



A large, semi-transparent yellow graphic of the Earth's outline is positioned in the upper left corner, showing the outlines of the continents against a white background.

THE FOURTH VIAC CAN CONGRESS

Cultivating Ideas Into Impact

13 February 2026
Vienna



A large, semi-transparent yellow graphic of the Earth's outline is positioned in the lower right corner, showing the outlines of the continents against a white background.

Brochure



Dear VIAC friends,

Welcome to the Fourth VIAC CAN Congress – “Cultivating Ideas Into Impact”!

The VIAC CAN initiative continues to grow in pursuit of its mission to strengthen VIAC's position as the premier arbitral institution in the CEE / SEE region. Over the past year, our network has expanded considerably, driven above all by the commitment and expertise of our Ambassadors. Alongside their efforts, the Trade Commissioners of ADVANTAGE AUSTRIA have contributed valuable insights into commercial developments in individual markets. Together, these complementary efforts allow us to refine our services and continuously strengthen our tailor-made solutions in commercial and investment arbitration as well as mediation.

As we gather today, we also look back on an extraordinary milestone. 2025 was a defining year for VIAC, marking our 50th anniversary, five decades of commitment to excellence in international dispute resolution. The celebrations began with the Third VIAC CAN Congress in February 2025, which brought together practitioners from across the region for a rich programme centred on leadership, the rule of law, and emerging challenges at the intersection of arbitration, criminal proceedings, and social media. The Gala Dinner at the Austrian National Library and our gathering at the Ball of Legal Professionals set a memorable tone for this remarkable Golden Jubilee year.

In the spirit of building on this strong foundation, VIAC CAN expanded into several new markets in 2025 and early 2026, supported by our newly appointed Ambassadors from Armenia, Latvia, the Netherlands, Ireland, England, and Scotland, who bring fresh momentum to the initiative. At the same time, a new VIAC Board for 2026–2028 has been appointed, ushering in a renewed vision for the institution. We are pleased that the Board now includes distinguished members from Serbia, Slovenia and Romania. Their collective expertise strengthens VIAC's CEE/SEE focus and deepens our engagement with stakeholders across the region.

This year's programme reflects this forward-looking spirit, offering a keynote, interactive workshops, and panel discussions that transform ideas into meaningful impact. The Congress is complemented by our festive Gala Dinner at the Austrian National Library and a celebration at the Ball of Legal Professionals at the Hofburg Palace.

We look forward to insightful exchanges, new connections, and inspiring conversations.

Sincerely yours,



NIAMH LEINWATHER
VIAC Secretary General
niamh.leinwather@viac.eu



EMA POTOČNIK
VIAC CAN Director
ema.potocnik@viac.eu



VLADYSLAVA DONCHYK
VIAC CAN Coordinator
vladyslava.donchyk@viac.eu

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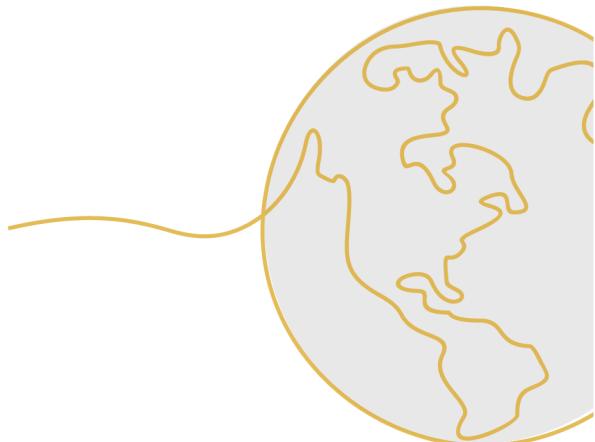
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FOURTH EDITION
WHAT TO EXPECT?

Full programme



PROGRAMME AT A GLANCE

12 - 14 February 2026

Our yearly Congress plays a vital role in advancing the objectives of the VIAC Community Ambassador Network. By gathering professionals from the network including our impressive VIAC Ambassadors, the Congress showcases recent developments in the market, considers how these markets will develop in the future and serves as a platform for sharing ideas and networking.

THURSDAY

12

Exclusive Programme for VIAC Ambassadors
CLOSED EVENT

FRIDAY

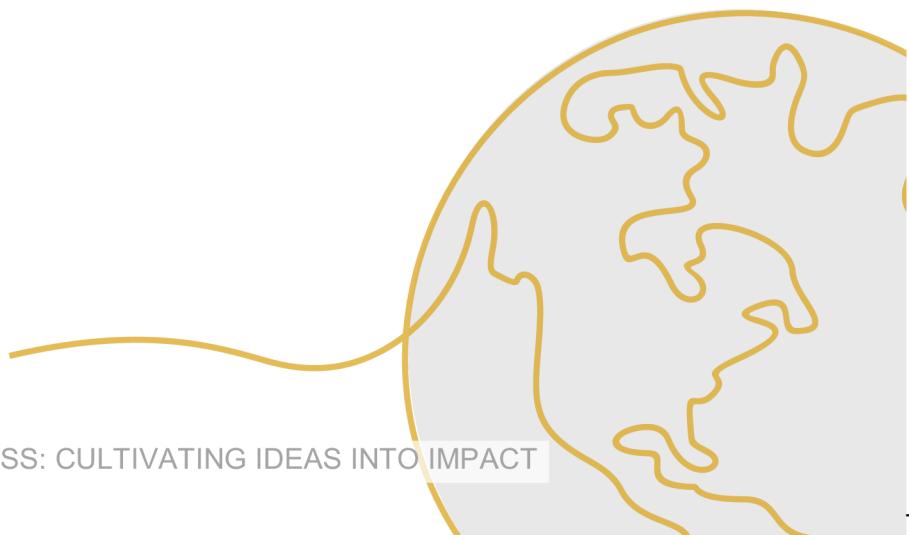
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The Fourth VIAC CAN Congress
WELCOMING ALL PARTICIPANTS
Gala Dinner at the Austrian National Library
WELCOMING ALL PARTICIPANTS SOLD OUT!

SATURDAY

14

Juristenball / Ball of Legal Professionals
WELCOMING ALL PARTICIPANTS
SOLD OUT!



DETAILED PROGRAMME

Thursday, 12 February 2026



14:30 - 15:00 **Welcome and coffee**
VIAC, Wiedner Hauptstrasse 63, 1040 Vienna

15:00 - 15:05 **Opening remarks**
Niamh Leinwather, VIAC Secretary General, Vienna

15:05 - 15:30 **Presentation by TrialView**
Stephen Dowling, Founder & CEO at TrialView, Dublin

15:30 - 17:00 **Exclusive Workshop for VIAC Ambassadors:
*Dealing with Sanctions as an Arbitrator***
Saal 4, VIAC, Wiedner Hauptstrasse 63, 1040 Vienna

Moderators:

Ana Stanič,
VIAC Board Member and Founder of E&A Law, London

Vladimir Pavić,
VIAC Board Member,
Professor, University of Belgrade Faculty of Law, Belgrade

19:30 - 22:00 **Exclusive Dinner for Ambassadors, sponsored by Baker McKenzie**
Maria und Josef, Rahlgasse 1, 1060 Vienna



Source: <https://www.mariaundjosefwien.at>



Source: <https://www.mariaundjosefwien.at>

DETAILED PROGRAMME

Thursday, 12 February 2026

Ana Stanič, founder of E&A Law, is an English Solicitor Advocate and Irish Solicitor with over 25 years' experience advising states, companies, and international institutions on energy, environmental, EU, and international law, with a focus on dispute resolution. She has acted as arbitrator in VIAC, LCIA, ICDR, ICC, and SCC cases and regularly represents states and companies in commercial and investment treaty arbitrations, particularly in energy, infrastructure, and shareholder disputes. Ana advises on inter-State disputes before the PCA and CJEU and has negotiated 10 BITs and FTAs as a member of the Slovenian government. She is ranked among the UK's top five Energy lawyers by Chambers & Partners and recognised by Legal 500 for Public International Law. A PCA member since 2019, Ana teaches in China and Germany. She holds degrees from UNSW and Cambridge and speaks multiple languages. Ana joined the VIAC Board in 2026 and co-heads its Energy Task Force.

MODERATOR



Ana Stanič
VIAC Board Member,
Founder of E&A Law
London

MODERATOR



Vladimir Pavić
VIAC Board Member,
Professor,
University of Belgrade Faculty of Law
Belgrade

Vladimir Pavić is a Professor at the Faculty of Law, University of Belgrade, where he teaches Private International Law, Arbitration, Competition Law, and Investment Protection. He serves as a VIAC Board Member since 2026, President of the Belgrade Arbitration Center since 2024, and is a member of the ICCA Governing Board. Formerly Vice-President of the Permanent Court of Arbitration at the Serbian Chamber of Commerce, and Vice-President of the Belgrade Arbitration Center. He has acted as arbitrator, counsel, and expert witness in numerous ad hoc and institutional arbitrations, both commercial and investment. Listed in Who's Who Legal: Arbitration since 2013, he has advised on cross-border litigation in civil and common law jurisdictions and taught as a visiting professor internationally. Vladimir holds an LL.B. from Belgrade and LL.M. and S.J.D. from Central European University, with research experience at Oxford and the T.M.C. Asser Institute.

DETAILED PROGRAMME

Friday, 13 February 2026



10:00 - 10:30 Welcome coffee and registration

10:30 - 10:40 Welcome remarks

Franz Schwarz, VIAC President, Partner at WilmerHale, London

10:40 - 10:50 Insights from Advantage Austria

Michael Otter, VIAC Domestic Advisory Board Member, Director General at ADVANTAGE AUSTRIA, Vienna

10:50 - 11:00 Opening remarks

Georg Kodek, VIAC Board Member, President of the Supreme Court of Austria, Vienna

11:00 - 12:00 Keynote: The Arbitrator in The Age of AI

John Fellas, VIAC International Advisory Board Member, Arbitrator, New York

12:00 - 13:00 Lunch Break

13:00 - 14:15 Panel I

**Cross-Border Enforcement Trends in CEE:
What Practitioners Need to Know**

Moderator:

Małgorzata Surdek-Janicka, Arbitrator, Warsaw

Speakers:

Ramūnas Audzevičius, Partner and Head of Dispute Resolution, Motieka, Vilnius

Ileana Smeureanu, Legal Director at Pinsent Masons, Paris

Utku Coşar, Arbitrator, Arbitration Chambers, New York and Istanbul

14:15 – 14:45 TrialBrew - Coffee Break sponsored by TrialView

DETAILED PROGRAMME

Friday, 13 February 2026

14:45 - 16:00 Panel II

CANversations: VIAC's 20x20 Vision!

Panel brings together VIAC Ambassadors for a fast-paced exchange on the key issues shaping the future of arbitration. From AI and third-party funding to sanctions and the evolution of the CEE region, the panel will explore the trends redefining practice across jurisdictions.

Moderator:

Arush Khanna, VIAC Ambassador for India, Partner, Numen Law, New Delhi

Speakers:

Daisy Chen, VIAC Ambassador for China, Associate, Global Law Office, Shanghai

Fëllëenza Limani, VIAC Ambassador for Kosovo, Senior Associate, Squire Patton Boggs, Prague

Emilie Pardoen, VIAC Ambassador for the Netherlands, Advocaat, Avizor, Amsterdam

Eveli Lume, VIAC Ambassador for Estonia, Partner, Squire Patton Boggs, Berlin

Rumen Cholakov, VIAC Ambassador for England, Barrister, 3 Verulam Buildings, London

16:00 - 16:15 Closing remarks

Niamh Leinwather, VIAC Secretary General, Vienna

19:30 - 22:00 Gala Dinner at the Austrian National Library

The Augustinian Reading Room, Josefsplatz 1, 1010 Vienna

Highlight: The Augustinian Reading Room at the Austrian National Library

The Augustinian Reading Room, the former library hall of the Augustinian monastery, offers a magnificent setting for an unforgettable evening. The baroque ambience of the monastic reading room features antique reading tables where guests will be served an exclusive dinner. The entire room is decorated with frescoes by Johann Bergl.

The Augustinian reading room is one of the most exclusive rooms in Vienna.



DETAILED PROGRAMME

Saturday, 14 February 2026

18:00 - 21:15 Pre-Ball Gathering sponsored by KNOETZL

As per kind invitation of VIAC's Vice-President, Patrizia Netal
KNOETZL, Herrengasse 1, 1010 Vienna

21:30 - 05:00 Juristenball / Ball of Legal Professionals
Hofburg Palace, 1010 Vienna





VIAC CAN CONGRESS **SIDE EVENTS**

Elevate your experience





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THE LUGOVY LAW SPREADS GLOBAL: JURISDICTIONAL WARFARE AND CROSS-BORDER JUDICIAL COUNTERMEASURES

On the occasion of the 4th VIAC CAN Congress

VALIKHAN SHAIKENOV
Partner,
ADL Disputes
VIAC Ambassador
for Kazakhstan
Berlin/Almaty

DR. BARBARA MAUCHER
Partner,
Noerr
Frankfurt

MODERATOR
DR. NIKOLAUS PITKOWITZ
Partner,
Pitkowitz & Partners;
VIAC Honorary President
Vienna

DR. EVELI LUME
Partner,
Squire Patton Boggs
VIAC Ambassador
for Estonia
Berlin/Tallinn

DR. AXEL BOËS
Partner,
KDB.legal Koch Boës
Hamburg

February 12
Thursday, 12:00 pm

Schwarzenbergplatz 3
1010 Vienna

Organisers: VIAC, ADL Disputes, and KDB.legal Koch Boës, hosted by Pitkowitz & Partners.

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ARBITRALWOMEN & ARBCEE BREAKFAST DISCUSSION

Beyond the Case File: How Arbitration Practitioners Attract and Retain Clients

Friday, 13 February 2026, 9:00 - 10:00 CET

VIAC, Wiedner Hauptstraße 63, 1040 Vienna

Opening remarks:



Niamh Leinwather
VIAC Secretary General,
Vienna

Speakers:



Minu Anamaria Gvardjančić
Partner at Ketler & Partners,
member of Karanovic,
Ljubljana



Zrinka Mustafa Prelić
Law office
Zrinka Mustafa Prelić,
Zagreb

Moderator:



Veronika Korom
Professor at ESSEC
Business School, Paris
Affiliated Partner at
PARAGON, Vienna



Sarolta Édua Szabó
Senior Associate at
Oppenheim Law Firm,
Budapest



Lucia Raimanová
Partner at
A&O Shearman,
Bratislava

Join us for a pre-Congress breakfast and an insightful discussion!



INTRODUCTION **SPEAKERS**

Recognised experts



WELCOME REMARKS



Franz Schwarz
VIAC President,
Partner at WilmerHale
London

Franz Schwarz provides strategic counsel and powerful advocacy in bet-the-company international arbitration matters. He is a globally recognized leader in the field and has been involved in more than 300 international arbitration proceedings as party representative and arbitrator, before all major arbitral institutions and in arbitration venues around the world. Franz is Global Vice-Chair of the International Arbitration practice group at WilmerHale and has particular experience with disputes regarding joint ventures and M&A; financial services, project finance and fintech; energy and infrastructure; life sciences; commercial transactions; and corporate law issues; as well as investment protection. Franz is qualified in Austria and in England and Wales. He regularly writes on pertinent issues of arbitration law and has taught at leading universities around the world, including at Harvard, LSE, Johns Hopkins (Bologna), Zurich, and Vienna.

INSIGHTS FROM ADVANTAGE AUSTRIA

Since September 2017 **Michael Otter** is Director General of ADVANTAGE AUSTRIA, Austria's official trade promotion organisation at the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber. ADVANTAGE AUSTRIA, with around 100 offices in 70 countries, provides a broad range of intelligence and business development services for both Austrian companies and their international business partners. Prior to his appointment in 2017, Michael Otter was Austrian Trade Commissioner to Japan and the Republic of Korea and Deputy Trade Commissioner in the USA, Japan and UAE. From September 2016 to September 2017 Mr. Otter served as Deputy Director General and Chief Strategy Officer of ADVANTAGE AUSTRIA. He is a graduate of the Vienna University of Economics and Business.



Michael Otter
VIAC Domestic Advisory Board Member,
Director General of
ADVANTAGE AUSTRIA
Vienna

OPENING REMARKS

Georg E. Kodek is President of the Austrian Supreme Court. In addition, he is professor of civil and commercial law at WU, the Vienna University of Business and Economics. He studied law at the University of Vienna and at Northwestern University School of Law. Before his appointment to the Supreme Court, he served at the Vienna District Court, the Regional Court of Eisenstadt and the Vienna Court of Appeals. In addition, Georg Kodek has lectured extensively both in Austria and abroad. In 2017 he was visiting researcher at QUT in Brisbane; in 2018 he was visiting professor in Luxemburg. He also served as court-appointed or retained expert on foreign law in foreign lawsuits and arbitration proceedings, appearing before courts in Germany, Liechtenstein, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, the United States and the British Virgin Islands.



Georg E. Kodek
VIAC Board Member,
President of the Austrian
Supreme Court
Vienna

KEYNOTE: THE ARBITRATOR IN THE AGE OF AI



John Fellas
VIAC International
Advisory Board Member,
International Arbitrator
New York

John Fellas is a highly respected international arbitrator with over 30 years of experience in global dispute resolution. Formerly a partner and co-chair of the International Arbitration group at Hughes Hubbard & Reed LLP in New York, he has acted as counsel and arbitrator in proceedings worldwide under all major institutional rules. He is consistently recognised in leading legal directories, including Chambers USA, Who's Who Legal—where he is named a "Global Elite Thought Leader"—and Best Lawyers, which has twice honoured him as the Best Lawyer in New York for International Arbitration. He holds degrees from Durham University and Harvard Law School, is admitted in New York and England & Wales, and teaches international arbitration at NYU School of Law and Durham Law School. John is also a member of the VIAC International Advisory Board.

PANEL I

CROSS-BORDER ENFORCEMENT TRENDS IN CEE: WHAT PRACTITIONERS NEED TO KNOW



Moderator
Małgorzata Surdek-Janicka
International Arbitrator at
SURDEK Arbitration
Warsaw

Małgorzata Surdek-Janicka is an international arbitrator at SURDEK Arbitration and Vice-President of the ICC Court. She is a member of the ICC Commission on Arbitration and ADR and a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators. Before establishing her arbitrator's practice in 2022, she spent 25 years at an international law firm, where she rose to the highest levels of the organisation, including serving on CMS's Global Board in London and its Global International Arbitration Group. Małgorzata has acted as arbitrator in infrastructure and construction, post-M&A, and commercial disputes across sectors including energy, mining, transportation, banking, insurance and reinsurance, technology, retail and manufacturing. Her experience spans arbitrations under various arbitration rules.

Ramūnas Audzevičius has been the partner and co-head of dispute resolution practice at Motieka & Audzevičius since 2003. His practice involves representing clients before the CJEU, ECHR, top Lithuanian courts, and tribunals constituted under almost all major arbitration rules. In 2022 Ramūnas was appointed a member of the Court of the London Court of International Arbitration. He has also been elected to the Executive Committee of the Swedish Arbitration Association. Since 2023 Ramunas has been a Board member of the Arbitration Association of Central and Eastern Europe. Since January 2024, he has served as a Board member of the SCC Institute.



Speaker
Ramūnas Audzevičius
Partner at Motieka & Audzevičius
Vilnius

Ileana Smeureanu is an international arbitration specialist known for her Eastern European sharpness and strategic clarity in high-stakes commercial and investor-State disputes. She represents clients across Europe, Africa, and the Middle East, currently acting for a Luxembourg investor in ICSID proceedings under the Energy Charter Treaty and sitting as arbitrator in energy cases. Her experience includes major successes for a North African state in two PCA matters and work for a leading telecoms operator across multiple complex arbitrations. Ileana is a member of ArbCEE, has published extensively on arbitration in the region, and is the author of *Confidentiality in International Commercial Arbitration*. She is admitted in New York, Bucharest, and as a European lawyer with the Paris Bar.



Speaker
Ileana Smeureanu
Legal Director
at Pinsent Masons
Paris



Speaker
Utku Coşar
Independent Arbitrator,
Arbitration Chambers
New York and Istanbul

Utku Coşar is an independent arbitrator, member of Arbitration Chambers based in New York and Istanbul. She is a Vice President of the LCIA Court, a member of the Arbitration Courts of the Swiss Arbitration Centre and Abu Dhabi International Arbitration Centre. She is a Co-Chair of the Task Force on the revision of the IBA Guidelines on Party Representation, Deputy Editor of the Dispute Resolution International (IBA) and a member of the editorial board of the Arbitration International (LCIA).

PANEL II CAN-VERSATIONS: VIAC'S 20x20 VISION!



Moderator
Arush Khanna
VIAC Ambassador for India,
Partner at Numen Law Offices
New Delhi

Arush Khanna (FCIArb) is the co-founder and Partner at Numen Law Offices. A multi-disciplinary law firm based out of India. He specialises in commercial disputes with a key focus on arbitration, insolvency, real estate, and infrastructure. He also acts as arbitrator and is empanelled with several institutions across the world. Deeply engaged in legal academia, Arush has over 25 publications in various national and international journals in the field of international arbitration. He is an officer of the Young Lawyers Committee of the International Bar Association, the Vice-Chair of YMG of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (India) and the Joint General Secretary of the Society of Indian Law Firms.

Daisy Chen is an associate at Global Law Office, one of the top law firms in China, specialising in dispute resolution and international arbitration. With extensive experience in handling cross-border disputes, Daisy has successfully represented both domestic and international clients, including notable arbitration cases before various arbitration institutions. Daisy holds a degree from a top law school in China and the U.S.A. and possesses a deep understanding of both civil and common law systems, which equips her to effectively navigate complex legal matters.



Speaker
Daisy Chen
VIAC Ambassador for China,
Associate at Global Law Office
Shanghai

Fëllënza Limani is a senior associate in the International Dispute Resolution Practice Group at Squire Patton Boggs. She serves as counsel in both international commercial arbitrations and international investment treaty arbitrations. She represents international commercial enterprises, state-owned entities and foreign governments in their disputes in various industry areas, including energy, construction, real estate, telecommunications, etc. As well as advising clients on arbitration disputes, Fëllënza is part of the defense team representing the former President of Kosovo, Mr. Hashim Thaçi, before the Kosovo Specialist Chambers in The Hague (Netherlands). Fëllënza is a fully qualified attorney from Kosovo and is registered as a foreign lawyer in the Czech Republic.



Speaker

Fëllënza Limani

VIAC Ambassador for Kosovo,
Senior Associate at
Squire Patton Boggs
Prague



Speaker

Emilie Pardoen

VIAC Ambassador for the Netherlands,
Partner at
Avizor Advocates and Arbitrators
Amsterdam

Emilie Pardoen is a partner at Avizor Advocates and Arbitrators, a Dutch boutique law firm specialising in international arbitration and dispute resolution. She acts as (co-)counsel in domestic and international arbitration proceedings, and represents clients before the Dutch courts in corporate and commercial disputes. Before entering private practice, Emilie worked at a leading litigation funder, gaining experience in asset tracing and the global enforcement of arbitral awards—expertise she continues to apply in her current work.



Speaker
Eveli Lume
VIAC Ambassador for Estonia,
Partner at Squire Patton Boggs
Berlin

Rumen Cholakov is a barrister at Three Verulam Buildings (3VB) in London, specialising in international arbitration and complex commercial litigation, particularly in banking, private equity, civil fraud and digital assets. He is ranked as a Leading Junior by Legal 500 and an Up-and-Coming Junior by Chambers & Partners, and is a member of the New York Bar. He has extensive experience in ICC, LCIA, PCA and UNCITRAL arbitrations. His work spans proceedings seated in London, Abu Dhabi and Europe, as well as investment treaty disputes, including ICSID cases. He frequently advises on jurisdiction, interim relief, enforcement and set-aside applications. Rumen also acts in high-value commercial litigation before the English courts and offshore jurisdictions, including major fraud, asset tracing and crypto-asset matters. He holds degrees from Cambridge and Columbia and lectures in U.S. constitutional law at King's College London.

Eveli Lume is a partner in the International Dispute Resolution Practice at Squire Patton Boggs, specialising in complex international arbitration. She represents states, state-owned entities, and private companies in high-stakes investor-state and commercial arbitrations under leading institutional rules. An Estonian national admitted in Estonia and Germany, Eveli works in English, German, Estonian, and Russian, handling disputes across sectors such as energy, water, construction, mining, telecoms, and food. She also serves as arbitrator and, in December 2023, was appointed by Estonia to the ICSID Panel of Arbitrators. Beyond practice, Eveli lectures on public international law at Humboldt University's LL.M. programme and teaches international arbitration and investment law at the University of Tartu.



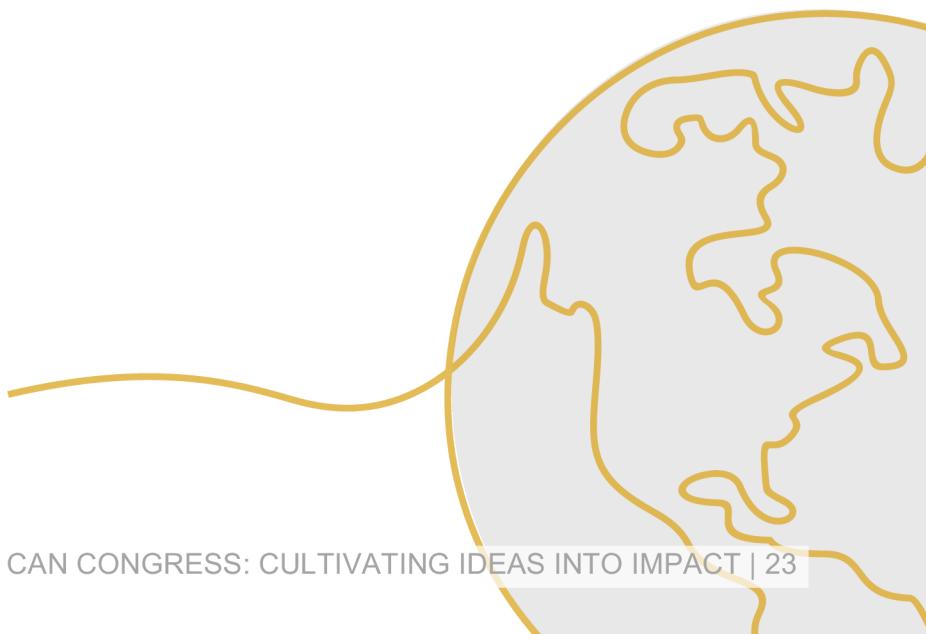
Speaker
Rumen Cholakov
VIAC Ambassador for England,
Barrister at Three Verulam
Buildings
London

CLOSING REMARKS

Since 1 January 2022, **Niamh Leinwather** has taken office as the Secretary General of the Vienna International Arbitral Centre (VIAC). Of Irish origin, Niamh has both a common and civil law background (Bachelor of Civil Law, University College Dublin, Mag.iur., University of Vienna, Master of European Studies, University of Vienna). She was the first Irish woman to be admitted to the Austrian Bar in 2013 and has over a decade of experience in international dispute resolution at Freshfields in Vienna where she acted as both counsel and arbitrator. Niamh has held the office of Secretary Treasurer of the International Federation of Commercial Arbitration Institutions (IFCAI) since February 2023. In July 2024 Niamh was appointed to the Board of Directors of Arbitral Women and chairs the Education Committee. In October 2024 Niamh was invited to her alma mater as an Adjunct Professor of the Sutherland School of Law (University College Dublin).



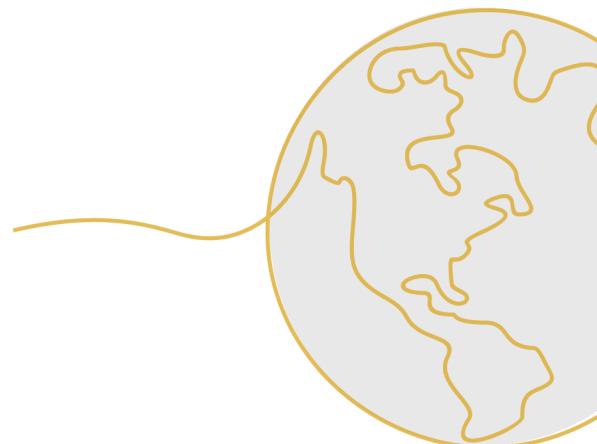
Niamh Leinwather
VIAC Secretary General
Vienna





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TrialView is an award winning, AI-powered platform designed to revolutionise and streamline your disputes practice. Its innovative capabilities help legal professionals seamlessly manage, prepare, and present their cases from a single, centralised location.

Using intelligent AI-driven insights, TrialView builds timelines and bundles, identifies crucial patterns and data, and pinpoints inconsistencies across your case documents and testimonies, even in real-time during hearings.

Trusted by global courts and leading arbitral institutions, it streamlines the entire dispute process, ensuring a smooth transition from initial bundle preparation right through to the final trial.

Baker McKenzie.

Baker McKenzie's international arbitration practice is one of the largest, busiest and most highly ranked arbitration teams worldwide, consistently recognised across leading international rankings for its work in complex, high-value and cross-border disputes.

Within this global platform, Baker McKenzie Austria is itself recognised as a Tier-One arbitration practice, regularly reviewed and ranked in both international (Legal 500) and German-language (JUVE) legal directories. From its Vienna base, the team plays a central role in international arbitrations across Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, combining strong regional insight with seamless access to the firm's global arbitration capabilities.

A defining hallmark of the Austrian practice is its market-leading expertise in Energy, Construction and Post-M&A disputes. The team is frequently instructed in disputes arising from major energy and infrastructure projects, construction contracts, complex transactions and long-term commercial arrangements.

Baker McKenzie Austria is known for strategic excellence, commercial acumen and a forward-looking approach, representing the next generation of elite arbitration practitioners.

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Law firm

Kožul & Petrinović Law Firm was founded in 2009 on the core principles of integrity, professionalism and transparency, which guide the quality of our legal advice, our attention to detail, and the long-term, trust-based relationships we build with our clients.

Based in Zagreb, the Firm cooperates with correspondent law offices in Rijeka, Split and Osijek, as well as with reputable international law firms.

Our primary focus is the provision of high-level legal advisory services and representation to corporate clients. We have particular expertise in construction law, public procurement, energy law, commercial law, banking and insurance, transport and environmental and waste management.

The Firm is especially recognised for its representation in complex construction disputes, including those arising from FIDIC-based contractual models, as well as for its extensive experience in arbitration proceedings, including proceedings before dispute adjudication boards. We regularly act for clients in high-value disputes involving infrastructure, energy and public sector projects.

For more information, please visit: <https://www.kozul-petrinovic.hr/eng/>



DLA Piper –The International Arbitration Practice with a Global Coverage

DLA Piper is a recognised leader in the international arbitration field, ranked in the Global Arbitration Review's GAR30 as one of the leading global practices. With presence in more than 40 jurisdictions across six continents, we serve as counsel and sit as arbitrators under all major institutional and ad hoc arbitration rules.

DLA Piper has unrivalled experience representing international companies in high profile commercial arbitrations, as well as states, government ministries and state-owned entities in investment arbitrations. This breadth enables innovative strategies delivering integrated cross-border dispute resolution and successful outcomes for clients. In today's complex geopolitical environment, it's never been more important to have leading global advisors by your side to protect your interests.

Our **VIAC Ambassador, Ricardo Gardini de Andrade** embodies the firm's cross-border and cross-practice outlook, promoting dialogue and strengthening arbitration ties between Brazil, Continental Europe and the United Kingdom through sustained engagement in major cases.

OUR SPONSORS:

KNOETZL

KNOETZL is Austria's first large-scale disputes resolution powerhouse, dedicated to delivering the highest quality advocacy in arbitration and litigation, asset recovery, and business crime.

KNOETZL's arbitration practice covers international commercial arbitration, investment protection, and arbitration-related court proceedings across sectors including construction and engineering, energy, post-M&A, gaming, hospitality, automotive, IT and telecommunications, life sciences, healthcare, pharmaceuticals, and aviation. Team members regularly act as counsel and arbitrators under all major arbitration rules.

The firm has been involved in some of the largest and most complex commercial arbitrations in Austria and the CEE region over the past decade, representing leading global companies. KNOETZL consistently delivers favorable outcomes through close collaboration with partner firms, experts, and in-house counsel. The firm is recognized for its diverse, high-end arbitration team and its strong standing in the CEE and SEE regions.



LFB – László Fekete Bagaméry is a legal and tax boutique based in Budapest with an international practice and clientele.

We assist our clients in confrontational situations, providing comprehensive solutions to every aspect of their problem (business and commercial litigation and arbitration, administrative and regulatory procedures and litigations, tax and criminal investigations and litigations, etc.).

Our colleagues possess qualifications and working experience in the CEE and beyond (including Hungary, France, Germany, Romania, the UK and the US). Beside domestic courts and arbitration tribunals, we act before international forums (e.g., the European Court of Human Rights, the Court of Justice of the European Union, complaints to the EU Commission, arbitrations under ICC, LCIA, VIAC, CCIR, ICSID and UNCITRAL ad hoc rules, etc.). Together with our local partners, we advise and represent our clients in litigations, arbitrations and other adversarial procedures worldwide.

In addition to practicing as attorneys at law, we pursue academic careers and regularly publish scholarly writings on law. We sit as arbitrators in domestic and international arbitrations seated worldwide and we act as experts on law.

OUR SPONSORS:

Peter & Kim

GLOBAL DISPUTES LAWYERS

Peter & Kim is your global partner for international arbitration and dispute resolution. With offices in Switzerland, South Korea, Singapore, and Australia, we bring proven expertise to cross-border disputes bridging Europe to the Asia-Pacific and beyond.

Our team has a strong track record in complex arbitrations involving Eastern European businesses and States, including under the VIAC Rules. Vienna is and remains a hub for our work in the CEE and Eurasia.

As proud supporters of the VIAC CAN Congress 2026, we share VIAC's dedication to efficiency and excellence in service — values at the core of our client management. Come and meet the members of P&K at the Congress.

Pitkowitz & Partners

Pitkowitz & Partners is a Vienna-based law firm dedicated to dispute resolution, with a particular strength in international arbitration and complex cross-border proceedings. With one of the largest specialised dispute resolution teams in Austria, the firm regularly represents clients in high-stakes arbitrations under all major institutional rules and across a wide range of jurisdictions.

The firm combines legal excellence and procedural precision with a distinctly business-minded, solution-oriented approach. Its arbitration practice is consistently recognised in leading international rankings, including GAR100, Chambers, and The Legal 500, reflecting its standing among the world's leading arbitration practices.

Deeply embedded in the global arbitration community, Pitkowitz & Partners is committed to professional exchange, innovation, and the continuous evolution of arbitration practice. The firm actively supports platforms that promote dialogue, collaboration, and new perspectives—connecting established leaders with the next generation of arbitration professionals.

Pitkowitz & Partners is pleased to support the Fourth VIAC CAN Congress and to contribute to its mission of turning ideas into impact—by engaging with leading practitioners, emerging trends, and the future direction of international arbitration.

OUR SPONSORS:



Popovski & Partners is a full-service law firm based in Skopje, Republic of North Macedonia, with strong expertise in arbitration, dispute resolution, and complex commercial matters. Through its participation in the VIAC CAN Congress, the firm reaffirms its commitment to excellence in international arbitration and cross-border legal practice.

By supporting the VIAC CAN Congress, Popovski & Partners actively contributes to the development of arbitration culture and professional dialogue in the region and beyond.

soukeník ■ štrpka

soukeník – štrpka: Your partner for International Arbitration in Slovakia

soukeník – štrpka is Slovakia's largest law firm, managing disputes valued at billions of euros. International construction arbitration is a cornerstone of our practice, with deep expertise in FIDIC/EPC/PPP contracts and ICC proceedings.

We currently represent clients in flagship ICC arbitrations, including National Highway Company in Višňové tunnel dispute and the Slovak Republic in a high-stake PPP project arbitration.

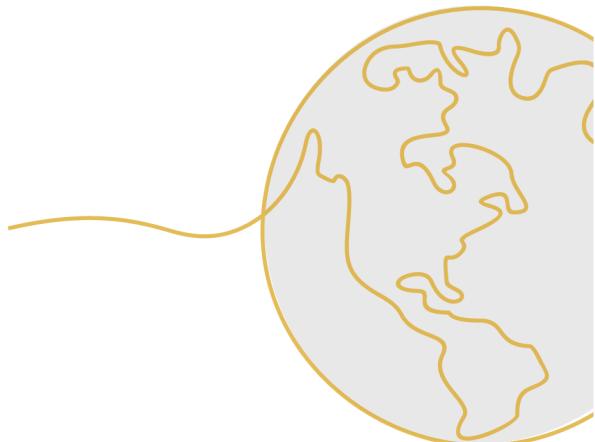
Our team, led by partner Lukáš Štefánik FCIArb alongside founding partners David Soukeník and Peter Štrpka, regularly coordinates with international barristers and experts on cross-border matters. We provide services in Slovak, English, German, Polish, and Czech.

Awarded "Highly Recommended" in Dispute Resolution (Law Firm of the Year 2025), we are your ideal Slovak partner for complex arbitration matters in Central Europe.



THE ORGANISER **INTRODUCING VIAC AND VIAC CAN**

Meet our Ambassadors



VIAC - THE PREMIER INTERNATIONAL ARBITRAL INSTITUTION IN CEE AND SEE

Representing one of Europe's leading arbitral institutions, the Vienna International Arbitral Centre ("VIAC") serves as a focal point for the settlement of international commercial disputes also offering mediation and since quite recently investment arbitration. VIAC has in recent years enjoyed a steadily increasing caseload from a diverse range of parties, with a growing number of cases having a CEE / SEE connection.

VIAC has administered over 2,500 proceedings since its inception and is thereby one of the most experienced arbitration centres in the region.



Full service ADR offering

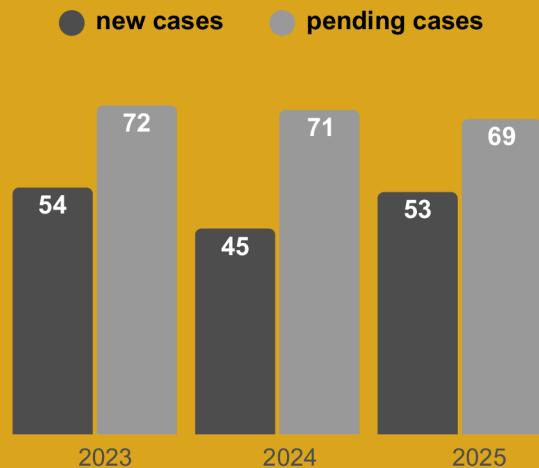
- national and international arbitration proceedings
- investment arbitration proceedings
- mediation proceedings
- arb-med-arb proceedings
- administering and appointing authority services

Services at a glance

- secure modern communication platform
- guidance throughout the proceedings
- flexible rules and freedom to choose language of the proceedings
- experienced Board
- predictable costs and practical solutions
- individual attention to all cases

VIAC STATISTICS 2025

In 2025, VIAC's caseload remained high, with 53 new cases and a total of 69 pending cases, making it one of the highest case numbers for new cases in recent years. The aggregated amount in dispute reached nearly 4,5 billion, the highest in VIAC's history. In 2025, the highest amount in dispute was approximately EUR 3 billion.



New and pending cases 2023 - 2025.

Amount in dispute.



Highest amount in dispute:
EUR 3 000 000 000

Aggregated amount in
dispute (pending).



EUR 4 595 911 845

International Cases in 2025.



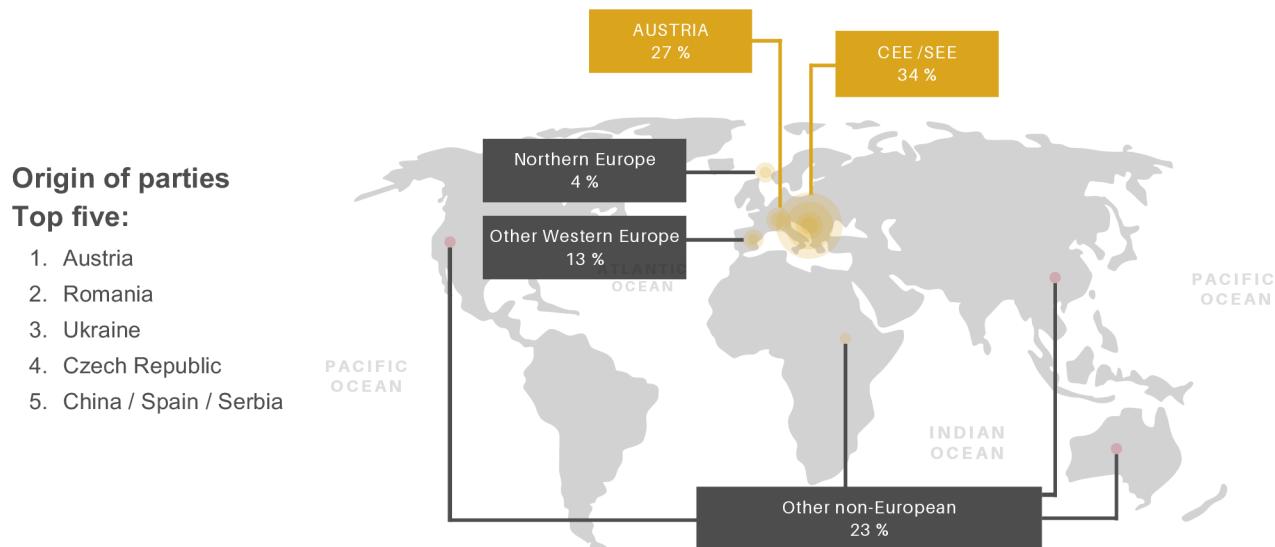
81 % international cases

Duration of proceedings.



13 months

VIAC continues to strengthen its position as the leading institution in the CEE and SEE region while at the same time expanding its reach in Austria's market. 34 percent of all parties originate from the CEE and SEE region. The percentage of parties from Austria amounted to 27 percent. The remaining parties are distributed across Northern and Western Europe (17 percent) and other regions (23 percent), including Belize, China, Jordan, South Korea, and the United States of America.



VIAC COMMUNITY AMBASSADOR NETWORK

(VIAC CAN)

Launched in February 2023, the VIAC Community Ambassador Network (VIAC CAN) was established to promote alternative dispute resolution and enhance VIAC's international reach, with a particular focus on the CEE/SEE region. Since then, the initiative has developed into a globally recognised platform for professional exchange and cooperation in the dispute resolution field.

VIAC CAN's activities throughout the years included conferences, workshops, meetings, and online sessions tailored to regional and professional needs. These initiatives strengthened cross-border collaboration, supported the development of local arbitration communities, and enhanced VIAC's international visibility.

2025 marked a key transition for VIAC CAN, as the initial two-year mandates of the first cohort of Ambassadors concluded. While several Ambassadors prepared for a second term, others passed their roles to newly appointed colleagues. A new call for applications was launched in jurisdictions not yet represented within the Network, attracting an exceptionally high number of strong candidates. As a result, VIAC CAN continued to expand in 2025, reaching 54 Ambassadors in 39 countries across three continents. Growth was particularly strong in Central Asia, the United Kingdom, Northern Europe, and through the appointment of a second Ambassador in Latin America, further strengthening VIAC's global presence.

55 Ambassadors

39 Countries

3 Continents

Find out more
about VIAC CAN



Find out more
about the
Ambassadors



VIAC CAN Vision

We strive to develop and grow VIAC CAN to become the largest platform for arbitration and mediation practitioners, local businesses and state-owned enterprises in CEE / SEE. We relentlessly seek to offer the best, tailor-made solutions in commercial and investment arbitration and mediation and commit to constantly upgrading our services according to the specific needs of the respective market.

We are historically, geographically and culturally close to you, and we know exactly what you need!

VIAC CAN – and so CAN you!



Building bridges

Beyond **hosting** high-level international conferences with top speakers and participants from the region, VIAC **actively supports and participates** in arbitration events in the Baltics, Balkans, Central Asia, India, China and beyond.



Collaborating

In addition to working with long-standing partners like **Advantage Austria** and **Arb|Aut**, VIAC's events also receive support from Austrian embassies abroad.



Facilitating new connections

VIAC **partners with local law firms and institutions** to host workshops, side events and standalone international conferences.



Exploring new formats

VIAC embraces more **creative settings** for smaller gatherings, including **distinctive venues, interactive elements and even musical interludes** as part of its events.



Expanding

Every year, VIAC expands into new jurisdictions. In 2025, VIAC made its first appearances in **Kazakhstan and Egypt** and organised two **roadshows in India and China**, forging valuable connections with key stakeholders on the ground.

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VIAC || Community Ambassador Network

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