

Annual **REPORT** 2024

Special
#VIAC50
timeline pull
out inside



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Your Partner for ADR



Experience matters.

We have successfully administered more than 2,500 arbitration and mediation proceedings since 1975. Our Board consists of distinguished arbitration practitioners, a Supreme Court judge and academics with extensive practice and expertise in ADR. Our Secretariat boasts practitioners with vast ADR experience and know-how.

Flexibility matters.

The Vienna Rules are flexible. The 2021 Vienna Rules in force from 1 January 2025 combine our well-trying provisions with recent market developments. This allows parties to tailor the proceedings to the needs of their specific dispute.

Costs matter.

VIAC offers an accurate cost calculator to ensure predictability and manage expectations. Arbitrators' fees are competitive but fair and arbitrators are remunerated for managing complex cases efficiently.

Efficiency matters.

VIAC endeavours to ensure that our arbitration proceedings are conducted in the most efficient manner possible. We have a strict monitoring process in place to insure that we can deliver on our promise.

Sustainability matters.

Our case management is predominantly digitalised. The VIAC Portal safeguards the secure storage of data. Counsel, arbitrators and the Secretariat communicate via the VIAC Portal.

Diversity matters.

VIAC took the ERA-pledge and lives it. We are continuously improving our regional and gender statistics, and tirelessly encourage our users to consider equal representation.

Personality matters.

Our cases are guaranteed individual attention. Parties, counsels and arbitrators are supported by their designated case manager. Complex issues can be elevated quickly to the Secretary General or the Board.

From the Desk of the Secretary General

Dear friends and colleagues,

As I look back on the past year, I am reminded of the resilience, dedication and vision that drive our work every day. It has been a year of challenges, but also of remarkable progress and innovation. I want to start by expressing my sincere gratitude to my team as well as our partners, and stakeholders for their unwavering commitment and support.

In 2024 many of our ongoing projects at VIAC came to fruition, while we also set the ground work for VIAC's Golden Jubilee celebrations in 2025.

On the case management front, we made significant strides in modernising our Rules, introducing provisions specifically tailored for corporate disputes while also reducing mediation costs. These developments reaffirm our commitment to remaining at the forefront of international dispute resolution. Following the reforms to our award monitoring policies in 2023, we are now finalising a best practice note for arbitrators on award writing, along with guidance on the use of artificial intelligence in arbitration. These initiatives reflect VIAC's dedication to thought leadership and innovation in the field.

As part of our broader vision, VIAC continued to drive forward key initiatives, in particular the VIAC Community Ambassador Network (VIAC CAN), which has gone from strength to strength and is now playing a crucial role in expanding our outreach in CEE and SEE.

In addition, our Expert Focus Groups particularly the Energy Group was extremely active, while our ADR Wellbeing Toolbox continued to make a positive impact on our users toward a more balanced lifestyle.

Over the past year, we deepened our relationships with international institutions, strengthening ties with ICSID on investment arbitration, and other institutions in relation to both mediation and commercial arbitration. These partnerships highlight VIAC's ongoing commitment to fostering global dialogue and cooperation.

We were also delighted to welcome two new team members, including our first-ever paralegal, a valuable addition that enhances the efficiency of our case administration. With these new colleagues, our Secretariat now operates in eight languages, further broadening our ability to serve a diverse international community.

The past year has been a testament to VIAC's unwavering commitment to excellence, collaboration, and leadership in international dispute resolution. This annual report offers a comprehensive overview of our activities in 2024, including key highlights, statistics, and emerging trends. I hope you enjoy reading it as much as we enjoyed experiencing it! Please do stay in touch, I look forward to hearing from you!

Sincerely yours,



VIAC Board in 2024

The VIAC Board can reflect on a successful second year of its three year term. Under the leadership of **Nikolaus Pitkowicz** (VIAC President), **Patrizia Netal** (VIAC Vice-President) and **Franz T. Schwarz** (VIAC Vice-President), VIAC's case numbers remained at an all time high and the institution continued to expand across the region.

2024 was also a year of reflection and remembrance for VIAC, as we mourned the loss of distinguished members of our arbitration community. **Martin Magál**, a valued member of our International Advisory Board, passed away, leaving a profound legacy. We also bid farewell to **Alexander Bělohávek** who played an important role in VIAC's history. They will both be deeply missed and fondly remembered.

19 Board Members

8 Board meetings

Scan the QR-Codes to find out more about VIAC's Advisory Boards



Domestic Advisory Board



International Advisory Board



Mediation Advisory Board





Patrizia Netal

Vice-President
Partner | KNOETZL



Nikolaus Pitkowitz

President
Partner | Pitkowitz & Partners



Franz T. Schwarz

Vice-President
Partner | WilmerHale



Anton Baier

Honorary President



Günther J. Horvath

Honorary President



Diana Akicol

Partner | Walder Wyss Ltd.



Claudia Annacker

Independent Arbitrator



Martin Hauser

International Commercial Mediator



Veronika Korom

Professor | ESSEC Business School



Paul Oberhammer

Professor | University of Vienna



Alexander Petsche

Partner | Baker McKenzie



Karl Pörnbacher

Partner | Hogan Lovells



Dietmar Prager

Partner | Debevoise & Plimpton



Lucia Raimanova

Partner | Allen & Overy



August Reinisch

Professor | University of Vienna



Stefan Riegler

Partner | Wolf Theiss



Friedrich Rüffler

Professor | University of Vienna



Erich Schwarzenbacher

Judge | Austrian Supreme Court



Irene Welser

Partner | CERHA HEMPEL

VIAC Secretariat in 2024

The VIAC Secretariat began 2024 with renewed energy and initiatives led by Secretary General **Niamh Leinwather** and Deputy Secretary General **Anna Förstel-Cherng**. Supporting their efforts, the dynamic Case Management trio, two assistants, and the VIAC CAN team.

From January until August, our team was further strengthened by the invaluable support of Stella-Jo Turner. She played a key role in organising VIAC's VIS Moot events, provided essential support to the Mediation Advisory Board and the Handbook project.

The year also marked a few transitions within the Secretariat. **Veronika Macha** commenced her educational leave, while Case Manager **Klaudia Sood**, a dedicated member of VIAC since 2018, left for maternity leave.

Nazli Morali joined us as a Case Manager to ensure a smooth transition. With experience in investment and commercial arbitration from her tenure as associate at one of Austria's leading law firms, Nazli has brought fresh perspectives and expertise to VIAC. Beyond case management, she supports VIAC with organising panels on critical topics in commercial and investment arbitration with stakeholders like UNCITRAL.

Ferenc Pöcz also joined our team as our first-ever paralegal. Ferenc's prior experience at a global law firm in Bratislava has proven invaluable, especially in handling administrative responsibilities and supporting case management.

Anna Förstel-Cherng began her maternity leave in the summer and passed the baton to **Elisabeth Vanas-Metzler** who returned after her extended leave.



Elisabeth Vanas-Metzler
Returned from leave



Nazli Morali
Joined the team



Ferenc Pöcz
Joined the team



Klaudia Sood
Left for maternity leave



Anna Förstel-Cherng
Left for maternity leave

Jessica Puhr, our most experienced Case Manager, continues to play a pivotal role in shaping VIAC's digital and public presence. Jessica has been instrumental in the rebranding of VIAC's resources, the development of our new website due to be announced in the first quarter of 2025, and the configuration of the VIAC Portal. Jessica also spearheads the promotion of arbitration on a national level.

Sophie Tesarik, our second most experienced Case Manager, is passionate about investment arbitration. In 2024, she was mainly responsible for the revision of the Vienna Rules on both arbitration and mediation. Sophie is the instigator of the Frankfurt Investment Arbitration Pre-Moot, further strengthening VIAC's ties with the investment arbitration community.

Emma Potocnik, who has excelled as VIAC CAN Director since January 2023, continues to drive the growth and impact of VIAC CAN. She is supported by **Vladyslava Donchyk**, VIAC CAN Coordinator, as they work together to strengthen ties with the CEE/SEE region and expand the initiative's reach.

Behind the scenes, **Susanne Schindler** and **Beatrix Wendt** provide indispensable support across all workstreams, especially in case management. Susanne is also the Secretariat's primary contact for IFCAL-related matters, ensuring seamless collaboration on international fronts.

Though small in size, the VIAC team is a powerhouse of talent, dedication, and motivation. Every member strives daily to deliver exceptional services and make a meaningful difference to our users. Team work makes the dream work, and this certainly applies to the VIAC Secretariat!



Mediation in Focus: More Cost-Efficiency for Users



I am proud of the recent revisions to the Vienna Mediation Rules. This update makes mediation more accessible and cost-effective, encouraging its use in Austria and beyond. A key focus of my presidency has been to foster a culture of amicable settlements and collaborative problem-solving. VIAC is committed to strengthening mediation and adapting our services to meet the needs of our users.

Nikolaus Pitkowitz
VIAC President

In 2024, VIAC continued to strengthen its commitment to providing efficient and effective dispute resolution services and to expanding the use of mediation. A significant highlight of the year was the revision of our mediation rules, aimed at amending our mediation clauses and making mediations at VIAC more cost-effective for our users.

The amendments of the Vienna Mediation Rules was developed by a working group at VIAC, comprising Nikolaus Pitkowitz (VIAC President), Martin Hauser (Board Member), Claudio Arturo and Ulrike Frauenberger-Pfeiler (members of the VIAC Mediation Board), along with a team from VIAC’s Secretariat—Niamh Leinwather (Secretary General), Sophie Tesarik (Legal Counsel), and Stella-Jo Thurner (Legal Intern).

The Working Group



Nikolaus Pitkowitz



Claudio Arturo



Martin Hauser



Ulrike Frauenberger-Pfeiler



Niamh Leinwather



Sophie Tesarik



Stella-Jo Thurner

Simplified model clauses

Reflecting recent decisions of the Austrian Supreme Court, VIAC's model mediation clauses were simplified. There are now two model clauses, each offering a range of supplementary provisions, including the number of mediators, the location of the mediation sessions, the language of the mediation, and the method of appointment of the mediator and the mediator's qualifications.

Additionally, the supplementary terms provide a provision enabling parties to refer the dispute to arbitration at VIAC if the mediation is (at least partly) unsuccessful.

Moreover, the supplementary terms include a provision allowing for the exclusion of parallel proceedings for a specific period while the mediation is ongoing.

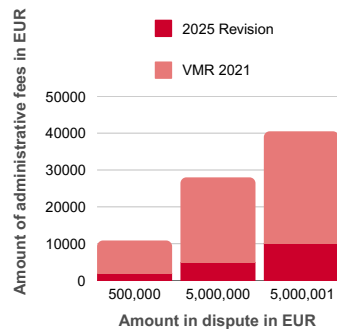
Revised cost structure

A revised fee schedule for mediation proceedings was introduced, making them more cost-effective. The registration fee is now a fixed fee of EUR 500, replacing the previous maximum of EUR 1,500.

Additionally, VIAC's administrative fees have been significantly adjusted.

While still based on the amount in dispute (as outlined in Annex 3 of the Vienna Rules), new maximum fees have been established: a maximum of EUR 2,000 for disputes up to EUR 500,000; a maximum of EUR 5,000 for disputes between EUR 500,001 and EUR 5,000,000; and a maximum EUR 10,000 for disputes exceeding EUR 5,000,000. The Secretary General has the discretion to set the fees within this range.

The Vienna Mediation Rules 2021 in the version of 1 January 2025 can be found on the VIAC website



Key Rule Revisions

1 Simplified model clauses

There are two new model clauses that allow parties to customise their future mediation proceeding to an even greater extent.

2 Revised, competitive cost structure

The introduction of a simplified cost structure makes mediation proceedings more attractive and particularly cost-efficient.

Aligning the Vienna Rules with Austrian Jurisprudence

In April 2024, the Austrian Supreme Court set aside an arbitral award, stating that shareholder disputes are arbitrable under Austrian law only if specific conditions are met. These include ensuring all shareholders agree to the arbitration agreement, and can participate in the arbitration, protecting their rights under fair trial standards, and drafting precise arbitration agreements to avoid enforceability issues.

In response to this Supreme Court ruling, VIAC formed a working group led by Vice-President Franz T. Schwarz, Board Member Paul Oberhammer, National Advisory Board Member Christian Koller, and Secretariat members Niamh Leinwather (Secretary General) and Sophie Tesarik (Legal Counsel). Recognising the court's focus on binding effects, participation rights, and precise drafting, VIAC introduced a number of amendments to ensure compliance with these developments.

VIAC developed a Model Arbitration Clause for intra-corporate disputes, providing corporations with a practical tool to include or update arbitration clauses in their articles of association or partnership agreements. A second key step was drafting Annex 7, "Supplementary Rules for Corporate Disputes", which ensure compliance with the Austrian Supreme Court standards by offering clear guidance on shareholder disputes in arbitration. These updates reflect VIAC's commitment to adapting to legal standards while maintaining arbitral integrity.



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Resolving corporate disputes through arbitration presents numerous complexities, especially when an arbitral award affects all shareholders, as is the case in disputes over shareholder resolutions. The newly introduced Annex 7 of the Vienna Rules provides a comprehensive regulatory framework to address these intricate multi-party disputes. It ensures that the fundamental procedural rights of all parties impacted by the arbitral award are fully safeguarded.

Franz T. Schwarz, VIAC Vice-President &
Christian Koller, VIAC Domestic Advisory Board Member

Continued Refinements to VIAC's Case Management

Efficiency continues to be a cornerstone of VIAC's case management, and 2024 saw significant progress in this regard. Building on the measures introduced in previous years, the VIAC Award Checklist and the strict award monitorin process have become an integral tool in facilitating smoother and more effective arbitral proceedings.

Updated documents for arbitrators and improved forms

This year, VIAC further modernised several key documents, including the Award Checklist, Acceptance of Office Forms, Checklist for arbitrators for the Final Determination of Costs, Transfer Instructions, and Declaration by the Tribunal Secretary. These forms are now more user-friendly and provide clearer guidance for both arbitrators and parties.

New for 2025

Looking ahead, VIAC is actively developing a new document titled Best Practice for Costs, designed to guide arbitrators on structuring and drafting the cost sections of awards. This practical resource will include examples to ensure clarity and consistency in cost decisions.

Improved services for hearings

Additionally, VIAC updated its Hearing Brochure to promote the wide range of hearing rooms as well as its' state-of-the-art technology. Available for both VIAC and non-VIAC arbitrations, the brochure highlights the advantages of our facilities including technical support and in-house catering available to ensure the seamless conduct of for arbitration hearings.



Download our brochure here!



Find our documents for arbitrators here

VIAC Expert Focus Groups

During 2024, VIAC's Expert Focus Groups continued their work on trending topics, including investment arbitration, energy, construction, and post-M&A disputes, as well as ESG, succession, and trust.

Energy disputes in focus

Among their notable achievements, the Energy Expert Focus Group, led by Ana Stanič (E&A Law Limited, London) and Eric Leikin (Freshfields, Vienna), successfully organised a legal workshop in collaboration with OPEC, specifically its General Legal Counsel, Leonardo Sempertegui. Over the course of two days, various representatives engaged in in-depth discussions on key issues, including financing energy contracts, and the critical role of dispute settlement in facilitating modern energy agreements. The first day featured a plenary session, encouraging dialogue between government officials and institutional representatives. The second day comprised a series of focused workshops, exploring contractual and legal mechanisms to balance the interests of investors and states, as well as broader dispute resolution frameworks within the energy sector.

These initiatives highlight VIAC's ongoing commitment to fostering dialogue and innovation within the ADR community, reinforcing its leadership in the field.

Succession and Trusts in focus

Our Succession and Trusts Expert Focus Group headed by Michael Nueber (Nueber Konzett Attorneys-at-Law) organised two events in Vienna and Vaduz. Both events were organised in collaboration with the University of Liechtenstein, the Austrian Foundation Association, and the research project "Continuity and Sustainability of Family Businesses." The events covered a series of presentations and discussions on conflict resolution in foundation law, bringing together key experts and practitioners in the field.

Legal Tech in focus

The Legal Tech Think Tank at VIAC met regularly throughout 2024 to analyse the impact of AI on transparency and disclosure obligations in arbitration proceedings. A key focus was the development of a non-binding AI Practice Note, designed to facilitate discussions on the use of AI in VIAC arbitration. In 2024, an additional workstream was introduced to enhance collaboration with tech companies by organising joint events that promote closer ties between the legal and technology sectors, fostering greater mutual understanding and engagement.



VIAC Community Ambassador Network

In February 2023, VIAC launched VIAC CAN with the aim of promoting and expanding ADR and VIAC's reach in CEE/SEE and beyond. Since its inception, the initiative has grown significantly - with an ever-increasing number of ambassadors. What began as a regional effort has evolved into a globally recognised platform for professionals to exchange knowledge and explore opportunities in the dispute resolution space. The VIAC CAN Congress and the numerous events that have followed demonstrate the power of cross-border collaboration and highlight how VIAC CAN has acted as a catalyst for positive change in the CEE/SEE region and beyond.

41 Ambassadors

31 Countries

3 Continents



Scan to find out more about VIAC CAN

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We welcome new ideas, initiatives, and collaborations to promote the use of ADR in CEE / SEE and beyond! VIAC CAN is a dynamic, co-creative space that continuously evolves with the primary aim of reaching more users and stakeholders with VIAC's world-class services.





Building bridges

Beyond **hosting** high-level international conferences with top speakers and participants from the region, VIAC **actively supported and took part** in arbitration events in the Baltics, Bucharest, Moldova, and Azerbaijan.



Collaborating

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



Facilitating new connections

VIAC **partnered with local law firms and institutions** to host international conferences, including, but not limited to "Arbitration 360" in Skopje and "Navigating Arbitration" in Ljubljana.



Exploring new formats

VIAC embraced more **creative settings** for a smaller gathering in an art gallery Zagreb, and incorporated a **musical performance** into "The Art of Arbitration" in Vilnius.



Expanding

VIAC hosted its first events in Georgia, Kosovo, and Azerbaijan, expanded its reach to audiences in India and Japan, with **14 Ambassadors** representing markets **beyond CEE/SEE**.

The Ambassadors

Find out more about the Ambassadors



VIAC CAN in 2024

4

International
Conferences

13

Events tailored to
a specific
audience

6

International
events supported

4

Webinars

4

New initiatives

6

New jurisdictions
covered



Promoting Diversity

In 2024, VIAC continued to be an advocate for women in arbitration and amplified its efforts to increase the presence of female arbitrators in arbitration. As a dedicated signatory and advocate of the ERA Pledge, VIAC will continue to raise awareness about the underrepresentation of women in arbitration and will keep the conversation going in 2025.

? Did you know?

Women are still underrepresented as arbitrators. In 2024, only **17 %** of party-nominated arbitrators in VIAC arbitrations were female. Let's change this statistic together for 2025.

Here is what you can do:

- Consider gender parity when nominating arbitrators. A list of arbitrators is also available on the VIAC website.
- If you are a female arbitrator, get in touch with us to have your profile added to our website (office@viac.eu).
- Sign the ERA-Pledge and become an advocate for women in arbitration. The Equal Representation in Arbitration Pledge is an initiative that addresses the concerning underrepresentation of women on arbitral tribunals. The initiative aims to promote diversity and inclusion by increasing the number of female arbitrators based on equal qualifications within the international dispute resolution community. Scan the QR-code and sign the pledge.



International Women's Day 2024 - "Inspire Inclusion"

VIAC once again launched an International Women's Day campaign on LinkedIn. Under the empowering theme "Inspire Inclusion" female Board members shared their insights and perspectives, reinforcing the importance of diversity in arbitration.

ArbitralWomen Board

Adding to this exciting momentum, VIAC's Secretary General has been appointed to the ArbitralWomen Board for the 2024–2026 term! She will serve as Chair of the Educational Programmes Committee and contribute as a member of the Events and Cooperation Committees. This marks her first term on the ArbitralWomen Board of Directors—a testament to VIAC's unwavering commitment to diversity and her own passionate dedication to advancing gender inclusion in arbitration.

International Gender Champion

As an International Gender Champion, a leadership network dedicated to breaking down gender barriers, our Secretary General, Niamh Leinwather, has pledged to promote gender parity and to continuing the ADR Wellbeing Toolbox project, offering training and webinars on emotional intelligence, stress management, and empowerment for the ADR community. The International Gender Champions initiative unites leaders across sectors to drive meaningful change and foster equal opportunities worldwide.





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50 Years of VIAC in 2025 - Celebrating the Golden Jubilee

Your Timeline for VIAC 50

28 February 2025
VIAC CAN Congress

7 - 11 April 2025
VIAC 50 at the Paris Arbitration
Week

11 - 17 April 2025
VIAC 50 at the Vis Moot

9 - 10 May 2025
VIAC 50 at the Vienna Arbitration
Days

1 - 3 October 2025
VIAC: The Next 50 Years and GAR
Live Vienna

Throughout the year:

- launch of new VIAC website
- launch of a new arbitrator search
- publication of an updated VIAC Handbook
- pop-up events

Don't want to miss out on the celebrations? Make sure to follow us on LinkedIn and subscribe to our Newsletter. We look forward to celebrating with you!

In 2025, VIAC will proudly celebrate its 50th anniversary, marking half a century of commitment to dispute resolution as the premiere international arbitral institution in CEE/SEE and beyond. Over the course of 2025, a series of activities will commemorate this milestone, with an anniversary event in October 2025.

Highlights include the VIAC CAN Congress - Third Edition, special events during the Willem C. Vis International Commercial Arbitration Moot in Vienna, events during the Paris Arbitration Week, Vienna Arbitration Days, and a special anniversary celebration, "VIAC: The Next 50 Years" and GAR Live Vienna, all featuring dedicated 50 Years of VIAC theme. A year-long campaign will highlight 12 historical milestones from VIAC's journey, paired with commitments to its future, special merchandise, and other initiatives.

#VIAC50



As we celebrate 50 years of VIAC in 2025, we reflect on our remarkable journey of providing dispute resolution services. This milestone year is a testament to our unwavering commitment to excellence, innovation, and the trust our users place in us. Over the past five decades, VIAC has grown and evolved, consistently setting high standards in the field of dispute resolution.

We are excited to commemorate this significant anniversary with a series of celebratory events throughout the year. We invite you to join us in these celebrations as we look back on our achievements and look forward to continuing our legacy of swift and effective dispute resolution for many more years to come.

Thank you for being a part of our journey and for your continued support.

Günther Horvath

VIAC Honorary President



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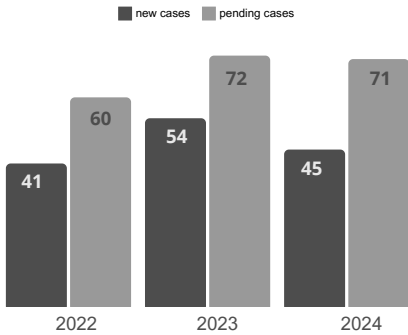
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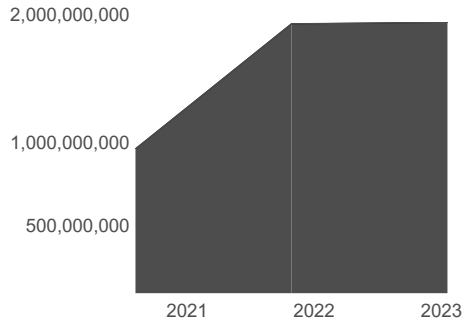
2024 Statistics

1 Caseload and Amount in Dispute

In 2024, VIAC's caseload remained high, with 45 new cases and a total of 71 pending cases, making it one of the highest total case numbers in recent years. The aggregated amount in dispute reached nearly two billion, the highest in VIAC's history. In 2024, the highest amount in dispute was approximately EUR 40 million, while the lowest amount in dispute was recorded at EUR 14,000.



New and pending cases 2022 - 2024.



Amount in dispute 2022 - 2024.

- 31 % Under EUR 100 000
- 20 % EUR 100 001 - 500 000
- 7 % EUR 500 001 - 1 000 000
- 24 % EUR 1 000 001 - 5 000 000
- 11 % EUR 5 000 001 - 10 000 000
- 7 % Over EUR 10 000 000

Amount in dispute of new cases received in 2024.



Lowest amount in dispute:
EUR 14 000

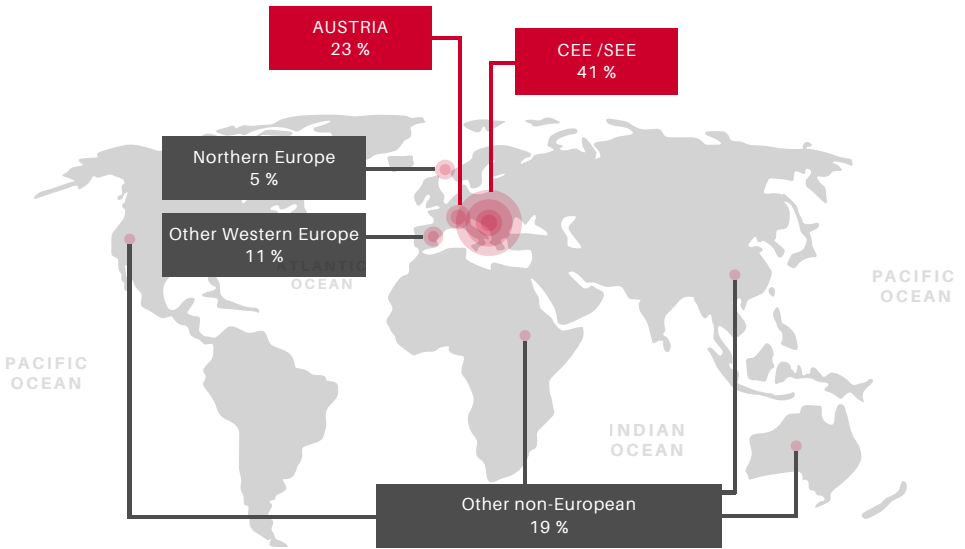


Highest amount in dispute:
EUR 40 000 000

Lowest and highest amount in dispute in 2024.

2 Origin of the Parties - CEE in Focus

VIAC continues to strengthen its position as the leading institution in the CEE and SEE region, further expanding its international reach. As a result, 41 percent of all parties now originate from the CEE and SEE region, marking a 36 percent increase compared to the previous year. The percentage of parties from Austria amounted to 23 percent. The remaining parties are distributed across Northern and Western Europe (15 percent) and other regions (18 percent), including the British Virgin Islands, China, Morocco, the United States of America, and Azerbaijan.



Origin of parties

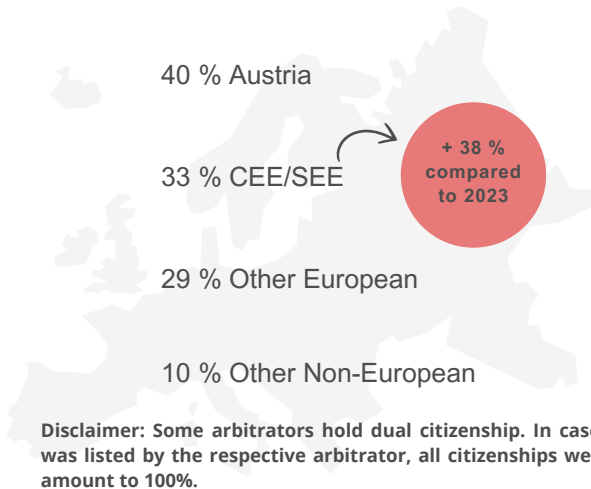
Top five:

1. Austria (22)
2. Bulgaria (6)
3. Italy (5)
4. Poland (5)
5. Turkiye (5)



3 Nationality of Arbitrators

The arbitrators confirmed by the VIAC Board represent a diverse range of nationalities, reflecting an increasingly international composition. In the 2024 statistics, Austrian nationals accounted for 40 percent of arbitrators, a decrease from 58 percent in 2023. There was a notable rise in arbitrators appointed from CEE and SEE, in 2024. The number of arbitrators from CEE/SEE increased by 38% compared to 2023. Approximately 29 percent of arbitrators were nationals from other Western and Northern European countries. The percentage of arbitrators from non-European countries significantly rose from 2 percent in 2023 to 10 percent in 2024, highlighting a marked increase in diversity.



Origin of arbitrators

Top five:

1. Austria (21)
2. Switzerland (10)
3. Romania (4)
4. Ukraine (2)
5. Poland (2)

Disclaimer: Some arbitrators hold dual citizenship. In cases where more than one citizenship was listed by the respective arbitrator, all citizenships were included. Hence, the list does not amount to 100%.



We are delighted to observe a 38 % increase in arbitrators from the CEE /SEE region this year. This growth highlights VIAC's dedication to the region and reinforces our commitment to providing diverse perspectives in arbitration.

Patrizia Netal
VIAC Vice-President



4 Applicable Law, Seat, Language

Austria is recognised as an arbitration-friendly jurisdiction with a modern and well-developed legal system. Unsurprisingly, Austrian law is designated as the governing law in a significant share of arbitration agreements (40 percent). Reflecting this preference, an overwhelming 93 percent of cases provided for Vienna as their seat of arbitration.

As of 31 December 2024, other applicable laws in VIAC cases included the CISG (11 percent), English law (7 percent), Hungarian law (4 percent), Czech law (4 percent), German law (2 percent), Italian law (2 percent), and Ukrainian law (2 percent).

40 % Austria

11 % CISG*

7 % English

4 % Czech Republic, Romania, Hungary

*Although CISG is not an applicable law, it was applied in a number of cases.

Applicable law of new cases received in 2024.

67 % English

29 % German

4 % Other

Language of the proceedings of new cases received in 2024.

93 % Vienna



Seat of arbitration of new cases received in 2024.

5 Duration of Proceedings and Expedited Proceedings

The Vienna Rules stipulate that VIAC proceedings shall be conducted efficiently (Art. 28 para. 1 Vienna Rules 2021), and VIAC makes every effort in its administration to uphold this principle. VIAC's commitment to increased efficiency is reflected in the average duration of proceedings in 2024, which was only 12 months. Additionally, the average time between receipt of a case and transfer of the file decreased from five months in 2023 to just four months in 2024. Art. 45 of the Vienna Rules 2021 governs supplementary rules for expedited proceedings. If parties opt in, the arbitral tribunal must render an award within six months of the transfer of the file. Over the past years, VIAC has observed a decline in expedited proceedings. As of 31 December 2024, ten percent of VIAC cases were conducted as expedited proceedings.

12 months



Average duration of proceedings of cases closed in 2024.



Percentage of expedited proceedings of new cases received in 2024.

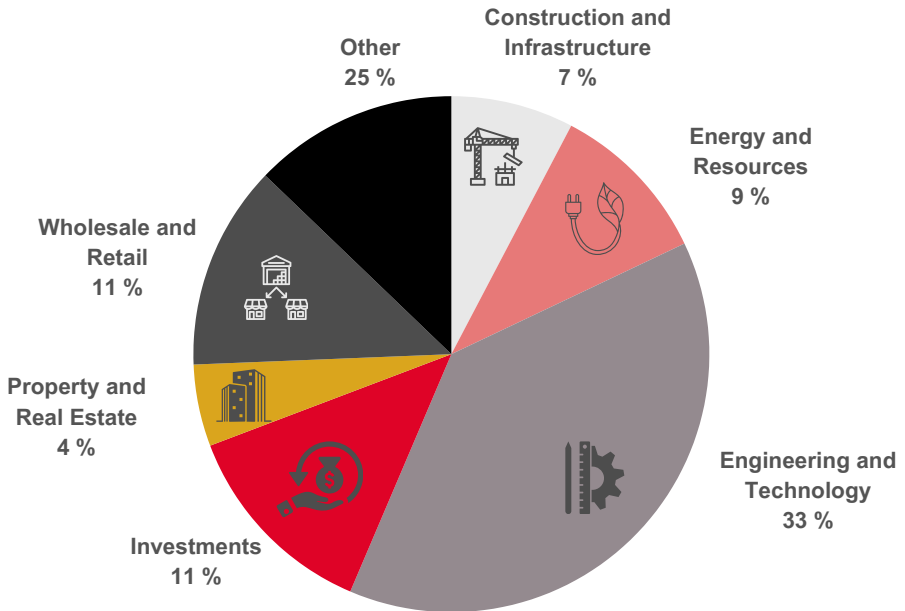


Our users rightly expect arbitrations to be conducted efficiently and with speed. By providing a very flexible framework – and quite frankly, less convoluted rules and procedures than you might find elsewhere – we are proud to report that the average resolution time for a VIAC arbitration is about 12 months. Together with our regional focus, this has helped to cement VIAC's place as the premier institution in Central and Eastern Europe.

Franz T. Schwarz
VIAC Vice-President

6 Nature of Disputes

The nature of disputes remained diverse in 2024. The most common category was Engineering and Technology (33 percent), followed by Investments (11 percent) and Wholesale and Retail Trade (also 11 percent). Energy and Resources accounted for 9 percent, Construction and Infrastructure represented 7 percent and Property and Real Estate 4 percent of cases. Other disputes involved Telecommunications, Arts, Entertainment and Recreation, and Banking and Finance.

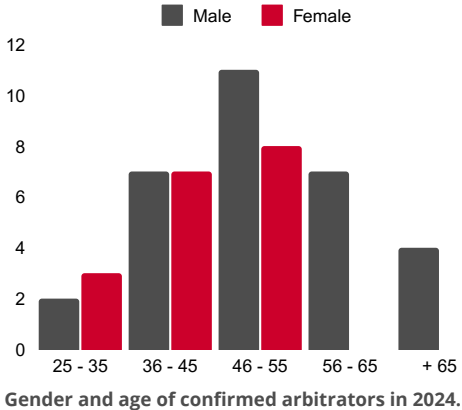
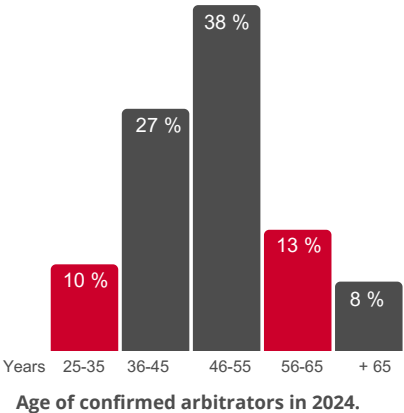
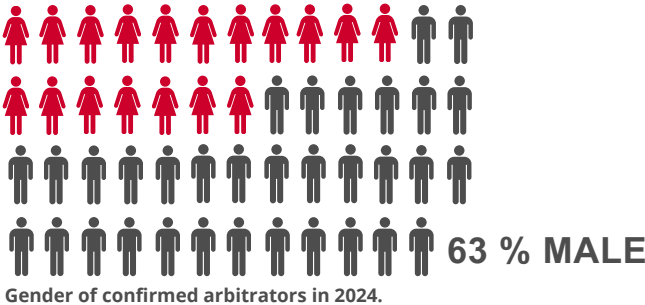


Nature of disputes of new cases received in 2024.

7 Gender and Age of Arbitrators

VIAC is committed to addressing gender parity in arbitration and, thus, the majority of arbitrators appointed by the VIAC Board are female (64 percent in 2024). In 2024, 63 percent of all arbitrators were male, while 37 percent were female. However, when considering only party-nominated arbitrators, the disparity was more pronounced: 83 percent were male and only 17 percent female.

38 percent of arbitrators were in the age group 46 to 55. This was also the age group in which gender disparity was most visible with the majority of arbitrators being male. 27 percent of arbitrators were between the ages of 36 to 45. In this age group, male and female arbitrators were equally represented. We observed an increasing number of arbitrators between the ages of 25 and 35. Female arbitrators surpassed male arbitrators in this age group.



Improving Wellbeing in Arbitration

The ADR Wellbeing Toolbox was launched in 2023 by VIAC, ARBalance, and REAL and gained quite some traction in 2024 hosting four events. This initiative underscores our ongoing commitment to supporting the wellbeing of our users and comprises a series of free, recorded webinars designed to provide practical tools and insights. In 2024 an in-person event was organised during the Willem C. Vis International Commercial Arbitration Moot in Vienna, tailored specifically for students. For International Women's Day, the ADR Wellbeing Toolbox hosted a fireside chat with two renowned female practitioners, Patrizia Netal, VIAC Vice-President and Emi Rowse Igusa, Partner and Head of Japan Practice at Kududn and Partners.

In the penultimate webinar of the year, Amber Allan, head of Learning and development at Stewarts shared her useful techniques for overcoming imposter syndrome. The final event of 2024 took place during the Kyiv Arbitration Days and focused on Emotional Intelligence in the Workplace, tailored for our colleagues in Ukraine and led by Sara Cook, conflict response specialist.

Looking ahead to 2025, the ADR Wellbeing Toolbox will be introducing fresh concepts addressing key topics, including pre-recorded sessions that will deal with various aspects of professional and personal wellbeing, burnout prevention, emotional resilience, conflict fatigue, workplace relationships and female-related challenges such as fertility issues.

Join us for our upcoming events and continue your journey of professional and personal development.



At VIAC, we understand that well-being is crucial. The ADR Wellbeing Toolkit provided valuable insights into stress management and work-life balance in 2024. With such initiatives, we aim to create a more effective and compassionate arbitration environment.

Niamh Leinwather
VIAC Secretary General



Wellbeing
Toolbox

Supporting the Next Generation

VIAC is taking a very active role in supporting the next generation of arbitration practitioners.

Willem C. Vis International Commercial Arbitration Moot

VIAC hosted multiple events during the 2024 Vis Moot, including an innovative AI-focused session where the previous year's Vis Moot problem was arbitrated using AI. In addition, VIAC co-organised the launch of the world's first Global Tribunal Secretary Platform at the University of Vienna. The platform provides arbitrators with an innovative tool to source external tribunal secretaries. The "Running for Resolutions" initiative, organised in cooperation with Comitê Brasileiro de Arbitragem, brought together the arbitration community for a morning run in the scenic Wiener Prater. Additionally, in collaboration with CAM-CCBC, VIAC co-hosted a Traditional Viennese Breakfast to discuss legal tech and its' influence on arbitration.

Pre-moot to the Frankfurt Investment Arbitration Moot Court

VIAC hosted its first pre-moot to the Frankfurt Investment Arbitration Moot Court in May 2024, providing teams with a valuable opportunity to refine their arguments and receive feedback from experienced arbitrators.

Austrian Arbitration Academy

VIAC participated again in the Austrian Arbitration Academy, a two-week intensive programme on arbitration held annually at St. Wolfgang.

Prague Pre-Moot for the FDI Moot Court

The Charles University FDI Moot Team hosted the Prague Pre-Moot at Kinstellar Law Firm to prepare teams for the FDI Moot finals. Our Legal Counsel, Sophie Tesarik, chaired an arbitrators' panel, offering insights and mooting expertise.

Other student events

VIAC also organised a series of lectures and presentations for students, sharing valuable insights into international arbitration and dispute resolution. These events further reflect VIAC's dedication to educating and inspiring the next generation of arbitration practitioners.



Cooperations

Find information on VIAC cooperation agreements here



VIAC frequently signs cooperation agreements with other arbitration institutions and organisations. Currently we have signed over 40 agreements.

In 2024, VIAC signed agreements with the following institutions:



The International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes and VIAC signed an agreement to jointly support the use of arbitration, conciliation, mediation, and other dispute resolution tools to resolve international investment disputes. The agreement establishes a framework to collaborate on public outreach on dispute resolution procedures, exchange information on new trends and technologies, and provide support for proceedings administered by ICSID or VIAC. Drawing on Article 63 of the ICSID Convention, the agreement also offers parties in ICSID proceedings with the option of holding hearings at VIAC's premises in Vienna.



The Macedonian Association of Corporate Lawyers have signed a cooperation agreement with VIAC —a partnership made possible through the efforts of VIAC Ambassador for North Macedonia, Ilija Mitrev Penushliski. This cooperation expands our direct engagement with businesses.



During the Second Annual Armenian Arbitration Conference, AMCA's director, Tatevi Matinyan, and VIAC's President, Nikolaus Pitkowitz, signed a Memorandum of Understanding to promote arbitration and mediation, enhance related services, and strengthen cooperation between AMCA and VIAC.



International Federation of Commercial Arbitration Institutions

VIAC is a long-standing member of International Federation of Commercial Arbitration Institutions (IFCAI), which was established in 1985 and now consists of 52 member organisations worldwide. The Federation aims at establishing and maintaining permanent relations between commercial arbitration institutions, fostering a broad exchange of information on all aspects of arbitration and conciliation, encouraging the responsible use of these dispute resolution techniques and facilitating the exchange of information on member organisation services.

In February 2023, Niamh Leinwather, VIAC's Secretary General was unanimously appointed as Secretary Treasurer by the Council of IFCAI. Thus, VIAC plays a pivotal role in progressing IFCAI's agendas.

In March 2024, VIAC had the honour of hosting the IFCAI General Assembly and the IFCAI Councillors' Meeting at its premises, warmly welcoming representatives from ADR centres worldwide to Vienna.

The **17th IFCAI Biennial Conference** took place in October 2024 in São Paulo during the spectacular XI CAM-CCBC Arbitration Congress! VIAC's Secretary General, Niamh Leinwather, contributed to a thought-provoking panel discussion on the impact of social media on arbitration, exploring its influence on transparency, public perception, and procedural integrity.



Event Highlights

VIAC as co-organisator of the Vienna Arbitration Days 2024

VIAC was a proud co-organisator of the Vienna Arbitration Days 2024, held on June 7–8. The event buzzed with engaging discussions on the latest trends in digitalisation, the practical and ethical challenges faced by arbitration practitioners, and the growing influence of ESG and human rights policies on dispute resolution. Beyond the thought-provoking panels, participants enjoyed a rich cultural programme. Highlights included an elegant dinner at Motto am Fluss with music and dancing, the inaugural Arbitral Women Breakfast, an exclusive guided tour of the Heidi Horten Collection, and a captivating performance by Chorus Juventus of the Vienna Boys' Choir following the ever-popular World Café. It was truly a memorable gathering, blending insight, inspiration, and camaraderie.



VIAC at the Exporttag

VIAC actively participated in the 22nd "Exporttag", a trade fair hosted by Advantage Austria of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber on 18 June 2024. With its own stand, VIAC engaged with trade experts, fostering valuable discussions on dispute resolution in cross-border transactions. Under the theme "Beyond the Box", over 70 international leaders from politics, business, and academia inspired and informed around 3,000 visitors.



VIAC and GAR Live Vienna

In the second half of the year, VIAC hosted the highly anticipated GAR Live Vienna on 27 September. The event focused on energy transition disputes in arbitration, exploring key cases and emerging regulations in the renewable energy sector. The classic interactive session, "GAR What Would You Do?", lived up to expectations, featuring an engaging discussion on "soft skills" in arbitration. A distinguished panel analysed real-life scenarios and invited the audience to compare potential solutions.



VIAC and UNCITRAL

VIAC holds an observer status at UNCITRAL, actively participating in Working Group II & III. On 30 September 2024, we successfully organised A Decade of Transparency: Celebrating 10 Years of UNCITRAL Transparency Standards—Theory and Practice, bringing together leading experts to discuss the impact of transparency in arbitration.





VIAC at the Paris Arbitration Week (PAW)

VIAC was shortlisted for the "GAR Guide to Regional Arbitration Award for Arbitral Institution that Impressed" at GAR's 14th annual awards. VIAC hosted its own event with Arb Aut at PAW as well as a joint event within The Unusual Suspects CEPANI, NAI and AFA.



VIAC CAN Congress

The Second VIAC CAN Congress was a landmark event, bringing together professionals from across Central, Eastern, and Southeastern Europe and beyond. Building on the success of the first Congress, this year's event was open to the public, transforming it into more than just a conference—it became a celebration of regional cooperation, skill-building, and community. The Congress focused on fostering innovation, exchanging ideas, and equipping participants with practical insights and meaningful connections.



The Congress agenda featured an exclusive programme for VIAC Ambassadors on Thursday, 8 February 2024, including a tailored workshop led by VIAC Vice-President Franz T. Schwarz. The main agenda on Friday, 9 February 2024, included engaging panel discussions on "ADR in Emerging Markets" and "New Trends in Investment Arbitration: What Role Can the Vienna Rules Play in the Region?", a keynote speech on business development, and a workshop on body language.



The main day conference was rounded off with a breathtaking dinner at the Austrian National Library.

The week concluded on Saturday, 10 February 2024, with a ballroom dancing class and the prestigious Ball of Legal Professionals—an elegant evening of celebration and networking, marking a memorable end to the event.



This year's Congress was not only an opportunity to share knowledge but also a moment to celebrate progress and the possibilities created through collaboration.

Outlook 2025

With the anticipation of our 50 years anniversary, we continue to be dedicated to expanding our reach and enhancing our services for **you**, our users.

Stay connected with us and subscribe to our newsletter and follow us on LinkedIn.

**Contact the
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Our Goals

1

Celebrating VIAC 50:

VIAC is celebrating a tradition of progress in 2025. We are dedicated to expanding and growing our excellent service for the next 50 years. We aim to be fit for the future!

2

Intensifying efficiency in our case management:

We are constantly critically reviewing and optimising our processes and will continue to do so in 2025. We are eager to receive feedback from our users so please stay in touch.

3

Strengthening global reach and thought leadership:

Through our VIAC CAN network, VIAC has significantly expanded its' reach. We vow to continue this outreach and contribute to thought - leadership in an ever-growing field.

Notes

Keep in touch



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