



Austrian Manager

Federal Chancellor of Austria (2016-2017)

Christian Kern was Federal Chancellor of the Republic of Austria and Chairman of the Austrian Social Democratic Party (SPÖ). Before entering politics for three years in 2016, he worked in the private sector for more than 20 years and held several board and C-level positions in the energy and railway industries in Austria, Turkey, Italy and France.

Mr. Kern was born in Vienna on 4th January 1966, and he graduated from an academic secondary school in Vienna's 11th district (Simmering). He then went on to study sociology, political science and communications at the University of Vienna. After working as a journalist and in the Austrian Parliament and Federal Chancellery, Mr. Kern launched a career in the energy sector in 1997. At Verbund AG, Austria's largest energy utility, he was appointed to the group's management board in 2007. He then switched to the Austrian Federal Railways Group, where he served as Chairman of the Management Board from 2010 onward. In this capacity, he also became Chairman of the Brussels-based Community of European Railways (CER) in 2014. Under Mr. Kern's leadership, the Austrian Federal Railways investigated the railway operator's role during the Nazi era in a project entitled "Suppressed Years".

In May 2016, Christian Kern succeeded Werner Faymann as Federal Chancellor. At an extraordinary federal party conference the following June, he was also elected Federal Party Chairman of the SPÖ. After the 2018 National Council elections, in which the Social Democrats lost first place, he was elected as the SPÖ parliamentary group's parliamentary group leader. In November 2018, he stepped down as party leader and resigned from the National Council.

After leaving politics, Christian Kern was Managing Partner and owner of the Vienna-based Blue Minds Company until 2022. The Blue Minds Group develops and invests in companies and technologies that focus on the energy transition and sustainable business models. Kern was also a member of the Supervisory Board of Russian state railway company RŽD from July 2019, but stepped down in 2022 due to the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Kern has been Managing Director of ELL Austria GmbH since September 2022. He is President of the European China Business Council set up by the China Europe Association for Technology and Economic Cooperation (CEATEC) and has also been Vice President of the European Forum Alpbach since October 2024.

Topics (Selection):

- Democracy – Cohesion – Are we on the right track?
- International developments
- What will tomorrow's Europe look like?
- Between tradition and transformation: policy-making in the 21st century