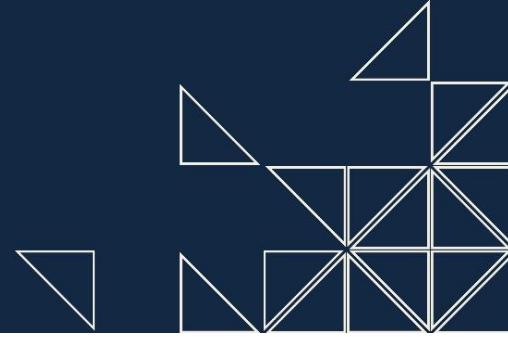




Parlament
Österreich



Press Information

#OeParl2023

Digital press documents, photos and videos:



Queries:

Media Service of the Parliamentary Administration

Tel. +43 1 401 10-2272

E-Mail: medienservice@parlament.gv.at



Table of Contents

Renovation of the Parliament Building	4
Facts and figures on the Parliament Building and its renovation.....	4
The most important data about the renovation at a glance.....	5
The main architectural innovations in the Building	6
The National Council Chamber	7
The Federal Council Chamber.....	8
Attic	9
New committee rooms on the first floor	10
Visitor Center "Demokratikum - Experience Parliament"	10
Realization of Essential Principles of Renovation in the Entire Building	11
Technical modernization	11
Historic preservation.....	12
Sustainability.....	13
Accessibility	14
Art in Parliament.....	14
Project organization	15
Project structure	15
Construction companies.....	16
Cost framework.....	16
Commissioning of the Building and Relocations	17
Move back into the renovated Parliament Building	17
Time plan for the relocations.....	17
Relocation as a logistical challenge.....	18
Interim location	18
Relocation of the Library and Archives	19
Rehearsal for real operations.....	19



The Reopening of the Parliament Building.....	20
Parliament opened. Ceremony of the opening of the renovated Parliament Building.....	20
Parliament connects. Open House Days in the reopened Parliament Building.....	20
Visitors Center "Demokratikum – Experience Parliament"	21
Agora	21
Auditorium	22
Forum	22
Passage	23
Offers for children	23
Accessibility	24
Opening hours and contact points.....	24
Emergence of the Demokratikum	24



Renovation of the Parliament Building

The Parliament is not only the heart of democracy; it also reflects Austrian history like hardly any other building. After 130 years of almost uninterrupted operation, the structure had reached the end of its technical life. Damage and defects had become increasingly obvious. In order to preserve the Building and make it fit for the future, in 2014 it was unanimously decided to renovate the Parliament Building on Vienna's Ringstraße. The comprehensive project is now drawing to a close: the renovated and modernized Parliament is reopening in mid-January 2023.

The renovation has succeeded to

- ◆ preserve the historically-valuable Building for future generations,
- ◆ adapt the Building in terms of existing safety requirements,
- ◆ create a place for contemporary, modern parliamentarianism, and
- ◆ open the Parliament to even more to visitors.

Facts and figures on the Parliament Building and its renovation

- ◆ Built 1874-1883 (architect Theophil Hansen), first session in the Parliament Building in December 1883
- ◆ Destruction of about 80% of the building in the Second World War, reconstruction 1945-1956 (architects Fellerer & Wörle)
- ◆ Sustainable renovation since 2018 (general planner Jabornegg & Pálffy)
- ◆ Size (including ramp): 151.68 meters long & 132.72 meters wide
- ◆ Property area: 20,142 m² (corresponds to the area of almost three football fields)



- ◆ Highest point of the Parliament Building: 33 meters. This is the wing tip of the quadriped steered by Nike. Even after the renovation, this is the highest point of the Building.
- ◆ 1,600 rooms
- ◆ 55,000 m² net floor space was refurbished
- ◆ 40,000 m² of floors were demolished and newly laid including technical installations
- ◆ 740 windows were thermally refurbished, around 600 historic doors were refurbished and technically upgraded
- ◆ 500 chandeliers and lighting fixtures were dismantled, cleaned, rewired and reinstalled
- ◆ Increase in usable floor space by 10,000 m²
- ◆ 1,500 m² new Visitor Center on the first floor
- ◆ 800 m² gastronomy area
- ◆ 400 m² terraces
- ◆ New glass dome over the National Council Chamber with a diameter of 28 meters and an area of 550 m²
- ◆ In the Chamber, the 2.8-meter-tall eagle, made of sheet steel by the sculptor Rudolf Hoflehner after the Second World War, weighs 650 kilograms and has now been restored.

The most important data about the renovation at a glance

2014: Unanimous resolution of the Parliamentary Building Renovation Law

2014-2017: Preparation for the renovation (tendering procedure, establishment of a renovation company, design, construction and relocation to the interim quarters in the



Hofburg and at Heldenplatz)

2018: First construction measures in the historic Parliament Building

2018-2022: Sustainable renovation of the Parliament (roof renovation, glass dome, new restaurant, Visitor Center, restaurant area, extensive restoration work on historic figures and surfaces, and much more)

October 2022: Takeover of the Building by the Parliamentary Administration and start of operations

Since October 2022: Relocation back to the main Building, relocations to external buildings since April 2022

12 January 2023: Parliament opened. Ceremony for the opening of the renovated Parliament Building

14 and 15 January 2023: Parliament connects. Open House Days in the reopened Parliament Building

The main architectural innovations in the Building

In the renovation of the Parliament Building, the consortium of Jabornegg & Pálffy Architekten / AXIS adapted the concepts of the architectural predecessors Theophil Hansen and Fellerer & Wörle and combined them with the structural means of the present.

As such, the existing architecture meets modern requirements and continues the structural space without covering it.

New to the Building are:

- ◆ New glass dome over the National Council Chamber provides daylight in the hall
- ◆ New functional arrangements in the bel etage, such as the conversion of the Budget Hall into the Federal Council Chamber



- ◆ Extension of the attic floors: visitor walkway "Plenarium," creation of a restaurant, four terraces, construction of two glazed multifunctional rooms, new offices
- ◆ New coverage of the entire roof
- ◆ Construction of two (Investigating) Committee rooms on the ground floor, one under the National Council Chamber and one under the Federal Assembly Hall
- ◆ Creation of the Visitor Center "Demokratikum - Experience Parliament" under the Colonnaded Hall
- ◆ Four new main staircases and thus, for the first time, a central connection of all upper and lower floors

The National Council Chamber

- ◆ Capacity: 250 people in the semicircle, 120 seats in the balcony, 240 seats in the gallery

Some structural changes were made in the Plenary Chamber:

- ◆ The floor of the Chamber was flattened in the interest of accessibility.
- ◆ The rostrum is now located between the divided government bench. Members of Parliament speak at the same height as Members of the Government.
- ◆ The distances between the rows of seats are now wider.
- ◆ The Member of Parliament (MP) benches were assembled with a flexible plug-in system. The seating arrangement of the parties can thus be easily updated if there is change in the mandate ratios.
- ◆ In each MP's seat, there is a 10" display that can be raised (including audio, USB-C and LAN connection), for information on Sitzings and items of negotiation.

A major innovation in the National Council Chamber is the 550 m² glass dome. For the first



time, it opens up a view of the outdoors, for example, of the quadrupeds on the roof, and lets daylight into the Chamber. The individual electrochromic glass panels lie on a grid shell and allow the light transmission to be controlled.

In April 2022, a flutter echo was detected in the Chamber, making changes to the carpet and its substructure necessary. Insulation material was placed in the cavity of the substructure, and a grating and perforated sheet were laid over it. A new, micro-perforated carpet was laid on top to absorb sound more effectively. Additional transparent acoustic sails were installed on the inside of the glass dome.

All interventions in the listed Chamber were carried out in close coordination with the Federal Monuments Office. The essence of the Chamber has been preserved. Historically-valuable surfaces were carefully restored:

- ◆ The heraldic steel eagle by Rudolf Hoflehner was restored in a workshop in Upper Austria and dismantled into four parts for transport. The eagle, weighing a total of 650 kg, was transported by crane over a balcony back into the Chamber.
- ◆ The wall paneling made of walnut veneer was also treated to preserve its historical value. The individual pieces of wood were removed, numbered and then reattached in their original position.
- ◆ The Couloir (corridor area) behind the plenary has been retained but extended towards Schmerlingplatz. This now allows a view of the outside in addition to more space for meetings and a restaurant area during the Sittings.
- ◆ The existing press balcony and visitor's gallery were redesigned to be barrier-free.

The Federal Council Chamber

- ◆ Capacity: 130 persons

In the future, the Federal Council will meet in the former Budget Hall:



- ◆ A plenary with fixed furniture was installed in the Chamber for this purpose. It can be dismantled or converted if required.
- ◆ As in the National Council Chamber, the seats of the Members of the Federal Council have been equipped with 10" displays that can be raised.
- ◆ Windows and a balcony facing Reichsratsstraße guarantee daylight in the Chamber.
- ◆ Two wheel chandeliers designed by Theophil Hansen were upgraded and restored with LED technology.

Attic

The expansion of previously unused areas in the attic offered the greatest potential for spatial expansion. Numerous new rooms were created here - most of them also for visitors:

Directly under the glass dome in the National Council Chamber, a glass walkway for visitors was created - the Plenarium. In this way, guided tours for visitors can take place even during ongoing sessions. The events can be observed from above, while explanations are given by the Parliament's democracy educators. The workshop areas of the Democracy Workshop are also located here.

Two new multifunctional rooms were also built in the attic. The new additions are arranged so as not to interfere with the historic appearance or to have a disturbing effect on the overall ensemble.

- ◆ What was unused as an attic before the renovation has now been converted in to a dining area open to the public. The **Kelsen** restaurant with a serviced lunch and evening opening, the Cantina for a quick lunchtime supply, and the Bistro for small and large hunger in between are all located on around 800 m². The contract was awarded in December 2021 to a bidding consortium consisting of Thomas Hahn (Labstelle Wien), Christine Friedreich (Friedreich Hospitality) and Lorenz Reichel (Gaumenglück).



- ◆ Four new roof terraces with a total area of around 400 m² offer views of Vienna's city center and the sculptural decoration of the roofscape. The terraces were also built in such a way that they do not alter the appearance of the Building from the street.

New committee rooms on the first floor

- ◆ Room under the National Council Chamber with a capacity of 150 people
- ◆ Room under the Federal Assembly Hall with capacity of 250 persons
- ◆ Both premises can be used not only for (Investigating) Committees but also for events.
- ◆ The furnishing can be changed flexibly.
- ◆ The construction of the rooms was a static masterpiece. Steel girder underpinnings had to be erected to support the floor of the listed Federal Assembly Hall above it. For the room under the National Council Chamber, the area up to the second basement level was demolished and rebuilt.

Visitor Center "Demokratikum - Experience Parliament"

- ◆ Located directly under the Colonnaded Hall on the first floor
- ◆ Around 1,500 m² for visitor areas and exhibition space
- ◆ Three halls: Agora, Auditorium and Forum
- ◆ Design by Atelier Brückner (after a Europe-wide award procedure)
- ◆ Wall stations, media tables, videos, interactive elements
- ◆ Contents: History of democracy in Austria, development of laws, parliamentary processes, interaction of democracy and media.
- ◆ The construction of the Agora was also a major structural challenge. Existing pillars had to be demolished to make room for the Visitor Center. To ensure that no historic



structures were damaged, sensors checked all structural changes in the Building, no matter how minimal, and reported them to the construction management in real time.

Four new staircases

- ◆ Four new primary staircases were built in the former courtyards. As such, they are not connected to the historic Building.
- ◆ As the staircases are open to the surroundings, daylight enters them from above.
- ◆ With the staircases, a direct central connection between all floors was created.

At the same time, they serve as additional escape staircases and for vertical earthquake bracing.

Realization of Essential Principles of Renovation in the Entire Building

Technical modernization

Members of Parliament, political parties, and Parliamentary Administration staff depend on modern workplaces in the Building. Accordingly, a fundamental update of the technological possibilities was important. The meeting rooms now have monitors at the seats, sufficient power connections, and improved accessibility. Plenary halls and committee rooms are equipped with microphone and sound systems, video systems, mobile conference systems, inductive hearing systems and other media-technology options. Information screens distributed throughout the Building provide timely information.

The safety technology and infrastructure have also been significantly improved; the Building has higher earthquake resistance, the latest safety standards, and a service ring in the basement, through which the Building's infrastructure is centrally managed and maintained.



Historic preservation

A team of highly specialized restorers took care of the professional restoration and repair of the original furnishings and building substance on site and in various specialist workshops.

Restored exterior features include:

- ◆ Facade on the Ringstraße side
- ◆ Pallas Athena Fountain
- ◆ 44 Attica figures made of Carrara marble

Inside the Building, surfaces from the period of its construction under Theophil Hansen (1874-1883) and from the period of its reconstruction by Fellerer & Wörle (1945-1956) were treated. For example, these included:

- ◆ Heraldic eagle in the National Council Chamber
- ◆ Chandeliers and lights
- ◆ Historic surfaces in the Colonnaded Hall and the Upper Vestibule
- ◆ Federal Assembly Hall (parquet floor, furniture, columns, figures, walls, ceiling with decorative painting)
- ◆ Interior surfaces of stone, stucco lustro, stucco marble, wood and metal as well as marouflages and decorative painting were restored.

In order to preserve the listed substance as much as possible, but nevertheless carry out the necessary modernization, all installations, for example, were installed in the floors as well as in pillars rather than in the historically-valuable stucco lustro walls.



Sustainability

The sustainability criteria of "klimaaktiv GOLD" were already taken into account during the planning of the renovation work, and so the Parliament Building was the first historical building to receive this certificate. The renovation brings sustainability through elements such as

- ◆ Insulation of the building envelope and replacement of glass panes to increase energy efficiency
- ◆ Connection to district heating or cooling and use of certified green electricity
- ◆ Motion and daylight-dependent lighting control
- ◆ Improvement of indoor air quality and reduction of pollutants
- ◆ Installation of energy-efficient technology
- ◆ Changeover to screens in all areas to reduce paper consumption

With the introduction of an environmental-management system, a sustainable approach will also determine the operation of the Building: from environmentally-friendly mobility services to recycling and catering.

In the course of the renovation of the Parliament Building, an outdoor space concept was also implemented; its expansion included more green areas. Instead of four new trees in Reichsratsstraße behind the Parliament Building as had been planned in the original concept, 14 new trees have now been planted. In addition, the flat roofs were greened.

For several reasons, the old green space - or rather the old trees directly on the facade of the Parliament Building and the old privet hedge along Reichsratsstraße - could not be preserved. The cellar masonry was attacked by the roots of the trees, and the irrigation of the old trees had led to moisture damage in the masonry. The removal of the trees was also unavoidable given the construction work on the Parliament Building. The two lime trees at the respective ends of the property facing Reichsratsstraße were left in place during



construction. The remaining existing trees (columnar hornbeams) were replanted professionally.

Accessibility

The Building is now largely barrier-free. In addition to staircases, all major areas are accessible via barrier-free elevator systems, lifting platforms or stair lifts. The main access routes are equipped with tactile floor guidance systems, tactile lettering and guidance system screens. An inductive hearing system has been installed in the meeting rooms and in the new committee rooms. There are barrier-free restroom facilities and an inclusive fire protection and evacuation concept. Information communication implements the two-senses principle. Signage and guidance systems, therefore, offer tactile inscriptions and Braille in addition to visual descriptions. Content in the Visitor Center is offered with subtitling, readable text, and in Austrian Sign Language, among other possibilities.

Art in Parliament

The art and culture program in the newly renovated Parliament Building is being expanded both in terms of space and content. Hans-Peter Wipplinger, Director of the Leopold Museum, was appointed as Parliament's curator. He has many years of experience as director of several art museums and has already acted as art curator of the Parliament in the past. At his suggestion, several Austrian artists were invited to present projects for the renovated Parliament Building. The projects were coordinated with the Federal Monuments Office and presented to representatives of all parliamentary groups. The projected total costs amount to about €1.8 million. This is just under 0.5% of the total volume of the renovation of the Parliament Building.

Installed work by:

- ◆ Lea Sonderegger - "Parliament," photographs in the Library Cafe
- ◆ Heimo Zobernig - "Democracy Parliament," steel lettering in the committee room below the National Council Chamber & "Interferences," pictures in the reception room



- ◆ Brigitte Kowanz - "The Proclamation of the Republic 12.11.1918," light installation in the committee room below the Federal Assembly Hall
- ◆ Eva Schlegel - "extension of public space," mirror sculptures in the vestibule and the restaurant
- ◆ Constantin Luser - "Democracy Trumpet - Frieze with Horn and Scales," brass frieze and sculptures in the Plenary Lounge
- ◆ Peter Sandbichler - "Resonance Body" - wooden frieze in the Plenarium & "Resonance Body", wooden podium in the Plenarium
- ◆ Esther Stocker - "Galaxy," graphic wall work in the main staircase 1
- ◆ Martina Steckholzer - "Figures," steel cables in staircase 3
- ◆ Peter Kogler - "Untitled (Curtain Parliament)," textile curtain in staircase 4 (not yet installed)
- ◆ Erwin Bohatsch - "Reflections," pictures in the Reflektorium

Contracts are currently being drawn up for further existing artistic installations by the memorial artist and literary figure Heimrad Bäcker and the media artist Peter Weibel. Their contributions are dedicated to the memory of the darkest period of Austrian history under National Socialism.

Project organization

Project structure

The entire renovation project was overseen by the Developers Committee, which was constituted in 2014 and which, in addition to the members of the Presidential Conference, also includes the President of the National Audit Office. Key decisions were made by consensus of all five parliamentary parties in this supervisory body. For user issues, the Board of Users was established to accompany the project, which includes one Member



from each of the parliamentary parties in the National Council and the Federal Council, the Parliament's Secretary General and Deputy Secretary General, as well as the Chairperson of the Staff Committee and a monitor from Transparency International as participants.

The Bundesimmobiliengesellschaft (BIG) was entrusted with the building management. Coordination and organization of all project participants was the responsibility of Vasko+Partner Ingenieure. The bidding consortium Werner Consult

- Wendl ZT GesmbH headed site supervision. It was responsible for the management and coordination of the construction site as well as for the supervision of the entire parliamentary renovation with regard to the implementation of the construction project in accordance with the contract. iC consulenten Ziviltechniker GmbH was entrusted with the accompanying project supervision. The planning, the invitations to tender, the preparatory measures for construction, and the provision of the interim location were carried out by the Parlamentsgebäudesanierungsgesellschaft, as a joint venture of the Parliamentary Administration and BIG. With the start of construction, BIG took over the operative building management as the "developer," while the building owner agendas were carried out by the Parliamentary Administration as the "customer."

Construction companies

More than 100 construction companies from all over Austria were involved in the renovation of the Parliament. From the roof from Burgenland to furniture from Styria to the heraldic eagle, which was restored to its former glory thanks to the work of a metal workshop in Upper Austria, the majority were small- and medium-sized local companies. At peak times, up to 550 workers were employed on the construction site simultaneously. Some spent their first years of apprenticeship on the Parliament Building site; for others, it was the final project before retirement.

Cost framework

The total cost framework for the renovation of the Parliament Building was unanimously set by law in 2014 at €352.2 million with a reserve of 20%. In November 2020, a



subsequent cost overrun of 20% was approved and the reserve was thus activated. Final settlement for the overall project is expected to occur at the end of 2023. A residual risk of around 2-3% still exists.

Commissioning of the Building and Relocations

Before parliamentary operations can start in such a large, comprehensively renovated building, a complex process of commissioning was necessary. For this purpose, the parliamentary management set up a process with 47 individual projects that were subject to close monitoring. This was to ensure that the Building was "ramped up" in a coordinated manner and prepared for parliamentary operations and for visitors.

The work packages ranged from furnishing, equipping with media technology and IT throughout the Building to the organization of security and logistics processes.

Smooth procedures for plenary and committee meetings of the National Council and the Federal Council were also prepared and rehearsed. The new areas for visitors, such as the Visitors Center, the Library and the gastronomy facilities, also had to be set up and put into operation. Events, guided tours and international visits were also rehearsed. An essential part of the commissioning was the relocation of Parliamentarians and organizational units of the Parliamentary Administration.

Move back into the renovated Parliament Building

Time plan for the relocations

- ◆ The first relocations to adjoining buildings started as early as April 2022.
- ◆ With the opening of the historic Parliament Building, the relocation back to the main Building took place. By the time of the reopening in mid-January 2023, all of the workplaces located there have been moved to the main Building.



- ◆ The relocation to the adjoining buildings is expected to be completed in the first few months of next year.

Moved altogether:

- ◆ 800 workplaces
- ◆ Up to 6,400 moving boxes (8 boxes per person)
- ◆ Approximately 3,000 small and special inventory items such as lamps, plants, trash cans, footrests, computers and monitors.

Relocation as a logistical challenge

A core team of 20 employees is involved in the relocations. On the relocation days themselves, around 40 people are deployed, including the transport and security staff. The relocation of historical objects and special objects, as well as the necessary protective measures for the historical substances, posed particular challenges. As the relocation took place at the same time as the ongoing parliamentary business in the interim quarters and the opening of the renovated Parliament Building, it was an enormous logistical achievement for the organizational units involved. The costs for the relocation are included in the budget for the interim location, which was set by law in 2014 together with the overall budget for the sustainable renovation of the Parliament Building. The cost of the renovation was set at €352.2 million and that of the interim location at €51.4 million, both with a reserve of 20%. In November 2020, the reserve of 20% was activated. The final settlement for the entire project is expected to take place at the end of 2023 with an existing cost risk of 2 to 3%.

Interim location

- ◆ Parliamentary business will once again take place in the renovated Parliament Building on the Ring from the beginning of 2023. The areas used in the Hofburg will be handed back to the Burghauptmannschaft. The pavilions (in the Bibliothekshof and at Heldenplatz) will be dismantled in 2023. As they are designed in a modular



construction, the components can be reused after their dismantling. Concrete projects for reuse are currently being examined.

- ◆ Furniture and inventory items that are not relocated will be used in an exchange of material goods with other federal agencies, auctioned off among employees, or donated for charitable purposes.

Relocation of the Library and Archives

The Library and Archives will be moved back to the historic Parliament Building in six stages between October 2022 and February 2023.

- ◆ A total of approximately 4,500 linear meters of library stock will be moved.
- ◆ The final stage of the move will involve transporting 2,710 linear meters of the Archive from its current location at Stubenring 8-10 and will take place in February 2023.

Rehearsal for real operations

Real operations were simulated in various trial runs on four dates in November and December 2022. The various processes and scenarios were rehearsed simultaneously. This is because meetings, tours, workshops, visits and events will also take place in parallel in real operations.

At the beginning of November, a plenary session of the Federal Council was simulated, and at the end of November, the National Council was rehearsed. Internal and external extras took the role of Members of Parliament and acted out the session in detail, from the registration of speakers to the final vote. Around 560 extras were deployed for this.



The Reopening of the Parliament Building

Parliament opened.

Ceremony of the opening of the renovated Parliament Building

On 12 January 2023, the renovated Parliament Building will be reopened. The ceremony will start at 3 p.m. in the Federal Assembly Hall. National Council President Wolfgang Sobotka, (designated) Federal Council President Günter Kovacs, Second National Council President Doris Bures, and Third National Council President Norbert Hofer will give speeches at the beginning. The former President of the German Bundestag, Wolfgang Schäuble, will deliver the keynote speech. Finally, a moderated discussion will be held with the Chairs of the parliamentary groups: August Wöginger (ÖVP), Pamela Rendi-Wagner (SPÖ), Herbert Kickl (FPÖ), Sigrid Maurer (Grüne), and Beate Meinl-Reisinger (NEOS).

The ceremony will be moderated by ORF journalists Clarissa Stadler and Rebekka Salzer. The musical accompaniment will be provided by the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, the Vienna Boys' Choir and the Vienna Girls' Choir. Immediately before the joint ceremony, the National Council Chamber will be opened in the presence of the Members of Parliament, and the Federal Council Chamber in the presence of the Members of the Federal Council.

Parliament connects.

Open House Days in the reopened Parliament Building

On 14 and 15 January 2023, two Open House Days will take place, during which citizens can discover the reopened Parliament Building. During an extensive tour, visitors can explore the renovated Parliament. The tour shows:

- ◆ the National Council Chamber with its new glass dome,
- ◆ the new Federal Council Chamber,
- ◆ the Federal Assembly Hall, where the inauguration of the Federal President will take place at the end of January,



- ◆ the offices of the presidents of the National Council and the Federal Council,
- ◆ the Colonnaded Hall with the possibility to meet representatives of all parliamentary groups,
- ◆ the completely new Visitor Center "Demokratikum – Experience Parliament" directly under the Colonnaded Hall as well as
- ◆ the Library.

Visitors Center "Demokratikum – Experience Parliament"

One of the main goals of the renovation of the Parliament Building was to open it up to the public. For that reason, the "Demokratikum – Experience Parliament" has been created on an area of 1,500 m² under the Colonnaded Hall.

It is addressed to visitors of all ages and educational levels - from elementary school children to students and families to senior citizens. It is intended to appeal to those interested in politics, history and architecture, as well as to those who would like to immerse themselves in precisely these topics through an experience-oriented approach. The 27 media stations are interactive and present the Parliament and its processes in a factual and understandable way. All of the content is offered in German and English, so visitors from abroad can also be reached.

The aim was to promote the active interest of visitors in parliamentarianism and democracy, to illustrate the development of democracy in Austria, to arouse interest in participation, to make transparent the parliamentarians with their diverse tasks and lively debate, and to show the Parliament as an open place of conflict resolution for all people.

Agora

The centerpiece is the Agora exhibition and experience area, the approximately 900 m²



hall located directly below the Colonnaded Hall. On the left wall of the Agora, four stations, each 4.5 meters long, provide an overview of the history of democracy in Austria from 1848. Significant moments from 170 years of democracy history can be explored on an interactive media table. The right wall of the Agora is dedicated to the citizens under the title "We are democracy." In short videos, a cross-section of people living in Austria express their wishes and thoughts on democracy and politics. Other station areas provide information about civil society engagement, tasks and everyday work of parliamentarians. A media table provides an experience-oriented explanation of parliamentary procedures and terminology.

In the center of the Agora is the information station "Aktuell im Parlament." Here, visitors can obtain information on the current sessions of the National Council and the Federal Council as well as on their resolutions and other news from the Parliament. A tactile orientation station with maps and tactile models of Parliament and Pallas Athene as well as two children's stations are also located in this room.

Auditorium

The Agora leads to the two other exhibition halls, the Auditorium and the Forum. The Auditorium is dedicated to the interplay between politics and media. Two media tables are dedicated to the media and their role in democracy, as well as to social platforms on the Internet. Works from around 100 years of photojournalism are displayed on the walls along with the winning photographs of the "Global Peace Photo Award" - both exhibitions were curated by Lois Lammerhuber. Films on the renovation and architecture of the Building along with live broadcasts of plenary sessions, among other things, will be shown on a 13 m² LED wall. The Auditorium is also used for press conferences.

Forum

The Forum deals with the legislative process and possibilities for involvement. Opportunities for participation, the creation of laws, the principle of separation of



powers, and parliamentary control instruments are explained here. Visitors can also meet Members of Parliament in a "digital conversation." The Presidents of the National Council and the Federal Council as well as the heads of the parliamentary groups answer questions in pre-recorded videos that visitors can select themselves from a pool. At another station, visitors can give their opinion on nine socially-relevant topics on which parliamentarians have already voted (such as "Should euthanasia be made possible under strict conditions?" or "Should party donations be generally banned?"). The visitors' voting results are compared with those of the parliamentarians.

A quiz table offers the opportunity to test one's knowledge of Parliament, elections and laws. Five people can take part in the quiz at the same time, with a choice of three difficulty levels. The results can be included in the list of the best of the day.

Passage

In the passage between the entrance and the Agora is the Parliament Shop. It offers souvenirs from the Parliament - from writing pads and books to porcelain cups in parliamentary design.

On the opposite side, a station is dedicated to the history of the Parliament Building. It is a cross-sectional model of the Building with a transparent OLED screen in front, on which videos show the development of the Building from its construction in 1874-1883 to its reconstruction after World War II and its overall renovation in recent years.

Offers for children

The Demokratikum aims at appealing to people of all ages. Therefore, almost all stations have their own offers tailored to children. For example, children can explore the history of democracy in a hidden-object picture. In a digital game, they can re-enact the daily routine of politicians. For the very young, the "Pass for Discoverers" guides them through the stations - a booklet in which stamps can be collected.



Accessibility

The Demokratikum is barrier-free both structurally and in terms of content; efforts are being made to develop barrier-free offerings on a continuous basis. For example, tactile stations and read-aloud services are available.

Opening hours and contact points

As of January 16, 2023, the Demokratikum is open Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Thursdays from 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. and Saturdays from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Admission is free of charge. Visitors can obtain initial information about the services offered by the Parliament at the Welcome Desk near the main entrance. The central information point is the Info Desk in the Agora. "Explainers" will be on the move throughout the Demokratikum, approaching visitors and answering their questions.

Emergence of the Demokratikum

Planning and construction of the Demokratikum were implemented between November 2020 and December 2022. The Stuttgart office of Atelier Brückner was entrusted with the design in November 2020 after a Europe-wide tendering procedure - and with the involvement of all parliamentary groups represented in Parliament. Atelier Brückner conceives and designs architecture for exhibitions and museums and has already implemented more than 200 projects in 29 countries worldwide. The best known are the "Parlamentarium" in Brussels, the "Swiss National Museum Collection" in Zurich, and the "Hyundai World" in Las Vegas.

The project was accompanied by an advisory board consisting of an expert in didactics, an expert in the conception and operation of a visitor facility, and a historian. The members are Dirk Lange, university professor for the didactics of civic education at the University of Vienna, Alexander Kleinig, responsible for the design of the "Parlamentarium" at the European Parliament in Brussels, and Helmut Wohnout, Director-General of the Austrian State Archives and lecturer in Austrian history.