global Dialogue, kulturen in bewegung and fairplay – are dedicated to promoting critical public discourse. A “dialogue among equals” conducted with international partners aims, among other things, to foster critical discourse, initiate cultural cooperation, and support diversity and anti-discrimination measures in sport.



# VIDC

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# The Power of Cooperation

In our areas of work – Global Dialogue, kulturen in bewegung and fairplay – we combine perspectives from the Global South with local initiatives, connect people across borders and provide impetus for an inclusive, democratic and anti-discriminatory society. Our work is based on respect, diversity and the shared goal of a just and sustainable world.



9

Publications published



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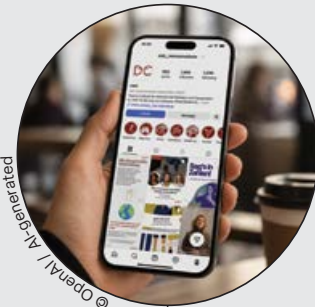


41

Workshops organised

77

Events organised



28.677

Social media followers

Visitors to events

11.706



# VIDC Global Dialogue



The Afghan ambassador in Vienna, Manizha Bakhtari, spoke at a VIDC event on feminist peace and security policy.

**VIDC Global Dialogue promotes critical debate on global justice – through dialogue with experts from West Asia and Africa, connected with stakeholders in Austria. Through events, publications and networks, we foster a multi-voiced discourse and international knowledge networks, opening up new perspectives.**



## Financing development?

The 4<sup>th</sup> Financing for Development Conference (FFD4) in Seville in July 2025 was one of the most important UN events of the year. The VIDC was represented by Martina Neuwirth as a member of the government delegation.

**T**he impact of the climate crisis. The end of USAID and the cutbacks by many other donor countries. A worsening debt. Trade conflicts and rising geopolitical tensions. Not a favourable environment for plugging the massive funding gap of over €4 trillion a year needed to meet international sustainability goals.

That was, in fact, why people had gathered in Spain. Yet the conference's final document, the 'Seville Commitment', contained little that was binding. Civil society would have liked to see more concrete and comprehensive reforms in the final document. Bringing the global financial system into the UN and thereby placing it on a broader footing, rather than leaving it to institutions to which continue

to be dominated by Western countries. Pursuing new and innovative ways to address current challenges – For People and Planet, as the CSO Forum put it. An exception is the negotiations on a UN tax framework agreement, which are set to run until 2027 and were also well received in Seville.

Nevertheless, the more than 16,000 representatives from all states (excluding the US), civil society and the private sector demonstrated that there remains interest in international negotiation processes. Standing up for multilateralism was certainly an important signal. However, it should not be a hollow multilateralism, lacking sufficient funding. <

# Peace and Democracy

Closely linked to the global pressure on democracies, multi-lateralism is also in crisis – exacerbated by the power politics of the major powers, and this in an anniversary year of all things: 80 years of the UN and 25 years of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on the Women, Peace and Security agenda.

VIDC Global Dialogue took these anniversaries and Austria's candidacy for a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council as an opportunity to organise a panel discussion with the former Swedish Foreign Minister and UN Special Representative Margot Wallström, the Ugandan activist Rosebelle Kagumire and the Austrian diplomat Alexander Kmentt.

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**“The UN remains an institution whose decision-makers are a small club of former colonial powers who still want to dictate what the world should look.”**

ROSEBELLE KAGUMIRE

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This statement by Rosebelle Kagumire can also be seen as support for Austria's candidacy for a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council. The two anniversaries, the crisis of democracy and the current security situation were also discussed in several episodes of the VIDC podcast Blickwechsel and in articles.

## Feminist approaches to conflict prevention

To mark the anniversary of UN Resolution 1325, we organised the panel discussion “Pathways to Peace: Legal Accountability and Feminist Peacebuilding” in collaboration with the Swedish Embassy. Experts including Manizha Bakhtari (Ambassador for Afghanistan), Julia Prummer (Austrian Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs), Jennifer Sarvary Bradford (UNODC), Dima Hussain (European University Institute, Florence) and Waruguru Gaiho (University of Cambridge)

the contribution of feminist approaches to conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

The workshop series “Feminist Foreign Policy – Potential & Reality” (VIDC Global Dialogue/WIDE) has been analysing feminist strategies in foreign policy since 2023. In 2025, the focus was on fairer global trade in the context of the Mercosur agreement. The series concluded with a workshop on feminist and decolonial solidarity as part of the 9th Austrian Development Conference.

## Courageous responses – beyond militarisation and outdated institutions

In February, Toni Haastrup, Ivan Krastev and Wolfgang Petritsch analysed the consequences of the ‘super election year’ of 2024 at a VIDC event. The focus was on the shift to the right in Europe, the US's rapprochement with Russia under Trump, and the growing significance of the Global South. The experts discussed how power relations are shifting worldwide: whilst the West is losing influence, countries in the Global South are diversifying their partnerships – often in favour of China or Russia. Europe, according to the analysis, appears disoriented and paralysed by internal deadlocks, whilst progressive forces are coming under pressure.

A central theme was the question of how resistance and democracy need to be reimagined. Haastrup emphasised that democracy does not end at the ballot box, but must be lived out through civil society solidarity. Petritsch called for Europe's peace project to be strengthened through strategic autonomy and new narratives.

Ivan Krastev: *“Trump understands the EU's loss of influence – and wants to redraw the world map, not only with Russia, but also in the Middle East and the Arctic.”* <

**The war in Gaza, Syria's instability following Assad's fall, the 12-day war between Israel and Iran, and the oppression of women in Afghanistan defined 2025 – VIDC Global Dialogue responded with analysis, advocacy and diaspora engagement for peace and equality.**

Following Bashar al-Assad's resignation in December 2024, Syria faced a fragile new beginning. Yet instead of the hoped-for stability, numerous violent clashes erupted between militias, government forces and international actors. VIDC followed these developments with an event in April entitled "Syria after Assad: Between Hope and Fear", at which Syrian activists spoke about the challenges of the transition. A podcast on the question: "Power shift in Syria – hope for refugees?" was also published.

A three-day conflict transformation workshop in September, involving representatives of the Syrian diaspora, sought to counter the growing polarisation within the Syrian community and Syrian society.

Magda Seewald (VIDC) warned: *"Syria faces the danger of falling into a new cycle of violence – unless we invest in reconciliation and justice now."*

## **Afghanistan: Gender Apartheid as Crimes against humanity**

Since the Taliban took power in 2021, the oppression of women and girls has intensified in Afghanistan. VIDC brought the issue to public attention with an initiative to recognise "gender apartheid" as a crime under international law. A policy brief offers recommendations on what can be done to counter the systematic disenfranchisement of Afghan women.

Two video reports produced with OXUS TV highlighted the demands of the Afghan diaspora. At the 'Against Gender Apartheid' conference in May 2025 at Vienna City Hall (in cooperation with the Afghan cultural association AKIS, AK Vienna and ÖGB), participants called for education and work as survival strategies for Afghan women.

On the occasion of the premiere of the film "The Last Ambassador", a discussion took place with the Afghan ambassador herself, Manizha Bakhtari.



© Lisa-Marie Kapici

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**“At a time when the world is talking about missions to Mars, Afghan women are fighting for their right to education. We must speak out and take action.”**

**TAHMINA SALIK, WOMEN'S RIGHTS ACTIVIST**

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Furthermore, VIDC Global Dialogue organised a reading and discussion at Buch Wien with the award-winning Iranian-Afghan author and women's rights activist Aliyeh Ataei on her book "In the Land of the Forgotten".

Michael Fanizadeh (VIDC): *"The international community must not forget Afghanistan: we want Austria and the world to hold the Taliban regime to account in international courts for its crimes."* ◀

**Relations between Africa and Europe are characterised by successes, untapped potential and complex challenges. That is why 2025 was entirely dedicated to Africa's role in the global reorganisation.**

The focus was on both the interests and the agency of stakeholders on the African continent and in the diaspora. At the same time, Austria's responsibility to rethink cooperation and further develop dialogue formats was emphasised.

## Austria's strategic reorientation

In the VIDC podcast episode "Rethinking Africa-Europe?", Franz Schmidjell (VIDC) and Irene Horejs (BKF) discussed expectations regarding the planned Austrian Africa strategy, as well as the question of how a partnership on equal terms can succeed. Over the coming years, VIDC Global Dialogue will closely and critically monitor the implementation of the new Africa strategy and engage in dialogue with the various stakeholders. The process kicked off with a joint event with the Bruno Kreisky Forum for International Dialogue on 9 December. There, representatives of the BMEIA, Concord, the WKO and the European Centre for Development Policy Management, the results of the AU-EU Summit 2025 in Luanda. The aim was to discuss the priorities and modalities of the forthcoming Austrian Africa Strategy, and how a renewed partnership between equals can be strengthened. Contributors included Robert Zischg, Stefan Scholz, Jamie Just, Georg Krenn, Geert Laporte and Philomena Apiko.

Miriam Mona Mukalazi (VIDC): *"In times of fragile multilateralism, Austria will have to ask itself even more strongly how it can link its foreign policy priorities more coherently with the changing structures of the UN, the African Union and individual African states."*

## Press freedom and climate justice

Fake news and one-sided reporting on crises threaten peaceful coexistence in times of global reorganisation. At the Africa Club on 24 June 2025, the focus was on the importance of press freedom and the media as a democratic instrument. Under the motto "Centring Black and African Perspectives in Media", participants



from various diaspora communities took part and engaged in dialogue with the speakers Mwita Mataro, Andrea E. Arnolds, Shila Schwitzer, Ifeoma Moira Ikea and Fatima Sidibe.

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**“The majority of the world’s population lives in the Global South. Yet the Global North holds the decision-making power over how we should tackle the climate crisis.”**

NOEMI ZENK-AGYEI

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The political role of the diaspora was also highlighted at the collaborative event on 3 October, “Decolonising our Climate”, with the African Cultural Foundation. International crises such as the threat to our planet can only be tackled together. In this context, the panellists—Pato Kelesitse, Noemi Zenk-Agyei, Adaora Ofoedu and Lucía Muriel appealed how important it is to recognise climate activism as fundamental human rights work. <

# Migration and Development

In 2025, particular emphasis was placed on EU migration policy, human rights issues and their impact in the Sahel-Sahara region. VIDC Global Dialogue actively maintains close and ongoing relationships with various diaspora communities.

In addition, VIDC Global Dialogue organised the expert workshop “Migration in International Cooperation”. In the field of climate justice and displacement, we expanded our networks – for example with the Climate Alliance, IIASA (International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis) and the Institute of Geography and Regional Studies at the University of Vienna.

## Diaspora Engagement – Achieving More Together

VIDC Global Dialogue maintains close and ongoing relationships with various diaspora communities. As the 2024 external evaluation found, this intensive



© Minitta-Kandbauer

cooperation is the unique distinguishing feature of VIDC Global Dialogue within Austria’s development NGO landscape. In doing so, the field is not viewed in isolation, but to involve representatives of the

various diasporas in all thematic areas, to draw on their expertise and to incorporate their demands and to support various initiatives: whether it is a matter of backing the call to recognise gender apartheid as a crime under international law, or of raising awareness of the Sudanese community’s efforts – for example, in conflict resolution and in supporting the population in Sudan and refugees. Experts such as Mohamed Refaat (IOM), Nisreen Elsaïm (climate activist) and Christoph Sternat (BMEIA) analysed the political and humanitarian crisis in Sudan at an event held in December in cooperation with the Sudanese association Mendy for Peace Culture and Diversity Management.

Moctar Dan Yayé: *“The EU is not just deporting people – it is shirking its responsibility. And in the end, people end up in the desert, where they die of thirst, starve to death or are murdered by militias.”*

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**“Behind every statistic lies  
Families, dreams, shattered lives.  
These figures – that’s us.”**

**NISREEN ELSAIM**

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But openness to concerns such as those of the Syrian community regarding the promotion of a non-violent-free dialogue within that very community, or support for promoting gender equality in the respective communities, for example through the development of a Feminist Organising Toolkit linked to an introductory workshop, are just as much a part of diaspora cooperation as the longstanding successful Gender-TANDEM project, which originated from the initiative of a diaspora association. New cooperation formats such as the #DiasporaTalks, in which people from different communities share their expertise. <

# In the shadow of the monsters

Antonio Gramsci's grim diagnosis of a world in upheaval seems alarmingly relevant today: wars, geopolitical tensions and global crises characterise the international system. Yet whilst 'the age of monsters' seems to be drawing nearer, the real alternative lies in something unspectacular – in diplomacy, cooperation and the painstaking search for common solutions.



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Antonio Gramsci, a communist politician and intellectual, has recently been frequently quoted across the political spectrum. In 1930, whilst imprisoned by the fascists for his political convictions, Gramsci wrote: “The old is dying and the new cannot be born.” An apt description of the current upheavals we are witnessing in global politics. To avoid upsetting readers too much, the second

part of this quote is often omitted. For Gramsci goes on to write, “It is the age of monsters.” In an era marked by Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, wars in the Middle East, the horrific civil war in Sudan and growing tensions in East Asia, this bleak analysis seems entirely appropriate. The return of war to a world accustomed to peace, the increa-



sing militarisation of international relations, and the nihilistic contempt for human life, legal constraints and international institutions are being normalised in public discourse. At the same time, we are facing an epoch-making technological transformation driven by artificial intelligence and robotics, as well as the challenges of the climate crisis, which are giving rise to new conflicts and exacerbating old ones.

### Global crises know no borders

What these political, social, technological and climatic changes have in common above all is that they transcend borders. No country in the world is capable of solving the resulting problems in isolation. No country in the world is powerful enough to impose its solutions on all others. To abandon once again the doomed path of confrontation and selfishness and to embark on the arduous path of cooperation and compromises that do not make for good media headlines, numerous international organisations are available. The United Nations system, as well as regional bodies such as the OSCE, the Council of Europe, the African Union and ASEAN, do not have ready-made answers. They are platforms where the search for cooperative solutions can take place according to tried-and-tested rules. Platforms where adversaries can discuss their conflicts without losing face. Forums where the very different interests of all states are laid on the table and new rules are sought together to tackle shared problems.

### Diplomacy under pressure

This may sound terribly banal, but it is precisely this diplomatic search for common rules, this commitment to agreements once reached, that has protected the world from total catastrophe since the end of the

Second World War — and which is now coming under increasing pressure. The strongmen (they are, without exception, men) who place power above law, who view compromise as defeat, who see violence or the threat thereof as the most effective means of conflict resolution, are the monsters against whom Gramsci warned.

The overwhelming majority of states have a vital interest in maintaining, reforming and modernising the rules-based international order. The overwhelming majority of the world's population does not expect their political leaders to stage show-downs and lavish parades, but rather professional solutions to real problems. Perhaps we can still spare ourselves the age of monsters and place our faith in an age of diplomats. <



**Bernhard Wrabetz** is a member of the VIDC Board of Trustees and Austrian Ambassador to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Prior to this, he was Deputy Head of Section VII and Head of Department VII.3, Humanitarian Aid, at the BMEIA.

# Gender equality

Trump's anti-gender policies are also encouraging autocratic governments in Europe to remove terms such as 'gender' from official documents by 2025. VIDC Global Dialogue countered this with networking, knowledge-sharing and empowerment.

The Gender TANDEM programme, which has been offering gender awareness training for refugee women and men since 2016, was expanded in 2025 thanks to funding from the Ministry of Social Affairs.

## Gender TANDEM: Empowerment for Refugees

The Gender TANDEM training raises awareness of gender equality among men and women from migrant communities, opens up new perspectives and supports them in critically reflecting on the costs and benefits of gender constructions. Partnerships with ÖBB, AMS and Caritas confirm that the TANDEM principle is also of interest to other institutions and the world of work.

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**“For many of our participants, this is the first time they have realised that equality is not a Western concept – but a human right.”**

SHOKAT WALIZADEH, PARTNER

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Trainer Abel Badenjky: *„For me, being a man means controlling one's anger. Strength is not a right to hurt others – neither physically nor verbally.”*

## Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR): A global struggle

Hegemonic power claims and the reintroduction of the Global Gag Rule by US President Trump led to drastic cuts and attempts to abolish SRGR programmes in 2025. Legal foundations for Equality and bodily autonomy are being undermined by measures such as the Geneva Consensus Declaration.



© Minita-Kendlbauer

VIDC Global Dialogue responded to these developments with an event featuring international panellists in cooperation with THE RAIN WORKERS, the Austrian Society for Public Health, and Women in Global Health (Austrian Chapter) under the title “Sexual and Reproductive Rights: Worldwide and for Everyone! Interlinked Perspectives from Health, Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid”, a policy brief on SRHR (focusing on sexual education) that sets out concrete demands for policymakers, and a press release marking quality assurance efforts in the field of sexual education.

Nadja Schuster (VIDC): *“Sex education plays a vital role in preventing sexual violence, sexually transmitted infections/diseases and unwanted (teenage) pregnancies. Furthermore, sex education promotes the dismantling of gender stereotypes and the acceptance of gender diversity and different sexual orientations, thereby fostering an inclusive society.”*

The topic was explored in depth in five spotlight articles and a podcast with SRGR expert Mercy Kamau from Kenya, who highlights the effectiveness of sex education for teenage mothers in Mathare, one of Nairobi's largest slums. <

**In 2025, VIDC Global Dialogue continued to engage intensively with the negotiations on a UN tax framework convention and participated in civil society debates at both international and European levels.**

This almost revolutionary UN process, initiated by the group of African countries, could fundamentally change a century-old international governance system that has tended to disadvantage the countries of the Global South. VIDC 2025 has published a policy brief on the history and background of the convention. It also contains concrete recommendations on how Austria could support the negotiation process, and in particular African countries and institutions within it.

As part of the 9th Austrian Development Conference in Innsbruck, VIDC Global Dialogue organised a workshop on illicit financial flows (IFFs). IFFs do not stem solely from illegal activities such as drug trafficking or corruption. They can also arise from tax avoidance or evasion. Africa loses around 89 billion US dollars annually due to IFFs. In 2024 alone, almost 11 billion US dollars in IFFs flowed out of South-Eastern European states. This was discussed in depth by the high-profile experts Luckystar Miyandazi (African Union), Mellissa Tullis (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, UNODC) and Anesa Agovic (Global Initiative Against Organised Crime).

## Saving education

Fundamental issues were at stake in May 2025, when the renowned postcolonial theorist Nikita Dhawan presented her new book “Saving the Enlightenment from Europe”. For, as Dhawan put it, “to bring about

change, we must change our thinking.” Dhawan criticised the Enlightenment and its legacy for having justified brutal colonisation, which encompassed the subjugation of both humanity and nature. Yet for her, postcolonial critical thinking is neither simply in opposition to the Enlightenment nor is it incompatible with it, particularly when it comes to Enlightenment norms such as democracy, equality, freedom and justice. These values shaped not only Europe. Turning away from them is therefore the wrong answer, yet this is precisely what can be observed in the Global North. Neither human rights, nor the environment, nor the international legal order are being adequately defended. Retreat is therefore not an option. Rather, one must engage with different ideologies and people.

## The VIDC in the media

Although around 85 per cent of the world’s population lives in the Global South, the 2025 Ludescher study shows that only about ten per cent of public service media coverage relates to these regions. But it can be done. The topics covered by VIDC Global Dialogue resonated with numerous media outlets in 2025: with a total of 73 media reports, the figure tripled compared to the previous year. The VIDC also provided continuous updates on its work via social media channels. The collaboration with the Viennese city broadcaster W24 was also successfully continued. <

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### Publications


VIDC (Ed.), Ali Ahmad, Michael Fanizadeh: Policy Brief: **Gegen Gender-Apartheid in Afghanistan. Anerkennung als Verbrechen gegen die Menschlichkeit**, Vienna, April 2025

VIDC (Ed.), Nadja Schuster, Sabine Ziegelwanger: **Policy Brief: Sexuelle und Reproduktive Gesundheit und Rechte (SRGR)**, Vienna, October 2025

VIDC (Ed.), Mansoor Hussein Ayobi: **Studie: Afghan diaspora’s role in peacebuilding and reconciliation**, December 2025

VIDC (Ed.), Nora Jasmin Ragab: **Feministisches Organizing-Toolkit für Diaspora Organisationen**, Vienna, September 2025

VIDC (Ed.), Martina Neuwirth: **Policy Brief: Die UN-Steuerabkommenkonvention**, Vienna, November 2025



KULTU  
REN I  
N BEW  
EGUNG

A tear. A smile. My childhood. In  
Damascus, a literary and musical  
performance by Luna Al-Mousli

**kulturen in bewegung implements artistic and knowledge-based projects that reflect on cultural, political and social developments from global and post-migrant perspectives. Situated uniquely at the intersection of art, culture and development cooperation, we provide impetus in the Austrian cultural and educational sectors.**

## Collective Unlearning for Greater Diversity of Perspectives in the Cultural Sector

**The Academy of Unlearning connects migrant and BIPOC women with cultural mediators in Viennese institutions, making their knowledge and perspectives visible and providing impetus for power-critical reflection and diversity in the cultural sector.**

In the second round of the ‘kulturen in bewegung’ mentoring programme, eleven cultural institutions, including Kultursommer Wien, Wiener Festwochen, the Konzerthaus and the State Opera. In individual one-to-one meetings, mentees gain an insight into the day-to-day running of a cultural organisation. Together with their mentor, they develop an educational initiative that is implemented in the institutions’ programmes. Examples include community formats at KunstHausWien or brut Wien, a storytelling café on memory and food at the Volkskundemuseum, and decolonial perspectives on the textile collection at the MAK – Museum of Applied Arts.

In workshops, questions are explored that extend far beyond individual projects. How do colonial structures shape our everyday lives? What might non-verbal



education look like? How can active listening be practised as a form of unlearning? Under the guidance of Carla Bobadilla, Mona Matbou Riahi and Annemarie Mitterbäck, collective spaces for learning and experience are thus created.

Burgtheater dramaturg and mentor Saliha Shagasi emphasises that diversity is not an “add-on”, but a prerequisite for a vibrant cultural landscape: “The more perspectives there are, the greater the pool of knowledge from which one can draw. And by that I mean not just factual knowledge, but also knowledge based on experiences and feelings.” In this context, ‘unlearning’ means questioning established patterns and creating space for diverse perspectives – as a contribution to greater participation and diversity in the cultural sector. <

# Artist in Residence and Forum

“My work explores methods of preserving collective memory by listening attentively to the world around me – and above all to the stories of people who often go unheard or are silenced.”

This is how Nour Sokhon, a multidisciplinary artist and composer from Beirut/Berlin and Artist in Residence 2025 at kulturen in bewegung, describes her approach. Her artistic practice combines interviews, field recordings and visual material from site-specific interventions to give voice to questions of memory, identity and belonging.

## Art as a resonant space for migration and memory

Live performances, including appearances in Vienna, Graz and at the Innsbruck International Film Festival, brought her together with Austrian artists and opened up new opportunities for collaboration. In the production studio, she worked alongside the Austrian-Palestinian rapper asifeh on material from their sound workshop Harboursing Voices and developed a live sound performance from it, which they presented for the first time at 12Ton at rhiz Vienna. “The residency was the highlight of my year,” sums up the artist.

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**On her debut album “Beirut Birds”, Nour Sokhon combined personal interviews, field recordings and video footage from Beirut and Berlin into a multi-layered reflection on migration, political instability and healing.**

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In collaboration with Forum von kulturen in bewegung, a key focus in 2025 was on refining the organisational structure and content of the Artist in Residence programme. The programme creates safe spaces for artistic freedom and



© Alena Klirger

promotes networking among FLINTA artists from the Global South. Through exchanges, live performances and collaborations with the Austrian scene, it makes marginalised perspectives visible and strengthens intercultural dialogue.

Since 2022, the Forum for Collective Curating, with a rotating team (2025: Ava Binta Giallo, Rojin Sharafi, Cleidy Acevedo, Petz Haselmayer), has been opening up spaces for participatory reflection and format development to make curatorial processes at kulturen in bewegung more democratic, diverse and experimental. <

With FIBER space, kulturen in bewegung has created a series of events where artistic, political and social issues converge.

In a specially designed stage and spatial setting, diverse voices, genres and aesthetics come together. Through associative storytelling, FIBER space gives rise to an overall composition in which perceptions overlap, shift and linger. In the October edition, actress Nancy Mensah-Offei's moderation ran like a quiet commentary through the evening: How do we reassemble things when the world becomes more fragile and confusing? The artists in the FIBER space offered no simple answers. Instead, they insisted on movement, on shift, on conditions of commonality—namely, taking the different perspectives seriously. A sound installation in the centre of the room: 'tone-deaf: a world off key' by Marlene Kager, for instance, explored acoustic warfare and the profound effects of

sound on the body and perception. Ramiro Wong invited visitors to 'taste' stories here. In 'Celebrations', memories, migration and identity were intertwined with flavours and language.

## The Traces of Digital Presence

In the concluding audiovisual performance, Robin Lütolf explored unconscious patterns of digital belonging and examined the question of what traces our digital presence leaves behind.

In 2025, two editions (18 June and 8 October) were realised in collaboration with WUK performing arts. Participating artists: Evandro Pedroni with Lau Lukkarila and Mzamo Nondlwana, Frida Robles & New Choir, HUUUM (Rojin, Omid Darvish & Álvaro Collao Leon), Inès Khannoussi, Jaskaran Singh, Marlene Kager, Mtasa, Mzamo Nondlwana, Nancy Mensah-Offei, Noor Abed, Nour Sokhon, Ramiro Wong, Robin Lütolf, Sainkho Namtchylak & Andreas Trobollowitsch, Sakina Teyna & Stefan Fraunberger. <

# LaLaLa – Concerts for Children

LaLaLa – Concerts for Children turns music into a shared experience for children and their families. Each year, a new concept is developed in which professional musicians invite people to multilingual participatory concerts in Vienna's outlying districts.

In 2025, the artist Luna Al-Mousli presented 'A Tear. A Smile. My Childhood in Damascus', a literary-musical performance that accompanied her eponymous. Memories,

sounds and stories came together to form a vivid picture of Damascus – with bilingual texts in Arabic and German. Due to high demand from various organisers and partners, the collaboration with the artists Rina Kaçinari, Özlem Bulut and Sakina Teyna (cello, guitar, cajón and daf) from 2024 was continued.

## Quality children's culture

LaLaLa stands for high-quality children's culture, which could be experienced in 2025 at various venues across Vienna, including Kultur-sommer Wien, Kulturcafé Max, Vienna City Libraries, Stand 129, Literaturmeile Zieglergasse and the Landstraßen-fest. The artists value their collaboration with kulturen in bewegung, particularly the creative freedom and the trust placed in their artistic work. So in 2026, the motto remains: LaLaLa – Music Everywhere! <

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## Publications

VIDC & Forum für kollektives Kuratieren (Ed.), Petz Haselmayer, Marissa Lôbo, Ivana Marjanovic, Negin Rezaie: **Guidelines für kollektives Kuratieren am Beispiel des Programms CLIŠHÉ TRĀSH**, Vienna, 2025

As part of the FairPlay prevention programme, Feminist Fighters Week took place in April.

**fairplay**

Since 1997, fairplay has been working within and through sport to promote a society free from exclusion. We harness the power of sport to promote diversity, inclusion, anti-discrimination and human rights, and to proactively counter extremism. At all levels of sport – from athletes and federations to schools, clubs and fans – we raise awareness, develop positive strategies against discrimination and support marginalised groups in participating on an equal footing.



## Exhibition: Leopold Štastný

From 17 June to 11 July, fairplay prevention, in collaboration with the Innsbruck City Archives/ City Museum and the Innsbruck Fan Initiative, presented an open-air exhibition on the legendary coach and survivor of Nazi terror, Leopold Štastný.

On 17 June, the open-air exhibition “Leopold Štastný – Survivor of Nazi Terror, Legendary Coach and Founder of the Schools League” was opened with an impressive ceremony in the plenary hall of Innsbruck City Hall.

The exhibition at Sparkassenplatz in Innsbruck brought Leopold Štastný’s eventful life to light: from his time as a celebrated player and coach in Bratislava in the 1940s and 1950s, through his persecution as a Jew under the Nazi regime, to his formative role in Austrian football after the war – as team manager and founder of the Schülerliga. This brought a previously largely unknown life story into the public eye, linking sporting history with the culture of remembrance. Over 7,000 people took the

opportunity to visit the open-air exhibition and the supporting programme. To accompany the exhibition, a comprehensive outreach and educational programme was offered for school and youth groups, sports clubs and interested members of the public, in the form of free guided tours. A dedicated workshop programme on anti-Semitism, diversity, the prevention of extremism in sport and the life of Leopold Štastný was developed. Through these programmes, football was deliberately used as a venue for democratic education and social debate.

The project was supported by the Federal Chancellery, the National Fund, the Future Fund, the Province of Tyrol, the Austrian Football Association (ÖFB) and the Slovak Institute. <

In October, the slogan “Violence is not a game. Don’t stand by and watch violence, sexism and hatred against women” sent a clear message. The fairplay action weeks were launched with a media event.

With a total of 226 teams from 9 sports (ice hockey, basketball, football, martial arts, American football, cheerleading, darts, table tennis, squash), a new record was set. Clubs were able to book awareness-raising workshops with violence prevention organisations. 25 November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, marked the end of the campaign weeks.

## Expertise & Visibility

In addition to numerous workshops and training sessions, fairplay 2025 contributed its advisory expertise to new sports such as fencing, cheerleading, rowing and volleyball, and acted as an expert for the media, academics and students on socio-politically relevant events in sport, such as the ORF documentary on the topic of binary gender in sport. The portrait series “90 for fairplay”, which provides insights into clubs committed to anti-discrimination, continued. The 2×11 Club also met again in 2025. Nikola Staritz served this year as a representative of the BMWKMS on the Mass Sports Commission.

Furthermore, as one of the four key integrity bodies in Austrian sport, fairplay is a key driver in setting the course for sports policy to support political decision-making processes. For instance, fairplay was part of the expert team involved in drafting the National Action Plan to Combat Violence against Women and Girls 2025–2029.

## Monitoring

Through the ‘Report Discrimination!’ reporting centre for football (in cooperation with the ÖFB and the Bundesliga) and the general, multi-sport ‘Report Extremism’ reporting centre, fairplay documents cases of discrimination and is thus able to paint a picture of the current situation. In addition, the survey “Violence & Discrimination: Challenges for Sports Clubs 2025” was launched.



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## International: European projects

Three Erasmus+ projects set new trends: OUTdoor for INclusion focused on outdoor and alpine sports and the question of how these can become more diverse and inclusive. In focus groups, barriers for girls and women with a history of migration or displacement were identified and attempts were made to overcome them. The final conference took place in Vienna in December. The ReWSE (Reinforcing Women Sports Events) project promotes the themes of equality, sustainability, visibility and inclusion at sporting events organised by and for women in Europe.

Hate speech against LGBTIQ+ people remains one of the most harmful forms of discrimination in sport. The European Observatory on LGBTIQ+ Hate Speech in Sport (EOLHSS) has set itself the goal of analysing, preventing and combating LGBTIQ+ hate speech in sport – and laying the foundations for a European observatory. <

The Erasmus+ project “Empower Diverse Youth” aims to increase participation in sport among young people from diverse backgrounds whilst promoting inclusive, non-discriminatory structures in sport.

During European Week of Sport, the project promoted greater inclusion in sport for young people. In Austria, the Youth Coordinators presented their action plan at the Day of Sport on Vienna’s Heldenplatz. .

## SPIN – Sport Inclusion Network

Participation in sport is not equal for everyone. Marginalised groups, particularly refugees, migrants and women, face barriers. SPIN aims to make sport and physical activity accessible to all. The SPIN network is the result of a partnership established in 2011 between organisations such as the Football Association of Ireland, the Italian sports association UISP, the Finnish migrant umbrella organisation Liikkukaa! – Sports For All, the Camino research group from Berlin, the players’ union SJPF and, as the driving force, the fairplay initiative.



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**These projects harness the power of sport to foster intercultural dialogue and break down nationalism. Local NGOs and sports clubs contribute expertise on identity, nationalism, the promotion of ethnic minorities, and the empowerment of girls and women in football.**

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Together, six European SPIN projects have already been implemented, including the current SPIN Youth. In 2023, the network was founded as an independent association in Vienna. In addition to the funded project “Inclusive Sport for Young Sahrawi Refugees” in the Tindouf region (Algeria), SPIN organised the webinar “Social Inclusion of Refugees through Sport” in February and has 19 members from 10 countries.

## Projects in the Western Balkans

This year, too, we deepened our focus on the Western Balkans with the projects Football Zajedno, Sport Zajedno and Game Changers. A highlight was the 3x3 basketball streetball tournament in July in Sarajevo, where around 100 participants from diverse backgrounds played in mixed teams and took part in fair play workshops to promote inclusion and teamwork. The tried-and-tested minivan tour also proved to be an innovative tool for cross-community work, visiting eight cities in six countries and reaching over 1,000 children and young people. The year concluded with the closing event of the Game Changers project in Bijeljina, where concrete ways to overcome gender discrimination in sport were developed.

In April, the fairplay initiative presented the EU project Sport Zajedno at the EU Sport Forum in Krakow as part of a high-level panel on the role of sport in EU enlargement. In attendance were the Ukrainian Minister for Sport, the Finnish Minister for Sport and the former President of Estonia. <

# Development and Human Rights

2025 has launched a new three-year project focusing on the FIFA Men's World Cup and critically examining issues of responsibility, human rights and sustainability in global sport.

## Sport and Human Rights Working Group

In 2025, three meetings of the Sport and Human Rights Working Group were held. More than 20 different sports federations and human rights organisations based in Austria. Major topics discussed within the working group included, among others, “freedom of expression and the political responsibility of athletes” as well as “the role of human rights in future major sporting events – the example of the 2026 FIFA World Cup in the USA”.

## GAME ON! Sport for Human Rights

The new project under the overarching theme of “Sport & Human Rights”, which will focus on the 2026 FIFA World Cup, is titled “GAME ON! Sport for Human Rights”. With an expanded network of project partners – including Südwind, the artist and curator Oscár Sanchez, Frauen\*solidarität, Protect Our Winters Austria, the Austrian League for Human Rights, Reporters Without Borders and the football magazine ballesterer – our main aim was to “human rights at major sporting events” back into the public consciousness following the highly publicised 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar.

Following criticism of human rights violations at the 2018 World Cup in Russia and the 2022 World Cup in Qatar, FIFA promised to take greater responsibility. The 2026 World Cup is the first men's World Cup to have a published human rights strategy, which was is being touted as a new benchmark for sporting events worldwide. Yet issues such as human rights and sustainability are also relevant in the supposedly ‘unproblematic’ World Cup host nations of Canada, Mexico and the USA.

On 4 December, one day before the official draw for the World Cup groups and the absurd awarding of the FIFA



Peace Prize to US President Donald Trump, we launched the GAME ON campaign with a public press conference at the Concordia Press Club.

The international and diverse panel included Jennifer Li (Georgetown University Law Center & coordinator of the Dignity 2026 Coalition), Philipp Budka (Institute for Cultural and Social Anthropology, University of Vienna), Christos Papadimitriou (Head of Marketing at VfB – The Players' Association) and Aurelia Velasco (FC Los Andes). The experts reported on the situation and the various human rights issues (US immigration policy, freedom of the press and freedom of expression, LGBTQI and women's rights, indigenous rights, environmental protection and much more) in the three host countries, as well as the responsibilities surrounding major sporting events. <

A monitoring report was published in the final year of the fairplay prevention project. The findings are alarming: combat sports in Austria are increasingly serving as a breeding ground for toxic cultures of masculinity.

At the end of January, the project was discontinued due to cost-cutting measures by the federal government and is no longer funded by the BMWKMS. This decision primarily affects the sports stakeholders who have benefited from the workshops, campaigns and events over the past four years. The focus was on disseminating our educational initiatives, monitoring the Austrian martial arts scene and preventing anti-Semitism. This latter focus was also reflected in fairplay prevention's collaboration on the Federal Chancellery's National Anti-Semitism Strategy 2.0, which for the first time includes a chapter on society, democracy and sport.

## Taking a Stand in Sport

As part of the conference "Taking a Stand in Sport", the 2025 monitoring report entitled "Misanthropic Ideologies in Martial Arts – Toxic Masculinities, Right-wing Extremism and Networks" was presented. The report serves to promote political education in sport and is available to download as an online document.

## Sport as an important tool for prevention work

On 3 December, the conference "Taking a Stand in Sport – Together Against Extremism" took place at the Sport-arena Wien. Representatives from organised sport, extremism research and youth work discussed how sport can be used for prevention work. In addition to panel discussions on the prevention of extremism, the programme also featured a lecture on Turkish right-wing



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extremism and the presentation of the monitoring report. The event highlighted the importance of prevention work within sporting structures to ensure that an inclusive space, free from exclusion, hatred and extremism, can continue to be guaranteed in the future. <

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### Publications

Vienna Institute for International Dialogue and Cooperation (VIDC)/fairplay Initiative (Ed.), **fairplay prevention: Menschenfeindliche Ideologien im Kampfsport – Toxische Männlichkeiten, Rechtsextremismus und Netzwerke**, Vienna, 2025

Vienna Institute for International Dialogue and Cooperation (VIDC): **FACTSHEET ZUM THEMA BARRIEREFREIHEIT IM SPORT**, Vienna, 2025

Vienna Institute for International Dialogue and Cooperation (VIDC): **Different jerseys, same team. A manual for organizing inclusive sport events**

**Our work is based on respect, diversity, and the shared goal of a just and sustainable world — to drive social change in Austria and worldwide.**