

Information note

The in-person segment of the Fifth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament (5WCSP) will be held at the Austria Center Vienna (ACV) on 7 and 8 September 2021. It will be preceded by the Summit of Women Speakers of Parliament on 6 September, and followed by the First Global Parliamentary Summit on Counter-Terrorism on 9 September. The Speakers' Conference will focus on the overarching theme of *Parliamentary leadership for more effective multilateralism that delivers peace and sustainable development for the people and planet*.

The Conference is being organized by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the Parliament of Austria, in close cooperation with the United Nations. All arrangements relating to the holding of the event are being made under the guidance of a Preparatory Committee composed of Speakers of Parliament and members of the IPU Executive Committee.

This note is intended to provide a preliminary overview of the general organizational aspects of the Conference.

Schedule of meetings

A **plenary debate** on the overall theme of the Conference will be held in the Plenary Hall at the ACV on Tuesday, 7 and Wednesday, 8 September. It will run from 09:30 to 12:30 and from 14:30 to 18:00 on 7 September, and from 09:30 to 13:00 and from 14:30 to 16:30 on 8 September, concluding with the adoption of an outcome document for the in-person segment of the 5WCSP. The plenary debate will be conducted in a Doha-style interactive format (more information to follow in due course). The United Nations Secretary-General is expected to participate in the opening of the Conference on 7 September.

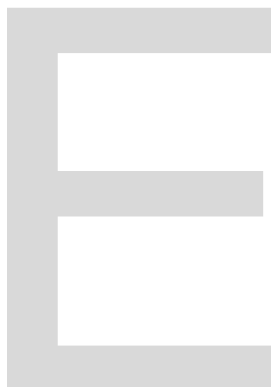
A **group photo** of the Speakers will be taken during the lunch break on the first day.

Five **panel discussions** will be held over the course of the two days and will address subjects that are linked to the overall theme of the Conference (see the Conference programme). Conference Reports will also be made available and will be posted on the event page at <https://www.ipu.org/event/fifth-world-conference-speakers-parliament-september-2021>.

During the lunch break on 8 September, a side event, organized by the IPU, IAEA and CTBTO, will take place.

A limited number of rooms at the ACV will be available for **bilateral meetings**, with bookings made through the IPU Secretariat.

The Parliament of Austria will host social events during the Conference.



Participation

The Conference will include the following categories of participants:

Speakers

Invitations shall be extended to the Presiding Officers of all parliaments that are Members of the IPU, as well as of other parliaments of sovereign States that meet the IPU's definition¹ of a national parliament. In the case of bicameral parliaments, invitations will be addressed to the Presiding Officers of both Chambers.

Observers

- Presidents of the main regional and international parliamentary assemblies and organizations (Associate Members and Permanent Observers of the IPU)
- Permanent Representatives of Member States to the United Nations in Vienna

Special guests

High-ranking officials of the United Nations and other international figures will be invited to address the meeting on specific topics.

Size and composition of delegations

In light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and social distancing regulations in place in Austria, the size of delegations to the 5WCSP is limited to four persons (Speaker plus three others, MPs and/or staff) or six persons in the case of bicameral parliaments. Observer delegations should be composed of no more than two persons. Seating arrangements at desks will be made according to this formula.

Declaration

At the end of the Conference, participants will be invited to adopt an outcome document, which will have been drafted by a Preparatory Committee and submitted to all parliaments in advance of the Conference for comments.

Cultural programme

In order to allow inter-parliamentary dialogue to continue outside the formal setting of the Conference, Viennese culture and hospitality will provide an additional basis for the Conference and be an integral part of the programme, as well as of the formal reception. For private guests accompanying Speakers of Parliament, an optional programme will be available showcasing the history, beauty and cultural opportunities of Vienna and its surroundings. Preparations for this programme are underway.

Languages

The plenary meeting of the Conference will have interpretation into all six official languages of the United Nations (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish), as well as German. Speakers addressing the Conference in any other language will need to have their individual statements translated into one of the six official languages.

Interpretation in the panel discussions will be in Arabic, English, French, German and Spanish.

Registration

The deadline for registrations is **30 July 2021**.

All invited participants are encouraged to use the IPU online registration system, which will be operational as of **4 June 2021** from the event webpage at <https://www.ipu.org/event/fifth-world-conference-speakers-parliament-september-2021>. Only one person should be designated as the delegation coordinator and have access to the system.

Should delegations encounter any difficulties, they are requested to contact the registration service at postbox@ipu.org. If, for any reason, delegations are unable to register online, they may send an email to the same address, or a fax to +41 22 919 41 60.

¹ The Inter-Parliamentary Council, in 1993, defined a parliament as a "national assembly which, according to domestic law, is endowed as a minimum with power to legislate and oversee the Executive".

A provisional list of participants will be compiled based on registrations received. Delegates will have an opportunity to check the accuracy of this list before the end of the Conference.

Entry passes

Due to strict security measures in effect at the Austria Center Vienna, every delegate to the Conference will need a 5WCSP identity badge in order to enter the ACV premises.

Accommodation

The Austrian Parliament has made provisional block bookings in several hotels in Vienna - see website of the host Parliament at <https://www.ipu2021vienna.at/> or Annex for more information) - both in the city centre and close to the Conference venue.

September is a particularly busy month for hotels in Vienna. Delegates are therefore advised to make their hotel reservations as soon as possible. Delegations from countries with an embassy or permanent mission in Vienna are invited to contact them, as they are accustomed to receiving delegations to UN meetings and handling hotel reservations. In keeping with the practice of hotels in Vienna, only reservations made with a credit card guarantee will be confirmed.

Immigration formalities – visas

Austria is a member of the Schengen Area.

Please note that nationals of certain countries require a Schengen visa to enter Austria. A list of these countries is available from the Federal Ministry of the Interior at:

https://www.bmi.gv.at/202/Fremdenpolizei_und_Grenzkontrolle/Visumpflichtige_Laender/start.aspx
(website available in German only, although the documents linked to include an English translation).

You will find relevant information and practical references concerning entry into Austria or the Schengen Area as well as information about the application process at:

<https://www.bmeia.gv.at/en/travel-stay/entry-and-residence-in-austria/entrance-and-residence/visa/>

You can find the Austrian representation in your country at:

<http://www.bmeia.gv.at/en/embassies-consulates/search-for-austrian-representations/>

We advise you to apply for your visa in good time – in any case by 30 July 2021 at the latest – via the Austrian diplomatic representation competent for your place of residence.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there are currently additional measures in place. Please find detailed information in the annex "Public Health Information".

National security officers / firearms requests

If national security officers travelling with Speakers intend to carry firearms during their stay in Austria, the following procedure applies:

- For security officers of Speakers from non-EU Member States, the competent Austrian embassy abroad will – provided it receives the request in good time – issue a permit entitling a national security officer to enter Austria with a firearm and to carry it during their stay. The permit must be carried when crossing the border and will be checked and completed by the border guards.
- For national security officers accompanying Speakers from EU Member States, no special permit is required for the import, possession and carrying of firearms. However, the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs must be notified thereof by note verbale no later than two weeks before their arrival in Austria (Protocol Department of the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs, abti1@bmeia.gv.at, cc: Austrian Parliament werner.autericky@parlament.gv.at and Federal Ministry of the Interior/Federal Agency for State Protection and Counter Terrorism abt3@bvt.gv.at). The note verbale should include the personal details of each national security officer (date and place of birth, passport number and expiry date) as well as the type and serial number of the weapon, the amount of ammunition carried, the date of arrival and departure and the border crossing points.

Please note that only handguns and only one firearm per security officer will be authorized.

Radio frequencies

If radio equipment is to be used during the Speaker's visit, an application to use specific frequencies must be submitted. Permission to use such frequencies must be requested by note verbale sent to the Protocol Department of the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs (abti1@bmeia.gv.at) no later than two weeks before arrival in Austria. The requested frequency as well as a possible alternative frequency, the transmission power, the time frame and approximate geographical indications (i.e. province) should be specified in the note verbale.

Flight clearance

Delegations arriving in government, military or custom aircraft must request diplomatic overflight and landing clearances by note verbale sent to the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs (exportkontrolle@bmeia.gv.at, cc: abti1@bmeia.gv.at). The note verbale must include the following information: arrival date and time, handling company, aircraft registration number, flight number (if applicable) and full details of all passengers as well as their passport numbers.

Security

Security at the ACV and during the social events will be subject to strict criteria and regulations. One such regulation obliges all Conference participants to display their identity badges visibly upon entering and at all times while on ACV premises and at the sites of social events. No weapons are allowed at the conference venue and at the sites of social events. More information concerning security will be provided in the coming months.

Transportation

As with previous IPU Speakers' Conferences, transport and escort arrangements are the responsibility of the respective delegations. Please coordinate with your embassy or permanent mission. The Austrian Parliament will provide escorted bus transfers to and from the social events.

In the further course of our preparation, we will inform you about relevant updates by email. Please also regularly visit our website <https://www.ipu.org/event/fifth-world-conference-speakers-parliament-september-2021> and the Conference Website of the Austrian Parliament <https://www.ipu2021vienna.at/>.

PUBLIC HEALTH INFORMATION

last updated: 20 May 2021

The Austrian Parliament will take all necessary measures to guarantee a safe and comfortable stay in Austria during the Conference. Therefore, we have included comprehensive security and health provisions in our planning in order to meet the necessary requirements. Nevertheless, we will need the **support of all participants** in our joint endeavour for a safe and successful Conference, including early registration, respect for the COVID safety measures in force, and implementation of our regulations.

Please note that the COVID regulations are under constant monitoring and subject to ongoing developments. We will communicate major changes on the Conference websites.

Current public health situation in Austria

After an extended lockdown period, the public health situation in Austria is improving. On 19 May 2021, the most recent regulations regarding the COVID safety measures came into force. As a result, following the reopening of shops and service providers, Austrian gastronomy, cultural institutions, cultural and recreational businesses, and sports venues have also reopened.

Proof of a low epidemiological risk must, however, be presented for access to certain areas of public life, including hotels, restaurants or bars, evidenced by a negative coronavirus test, proof of vaccination or a certificate of past COVID-19 infection.

Please find detailed information about the reopening steps as well as FAQs regarding the coronavirus and other relevant information on the website of the Austrian Ministry of Health (<https://www.sozialministerium.at/en/Coronavirus/Information-in-English.html>).

Entry regulations for Austria

Due to the ongoing pandemic, Austria has entry and travel regulations in force which stipulate clear restrictions and requirements.

However, exceptions to these regulations apply, for example, if there are compelling reasons for the travel in the interest of the Republic of Austria or if the travel is performed for professional/business purposes.

As a result, **Speakers of Parliaments and their delegations (1+3, or 2+4 for bicameral parliaments) who are registered to participate** in the 13th Summit of Women Speakers of Parliament and/or the Fifth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament **will be permitted to travel to and enter Austria for the purpose of the Conference**. For further accompanying persons, please contact your respective embassies concerning travel and entry requirements.

Please note that it will be necessary to explain and prove the reason for your travel to the authorities when entering the country. We therefore strongly recommend **carrying a printed version of the invitation and/or conference registration with you when travelling**. In order to facilitate the entry procedure, we will communicate the list of registered delegations to the relevant Austrian authorities in advance, with the agreement of the participants. You will receive more information about data protection during registration itself, which will be processed by the IPU.

If your travel to Austria involves **transit** through other countries, we advise you to contact your respective embassies in advance to prepare necessary entry/transit requirements. Furthermore, it is advisable to contact the relevant airlines in advance to be informed about potential boarding requirements.

In the interest of public health and security among the international community, we also strongly advise delegations to undergo a correctly performed and recognized COVID test before their journey to Austria and to carry with them a negative molecular biological test certificate for SARS-CoV-2 (in German or English).

In any event, **proof of a low epidemiological risk (a negative coronavirus test, proof of vaccination or a certificate of past COVID-19 infection) must be presented for access to hotels, restaurants and other areas of public life in Austria, on the basis of the current regulations. You will, therefore, need corresponding certifications for your stay in Austria.**

Coronavirus safety measures at the Conference venue

The Austrian Parliament will define and arrange situation-adjusted coronavirus safety measures at the Austria Center Vienna (ACV). More detailed information will be announced at a later date.

In light of the continuously evolving situation, we are making every effort with all of the authorities involved to provide frequent updates.