



Parliament
Austria

Parliamentary Administration

Demokratiewebstatt

The website of the Austrian Parliament for Kids
and Youngsters

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Goals of the Demokratiewebstatt

The Demokratiewebstatt is the website of the Austrian Parliament for kids and youngsters aged 8 to 14. One of the main goals is to make young people of this age group familiar with democracy and parliamentary processes. To this end political processes are presented in a way that is appropriate for the age group. Additionally, the website offers the target groups ways to get actively involved, thereby making them aware that their opinions and ideas are taken seriously and sought after.

The Demokratiewebstatt dates back to 2007 and is constantly being upgraded with new interactive, playful and graphic elements thus creating a platform for kids and youngsters full of information. Apart from the communication elements, the website also fosters and supports action and interaction at a political level. The latest news of the Democracy Workshops are announced on the website, which also includes newspapers, films, audio recordings as well as photos of the workshops.

One of the aims of the Demokratiewebstatt is to instil a positive basic attitude towards politics and parliament in the kids and youngsters and also make their opinions and interests visible, and, above all, to show them that it can be fun to take part in decision-making processes. These are the added benefits apart from the education mandate to offer basic knowledge on democracy.

Recommendations on how to effectively incorporate the Demokratiewebstatt in lessons

Versatility of use and application were the predominant ideas behind the development process of the Demokratiewebstatt platform. In terms of subjects, the site is particularly suitable for German, history, civic education, geography and arts classes. The interdisciplinary approach provides an excellent opportunity to incorporate the Demokratiewebstatt into projects and school project weeks. During these projects, pupils look at the Austrian political system, the democratic processes in general as well as ways of getting actively involved in the decision-making process.



Structure of the Demokratiewebstatt

Once you are on the site of the Demokratiewebstatt, the navigation bar at the top shows you the various parts of the website: **Topic** (Thema) lists all issues addressed in the Demokratiewebstatt. The topics deal with exciting issues relating to democracy. Each topic is presented in a way that fits the target group and also includes interviews with experts relating to the topic as well as interactive elements for experimentation. These elements are designed to help the users acquire in-depth knowledge and an e-book is also available. **Parliament** (Parlament) opens to a virtual visit of the building and presents facts about the various members of Parliament. It also serves as a platform for parliamentary staff who do not normally take centre stage, but are given a chance to introduce their work here. It also gives information and dates regarding chats between school classes and politicians. **Knowledge** (Wissen) provides information and explains content relating to democratic and parliamentary procedures in a manner suitable to the age group as well as an encyclopaedia with a glossary. **Play along** (Spiel mit!) focuses on playful learning and provides a hands-on opportunity for experimentation using films, picture colouring, games, and quizzes. All questions, requests and ideas from the kids are welcome.





5.1 Democracy Education

Topics

The main topics of the Demokratiewebstatt deal with interesting issues relating to democracy. Each topic is presented in a manner that fits the target group and interviews with experts relating to the topic are also presented as well as interactive elements for experimentation to promote in-depth acquisition of knowledge. Additionally, teaching materials and an e-book are also made available.

Demokratiewebstatt

Thema Parlament Wissen Spiel mit!

Demokratie weltweit

Wo auf der Welt gibt es Demokratie und warum sind nicht alle Länder demokratisch?

Demokratie & Politik für Kinder > Thema > Politik und Rechte > Thema: Demokratie weltweit

Informiere dich zum Thema „Demokratie weltweit“:

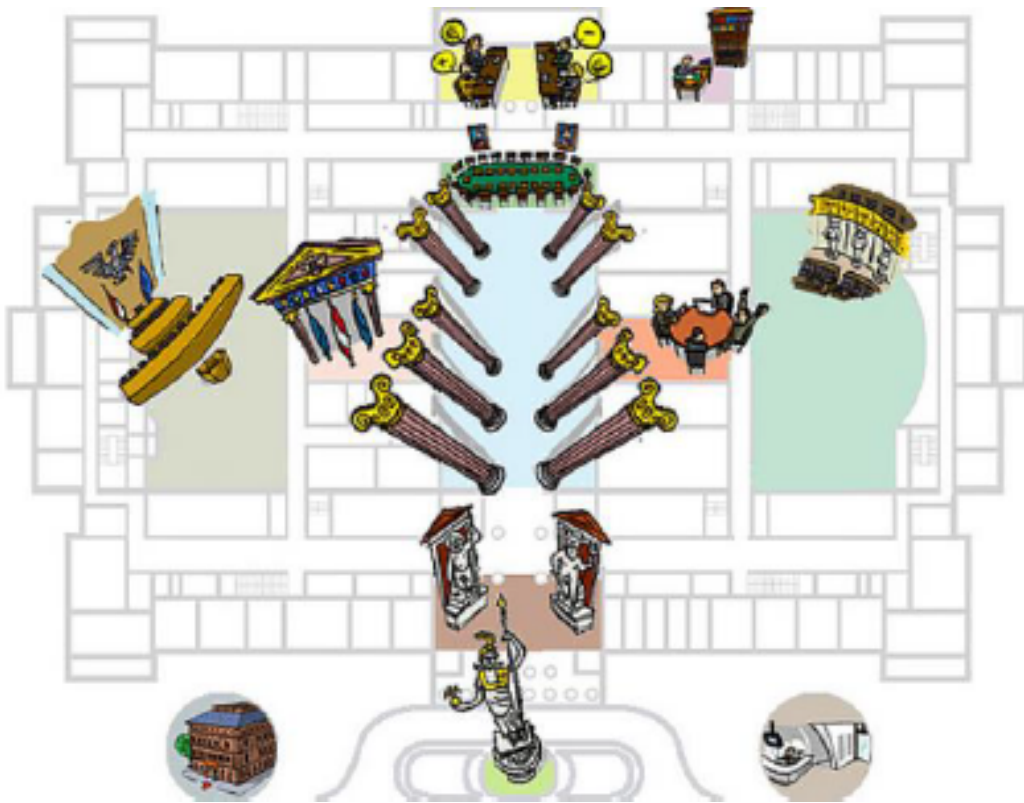
Grundsätze der <i>Demokratie</i> weiterlesen	Es gibt nicht überall <i>Demokratie</i> weiterlesen	Wie kann man <i>Demokratie</i> weltweit fördern? weiterlesen	Gibt es weltweite <i>Gesetze</i>? weiterlesen
Interviews weltweit weiterlesen	Chat mit <i>PolitikerInnen</i> weiterlesen		



5.1 Democracy Education

Parliament

The virtual tour is an exciting opportunity for pupils to look inside the buildings of the Houses of Parliament, their history and their use. It is an interactive tour that permits users to move from one room to the next or to take a look at different rooms selected from an illustrated map. It creates interest, inspires curiosity and has proven an exciting way of learning. Each room is described in language suitable for the age group. This section pools a lot of knowledge: the architecture of the building, the philosophical and artistic background, historic events and developments as well as the present and former uses of the rooms.



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Who works where (Wer arbeitet wo) shows the complexity of procedures in Parliament and how much work takes place behind the scenes to make parliamentarianism work in Austria. Kids and youngsters learn that politicians not only work there, but that there is a wide variety of different types of jobs for other people as well.



5.1 Democracy Education

Who is who (Wer ist wer) in Parliament is where users can find out more about the members of parliament and communicate with them on an equal footing. This reduces barriers. It also shows users they are people from all walks of life and their careers do not depend on university degrees or a long list of qualifications. The seating on the map corresponds with the seats in the Lower and the Upper Houses.



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Chats with Members of Parliament (Chats mit Abgeordneten): Politicians from the various political parties and pupils from different provinces meet in the chat room of the Demokratiewebstatt at regular intervals. Each chat is dedicated to a certain topic – the current topic of the Demokratiewebstatt – on which politicians and pupils express their opinions. All dates and topics as well as photos and chat records of previous chats are available in this section.



Knowledge

The extremely concise information section of the DemokratieWEBstatt provides basic knowledge on democracy, elections and laws in a simple and well-structured manner. This section has answers to questions like “What is a minister?” “Who is allowed to vote?” or “How are laws made in Austria?” A number of concepts used in politics and parliament are explained in the encyclopaedia on democracy. The linked references, which are sorted by topic, take the pupils to their areas of interests and to exercises.

Play Along!

The law generator in the menu item **Create your own law** (Mach dir dein eigenes Gesetz) is an ideal tool for the presentation of the rather complex procedure of law-making. It is a step-by-step process explaining in a simplified way all of the details that need to be written down in an act of law and the aspects that need to be observed when drafting a bill. As pupils are actively engaged in the creation process, the individual steps are remembered better and become comprehensible. (It is recommended to combine it with the knowledge part “All about laws”.)

The games are very useful at the end of a lesson, the brain game leaves a good impression of the parliament building. Pupils may choose pictures to colour, which can be printed out and filled in. These have been especially designed for younger visitors of the Demokratiewebstatt. A collection of animated films on topics of the Demokratiewebstatt can be found in the category of films.



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Additional features

Democracy Workshop

The menu item Demokratiewerkstatt at the top right of the page offers information on the Democracy Workshop, the various workshop modules, registration as well as the newspapers, films and podcasts that the children and young adults create in the Democracy Workshop.

Virtual Democracy Workshop

The virtual Democracy Workshop (Demokratiewerkstatt virtuell) has been designed as a new kind of virtual space on the Austrian Parliament's Web Portal for children, young adults and anyone interested in discovering more about the parliament, democracy and participation. In the virtual Democracy Workshop, terms and basic concepts of political learning are illustrated with the help of videos, texts, cartoons and audio recordings from the Democracy Workshop.



Arrived – New in Austria

In the year 2015, a very large number of refugees and asylum-seekers arrived in Austria. In this situation, learning materials were developed for refugees and asylum-seekers to provide support to the people newly arrived. The contents are based on the learning materials provided by the Federal Ministry of the Interior for persons preparing for Austrian citizenship. The topics have been expanded to include basic historical knowledge about the state of Austria, starting with the Habsburgs and continuing through the two world wars and the founding of the Second Republic up to the modern Republic of Austria and its accession to the European Union. All texts are written in very simple language specifically for the target group and can also be used in the classroom.

Kids Corner

The Kids Corner includes a collection of links to fun games, a collection of videos of comics with the mascots of the Democracy Workshop and colouring pictures.

Opinion Polls

This interactive part of the website invites viewers to voice their opinions by answering questions such as “What does politics mean to you?” or “How do you engage politically?”.

Adults

The category Adults (Erwachsene) supplies materials for kids and youngsters aged 8 to 14 and includes worksheets, PowerPoint presentations and e-books on a range of topics.

Newsletter

If you are interested in subscribing to our newsletter (available only in German), enter your e-mail address on the page below under “Themenslider”.



5.1 Democracy Education

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