

Square with a Mission



SANIERUNG PARLAMENT



Being visible. Making visible. Staying visible.

For the duration of the refurbishment of the historical building, Parliament is moving to a public space. For this purpose, two temporary buildings were erected which not only contain offices, but are also intended to be used for a dialogue with the general public. The goal is to ensure that the public's perception of Parliament is retained during the years in which the building is being renovated.

There is a good reason for calling this area Platz.Mit.Bestimmung (Square with a Mission). On the one hand this is a pointer towards the long and eventful history of Heldenplatz; on the other hand, the idea is to use Parliament's temporary presence in this important location to draw attention to democracy and parliamentarianism. Both of these elements are focused on at the Platz.Mit.Bestimmung information point, which is located in the building called "Burg" Pavilion. The building opposite, called "Ring" Pavilion, accommodates the Democracy Workshop, where children can learn about the principles and mechanisms of a democratically organised society.

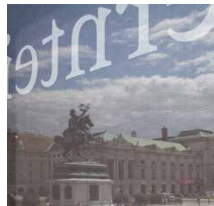


Heldenplatz – a significant place in terms of history and democracy. This is where attention will be drawn to parliamentarianism and participation in the coming years.

A strong statement for democracy and the rule of law

The wraps on the façades of both office buildings at Heldenplatz are being used as an information surface as well as to provide shade and privacy. Extracts presented there from the constitution and various laws are intended to raise public awareness of fundamental rights and freedoms, and of the value of parliamentary democracy. The texts have been taken from a range of sources:

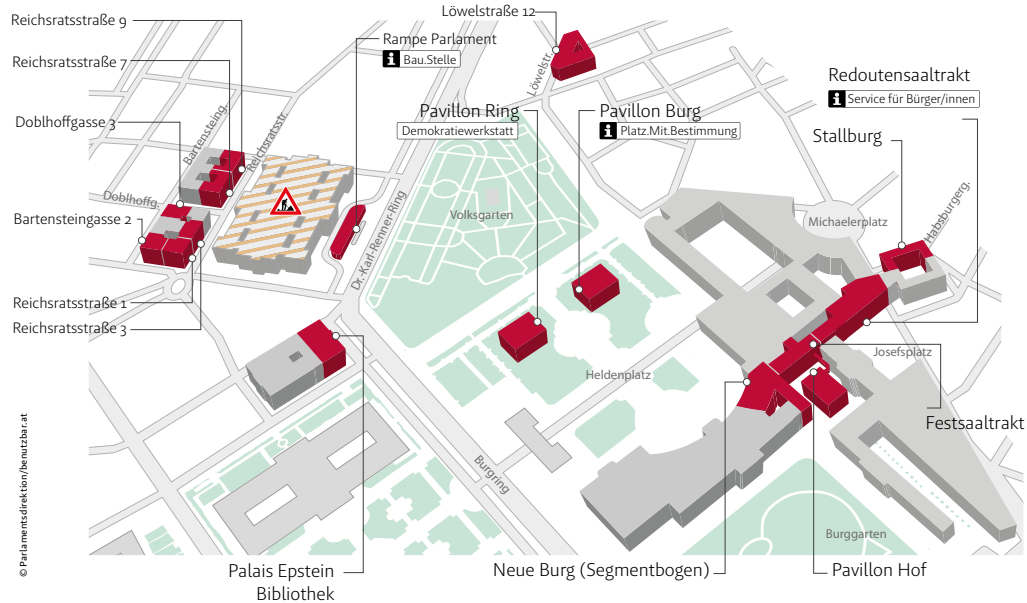
- ▶ The Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations
- ▶ The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- ▶ The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union
- ▶ The Austrian Federal Constitution and various constitutional laws
- ▶ Austrian Basic Law on the general rights of citizens.



Quotes from the constitution and various laws provide a reflection of the internal life of Parliament for the outside world, and create an awareness of fundamental rights.

The simple elegance of the concept created by the graphic designers Sägenvier in Dornbirn is impressive, and has a strong focus on words as a key element of legislation. Significant legal concepts in the official languages of the EU are interspersed between the quotes and function as graphic design elements.

DemocracyQuarter



During the refurbishment of the Parliament building, the workings of Parliament are distributed among several locations which, taken as a whole, form the DemocracyQuarter. In the coming years, the National Council and the Federal Council (the two chambers of Parliament) will sit in the Große Redoutensaal (the Grand Ballroom) of the Hofburg Palace, which has been converted for this purpose. The three temporary office buildings named Hof, Burg and Ring have been erected in Heldenplatz and in the Bibliothekshof. In addition there are the auxiliary buildings already used until now – which are partly owned by Parliament and partly leased – as well as Epstein Palace.

During the process of looking for suitable alternative accommodation, a comprehensive market analysis was carried out. The variation chosen was by far the most appropriate and economical one. In spite of the larger distances compared to those which had to be covered previously, Parliament can function normally.

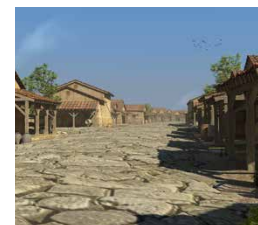
A square tells its eventful history

The excavation work was accompanied by archaeologists and unearthed valuable findings.

Heldenplatz is located on historical ground. Even at the time of the Romans and in the Middle Ages, this area just outside the city (as it was then) was used for different purposes. Heldenplatz (Heroes Square) in its current form was created in the 19th century on the site of the former fortifications of the city in front of the Hofburg. The square received its name after the erection of the two equestrian statues in the year 1865 (Archduke Karl and Prince Eugen).

During the construction of the temporary office buildings, care was taken to avoid damaging the historical remains below the square. To this end, a study was commissioned which describes possible archaeological findings on the basis of historical plans and documents. In addition, geophysical measurements were made in order to localise subterranean structures (remains of historical roads, settlements and fortifications).

Using the now clearly localised structural elements, old maps and pictures of the city can be checked and re-evaluated. After their examination, a protective layer was placed over the building remains.



Everyday life in Roman times



A bird's eye view by Daniel Suttinger of the mine shafts created during the Ottoman siege.



Ecological – sustainable – efficient

Three temporary office buildings have been erected in Heldenplatz and in the Bibliothekshof: they each have a surface area of 30 x 40 metres, three or four storeys, and have a total usable area of 11,450 square metres.

They are purpose-built, functional structures which were not made to last forever. They were erected using a module system and are largely made of wood. The innovative technology used was developed by Lukas Lang Building Technologies GmbH: the prefabricated standardised building elements were assembled on site.

This technology is entirely orientated towards sustainability. The amount of spruce wood required for the three buildings re-grows in Austria in about 30 minutes. And: the buildings will be dismantled after three years and reused in a new configuration elsewhere. For example, they could be used to create 80 detached homes or nine nursery schools.

Alternative accommodation from a construction set: the temporary office buildings are largely made of wood and were built using a modular system.

Additional information
is available at:
sanierung.parlament.at



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