

# Master of Science (MSc) in Digital International Affairs



## Where Diplomacy Meets Data: Preparing International Experts for the Digital Era

**As digital technologies reshape diplomacy, security and global governance, international affairs require a new kind of expertise. DA alumna Sophie Ernest explains why the MSc DIA equips graduates with the skills needed to navigate and shape international politics in the digital age.**



"I am delighted to support the Diplomatic Akademie Wien – Vienna School of International Studies (DA) not only as an alumna, but also because programmes like the MSc in Digital International Affairs embody an education that continuously reimagines the discipline of international relations for the digital era. This programme, in particular, ties in the analysis of foreign and security policy with hands-on expertise in big data, cybersecurity, digital diplomacy and international law – a combination that gives graduates a clear competitive edge.

In many emerging professional domains at the intersection of technology, digitalisation, public administration, development, and politics, this very combination of skills is increasingly sought after: on the one hand, a profound understanding of international processes and institutions, and on the other, the assured application of – or collaboration with – digital technologies and platforms. This applies to careers ranging from ministries and international organisations to development cooperation and the executive bodies of regulatory authorities such as the Austrian Regulatory Authority for Broadcasting and Telecommunications (KommAustria and RTR), where media regulation, platform oversight, data flows, funding mechanisms and network regulation have long become core responsibilities.

From my own experience, I can say that at the international level, negotiations are increasingly shaped by issues that can hardly be addressed without a deep understanding of the digital dimension – for example in dealing with major technology platforms, safeguarding democratic public spheres, or regulating global data flows. When the new head of the British foreign intelligence service MI6 compares the power of large platform companies to that of states, this clearly illustrates how questions of sovereignty and security are now also negotiated in the digital realm – and how essential it is to develop a well-trained sensitivity to these issues.

The MSc in Digital International Affairs responds precisely to this reality. It not only conveys the opportunities and risks that digitalisation creates in diplomacy, law, security and the economy, but also enables students to apply modern digital tools in practice – for example methods of data analysis and artificial intelligence. Anyone who later works at institutions such as the RTR, in ministries, international organisations or the tech sector at the interface of regulation and policy needs the ability to translate technical details into political strategies, and vice versa.

For these reasons, I support the education offered by the DA, and in particular the MSc in Digital International Affairs: because it trains the next generation of experts who think international politics, technological development and social responsibility together – and who remain capable of effective action both in negotiations and in regulatory practice."

To learn more about the MSc DIA programme, visit [www.da-vienna.ac.at/DIA](http://www.da-vienna.ac.at/DIA).

**Sophie Ernest** studied Global World Affairs at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., media studies at the University of Vienna, and completed the Diploma Programme at the DA. After having started her career in the Austrian public administration, she became Head of Communications at the Federation of Austrian Industries, Managing Director of the UBIT Academy incite, and currently serves as Director Competence Center Media at Austria's Media Regulatory Authority, Rundfunk und Telekom Regulierungs-GmbH (RTR).