

Ludwig/Hanke: Delight at CEU Board decision to endorse Otto Wagner site as university's permanent home

Negotiations set to be concluded by the end of June

"In these difficult times, the CEU's decision to make the Otto Wagner site its permanent home is a hugely important sign for the future in Vienna," said Mayor Michael Ludwig in response to the CEU Board of Trustees' decision to conclude negotiations with the city by the end of June. "A renowned institution such as the CEU will find more than just bright, talented and hard-working minds in Vienna – in selecting the Otto Wagner area, it has also found the ideal campus location. We hope to bring the final negotiations to a swift conclusion."

The CEU has also commented on the decision. "This is a historic decision for the university," said Leon Botstein, Chairman of the CEU Board of Trustees. "Otto Wagner's Steinhof is magnificent and has a rich cultural and historic significance for Vienna. CEU looks forward to an enduring partnership with the local community and the city. The entire site, given its beauty, scale and complex history, should become an international centre for learning, teaching, research, the arts and culture."

Provost of CEU Liviu Matei, who is leading the university's negotiations with the City of Vienna, noted: "We are committed to bringing these negotiations to a successful conclusion by June and to securing a permanent home for CEU as an academic institution based in Vienna."

Rector of CEU Michael Ignatieff confirmed that the CEU is committed to working with the local community to ensure that the public can still access and enjoy the grounds. Regarding the dark history of the site, the Rector added: "The CEU will consult with all stakeholders to ensure that this site is appropriately commemorated. By doing so, the site can act as a warning to future generations so that such events may never again occur."

The Central European University commenced teaching in Vienna in September 2017 at Quellenstrasse 51 in the city's Favoriten district. However, the 12,000m² building was always intended to be a temporary solution for the university. A permanent home on the Otto Wagner site has been the aim for the Budapest-born institution since it first began the search for a new base and opened negotiations.

"Universities, science and research drive the economy and create significant added value for the

city,” said Councillor for Economic Affairs Peter Hanke. “In a situation like the current crisis, positive news is particularly important. I am confident that CEU will send an important economic signal at the Otto Wagner site in Vienna and thereby underline the city’s successful development.” Ultimately, the CEU’s decision to base its teaching in Vienna will not only shape the city’s international profile but also create jobs.

Vienna is the greatest university city in the German-speaking world and offers students excellent conditions in which to start their career after graduation. This is in no small part due to Vienna’s success in attracting international companies to settle in the city and providing fertile ground for start-ups. “I am delighted that the CEU is joining us in investing in the academic and economy future of our city,” concluded Hanke.

Fundamental aspects of the ongoing negotiations are as follows: the Central European University will establish its campus on an area of 35,000m² – around one-third of the total available area. A further third will contain student accommodation, while the final third is to become a facility dedicated to research and university partnerships. All further plans will be decided in close discussion with the Federal Monuments Authority Austria.

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