

# **Multicultural heritage and politics of inclusion in Vienna**

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# „Melting pot“ Vienna

- 2,000 years of migration (from Roman Vindobona till today's Vienna).
- The first Austrian Duchess (1156-1177), Theodora, was Byzantine!
- Baroque Vienna: Italian cultural influence.
- Czechs from Bohemia and Moravia contributed to the 19<sup>th</sup> century „boom“.
- Around 1910: the capital (2 million inhabitants) of an empire with over 50 million inhabitants attracted migrants from all parts (spread over 13 countries today).



## Jewish influence

**First Jewish community in the middle ages, second in the 17th century (persecutions in 1420/21 and in 1670).**

**Rapid growth in the 19th and early 20th century (c. 200,000 before 1938), key contributions to culture and science.**

**Nazi dictatorship and Shoa: 65,000 Jews killed, most of the others exiled. Several Viennese actively took part in mass murders.**

**Since about 40 years growth of a new Jewish community in Vienna (c. 8,000 members, mainly from Eastern Europe).**



## Vienna after 1945

**Loss of multiculturalism after WW II.**

**Waves of refugees from Communist Countries in 1956 (Hungary), 1968 (Czechoslovakia) and 1981 (Poland).**

**Since early 1960ies labour migration of so-called „Gastarbeiter“, mainly from Yugoslavia and Turkey.**

**1989 and thereafter:**

**Fall of the „iron curtain“, 1995 EU accession – Vienna readopts its**

**„melting pot“ role in the heart of Europe. 2011: 1.7 million inhabitants, growth of population c. 20,000, mainly caused by migration.**





## Greens and the past

**1986: Founding of Die Grünen Vienna.**  
**Important task: coming to terms with the past and „dark spots“ in it, exposing the role of Austrians during Nazi dictatorship and drawing conclusions for today.**  
**1986-88 „Waldheim affair“ – challenge of the „first victim“ theory (on 1938).**  
**Struggle of Greens against extreme right-wing and xenophobic politics of FPÖ (Freedom Party of Austria).**  
**Commemorations, protest actions, naming and re-naming of streets, initiatives for reconstruction of Jewish cemeteries, rehabilitation of deserters from the German „Wehrmacht“ (monument!), etc.**



# Integration inside the Green Party

**Party Constitution:** Ethnic minorities have the status of a „tenth region“ (Austria has 9 regions).

Since 1986 election of Slovenes from Carinthia and Croats from Burgenland to Parliament on the list of Greens.

**Vienna:** activities of the party section GMW („Green Migrants of Vienna“).

2008: Alev Korun, councillor in Vienna, becomes first MP of Turkish origin.

November 2010: Maria Vassilakou, born in Greece, becomes Vienna's first Green Deputy Mayoress (in charge of urban planning, traffic, climate protection, energy planning and public participation) in a „Red-Green“ coalition.



## The „Red-Green“ City Government and politics of inclusion

- Services for people migrating to Vienna („Welcome packages“).
- Effective support measures for learning German (and also the own mother tongue!), language training in kindergartens but also for old people.
- Steps towards a common school for all kids aged from 6 to 14.
- Employing more migrants in the public sector (city administration, police etc.).
- Right to vote for EU citizens living in Vienna not only for the local (urban district) councils, but also for the city council. Right to vote for Viennese residents from countries outside EU after living in Vienna for a certain period.



## The „Viennese Charter for living together“

Main political project of the „Red-Green“ coalition in 2012.

All people living in Vienna are invited to contribute with proposals, ideas and (moderated) discussion rounds to issues of living together – young and old, migrants and "indigenous Viennese", men and women, people with and without disabilities, car-drivers and pedestrians, etc.

All inputs are being collected and will be used to draft a "Viennese Charter" that shall be signed symbolically by those involved in November 2012.

This project is aimed at mobilizing people and offering them dialogue instead of leaving them aside to be manipulated by right-wing populists.



[www.charta.wien.gv.at](http://www.charta.wien.gv.at)



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**Thank you**  
**for your attention!**

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