



25 years [Vienna International Centre](#)



United Nations Information Service (UNIS) Vienna

“FIELD VOICE” OF THE UN AND PROMOTER OF VIENNA-BASED OFFICES

The main task of the United Nations Information Service (UNIS) in Vienna is to serve as the United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) for Austria, Hungary, Slovakia and Slovenia. UNIS also provides information support to the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna (UNOV), the United Nations *Office on Drugs and Crime* (UNODC) and other United Nations organizations based in Vienna. The office assists in providing press, radio, television and photographic coverage of the activities and meetings of the substantive United Nations units and supports the coverage of other United Nations conferences and events at Vienna. In order to fulfil these tasks, it has to maintain close working relationships with media representatives, government officials, educational institutions and non-governmental organizations. UNIS also looks after the Visitors Service, which organizes lectures and conducts guided tours of the Vienna International Centre. (See separate information sheet).

DUAL FUNCTION: UNIS AND UNIC

The role of a United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) as the “field voice” of the Department of Public Information (DPI) is to promote an informed understanding of the work and goals of the United Nations to local audiences around the world. In this sense, UNIS Vienna serves as the “field voice” for Austria, Hungary, Slovakia and Slovenia. Desks officers for the four respective client countries monitor the national media on a daily basis and prepare press reviews of the work of the United Nations. In order to raise awareness on specific issues, meetings and conferences that the organization deals with, information in the form of press releases, brochures, flyers, posters, audio and video material, as well as other information materials are distributed to local representatives of the media, government, academia and non-governmental organizations. UNIS staff also gives presentations on the work of the organization to local audiences and places opinion/editorial articles by the Secretary-General and other senior officials on specific issues in the local media.

As its name implies, UNIS provides information service to the Vienna-based United Nations Secretariat programmes. Its role is to assist these programmes in communicating their activities to a worldwide audience. UNIS Vienna follows the overall mandate of the Department of Public Information (DPI) to help fulfil the substantive purposes of the United Nations by strategically communicating the activities and concerns of the Organization to achieve the greatest public impact. In addition to the already mentioned communication tools, such as press releases and other print, audio and video information material, UNIS also organizes press briefings on specific issues or to launch reports, surveys or analyses completed or underway by the Vienna-based United Nations organizations. UNIS also implements special events and information campaigns aimed at specific audiences, such as students, journalists and teachers fora. In the light of the above, cooperation with local partners such as media, governmental agencies, non-governmental organizations, academia, local authorities and the business community is absolutely essential for UNIS.

PRIORITY THEMES

The Millennium Declaration laid out eight Millennium Development Goals aimed at significantly improving human conditions by 2015. The Goals are meant to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, achieve universal literacy, end discrimination against women, reduce child mortality and improve maternal health, combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, ensure environmental sustainability and develop a global partnership for development. Within these Goals are certain themes that are being highlighted every year, like poverty eradication, sustainable development and counter-terrorism. In order to raise awareness and promote specific topics and issues, the United Nations also schedules commemorative events and observances such as conferences and meetings, special decades, years, weeks and days. In the year 2004, for example, the United Nations observes the International Year to Commemorate the Struggle against Slavery and its Abolition, and the International Year of Rice.

Due to the fact that UNIS Vienna services the Vienna-based Secretariat bodies, the Office's priority communication themes also include the United Nations work in drug control, crime prevention, peaceful uses of outer space and harmonizing international trade law. As an information centre, UNIS Vienna lays a special emphasis on themes of most relevance and interest to the local audiences in the four client countries. Because three out of four client countries are focusing their attention on NATO and EU-related issues, UNIS Vienna also tries to promote the global character of the United Nations as a multinational organization.



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