

## **VÖWG - The Association of public services and public enterprises Austria**

The Association of public services and public enterprises Austria (VÖWG) supports and advises its members in various fields on a national and European level. President of the VÖWG is the Vice Mayor and City Councillor of Vienna, Ms. Renate Brauner.

Being present before the European institutions is particularly important as EU's competences are becoming more and more complex, influencing our members in their freeness to exercise services of general interest. Therefore, we closely follow the legislative process in Austria and the EU together with our European partner CEEP (The European Centre of Employers and Enterprises providing Public services), which we are member of. CEEP is one of the three General Cross Industry Social Partners recognised by the EU Commission. VÖWG regularly consults Directorate Generals of the European Commission on their draft Regulations, Directives and other legislation of interest for our members. Furthermore, the VÖWG team takes part in a number of committees and is therefore always up to date with developments on European level. Taking an active role within the decision-making process in Europe, we are a strong counterpart to Brussels' persisting liberalisation attempts.

VÖWG represents more than 100 member companies that act within the wide spectrum of public services. Our members guarantee security of supply in the energy business, ranging from high efficient district heating and cooling to grid operation. Furthermore, the health sector is as well represented as the social services – both essential parts of the European Social Model. When it comes to mobility, public transport is a corner stone in order to meet mobility problems of urban areas, contributing to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in an affordable way. On top of that, our member associations provide Austrian citizens with high-quality water-services, a universal product that is much more than a “commercial good” in the sense of the internal market doctrine. While providing services of general interest, VÖWG-members are accorded a key function in meeting EU's ambitious environmental targets. The public sector plays an essential part in securing supply on the one hand and advocates sustainable developments on the other hand, in terms of taking a holistic approach into account which covers the whole live circle of services and goods.

VÖWG bundles the humongous amount of information and develops a precise information tool for our members. We are in constant contact with different stakeholders and defend the interest of our members at the right time at the right place.