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## **Analytical Review**

# **Reforms of Diplomatic Agencies in the Face of New Foreign Policy Challenges**

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Center for advanced governance (CAG) presents this analytical review of reforming diplomatic agencies based on the transformation experience of the diplomatic service in different countries over the past ten years. This review describes the global and national drivers of reforms, the details of their preparation and implementations, and the best practices applied by diplomatic agencies seeking to adapt to changing international foreign policies.

### **Center for Advanced Governance (CAG)**

is an analytical and research center created in 2018 to promote the principles of evidence-based policymaking in Russia and support the development and incorporation of changes to improve the governance system, including changes caused by the digital transformation of the economy, politics, and society.

The Center researches the issues of the public administration systems and political and economic institutions in Russia and other post-Soviet states, prepares analytical reports, reviews, and executive summaries, and communicates research findings to government authorities, business, academia, and experts.

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY<sup>1</sup>

Unlike other government agencies, the diplomatic service is often associated with conservatism. Indeed, diplomats are often unwilling to embrace fast changes. Firstly, their **work is governed by centuries-old norms and traditions** that have emerged and are followed for the sake of greater predictability in international relations. Secondly, diplomatic agencies are **large and extensive bureaucratic organizations** with a vast network of offices overseas, making it challenging to implement changes.

Nevertheless, in recent years, many attempts have been made to reform diplomatic agencies. As a result, a sufficient number of case studies have been accumulated for comparative cross-country analysis. This review is an attempt to examine the case studies of diplomatic service reforms, focusing on how the agencies use tools to respond to new foreign policy challenges within their change programs. We have addressed reforms carried out in diplomatic departments in 11 countries (Netherlands, Germany, Great Britain, Uzbekistan, New Zealand, Canada, Australia, Denmark, France, USA, and Kazakhstan) from 2010 to 2020.

To compare the reforms, we have identified **two drivers of change** that cause the diplomatic service transformation. *National drivers* reflect the specifics of the situation in each particular country that led to the reform. *Global drivers* are global challenges that have a similar impact on all governments and their diplomatic agencies.

Within states, the wish to cut costs or get a greater return on the funds allocated for diplomacy has often become the **national driver** of the MFA modernization in 2010-2020. This wish can arise both in a single department and at the government level as part of larger-scale reforms. New initiatives can also be driven by a new government seeking to boost its foreign policy profile by making efforts that raise public awareness.

The national context affects the **sustainability and quality of reform implementation**. The analysis showed that factors contributing to the sustainability of the reform include:

- integration of the previous MFA reform experience into a new transformation program;
- involvement of stakeholders and beneficiaries, both internal and external, in preparing and implementing the reform;
- reform consolidation at the non-political level of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) to insure against the risks associated with a change of political course;
- the coherence of the MFA reform goals and the country's strategic goals;
- putting in place the reform management mechanism within the MFA system.

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The review highlights **three global foreign policy challenges** that are driving changes in diplomatic agencies:

- Economization, the growing influence of economic factors on international relations;
- Communication, the transformation of the global communication environment; and
- Coordination, the increasing density and complexity of ties between states.

Based on the experience of reforms in 11 countries, we have identified how diplomatic agencies can respond to these global challenges. **Economization has a crucial impact on the reform of diplomatic departments:** efforts to respond to this challenge were made the vast majority of case studies.

- Most states **expand MFA's powers in foreign economic activities**. Some develop an economic branch within the MFA, and others transfer specific responsibilities from the outside. The basic idea behind such measures is to ensure a closer link between foreign policy and foreign economic functions within the government system.
- Another trend is **to reconfigure the network of diplomatic missions based on foreign economic priorities**. The MFA would reallocate diplomatic resources in favor of priority countries and regions by changing the staff, opening or closing missions, searching for new forms of diplomatic presence, and creating tools for the prompt assessment of needs.
- The third response to the challenge of economization is to **expand communication with the private sector**. For this purpose, the diplomatic agencies ensure greater openness of diplomats to business representatives and improve the services that can be used by companies involved in foreign economic activity.

**Communication** as a challenge has encouraged diplomatic agencies **to look for new channels and formats of dealing with both domestics and foreign audiences:**

- Dealing with a *domestic audience*, diplomatic agencies have worked for greater outreach, creating dialogue, and better handling public requests. These efforts are intended to raise public awareness, garner support for foreign policy, and receive feedback.
- As for a *foreign audience*, the diplomatic reforms involved greater use of digital tools. The development of digital diplomacy included the systematization of diplomatic missions' activities on social media, restructuring and changing communication departments' approaches, and the launch of online thematic resources.

**Coordination** as a challenge is associated with the MFA's loss of exclusivity on implementing the state's foreign policy role: non-diplomatic agencies have been increasingly involved in international activities. While the general trend of responding to this challenge does not imply regaining such exclusivity, **the MFA**

**seeks to streamline other departments' foreign policy activities.** As part of the reforms, the following tools are used for this purpose:

- Developing the **embassy-as-a-platform** model is aimed at encouraging cooperation among agencies represented in the host country and making the MFA as the owner of the platform responsible for all support services.
- Positioning the MFA as a provider of **support services for the whole government** is aimed at facilitating civil servants' international activities. In particular, this includes services related to information, education, and business travel support.
- **Developing mechanisms for interagency mobility** enables the MFA and other departments to exchange seconded employees on a temporary basis. In Europe, mobility mechanisms are also used for exchanges between national governments and the EU integration structures.



# INTRODUCTION

The functions of a diplomatic agency (a foreign ministry, foreign office, etc.) as part of the government system differ from those of other government bodies. Most of diplomats' work is related to operations outside their country. The laws of some countries, e.g., the USA, Germany, Philippines, some Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries, define the diplomatic service as a particular type of the civil service<sup>2</sup>. In Russia, as in many other countries, the diplomatic service has no special status, but it must comply with a specific procedure for hiring and assessing its servants and special requirements for secrecy and workflow related to long-term overseas assignments.

These particular features of the diplomatic service have influenced reforms in this area. On the one hand, the transformation of the diplomatic service and any other government agencies is fuelled by the need to meet public administration challenges, such as bureaucratization, increasing government spending, and a high staff turnover. On the other hand, such transformation is prompted by challenges related to global changes in international relations and foreign policy.

While the internal problems of the diplomatic service are unique in each country at any given moment, the global challenges are relevant for most diplomatic agencies and remain significant in the medium and long term. The need to respond to global challenges distinguishes diplomatic agencies from other government bodies and should be the key driver of reforms. Often, however, the initial impetus for reform **is generated by domestic governance issues and further continues** as a backdrop (initial conditions) for diplomatic reforms.

Thus, the research of diplomatic service reforms will look at the following two types of drivers that trigger the reform:

- **global foreign policy challenges** that arise from changes in relations among states and other international actors (these drivers are the main focus of this research), and
- **internal problems** of the public administration system that have become urgent because of changes in politics (change of government) and governance (introduction of a new model of the civil service).

Considering national and global drivers of the diplomatic service transformation, this study sets **the following objectives**:

- to describe the substance and progress of diplomatic agency reforms in 2010 through 2020 based on the internal drivers, and
- to describe current global foreign policy challenges that have influenced diplomatic agency reforms;
- to identify specific measures and areas of reform in different countries aimed at tackling global foreign policy challenges.

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<sup>2</sup> See Занко Т.А. Дипломатическая служба Российской Федерации: особенности и основные направления совершенствования правового регулирования: учеб. пособие / Т.А. Занко; МГИМО (У) МИД России, Международный институт управления, каф. гос. управления и права. — М.: МГИМО-Университет, 2014.

## Research Methodology

The report is primarily based on comparative case studies<sup>3</sup>. This approach was used to analyze the reforms of diplomatic agencies aimed at improving the quality of their work and the effectiveness of their responses to modern global foreign policy challenges.

The **selection of countries** for analysis was made based on the following criteria:

- relevance: the reform was launched and/or implemented in 2010 through 2020;
- comprehensiveness: the reform has covered several areas of the diplomatic service rather than being sporadic;
- publicity: the reform progress and its general context have been documented and are open to review.

Based on the above criteria, the sample includes 11 cases. Four cases have been studied in full detail:

- Modernizing the Dutch Diplomatic Service (2012–2016);
- The «2014 Review» and the Federal Foreign Office Reform in Germany (2014–2016);
- Diplomacy 20:20 and the Foreign & Commonwealth Office reform in the United Kingdom (2015–2020);
- radical improvements of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Uzbekistan (2017–2021).

Seven more cases (New Zealand, Canada, Australia, Denmark, France, United States, and Kazakhstan) were studied to review what were the foreign policy drivers of reforms and how countries responded to foreign policy challenges.

We have examined the selected cases for the following characteristics:

- internal reform drivers (general reform context, goals and objectives, and actors),
- global reform drivers (whether or not such global foreign policy challenges are relevant for the country in question),
- progress and substance of the reform,
- the reform results in terms of responding to national drivers, and
- evaluating the performance of efforts made to tackle global foreign policy challenges (drivers).

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<sup>3</sup> Gerring J. Case study research: Principles and practices. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

## Data

We have used the following data sources for our case study:

### Public domain materials:

- official documents that outline the reform (reports, plans, policies, and regulations) as well as expert reports commissioned by government agencies;
- annual and thematic reports and press releases prepared by the Ministries of Foreign Affairs (MFAs) that describe the reform progress and the statements and letters by the relevant ministers concerning the reform results;
- public comments and articles by the reform stakeholders (employees of MFAs and other agencies and independent experts);
- reports prepared by supreme audit institutions related to the progress and results of the MFA reform;
- news stories related to the reform progress and its results.

In addition to publicly available information we used CAG's own materials:

- interviews with the diplomatic staff members who were engaged in the reform in their own countries;
- interviews with foreign policy or diplomacy experts regarding the MFA reform context and outcomes;
- the MFA official response to the inquiry related to the reform details.

## Report Structure

The report consists of three chapters. Chapter One looks at new global foreign policy challenges and their impact on the diplomatic service and its current transformations. Chapter Two reviews foreign reform case studies, including the background, key areas, outcomes, and efforts to meet the national objectives (drivers). Chapter Three compares the reform's focus and results in various countries with relevant global foreign policy challenges. Such comparison allows us to rely on multiple countries' experience in pursuing their ways to tackle common problems and identify options that can be used as a model to design new reform projects for the diplomatic service.

# 1. GLOBAL FOREIGN POLICY CHALLENGES: OVERVIEW AND IMPACT ON THE DEVELOPMENT PATHWAY OF DIPLOMATIC SERVICE

By global challenges we mean developments that affect most countries and require new solutions from governments as international actors. Global challenges have gained importance for most countries in an increasingly connected world at the turn of the 21st century. The World Economic Forum (WEF) annual reports classify global risks (challenges) into the following five categories (see Appendix 1 for more details):

- Economic;
- Societal (such as migration or disease spread);
- Environmental;
- Technological (the effects of new technology);
- Geopolitical (for example, conflicts or the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction).

The comparison of the risks identified by the WEF shows that such risks and the relevant challenges change along with the current global situation. In 2010, in the context of the global financial crisis, economic risks prevailed both in terms of likelihood and impact<sup>4</sup>, and environmental risks gained prominence in 2020<sup>5</sup>.

Within the government structure, the diplomatic agencies are responsible for representing the country in the international arena and dealing with other countries. Thus, they are often responsible for the way their country responds to the current global challenges. Some challenges transform international and interstate relations. These directly affect diplomatic agencies and force them to review their approaches to foreign policy. Therefore, this report emphasizes **three global foreign policy challenges** that have a significant impact on the transformation and development trajectories of diplomatic services:

- the growing influence of economic factors on international relations (Economization);
- the changing global communication environment (Communication);
- the consolidation and complication of relations between States (Coordination) (Table 1).

4 Global Risks 2010. A Global Risk Network Report // World Economic Forum.  
URL: [http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_Global\\_Risks\\_Report\\_2010.pdf](http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Global_Risks_Report_2010.pdf)

5 The Global Risks Report 2020 // World Economic Forum.  
URL: [http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_Global\\_Risk\\_Report\\_2020.pdf](http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Global_Risk_Report_2020.pdf).

**Table 1.** Manifestations of global foreign policy challenges

General Challenges	1. Economization. The growing influence of economic factors on international relations	2. Communication. The change in the global communication environment	3. Coordination Consolidation and complication of the nature of relations among States
Manifestation of Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation in the global economy has played an increasing role in the states' development</li> <li>• Global economic growth centers have changed</li> <li>• States have been increasingly applying economic instruments to achieve their foreign policy goals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The monopoly of governments and diplomatic missions to information related to the global agenda has weakened</li> <li>• Public trust in government institutions has decreased</li> <li>• Competition in public diplomacy among States has toughened</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Global integration projects have strengthened their demand for closer cooperation among States outside the MFA functions.</li> <li>• Non-diplomatic agencies have increased their engagement in international activities</li> </ul>

## 1.1. Economization. The growing influence of economic factors on international relations

Within diplomatic missions, the economization of international relations manifests itself in two areas. On the one hand, diplomatic missions must address or rely on the priority of their country's social and economic goals to develop and implement foreign policy goals. On the other hand, today's diplomatic missions must build direct relations with other diplomats and the business community at home and abroad.

The economization of international relations would manifest itself in three ways.

**Manifestation 1. Participation in the global economy plays an increasingly important role in the development of the state, which leads to the priority of the economic agenda over political matters.**

Over the past 25 years, States have increasingly integrated into the global economic system. **With strengthening interstate cooperation, investments and international trade have become dominant.** Such Asian economic cooperation venues as the Association of South East Asian Nations and Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation have expanded their role and presence. Moreover, the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) has evolved out of the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement and entered into full force in the late 2010s. While the economic agenda has penetrated

all other international relations areas, diplomatic agencies have to hire staff members proficient in economics.

Moreover, even if stakeholders have political differences but share a common **economic interest**, they can opt for acceptable forms of cooperation to address long-term problems or manage their strategic interaction. For instance, Russia and EU states have maintained a range of multilateral, economic, and cultural work formats despite growing tensions. A good example may be the Northern Dimension (ND), a joint policy of the European Union, Russian Federation, Norway, and Iceland to develop cooperation in Northern Europe. It aims to support stability, economic development and promote economic integration, competitiveness, and sustainable development in the region. The Northern Dimension develops joint projects in health care and social support in north-western Russia.

## **Manifestation 2. Global economic growth centers have shifted.**

The global economy structure may be represented as a network with many economic *nodes* where various economic agents — firms, corporations, and states — actively cooperate. Such nodes are distributed unevenly worldwide, forming a topographically determined network reinforced by an institutional framework. The network is difficult to redesign, as this would counter the natural macroeconomic trends. This factor allows the countries, which govern such nodes to influence the global economy significantly<sup>6</sup>.

In 2019, the Financial Times ranked<sup>7</sup> the world's countries based on their share in global gross domestic product and traced the changes since the turn of the 21st century<sup>8</sup>. Figure 1 shows changes in the positions of Asia's fastest-growing states compared with some developed economies. For example, China ranks first and is now a bigger economy than the United States. Other Asian countries have drastically improved their positions, rising by 5 or even 10 points. Meanwhile, the developed economies find it increasingly hard to keep their leading roles, and their share of global GDP has been declining proportionally.

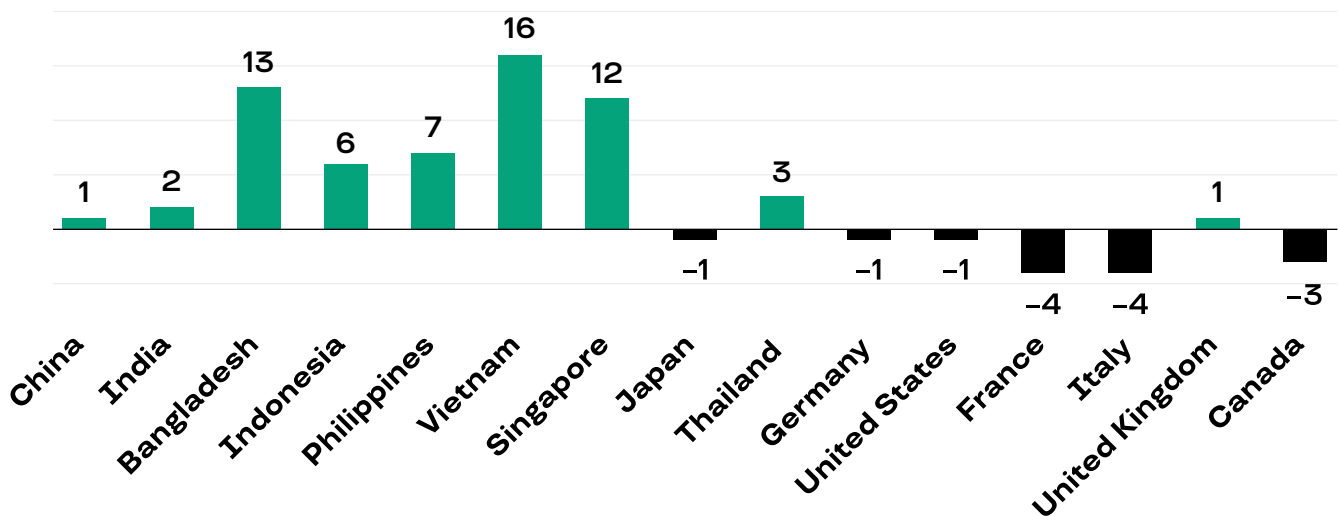
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6 Farrell H., Newman A. L. Weaponized interdependence: How global economic networks shape state coercion // International Security. 2019. Vol. 44, no 1. P. 42–79.

7 Romei V., Reed J. The Asian century is set to begin // Financial Times. 2019. 26 March.  
URL: <https://www.ft.com/content/520cb6f6-2958-11e9-a5ab-ff8ef2b976c7>.

8 World Economic Outlook Database // International Monetary Fund.  
URL: <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2019/02/weodata/index.aspx>.

**Figure 1.** Change in the ranking of economies by the share of their GDP in global GDP.



With its enormous populations and marketplace, Asia has become the point of attraction for international counterparties and investors. Thus, it has created multiple economic nodes and redesigned the global financial network to meet its interests. Given Asia's increasing global economic role, other states increasingly focus their foreign policy on strengthening their cooperation with these countries. Therefore, they are redirecting their diplomatic resources for this purpose. With its enormous populations and marketplace, Asia has become the point of attraction for international counterparties and investors. Thus, it has created multiple economic nodes and redesigned the global financial network to meet its interests. Given Asia's increasing global economic role, other states increasingly focus their foreign policy on strengthening their cooperation with these countries. Therefore, they are redirecting their diplomatic resources for this purpose.

### **Manifestation 3. States seek to apply economic instruments to achieve their foreign policy goals.**

During the 2000s, **economic sanctions became one of the most common ways to put pressure on a foreign policy opponent.** The study<sup>9</sup> of 1,412 cases of imposed or threatened sanctions in 1945 through 2005 shows that sanctions became more frequent in the early 1990s, which remained unchanged until 2005. Besides, non-trade-related sanctions, i.e. politically motivated ones, went up in the 2000s. While their effectiveness for political leverage has been disputed, the popularity of sanctioning, particularly with the United States, can be explained by their availability and the low cost of their implementation versus other foreign policy instruments.<sup>10</sup>

The increasing economization of international relations is evidenced when large national **business players influence their governments to effect a foreign policy shift.** For example, the U.S. sanctions against Rusal, the world's largest

9 Morgan T. C., Bapat N., Kobayashi Y. Threat and imposition of economic sanctions 1945–2005: Updating the TIES dataset // Conflict Management and Peace Science. 2014, Vol. 31, no 5. P. 541–558.

10 Afesorgbor S. K. The impact of economic sanctions on international trade: How do threatened sanctions compare with imposed sanctions? // European Journal of Political Economy. 2019. Vol. 56. P. 11–26.

aluminum supplier, had caused prices to grow. Despite the strained relations with Russia, the United States soon decided to lift<sup>11</sup> sanctions imposed on En+ Group, Rusal, and EuroSibEnergo. Europe embraced the lifting of sanctions to “protect the aluminum industry and prevent China’s dominance in the market”.<sup>12</sup>

The broader use of economic pressure has given rise to yet another challenge for diplomatic agencies. Today, a successful foreign policy position increasingly depends on collecting and using information related to other states’ economic status. Such analysis can provide more opportunities to diversify economic relations and manage risks.

## 1.2. Communication. The change in the global communication environment

The rapid spread and development of the Internet and new media have put diplomats into the environment that requires them to use more communication channels, beyond their traditional ways to communicate, such as personal meetings, formal diplomatic correspondence, and international events. The Internet has brought down entry barriers to the media for new actors, including those dealing with international relations. The popularity of such concepts as soft power and national brand strengthens the priority of public diplomacy. Broadly speaking, the democratization of information access and the spread of modern public administration methods require more openness, active communication, and public accountability from government agencies, including foreign ministries. As a result, a strong national brand has gained greater strategic importance: transparency generates trust, and trust, in turn, opens the way to new formats of interaction and communication.

### **Manifestation 1. The monopoly of governments and diplomatic agencies on information related to the global agenda has weakened.**

The official narrative around any given issue on the global agenda is no longer the only and true one. Non-governmental organizations, research centers, businesses, and the public have gained access to information and media channels. Multiple information sources have intensified competition for attention. By consistently delaying communication or sharing incomplete information, diplomatic agencies can dissuade people from reading official statements on urgent foreign policy matters. That would gradually weaken confidence in diplomatic agencies.

### **Manifestation 2. Public trust in government institutions decreases.**

Faith in government bodies and government as an institution has been dropping over the recent years.<sup>13</sup> This is illustrated by public distrust of officials’ statements and actions. This trust deficit among people coupled with the development

11 The US have lifted sanctions against Deripaska // BBC. URL: <https://www.bbc.com/russian/news-47024522>.

12 Yashunsky G., Trifonova P., Bocharova S. The United States lifted sanctions against Deripaska’s companies // Vedomosti. 2019. 27 Jan. URL: <https://www.vedomosti.ru/business/articles/2019/01/18/791797-deripaski>.

13 Snow S. Why Major Institutions Lost Public Trust, and How They Can Gain It Back // Contently. URL: <https://contently.com/2017/12/15/institutions-regain-public-trust/>.



of information technology has equipped citizens with additional tools for fact-checking, tracking governments' performance, and further disseminating such information.<sup>14</sup> Thus, government bodies, including foreign ministries, realize the growing importance of how they position themselves in the media.

### **Manifestation 3. Public diplomacy competition among states intensifies.**

States have intensified competition in public diplomacy. Information technology developments allow governments and diplomatic agencies to communicate directly with international audiences; for example, embassies and individual diplomats maintain their official social media presence. With conflicting interests, countries may use public diplomacy to affect their counterparty's reputation or support local political activists.<sup>15</sup>

In the summer of 2017, an old regional conflict provoked an acute crisis between Qatar, on the one side, and Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt, and Bahrain, on the other side. The Arab states imposed a blockade on Qatar, threatening a military invasion. For a country of three million people, public diplomacy and public relations have proved to be the best way to deal with the crisis. Qatar emphasized that it was a victim of external aggression by appealing to international law and showed openness and willingness to engage in a dialogue, which positively affected its global reputation. Qatar's soft power policy aimed at exporting investments and cultural cooperation played an important role.<sup>16</sup> In particular, Qatar succeeded in gaining diplomatic support soon after the crisis broke. German diplomats were among the first to help in reducing tensions.<sup>17</sup> During the crisis, Qatar actively invited politicians and journalists to meetings, compensating for all their expenses. Through the mediation of non-profit organizations, Qatar networked to steer public opinion abroad.<sup>18</sup>

## **1.3 Coordination. The increasing density and complexity of ties between states**

According to Jean-Robert Leguey-Feilleux, over past years most states realized that many problems, including crime, climate change, economic sustainability, and migration, have no state borders. As a result, they attempted to develop joint solutions to these problems, thus expanding the diplomatic agenda. Many issues that have been a national prerogative are now included in international organizations' scope of interests or addressed within bilateral relations. In 2020, bi- or multilateral negotiations dealt with health care, food security, promotion of sports, and international standards. These and many other matters go beyond

14 Zhu Y. Domestic Extension Of Public Diplomacy: Media Competition For Credibility, Dependency And Activation Of Publics: Doctoral dissertation) // Scholar Commons. URL: <https://scholarcommons.sc.edu/etd/4736>.

15 Ibid.

16 Cherkaoul T. Qatar's public diplomacy, international broadcasting, and the Gulf Crisis // Rising Powers Quarterly. 2018. Vol. 3, no 3. P. 127–149. URL: <http://risingpowersproject.com/quarterly/qatars-public-diplomacy-international-broadcasting-and-the-gulf-crisis/>.

17 Germany urges diplomatic solution to Qatar crisis // Reuters. URL: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-gulf-qatar-germany-idUSKBN19010W?il=0>.

18 Ibid.

the traditional responsibilities of ministries of foreign affairs. Other agencies are getting more engaged in international relations, with each performing a diplomatic function. The involvement of such specialized agencies in addressing global issues represents “the blurring of the line between domestic and international functions.”<sup>19</sup> In fact, as foreign ministries lose their monopoly over foreign policy, it becomes ever more essential for states to coordinate their diverse efforts to be able to act as one and whole in the international arena.

**Manifestation 1. International integration projects require closer cooperation among states that takes place outside the foreign ministry’s purview.**

The relevant government agencies of member countries in regional integration projects such as Eurasian Economic Union (EEU), European Union, Southern Common Market, and Association of South East Asian Nations are engaged in regular cooperation, including information sharing, meetings, developing new regulations, etc. On the one hand, they establish supranational structures, such as the Eurasian Economic Commission within the EEU, as part of such integration structures. On the other hand, the relevant agencies within integration projects use their own cooperation mechanisms, such as intergovernmental commissions or working groups. Both of these institutional mechanisms take a whole layer of interstate relations beyond the responsibility of foreign ministries. In this system, diplomatic agencies maintain their role in terms of coordination and as an information source.

In general, the nature of the MFA engagement depends on the degree of integration between countries. In case there is a **potential for political integration, the national agenda becomes blurred, but the direct responsibilities of foreign agencies tend to either remain unchanged or increase**. For example, national foreign ministries in the EU are closely linked to the EU foreign policy priorities and coordinate with the European External Action Service. European diplomats tend to move away from the traditional “one country - one embassy” model and experiment with various representation forms in host countries. Arjan Uilenreef describes the following alternative representation models within the EU:

- secondments within member states’ capitals;
- visiting ambassadors who stay in their countries and visiting other member states if needed;
- pooling resources: the embassies of several EU member states can be located in one building maintained by the European External Action Service (co-location), or one state can represent the other one in the countries where the latter has no diplomatic representation.<sup>20</sup>

In situations where it is primarily about economic integration, diplomatic agencies function strictly within their usual agenda, which typically leads to a reduction in the scope of their functions. For example, in the EEU, national agencies are

19 Leguey-Feilleux J. R. Global governance diplomacy: the critical role of diplomacy in addressing global problems. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017. P. 5.

20 Uilenreef A. Alternatives to the resident embassy: Intra-EU diplomatic networks in the twenty-first century // Diplomacy & Statecraft. 2014. Vol. 25, no 2. P. 356–377.

represented in the Intergovernmental Council; in particular, Russian agencies responsible for integration include the Ministry of Economic Development, Ministry of Industry and Trade, Ministry of Finance, and the Federal Customs Service.<sup>21</sup> The Eurasian agenda is part of foreign policy; however, the MFA is not the main authority as far as economic integration is concerned and it cedes the leading role to the relevant specialized agencies.

## **Manifestation 2. Non-diplomatic agencies engage in international activities by themselves.**

The modes of official foreign representation became more diverse in the 2000s. The missions of cultural diplomacy and innovation centers opened along with traditional embassies and trade missions. Some domestic agencies may need to open their special missions abroad but prefer to run them independently of embassies.

One of the latest trends is expanding representations in the innovation area. In the early 2000s, Switzerland established Swissnex, an innovation hub network, with the first hubs launched in San Francisco and Boston and expanding to Shanghai, Bangalore, Rio de Janeiro, and Singapore. The network is managed through interagency cooperation. The State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation manages the network, while the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs is also involved in the project. Administrative and innovation hubs are integrated into the MFA's global network and coordinated with approximately 20 Swiss research and technology offices of Swiss diplomatic missions. Denmark's innovation center network employs a similar approach to cooperation with the MFA.<sup>22</sup>

Other states also attempted to set up innovation hub networks, although without the MFA engagement. The National IT Industry Promotion Agency manages innovation network of the Republic of Korea, which is officially independent of the diplomatic service. The Russian Digital Innovation Center<sup>23</sup> was launched in Dubai in 2019 by the Ministry for Digital Development, Communications and Mass Media, and the Russian Export Center.

Thus, government agencies often cooperate with their foreign peers to address the relevant matters. While the MFA can act as a liaison and help build efficient communication between the relevant agencies and their foreign peers, it is not always that it can do so efficiently.

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21 Трещенков Е. Ю. Евразийская интеграция России и неправительственные участники // Национальная безопасность и стратегическое планирование. 2017. № 4. С. 124.

22 Innovation Centre Denmark // Ministry of Higher Education and Science. URL: <https://ufm.dk/en/research-and-innovation/international-cooperation/global-cooperation/innovation-centres-and-attaches>.

23 Российский центр цифровых инноваций открылся в Дубае // Министерство цифрового развития, связи и массовых коммуникаций Российской Федерации. URL: <https://digital.gov.ru/ru/events/39146/>.

## 2 REFORMS OF DIPLOMATIC AGENCIES: CASE STUDY

The above-mentioned global challenges often drive the transformation of diplomatic agencies. But the need for such reform in each state is affected by its national drivers, including existing public administration issues, the country's political priorities, etc. Thus, case studies of diplomatic reforms set forth below cover both domestic drivers of the MFA transformation (the general context, areas of change, reform progress, stakeholders, etc.) and global and foreign policy drivers and their effects on the reform elements and their outcomes.

### 2.1. The Netherlands: Modernizing the Dutch Diplomatic Service (2012–2016)

#### General context of the reform

The Dutch diplomatic service reform was implemented by the center-right liberal government led by Prime Minister **Mark Rutte**. The modernization plan was approved for 2014 – 2016, and preliminary work to draft it and prepare its implementation started in 2012; therefore, we have defined the reform's chronological framework from 2012 through 2016.

**Frans Timmermans**, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands from 2012 to 2014, prepared the reform relying on the work of the Advisory Committee on Modernising the Diplomatic Service established by his predecessor in March 2012. The Advisory Committee was assigned to review the diplomatic service challenges with an eye to global diplomacy trends. It included five members<sup>24</sup> and was chaired by **Arthur Docters van Leeuwen**, a Dutch politician and former civil servant. The Committee was limited to two years of service. In spring 2013, the Advisory Committee released a progress report,<sup>25</sup> and its recommendations were used to prepare the MFA reform master plan. The final report was published after the launch of the reform in 2014 and reviewed the first implementation phase.<sup>26</sup>

The MFA also relied on the coalition agreement between the People's Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD) led by Mark Rutte and Labour Party (PvdA), which had formed the government. The coalition agreement's foreign policy section included additional spending cuts to the MFA's mission network, a new minister for

24 Adviescommissie Moderniseren Diplomatie, Den Haag // Parlementaire Monitor. URL: [https://www.parlementairemonitor.nl/9353000/1/j9tvgaicor7dxyk\\_j9vvij5epmj1ey0/vjnicqhcl0yb?ctx=viofkh66fz8&v=1](https://www.parlementairemonitor.nl/9353000/1/j9tvgaicor7dxyk_j9vvij5epmj1ey0/vjnicqhcl0yb?ctx=viofkh66fz8&v=1).

25 Modernising Dutch diplomacy. Progress report by the Advisory Committee on Modernising the Diplomatic Service // Clingendael Magazine. URL: <https://www.clingendael.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/Report%20Modernising%20Dutch%20Diplomacy.pdf>.

26 Modernising Dutch diplomacy. Progress report. Final report // Government of the Netherlands. URL: <https://www.government.nl/binaries/government/documents/reports/2014/05/22/final-report-modernising-diplomatic-service-by-docters-van-leeuwen/modernising-diplomatic-web.pdf>.

trade and cooperation within the MFA, and other changes.<sup>27</sup>

The coalition agreement launched the general civil service reform in 2013.<sup>28</sup> The diplomatic service was modernized on a parallel track. The MFA had to consider the general principles established by the government (agile management, digitalization, the reduction of administrative barriers within agencies) which were included in the modernization plan. The MFA also borrowed some specific solutions from the civil service reform, such as shared services.

According to **Steven Collet**, the Chief of Staff of the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who led the modernization team, the following caused the need for the changes:

- The last major diplomatic service reform was carried out in the 1990s.
- The 2007–2008 economic crisis led to government spending cuts, including international activity, causing the MFA to cut its administrative costs by one-fourth.
- The new government formed after the 2012 elections assigned the MFA with ambitious foreign policy tasks, including "actively promoting economic and monetary recovery in Europe, promoting an integrated approach to security, diplomacy, and development in the international missions in which the Netherlands participates, and combining the development cooperation and foreign trade portfolios."<sup>29</sup>

In 2014, **Bert Koenders** replaced Frans Timmermans as the Foreign Minister, but this event hardly affected the reform's progress and substance.

Thus, the reform's *internal driver* was the change of government, which focused on spending cuts and the total overhaul of the civil administration that had affected the MFA.

*Global drivers* included trends outlined in the MFA's letter to the Parliament (and two others were related to the national priorities mentioned above):

- "The multilateral system is under pressure."
- "Increasingly, the world's economic center of gravity is shifting to growth markets in Asia, Latin America and Africa."
- In the developing economies with the state's vital role (e.g., BRICS member states), "economic diplomacy [...] depends on an ability to interact with powerful government institutions."

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27 Coalition Agreement // Government of the Netherlands. URL: <https://www.government.nl/binaries/government/documents/reports/2012/10/29/coalition-agreement/coalition-agreement.pdf>.

28 Letter of 22 May 2013 from the Minister for Housing and the Central Government Sector to the House of Representatives on the Civil Service Reform Agenda // Government of the Netherlands. URL: <https://www.government.nl/binaries/government/documents/parliamentary-documents/2013/05/22/letter-to-the-house-of-representatives-on-the-civil-service-reform-agenda/the-dutch-civil-service-reform-agenda-2013-2018.pdf>.

29 Collet S. Modernizing the Dutch Diplomatic Service: a work in progress // The Hague Journal of Diplomacy. 2015. Vol. 10, no 4. P. 440–451.

- In the Western world, networks are becoming no less critical than traditional interstate channels.
- “Social media are becoming standard platforms for policymaking and public diplomacy abroad.”<sup>30</sup>

## Substance and progress of the reform

Formally, the reform of the Dutch diplomatic service took place from late 2013 to 2016. **The Foreign Ministry's transformation began immediately after the appointment of the new head of the ministry** Frans Timmermans. The plan included some measures, whose implementation had already begun. For example, after establishing the second ministerial post in the MFA, the Directorate General for Foreign Economic Affairs was transferred there in December 2012 from the Ministry of Economy.<sup>31</sup> The MFA planned to pursue some individual projects launched as part of the modernization in 2017 and 2018, after the formal completion.<sup>32</sup>

In the summer of 2013, the MFA sent a letter to Parliament entitled **“Working Together for the Netherlands, Worldwide”**,<sup>33</sup> outlining the reform's main ideas and the proposed spending cuts. In October 2013, the government approved **the Modernization of Diplomacy (Modernising Diplomacy) plan for 2014-2016**,<sup>34</sup> which detailed the reform's substance.

The plan set out the **goals** of modernizing the Dutch diplomatic service:

- create advanced diplomacy;
- perform superior service (in particular, consular and economic services);
- develop the MFA as a valuable partner for cooperation both within and outside the government;
- build a flexible network entity (by cutting red tape and encouraging horizontal communication among staff members);
- cut spending with a focus on the reform.

30 Working together for the Netherlands, worldwide; Moving to the forefront of modern diplomacy // Government of the Netherlands. URL: <https://www.government.nl/documents/parliamentary-documents/2013/06/28/working-together-for-the-netherlands-worldwide>.

31 Rapport bij het Jaarverslag 2012. Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken (V) // Algemene Rekenkamer. URL: <https://www.rekenkamer.nl/binaries/rekenkamer/documenten/rapporten/2013/05/15/rapport-bij-het-jaarverslag-2012-van-het-ministerie-van-bz/Rapport+bij+het+Jaarverslag+2012+BuiZa.pdf>.

32 Resultaten verantwoordingsonderzoek 2015 bij het Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken // Algemene Rekenkamer. URL: <https://www.rekenkamer.nl/publicaties/rapporten/2016/05/18/resultaten-verantwoordingsonderzoek-2015-bij-het-ministerie-van-buitenlandse-zaken>.

33 Working together for the Netherlands, worldwide; Moving to the forefront of modern diplomacy // Government of the Netherlands. URL: <https://www.government.nl/documents/parliamentary-documents/2013/06/28/working-together-for-the-netherlands-worldwide>.

34 Modernising Diplomatie. Plan van aanpak. Hervormingen en bezuinigingen BZ 2014–2016. Buitenlandse Zaken // Docplayer. URL: <https://docplayer.nl/19990079-Modernisering-diplomatie-plan-van-aanpak-hervormingen-en-bezuinigingen-bz-2014-2016.html>.

The plan defined **17 results** to achieve the above goals. Each case described **the final result** and **partial results** (specific steps) with the set deadlines, which in essence was similar to a roadmap.<sup>35</sup> The approved plan did not aggregate such steps into **projects**, but such aggregation took place during the implementation of the plan. The plan had more than 40 projects focused on achieving the goals<sup>36</sup> and included 96 steps.<sup>37</sup> **Each result specified the amount of the MFA's spending cuts resulting from changes.**

While implementing the plan, the MFA has selected five signature projects as its priority<sup>38</sup> (Table 2).

**Table 2.** Correlation of goals, results, and steps in Modernising Dutch Diplomacy from 2014 to 2016.

**Note.** In this plan, colors indicate which goal the result belongs to; the cells indicate the degree of contribution of the result to achieving one or more goals, increasing from light to dark gray.

Objective/result	Leading diplomacy	Excellent service	Valued cooperation partner	Flexible network organization	Reform-oriented cutbacks
1. Posts are modern, effective, and flexible partners					
2. Policy directorates are flat and flexible, focused and collaborative					
3. Excellent country and regional knowledge in the service of the government					
4. Strategic knowledge and vision					
5. Professionalism leading in renewed personnel policy					
6. Excellent consular service, valued by customers					
7. Economic services measurably better, valued by customers					
8. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is central to international government action					
9. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is at the heart of society (raising citizens' awareness about foreign policy)					

<sup>35</sup> Hoofdpunten verantwoordingsonderzoek 2014 van het Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken // Internet Archive. URL: <https://archive.org/details/blg-513351/page/n3>.

<sup>36</sup> Resultaten verantwoordingsonderzoek 2014 bij het Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken // Algemene Rekenkamer. URL: [https://www.rekenkamer.nl/binaries/rekenkamer/documenten/rapporten/2015/05/20/resultaten-verantwoordingsonderzoek-2014-bij-het-ministerie-van-buitenlandse-zaken/Verantwoordingsonderzoek\\_2014\\_Buitenlandse\\_Zaken\\_V.pdf](https://www.rekenkamer.nl/binaries/rekenkamer/documenten/rapporten/2015/05/20/resultaten-verantwoordingsonderzoek-2014-bij-het-ministerie-van-buitenlandse-zaken/Verantwoordingsonderzoek_2014_Buitenlandse_Zaken_V.pdf).

<sup>37</sup> Modernisering Diplomatie. Plan van aanpak. Hervormingen en bezuinigingen BZ 2014–2016. Buitenlandse Zaken // Docplayer. URL: <https://docplayer.nl/19990079-Modernisering-diplomatie-plan-van-aanpak-hervormingen-en-bezuinigingen-bz-2014-2016.html>.

<sup>38</sup> Resultaten verantwoordingsonderzoek 2014 bij het Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken // Algemene Rekenkamer. URL: [https://www.rekenkamer.nl/binaries/rekenkamer/documenten/rapporten/2015/05/20/resultaten-verantwoordingsonderzoek-2014-bij-het-ministerie-van-buitenlandse-zaken/Verantwoordingsonderzoek\\_2014\\_Buitenlandse\\_Zaken\\_V.pdf](https://www.rekenkamer.nl/binaries/rekenkamer/documenten/rapporten/2015/05/20/resultaten-verantwoordingsonderzoek-2014-bij-het-ministerie-van-buitenlandse-zaken/Verantwoordingsonderzoek_2014_Buitenlandse_Zaken_V.pdf).



Objective/result	Leading diplomacy	Excellent service	Valued cooperation partner	Flexible network organization	Reform-oriented cutbacks
10. Strengthening program implementation					
11. Core qualities at the center of our organizational culture / The New Way of Working (Het Nieuwe Werken, HNW)					
12. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is completely digital					
13. Management support smaller and more effective					
14. Business operations that facilitate and unburden					
15. Reduced policy and management burden and reformed control system					
16. Functional and rational real estate abroad					
17 Current and upcoming cutbacks implemented					

For example, achieving the goal titled Leading diplomacy should be facilitated by obtaining five results, each of which implied specific steps (Table 3).

**Table 3.** Correlation of results and specific steps aimed at achieving the Leading diplomacy goal of the Modernization of Diplomacy in the Netherlands

Result	Steps (short summary)
1. Diplomatic missions are modern, efficient, and flexible partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— By early 2014, the government shall decide how diplomatic missions would implement the "one team" concept and how they would achieve a 15% cutback.</li> <li>— The diplomatic missions in Kabul and Sana'a would be closed down but maintain capability to monitor and support development cooperation at minimal cost (the decision shall be prepared from early 2014 and implemented in the summer of 2015).</li> <li>— New powers shall be defined for consulates general in Antwerp, Munich, Milan, Chicago, and Osaka.</li> <li>— By late 2016, the decision shall be made on regional cooperation and management with the network of diplomatic missions based on targeted experiments. The distribution of tasks between The Hague and diplomatic missions shall be optimized.</li> <li>— By 2014, the assignments shall be clearly distributed between diplomatic missions and headquarters directorates, with more extensive use of framework instructions.</li> <li>— In 2014, there shall be a mechanism for flexible extension of the mission network, in case it is needed.</li> </ul>



2. Policy directorates are flat and flexible, focused and collaborative	This result consists of 11 steps and involves improving the policy division's work and interaction with general directorates (large structural units). The steps are mainly aimed at specifying the areas of responsibility for certain foreign policy areas and building coordination mechanisms.
3. Excellent country and regional knowledge in the service of the government	This result consists of 6 steps aimed at improving the efficiency of regional divisions at the headquarters, including by combining employees of regional divisions into a regional pool, which would act as a center for regional and country expertise for partners inside and outside the government, as well as by distributing tasks between the pool and thematic (functional) divisions, on the one hand, and diplomatic missions, on the other hand.
4. Strategic knowledge and vision	Includes one step to explore how general directorates' strategic knowledge can be better integrated at the ministry level and made available to other agencies.
5. Professionalism leading in renewed personnel policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— This result involves 21 steps. All steps are divided into groups according to four theses:</li> <li>— improving the quality of work: the target level of satisfaction of managers with their employees, improving the selection of personnel, increasing the share of employees with temporary contracts, etc.;</li> <li>— greater flexibility: moving to a flatter structure, increasing productivity within projects, reducing bureaucratic costs, etc.;</li> <li>— professional cooperation and stimulating work culture: target indicators of employee satisfaction with work, increasing diversity, increasing the proportion of women, etc.;</li> <li>— The MFA as a valuable partner for professional development within the government</li> </ul>

**The overall reform management** was carried out by the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (the senior civil servant responsible for the organization's daily management), with the support of a small specially created program team. In the summer of 2015, this team was dissolved, and responsibilities for monitoring and coordinating the Modernization of Diplomacy plan were assigned to the Secretary-General's office.<sup>39</sup> The plan involved the establishment of a project organization to develop and implement the steps. This process was to involve employees of relevant divisions, including those of diplomatic missions.<sup>40</sup>

39 Resultaten verantwoordingsonderzoek 2015 bij het Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken // Algemene Rekenkamer. URL: <https://www.rekenkamer.nl/publicaties/rapporten/2016/05/18/resultaten-verantwoordingsonderzoek-2015-bij-het-ministerie-van-buitenlandse-zaken>.

40 Modernisering Diplomatie. Plan van aanpak. Hervormingen en bezuinigingen BZ 2014–2016, Buitenlandse Zaken // Docplayer. URL: <https://docplayer.nl/19990079-Modernisering-diplomatie-plan-van-aanpak-hervormingen-en-bezuinigingen-bz-2014-2016.html>.

*In July 2017, the Dutch Foreign Ministry moved to the government building with other agencies.<sup>41</sup> The move was not included in the MFA's modernization plan but was in line with the government's priority to cut civil servant spending. The MFA employees were dissatisfied with the limited workspace.<sup>42</sup> Another issue was the limitation of the floor load capacity in the new building.<sup>43</sup> According to Dutch diplomats, not all of the MFA's changes were positive, and they would have been happy to stay in the old building.<sup>44</sup>*

## Results of the reform and assessment of the quality of its implementation

In 2017, the MFA said that the action plan had been completed by the end of 2016, and it would continue to monitor the effects of the changes. In particular, the MFA intended to study the extent to which the implementation of projects and steps contributed to achieving the reform's strategic goals.<sup>45</sup>

During the Modernization of Diplomacy implementation, the reform information was **disclosed in the MFA's annual reports**<sup>46</sup> and **the Netherlands Court of Audit reports**,<sup>47</sup> and the **MFA's letters to the Parliament**. Some aspects of the reform were covered in the reports of the **Foreign Ministry's Policy and Operations Evaluation Department (IOB)**, specifically in the areas of economic diplomacy<sup>48</sup> and public diplomacy.<sup>49</sup>

The 2013 Court of Audit review stated briefly that the civil service reform and the Rutte cabinet's priorities had reduced funding of the MFA and changed its internal processes, while the MFA sought to provide more services to

41 van Blanken K. Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken verlaat Apenrots // AD.

URL: <https://www.ad.nl/den-haag/ministerie-van-buitenlandse-zaken-verlaat-apenrots-a9624977/>.

42 Niewold M. Ambtenaren chagrijnig door flexplekken, overheid start onderzoek // RTLNieuws.

URL: <https://www.rtlnieuws.nl/economie/artikel/3708506/ambtenaren-chagrijnig-door-flexplekken-overheid-start-onderzoek>.

43 Printpapier en dansfeesten te zwaar voor zwakke vloer ministeries // NOS.

URL: <https://nos.nl/artikel/2275495-printpapier-en-dansfeesten-te-zwaar-voor-zwakke-vloer-ministeries.html>.

44 The information was obtained as part of CAG's interview with Foreign Ministry employees.

45 Bestuurlijke reactie op het concept-rapport Resultaten Verantwoordingsonderzoek 2016, Buitenlandse Zaken

(V) // Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken. URL: <https://www.rekenkamer.nl/binaries/rekenkamer/documenten/brieven/2017/05/17/reactie-minister-van-bz-betreffende-verantwoordingsonderzoek-2016-buitenlandse-zaken/VO+2016+Ministerie+BuZa+reactie+minister+van+BuZa.pdf>.

46 Rijksjaarsverslag 2016 v Buitenlandse Zaken // Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken. URL: <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/binaries/rijksoverheid/documenten/jaarverslagen/2017/05/17/buitenlandse-zaken-2016/5.+V+Jaarverslag+Ministerie+van+Buitenlandse+Zaken+2016.pdf>.

47 Algemene Rekenkamer. URL: <https://www.rekenkamer.nl/>.

48 Effectevaluatie Economische Diplomatie // Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken.

URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20190430004659/https://www.iob-evaluatie.nl/publicaties/terms-of-references-lopemd/2016/11/10/effectevaluatie-economische-diplomatie>.

49 Beleidsdoorlichting publieksdiplomatie 2010–2014. IOB Evaluatie. Nr 413 // Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken.

URL: <https://www.iob-evaluatie.nl/binaries/iob-evaluatie/documenten/beleidsdoorlichtingen/2016/11/01/413-%E2%80%93-beleidsdoorlichting-publieksdiplomatie-2010-2014/413+%E2%80%93+Beleidsdoorlichting+publieksdiplomatie+2010-2014.pdf>.

individuals and businesses.<sup>50</sup> According to the 2014 review, "The change process is managed and monitored at a high level in the organization and proceeds in a controlled manner. Programs that are not going so well are often those with a significant ICT component."<sup>51</sup> According to the Court of Audit, responsibility for 17 areas (and achieving the plan's results) was distributed at a high level. However, the semi-annual report of the Ministry failed to give a complete picture of the progress made. The review took a closer look at six areas. It highlighted the existing problems, such as the lack of a strategic vision for managing foreign real estate or the overly ambitious pace of creating the agency's digital archive.

The 2015 review of the Court of Audit showed some results of modernizing diplomacy: a new appointment procedure was introduced to update the personnel policy, and a 24/7 contact center was opened to improve consular services.<sup>52</sup> A separate section addressed the MFA digitalization (one of the five priority projects launched in 2012 that was also included in the modernization plan as result number 12). According to the review, the results were difficult to assess due to the absence of detailed financial reports for the preceding years. The Court of Audit also said that the MFA should be prepared to link ongoing projects with its activities after the official completion of the time-bound modernization.<sup>53</sup> The 2016 review said that the diplomacy modernization plan's implementation had been completed on December 9, 2016, with some projects implemented according to the schedule while the rest were still in progress and expected to be completed in 2017.<sup>54</sup>

## Assessment of implemented measures as a response to global foreign policy challenges

Table 4 shows the correlation of measures and mechanisms involved in the diplomatic service modernization reform in the Netherlands with global foreign policy challenges affecting the trajectory of diplomatic agencies' transformation.

50 Resultaten verantwoordingsonderzoek 2013 bij het Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken (V) // Algemene Rekenkamer. URL: <https://www.rekenkamer.nl/binaries/rekenkamer/documenten/rapporten/2014/05/21/resultaten-verantwoordingsonderzoek-2013-bij-het-ministerie-van-buitenlandse-zaken/Resultaten+VO+2013+bij+het+Ministerie+van+BZ+%28V%29.pdf>.

51 Hoofdpunten verantwoordingsonderzoek 2014 van het Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken // Internet Archive. URL: <https://archive.org/details/blg-513351/page/n3>.

52 Resultaten verantwoordingsonderzoek 2015 bij het Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken // Algemene Rekenkamer. URL: <https://www.rekenkamer.nl/publicaties/rapporten/2016/05/18/resultaten-verantwoordingsonderzoek-2015-bij-het-ministerie-van-buitenlandse-zaken>.

53 Ibid.

54 Resultaten verantwoordingsonderzoek 2016 bij het Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken // Algemene Rekenkamer. URL: <https://www.rekenkamer.nl/publicaties/rapporten/2017/05/17/resultaten-verantwoordingsonderzoek-2016-bij-het-ministerie-van-buitenlandse-zaken>.

**Table 4.** Correlation of the reform measures in the Netherlands with global foreign policy challenges faced by the diplomatic service

Challenge: Economization	
Response	Effect
<p>Reorganization of the MFA economic divisions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— transfer of the Directorate-General for Foreign Economic Relations (DGBEB) from the Ministry of Economy to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with the Directorate having to serve both ministries;</li> <li>— formulation of the new MFA agenda in trade, investment, and development cooperation;</li> </ul> <p>Furthermore, the reorganization was accompanied by (1) combining these areas into a single portfolio with the corresponding budget, and also, as part of a set of measures to improve the management of directorates (structural divisions of the MFA responsible for main foreign policy areas), and involved (2) increasing their flexibility, customer focus, reducing hierarchy, while reducing the staff by 88 full-time wage rates.</p> <p>For the economic part, the result involved the following steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• delineating the areas of responsibility and ensuring the necessary interaction between the Directorate-General for Foreign Economic Relations (DGBEB) and the Directorate-General for International Cooperation (DGIS);</li> <li>• making the Directorate-General for Foreign Economic Relations (DGBEB) responsible for economic diplomacy, including interaction with top sectors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The transfer of the new directorate from the Ministry of Economy into the MFA was supposed to improve the economic competence of the MFA. This was further helped by the reform of interaction within the economic branch of both ministries.</li> <li>• The new Directorate's servicing of two ministries helped them better coordinate their efforts to support exports and foreign trade.</li> </ul>
<p>Improving the financial services provided by the MFA and its foreign missions at the request of Dutch businesses for improved cooperation.</p> <p>The following steps were required to achieve the result:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• obtaining recommendations on how to further standardize services;</li> <li>• creating in cooperation with clients a service catalog with measurable results;</li> <li>• standardizing economic services (in parallel with a similar process of standardization of consular services);</li> <li>• introducing new service standards into staff training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The 2015 MFA report referred to the Guide for International Business and the NL Exports mobile app as examples of improved economic services for business. The app had more than 5,000 downloads on Google Play.</li> <li>• In 2016, the Central Government Audit Service reported that organizations (including the MFA) performing economic services had established better horizontal cooperation and launched various processes to improve the quality of economic services.</li> <li>• In 2018, the Minister of Foreign Affairs sent a letter to the Parliament, which stated that the satisfaction of businesses with the MFA services was evidenced by a high rating received by the embassies from large Dutch associations.</li> </ul>

### Challenge: Communication

Response	Effect
<p>Improving the MFA communication with people, community structures, and domestic organizations.</p> <p>The following steps were aimed at achieving the result:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>increasing the number of public presentations to raise awareness of the country's participation in international affairs;</li> <li>regular use of social media by diplomats to promote public interests;</li> <li>creating permanent formats for dialogue with partners and clients;</li> <li>regular consultations with a group of representatives from the society</li> </ul>	<p>Some of these efforts were made before the reform launch:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>After Frans Timmermans was appointed the Foreign Minister, diplomats were encouraged to participate in talk shows and engage on social media.</li> <li>In the fall of 2013, the MFA published the social media atlas with a list of all diplomatic social media accounts. In 2015, the MFA released a guidebook describing the standards for maintaining Facebook pages (the first social media guides were developed in 2012).</li> <li>The MFA department responsible for policy research and evaluation prepared a paper on Dutch public diplomacy from 2010 to 2014. According to it, the number of messages on diplomatic accounts has increased. Diplomats shared their social media plans and created BZ Content Club, a closed Facebook group to share information and improve coordination. The same report stated that the use of social media in the MFA system was not always well organized and was not goal-oriented.</li> <li>The MFA failed to mention the progress of steps 3 and step 4 in its reports. The plan describes the steps in general terms, which makes it impossible to evaluate their performance independently.</li> </ul>

### Challenge: Coordination

Response	Effect
<p>Assigning the MFA with a "pivotal and unique" status in terms of providing government services abroad and the expansion of MFA's role in interagency coordination related to foreign policy.</p> <p>The following steps were aimed at achieving the result:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the MFA, together with other agencies identifying policy areas that require the establishment of interagency teams;</li> <li>creating an updated catalog of services provided within the government;</li> <li>determining how the MFA will become the center of regional and country expertise for civil servants and society;</li> <li>the Coordinating Committee on International Affairs (the interagency coordination body on foreign policy issues) drafting a plan for cutting international cooperation costs in the first half of 2014;</li> <li>intensifying cooperation between the MFA and other agencies to improve the MFA's international expertise within the civil service and specialist expertise;</li> <li>the MFA launching a training program for civil servants to share diplomatic knowledge, with a possible private sector participation;</li> <li>further developing 3W services managed by the MFA for civil servants traveling on business trips or working abroad</li> </ul>	<p>Except for the first step, which was not publicly reported, these steps have led to the expected effect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The establishment of the 3W Shared Service Organization (steps 2 and 7) was the most remarkable effort. Created in 2013, it has been in full operation since 2014. The 2015 and 2016 3W reports specify improvements in the organization. During the implementation of the Plan the list of services provided to customers within the government was expanded. For example, the consular service center was integrated into 3W in 2016. Moreover, 3W has included services related to business trip cost management. In 2017, 3W served nine ministries;</li> <li>In 2015, the MFA established the Academy for International Relations to provide educational services within the government and share knowledge (steps 3, 5, 6). The Academy is part of the Government Campus, a government platform for education and advanced training. According to annual report of the Academy, in 2018, almost 9,000 students took part in its educational activities.</li> <li>As part of the implementation of step 4 in this section, in 2014, the budget for international cooperation (HGIS) reflected spending cuts of more than 1 billion euros over five years. Subsequently, however, HGIS spending did not decline as sharply, and the 2019 budget document provided for an increase in spending for the next five years.</li> </ul>

## Responding to national and global challenges: best practices from the Dutch case

The modernization of the Dutch diplomatic service was primarily focused on spending cuts. Besides, it largely addressed global challenges of economization and coordination.

In the the economic sphere, **the transfer of the Directorate-General for Foreign Economic Relations** from the Ministry of Economy to the MFA, which has established the second ministerial position, and making this directorate responsible for serving both agencies was an effective response to the relevant challenge. This effort has improved the MFA's economic competence and strengthened coordination between the government's external and internal economic activities. Another response to the challenges of economization involved **the standardization of MFA's economic services**, which enabled the ministry to become a better partner to economic actors.

In terms of improving foreign policy coordination within the government, the Dutch case provides a compelling technical solution: **the MFA developed shared services for the government** concerning international activities. Founded in 2013, the 3W Shared Service Organization served nine agencies by 2017 by managing their staff members' foreign business trips, including issuing passports and paying their travel allowance and healthcare costs.

## 2.2 Germany: Review 2014 and the MFA Reform, 2014–2016

### General context of the reform

The reform, called Review 2014, was carried out in the first years of the third cabinet of **Angela Merkel** under the leadership of Foreign Minister **Frank-Walter Steinmeier**. Steinmeier led Germany from 2005 to 2009 and was the leader of the parliamentary opposition of the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD) in Bundestag in 2009–2013. As a result of the 2013 elections, the SPD entered into a ruling coalition with the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and the Christian Social Union (CSU). Steinmeier was appointed the Foreign Minister. While the coalition agreement between the parties<sup>55</sup> did not directly mention the reform of the Federal Foreign Office, its foreign policy section highlighted some ideas that were included in Review 2014:

- basis on Foreign Cultural and Education Policy;
- commitment to strengthening interagency cooperation on foreign and security policy;

<sup>55</sup> Deutschlands Zukunft gestalten. Koalitionsvertrag zwischen CDU, CSU und SPD. 18. Legislaturperiode. (2013). URL: <https://www.cdu.de/sites/default/files/media/dokumente/koalitionsvertrag.pdf>.

- development of crisis prevention structures;
- engaging existing German institutions for peacebuilding and peace research more closely in policy advice.<sup>56</sup>

The reform was announced<sup>57</sup> in December 2013, on the day when Steinmeier took office as Foreign Minister. In his inaugural address, he stated, “We now need a mature, enlightened discussion on the institutional framework within which our foreign policy activities should take place, on the degree of responsibility we can shoulder in the next ten to twenty years, and also on where the limits of our capabilities lie.”<sup>58</sup> Steinmeier referred to the need to redesign the foundations of German foreign policy due to the changing global situation, particularly the growth of Euroscepticism, the crisis of multilateral institutions, and regional crises. Invoking other countries that had subjected their foreign policy to self-assessment, he announced his intention to launch “a similar process of internal reflection on German foreign policy’s future prospects.”<sup>59</sup> According to him, such a review should be carried out not only within the ministry but also with the involvement of other stakeholders involvement, primarily civil society.

To organize the foreign policy review, Steinmeier invited **Christoph Bertram**, a former director of the leading German think tank Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (the German Institute for International and Security Affairs), **SWP**. Within the Federal Foreign Office, the process was led by **Thomas Bagger**, who headed the MFA’s Political Planning Department from 2011 to 2017.<sup>60</sup>

The discussion began in February 2014 and continued for a year. On the one hand, it involved a rethinking of foreign policy with the public’s participation, and on the other hand, it was set to prepare a large-scale reform of the Foreign Ministry. According to Bagger, discourse elements prevailed at first, and the matter of real changes surfaced “only during the course of the crises-dominated year 2014.”<sup>61</sup> Bagger also notes that financial matters did not play a significant role in Germany’s MFA reform compared with similar reforms of foreign ministries in many other countries.<sup>62</sup>

The discussions went in three phases — with experts, with German citizens (a series of events in German cities), and within the Ministry. **The involvement of a wide range of participants in the discussion has become one of its distinctive features**, which was emphasized by the German MFA.

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56 Ibid. P. 121-122.

57 Bendiek A. The “2014 Review”: Understanding the Pillars of German Foreign Policy and the Expectations of the rest of the World. Berlin: SWP, 2015. P. 2.

58 Speech by Dr Frank-Walter Steinmeier, Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs, at the handover ceremony on 17 December 2013 // Federal Foreign Office.  
URL: <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/newsroom/news/131217-bm-antrittsrede/258766>.

59 Ibid.

60 Bagger T. Strategiebildungsprozesse // Das Weißbuch 2016 und die Herausforderungen von Strategiebildung. Wiesbaden: Springer VS, 2019. S. 111–120.

61 Bagger T. ‘Review2014’: A Project of Reflection and Change in German Foreign Policy // The Hague Journal of Diplomacy. 2015. Vol. 10, no 4. P. 421–429.

62 Ibid. P. 423.



A website<sup>63</sup> and Twitter account<sup>64</sup> (none are active today) were created in the first phase to publish updates related to Review 2014. The website posted<sup>65</sup> written expert feedback to Steinmeier's questions, "What, if anything, is wrong with German foreign policy? What needs to be changed?"<sup>66</sup> Almost 60 experts sent their proposals; a third of them from Germany and the rest from other countries.<sup>67</sup> The second review phase included more than 60 public events held in cities across Germany with the participation of the Foreign Minister and other officials.

The third phase of Review 2014 featured formats that were uncommon for the MFA. The future of German diplomacy was discussed in the fishbowl format, where all participants could speak out in front of their colleagues. The MFA held an in-house seminar where all staff members could pitch their projects related to the MFA improvements. It was followed by a moderated online discussion where diplomats could debate anonymously.<sup>68</sup>

Thus, the key *internal driver* of the reform in Germany was the change of government and the new Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier's initiative to reset the MFA, whose overall performance had declined. Furthermore, there were concerns that the Federal Foreign Office was losing control of the foreign policy agenda due to the strengthened role of the Chancellor's office, especially on the EU track.<sup>69</sup>

The reform's *global drivers* included three challenges that were identified in the discussion:

- Crisis: crises emerge as a permanent condition of today;
- Order: changing parameters of the international order, largely associated with the rise of China, as well as with the pressure of globalization, which is expressed, among other things, in the form of parallel structures, regionalism, the emergence of new issues on the agenda, for example, cyber foreign policy;
- Europe: the need to preserve and strengthen European integration as the basis of German foreign policy.<sup>70</sup>

In terms of substance, these challenges overlap with such global foreign policy challenges as economization (the rise of China) and coordination (the alignment of national foreign policy with EU priorities).

63 Review 2014. URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20141115232442/http://review2014.de/de/themen.html>.

64 Review2014. [@Review2014]. URL: <https://twitter.com/Review2014>.

65 Denken für Deutschland // Deutsche Gesellschaft für Auswärtige Politik e.V. URL: <https://zeitschrift-ip.dgap.org/de/ip-die-zeitschrift/archiv/jahrgang-2014/juli-august/denken-fuer-deutschland>.

66 Review 2014. Crisis – Order – Europe // Auswärtige Amt. URL: <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/blob/692042/ceff1f6308ebdb0d2d7c62725089c4198/review2014-data.pdf>.

67 Ibid. S. 50–51.

68 Ibid. S. 37–41.

69 The information was obtained as part of an interview with a country expert by the CAG.

70 Ibid. S. 8–12.



## Substance and progress of the reform

In late February 2015, the MFA **presented results of the year-long deliberations** in a report titled *Review 2014: Crisis. Order. Europe*.<sup>71</sup> This public document described the proposed reform. The report detailed the review process, ideas, and proposals related to improving the effectiveness of German diplomacy.

Changes were planned in seven areas (Table 5). The first three areas covered responses to the main challenges (crisis, order, and Europe), the remaining four areas addressed more practical challenges, which were directly related to the work of the MFA.

Each area is covered in a single paragraph, which sets out specific steps (for example, creating a new Directorate-General for crisis response) and general approaches. According to the document, these proposals must have been implemented within 18 months by the summer of 2016.

**Table 5.** Germany's Federal Foreign Office reform pillars proposed in the *Review 2014* report<sup>72</sup>

Pillars	Changes (adapted from the report)
1. Better crisis anticipation, enlarged diplomatic toolkit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>improving toolkits for prevention, early warning, and crisis management;</li> <li>pooling and strengthening the crisis response structure of the Federal Foreign Office, including by creating a new directorate-general (a division at the deputy minister level) in charge of crisis response;</li> <li>creating a "crisis pool" to ensure the rapid deployment of diplomats to crisis areas and to form special project teams;</li> <li>examining the potential for more substantial support to UN peacekeeping efforts;</li> <li>strengthening the Center for International Peace Operations (ZIF) in charge of preparing civilian personnel for crisis response</li> </ul>
2. A new impetus for a just and peaceful international order	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>adapting Federal Foreign Office's structures and policies to help shape processes of change in the international order by strengthening multilateral institutions;</li> <li>creating within the Federal Government a state secretaries committee (non-political leaders at the deputy minister level) to address issues pertaining to the international order (similar to the RELEX Group of the European Commission);</li> <li>giving prominence to such foreign policy instruments as international legal cooperation and rule-of-law promotion;</li> <li>strengthening competence in multilateral diplomacy by establishing a directorate-general for issues pertaining to the international order</li> </ul>

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid. S. 44–46.

Pillars	Changes (adapted from the report)
3. Anchoring the "European reflex" more firmly in German diplomacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>anchoring the "European reflex" more firmly in all foreign policy fields by taking appropriate staffing and structural measures, and ensuring yet closer links with the institutions in Brussels;</li> <li>considering the impact on EU partners of all undertakings within the Foreign Service and across the Federal Government</li> </ul>
4. More room for strategic reflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>optimizing workflows and routines and making structures less rigid where necessary (including an on-going well-structured and professionally moderated process of defining priorities, regular brainstorming sessions on underlying, cross-cutting issues at the top level, the use of modern scenario and forecasting methods, etc.);</li> <li>encouraging the use of joint strategic forecasting by the Federal Government;</li> <li>learning more systematically from past experience and enhancing evaluation practices</li> </ul>
5. Better communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>redefining Foreign Service's communication structures and processes with special attention to online formats and the digital media;</li> <li>making the Federal Foreign Office more receptive to stimuli from within and without, to signals from the Bundestag and civil society, to the skepticism and concerns of the public, to the contributions and ideas of other foreign policy players;</li> <li>holding regular discussions in formats tried out during the Review 2014 process (simulations, Internet fora);</li> <li>launching a new dialogue format in 2015 – the citizens' conference (Bürgerkonferenz)</li> </ul>
6. Greater openness and more networking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ensuring that the Foreign Service better reflects the growing diversity of German society;</li> <li>transforming the Foreign Service into a hub in the variegated world of modern diplomacy and making of information and ideas from civil society, academia and think tanks;</li> <li>improving networking at all levels of the Foreign Service;</li> <li>positioning the Federal Foreign Office and its missions abroad as the platform on which the many components of German foreign policy should be integrated and moulded into a coherent whole</li> </ul>
7. Better mobilization of resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>putting greater emphasis on leadership and personal responsibility;</li> <li>improving information sharing; improving internal communication;</li> <li>introducing modern matrix management for increased cooperation between directorates-general within the Federal Foreign Office;</li> <li>creating better career development prospects for particularly high-achieving members of staff;</li> <li>involving more closely the network of diplomatic missions in decision-making processes and the everyday formulation of German foreign policy</li> </ul>

Based on the report, the German MFA prepared the Action Plan for a more effective Foreign Service (Aktionsplan für einen schlagkräftigeren Auswärtigen

Dienst). According to Thomas Bagger, one of the reform organizers<sup>73</sup>, this ten-page document described in more detail changes in the same seven areas. The action plan was intended for internal use and was not published.

In his article on Review 2014, Bagger also said that after completing the report and the action plan, a team of five people was created to manage the reform and implement changes in the MFA, which reported directly to the Minister. This implementation unit developed specific projects to address these seven areas. Ten projects were launched in 2015, each of them developed by teams from different units of the MFA.<sup>74</sup>

## Results of the reform and assessment of the quality of its implementation

One of the main results of the reform was the establishment in March 2015 of the Directorate-General for Humanitarian Assistance, Crisis Prevention Stabilisation and Post-Conflict Reconstruction, in line with the first pillar in Review 2014.<sup>75</sup> This is the change most often mentioned by representatives of the Federal Foreign Office. The idea to establish this directorate-general originated in the Ministry before the reform and was integrated into the review.<sup>76</sup> According to Thomas Bagger, the MFA used to create temporary ad hoc structures to address crises. Now, the MFA realized the need to maintain them so that they did not have to start from scratch each time and could gradually accumulate expertise and keep qualified personnel ready.<sup>77</sup> The new division also became a platform to develop up-to-date solutions for early warning and data-driven analysis and strategic prediction of crisis.<sup>78</sup> A year and a half after the launch of the new Directorate-General, Bagger said that without the crisis response structures set up in the MFA, Germany would not have been able to lead the Working Group on Stabilization in the territories liberated from ISIS<sup>79</sup> (the terrorist organization is banned in Russia).

Along with structural changes, the Foreign Office led the development of the new Guidelines on Preventing Crises, Resolving Conflicts, Building Peace. The government approved them in June 2017.<sup>80</sup> That was also when Germany adopted

73 Bagger T. 'Review2014': A Project of Reflection and Change in German Foreign Policy // The Hague Journal of Diplomacy. 2015. Vol. 10, no 4. P. 421–429.

74 Ibid.

75 Directorate General for Humanitarian Assistance, Crisis Prevention Stabilisation and Post-Conflict Reconstruction // Federal Foreign Office. URL: <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/aamt/auswdienst/abteilungen/s-node>.

76 The information was obtained as part of an interview with a country expert by the CAG.

77 Wir müssen weiterhin selbst Antworten geben // Die Bundeswehr. 2015. No 10. URL: <https://exploredoc.com/doc/9206125/bedrohung-f%C3%BCr-den-weltfrieden-erh-donau>.

78 Krisenfrüherkennung, Konfliktanalyse und Strategische Vorausschau. (2019) // Auswärtiges Amt. URL: <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/de/aussenpolitik/themen/krisenpraevention/-/2238138>.

79 Scheffer U. Berliner Rollenspiele // Der Tagesspiegel. 2016. November 1. URL: <https://www.tagesspiegel.de/themen/agenda/deutschlands-neue-aussenpolitik-berliner-rollenspiele/14763184.html>.

80 Guidelines on Preventing Crises, Resolving Conflicts, Building Peace // Federal Government. URL: <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/blob/1214246/057f794cd3593763ea556897972574fd/preventing-crises-data.pdf>.

the law on the secondment of civilian personnel to prevent crises.<sup>81</sup> In early June 2017, Germany completed the transformation of the Center for International Peace Operations (ZIF) to enable it to send its personnel to perform crisis management tasks. The ZIF budget was increased by 60%, and its personnel grew by 40%.<sup>82</sup> The MFA's structural changes involved the transfer of 180 and renovation of 50 offices.<sup>83</sup>

Review 2014 and the MFA reform plan led to **significant changes in the Ministry's communication activities**. The Ministry reoriented<sup>84</sup> its foreign cultural and educational policy, which is considered the third pillar of German foreign policy.<sup>85</sup> In particular, it was tasked to be more active in crisis regions, the principle of co-creation was strengthened, and Germany's cultural infrastructure abroad was expanded.<sup>86</sup>

**The Federal Foreign Office emphasized the development of digital communications.** In the summer of 2016, the MFA's Directorate-General for Culture and Communication set up the strategic communication unit headed by the MFA Director for strategic communication.<sup>87</sup> The Foreign Office reported to Bundestag that its task was "to communicate German foreign policy to the broadest possible audience, both at home and abroad, and to understand better the expectations placed on Germany."<sup>88</sup> The new department was responsible for maintaining communication via all available channels, in particular, by focusing on social media. The strategic communication team included career diplomats, as well as communication experts. In March 2018, it hired a web designer, graphic designer, video editor, event and campaign manager, social media director, and journalist.<sup>89</sup> This effort is best illustrated by **Rumours about Germany**<sup>90</sup>, a strategic communication campaign launched by the MFA after Review 2014, which targeted potential immigrants and ran since 2015. In 2017, the Ministry created a website under the same name.<sup>91</sup>

81 Germany > Elimination of forced labour // International Labour Organization.

URL: [http://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/natlex4.detail?p\\_lang=en&p\\_isn=106043&p\\_country=DEU&p\\_classification=03](http://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/natlex4.detail?p_lang=en&p_isn=106043&p_country=DEU&p_classification=03).

82 Antwort der Bundesregierung auf die Kleine Anfrage der Abgeordneten Kathrin Vogler, Annette Groth, Andrej Hunko, weiterer Abgeordneter und der Fraktion // Deutscher Bundestag.

URL: <http://dipbt.bundestag.de/doc/btd/18/135/1813598.pdf>.

83 Dank an den "Inneren Dienst" // Federal Foreign Office.

URL: <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/de/aamt/151029-bm-hausarbeiter/275958>.

84 Was wir tun. 21. Bericht der Bundesregierung zur Auswärtigen Kultur- und Bildungspolitik für das Jahr 2017 // Auswärtiges Amt.

URL: <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/blob/2177718/893ae0d7033056d7f6ce7e51a61d42e0/akbp-bericht-2017-data.pdf>.

85 Maaß K.-J. The Third Pillar of Diplomacy // Goethe Institut. URL: <https://www.goethe.de/en/kul/ges/20723017.html>; См. дальше: Die dritte Säule: Beiträge zur Auswärtigen Kultur- und Bildungspolitik // Politik & Kultur / hrsg. von O. Zimmermann, T. Geisser // Deutscher Kulturrat. URL: [https://www.kulturrat.de/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/AusPolitikUndKultur\\_Nr16.pdf](https://www.kulturrat.de/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/AusPolitikUndKultur_Nr16.pdf).

86 Unterrichtung durch die Bundesregierung. 19. Bericht der Bundesregierung zur Auswärtigen Kultur- und Bildungspolitik // Deutscher Bundestag. URL: <http://dip21.bundestag.de/dip21/btd/19/115/1911510.pdf>.

87 Unterrichtung durch die Bundesregierung 20. Bericht der Bundesregierung Auswärtige Kultur- und Bildungspolitik // Deutscher Bundestag. URL: <http://dipbt.bundestag.de/doc/btd/18/115/1811550.pdf>.

88 Ibid. S. 5–6.

89 Kindl, A. [@GERonStratCom]. (2018, March 2). Giant leap for #StratCom@GermanyDiplo - from today we have a full-fledged expert team (web design, graphic design, video, campaign management, social media, journo)#behindthescene [Tweet]. URL: <https://twitter.com/GERonStratCom/status/969550914087542784>.

90 Fake news, bots and provocative statements — disinformation on the internet // Federal Foreign Office. URL: <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/aussenpolitik/themen/disinformation-on-the-internet/2125634>.

91 Rumours about Germany. URL: <https://rumoursaboutgermany.info/>.

In November 2015, the German Federal Foreign Office launched<sup>92</sup> a strategic dialogue with private funds to look for **new opportunities for cooperation with non-governmental organizations involved in international activities** (Greater openness and more networking per Review 2014). The dialogue included seven working groups focused on world regions and two thematic groups to address migration and networking with alumni.<sup>93</sup> In its reports on foreign cultural and educational policy to Bundestag the MFA described projects that were based on ideas originating from the strategic dialogue.<sup>94</sup>

**To foster openness and communication with German citizens**, the Federal Foreign Office **created new forms of dialogue** envisioned by Review 2014. In 2016, the Foreign Office organized a citizens' workshop on foreign policy (Bürgerwerkstatt Außenpolitik). Following an open call for applications, the MFA invited more than 130 citizens to discuss foreign policy issues with diplomats.<sup>95</sup> Citizens' workshops were also held after the reform was completed: events in this format were held in 2017 and 2018<sup>96</sup>. The MFA also began to organize similar meetings with a smaller number of participants. Each event focused on a specific problem or situation (Open Situation Room).<sup>97</sup> Diplomats also met with the public in different cities holding a discussion between government representatives and citizens.<sup>98</sup> The Federal Foreign Office published the schedule of open meetings,<sup>99</sup> putting all past events on the map.<sup>100</sup> In 2017, the Berlin-based Global Public Policy Institute conducted an MFA-commissioned study and made recommendations on the further development of citizen dialogue on foreign policy issues.<sup>101</sup>

As part of the seventh pillar focused on efficient resource mobilization, the MFA has set up three project teams "on improving our knowledge and idea management, strengthening our leadership culture and reducing barriers for all career and status groups".<sup>102</sup> In early 2016, the MFA launched<sup>103</sup> a mentoring program for junior employees. An equal opportunity specialist runs the program with the support of

92 Hin zu einer "Außenpolitik der Gesellschaften" — Außenminister Steinmeier gibt Startschuss für Strategischen Dialog zwischen Auswärtigem Amt und privaten Stiftungen // Federal Foreign Office. URL: <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/de/newsroom/151130-stiftungskonferenz/276812>.

93 Unterrichtung durch die Bundesregierung 20. Bericht der Bundesregierung Auswärtige Kultur- und Bildungspolitik. // Deutscher Bundestag. URL: <http://dipbt.bundestag.de/doc/btd/18/115/1811550.pdf>.

94 Ibid.

95 Strum D., von. Steinmeiers Speeddating mit dem Volk // Welt. 2016, February 2. URL: <https://www.welt.de/politik/deutschland/article152444782/Steinmeiers-Speeddating-mit-dem-Volk.html>.

96 Das Format Bürgerwerkstatt // Federal Foreign Office. URL: <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/de/aamt/aussenpolitiklive/buergerwerkstatt-node>.

97 Open Situation Room // Federal Foreign Office. URL: <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/de/aamt/aussenpolitiklive/02-open-situation-room>.

98 Diplomaten im Dialog // Federal Foreign Office. URL: <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/de/aamt/aussenpolitiklive/03-diplomaten-im-dialog>.

99 Aktuelle Veranstaltungen // Federal Foreign Office. URL: <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/de/aamt/aussenpolitiklive/04-veranstaltungskalender>.

100 Veranstaltungsübersicht Außenpolitik Live // MapHub. URL: [https://maphub.net/AAbuergerdialog/Burgerdialog\\_AA](https://maphub.net/AAbuergerdialog/Burgerdialog_AA).

101 Adebahr C., Brtockmeier S., Li M. Stärkung von Bürgerdialog zu Außenpolitik in Deutschland. Bestandsaufnahme und Beispiele aus dem In- und Ausland // Global Public Policy Institute. URL: <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/blob/2074186/32c8625e39a0bc980aeced84f6227854a/180508-studie-global-policy-institute-data.pdf>.

102 Grußwort von Staatssekretär Stephan Steinlein bei der Vorstellung des AA Mentoring-Programmes // Federal Foreign Office. URL: <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/de/newsroom/160225-sts-s-mentoring/278880>.

103 Ibid.

an advisory board. The reform also affected the leadership: the MFA developed<sup>104</sup> a model for good leadership and compiled a handbook for managers. The MFA created the Leadership Competence Centre (Kompetenzzentrums Führung), where senior staff members were provided additional training.

## Assessment of implemented measures as a response to global foreign policy challenges

Table 6 correlates global foreign policy challenges with measures implemented as part of the German MFA reform. It should be noted that of all cases studied in our report, only Germany and the United States have introduced no measures that directly responded to the challenge of economization.

**Table 6.** Correlation of the reform measures in Germany with global foreign policy challenges faced by the diplomatic service

Challenge: Economization	
Response	Effect
No measures aimed at addressing this challenge	—
Challenge: Communication	
Response	Effect
Development of digital communication: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• creating a separate structural unit for strategic communication,</li> <li>• hiring communication experts</li> </ul>	<p>The MFA has stepped up its social media activity, standardized its thematic Twitter accounts of high-ranking diplomats, and launched Rumours about Germany. According to the Federal Foreign Office, the website was visited by 340,000 users from late October 2017 to early August 2018.</p> <p>Germany went up from the thirteenth line in 2016 to the sixth line in 2017 in the global digital diplomacy ranking (the ranking has not been updated since 2017).</p>
New forms of domestic public dialogue in Germany: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• citizens' workshops on foreign policy;</li> <li>• open situation room;</li> <li>• open meetings between diplomats and citizens</li> </ul>	<p>According to Global Public Policy Institute's foreign policy report, many German organizations polled for the research "welcome[d] a stronger role for the Federal Foreign Office in civil dialogue and foreign policy." The report said that the Federal Foreign Office was "one of a small group of foreign ministries that are actually active in the field of civil dialogue. Compared to other foreign ministries, it is far advanced in terms of the dialogue element of its events." As noted in the report, the civic dialogue has strengthened democratic capacity, increased political support and is often seen as an element of good governance.</p>

104 Forum III — Vortrag von MinDir Dold - Auswärtiges Amt // Bundesministerium des Innern, für Bau und Heimat.  
URL: <https://www.orghandbuch.de/SharedDocs/Publikationen/Nachrichten/Forum%20III.html>.



### Challenge: Coordination

Response	Effect
<p>Review 2014 proposed the following measures aimed at improving coordination within the government:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— creating an interdepartmental committee of secretaries of state to address issues related to the international order;</li> <li>— joint strategic forecasting by the federal government;</li> <li>— the positioning of the Federal Foreign Office and diplomatic missions as a platform bringing together various elements of foreign policy</li> </ul>	<p>No reports were published on Review 2014 efforts to improve foreign policy coordination.</p> <p>According to the 2019 report on digitalization projects in the federal government, the MFA led the development of a portal on government services provided abroad. The portal will encourage data sharing by foreign missions, government bodies, and other organizations. While the portal is governed by the 2017 Online Access Act (Online-Zugangsgesetz), it is similar to the relevant measure set out in Review 2014.</p>

## Responding to national and global challenges: best practices from the German case

The key feature of Review 2014 was that **it was initially intended as a document for discussing and rethinking German foreign policy but gradually developed into a full-fledged reform of the Federal Foreign Office.** That happened mostly under the influence of external crises, after which Steinmeier's team realized the need for improvements in the MFA. Overall, this transformation was beneficial for the reform: thanks to the initial focus on public and inclusive discussion the MFA received many ideas from the outside. According to Steinmeier, diplomats "have examined their own work in a critical light and taken part in the public debate."<sup>105</sup>

The most frequently mentioned outcome of Germany's reform is the creation of **the Directorate-General for Humanitarian Assistance, Crisis Prevention Stabilisation, and Post-Conflict Reconstruction.** The Federal Foreign Office was prompted to view the crisis as a permanent state of the modern world. The new Directorate-General helped accumulate expertise and supported the MFA's capacity to respond to unforeseen events. Without the Directorate-General, the Foreign Office had to establish temporary crisis mechanisms. Moreover, the MFA made other efforts to improve its crisis preparedness and response, such as strengthening its Center for International Peace Operations, developing a legal framework for the secondment of civilian personnel to crisis areas, and leading the development and approval of the new Guidelines on Preventing Crises, Resolving Conflicts, Building Peace.

Finally, the outcomes of foreign policy public discussions held to prepare Review 2014 have formed the backbone of **new interaction forms between the Foreign**

<sup>105</sup> Speech by Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier at the closing event of 'Review 2014 – A Fresh Look at German Foreign Policy'. (2015). Federal Foreign Office.  
URL: <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/newsroom/news/150225-bm-review-abschlussveranstaltung/269668>.

**Office and citizens** in Germany. On the one hand, conducting citizens' workshops, open situation rooms, and meetings with diplomats in the town hall format aims to raise awareness and confidence in German diplomacy. On the other hand, these formats allow the MFA staff to understand public expectations and enable citizens to share their proposals with diplomats.

## 2.3. United Kingdom: Foreign Office Reform “Diplomacy 20: 20” (2015–2020)

### General context of the reform

The Diplomacy 20:20 program to transform the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) was launched in 2016 to run until 2020. Today, this is yet another effort to transform British diplomacy.

The Conservative government (second Cameron ministry) launched the reform **after completing the Spending Review** in November 2015. Over the previous five years, the Foreign Office budget had been cut by more than 20%<sup>106</sup>, and at the Treasury's request the FCO prepared a proposal for further cost reductions.<sup>107</sup> While the budget was protected in real terms until 2020 following the report, the FCO was instructed to find further savings in the way government works overseas.<sup>108</sup>

With these inputs, the Foreign Office had set to prepare the reform **before the referendum in June 2016**, when the majority supported the UK's exit from the EU. The referendum caused the prime minister's resignation and the formation of a new government led by **Theresa May**. The UK exit from the EU required an adjustment of foreign policy, whose strategic goals were defined by the 2015 National Security Strategy and assumed UK's continued membership in the EU.<sup>109</sup> The referendum results have **reduced the Foreign Office's bureaucratic weight**. The May ministry delegated a part of its international functions to new ministries — the Department for International Trade and the Department for Exiting the European Union.<sup>110</sup>

Despite the change in foreign policy priorities after the referendum and a quick succession of management turnover, the next ministries have pursued the

106 A Short Guide to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office // National Audit Office.

URL: <https://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Short-Guide-to-the-Foreign-and-Commonwealth-Office.pdf>.

107 McDermott J. UK Foreign Office ministers warn over cuts // Financial Times. 2015. November.

URL: <https://www.ft.com/content/51af3ef0-8158-11e5-8095-ed1a37d1e096>.

108 Foreign Office's settlement at the Spending Review 2015 // Gov.uk.

URL: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/foreign-offices-settlement-at-the-spending-review-2015>.

109 National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015. A secure and Prosperous United Kingdom // HM Government. URL: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/478933/52309\\_Cm\\_9161\\_NSS\\_SD\\_Review\\_web\\_only.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/478933/52309_Cm_9161_NSS_SD_Review_web_only.pdf).

National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015. First Annual Report 2016 HM Government. URL: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/575378/national\\_security\\_strategy\\_strategic\\_defence\\_security\\_review\\_annual\\_report\\_2016.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/575378/national_security_strategy_strategic_defence_security_review_annual_report_2016.pdf).

110 Bloomfield S. An island apart: the inside story of how the Foreign Office is failing to prepare for Brexit // Prospect.

URL: <https://www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/magazine/foreign-office-brexit-failure-steve-bloomfield>.



reform as initially intended. This can be partially explained by the fact that the FCO transformation, as originally planned, **had little to do with the substance of foreign policy and focused on improving internal processes**. With Brexit impacting the reform, the transformation program included some new initiatives inspired by it, such as strengthening the diplomatic network, establishing new diplomatic missions, and increasing the number of employees working abroad.

The continuity of the reform was also ensured by the role of the **Permanent Under Secretary and Head of the Diplomatic Service** who also chaired the FCO Board and headed Her Majesty's Diplomatic Service. The Permanent Under Secretary holds the ministry's highest non-political position and remains in office after a new government is formed. They advise the ministerial team on foreign policy matter and are responsible for the Foreign Office's day-to-day management. Since September 2015, the post has been held by **Sir Simon McDonald**.

After the presentation of the Spending Review and Autumn Statement 2015, McDonald asked to **review possible ways to improve the FCO's performance in the Internet era**.<sup>111</sup> The research team was led by former British Ambassador to Lebanon **Tom Fletcher**, who actively advocated incorporating digital technologies into the diplomatic service.<sup>112</sup> As evidenced by the Terms of Reference (see box, paragraph 9), the upcoming transformation was seen as a continuation of the Foreign Ministry's previous reform called Diplomatic Excellence.

#### **Terms of Reference for the Future FCO report<sup>113</sup>**

1. *Identify opportunities for better, flatter, and more flexible organisation of policy capabilities, including through delayering and greater clarity on roles and responsibilities;*
2. *Maximise the opportunities presented by our investment in Technology Overhaul,<sup>114</sup> including better use of our network in policy making and better balance between demands of security and speed of delivery;*
3. *Identify a more efficient approach to bulk work including correspondence, FOIs and standard briefing;*
4. *Identify where we can strip out the lowest value and lowest priority work, in particular areas where the FCO added value is minimal (eg reporting without HMG specific analysis or action or where we duplicate work done elsewhere);*
5. *To ensure continued FCO policy leadership across Whitehall including in*

111 McDonald S. (2016). The FCO — "less Ferrero Rocher, more Jack Bauer"? // Gov.uk. URL: <https://civilservice.blog.gov.uk/2016/05/17/the-fco-less-ferrero-rocher-more-jack-bauer/>.

112 Fletcher T. The Naked Diplomat // FCO Blog. URL: <https://blogs.fco.gov.uk/tomfletcher/2012/10/02/the-naked-diplomat/>;  
Teller M. On Her Majesty's Service - in a new way // BBC News. URL: <https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-34040175>.

113 Future FCO Report // Foreign and Commonwealth Office. URL: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/521916/Future\\_FCO\\_Report.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/521916/Future_FCO_Report.pdf).

114 Technology Overhaul or Tech Overhaul is an independent program launched in 2014-2015 (Foreign and Commonwealth Office Annual Report and Accounts 2014 to 2015 // Foreign and Commonwealth Office. URL: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/444067/Amended\\_FCO\\_Annual\\_Report\\_2015\\_web\\_1\\_.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444067/Amended_FCO_Annual_Report_2015_web_1_.pdf)).

With the start of the FCO transformation, the program has been integrated into Diplomacy 20:20 and facilitated achieving the reform goals related to the development of a single platform. See McDonald S. Update on FCO Management Issues: October–December 2016 // Parliament of the United Kingdom. URL: <https://www.parliament.uk/documents/commons-committees/foreign-affairs/Correspondence/2015-20-Parliament/Letter-from-Permanent-Under-Secretary-of-State-FCO-re%20FCO-Management-Issues-October-December-2016-22-February-2017.pdf>.

*the context of joint units and to ensure we are delivering efficiently and effectively overseas on behalf of the whole of government including further implementation of One HMG overseas;<sup>115</sup>*

6. *To ensure the FCO is correctly structured, staffed and trained to maximise the opportunities provided by cross Whitehall programme funds;*
7. *To explore better ways of recognising, incentivising and harnessing the expertise and knowledge of all of our staff across the network (in particular our specialists<sup>116</sup>) and improving access to, and use of, knowledge held outside the FCO;*
8. *To propose better and more agile deployment and capability building of our human resources to ensure we maximise our impact and investment in our overseas Posts (including considering whether and where shifts in resources would raise our game and how we can devolve more programme and policy tasks to Posts and a refresh of our strategy for the staff);*
9. *Identify a framework to implement the structural and cultural changes needed to deliver 21st Century Diplomacy (the next iteration of Diplomatic Excellence<sup>117</sup>)*

The FCO conducted an internal review in March 2016 and published results in the Future FCO report<sup>118</sup> in April 2016. According to the FCO's annual report, "[t]he review received **unprecedented levels of engagement from staff throughout the organization**. 88 Posts and 48 departments sent in collective contributions," and the team conducted over 130 interviews, workshops, and forums with staff and stakeholders.<sup>119</sup>

Future FCO was aimed at improving internal procedures within the Foreign Office, policymaking process, and its impact. **The report was divided into three sections:**

- the description of proposed reforms (what we do);
- ways to implement them (how we do it);
- required competencies and personnel policy (who does it).

The report contained 36 specific recommendations across these sections, which would be used in Diplomacy 20:20, a program to transform the FCO from 2016 to 2020. According to one participant of the review, "more than 75% of

115 One HMG (Her Majesty's Government) Overseas is an initiative launched by the UK Government in 2010 to improve the joint working and coordination of all staff working for the UK government overseas. One HMG Overseas // National Audit Office. URL: <https://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/One-HMG-Overseas.pdf>.

116 This refers to the difference between generalists (generalists) and specialists (specialists) among the staff members of the British Foreign Office.

117 Diplomatic Excellence is a campaign launched to reform and improve the Foreign Office in late 2010 by William Hague (see Pamment J. (2016). British Public diplomacy and soft power: Diplomatic influence and the digital revolution // Springer. P. 1) to run from 2011 to 2015. What is Diplomatic Excellence? // Foreign and Commonwealth Office. URL: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/253590/Dip\\_Ex\\_MFA\\_briefing\\_Oct\\_13\\_finalv1\\_2.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/253590/Dip_Ex_MFA_briefing_Oct_13_finalv1_2.pdf).

118 Future FCO Report // Foreign and Commonwealth Office. URL: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/521916/Future\\_FCO\\_Report.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/521916/Future_FCO_Report.pdf).

119 Annual Report and Accounts 2015–16 // Foreign and Commonwealth Office. URL: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/539413/FCO\\_Annual\\_Report\\_2016\\_ONLINE.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/539413/FCO_Annual_Report_2016_ONLINE.pdf).

recommendations were accepted and the [Diplomacy 20:20] team has captured the spirit of the report."<sup>120</sup>

Thus, the initial *internal driver* of the FCO reform was to improve the efficiency of internal processes to cut costs. The management needed to regenerate after the preceding budget cuts that had affected the FCO's potential.<sup>121</sup> After the referendum, a new vision for UK foreign policy became an additional driver and at the FCO it was integrated into the reform, which was already running.

As for *global drivers*, initially communication was the most visible one. In Future FCO, Tom Fletcher emphasized that diplomacy must adapt to the digital age. Later, in the run-up to Brexit, the reform included the expansion of the UK diplomatic presence in countries that were seen as prospective trade and economic partners, which corresponded to the economization challenge.

## Substance and progress of the reform

While the FCO did not publish the complete reform overview, it was described in detail in different documents available in the public domain. In May, Permanent Under Secretary Simon McDonald first mentioned the program in a blog post.<sup>122</sup> In July 2016, he informed the Parliament that the FCO was preparing recommendations on three reform pillars and attached the program structure to the letter (which was not published).<sup>123</sup> Diplomacy 20:20 was launched on December 1, 2016, and is expected to run until 2020.<sup>124</sup>

Diplomacy 20:20 had **three pillars**.<sup>125</sup>

- **Expertise** — People with the right skills, capabilities, knowledge and incentives to deliver expert foreign policy;
- **Agility** — An agile organisation able to deliver quickly and effectively for the FCO in 2020 and beyond;
- **Platform**<sup>126</sup> — A platform for the whole of government overseas that enables first-class foreign policy at a lower cost.<sup>127</sup>

<sup>120</sup> The information was obtained as part of CAG's interview with Foreign Ministry employees.

<sup>121</sup> UK diplomats have 'alarming shortfall' in language skills // BBC. URL: <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-31646908>.

<sup>122</sup> McDonald S. The FCO — "less Ferrero Rocher, more Jack Bauer"? // HMGovernment. URL: <https://civilservice.blog.gov.uk/2016/05/17/the-fco-less-ferrero-rocher-more-jack-bauer/>.

<sup>123</sup> McDonald S. Update on FCO Management Issues: March-June 2016 // Parliament of the United Kingdom. URL: <https://www.parliament.uk/documents/commons-committees/foreign-affairs/AMENDEDFCOManagementIssuesMarchtoJune16.pdf>.

<sup>124</sup> Annual Report and Accounts: 2016–2017 // Foreign and Commonwealth Office. URL: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/625651/FCO-annual-report-2017-web-accessible.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/625651/FCO-annual-report-2017-web-accessible.pdf).

<sup>125</sup> Diplomacy 20: 20 was first publicly described in the 2016 U.K. National Audit Office report. Departmental Overview 2015-16: Foreign & Commonwealth Office // National Audit Office. URL: <https://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Departmental-Overview-2015-16-Foreign-Commonwealth-Office.pdf>.

<sup>126</sup> And a World-Class Platform.

<sup>127</sup> The FCO has designed the reform's brand: the Expertise group was represented by a symbolic owl, Agility by a sparrow, and Platform by a stork. FCO Digital Brand Library // Foreign & Commonwealth Office. URL: <http://brand.fco.gov.uk/gallery/dip2020>.

These reform pillars were based on the Future FCO report, which grouped some of its recommendations under three headings: Posture, Agility, and Expertise. Diplomacy 20:20 changed Posture to Platform, a term which was also the focus of one section for the Future FCO <sup>128</sup>

**Platform refers to the further development of the One HMG Overseas initiative** launched in 2010. It involves removing barriers to cooperation among the agencies involved in international activities, including sharing office and residential buildings and consolidating corporate services.<sup>129</sup> The FCO is positioned as the owner of the joint platform used by 31 agencies working overseas. Under Diplomacy 20:20, the Platform pillar focused on providing the FCO missions with modern information technology.

Pillars consist of **eleven work-streams**.<sup>130</sup> For instance, the Expertise pillar consists of four separate work-streams:

- “Skills and Capabilities, which [centers] around the Diplomatic Academy;”<sup>131</sup>
- Future Policy Leadership, which will help the Foreign Office consolidate its position as the lead department on international issues within HMG;
- Future Heads of Mission, which is about preparing senior staff for playing a leadership role overseas; and
- Future Careers, which includes, for example, secondments to industry and other government departments where staff gain new skills.”<sup>132</sup>

Some work-streams were changed or added in the reform progress to deliver the government's **vision for Global Britain**, a foreign policy concept proposed by Theresa May's cabinet, which envisages a new quality of the UK's international relations after Brexit.<sup>133</sup> In March 2018, **Boris Johnson**, the then Foreign Secretary, announced the opening of ten new foreign missions and the creation of at least 250 new diplomatic roles overseas (an uplift by almost 15% in overseas staff).<sup>134</sup> The FCO soon announced the new host countries: Lesotho, Swaziland (Eswatini), the Bahamas, Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Tonga, and Vanuatu.<sup>135</sup> Six months later, **Jeremy Hunt**, Johnson's successor in the ministerial post, announced an even larger expansion of the global

128 Future FCO Report // Foreign and Commonwealth Office. URL: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/521916/Future\\_FCO\\_Report.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/521916/Future_FCO_Report.pdf).

129 One HMG Overseas // National Audit Office. URL: <https://www.nao.org.uk/report/one-hmg-overseas/>.

130 No full list of pillars was published, but they are mentioned in different FCO documents.

131 The Diplomatic Academy of the United Kingdom was opened in 2015.

132 Written evidence from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (SKIO004) // Parliament of the United Kingdom. URL: <http://data.parliament.uk/WrittenEvidence/CommitteeEvidence.svc/EvidenceDocument/Foreign%20Affairs/Global%20Britain%20FCO%20Skills/written/86253.html>.

133 Global Britain: delivering on our international ambition // Gov.uk. URL: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/global-britain-delivering-on-our-international-ambition>; Spinning global Britain // Financial Time. URL: <https://www.ft.com/content/4e1ec04c-26a8-11e8-b27e-cc62a39d57a0>.

134 Foreign Secretary announces 250 new diplomatic roles and ten new sovereign missions overseas // Foreign and Commonwealth Office. URL: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/foreign-secretary-announces-250-new-diplomatic-roles-and-ten-new-sovereign-missions-overseas>.

135 Foreign Secretary expands UK Commonwealth diplomatic network // Foreign and Commonwealth Office. URL: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/foreign-secretary-expands-uk-commonwealth-diplomatic-network>.

diplomatic presence whereby by 2020 the number of British diplomats abroad would increase by 1,000.<sup>136</sup> **The plans to increase the diplomatic presence were incorporated and implemented as part of Diplomacy 20:20.**

**The reform implementation was included as an additional objective in the FCO Single Departmental Plan**, its key annual planning document.<sup>137</sup> The plan's goals are broken down into sub-objectives with actions listed as "How we will achieve this." The fourth objective had only one sub-objective that involved the three pillars: "Develop a more expert and agile FCO supported by a world-class platform through Diplomacy 20:20".<sup>138</sup> The 2018 plan had kept the name of the fourth goal but replaced Diplomacy 20:20 with the Global Britain vision in the sub-objective description. The 2019 Plan expanded the fourth objective: "Manage our business and provide the platform for the whole of the UK government internationally." The **Platform pillar was set out as a separate sub-objective** specified as FCO corporate policy priority outcome 1.

Actions aimed at achieving the objective related to Diplomacy 20:20, as stated in the FCO single departmental plans from 2016 through 2019, are shown in Table 7.

**Table 7.** Consistency of the FCO's objectives, sub-objectives, and actions to implement Diplomacy 20:20 in 2016-19<sup>139</sup>

Objective and date	Sub-objective	Action
Delivering efficiently in FCO (February 2016)		
Manage our business (December 2017)	4.1. Develop a more expert and agile FCO supported by a world class platform through Diplomacy 20:20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver a new organisational structure for the FCO aligning resources with policy priorities;</li> <li>• A new Local Staff Charter that sets out a clear and consistent offer to our local staff;</li> <li>• Deliver a digitally enabled department, transforming services and business processes</li> </ul>

136 An Invisible Chain: speech by the Foreign Secretary // Foreign and Commonwealth Office. URL: <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/an-invisible-chain-speech-by-the-foreign-secretary>.

137 The government introduced Single Departmental Plans in 2015 as a tool for planning and monitoring performance. The plans must be reviewed annually, and the government has published them four times since 2016. Each department draws up its own plan, which is approved by the Prime Minister's office and the Treasury, thereby ensuring that they meet the goals of the current government, and the implementation costs are included in the budget. The government's planning and performance framework // Gov.uk. URL: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/planning-and-performance-framework/the-governments-planning-and-performance-framework#single-departmental-plans>.

138 According to the categorization proposed by the British Institute for Government: objective-sub – objective-action. See Whitehall Monitor 2019 // Institute of Government. URL: <https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/Whitehall%20Monitor%202019%20WEB1.pdf>.

139 Single departmental plan: 2015 to 2020 // Foreign and Commonwealth Office. URL: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fco-single-departmental-plan-2015-to-2020/single-departmental-plan-2015-to-2020>; [Withdrawn] Foreign and Commonwealth Office single departmental plan: December 2017 // Foreign and Commonwealth Office. URL: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/foreign-and-commonwealth-office-single-departmental-plan/foreign-and-commonwealth-office-single-departmental-plan>; [Withdrawn] Foreign and Commonwealth Office single departmental plan: May 2018 // Foreign and Commonwealth Office. URL: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/foreign-and-commonwealth-office-single-departmental-plan/foreign-and-commonwealth-office-single-departmental-plan-may-2018>; Foreign and Commonwealth Office single departmental plan // Foreign and Commonwealth Office. URL: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/foreign-and-commonwealth-office-single-departmental-plan/foreign-and-commonwealth-office-single-departmental-plan-2019-20>.

Objective and date	Sub-objective	Action
Manage our business (May 2018)	4.1. Develop a more expert and agile FCO supported by a world class platform, leading work overseas on Global Britain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement a new organisational structure for the FCO supported by a world class platform, leading work overseas on Global Britain;</li> <li>• Set out a clear and consistent offer to our local staff through our Post-owned Local Staff Charter;</li> <li>• Revise our global mobility framework to ensure we have expert staff in the places that most matter;</li> <li>• Implement the Skills Statement 2020, delivering priority areas for all staff for building capability;</li> <li>• Roll out modern and flexible IT hardware and software across the network;</li> <li>• Create a digitally enabled department, transforming services and businesses processes;</li> <li>• Simplify corporate services across the overseas network to offer greater clarity, better services and better value, freeing up time for front line diplomacy</li> </ul>
Manage our business and provide the platform for the whole of the UK government internationally (June 2019)	<i>International platform (FCO corporate policy priority outcome 1)</i> 4.1. Provide an efficient, impactful and collaborative international platform for the whole of the UK government via our embassies, high commissions, consulates and offices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide leadership and support to all departments overseas to deliver government priorities</li> </ul>
	<i>Manage our business</i> 4.2. Develop a more expert and agile FCO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• build capability for all staff in line with the Priority Skills Statement 2020</li> <li>• roll out modern and flexible IT hardware and software across the network, including delivering the final phase of moving to Office 365 under our Tech Overhaul Programme and introducing a new finance and resource planning system</li> <li>• increase the accessibility, relevance, uptake and impact of Diplomatic Academy training</li> <li>• deploy our resources for maximum impact, reflecting UK priorities, while ensuring we have an inclusive offer to staff that reflects modern requirements</li> </ul>

**The overall leadership** of Diplomacy 20:20 fall under the authority of Simon McDonald, Permanent Under Secretary of State, who launched the FCO transformation soon after his appointment in 2015. The reform is managed by a Programme Board that meets monthly and an Advisory Board that meets quarterly.<sup>140</sup>

<sup>140</sup> Annual Report & Accounts: 2016–2017 // Foreign and Commonwealth Office. URL: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/625651/FCO-annual-report-2017-web-accessible.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/625651/FCO-annual-report-2017-web-accessible.pdf).



Chief Operating Officer **Peter Jones** (appointed in May 2017) is responsible for the transformation as the fourth objective in the FCO single developmental plan.

Director of Diplomacy 20:20, a post created especially for the programme, is responsible for **the day-to-day management and coordination of the reform**. July 2016 through August 2018, this post was held by **James Kariuki** and succeeded by **Paul Rennie**. According to McDonald, to ensure transparency of the program, the FCO has restarted the Sounding Board,<sup>141</sup> a consultative body composed of staff representatives and connected through the chairman with the FCO Management Board.<sup>142</sup>

## Results of the reform and assessment of the quality of its implementation

The following documents report on Diplomacy 20:20 progress:

- the FCO annual reports;<sup>143</sup>
- the National Audit Office documents;<sup>144</sup>
- Quarterly letters from the Permanent Under Secretary to the Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee in the House of Commons;<sup>145</sup>
- parliamentary inquiries.

Based on these documents, several conclusions can be drawn about the implementation of the reform program.

**FCO Annual Report and Accounts 2015 to 2016** briefly mentioned that Diplomacy 20:20 would be based on Future FCO. The three following annual reports (2016 to 2019) described the FCO transformation in the Performance Report and Corporate Governance Report. Both sections described the reform's intermediate results (Table 8), and the second section set out the following year's priorities. The report no insights about performance assessment or any difficulties in the program implementation.

141 McDonald S. (2017). Update on FCO Management Issues: October-December 2016 // Parliament of the United Kingdom. URL: <https://www.parliament.uk/documents/commons-committees/foreign-affairs/Correspondence/2015-20-Parliament/Letter-from-Permanent-Under-Secretary-of-State-FCO-re%20FCO-Management-Issues-October-December-2016-22-February-2017.pdf>.

142 Annual Report & Accounts: 2016–2017 // Foreign and Commonwealth Office. URL: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/625651/FCO-annual-report-2017-web-accessible.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/625651/FCO-annual-report-2017-web-accessible.pdf).

143 Transparency and freedom of information releases // Gov.uk. URL: [https://www.gov.uk/search/transparency-and-freedom-of-information-releases?keywords=accounts+annual&content\\_store\\_document\\_type%5B%5D=corporate\\_report&organisations%5B%5D=foreign-commonwealth-office&order=relevance](https://www.gov.uk/search/transparency-and-freedom-of-information-releases?keywords=accounts+annual&content_store_document_type%5B%5D=corporate_report&organisations%5B%5D=foreign-commonwealth-office&order=relevance).

144 Ministerial reviews: Departmental Overview 2015–16: Foreign & Commonwealth Office // National Audit Office. URL: <https://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Departmental-Overview-2015-16-Foreign-Commonwealth-Office.pdf>; Departmental Overview, Novembre 2018: Foreign & Commonwealth Office // National Audit Office. URL: <https://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Departmental-Overview-Foreign-and-Commonwealth-Office.pdf>.

145 McDonald S. Update on FCO Management Issues July-September 2016 // Parliament of the United Kingdom. URL: <https://www.parliament.uk/documents/commons-committees/foreign-affairs/Correspondence/2015-20-Parliament/Quarterly-update-on-FCO-Management-Issues-Jul-Sep-2016.pdf>.

**Table 8.** Achievements in the first two years of the Diplomacy 20:20 programme, according to the FCO Corporate Governance Report 2018–2019<sup>146</sup>

Expertise	Agility	Platform
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Central Hubs providing higher quality briefing for and freeing up departments for front line policy delivery.</li> <li>Diplomatic Academy is an established brand across HMG; more staff obtaining accredited C&amp;G [City &amp; Guilds] qualifications.</li> <li>Skills embedded in appointments and performance management; promotion now based on expertise demonstrated in job.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reprioritisation of resource, and allocation of new funding to support new foreign priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Global Britain;</li> <li>EU Exit;</li> <li>Africa.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Up to 400 new positions filled through more agile HR processes.</li> <li>Pay flexibility initiative approved by HMT [Her Majesty's Treasury], moved FCO pay structure closer to other international departments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Modern IT, rolled out in the UK and overseas, is changing the way we work and increasing productivity.</li> <li>Corporate services future operating model produced.</li> <li>Delivering the biggest expansion of the diplomatic network in a generation, including 14 new or upgraded Posts.</li> <li>Bangkok estate sale released funding for major update of overseas estate.</li> </ul>

The FCO reform reports have not covered many of Future FCO's proposals so far. For example, it contained recommendations for improving communication in the digital age. In particular, it was proposed to instruct all diplomatic missions to develop soft power strategies and integrate them into country plans to hire a permanent cadre of digital professionals.<sup>147</sup>

**The UK National Audit Office published the FCO reviews** in 2016 and 2018. These are presentations based on data disclosed by the FCO. The reviews present no assessment of the program performance. The 2016 review contained Future FCO's main conclusions and a summary of pillars (Expertise, Agility, and World-class Platform) under Diplomacy 20:20.<sup>148</sup> The 2018 review included three FCO transformation slides, which described the current situation and individual achievements. In part, these are the same results as in the 2018-2019 FCO report.

The National Audit Office mentioned the following **key achievements** related to three pillars:<sup>149</sup>

- online courses for staff members developed by the Diplomatic Academy (Expertise);
- a more flexible approach to overseas postings (Agility);

146 Annual Report & Accounts: 2018–2019 // Foreign and Commonwealth Office. URL: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/827788/FCOAnnualReport201819.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/827788/FCOAnnualReport201819.pdf).

147 Ibid. P.10.

148 Departmental Overview 2015–16: Foreign & Commonwealth Office // National Audit Office. URL: <https://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Departmental-Overview-2015-16-Foreign-Commonwealth-Office.pdf>.

149 Departmental Overview, November 2018. Foreign & Commonwealth Office // National Audit Office. URL: <https://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Departmental-Overview-Foreign-and-Commonwealth-Office.pdf>.



- consolidation of residential estate of the Department for International Development onto the One HMG platform (in shared buildings or complexes) managed by the FCO (Platform).

Since the publication of Future FCO, Simon McDonald has reported quarterly on the current status of Diplomacy 20:20 to the Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee in the **FCO Corporate Updates**. For example, each update stated the number (a percentage) of staff members and mission heads who had passed language exams for the Expertise pillar. The target for 2020 was 80%. The proportion of heads of diplomatic missions was close to the target, with 72% in 2017 and 79% in 2019. The proportion of employees who required language skills was 39% in 2015, 49% in December 2016 (at the reform commencement), and ranged from 55% to 60% in 2018 and 2019.<sup>150</sup>

Some aspects of the FCO transformation were addressed as part of **thematic parliamentary inquiries**. For example, the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee made an inquiry into the FCO required skills in 2018. According to the inquiry report, the FCO relied on Diplomacy 20:20 to develop a **Priority Skills Framework** (which was published in the report), a **Skills Framework** and a **Languages Strategy** and modified its approach to assessing these skills and knowledge for promotion.<sup>151</sup> The inquiry also asked the FCO whether a recommendation in the Future FCO report—to introduce a formal two-week training margin for all staff entering new roles, focused on improving expertise—had been adopted.<sup>152</sup> In conclusion, the report's authors recommended that the FCO complete an audit of its staff's current skills. The inquiry stated that by 2020 the FCO should be ready to produce a Priority Skills Statement for 2025 (the current version was made for 2020) and required the FCO to meet its goal of having 80% of officers in speaker slots at their target-level language attainment by 2020 and report realistic figures for the additional budgetary resources required to deliver on the Foreign Secretary's goals. The FCO's response of February 2019 committed to carrying out a skills audit as soon as the Atlas Enterprise Resource Planning system was introduced (one of measures in the Platform pillars) and assess how best to improve foreign language proficiency.<sup>153</sup>

*The Future FCO report recommended that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Diplomatic Academy set out priority skills for the British diplomacy that should be developed by 2020. That proposal was included into the Expertise pillar of Diplomacy 20:20. The FCO identified priority skills and revealed the list in its evidence provided to the parliamentary inquiry. According to the FCO, "The priority Skills Statement 2020*

150 McDonald S. Letter from the Permanent Under-Secretary of State to the Chair, regarding FCO Corporate Update July-September 2018 // Parliament of the United Kingdom. URL: <https://www.parliament.uk/documents/commons-committees/foreign-affairs/Correspondence/2017-19/Tom-Tugendhat-FAC-Operations-July-Septem-17-19.pdf>.  
McDonald S. Quarterly update on FCO management issues, January–March 2019 // Parliament of the United Kingdom. URL: <https://www.parliament.uk/documents/commons-committees/foreign-affairs/Correspondence/2017-19/19-05-13-Letter%20to-FCO-Corporate-Update-for-January-to-March-2019.pdf>.

151 Delivering Global Britain: FCO Skills. Fourteenth Report of Session 2017–19 / House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee // Parliament of the United Kingdom. URL: <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmfa/1254/1254.pdf>.

152 Ibid. P.14.

153 Delivering Global Britain: FCO Skills: Government response to the Committee's Fourteenth Report of Session 2017–19 / House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee // Parliament of the United Kingdom. URL: <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmfa/1937/1937.pdf>.

*is not exhaustive and not everyone in the organisation needs the skills in this list.”<sup>154</sup> The list should provide guidance to FCO’s HR and the Diplomatic Academy. The House of Commons’ Foreign Affairs Committee recommended that the FCO be ready to update the Priority Skills Statement for a period beyond 2020.<sup>155</sup>*

### **Priority Skills Statement 2020**

#### **Diplomatic Skills and Tradecraft**

- Diplomatic Academy Faculties of Diplomatic Practice; International Policy; Trade Policy and Negotiations; Security, Defence and Intelligence; Consular and Crisis Management; Economics and Prosperity
- Overseas leadership
- Priority 1 languages of Arabic, French, Mandarin, Russian and Spanish. Priority 2 languages of Farsi, German, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, Turkish

#### **Geographical Knowledge and the International System**

- Europe and its extended neighbourhood: Russia, the Middle East, and North Africa
- Major strategic relationships: US, India, China, Japan
- Major multilateral institutions: UN, NATO, EU and WTO

#### **Other Professional Skills and Knowledge**

- Project and programme management and delivery
- Digital Data & Technology
- Commercial and Financial awareness, including in managing the FCO Estate

Finally, by the end of 2019, **plans to strengthen the diplomatic representation in connection with Brexit have been partially implemented.** High Commissioners (basically ambassadors to the Commonwealth countries) were appointed to Lesotho, Eswatini, the Bahamas, Vanuatu, and Samoa<sup>156</sup> and permanent representatives to Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada, Saint Lucia, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.<sup>157</sup> According to the FCO Report 2018–2019,

154 Written evidence from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (SKI0004) // Parliament of the United Kingdom. URL: <http://data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/committeeevidence.svc/evidencedocument/foreign-affairs-committee/global-britain-fco-skills/written/86253.html>.

155 Delivering Global Britain: FCO Skills. Fourteenth Report of Session 2017–19 / House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee. URL: <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmfaaff/1254/1254.pdf>.

156 Change of British High Commissioner to Lesotho — May 2019 // Foreign and Commonwealth Office. URL: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/change-of-british-high-commissioner-to-lesotho-may-2019>;  
Change of British High Commissioner to Eswatini during summer 2019 // Foreign and Commonwealth Office. URL: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/change-of-british-high-commissioner-to-eswatini-during-summer-2019>;  
Change of British High Commissioner to The Bahamas — August 2019 // Foreign and Commonwealth Office. URL: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/change-of-british-high-commissioner-to-the-bahamas-august-2019>;  
Change of British High Commissioner to Vanuatu — Summer 2019 // Foreign and Commonwealth Office. URL: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/change-of-british-high-commissioner-to-vanuatu-summer-2019>;  
Change of British High Commissioner to Samoa — December 2019 // Foreign and Commonwealth Office. URL: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/change-of-british-high-commissioner-to-samoa-december-2019>.

157 British High Commissioner welcomes new Resident British Commissioners to Region // Caricom Today. URL: <https://today.caricom.org/2019/11/08/british-high-commissioner-welcomes-new-resident-british-commissioners-to-region/>.

the recruitment of 1,000 new employees is planned for the end of 2020,<sup>158</sup> and additional diplomatic missions will be opened during this financial year.<sup>159</sup>

## Assessment of implemented measures as a response to global foreign policy challenges

Diplomacy 20:20, intended for four years, has been only partially implemented so far. Table 9 shows the FCO efforts made to respond to the diplomatic service's common challenges and the expected effects.

**Table 9.** Correlation of the reform measures in the UK with global foreign policy challenges faced by the diplomatic service

Challenge: Economization	
Response	Effect
Strengthening the global network of diplomatic missions (the Agility pillar)	New diplomatic missions and expanding the FCO staff abroad should compensate for the economic effects of Brexit, as this is what their work will focus on (the idea that the Commonwealth market will replace Europe as UK's leading trade partner was popular among Brexit supporters)
Challenge: Communication	
Response	Effect
Improving language skills, with 80% target by 2020 (based on the results of the exam) for heads of diplomatic missions and employees in positions that require language skills	If diplomats have a better command of foreign languages, it will expand the FCO's ability to communicate with foreign audiences. The heads of diplomatic missions have almost reached the target of 80% in this area, but for other employees, it is still 60%
Challenge: Coordination	
Response	Effect
The increase in the Diplomatic Academy training programs available to the UK civil servants involved in international activities; the engagement of other staff members in developing training programs and courses	Positioning the Diplomatic Academy as an educational center on the government's international agenda will improve knowledge sharing and serve as an additional format for exchanging business contacts. During the training process, students from different government agencies will simulate interdepartmental interaction, which can help build more effective communication in future work

158 Annual Report and Accounts: 2018–19. // Foreign and Commonwealth Office. URL: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/827787/FCO\\_Annual\\_Report.print.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/827787/FCO_Annual_Report.print.pdf).

159 Ibid. P. 62.

### Challenge: Coordination

Response	Effect
The creation of a new Secondments and Interchange Unit	Future FCO viewed secondment as a possibility to gain new experience and skills and as a networking tool to deal with secondment hosts. This effort can be an effective response to the challenge of coordination, as it will complement the inflexible formal channels of interdepartmental interaction with more open and convenient personal contacts and also allow staff members from different departments to understand each other's work
Developing a new pan central Government IT network known as Rosa (the Platform pillar)	According to the FCO, Rosa will significantly improve communication across the government departments at the secret level (within a secure environment)

## Responding to national and global challenges: best practices from the UK case

The preparation of the transformation program Diplomacy 20:20 began before the referendum on leaving the EU. Initially, it was aimed at improving the FCO's internal processes and spending performance. Brexit marked a sharp turn in British foreign policy. However, the Foreign Office team **has maintained the overall logic of the planned reform while making specific changes to its program reflecting the new course**. The main innovation involved strengthening the global network of British diplomatic missions, including in Africa and in the Commonwealth. This example shows that reform can be sustained even amidst dramatic changes in foreign policy.

The best practices of Diplomacy 20:20 include **the establishment of the FCO Secondment Unit in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs**. The idea came from Future FCO that said secondments and exchanges would help develop "new ways of thinking, wider networks and important skills."<sup>160</sup> Exchanges of employees across the government will create an additional level for interagency cooperation.

Another advantage of the FCO reform is **the positioning of skills development as one of the three transformation areas** (the Expertise pillar). Specific efforts included developing a Priority Skills Statement for 2020, defining targets for language skills, and developing the Diplomatic Academy's capacity to train the staff of the FCO and other agencies.

<sup>160</sup> Future FCO Report // Foreign and Commonwealth Office. URL: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/521916/Future\\_FCO\\_Report.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/521916/Future_FCO_Report.pdf).

## 2.4. Critical improvements in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Uzbekistan (2017–2021).

### General context of the reform

The MFA reform was part of a broad transformation launched in Uzbekistan in 2016 by the new government after President Islam Karimov's death. During his presidency, the country had complicated relations with other states in the region and an archaic system of governance.

New President Shavkat Mirziyoyev launched a structural transformation. One of its goals was to **shift the balance between the government's economic and security blocks** both in the government and in the Administration of the President of Uzbekistan. Karimov relied more heavily on a large power apparatus (including in international relations), and Shavkat Mirziyoyev counted on the economic bloc. He set out to make Uzbekistan more open to the outside world (in terms of handling foreign investments, the openness of trade, and adherence to international standards) and, to this end, to improve relations with other countries, including Uzbekistan's closest neighbors. As one of his initial efforts, he lifted restrictions on free currency exchange in September 2017.<sup>161</sup> The foreign policy course started to change before the MFA reforms. In 2017, Uzbekistan resumed its suspended contacts with the leaders of neighboring countries,<sup>162</sup> the United States, and China.

Deputy Chairman of the Senate of the Oliy Majlis<sup>163</sup> of the Republic **Sadyk Safayev**<sup>164</sup> is referred to<sup>165</sup> as one of the key persons who promoted changes in foreign policy and in the MFA.<sup>166</sup> He headed the Foreign Ministry of Uzbekistan from 2003 to 2005 and was known as a proponent of pro-Western foreign policy. After the unrest in Andijan in 2005 and a marked cooling in relations with Western countries, which had disapproved the government's military solution of the conflict, Safayev left the office to take the position of the head of the Senate's Foreign Policy Committee, where he retained some influence on political relations with the EU and the United States. In early December 2016, on the eve of the presidential election, which Shavkat Mirziyoyev won, Safayev said there were no reasons to review Uzbekistan's foreign policy principles.<sup>167</sup> After the election, he was appointed to the newly created position of First Deputy Chairman of the Senate.<sup>168</sup> He emphasized the importance of continuity in foreign policy, but noted

161 Латыпов С. (2017). Узбекистан открывает конвертацию // Norma.uz. URL: [https://www.norma.uz/novoe\\_v\\_zakonodatelstve/uzbekistan\\_otkryvaet\\_konvertatsiyu](https://www.norma.uz/novoe_v_zakonodatelstve/uzbekistan_otkryvaet_konvertatsiyu).

162 Ионова Е. П. Внешнеполитические приоритеты Узбекистана // Россия и новые государства Евразии. 2018. № 2. С. 80–96.

163 The Upper House of Uzbekistan's Parliament is the chamber for territorial representation that consists of 100 senators.

164 Саттаров Р. Новое равновесие. Как Мирзиёев изменил кадровый состав власти Узбекистана // Московский центр Карнеги. URL: <https://carnegie.ru/commentary/72982>.

165 Ibid.

166 Ibid.

167 В Узбекистане пообещали, что при новых властях «хаоса не будет» // Sputnik. URL: <https://tj.sputniknews.ru/asia/20161130/1021199146.html>.

168 Садык Сафаев избран первым заместителем председателя Сената // Газета.uz. URL: <https://www.gazeta.uz/ru/2016/12/13/safayev/>.

that “it would also be wrong to say there is nothing to change. We know that there are resources for this. We need new partners. In my opinion, one of the most urgent tasks now is to intensify the dialogue with our closest neighbors.”<sup>169</sup>

Like reforms in other government agencies, changes in foreign policy and the related reform of the MFA were held within the framework of a general strategic document developed by the new government. **The Action Strategy on Five Priority Development Areas 2017–2021**<sup>170</sup> was approved by the President in February 2017. The following areas have been declared priority:

- improvement of state and public construction;
- the rule of law and further reform of the judicial system;
- development and economic liberalization
- development of the social sphere
- ensuring security, inter-ethnic harmony, and religious tolerance, and implementation of balanced, mutually beneficial, and constructive foreign policy.

Each area included more targeted subgroups classified by tracks. The fifth area covered two tracks:

- ensuring security, religious tolerance, and interethnic harmony;
- implementation of a balanced, mutually beneficial, and constructive foreign policy.

The foreign policy portion of the Strategy contained the following **subgroups**:

- strengthening the independence and sovereignty of the state, further strengthening the place and role of the country as a full subject of international relations, joining the ranks of developed democratic states, creation of security, stability, and good neighborliness belt around Uzbekistan;
- strengthening the international reputation of the Republic of Uzbekistan, making available to the international community of objective information on the ongoing reforms in the country;
- improving the legal framework of the foreign policy and foreign economic activities of the Republic of Uzbekistan, as well as the legal basis for international cooperation;
- resolving issues of delimitation and demarcation of the state boundary of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

169 В Центральной Азии в одиночку не выжить: интервью с Садыком Сафаевым // EADaily. URL: <https://eaddaily.com/ru/news/2016/12/19/v-centralnoy-azii-v-odinochku-ne-vyzhit-intervyu-s-sadykom-safaevym>.

170 Указ Президента Республоики Узбекистан «О стратегии действий по дальнейшему развитию Республики Узбекистан» // Lex.uz. URL: <http://lex.uz/docs/3107042>.

These subgroups **drove the MFA reform** by encouraging the Ministry to promote **Uzbekistan's foreign economic interests**.

**The MFA reform began a year after the Strategy had been approved.** The relevant regulations had been prepared before the reform started. The State Program on the implementation of the Strategy of Action for 2017 included the development of the draft regulation On the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Uzbekistan to cover "a set of measures to improve the activities of the Ministry, primarily diplomatic missions in foreign countries, to attract investment and promote domestic products to foreign markets."<sup>171</sup>

The 2018 state program included<sup>172</sup> a radical improvement of the MFA activity. It implied that a special commission would develop draft regulatory documents by mid-March 2018, containing:

- the description of the MFA reform;
- plans to improve the University of World Economy and Diplomacy of Uzbekistan;
- measures to improve interagency coordination in trade, economic, and investment cooperation with foreign partners.

It was on the basis of those draft documents that **the government, in early April 2018, approved two presidential decrees to launch the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' transformation based on the above projects.** Other efforts covered in the foreign policy section of the government programs also focused on the MFA reform:

- improving the protection of the rights of Uzbek citizens abroad;
- the formation of policy in respect of compatriots;
- development of measures to improve Uzbekistan's international reputation.

Unlike in other reforms carried out in Uzbekistan under Shavkat Mirziyoyev, **the head of the MFA kept his post.** The President changed<sup>173</sup> the government composition, including the key posts of Prime Minister and deputies, interior minister and the minister of energy, and the structure of the government departments.<sup>174</sup> Nevertheless, Foreign Minister **Abdulaziz Kamilov**, who had headed the Foreign Ministry since 2012, retained his post. In the reform progress,

171 О стратегии действий по дальнейшему развитию Республики Узбекистан // Lex.uz. URL: <http://lex.uz/docs/3107036#3109519>.

172 О государственной программе по реализации стратегии действий по пяти приоритетным направлениям развития Республики Узбекистан в 2017–2021 годах в «год поддержки активного предпринимательства, инновационных идей и технологий» // Lex.uz. URL: <http://lex.uz/docs/3516847#3517305>.

173 Утвержден новый состав Кабинета Министров // Комитет по автомобильным дорогам при министерстве транспорта Республики Узбекистан. URL: <http://www.uzavtoyu.uz/ru/post/vazirlar-mahkamasining-yangi-tarkibi-tasdiqlandi.html>.

174 Количество вице-премьеров сокращено // Газета.uz. URL: <https://www.gazeta.uz/ru/2017/06/13/gov/>; В Узбекистане появились еще два новых вице-преьера // Sputnik Узбекистан. URL: <https://news.rambler.ru/other/38542412-v-uzbekistane-poyavilis-esche-dva-novyh-vitse-premera>; Утверждены кандидатуры всех пяти вице-премьеров Узбекистана // Даракчи. URL: <https://darakchi.uz/ru/65470>.



the President reshuffled the ministry, in particular, by appointing three new deputy ministers.<sup>175</sup>

Based on the Strategy priorities in public administration, the MFA reform launched **a movement towards openness**. In July 2017, Minister Abdulaziz Kamilov held a direct dialogue with compatriots (both present in the studio and via video conference).<sup>176</sup> As a result, the government established an interdepartmental body responsible for improving the mechanism for providing services to Uzbekistan citizens.<sup>177</sup> The direct dialogue takeaways were summarized in the documents that have driven the MFA reform.

Thus, the *internal drivers* of the MFA reform in Uzbekistan, such as the change of political leadership and a new strategy for the country's socio-economic development, were crucial for the reform. Moreover, the reform was justified (see the next section) by the need to solve the internal problems of the MFA system rather than respond to external challenges.

The leading *global driver* of the reform was to gain benefits through greater involvement in the world economy and the influx of foreign investment, which corresponds to economization as a global foreign policy challenge.

## Substance and progress of the reform

The formal start of the MFA reform was the adoption of the presidential decree On measures on radical improvement of the system of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Uzbekistan and strengthen its responsibility for the realization of priority directions of foreign policy and foreign economic activity dated April 5, 2018,<sup>178</sup> whose key ideas were outlined by Shavkat Mirziyoev in his address to the Foreign Ministry in January 2018.<sup>179</sup> The decree focused on promoting the country's foreign economic interests. The decree did not outline the reform's deadline, but it was linked to its development strategy for 2017–2021.

The document listed nine issues that prevented the MFA from achieving its objectives and identified nine work areas to address them.<sup>180</sup> While some issues involve two reform areas, other areas cover two identified issues (Table 10).

175 Алишер Абдуалиев назначен замминистра иностранных дел // Газета.uz.

URL: <https://www.gazeta.uz/ru/2019/01/23/abdualiev/>;

Дилшод Ахатов назначен замминистра иностранных дел // Газета.uz. URL: <https://www.gazeta.uz/ru/2018/05/29/mfa/>;  
Назначен первый замглавы МИДа // Газета.uz. URL: <https://www.gazeta.uz/ru/2018/11/14/vice-minister/>.

176 Прямой диалог министра иностранных дел с согражданами // Министерство иностранных дел Республики Узбекистан. URL: <https://mfa.uz/ru/video/dialogue/>.

177 Брифинг в национальном пресс-центре // Министерство иностранных дел Республики Узбекистан. URL: <https://mfa.uz/ru/press/news/2017/09/12522/>.

178 Указ Президента Республики Узбекистан «О мерах по коренному совершенствованию системы министерства иностранных дел Республики Узбекистан и усилению его ответственности за реализацию приоритетных направлений внешнеполитической и внешнеэкономической деятельности» // Lex.uz. URL: <http://lex.uz/docs/3611113>.

179 Выступление президента Узбекистана Шавката Мирзиёева на совещании, посвященном деятельности Министерства иностранных дел и посольств нашей страны за рубежом // Министерство иностранных дел Республики Узбекистан. URL: <https://mfa.uz/ru/press/news/2018/01/13631/>.

180 Ibid.

**Table 10.** Issues and areas of the MFA reform in Uzbekistan

Issues preventing task implementation	The MFA reform area
<p>The current legal framework does not comprehensively regulate all issues of the diplomatic service, does not fully reflect the accumulated legal and practical experience, and does not meet modern requirements</p>	<p>A radical revision and improvement of the regulatory framework and organizational structure of the MFA and Uzbekistan's overseas entities, with a focus on promoting "economic diplomacy."</p>
<p>The MFA's organization and staff structure is not focused on the effective mobilization of available resources for solving strategic tasks in the foreign policy and foreign economic spheres</p>	
<p>There are no well-defined mechanisms for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>interaction of state bodies with the MFA and Uzbekistan's overseas entities,</li> <li>effective and well-coordinated work on the development of trade, economic, investment, and tourism cooperation with foreign partners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthening the MFA's coordinating role in unified foreign policy and foreign economic activities;</li> <li>precise regulation and delineation of tasks, functions, and powers of the relevant ministries, departments, and local government bodies in foreign economic activities</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information and analytical support and planning of the work of the Foreign Ministry are fragmented.</li> <li>The existing proposals on foreign policy priorities fail to cover the promotion of the country's foreign economic interests</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Streamlining the effective system of internal planning and control;</li> <li>simplification of the procedures and forms of reporting, developing criteria for evaluating the performance of the MFA and Uzbekistan's overseas entities</li> </ul>
<p>Efforts related to raising global awareness of the large-scale transformations in the country and international initiatives are reactive and hindering the effective implementation of the tasks of forming a positive image and strengthening the country's authority in the international arena</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No consistent dialogue with compatriots.</li> <li>The potential of compatriots is not used in the implementation of socio-economic, cultural, and humanitarian projects and programs</li> </ul>	<p>Active use of public diplomacy tools in promoting a positive international reputation of Uzbekistan, primarily through strengthening systematic and targeted information interaction with national and foreign expert communities, the media, public, and academia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formation and implementation of mechanisms to ensure real protection of the rights and legitimate interests of citizens;</li> <li>maintaining a comprehensive dialogue with compatriots abroad and their engagement in projects and programs</li> </ul>

Inefficient HR policy and low financial incentives, and social protection of the MFA staff prevent the formation of highly professional diplomatic staff, reduce the prestige of the diplomatic service and lead to an outflow of qualified specialists	The fundamental revision of the HR policy for the MFA and Uzbekistan's overseas entities through the introduction of advanced and transparent organizational and legal mechanisms for the selection, training, retraining and advanced training, rotation, and formation of a promising reserve of diplomatic staff
	Improving financial incentives and social protection of the diplomatic service staff and creating adequate conditions for their practical work
There is an unsatisfactory level of efficiency and quality of public services provided by consular institutions and the adequate protection of the rights and legitimate interests of individuals and legal entities of Uzbekistan abroad and assistance to citizens in difficult situations	Strengthening the MFA's facilities and resources by integrating information technology to improve the system of public services and promote the country's interests in the global information space
Insufficient implementation of advanced information and communication technologies hinders the solution of priority tasks, does not provide an operational foreign policy and foreign economic response, as well as the development of digital diplomacy tools	

The decree outlines measures to **change the MFA structure, powers, and responsibilities**, in particular:<sup>181</sup>

- establishment of the Main Department for Foreign Economic Cooperation, where hired specialists with “higher economic education and practical experience in the relevant sectors of the economy” will ensure the attraction of foreign investment, export promotion, development of foreign trade relations, and other foreign economic tasks;<sup>182</sup>
- transformation of the MFA press service into the Department of Public Relations and Mass Media;
- establishment of a department for communication with compatriots abroad;
- establishment of a department and a call center for appeals of individuals and legal entities;
- establishment of Dunyo Information Agency and a translation bureau as a successor of Jahon News Agency;
- transformation of the Information and Analytical Center of International Relations into the Center for Analysis and Forecasting;

<sup>181</sup> Ibid.

<sup>182</sup> Постановление Президента Республики Узбекистан «Об организационных мерах по дальнейшему совершенствованию деятельности министерства иностранных дел Республики Узбекистан» // Lex.uz.  
URL: <http://lex.uz/docs/3611280>.

- establishment of the MFA regional offices in the Republic of Karakalpakstan and 12 regions of Uzbekistan (with 1–2 employees each).

The decree introduced **new organizational practices** across the MFA:

- regular reconciliation of foreign policy and foreign economic priorities with the country's strategic development goals,
- interdepartmental rotation of employees according to the principle “relevant ministries, departments, and public authorities locally — Ministry of Foreign Affairs — foreign institution — Ministry of Foreign Affairs, relevant ministries, departments, and public authorities locally”;
- annual development of roadmaps by overseas entities and a reporting mechanism for their implementation.

Along with the decree, **the government adopted the Presidential Resolution “About organizational measures for further enhancement of activities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan”<sup>183</sup>** to approve the goals, structures, and regulation of the MFA. The resolution also defined **criteria for evaluating the effectiveness and efficiency of the MFA's activities**. However, these criteria are instead a **list of tasks of the Ministry**.

**Criteria for evaluating the effectiveness and efficiency of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan<sup>184</sup>**

1. The practical implementation of the activities envisaged in the annual action plans (roadmaps) to develop cooperation between Uzbekistan and foreign countries in political, diplomatic, trade, economic, investment, technological, financial, technical, scientific, cultural, humanitarian, and other areas.
2. Organization of visits, meetings, and negotiations at the top, high and other levels aimed at achieving specific, meaningful, and mutually beneficial international agreements and contracts.
3. Ensuring political support from foreign countries, including within the framework of international organizations, initiatives, positions, and approaches of the Republic of Uzbekistan on the relevant items of international agenda and regional security and national development matters.
4. Providing regularly the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan with up-to-date information and analytical materials and forecast assessments of current global events, critical political and economic developments affecting the national interests of the Republic of Uzbekistan.
5. Assistance in making foreign economic transactions aimed at ensuring further growth in the volume and expansion of the bilateral trade range, primarily export supplies of goods and services of domestic companies and organizations to global markets.
6. Reaching specific agreements on attracting foreign direct investment, grants, loans and technical assistance, advanced technologies, and scientific developments of organizations of foreign countries in the development and modernization of priority sectors of the economy and infrastructure of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

183 Ibid.

184 Ibid.

7. *Increasing the tourist inflow to the Republic of Uzbekistan, facilitating the conclusion of agreements with foreign companies and organizations on the implementation of joint programs and projects to promote national tourism products and attract investment in the development of tourism infrastructure.*
8. *Dissemination of correct and reliable information to disclose the essence and the value of the country's ongoing large-scale reforms and economic, investment, cultural-historical, and tourist potential of the Republic of Uzbekistan authoritative print, electronic, and broadcast media of foreign countries.*
9. *Development of proposals to conclude important international treaties of the Republic of Uzbekistan and assistance in their full-scale implementation.*
10. *Efficiency and quality of consular services, ensuring adequate protection of the rights and legitimate interests of individuals and legal entities of Uzbekistan abroad, assisting citizens in difficult situations.*

Along with the presidential decree and resolution, the MFA reform measures were included in **the state program to implement the Development Strategy for 2019**.<sup>185</sup> The state program included:

- development of the law on the diplomatic service (a measure previously included in the state program for 2017);
- adoption of the foreign policy concept;
- development of the concept of strengthening the positive image of Uzbekistan abroad.

Besides, the state program contained measures directly related to the MFA reform (Table 11). Despite the program's focus on economic diplomacy and attracting investment, the **MFA was not listed among the performers of the measure called "Bringing into a single system and improving the efficiency of working with foreign investors."**

**Table 11.** Measures in the state program for 2019 related to the MFA reform

Measure	Form and substance
Strengthening the activities of foreign institutions and diplomatic missions of the Republic of Uzbekistan, opening new diplomatic missions and consular offices	<p>Draft presidential decree providing for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• expanding the geography of Uzbekistan's international cooperation in political and economic spheres;</li> <li>• opening new diplomatic and consular institutions to protect the rights and interests of citizens living abroad, and increasing the number of employees in existing institutions;</li> <li>• further improvement of diplomatic and consular missions, creation of favorable conditions for employees, and fundamental improvement of the logistics system</li> </ul>

<sup>185</sup> Государственная программа по реализации Стратегии действий по пяти приоритетным направлениям развития Республики Узбекистан в 2017–2021 годах в «Год активных инвестиций и социального развития» // Центр «Стратегия развития». URL: <https://strategy.uz/files/static/77041/stateprogramru.pdf>.

Measure	Form and substance
Improvement of the government service system and legal assistance by consular institutions to citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan abroad	Practical measures aimed at expanding and improving the possibilities for providing electronic services for citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan temporarily employed abroad
Development of "digital diplomacy" to establish foreign relations	<p>A comprehensive action program that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>improving the position of Uzbekistan in the Digital Diplomacy Rating and establishing cooperation with analytical centers operating in this area;</li> <li>conducting an audit of the websites of all diplomatic missions of Uzbekistan abroad to develop their branded design and structure;</li> <li>establishing a professional development program for the MFA staff related to the use of information technology and digital tools in diplomacy;</li> <li>set up of a team of specialists in social networks and digital diplomacy at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs</li> </ul>

## Results of the reform and assessment of the quality of its implementation

According to experts,<sup>186</sup> the decree's implementation does not yet mean a systematic change in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' work. **Still, it reflects a priority change**, primarily, the orientation of diplomacy to attract foreign investment, promote economic growth, and change approaches to conducting operations. Deputy Foreign Minister Ilkhom Nematov summarized the MFA goals in late 2018. As the critical goals in 2019, he mentioned the attraction of foreign investment, expanding exports, and tourism development.<sup>187</sup>

The reform's progress is shown in **the MFA reports** (including speeches by representatives of the Ministry, transcripts of parliamentary hearings and reports), and media reports. The MFA typically reports on the implemented measures to improve its activities briefly and summarizes the achieved results. In December 2018, at a meeting of the Senate of the Oliy Majlis, the Minister of Foreign Affairs presented a report on the MFA report:

1. "In 2018, Uzbekistan's diplomatic missions added 14 diplomatic posts directly responsible for foreign economic matters."
2. "The Ministry has established the Department for Foreign Economic Cooperation, the Department for Interaction with Compatriots Abroad, the

<sup>186</sup> The information was obtained as part of an interview with a country expert by the CAG.

<sup>187</sup> Задачи МИДа на 2019 год — увеличение экспорта, туристов и инвестиций // Газета.uz.  
URL: <https://www.gazeta.uz/ru/2018/12/26/mvd/>.

department for working with appeals of individuals and legal entities, and the sector for receiving appeals. Dunyo Information Agency and a media center have been established as a successor of Jahon News Agency. Because of the new challenges of strengthening economic and public diplomacy, many departments have been transformed."

3. "To further intensify foreign policy activities, some new diplomatic missions have been opened in foreign countries, and existing ones have been expanded. Resolutions of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan on 23 foreign institutions have been reviewed and adopted" (in 2018 and 2019, Uzbekistan opened five consulates general in Russian cities,<sup>188</sup> on in Kazakhstan,<sup>189</sup> and planned to open a consulate general in China<sup>190</sup>).
4. "The work of consular institutions of Uzbekistan in providing legal assistance to citizens of Uzbekistan abroad, including those engaged in labor activities in foreign countries, has been reinvigorated."
5. "A mechanism of interactive dialogue with compatriots living abroad has been developed and put in place."
6. "The Ministry is carrying out consistent work to improve the regulatory framework for foreign policy activities" (followed by the list of prepared and adopted documents).<sup>191</sup>

The report set out seven "unresolved problems that slow down implementing changes in the ministry, particularly on the investment track."<sup>192</sup> A few months earlier, President Mirziyoyev had criticized regional officials for their unsuccessful foreign trips.<sup>193</sup> According to the MFA, difficulties arise when interacting with other Uzbek agencies and structures involved in international activities:

1. Proposals for cooperation in the field of export, investment, and tourism, received through Uzbek foreign institutions, are considered for a long time by relevant departments and regions, which leads to the cancellation or postponement of bilateral events.
2. Information related to industry agencies' investment projects is often inadequately reviewed and makes it impossible to conduct high-quality negotiations with foreign partners.

188 Товарооборот России и Узбекистана в 2019 году может превысить \$7 млрд // ТАСС.  
URL: <https://tass.ru/ekonomika/7129021>.

189 В Актау открыли генконсульство Узбекистана // Актау.Казинформ.  
URL: [https://www.inform.kz/ru/v-aktau-otkryli-general-noe-konsul-stvo-uzbekistana\\_a3561251](https://www.inform.kz/ru/v-aktau-otkryli-general-noe-konsul-stvo-uzbekistana_a3561251).

190 Узбекистан планирует открыть Генеральное консульство в Гуанчжоу // Uzreport.  
URL: <https://uzreport.news/politics/uzbekistan-planiruet-otkrit-generalnoe-konsulstvo-v-guanchjou>.

191 Информация Министерства иностранных дел Республики Узбекистан о своей деятельности по выполнению возложенных задач // Министерство иностранных дел Республики Узбекистан.  
URL: [https://mfa.uz/ru/about/activity/17073/?sphrase\\_id=8183594](https://mfa.uz/ru/about/activity/17073/?sphrase_id=8183594);  
Информационное сообщение о семнадцатом пленарном заседании Сената Олий Мажлиса Республики Узбекистан // Сенат Олий Мажлиса Республики Узбекистан. URL: <http://www.senat.uz/ru/lists/view/202>.

192 Ibid.

193 Намечен план привлечения прямых иностранных инвестиций, определены ответственные за его реализацию // Prezident.uz. URL: <https://president.uz/ru/lists/view/1935>.



3. The country's regions often do not have specific plans for cooperation with foreign partners, and preparations for visits are not carried out correctly.
4. There is no exact feedback mechanism between the MFA and responsible agencies on the progress of projects or the results of visits.
5. Because of inadequate interagency coordination and improper work of some agencies and because the MFA is often required to perform functions beyond its responsibilities, the MFA must handle documents delivered by other government agencies.
6. Foreign entities have no quality materials about Uzbekistan in foreign languages and promotional materials to advertise Uzbekistan in other countries.
7. The promotion of exports, investments, and tourism is poorly coordinated due to the unclear distribution of responsibilities among the MFA staff, local authorities, and representatives of national structures.

Some of these issues were relevant in 2019: in August, Foreign Minister Abdulaziz Kamilov reported on the lengthy review periods of investment proposals by departments, the low quality of information about projects, the low efficiency of travel of representatives of departments abroad due to the formal approach to the implementation of agreements reached and informing the Foreign Ministry among the circumstances that hinder the implementation of foreign policy and foreign economic tasks.<sup>194</sup>

The emphasis on improving the MFA's foreign economic activity is also reflected in the fact that the Ministry provides information on quantitative indicators in the relevant areas. Some of them are not related to the MFA reform, and some performance indicators have remained unchanged. In January 2019, the MFA reported on the progress for the previous year:<sup>195</sup>

- exports of goods and services in 2018 was \$11.3 billion (according to the Central Bank of Uzbekistan,<sup>196</sup> \$14 billion in 2018, \$12.3 billion in 2017, and \$10.5 billion in 2016);
- the foreign direct investment was \$2.7 billion (according to the Central Bank of Uzbekistan,<sup>197</sup> the net inflow of foreign direct investment in 2018 totaled \$624 million, which is three times less than in 2017);
- in 2018, about 4 million foreign citizens visited Uzbekistan (a 107% increase from 2017).

194 Выступление Министра иностранных дел Республики Узбекистан Абдулазиза Камилова на XXI пленарном заседании Сената Олий Мажлиса // Министерство иностранных дел Республики Узбекистан. URL: <https://mfa.uz/ru/about/speech/2019/08/20621/>.

195 Министерство иностранных дел Узбекистана: важнейшие события 2018 года // Министерство иностранных дел Республики Узбекистан. URL: <https://mfa.uz/ru/press/news/2019/01/17275/>.

196 Платежный баланс, международная инвестиционная позиция и внешний долг Республики Узбекистан // Центральный Банк Республики Узбекистан. URL: [http://cbu.uz/upload/statistics/bop/IV%20quarter/ru\\_BOP,%20IIP,%20EXD%20\\_2016-2018.pdf](http://cbu.uz/upload/statistics/bop/IV%20quarter/ru_BOP,%20IIP,%20EXD%20_2016-2018.pdf).

197 Ibid.

In June 2019, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs announced the successful development of 244 investment projects worth more than \$5 billion by Uzbekistan's diplomatic missions.<sup>198</sup>

## Assessment of implemented measures as a response to global foreign policy challenges

The MFA reform in Uzbekistan is still far from completion. Still, based on assessing the effect of implementing specific measures, it is possible to get an idea of the overall dynamics of changes. Table 12 compares the planned and partially implemented reform measures with the global foreign policy challenges described above

**Table 12.** Correlation of the reform measures with global foreign policy challenges faced by the diplomatic service

Challenge: Economization	
Response	Effect
Refocusing Uzbek diplomats abroad on interaction with and attraction of foreign investors	<p>Since the president regularly makes public statements about the need for communication between Uzbek diplomats and foreign investors, foreign investment has been increasingly put on the Foreign Ministry's agenda. According to the 2019 public report, the MFA attracted \$ 2.7 billion in foreign direct investment. Particular attention should be given to the fact that the Foreign Ministry provides such information. However, this is usually part of the functions of the economic unit of the government.</p> <p>The diplomatic staff performance abroad is estimated based on the specific number of attracted investments and the number of contracts executed.</p> <p>It is hardly possible to assess performance so far as the reform is still in progress and little quantitative data exist at present</p>
Structural transformations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• establishment of the Main Department of Economic Cooperation,</li> <li>• appointment of the First Deputy Minister responsible for interdepartmental coordination of foreign economic policy and foreign economic activity of diplomatic missions</li> </ul>	Foreign economic relations are now handled by a separate department of the Foreign Ministry to improve the quality of decisions and the speed of their adoption

198 МИД Узбекистана отчитался о привлеченных в страну инвестициях // Fergana.Agency.  
URL: <https://www.fergana.agency/news/108131/>.

**Challenge: Communication**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Effect</b>
Development of digital diplomacy (online communication)	Despite the task of integrating online tools in communication and updating websites, there has been no noticeable progress in this area since the reform began: embassy websites' design has remained unchanged. The only new account in social networks has become the Instagram of the head of the ministry. Existing diplomatic accounts have few followers, except for the official Facebook page of the Foreign Ministry
Communication with citizens and compatriots	In December 2018, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs opened a call center to receive applications from citizens. In July 2019, the Embassy of Uzbekistan in Russia also launched its call center. No information is publicly available about the received and reviewed appeals. Still, the efforts made show that Uzbek diplomats pay a lot of attention to citizens' and compatriots' requests. According to the expert, after the beginning of changes in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Uzbek diplomats began to actively establish contacts with Uzbek diasporas abroad to implement their tasks
Expansion of the network of diplomatic missions: in 2018–2019, Uzbekistan opened five new consulates-general in Russia and one in Kazakhstan	<i>Expectations:</i> increasing cultural and humanitarian cooperation, improving the quality of services provided to compatriots abroad

**Challenge: Cooperation**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Effect</b>
As part of the MFA reform and the implementation of the country's development strategy, the government has adopted several measures aimed at improving foreign economic coordination: introduced the interagency personnel rotation, created by the General Directorate of foreign economic cooperation Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and approved the regulation on interagency coordination	<p>Interdepartmental rotation is expected to strengthen the MFA staff with employees qualified in other civil service areas, primarily with economic competencies.</p> <p>According to the President's decree and decree, the Main Department of Foreign Economic Cooperation was created to enhance the coordination role of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the foreign economic sphere and, ultimately, to implement development goals.</p> <p>The MFA's assessments show that coordination in the foreign economic sphere faces numerous obstacles</p>

## Responding to national and global challenges: best practices from the Uzbekistan case

The MFA reform in Uzbekistan is designed to improve many inhouse processes and make it a useful tool for ensuring socio-economic development through international cooperation.

One of the most successful MFA reform decisions was its **alignment with its Development Strategy** for 2017–2021. This integration will help better coordinate changes in the MFA with changes in other departments and the overall strategic course pursued by the Presidential Administration. Thus, in addition to the focus on foreign economic policy at an early stage of the reform, we can note the efforts to reformat the Foreign Ministry's interaction with other government bodies by giving the MFA additional responsibilities and coordinating functions.

Also, the **formal criteria for evaluating the Ministry of Foreign Affairs activities** can be called a successful solution.<sup>199</sup> A significant part of the activities aimed at improving the MFA's work is developing relevant regulatory legal acts. Less is known about the practical implementation of the reform. The MFA regularly reports on the measures taken and the difficulties in the process of transformation.

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## 2.5. Measures as part of reforms in other countries

### New Zealand: the Ministry 20/20 change program and related reforms of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (2009–2014)

In 2009, the New Zealand Foreign Ministry launched a set of reforms in three areas:<sup>200</sup>

- A review of the structure of New Zealand's network of foreign missions and development of interagency coordination. New Zealand agencies with offices in other countries are collectively denoted by the term NZ Inc.

199 Положение о Министерстве иностранных дел Республики Узбекистан // Все законодательство Узбекистана. URL: [https://nrm.uz/contentf?doc=539156\\_&products=1\\_vse\\_zakonodatelstvo\\_uzbekistana](https://nrm.uz/contentf?doc=539156_&products=1_vse_zakonodatelstvo_uzbekistana).

200 Annual Report 2009/10. Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of New Zealand // Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20150401025851/http://mfat.govt.nz/downloads/media-and-publications/annual-report/annualreport09-10.pdf>.

(used since 2005<sup>201</sup>) to emphasize the country's international activities' whole-of-government nature. New foreign missions were opened (in 2013, the presence in Africa was expanded and diplomatic resources were reallocated from Europe to Asia<sup>202</sup>), and new interdepartmental mechanisms were created, for example, the development of government-wide country strategies;<sup>203</sup>

- The integration of the New Zealand Agency for International Development (NZAID) into the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT). The Agency was established as a semi-autonomous organization in 2002. Previously, international aid was the responsibility of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. In 2009, the government decided to reintegrate the agency into the MFAT. The reform aimed to "better align development with foreign policy objectives and reduce management overheads."<sup>204</sup> In practice, integration took several years, meanwhile the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade worked on improving international aid effectiveness.
- The Ministry 20/20 change program, consisting of interrelated projects. Initially, the program included seven streams of work (Strategy, Structure, People, Technology and knowledge management, Measures, Efficiency, and Culture and values).<sup>205</sup> A new MFAT business model became its main project by 2012.<sup>206</sup> Beyond changing internal processes, the reform focused on reducing costs — by NZD 10 million in the first implementation year.<sup>207</sup>

Ministry 20/20 was completed in 2014,<sup>208</sup> and its implementation covered all three areas. Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade **John Allen** called the program "the most profound structural, cultural and technological reform in the Ministry's history"<sup>209</sup> (Table 13).

201 Martin C. NZ Inc: New Zealand's Whole-of-Government Approach to Peace Support Operations. Centre for Strategic Studies. School of Government // Victoria University of Wellington.  
URL: <http://researcharchive.vuw.ac.nz/bitstream/handle/10063/1930/thesis.pdf>.

202 Annual Report 2012/13. Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of New Zealand // Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.  
URL: [https://web.archive.org/web/20150401023146if\\_/http://mfat.govt.nz/downloads/media-and-publications/annual-report/MFAT%20Annual%20Report%20201213.pdf](https://web.archive.org/web/20150401023146if_/http://mfat.govt.nz/downloads/media-and-publications/annual-report/MFAT%20Annual%20Report%20201213.pdf).

203 Ibid.

204 New Zealand. Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Peer Review. 2010 // OECD.  
URL: <http://www.oecd.org/dac/peer-reviews/47468242.pdf>.

205 Annual Report 2010/11. Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of New Zealand // Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.  
URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20150401022457/http://mfat.govt.nz/downloads/media-and-publications/annual-report/annualreport10-11.pdf>.

206 Vote Foreign Affairs and Trade and Vote Official Development Assistance / Office of the Auditor-General. Briefing to the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee // New Zealand Parliament.  
URL: <https://www.parliament.nz/resource/OO00197319>.

207 Annual Report 2012/13. Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of New Zealand // Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.  
URL: [https://web.archive.org/web/20150401023146if\\_/http://mfat.govt.nz/downloads/media-and-publications/annual-report/MFAT%20Annual%20Report%20201213.pdf](https://web.archive.org/web/20150401023146if_/http://mfat.govt.nz/downloads/media-and-publications/annual-report/MFAT%20Annual%20Report%20201213.pdf).

208 Annual Report 2013/14. Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of New Zealand // New Zealand Parliament.  
URL: [https://www.parliament.nz/resource/en-nz/51DBHOH\\_PAP59273\\_1/24b8d666a71f284f28cc5ddccf0aca216d49c22c](https://www.parliament.nz/resource/en-nz/51DBHOH_PAP59273_1/24b8d666a71f284f28cc5ddccf0aca216d49c22c).

209 Statement of Intent 2012–2015. Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of New Zealand // Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.  
URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20150331141133/http://mfat.govt.nz/downloads/media-and-publications/soi-mfat-2012-15.pdf>.

**Table 13.** Correlation of the reform measures in New Zealand with global foreign policy challenges faced by the diplomatic service

Challenge: Economization	
Response	Effect
Integration of the New Zealand Agency for International Development into the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade	According to Peter Adams, the executive director of the New Zealand Agency for International Development (2002–2009), the amalgamation has negatively affected the agency as the funds allocated to international aid programs were reallocated to the needs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. The OECD Peer Review 2010 appreciated the reform. Still, it said that aid programs lacked clear strategic focus while the mid-term strategy failed to address social dimensions of international aid. Besides, the amalgamation has affected well-organized cooperation between NZAID and non-profit organizations engaged in international aid activities. According to the OECD expert assessment in 2015, after reintegration, the agency was able to retain key development experts, but there were a high staff turnover and shortage of professionals in different areas
Challenge: Coordination	
Response	Effect
The mechanism for developing country strategies led by the MFAT and other agencies within NZ Inc.	Expectations: Country strategies developed jointly by agencies involved in international activities will reflect strategic thinking and improve interagency coordination. By 2014, four such strategies had been approved and implemented (for China, India, Australia, and ASEAN), and three more were being prepared. NZ Inc. members have created additional mechanisms for interagency coordination

## Canada: Merger of the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Canadian International Development Agency (2013)

In 2013, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) was merged into the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade, and Development (DFATD), and the international aid matters were assigned to the foreign ministry. One of the main prerequisites for such a merger was the planned reduction of spending on foreign policy and international aid in 2010–2013. In 2012, the downsizing affected 300 agency staff members and 450 jobs in the DFATD.<sup>210</sup> Another possible reason for the merger was the divergence between the two agencies' interests related to aid recipients.<sup>211</sup> While the foreign ministry was interested in supporting Canadian companies in developing countries, the CIDA focused on development and

<sup>210</sup> Federal job cuts: Tracking the rollout // CBC News.

URL: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/federal-job-cuts-tracking-the-rollout-1.1138401>.

<sup>211</sup> Harley J. Appraising the CIDA-DFAIT amalgamation: From consolidating organizations to building a collaborative culture // University of Victoria. URL: <https://dspace.library.uvic.ca/handle/1828/7644>.

humanitarian aid. Finally, the merger was recorded in Bill C-60, the budget implementation act adopted in June 2013.<sup>212</sup> Thus, the foreign ministry reform in Canada was related to the response to the economization of international relations (Table 14).

**Table 14.** Correlation of the reform measures in Canada with global foreign policy challenges faced by the diplomatic service

Challenge: Economization	
Response	Effect
The Canadian International Development Agency merger into the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade, and Development	A study conducted three years after the merger showed that most employees supported the reform, and few officials continued to be increasingly hostile about it. According to respondents interviewed, staff members of previously different departments have established successful working relations, but some respondents mentioned inadequate expertise in international development matters, in particular, among management staff

## Australia: Merger of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Australian International Development Agency (2013–2014)

In Australia, the idea to merge the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) with the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) was raised by new Prime Minister **Tony Abbott** in 2013. According to him, the merger was required to integrate international aid with diplomatic activities: "We don't want our diplomacy going in one direction and our aid program going in another direction."<sup>213</sup> The financial factor played an important role: the Liberal-National Coalition that won the election planned to reduce public spending, including on international aid<sup>214</sup> (Table 15). Despite criticism from the professional community,<sup>215</sup> the merger has not been reconsidered. AusAID was terminated as an independent entity in November 2013.<sup>216</sup> That launched prompt administrative changes related to personnel, remuneration, information technology, and staff relocation a few months later (the DFAT and AusAID occupied buildings in different parts of Canberra), which took a little more than a year.<sup>217</sup>

212 Bill C-60 // Parliament of Canada. URL: <https://www.parl.ca/DocumentViewer/en/41-1/bill/C-60/royal-assent>.

213 Lloyd P. Aid experts concerned AusAID decision a sign of things to come // ABC. URL: <https://www.abc.net.au/radio/programs/worldtoday/aid-experts-concerned-ausaid-decision-a-sign-of/4968866>.

214 Election 2013 live: Coalition releases its costings — as it happened // The Guardian. URL: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/sep/04/election-2013-costings-kevin-rudd-politics-live-blog>.

215 Koc E. End of the line for AusAID // SBSNews. URL: <https://www.sbs.com.au/news/end-of-the-line-for-ausaid>.

216 Order to Abolish the Australian Agency for International Development as an Executive Agency // Federal Register of Legislation. URL: <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2013G01553>.

217 Harley J. Appraising the CIDA-DFAIT amalgamation: From consolidating organizations to building a collaborative culture // University of Victoria. URL: <https://dspace.library.uvic.ca/handle/1828/7644>.



**Table 15.** Correlation of the reform measures in Australia with global foreign policy challenges faced by the diplomatic service

Challenge: Economization	
Response	Effect
The merger of the Australian International Development Agency into the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade	<p>The merger allowed the government to reduce spending on international aid.</p> <p><i>Expectations:</i> increased coherence between the work of diplomats and international aid programs and the elimination of overlap between the agencies.</p> <p>The hasty merger has frustrated employees. The 2014 DFAT survey showed that only 33% of former AusAID staff felt "part of the team" compared to 70% of their colleagues who had always been at DFAT.</p> <p>The government conducted the reform performance studies two years after the merger. According to the 2015 survey of Australian aid stakeholders (non-government organizations, contractors, and other aid program members), Australian aid quality and efficiency worsened after the merger. Another survey done in 2018 showed more optimistic evaluations by stakeholders compared with 2015, but they were still below the 2013 level.</p>

## Denmark: Reform of the Diplomatic Mission Structure (2013–2014)

In 2013, Denmark launched a reform of its diplomatic network, which the MFA called the most considerable diplomatic service transformation in recent years.<sup>218</sup> This reform was the second part of the MFA modernization.<sup>219</sup> It was preceded by central office changes, such as connecting to a single government financial system and simplifying internal business processes.<sup>220</sup> For the first time, the MFA set up an analytical team of independent experts led by the Permanent Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to prepare the reform of the diplomatic mission structure. In its report,<sup>221</sup> the team concluded that the Danish presence overseas played a crucial role in promoting the country's interests, while the form of its missions was less significant. Experts urged the MFA to focus on economic diplomacy and proposed changes focusing on "More [representation in the] world, less Europe, more EU." In January 2014, the MFA announced<sup>222</sup> a

218 Annual Report 2013 // Udenrigsministeriet. URL: <https://um.dk/en/about-us/economy-and-results/-/media/um/english-site/documents/about-us/annual%20report%202013.pdf>.

219 Udenrigs. Tema: Nyt nordisk forsvarssamarbejde. Største reform af Udenrigstjenesten i nyere tid // Forsvarets Forskningsdatanase. URL: [https://pure.fak.dk/files/5531794/Udenrigs\\_2\\_2014\\_web.pdf](https://pure.fak.dk/files/5531794/Udenrigs_2_2014_web.pdf).

220 Annual Report 2011 // Udenrigsministeriet. URL: <https://um.dk/-/media/um/english-site/documents/about-us/annual%20report%202011%20english.pdf?la=en>.

221 Udenrigstjenestens Repræsentationsstruktur — Opsummering Af Droftelser I Refleksionsgruppen // Udenrigsministeriet. URL: [http://um.dk/-/media/UM/Danish-site/Documents/Udenrigspolitik/Nyheder\\_udenrigspolitik/2013/Udenrigsministeriets%20repræsentationsstruktur\\_%20Opsummering.pdf](http://um.dk/-/media/UM/Danish-site/Documents/Udenrigspolitik/Nyheder_udenrigspolitik/2013/Udenrigsministeriets%20repræsentationsstruktur_%20Opsummering.pdf).

222 Ændringer i Danmarks repræsentationsstruktur 2014 // Udenrigsministeriet. URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20141031182617/http://um.dk/da/om-os/organisation/repr/aendringer-repr/>.

reform of the structure of diplomatic missions titled “Denmark in the world — new centers of power, new markets.” It was planned to open new embassies in the Philippines and Colombia, an embassy and a trade office in Nigeria, to strengthen diplomatic missions in developing economies, to increase the staff of the Danish mission to the EU and its embassies in large European countries, and close some embassies or downsize their staff, including those in small European countries. In total, the changes have affected missions in more than 25 countries<sup>223</sup> and were completed by late 2014 (Table 16)

**Table 16.** Correlation of the reform measures in Denmark with global foreign policy challenges faced by the diplomatic service

Challenge: Economization	
Response	Effect
Reorganization of the foreign mission network: reallocation of diplomatic resources to developing economies by closing or reducing the staff of embassies in states with a lower priority	<i>Expectations:</i> the reform will focus diplomatic resources on the countries with which trade and economic cooperation will be most beneficial to Denmark. According to the MFA, the new structure of Danish embassies will provide access to 300 million more people than at present

## France: MAEDI 21 (2015–2017)

A reorganization of the French MFA started after 2008 with the adoption of the White Paper on Foreign and European Policy.<sup>224</sup> In 2009, **Bernard Kouchner**, the French Minister of Foreign and European Affairs, proposed to build “a ministry on the move.”<sup>225</sup> The law on the MFA reorganization was adopted in late 2012.<sup>226</sup> Since the early 2010s, such areas of foreign policy activity as cultural and economic diplomacy have been transformed.<sup>227</sup>

In 2015, Foreign Minister **Laurent Fabius**, who at that time had been in charge of the Foreign Ministry for three years, released a new reform program, MAEDI 21: Global diplomacy for the 21st century<sup>228</sup> (MAEDI stands for the Ministry of Foreign

<sup>223</sup> Annual Report 2014 // Udenrigsministeriet.

URL: <https://um.dk/~media/um/english-site/documents/about-us/annual%20report%202014.pdf>.

<sup>224</sup> Juppé A., Schweitzer L. La France et l'Europe dans le monde — Livre blanc sur la politique étrangère et européenne de la France 2008–2020 // Vie-publique.

URL: <https://www.vie-publique.fr/rapport/29950-la-france-et-leurope-dans-le-monde-livre-blanc-sur-la-politique-etran>.

<sup>225</sup> Un ministère en mouvement // Ministère des Affaires étrangères et européennes.

URL: <https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/Reforme.pdf>.

<sup>226</sup> Arrêté du 28 décembre 2012 relatif à l'organisation de l'administration centrale du ministère des affaires étranger // Legifrance.gouv.fr. URL: [https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?sessionId=F6CF6554FB20FFA82C28717EA095D371.tplgfr31s\\_3?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000026858948&idArticle=&dateTexte=20190301](https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?sessionId=F6CF6554FB20FFA82C28717EA095D371.tplgfr31s_3?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000026858948&idArticle=&dateTexte=20190301).

<sup>227</sup> Левицкий В.Б. Реформа культурно-гуманитарного направления французской дипломатии // Дипломатическая служба. 2019. № 5(86). С. 39; Левицкий В.Б. (2019). Экономическая составляющая внешней политики Франции // Дипломатическая служба. 2019. № 6(87). С. 59.

<sup>228</sup> MAEDI 21 — Global diplomacy for the 21st century // Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs.

URL: <https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/the-ministry-and-its-network/maedi-21-global-diplomacy-for-the-21st-century/>.

Affairs and International Development from 2012 to 2017; since 2017 it has been named the Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs). According to the report, in the 21st century, diplomacy has faced challenges such as the shifting balance of power, the growing influence of sub-state actors, the increasing impact of digital technologies, and the permanent state of crisis.

The program covered three major areas:

- Adapting our external action [to a world which itself is in constant flux];
- Simplifying to provide a high-quality public service;
- Managing all MAEDI employees.

These areas included tasks and specific subtasks, with implementation deadlines specified.

Some measures were planned for completion by 2020, but the reform continued until the change of government in 2017. At that time, many of the results have been partially or fully achieved<sup>229</sup> (Table 17). After the election of President **Emmanuel Macron**, the new government in 2017-2018 launched the civil service reform called Action Public 2022. The MFA prepared a new transformation plan<sup>230</sup> which failed to mention MAEDI 21.

**Table 17.** Correlation of the reform measures in France with global foreign policy challenges faced by the diplomatic service

Challenge: Economization / Coordination	
Response	Effect
<p>Reorganization of the diplomatic network based on new foreign policy priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By 2025, a quarter of the MFA's staff should be posted to emerging G20 countries; in 2017, the embassy in China will be the largest by the number of employees.</li> <li>• Twenty-five embassies abroad will be co-located in the same building with other European countries.</li> <li>• Responsibilities in host countries will be distributed between the French and other European embassies according to the principle of division of labor</li> </ul>	<p><i>Expectations:</i> strengthening the diplomatic presence in developing economies will allow France to amplify relations with them and boost trade and economic cooperation. The co-location of embassies with other EU countries and the division of labor will reduce the cost of maintaining embassies where this is not a priority</p>

229 Au nom de la Commission des Affaires Étrangères sur le projet de loi de finances pour 2018 (n° 235) // Assemblée Nationale. URL: <http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/15/budget/plf2018/a0275-tI.asp>.

230 Notre stratégie pour la transformation de l'action publique / Comité interministériel de la transformation publique // Le Gouvernement. URL: [https://www.gouvernement.fr/sites/default/files/document/document/2018/10/action\\_publique\\_2022\\_-\\_notre\\_strategie\\_pour\\_la\\_transformation\\_de\\_laction\\_publique\\_-\\_29\\_octobre\\_2018.pdf](https://www.gouvernement.fr/sites/default/files/document/document/2018/10/action_publique_2022_-_notre_strategie_pour_la_transformation_de_laction_publique_-_29_octobre_2018.pdf).

### Challenge: Communication / Coordination

Response	Effect
<p>Communication improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To expand their social media outreach, each foreign institution must maintain accounts on local websites (in the host country) and have a strategy to expand the audience;</li> <li>Creation of regional communication and press centers;</li> <li>Increasing the number of languages of communication with external audience from 6 to 10;</li> <li>Transformation of the MFA into a body responsible for interagency cooperation in the field of external communication</li> </ul>	<p>In the digital diplomacy ranking in 2016 and 2017, France ranked second and third, respectively (the ranking has not been updated since 2017).</p> <p>As of 2017, one regional pilot center was opened in Cairo, and another was planned in a Spanish-speaking country, but their effectiveness is difficult to assess</p>

### Challenge: Coordination

Response	Effect
<p>Supporting professional mobility outside the MFA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revision of the rules to introduce a mandatory mobility requirement outside the MFA for employees applying for senior management positions;</li> <li>Promotion of mobility in other organizations (including government agencies, private sector, research centers, and the European External Action Service);</li> <li>Building career paths for employees competent in European issues based on mobility to enable them to gain and apply diverse experience for employment in European institutions, in particular, in the European External Action Service;</li> <li>Increasing mutual transfers of employees with the European External Action Service by 50% by 2017</li> </ul>	<p><i>Expectations:</i> employees will gain experience in related fields and use it in their diplomatic work. Secondment will maintain horizontal communication between the MFA and other organizations. As for the European institutions, support for the MFA employees will eventually contribute to a better understanding between the MFA and European External Action Service</p>

## USA: Redesign and merger of communications bureaus (2017–2019)

In 2017, **Rex Tillerson**, the first secretary of state in the **Donald Trump** administration, launched a reform of the State Department dubbed Redesign. It was initiated as part of a comprehensive plan for reorganizing the executive branch.<sup>231</sup> This reorganization was carried out by each department independently. The State Department developed the reform in 2017 and it was aligned with White House's plans to reduce spending on foreign policy, which Congress opposed

<sup>231</sup> Executive Order 13781 of March 13, 2017. Comprehensive Plan for Reorganizing the Executive Branch // Federation of American Scientists. URL: <https://fas.org/irp/offdocs/eo/eo-13781.htm>.

three times.<sup>232</sup> The preparation of such reorganization by the State Department and its subordinate Agency for International Development (USAID)<sup>233</sup> included a survey of employees about how they see organizations' current state and future. A private consulting company, Insigniam, conducted the survey. The process was criticized in the media and by the professional community because the consultants were poorly informed about the specifics of the diplomatic service.<sup>234</sup> In early 2018, the State Department's budget request showed that the reorganization was entering the implementation phase, which was called the Impact Initiative<sup>235</sup> and included 16 keystone projects covering three areas:

- Modernizing IT and HR Operations;
- Modernizing Global Presence (foreign missions), and Creating and Implementing Policy (cooperation between the Department of State and USAID); and
- Improving Operational Efficiencies (HR, real estate, and procurement services).

Compared to the plans announced earlier, the initiative was less ambitious.<sup>236</sup> A few months later, Donald Trump dismissed Secretary of State Tillerson. According to the U.S. Government Accountability Office report,<sup>237</sup> the next Secretary of State, **Mike Pompeo**, continued implementing the projects. However, he also led a structural reform that was not included in Tillerson's plans and involved the merger of two communication divisions, the Bureau of Public Affairs (public and media relations in the United States), and the Bureau of International Information Programs (coordination of public diplomacy abroad).<sup>238</sup> The merger idea was recommended by the Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy and had been discussed long before.<sup>239</sup> According to Senior Official for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs **Michelle Giuda**, the reform was driven by the changing communications landscape and the need to effectively communicate U.S. positions in this environment<sup>240</sup> (Table 18).

232 McBride C. Trump Keeps the Pressure on State Department Spending // The Wall Street Journal. URL: <https://www.wsj.com/articles/trumps-keeps-the-pressure-on-state-department-spending-11552326475>.

233 Subsequent USAID reorganization was independent of the State Department and much more successful. Gramer R., Luce D. USAID Redesign Moves Forward, With No Drama // Foreign Policy. URL: <https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/04/25/usaid-redesign-moves-forward-with-no-drama-u-s-agency-for-international-development-humanitarian-relief-development-crises-disaster-assistance/>.

234 Gramer R., Luce D., Lynch C. How the Trump Administration Broke the State Department // Foreign Policy. URL: <https://foreignpolicy.com/2017/07/31/how-the-trump-administration-broke-the-state-department/>.

235 Congressional Budget Justification. Fiscal Year 2019 // Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs. URL: <https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/FY-2019-Congressional-Budget-Justification-Department-of-State-Foreign-Operations-and-Related-Programs.pdf>.

236 Toosi N. Tillerson scales back State Department restructuring plan // Politico. URL: <https://www.politico.com/story/2018/02/07/tillerson-state-department-restructuring-downsizing-397612>.

237 Leadership Focus Needed to Guide Agency Reform Efforts // United States Government Accountability Office. URL: <https://www.gao.gov/assets/710/700703.pdf>.

238 Morello C. State Department to take a step into the digital age in effort to counter disinformation // The Washington Post. URL: [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/state-department-to-take-a-step-into-the-digital-age-in-effort-to-counter-disinformation/2019/04/12/c333bd8c-1b46-44d9-a2be-83aa0c8e9114\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/state-department-to-take-a-step-into-the-digital-age-in-effort-to-counter-disinformation/2019/04/12/c333bd8c-1b46-44d9-a2be-83aa0c8e9114_story.html).

239 2018 Comprehensive Annual Report on Public Diplomacy and International Broadcasting // United States Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy. URL: <https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/2018-ACPD.pdf>.

240 ACPD Official Meeting Minutes: September 4, 2019 // U.S. Department of State. URL: <https://www.state.gov/acpd-official-meeting-minutes-september-4-2019/>.

**Table 18.** Correlation of the reform measures in the USA with global foreign policy challenges faced by the diplomatic service

Challenge: Coordination	
Response	Effect
<p>Three related projects under the Impact Initiative aimed at modernizing the U.S. global presence will improve the interaction of the State Department and other U.S. government agencies when working abroad:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and Implement a National Interest Global Presence Model: a tool for assessing, based on data and political priorities, what resources of different agencies are needed in a particular foreign mission;</li> <li>• Expand Post Archetype Options: an expanded menu of options for foreign presence, not limited to traditional embassies and consulates, including less expensive and more flexible options;</li> <li>• Improve U.S. Government Global Presence Governance: additional tools with which more than 20 U.S. government agencies will be able to better coordinate their international activities, avoid duplication, and link their actions to national and political priorities</li> </ul>	<p><i>Expectations:</i> The implementation of these projects will help to use resources more efficiently and flexibly redirect them to the relevant areas. According to the Government Accountability Office report, the State Department is preparing a global presence model, while two other projects have been postponed</p>
Challenge: Communication	
Response	Effect
<p>Consolidation of communications agencies to establish the Global Public Affairs bureau. Its main characteristics are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integration of communication skills and regional expertise, knowledge of foreign audiences;</li> <li>• Relying on data analysis to develop communication campaigns;</li> <li>• Speed;</li> <li>• Future proofing: focus on the future and willingness to experiment with new solutions</li> </ul>	<p>The merger did not raise any additional funding and retained the staff and all programs. To illustrate the benefits of the new communication approach, the State Department officials cited the coverage of the U.S. participation in the 74th session of the UN General Assembly. Through the use of findings based on data analysis, diplomats managed to increase the number of interactions with State Department content during the session by 40% compared to the previous year</p>

## Kazakhstan: expanding the MFA powers to attract investment and open new embassies in Europe (2018–2019)

In December 2018, President of Kazakhstan **Nursultan Nazarbayev** in his address on the appointment of a new foreign minister said that the MFA should not be an exclusively political organization and should perform broader functions in the foreign economic sphere.<sup>241</sup> The transformation of the MFA's focus was manifested in two significant changes:

- First, in late 2018, the MFA was put in control of the Investment Committee (after the reorganization of the Ministry for Investment and Development) and national company Kazakh Invest.<sup>242</sup> This move has expanded the MFA's powers related to investment policy.
- Second, in 2019, Kazakhstan's diplomatic missions in six European countries (Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Portugal, Serbia, and Slovakia) were transformed into embassies.<sup>243</sup> An aide to the President of Kazakhstan stated that their new elevated status was due to the fact that the EU was "the largest trade, economic, and investment partner of Kazakhstan," and insufficient diplomatic presence in these countries "hindered the dynamic development of cooperation with them."<sup>244</sup>

These two transformations were not formally combined into the MFA reform. But both were associated with the next stage of the development of Kazakhstan's investment policy, along with the creation of the Coordination Council on Investment Attraction under the Prime Minister<sup>245</sup> and the Kazakhstan Investment Development Fund.<sup>246</sup> All of this was a response to the global challenge of economization (Table 19).

241 Глава государства объяснил смену министра иностранных дел // Капитал.

URL: <https://kapital.kz/gosudarstvo/74765/glava-gosudarstva-ob-yasnil-smenu-ministra-inostrannykh-del.html>.

242 Привлечение инвестиций — главный акцент МИД Казахстана // Zona.kz.

URL: <https://zonakz.net/2018/12/28/privlechenie-investicij-glavnyj-akcent-mid-kazaxstana/>.

243 О преобразовании дипломатической миссии Республики Казахстан в городе Лиссабоне

(Португальская Республика) // Официальный сайт Президента Республики Казахстан.

URL: [http://www.akorda.kz/ru/legal\\_acts/decrees/o-preobrazovanii-diplomaticheskoi-missii-respubliki-kazahstan-v-gorode-lissabone-portugalskaya-respublika](http://www.akorda.kz/ru/legal_acts/decrees/o-preobrazovanii-diplomaticheskoi-missii-respubliki-kazahstan-v-gorode-lissabone-portugalskaya-respublika).

244 Помощник Президента прокомментировал преобразование дипмиссий РК в Европе // Zakon.kz.

URL: <https://www.zakon.kz/4978273-pomoshchnik-prezidenta-prokommentiroval.html>.

245 Правительство РК меняет подход в работе с иностранными инвесторами // Forbes.Казахстан.

URL: [https://forbes.kz/finances/investment/pravitelstvo\\_rk\\_menyaet\\_format\\_raboty\\_s\\_inostrannymi\\_investorami/](https://forbes.kz/finances/investment/pravitelstvo_rk_menyaet_format_raboty_s_inostrannymi_investorami/).

246 370 млрд тенге из Нацфонда выделят на создание еще одного казахстанского фонда // Forbes.Казахстан.

URL: [https://forbes.kz/finances/investment/370\\_mlrtd\\_tenge\\_iz\\_natsfonda\\_vyidelyat\\_na\\_sozdanie\\_esche\\_odnogo\\_kazahstanskogo\\_fonda/](https://forbes.kz/finances/investment/370_mlrtd_tenge_iz_natsfonda_vyidelyat_na_sozdanie_esche_odnogo_kazahstanskogo_fonda/).



**Table 19.** Correlation of the reform measures in Kazakhstan with global foreign policy challenges faced by the diplomatic service

Challenge: Economization	
Response	Effect
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transfer of the Investment Committee and Kazakh Invest under the control of the MFA</li> </ul>	<i>Expectations:</i> putting the MFA in charge of coordinating investment attraction, reducing the number of staff from other agencies seconded to embassies, eliminating function overlap and duplication
Transformation of diplomatic missions in six European countries into full-fledged embassies	<i>Expectations:</i> the new status of diplomatic missions will boost relations with the relevant countries, including in the economic area

## 3. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The cases studied in this report differ in the scope and nature of changes that were implemented and the national specifics of each country's diplomatic system. Nevertheless, their comparative analysis allows us to draw recommendations that relate to two aspects of reforming the diplomatic services:

- improving the sustainability of the reform and the quality of its final implementation;
- selecting the most effective tools for responding to global foreign policy challenges affecting diplomatic agencies (economization, communication, and coordination).

### 3.1. Recommendations for improving the sustainability and quality of implementation of diplomatic service reforms

#### Integration of previous efforts to reform the MFA system

The implementation of reforms in general and the transformation of diplomatic agencies, in particular, are time-consuming processes. As the analysis shows, it is advisable to include in the reform efforts from previous programs to increase the chances of success. If a new program builds on the earlier achievements and incorporates any existing but dormant changes (which have not been even viewed as part of the reform), this would boost the reform sustainability, staff commitment, and the pace of changes. As a result, the reform will probably be perceived less as an extraordinary event and more as part of a continuous adaptation to changing external conditions and domestic needs.

Based upon the cases reviewed, the diplomatic reform in France relied on ideas that emerged after adopting the White Paper on Foreign and European Policy in 2008. The reform of the UK FCO was preceded by seven reform initiatives launched in the previous 20 years, and most of them were utilized during the preparation of the current reform. Efforts to develop digital diplomacy tools in different countries reflected the existing practice of communicating online, which were doing in the 2010s following each other's footsteps.

## Involvement of stakeholders and beneficiaries at the stages of reform preparation and implementation

Inviting different groups of stakeholders to discuss the agency's reform goals and possible measures also increases the sustainability of the reform.

By engaging internal stakeholders (the MFA staff), the reform architects ensure that the diplomats who will be affected by the changes understand and share the goals and have an opportunity to make their proposals. By inviting outside stakeholders, the reform architects can improve their plans by relying on their feedback and identifying tasks that may not be obvious to those inside the reform process.

The success of such engagement success directly depends on the tools used for this purpose. In the UK the discussion was organized **within the FCO, including staff of its diplomatic missions**. The project was coordinated by Former British Ambassador to Lebanon Tom Fletcher. The Netherlands and Denmark set up **groups of external experts** to prepare for the MFA reform. The Dutch Advisory Committee on Modernising the Diplomatic Service consisted of five members and worked for two years to review a wide range of diplomacy related matters. In Denmark, the analytical group consisted of 16 members led by the Permanent Secretary of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and, during three months, focused on reforming the structure of the country's foreign missions.<sup>247</sup>

German Federal Foreign Office was the most open when preparing the reform. To discuss the country's foreign policy, it engaged **not only the German public and experts, but also representatives of foreign research organizations**. International participants helped better understand how Germany's role is perceived from the outside. At the same time when it came to developing the ways to reform the Federal Foreign Office, this process was held within the MFA and involved staff from the headquarters as well as from diplomatic missions.

To prepare reforms, France and Uzbekistan sought advice from **their citizens living abroad**. French diplomatic missions asked their compatriots to take an online survey.<sup>248</sup> In Uzbekistan, the exchange of views was held as a dialogue with the Minister of Foreign Affairs who took questions from the audience both in the room and via video conference. The ideas were delivered to a newly established interdepartmental body and taken into account in the MFA reform.

247 Udenrigstjenestens Repraesentationsstruktur — Opsummering Af Droftelser I Refleksionsgruppen // Udenrigsministeriet. URL: [http://um.dk/~media/UM/Danish-site/Documents/Udenrigspolitik/Nyheder\\_udenrigspolitik/2013/Udenrigsministeriets%20repraesentationsstruktur\\_%20Opsummering.pdf](http://um.dk/~media/UM/Danish-site/Documents/Udenrigspolitik/Nyheder_udenrigspolitik/2013/Udenrigsministeriets%20repraesentationsstruktur_%20Opsummering.pdf).

248 Participez à la réflexion sur les services consulaires du XXIème siècle // La France en Angola. URL: <https://ao.ambafrance.org/Participez-a-la-reflexion-sur-les>.

## Anchoring the reform at the non-political level of the MFA

In the cases reviewed, the immediate reform driver was either a change of government and political course or an internal initiative that matured within the MFA. Review 2014 in Germany was the initiative of the newly appointed Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier's, who came the ministry after the 2013 elections and the formation of a new coalition government. In the United States, the attempt to modernize the State Department was initiated as part of the Comprehensive Plan for Reorganizing the Executive Branch, signed by Donald Trump among the first executive orders after his inauguration. In France, MAEDI 21: Global diplomacy for the 21st century was implemented by Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius, who had been in office for three years by 2015. In the UK, Future FCO was initiated by senior career diplomat and Permanent Undersecretary Simon McDonald, responsible for the FCO transformation.

As the analysis shows, the **source of the reform does not determine its sustainability**. In the Netherlands, the replacement of the foreign minister who launched the reform had no noticeable impact on implementing the MFA's modernization plan. Yet, with the resignation of Secretary of State Rex Tillerson in the United States, the Redesign program has lost its principal champion.

Therefore, the reform's consistency can be enhanced by **its anchoring in the agency's long-term agenda and the appointment of a high-ranking civil servant responsible for its implementation at the non-political level**, e.g., a deputy minister, adviser, or a department director. For example, in the UK, Simon McDonald was not a political appointee, and the FCO reform continued despite Brexit and the frequent turnover of foreign ministers.

## Coherence of the MFA reform goals and the country's strategic goals

Due to the special status of diplomatic agencies within the civil service, the MFA goals and transformation are often isolated from other domestic changes. According to the review, **the coherence of the MFA reform goals and higher-level government goals** (strategic or national goals) **enhances the stability of its implementation**: the diplomatic service reform is aligned with other transformational processes, it helps strengthen interagency cooperation, and raises the government's awareness of need and directions of diplomatic changes.

Uzbekistan is a case in point, with the MFA reform following the country's Development Strategy for 2017-2021. In the Netherlands, the agreement of the ruling coalition was a starting point for the reform. In the UK, the FCO transformation program was embedded into its single departmental plan, which, in turn, was based on the National Security Strategy. When the country's strategic goals changed in connection with Brexit, the MFA has adjusted the reform.

## Center for reform management located inside the MFA

While diplomatic agencies are usually isolated from other government bodies, the research shows that it is inefficient to locate the reform coordination and implementation center outside the diplomatic agency. On the contrary, a key factor in the sustainability and successful implementation of the reform is **the deliberate placement of the center for reform management within the same agency**.

In the UK, the FCO transformation program falls under the authority of the Permanent Under Secretary and managed by a special Programme Board and an Advisory Board, and the program director responsible for day-to-day management. Similarly, in Germany and the Netherlands the overall management of the reform was the responsibility of the ministry's leadership (the Minister and the Secretary-General, respectively) and their team. The two countries shared the same focus on internal project activities: team members, together with staff from various divisions, developed and implemented specific projects related to the reform's implementation.

The high-level support for the reform and a functioning management mechanism within the agency help raise awareness of implementation issues and ensure that the tasks stay relevant to diplomats' day-to-day work.

## 3.2. Responses to global foreign policy challenges: best practices in the diplomatic service reform

### Economization: the trend to expand the MFA powers in foreign economic activities

In 7 of the 11 cases we have reviewed, countries expanded the powers of diplomatic departments related to foreign economic matters in response to the economization of international relations. The expansion of MFA powers often involved the creation or transfer of units with relevant functions to the Ministry. This seems to be the first trend.

Potential **tools** to expand foreign economic powers include:

1. **Strengthening of the economic branch.** In line with the large-scale socio-economic transformations in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Uzbekistan, the Main Department of Economic Cooperation was created. The ministry was given a central role in the interagency coordination of foreign economic policy. The first deputy minister was put in charge of this sphere. Uzbek diplomats were tasked to find investors, while performance in terms of foreign economic achievements was included in MFA evaluation.
2. **Transfer of the Directorate-General for Foreign Economic Relations from the Ministry of Economy to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.** This effort strengthened the MFA's economic branch in the Netherlands. As a result, the MFA brought together various foreign economic activities, such as trade, investment attraction, and development cooperation. The new Directorate began to service both the MFA and the Ministry of Economy, thus ensuring an interagency link.
3. **Measures expanding the MFA powers in specific areas:**
  - *International development assistance.* In Australia, Canada, and New Zealand, international development agencies were incorporated into diplomatic agencies. A possible merger of development and agencies is also being discussed in the United States and the United Kingdom.<sup>249</sup>
  - *Investment attraction.* In Kazakhstan, the Investment Committee and Kazakh Invest were transferred to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
  - *Cooperation with national businesses involved in foreign economic activity.* The French Foreign Ministry established a business directorate. Another entity, Business France, operates under the joint supervision of the MFA, the Ministry of Economy and Finance, and the Ministry of Territorial Development to provide export assistance, promote France's image as an attractive country for business, and organize business internships in French companies abroad.

<sup>249</sup> In the UK, DFID was merged with the FCO in September 2020, forming the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office.

## Economization: the trend to reconfigure the diplomatic mission network

The second steady trend of countries' response to economization is related to the reconfiguration of their diplomatic presence. Diplomatic missions are located in those countries where it is needed not so much from the point of view of foreign policy interests, as from the economic benefits perspective. During the reforms, it was economic factors that played a decisive role in justifying the need to reallocate resources.

Potential **tools** for reconfiguring the diplomatic mission network:

- 1) *Closing diplomatic missions where there is no reasonable need for them at the moment and expanding their presence in priority countries.* In Denmark, the change in the structure of foreign missions in line with new priorities formed the basis of the reform: new missions were opened in developing countries, and some missions in those countries that are not considered a priority, including in small European countries, were closed. After the Brexit referendum, the UK announced new missions in countries that will be of interest to the British, rather than EU businesses.
- 2) *Joint diplomatic missions with other countries (co-location).* By 2025, a quarter of the French diplomatic staff will be posted to emerging G20 countries, while 25 embassies abroad will be co-located with missions of other European states.
- 3) *Development of tools to assess the priority of locating a diplomatic mission in a particular country, depending on changes of foreign policy interests.* Such a tool is being developed in the United States as part of the MFA reform. The initiative is called the National Interest Global Presence Model.

## Economization: the trend to expand cooperation with the private sector

The third trend of countries' response to economization is more traditional: diplomatic agencies develop a set of tools that are most appropriate for supporting national businesses in other countries. These tools include:

- the standardization of economic services provided by the MFA and other agencies to businesses when operating abroad, for example, the development of the Guide for International Business (the Netherlands);
- holding speed meetings between business representatives and ambassadors during the Embassy Week (France);
- development of mobile apps for export companies with a list of MFA services available in each country (e.g., NL Exports in the Netherlands), and business travel apps similar to tourist travel apps (France).



## Communication: the trend to search for new channels and formats of interaction with domestic and foreign audiences

In response to communication as a challenge associated with the dramatic expansion of the ability of non-professional agents to interact with or influence international actors, diplomatic agencies are trying to go beyond their traditional information channels and expand the formats of work with domestic and foreign audiences.

Through communication with its fellow citizens **within the country**, the Foreign Ministry can seek to deliver its official position, enhance trust, or get feedback. The following tools are used:

- увеличение числа публичных выступлений представителей МИД, greater number of public addresses by representatives of the MFA; broader range of officials who speak publicly, including employees who do not have the status of a minister, press secretary, or deputy minister; a specialized page created to announce upcoming public events;
- creating special, more interactive formats for dialogue with citizens and civic organizations, for example, citizens' workshops on foreign policy and the Open Situation Room (Germany), an open dialogue (Uzbekistan);
- creating a call center to receive citizens' requests and support them (Uzbekistan).

Diplomatic agencies increasingly rely on digital tools to reach out to **foreign audiences**. The following solutions are used for this purpose:

- systematizing social media presence of the MFA and developing general guidelines and standards;
- creating new or reorganizing existing communication units within the MFA so that they are better equipped to communicate online (France, USA);
- launching thematic websites to communicate and explain the issues of domestic or foreign policy (Rumors about Germany);
- setting targets for foreign language skills for diplomats working abroad (UK).

## Coordination: the trend to streamline the foreign policy activities conducted by other government agencies

In response to coordination as a challenge associated with the loss of the foreign ministry's monopoly on the implementation of foreign policy functions of the state, diplomatic agencies often do not try to retain this monopoly but rather seek to build a system that streamline other agencies' activities in this area. The MFA can improve the coordination of other agencies by using the following **tools**:

- *Developing the embassy-as-a-platform model.* The MFA creates conditions in its foreign missions for better cooperation on international issues among different departments and agencies and takes on additional support functions (consolidation of foreign real estate, general maintenance, etc.). This approach is most developed in the UK (the One HMG Overseas initiative). In the United States, the reform project aims to improve the HR management system across more than 20 government agencies working in diplomatic missions.
- *Developing the MFA-owned government support services* for international activities without building additional tools for permanent coordination. Examples include:
  - services related to foreign travel of civil servants (in 2017, the 3W initiative provided services to nine ministries in the Netherlands);
  - information services (in the UK, the Foreign Office is leading the development of the secret Rosa platform, which should be used for secure communication within the government; in Germany, under the leadership of the Foreign Ministry, a website is being created that, among other things, will allow foreign missions to share data with government agencies and other organizations);
  - educational services, positioning the MFA as the center of international and regional expertise, including for the employees of other agencies (in the Netherlands, the MFA created the Academy of International Relations; in the UK, the Diplomatic Academy increased the number of programs open to civil servants).
- *Developing mechanisms for interagency mobility:* the MFA and other agencies engaged in international activities, temporarily exchange seconded staff (UK: creation in the Foreign Office of a new Secondments and Interchange Unit; France: support for external mobility, including in the private sector, other ministries, and the European External Action Service; Uzbekistan: interagency rotation of personnel was introduced into the work of the Foreign Ministry).

## ANNEX 1

### List of global risks according to the World Economic Forum (2006, 2010, and 2020 reports)<sup>250</sup>

2006	2010	2020
<i>Economic</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oil prices/energy supply;</li> <li>• Asset prices/Indebtedness;</li> <li>• US Current Account deficit and US dollar;</li> <li>• Coming fiscal crises;</li> <li>• China (its role in the global economy and its modernization);</li> <li>• Critical infrastructures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food price volatility;</li> <li>• Oil price spikes;</li> <li>• Major fall in the US dollar;</li> <li>• Slowing Chinese economy (&lt;6%);</li> <li>• Fiscal crises;</li> <li>• Asset price collapse;</li> <li>• Retrenchment from globalization (developed);</li> <li>• Retrenchment from globalization (emerging);</li> <li>• Burden of regulation;</li> <li>• Underinvestment in infrastructure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asset bubbles in a major economy (unsustainably overpriced assets such as commodities, housing, shares etc. in a major economy or region);</li> <li>• Deflation in a major economy;</li> <li>• Failure of a major financial mechanism or institution;</li> <li>• Failure/shortfall of critical infrastructure;</li> <li>• Fiscal crises in key economies;</li> <li>• High structural unemployment or underemployment;</li> <li>• Illicit trade (e.g., illicit financial flows, tax evasion, human trafficking, organized crime);</li> <li>• Severe energy price shock (increase or decrease);</li> <li>• Unmanageable inflation</li> </ul>

250 Global Risks 2006 // World Economic Forum.  
 URL: [http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_GlobalRisks\\_Report\\_2006.pdf](http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GlobalRisks_Report_2006.pdf);  
 Global Risks 2010. A Global Risk Network Report // World Economic Forum.  
 URL: [http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_GlobalRisks\\_Report\\_2010.pdf](http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GlobalRisks_Report_2010.pdf);  
 The Global Risks Report 2020 // World Economic Forum.  
 URL: [http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_GlobalRisk\\_Report\\_2020.pdf](http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GlobalRisk_Report_2020.pdf).

2006	2010	2020
<i>Societal</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regulation;</li> <li>• Corporate governance;</li> <li>• Intellectual Property rights;</li> <li>• Organized crime;</li> <li>• Global pandemics;</li> <li>• Slow and chronic diseases (industrialized world);</li> <li>• Epidemic disease (developing world);</li> <li>• Spread of US-style liability regimes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pandemics;</li> <li>• Infectious diseases;</li> <li>• Chronic diseases;</li> <li>• Liability regimes (the spread of US-style liability regimes to other jurisdictions);</li> <li>• Migration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Failure of urban planning;</li> <li>• Food crises;</li> <li>• Large-scale involuntary migration;</li> <li>• Profound social instability;</li> <li>• Rapid and massive spread of infectious diseases;</li> <li>• Water crises</li> </ul>
<i>Environmental</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tropical cyclones;</li> <li>• Earthquakes;</li> <li>• Climate change;</li> <li>• Loss of ecosystem services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extreme weather;</li> <li>• Droughts and desertification;</li> <li>• Water scarcity;</li> <li>• Natural catastrophes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Cyclone;</li> <li>◦ Earthquake</li> <li>◦ Inland flooding;</li> <li>◦ Coastal flooding;</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Air pollution;</li> <li>• Biodiversity loss</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extreme weather events (e.g. floods, storms);</li> <li>• Failure of climate-change mitigation and adaptation;</li> <li>• Major biodiversity loss and ecosystem collapse (terrestrial or marine);</li> <li>• Major natural disasters (e.g. earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanic eruptions, geomagnetic storms);</li> <li>• Human-made environmental damage and disasters (e.g. oil spills, radioactive contamination)</li> </ul>
<i>Technological</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Convergence of technologies;</li> <li>• Nanotechnology;</li> <li>• Electromagnetic fields;</li> <li>• Pervasive computing (concerns about RFID systems)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Critical information infrastructure breakdown;</li> <li>• Nanoparticle toxicity (nanoparticles used in paint, cosmetics, healthcare);</li> <li>• Data fraud/loss</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adverse consequences of technological advances;</li> <li>• Breakdown of critical information infrastructure and networks;</li> <li>• Large-scale cyberattacks;</li> <li>• Massive incident of data fraud or theft</li> </ul>

2006	2010	2020
<i>Geopolitical</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Terrorism;</li> <li>• European dislocation;</li> <li>• Current and future hotspots</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International terrorism;</li> <li>• Nuclear proliferation;</li> <li>• Iran (its nuclear programme and its role in the Middle East);</li> <li>• North Korea (increasing instability and unpredictability);</li> <li>• Afghanistan instability;</li> <li>• Transnational crime and corruption;</li> <li>• Israel-Palestine;</li> <li>• Iraq (failure of stabilization efforts, proliferation of violence and terrorism);</li> <li>• Global governance gaps (weak or inadequate global institutions and agreements)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Failure of national governance (e.g. failure of rule of law, corruption, political deadlock);</li> <li>• Failure of regional or global governance;</li> <li>• Interstate conflict with regional consequences;</li> <li>• Large-scale terrorist attacks;</li> <li>• State collapse or crisis (e.g. civil conflict, military coup, failed states);</li> <li>• Weapons of mass destruction</li> </ul>





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