

INFORMATION ON THE NEW PREMISES OF THE EUROPEAN CENTRAL BANK IN FRANKFURT

NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2015 | ISSUE 9



■ CONSTRUCTION 3

CONVERSION OF THE GROSSMARKTHALLE

■ EDITORIAL 2
by Werner Studener

■ CONSTRUCTION 4
Fit-out works in the office tower

■ MEMORIAL ON THE SITE OF THE GROSSMARKTHALLE 5
The deportation of Frankfurt's Jewish citizens

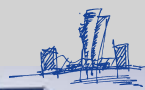
■ MEMORIAL ON THE SITE OF THE GROSSMARKTHALLE 6
Artistic concept for the memorial

■ IMPRINT 6



EUROPEAN CENTRAL BANK

EUROSYSTEM



Relocation to the new ECB premises 2014

Topping out ceremony 20 September 2010



Laying of the foundation stone 19 May 2010



Start of main construction works April 2010



Start of tendering procedure for construction works in packages and lots February 2009



Preliminary construction works Summer 2008



Issuance of building permit May 2008



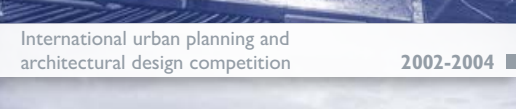
Planning phases 2006-2008



Revision phase 2005



International urban planning and architectural design competition 2002-2004



Purchase of the Grossmarkthalle site in Frankfurt 2002

EDITORIAL

Dear reader,

Since the laying of the foundation stone in May 2010, we have watched the new premises of the European Central Bank (ECB)

go up and become operational. Personally, I was impressed to how the works progressed, how the various structures developed and how their interior started to take shape with the installation of the technical infrastructure.

The final important link between the office tower and the *Grossmarkthalle* – the

“loop” – was lifted into place in three segments at the end of May. Before that, its individual components – from steel trusses to the technical installations – had already been assembled on the construction site. Last spring, we also started to furnish the buildings following completion of the installation of the technical infrastructure and the fit-out works on the standard office floors. These involved putting down carpets, fitting lights, assembling kitchenettes, installing sanitary facilities and laying cables. The very first offices to be furnished were those in the eastern wing building of the *Grossmarkthalle*, which were ready for the New ECB Premises Project Office to move into from Easter. Next to be done were all the other offices and finally the various meeting rooms.

By the summer of 2014 the construction works had reached the point where testing and commissioning could begin. Various tests and assessments were then carried out by the City authorities until the autumn.

This level of progress was only possible because of the excellent teamwork among the new premises team, which I have been responsible for since 2010 in my capacity as Director General Administration. During peak periods there were between 1,200 and 1,400 construction workers on site every day, as well as around 200 architects, engineers and planners. Everyone involved worked remarkably hard to ensure the success of the project, which was challenging because of its uniqueness and complexity. At this point, I would like to extend my warmest thanks to all those involved:

architects, planners, site supervisors, the external project management company and all construction companies.

The relocation of 2,421 workplaces began on 31 October 2014 and had already been completed by 23 November. More than 18,000 removal boxes were transported to the new premises over four consecutive weekends. Thanks to the meticulous planning by the relocation team, which consisted of ECB staff and specialist planners, as well as the efficiency of the removal company, the move went without a hitch. For this too, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to everyone involved.

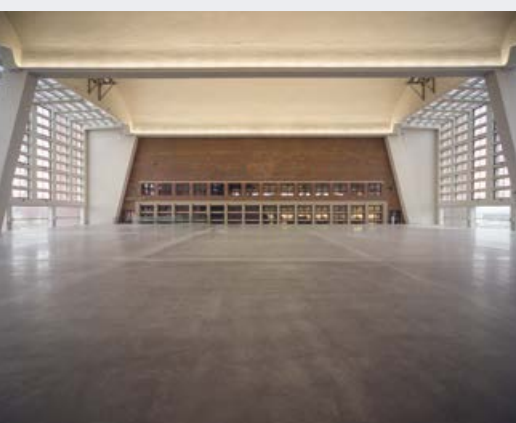
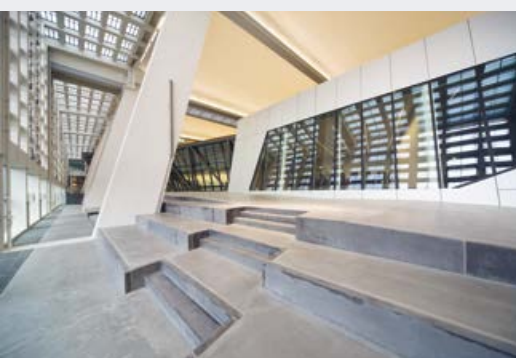
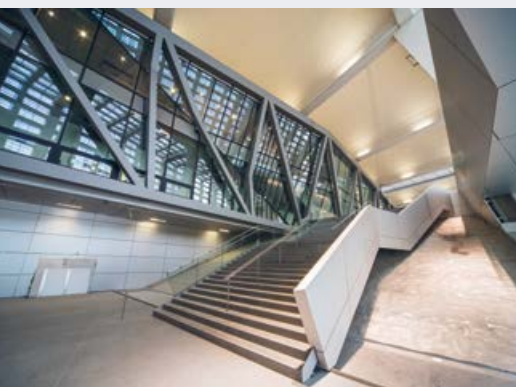
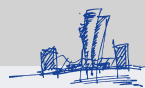
The successful realisation of a project the size of the new ECB premises is only possible if the relevant authorities are involved in the planning from the outset. For example, cooperation early on with the Frankfurt Fire Brigade enabled its needs to be accommodated during the construction phase. The timely involvement of the historic preservation authorities and the City's Energy Department facilitated the careful restoration and preservation of a historic listed building – the *Grossmarkthalle* (Frankfurt's former wholesale market hall) – in line with energy saving requirements. The former industrial site is also being transformed into a green area in the direct vicinity of Frankfurt's green belt. Since the construction site road and facilities were only removed a few weeks ago, freeing up most areas for planting, it will still be a few months – most likely summer 2015 – before the landscaping works are finished.

The memorial on the site of the *Grossmarkthalle* to commemorate the deportation of Jewish people is still under construction. Further details are provided in this newsletter, in the articles by Fritz Backhaus (Jewish Museum) and the architects.

The first meeting of the ECB's Governing Council, the top decision-making body of our institution, and the first press conference in our new building were held on 4 December last year.

I am delighted to now be working in our new “home” and hope for good neighbourly relations.

Werner Studener, Director General Administration Coordinator of the New ECB Premises project



CONSTRUCTION

Conversion of the *Grossmarkthalle*

The *Grossmarkthalle* (Frankfurt's former wholesale market hall) is a typical building of the industrial era. On account of its reinforced concrete structure, which was state-of-the-art at the time of its construction, it has been a listed building since 1972. Now, it is an integral part of the ECB's new premises.

The market hall houses the more public areas of the ECB, such as the lobby, conference area, library, staff restaurant, cafeteria and visitor centre. To make the most of the hall's magnitude, various building elements were incorporated into it on the basis of the "house-in-house" concept.

The main entrance to the ECB's new headquarters is beneath the distinct entrance building, which, looking at it from *Sonnemannstrasse*, is in the western third of the *Grossmarkthalle*. Old and new are clearly distinguishable, with the carefully restored market hall standing alongside new structures of glass, steel and aluminium.

Conference area

As one of the house-in-house building elements, the conference area is a separate enclosed unit. Its visible anthracite-coloured steel beams, silver-grey aluminium panels and large windows contrast with the pale interior surfaces of the restored market hall. This new long building that stands aslant in the *Grossmarkthalle* houses ten meeting rooms over two levels, which can be subdivided in some cases. Each room can hold between 40 and 80 people.

The floor in the conference area is laid with blue, grey and light-coloured carpet tiles, arranged in a pattern specially conceived by the architects COOP HIMMELB(L)AU. The meeting rooms are equipped with modern conference tables with an eggshell-toned finish and black ergonomic chairs. From the main entrance, there is a wide set of stairs leading up to the meeting rooms, which is flanked by cascades of water. This helps to regulate the climate in the market hall. The large open spaces in the *Grossmarkthalle*, the structure and facades of which have been restored, are kept at a moderate temperature via an underfloor system of pipes that uses the excess heat generated by the computer centre, while the conference area has a standard air conditioning system.

The characteristic appearance of the *Grossmarkthalle* can also be seen from the inside: both the concrete surfaces of the roof shells and the concrete grid facades on

the north and south sides have been carefully restored and replastered in an eggshell colour. As the repurposing of the market hall involved incorporating the new facilities as separate buildings, several aspects of its interior can still be perceived. For example, the large open space behind the conference area in the eastern third of the hall gives a sense of its height and its width of 50 m. From both the cafeteria and the visitor centre, the northern facade of the *Grossmarkthalle* and the internal facade of its western wing building are still visible: the concrete surfaces, which are covered with pale plaster, are complemented by the dark exposed concrete surfaces and brick facade of the wing building, which has been carefully restored to its former splendour. The open spaces inside the *Grossmarkthalle* are laid with terrazzo flooring, harking back to the building's industrial past.

Western wing building/library

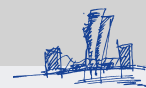
The carefully renovated rooms on the ground and first floors of the wing building at the western end of the *Grossmarkthalle* house the library. The hallway leading to the former checkout area has been restored to its original colours and is now an area for people to read and work in.

The rooms are equipped with the latest technology and modern furniture. Owing to the lower height of the rooms in the wing building, it was decided not to install dropped ceilings. As a result, the technical installations are on display and also serve as a reminder of the *Grossmarkthalle's* industrial past.

The plaster on the walls of what used to be the foyer of the market traders' offices on the ground floor of the western wing building was removed, revealing Martin Elsaesser's original fishbone design for the brickwork. Last year the bricks and pointing were carefully repaired and restored, and the paternoster is now fully operational again.

Press centre

The entrance building, which projects out of the *Grossmarkthalle*, houses the rooms used for the ECB's press conferences: a large conference room, a smaller auditorium and workstations for journalists to use during the press conferences. It is here that the President of the ECB regularly announces the interest rate decisions of the ECB's Governing Council. The press centre can be accessed from the main entrance via a separate set of lifts.



The press conference room has a large panoramic window that is curved in two directions. It was not produced using flat glass panels, but rather using panels with a shell-shaped curvature. The walls and ceilings of the room are covered in aluminium sheets, which, on account of their form, fulfil the acoustic requirements for such a room. The entire area is covered with hard-wearing, steam-treated false acacia parquet flooring.

The room is furnished with blue chairs, which can be rearranged and, if necessary, supplemented by conference tables with a pale finish. For example, the large room can either be laid out with rows of seating or used for seminars. The tables and chairs on the podium are light-grey/silver in colour.

CONSTRUCTION

Fit-out works in the office tower

The fit-out works in the office tower were carried out alongside the installation of the technical infrastructure, which included the heating system, electrical installations and fire protection systems. In April 2013 work began on furnishing the offices, meeting rooms and kitchenettes. With the relocation complete, around 2,600 of the maximum of 2,900 workplaces are now occupied.

Offices

The high-rise consists of two towers and an atrium, which forms a structural link and enables people to move between them via platforms and bridges. The south tower is 163 m high at its lowest point on the south-western part of its roof. Level 41 is the highest office floor and is where the council meeting room is located, while the floors above it contain technical installations, such as the ventilation system. The north tower measures 185 m at its highest point on the north-eastern part of its roof and has 45 floors.

The high-rise houses the vast majority of workplaces and internal meeting rooms. Owing to its structural and spatial design, it provides a working environment that meets various functional requirements. The layout of the office floors offers a high level of flexibility with regard to office configurations, which range from single offices to team offices and are organised based on the needs of the individual business areas.

The offices are fitted with floor-to-ceiling energy-efficient glass elements that consist of three layers: the outer glass panels are covered with a coating that reduces the amount of sunlight entering the offices. In addition, the sun screens/glare shields are programmed in such a way that the amount of direct sunlight and glare on the workplaces is reduced in all weather conditions and seasons. An independently controlled open-

ing mechanism (*Parallel-Abstell-Lüftungselement (PALE)*) also provides the possibility of natural ventilation in the offices and meeting rooms. It is integrated into the facade so that it is invisible from the outside, but visible on the inside, and allows fresh air into the rooms through the vents that it creates. If the vents are open, the air conditioning in the offices switches off automatically. The building's technical installations can be controlled both centrally and individually by the occupants of the office.

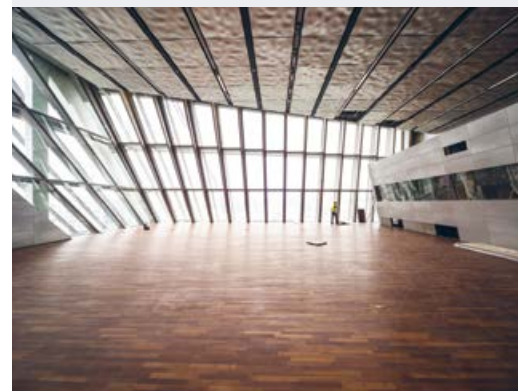
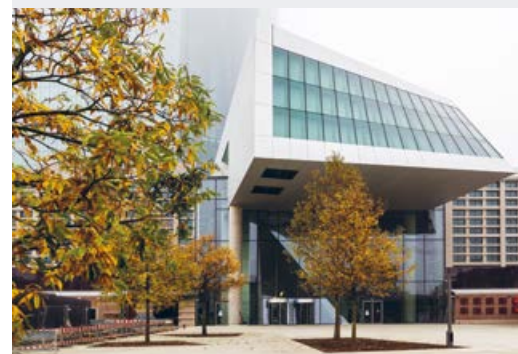
The transparent walls of the offices allow natural light into the corridors and foster an open working environment that is conducive to communication. The office floors are light and neutral in colour, with pale grey, slightly mottled carpets, while the office furniture is modern, practical and simple, in keeping with this sober decor. In order to fulfil the ergonomic requirements for office work, the desks and chairs are height-adjustable. All desks, cupboards and sideboards are light and unobtrusive in colour, and furthermore meet both ecological requirements and current workplace standards.

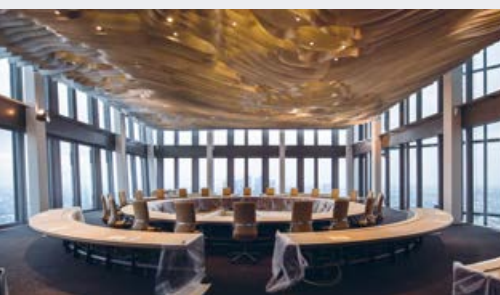
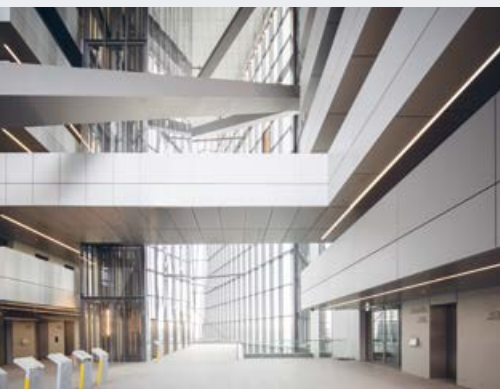
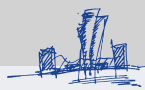
Communal areas

Every floor in the two towers has a central, open-plan kitchenette, which also serves as an informal meeting point. The colour scheme is based on the rainbow, for example, the kitchenette on the 4th floor of the south tower and the 28th floor of the north tower is green and yellow, while the kitchenette on the 25th floor of the south tower is a mixture of blues. The colours of the chairs in the multizone areas also offer a degree of contrast. Overall, the office environment is both functional and friendly, fostering teamwork and interaction at every level.

Atrium

The ECB's aim of promoting internal communication was one of the criteria in





the international architectural competition. With the atrium, which connects the two towers, COOP HIMMELB(L)AU found a particularly novel way to fulfil this requirement.

From the main entrance, the atrium can be reached by walking through the *Grossmarkthalle* and the connecting building. There are three sets of lifts up to the office floors: the express lifts in the atrium and the local lifts in both the north and south towers. The express lifts only stop at the interchange platforms inside the atrium. These platforms promote interaction between staff. On several levels, there are small groups of chairs which can be used for brief informal meetings.

Council meeting room

The council meeting room for the top decision-making body of the ECB is on the 41st floor of the south tower. The offices of the members of the Executive Board, the Governing Council and the General Council are on the floors below it, both in the north and the south tower.

The council meeting room has a fixed round conference table in the middle of the room, as well as additional curved table elements round the edges of the room. A maximum of 36 people can sit around the central conference table. This is where the regular decisions on interest rates for the euro area are taken. From the atrium, the council meeting room can be reached via a separate, glass-walled lobby. The decor of the entire area is warm and neutral in colour. While the council meeting room has a dark carpet for acoustic reasons, the lobby area in front of it has steam-treated false acacia parquet flooring.

What makes this room unique is the design of its ceiling, which is described by the architect as the “Europe ceiling”, as it depicts a stylised map of Europe, like on the euro banknotes. The ceiling itself contains the lighting and other technical features, and, in conjunction with other materials, ensures good acoustics. The room has windows on three sides, which provide a view of Frankfurt to the west, north and south.

MEMORIAL ON THE SITE OF THE GROSSMARKTHALLE

The deportation of Frankfurt’s Jewish citizens

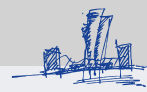
Between 1941 and 1945 the *Geheime Staatspolizei* (Gestapo – secret state police) commandeered the *Grossmarkthalle* as an assembly point for the deportation of Jewish citizens. From there, almost 10,000 people were forcibly put on trains that transported them to concentration and extermination camps, where they were then murdered. As far as we know today, only 179 people survived.

In 1930 over 30,000 Jewish people were living in Frankfurt am Main – it was one of the largest Jewish communities in Germany and had left its mark on the city’s development over the centuries. After the seizure of power by the National Socialists, these people were increasingly vilified, terrorised and robbed of their existence. By 1939 over half of Frankfurt’s Jewish population had managed to flee into exile. In rural areas, however, the victims of anti-Semitism decided to converge on the city in the hope that its anonymity would offer them protection and a better chance of emigration. In 1941

there were almost 10,000 Jewish citizens still living in Frankfurt.

From October 1941 the Gestapo arranged the deportation of these people to concentration and extermination camps, and rented the basement of the *Grossmarkthalle* as the assembly point in Frankfurt. It was there that Members of the Gestapo and Finance Ministry officials, as well as officials of other city and state authorities, awaited all those being persecuted for being Jewish. Upon arrival, they had to hand over 50 *Reichsmark* for their train travel, as well as their identity cards and a declaration of their wealth. They were also subjected to a full body search. Once these degrading and abusive ordeals were over, they waited in a large room in the basement, which had been lined with mattresses, before being put on trains. This room, which has been retained in its original state, will form part of the memorial.

As all this was happening, the market operators continued to go about their daily business on the ground floor of the *Grossmarkthalle*.



The first mass deportation took place on 19 October 1941. Over 1,100 people, living mainly in Frankfurt's Westend district, were collected from their homes early in the morning and publicly herded through the city to the *Grossmarkthalle*. Of all those who, on that day, were put on trains headed for the Łódź Ghetto, only three survived the liberation.

By September 1942 there had been a further nine mass deportations, so that within a few months a large part of Frankfurt's Jewish community had been forcibly driven out.

Up to 1945 smaller groups of people were deported on a regular basis, the main

victims being Jewish partners of "mixed marriages" or their children, who until then had been spared.

The last deportations took place on 14 February 1945 (301 victims) and on 15 March 1945 (five victims) – only 11 days before the US troops arrived in Frankfurt. By the end of the war, the Jewish community that had once been so influential had been completely wiped out – a mere 200 people were liberated by the US Army in Frankfurt am Main.

Fritz Backhaus, Deputy Director of the Jewish Museum

MEMORIAL ON THE SITE OF THE GROSSMARKTHALLE

Artistic concept for the memorial

For decades, the *Grossmarkthalle* was an everyday place at the heart of Frankfurt where people used to buy and sell fruit and vegetables. It was built as a wholesale market hall and, looking at the site, you would never imagine that it had been used for anything else, not least that it was rented by the Gestapo between 1941 and 1945 as a base for organising and carrying out the deportations of Jewish citizens from Frankfurt. The question was how to tie these events into a visible part of the site and thereby ensure that they are not forgotten.

Around the site, parts of the building elements used for the deportations have been retained. For example, in the grounds of the market hall, there is still a section of the original access ramp, down which Frankfurt's Jewish citizens were herded into the basement, as well as the room in which they were held. To the south of the ramp, a signal box and railway tracks serve as a reminder of the deportations, as well as a footbridge over the tracks from which people used to bid farewell to their loved ones or simply look on with idle curiosity.

In order to integrate these individual elements into a single narrative, it was necessary to link them both physically and contextually, and thereby enable visitors to reconstruct events in their minds. Hence, a new path running from Sonnemannstrasse on the northern side of the site traces the route Frankfurt's Jewish citizens had to take once they had been summoned for deportation. Leading off this path to the side is a new ramp, which, echoing the original access ramp, runs into the grounds of what is now the European Central Bank and creates a visual reference to the basement of the *Grossmarkthalle*. From the ramp, the path continues along to the railway tracks, signal box and footbridge.

Such reminders of the deportations are made all the more relevant by the personal stories of those who witnessed the events, which can be seen all around the memorial in the form of engravings. The testimonies from victims and observers give visitors and passers-by insights into the deportations from a range of perspectives as they chance upon these accounts, gradually taking in the significance of the memorial.

Marcus Kaiser and Tobias Katz



Fritz Backhaus, Deputy Director of the Jewish Museum



Markus Kaiser and Tobias Katz, KatzKaiser

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 Website: www.ecb.europa.eu
 Photos: Robert Metsch, Norbert Miguletz
 Print: Imprimerie Centrale, Luxembourg
 ISSN: 1830-964X (online version)