

American University Kyiv

Management Framework for Transforming Diplomatic Service
in Ukraine: Organizational Challenges and Strategic Solutions

Розробка Управлінської Концепції для Трансформації
Дипломатичної служби в Україні: Організаційні Виклики та
Стратегічні Рішення

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Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Master Degree

2024

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Abstract

Aim of the Research

This research aims to examine challenges and opportunities within Ukraine's classical diplomatic framework through the lens of modern management theory and approaches. The study analyzes organizational transformation needs across multiple dimensions: strategic planning, operational efficiency, talent management, and performance optimization. Main challenges identified are Institutional Structure, Digital Transformation, Human Resources Development, Economic Diplomacy Enablers, and Cultural Diplomacy processes. Through systematic analysis the research develops a comprehensive management framework for reforming diplomatic services to meet contemporary global challenges and the post-2022 geopolitical reality.

The object of the research is **the management systems and processes** within Ukraine's classical diplomatic framework, examining **how management theories and practices can address operational inefficiencies** while respecting diplomatic specifics.

The subject of the research is the application of modern management approaches in diplomatic service transformation, including organizational development strategies, change management methodology, and performance optimization frameworks in the context of diplomatic institution modernization. This includes human resources management, interdepartmental coordination, power distribution, and the alignment of organizational values with modern operational demands.

Milestones:

1. Conduct qualitative research through semi-structured interviews with representatives of the Ukrainian diplomatic services, focusing on management challenges and organizational processes.
2. Identify key management-related challenges of organizational development and process optimization.
3. Analyze stakeholder perspectives and benchmark best practices in diplomatic services delivery through comparative analysis of digital transformation and management innovations of countries such as Estonia, the UK, and Denmark.
4. Develop a management framework addressing critical areas such as human resources, operational workflows, and organizational culture transformation.

5. Provide strategic recommendations, including actionable short-term solutions and long-term reforms, with clear Definitions of Done criteria and KPIs.

Research Results: the study revealed critical management challenges and opportunities in diplomatic services transformation. Analysis of interview responses revealed 127 initial codes consolidated into five main themes that demonstrated the need for organizational change.

The research produced a comprehensive management framework that transforms traditional diplomatic approaches through modern management methodologies, with clear implementation roadmap and success metrics.

Keywords: management framework, diplomatic service modernization, digital diplomacy, diplomatic innovation, digital skills development, foreign service transformation, contemporary diplomatic challenges, diplomatic process optimization.

CHAPTER 1. Introduction

Classical diplomacy alone is no longer sufficient in today's complex geopolitical landscape (Korsunsky, 2021), (Tauris, 2021). The diplomatic framework that Ukraine operated under before 2014 was limited, overly influenced, and shaped through the lens of Russian politics (Sakwa, 2008). It lacked true independence and a distinct identity, and this absence of autonomy affected its global positioning (D'Anieri, 2006). The absence of clear national branding left Ukraine struggling to establish its unique diplomatic voice, relying instead on outdated frameworks that failed to address contemporary challenges. As noted by the Ukrainian Institute, 'Ukraine's state presence on the international arena was limited to traditional diplomacy,' reflecting a broader institutional inability to project and protect national interests through modern diplomatic tools and approaches.

Ukraine's diplomatic transformation has undergone two critical phases since 2014, fundamentally reshaping its approach to international relations and diplomatic practice. The initial transformation period (2014-2022) was marked by Ukraine's efforts to establish diplomatic independence and Western orientation (Zhurzhenko, 2021). This period saw the first attempts to modernize diplomatic practices, though still constrained by traditional bureaucratic frameworks (Bureiko, 2021).

Russia's invasion in 2014 marked a turning point moment in Ukrainian diplomacy (Komarnutsky, 2021). Ukraine began establishing diplomatic relations from a distinctly Ukrainian perspective, free from Russian influence, strengthening Western partnerships while developing new approaches to national security and digital diplomacy (Balabanov, 2019). As the Ukrainian Institute notes, 'After the Revolution of Dignity, the hybrid war, and the annexation of Crimea, Ukraine faced an urgent need to boost its visibility in the world and promote its own narrative.' The post-Maidan state institutions transformation, while emerging within an archaic system of public administration and outdated legislative framework, included enhanced transparency, strategic communication, and evidence-based planning developed through international expertise and cross-institutional collaboration. This period represented not just a shift in diplomatic orientation, but a comprehensive reimagining of Ukraine's institutional capacity and its place in the international community (Gulenko, 2020).

The full-scale invasion in 2022 catalyzed an unprecedented acceleration of diplomatic modernization needs. As Minister Kuleba articulated, Ukraine developed six key principles of wartime diplomacy: *Being stubborn; All talk to all; Keeping it sharp clear and relevant; Polarizing with friends; Condensing the*

decision making; No plan B; Offering a la carte (piece) (Kuleba,2022). This new diplomatic doctrine proved effective: Ukraine secured the largest coalition of support in modern history, with over 50 countries in the Ramstein format (Wikipedia) and unprecedented military aid commitments exceeding \$100 billion (Statista, 2024).

The Ukrainian diplomatic service demonstrated remarkable adaptability, as evidenced in the UN's assessment (Ukraine UN, 2024). Ukraine successfully initiated 12 resolutions in the UN General Assembly (Security Council report, 2024), maintained active engagement in 23 international organizations (Ukraine UN, 2024), and secured sanctions against Russia from more than 30 countries. The effectiveness of Ukraine's diplomatic efforts is further highlighted by the Foreign Policy Council "Ukrainian Prism" analysis, which noted significant improvements in crisis diplomacy, strategic communications, and digital presence. Key achievements included rapid EU candidate status (Council of EU, 2024), the Black Sea Grain Initiative (UN, 2023), and the establishment of multiple humanitarian corridors (President Office, 2022).

This extraordinary situation revealed both critical gaps and transformative opportunities in diplomatic practice. As Ukraine's Permanent Mission to the UN emphasizes, modern diplomacy requires simultaneous management of traditional diplomatic tools and innovative approaches, from multilateral negotiations to digital advocacy. The necessity to operate under extreme pressure has accelerated digital adoption, with Ukraine's President delivering over 100 virtual addresses to foreign parliaments and international organizations, demonstrating the effective fusion of classical diplomacy with modern communication technologies (President Office site).

Therefore, this research aims to address these emerging challenges while capitalizing on the opportunities for transformation. Drawing on Ukraine's successful wartime diplomatic approaches, the objectives focus on developing practical solutions for enhancing diplomatic effectiveness through digital modernization, institutional adaptation, and strategic resource optimization, while maintaining the fundamental principles of diplomatic practice in an increasingly complex geopolitical environment.

The study combines several complementary approaches: Document Analysis of official government strategic documents, analytics and communications, literature review that highlights the transformation on Ukraine's diplomatic services from post-Soviet state to nowadays, and semi-structured interviews with expert from Ukrainian diplomatic field.

The first approach involves **document analysis**, which serves as a foundational method for establishing the context of the research. By analyzing strategic documents such as the Ukrainian Institute's Strategy, assessments from the Foreign Policy Council "Ukrainian Prism," and official communications from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), this research seeks to identify existing frameworks, policies, and operational challenges within the diplomatic service. This analysis will highlight both the strengths and weaknesses of current strategies, offering insights into the systemic issues that may hinder effective diplomatic engagement.

In addition to document analysis, a thorough **literature review** is conducted. This review encompasses books, scholarly articles, and papers by foreign policy institutions, political analysts, and observers. The aim is to explore global policy trends and geopolitical dynamics, assessing how these factors have influenced Ukraine's diplomatic landscape. The literature review also seeks to identify strategies that Ukraine can adopt to align its diplomatic efforts with prevailing geopolitical conditions while effectively leveraging these trends for its own support, protection, and development. This review forms the basis for further exploration through **semi-structured interviews** with experts from the Ukrainian diplomatic field, ensuring that the research is anchored in documented realities.

This methodological approach enables comprehensive examination of both institutional challenges and transformation opportunities while ensuring practical applicability of the proposed management framework.

CHAPTER 2. Documents Analysis and Literature Review

2.1 Classical Diplomacy: Theoretical Framework

The theoretical foundations of classical diplomacy have been shaped by centuries of international relations practice, scholarly discourse, and evolving state interactions. Traditional diplomatic principles emerged from the Peace of Westphalia (1648), which established the cornerstone concepts of state sovereignty and diplomatic representation. Nicolson (1939) articulates the cardinal principles of classical diplomacy: truth in negotiations, precise language, and the preservation of professional integrity. These principles were further refined by the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (1961), which codified diplomatic privileges, immunities, and responsibilities that had developed through customary international law.

In the Ukrainian context, classical diplomatic traditions trace back to Kyivan Rus and the Cossack Hetmanate period, with significant developments during the 19th and early 20th centuries. Vidnyanskyi, (2020) highlights how the Ukrainian People's Republic (1917-1921) established formal diplomatic missions and developed professional diplomatic services, marking Ukraine's modern diplomatic emergence. The subsequent Soviet period significantly influenced Ukrainian diplomatic practices through forced centralization and Moscow-directed foreign policy, though Ukraine maintained nominal diplomatic representation as a founding UN member in 1945 (Vidnyanskyi, 2020). This complex historical legacy combines elements of traditional European diplomatic practice with distinctive approaches developed through Ukraine's unique geopolitical position.

The theoretical framework of classical diplomacy rests on several key pillars. First, the principle of reciprocity, whereby states extend mutual recognition and privileges to each other's diplomatic representatives. Second, the concept of diplomatic immunity, which enables diplomats to conduct their duties without fear of prosecution or harassment in host countries. Third, the practice of permanent diplomatic missions, which revolutionized interstate communications and relationship management (Berridge, 2015).

Significant transformations occurred during the 20th century, particularly after World War I. The advent of multilateral diplomacy, exemplified by the League of Nations and later the United Nations, challenged traditional bilateral approaches. Conference diplomacy emerged as a crucial mechanism for addressing complex international issues, while summit diplomacy gained prominence during the Cold War era (Hamilton & Langhorne, 2011).

This theoretical foundation provides essential context for understanding contemporary challenges in diplomatic modernization, particularly in the Ukrainian context where classical diplomatic principles intersect with the imperatives of post-Soviet transformation and European integration.

2.2 Modern Diplomatic Challenges

The landscape of modern diplomacy faces unprecedented challenges that have fundamentally transformed traditional diplomatic practices and paradigms. The technological shift coincides with a significant expansion of diplomatic actors beyond state-centric frameworks, incorporating non-state actors, civil society representatives, and "amateur diplomats" - experts who operate through both formal and informal

channels. The physical geography of diplomacy has also evolved, moving beyond traditional embassy settings to embrace diverse venues like hotels, restaurants, and digital platforms, creating hybrid diplomatic spaces that blend physical and virtual presence. (Constantinou, 2020).

The rise of digital diplomacy, exemplified by "Zoom diplomacy" during COVID-19 (Manulak, 2023) and strategic social media engagement like China's "Wolf Warrior" diplomacy, has redefined how diplomatic interactions occur across virtual spaces (Westcott & Jiang 2020).

Digital transformation has revolutionized diplomatic practice in fundamental ways. Bjola and Holmes (2015) argue that digital technologies have created new channels of diplomatic communication while simultaneously increasing the vulnerability of diplomatic information systems. Social media diplomacy, or "digital diplomacy," has emerged as a crucial tool for public engagement and crisis communication, requiring diplomats to develop new competencies in digital communication and strategic messaging. Manor (2022) emphasizes how foreign ministries must now manage their digital presence while maintaining traditional diplomatic functions, creating what he terms "hybrid diplomatic practices."

The emergence of hybrid warfare presents particularly acute challenges for modern diplomacy. Hybrid threats combine conventional military operations with cyber-attacks, disinformation campaigns, and economic coercion (Hoffman, 2022). In the Ukrainian context, these challenges are especially pronounced, as diplomatic services must respond to multiple forms of aggression while maintaining international support networks. The weaponization of information and the need to counter hostile narrative warfare have become central diplomatic tasks, requiring new approaches to strategic communication and international coalition-building (Kuleba, 2022).

Multi-stakeholder diplomacy represents another significant shift in contemporary diplomatic practice. Traditional state-to-state diplomacy has evolved into a complex network involving non-governmental organizations, multinational corporations, civil society groups, and international institutions. Hocking et al. (2020) describe this as a "networked diplomacy" environment where success depends on managing relationships with diverse stakeholders. This evolution requires diplomatic services to develop new capabilities in:

- Stakeholder mapping and engagement
- Public-private partnership management

- Civil society collaboration
- International coalition building

The intersection of these challenges creates a complex operational environment for modern diplomatic services. Foreign ministries must simultaneously:

- Modernize their technological infrastructure while ensuring cybersecurity
- Develop capabilities to counter hybrid threats while maintaining traditional diplomatic functions
- Build and manage diverse stakeholder networks while preserving core diplomatic relationships
- Adapt organizational structures to new realities while maintaining institutional continuity

These transformations challenge conventional power dynamics and hierarchies, forcing diplomatic institutions to confront questions of representation, legitimacy, and colonial legacies while adapting their methodological approaches. Modern diplomatic institutions must now navigate this complex environment by developing more flexible, inclusive, and technologically adapted strategies while maintaining traditional diplomatic effectiveness in mediation and negotiation.

These challenges are particularly relevant for Ukraine's diplomatic modernization efforts. Sharov (2023) notes that Ukrainian diplomacy must navigate these complex challenges while simultaneously managing immediate security concerns and pursuing European integration objectives. The combination of digital transformation requirements, hybrid warfare threats, and the need for effective multi-stakeholder engagement creates a unique set of modernization imperatives for Ukrainian diplomatic institutions.

2.3 Evolution of Ukrainian Diplomatic Service: Structure and Digital Transformation

Literature review of Ukrainian diplomatic service development reveals several key areas of institutional transformation and modernization efforts. The foundational framework for the modern diplomatic service is established by the Law "On Diplomatic Service" (2018), which codifies the institutional structure and operational principles. This was further enhanced by Minister Kuleba's Public Diplomacy Strategy (2021), which modernized approaches to cultural diplomacy, international communication, and nation branding initiatives. Ukraine's diplomatic evolution is marked by progressive alignment with EU standards and practices through implementation of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement provisions, joint diplomatic

initiatives and coordination mechanisms, enhanced institutional capacity building aligned with EU best practices (Bureiko, 2024).

According to Ministry of Foreign Affairs data, Ukraine maintains an extensive diplomatic network comprising 86 embassies, 31 consulates general, 8 permanent missions to international organizations, and numerous honorary consulates worldwide. This network serves as the practical implementation of Ukraine's diplomatic engagement with over 180 countries.

Recent literature highlights Ukraine's emergence as a leader in digital transformation. Cohen and Kuleba (2024) emphasize that "Ukrainian tech companies continue developing new technologies, showing potential to become a global digital hub, or at minimum, a European technology powerhouse with democratic values." This technological advancement directly influences diplomatic capabilities and practices. Power (2024) notes that Ukraine has become one of the most digitalized countries in Europe, implementing services that were unprecedented in other European nations.

The transformation of Ukraine's diplomatic practice has gained international recognition. As German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock stated at the 2022 Conference of Ambassadors of Ukraine, "Ukraine has reinvented diplomacy." This diplomatic reinvention combines technological innovation with new approaches to diplomatic engagement, particularly in crisis communication and digital public diplomacy (Cohen & Kuleba, 2024).

Institutional Effectiveness Metrics: "Ukrainian Prism's Foreign Policy Scorecard (2023) provides quantitative evidence of improved diplomatic effectiveness, showing:

- Increased bilateral engagement effectiveness scores (from 3.8 to 4.2 out of 5)
- Enhanced multilateral diplomacy performance (4.0 to 4.5)
- Improved crisis response capabilities (4.3 to 4.7)
- Strengthened digital diplomatic presence (4.1 to 4.6)"

Comparative analysis of international digital diplomacy practices provides valuable insights for the development of Ukraine's diplomatic framework. Estonia's experience in digital diplomacy highlights the successful implementation of e-governance and virtual embassy initiatives. Through its "e-Estonia" program, the country has established a **digital-first approach**, offering online citizen services, e-residency programs, and blockchain-secured data systems that ensure transparency, security, and efficiency in

diplomatic operations (e-Estonia, 2023). Estonia's emphasis on decentralization and trust-building mechanisms offers a compelling model for Ukraine to consider in its own modernization efforts.

Denmark's approach to digital diplomacy serves as another benchmark of excellence. The country's "digital-by-default" strategy prioritizes citizen-centric e-governance, facilitated through platforms like **Borger.dk** (for citizens) and **Virk.dk** (for businesses). Denmark's secure digital identification systems (NemID and MitID) enable safe access to public and private services, fostering trust and accessibility. Moreover, Denmark's focus on **data ethics, privacy, and cybersecurity** is a key differentiator, ensuring responsible and transparent use of data in diplomacy. Its proactive use of **AI-driven public administration, automated welfare services, and citizen notifications** showcases how advanced technology can support diplomatic goals. The Danish model exemplifies how public-private partnerships can accelerate digital transformation, offering valuable lessons for Ukraine's diplomatic development.

The United States' digital transformation in diplomacy is characterized by the systematic integration of data analytics into decision-making processes and the development of robust digital infrastructure. The establishment of the **Center for Analytics (CfA)** in 2019 marked a significant shift toward data-driven diplomatic practice. By leveraging big data and predictive analytics, the U.S. State Department enhances **strategic decision-making, risk assessment**, and operational efficiency. Manor and Huang (2022) analyze how U.S. digital diplomacy initiatives have evolved to incorporate advanced technological capabilities while maintaining traditional diplomatic functions. The U.S. experience illustrates how institutional capacity for data analysis can support proactive foreign policy and crisis response—a lesson that could be adapted to Ukraine's diplomatic modernization.

The United Kingdom's **Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO)** offers yet another perspective on digital transformation. The **Digital Strategy 2021-2025** outlines a structured approach to modernizing diplomatic communications and service delivery. Key priorities include enhancing **digital skills development**, promoting **data-driven decision-making**, and expanding **digital service capabilities**. This strategy ensures that UK diplomats are equipped with the tools and skills to engage effectively in a rapidly evolving digital landscape. By focusing on human capital development and modernizing its technological infrastructure, the UK's approach highlights the importance of training and capacity-building in digital diplomacy—a strategy that could be pivotal for Ukraine's diplomatic evolution.

Hamidouche (2021) examines the emerging role of artificial intelligence in diplomatic practice, identifying several key applications for modern diplomacy. These include AI-assisted consular services for streamlining routine operations, enhanced language processing for breaking down communication barriers between countries, data analysis capabilities for early crisis detection and prevention, and AI-supported negotiation tools like the Cognitive Trade Advisor (CTA) that helps diplomats prepare for international trade negotiations. The author emphasizes that while these applications can enhance diplomatic functions through cognitive augmentation and improved effectiveness, AI should serve as a support tool rather than a replacement for human diplomatic expertise.

The literature suggests several critical areas for continued development in Ukrainian diplomatic service: Omelianenko (2023) emphasizes the need for enhanced digital infrastructure, while Syvak (2022) highlights the importance of professional development in **project management frameworks**. These technical priorities intersect with strategic challenges identified by Korsunsky (2021), who points to fundamental gaps in Ukraine's policy implementation: **the disconnect between internal strategic planning** and external diplomatic initiatives, and insufficient mechanisms for substantive public-professional discourse on diplomatic modernization. This multi-layered challenge aligns with Manor's (2022) research on digital diplomatic ecosystems, which emphasizes critical elements for modern diplomatic institutions: integrated digital communication architectures and multi-stakeholder engagement platforms. Manor's framework particularly addresses the need for bridging technical capabilities with strategic policy implementation through systematic stakeholder engagement.

This review of literature reveals a complex picture of institutional transformation, where traditional diplomatic structures are being adapted to meet contemporary challenges through digital innovation and institutional reform. The research suggests that successful modernization requires a balanced approach that maintains core diplomatic functions while embracing technological advancement and institutional innovation.

Significant analytical contributions to understanding Ukraine's diplomatic modernization challenges come from leading think tanks and research institutions. The Razumkov Centre's 2023 analysis highlights critical institutional challenges in crisis diplomacy adaptation and the need for flexible diplomatic staffing models. The National Institute for Strategic Studies (2022) emphasizes the importance of enhancing digital resilience and **cyber diplomacy capabilities** in response to modern security challenges.

The literature review reveals significant gaps in understanding the transformation of Ukrainian diplomatic institutions during wartime and crisis conditions. While existing research documents Ukraine's digital diplomacy capabilities and institutional modernization efforts, there remains limited empirical evidence about specific mechanisms of diplomatic service adaptation. Key understudied areas include integration of crisis diplomacy tools, impact of wartime conditions on institutional transformation, and effectiveness of digital initiatives in conflict resolution.

CHAPTER 3. Research Methodology

This research employs a qualitative methodology to examine the transformation needs of Ukraine's diplomatic service within the complex context of the post-Soviet legacy, resource and budget constraints, wartime disruptions, and the ongoing digital evolution of diplomatic practices. Building on the identified research gaps, particularly in understanding institutional adaptation mechanisms during crisis, the study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the current state and future direction of Ukraine's diplomacy.

Semi-structured expert interviews

The research includes **semi-structured expert interviews** designed to capture in-depth insights from a diverse range of stakeholders involved in or impacted by Ukraine's diplomatic efforts. The main criteria for selecting interviewees were their experience in the diplomatic service within the country, their roles in diplomatic missions abroad, and their connections to the diplomatic academy, particularly in relation to foreign policy interactions after February 24, 2022. To maintain confidentiality, interviews were conducted anonymously, with only the seniority level of the participants indicated: middle or senior. The interview data was collected between October – November 2024.

Participants included:

Middle, Senior and Top Diplomatic Service Representatives. Three (3) representatives from the diplomatic service shared their insights. Notably, retired diplomats tended to be more open in sharing their knowledge and experiences, while those currently serving were often reluctant to speak candidly, fearing potential repercussions for revealing sensitive information.

Digital Transformation Specialists (MFA-related). Two (2) specialists discussed the role of technology in modernizing diplomatic practices, focusing on how digital tools can enhance the effectiveness of diplomatic operations.

Diplomatic Academy Instructors. Two (2) instructors from the Diplomatic Academy provided insights into the educational needs of current and future diplomats, emphasizing how curricula can be adapted to meet contemporary challenges.

Foreign Policy and European Integration Experts. Two (2) experts contributed their perspectives on Ukraine's foreign policy strategies and integration with European frameworks.

Some interviewees possessed diverse backgrounds, such as former diplomats who currently work in the Diplomatic Academy or Foreign Policy programme, enriching the discussion with varied experiences.

Interviews were conducted via Teams and Zoom video calls, lasting between 20 and 60 minutes depending on the participants' available timeframe. They were held in Ukrainian and subsequently translated into English for analysis. The interviews were transcribed, and qualitative data analyzed using thematic analysis to identify common themes and actionable insights. This process involved coding the data inductively to uncover patterns and relationships relevant to Ukraine's diplomatic transformation.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical guidelines were strictly adhered to throughout the research process. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and confidentiality was ensured by anonymizing responses. Participants were informed of their right to withdraw at any time, and steps were taken to mitigate any potential risks associated with discussing sensitive information.

Limitations

One notable limitation of this study is the reluctance of active diplomats to share their knowledge and experiences candidly. This hesitance may stem from concerns over the sensitivity of the information and potential repercussions related to their current roles. As a result, the perspectives gathered from active diplomats may be less comprehensive compared to those from retired diplomats, potentially limiting the depth of insight into ongoing diplomatic practices and strategies. This shortage of responses from active

service representatives may impact the overall understanding of the current operational challenges and nuances within Ukraine's diplomatic efforts.

Analysis Approach

The analysis of the qualitative data obtained from the semi-structured expert interviews followed a thematic analysis approach. This method allowed for the identification, analysis, and reporting of patterns (themes) within the data. The analysis was conducted in several phases, including familiarization with the data, coding, theme development, and reviewing themes to ensure they accurately represent the data.

Coding Methodology

The coding process is inductive, allowing codes to emerge from the data itself rather than being pre-determined. Initial codes are generated during the first read-through of the transcripts, focusing on significant statements and ideas related to diplomatic practices and modernization. These initial codes are organized into broader themes, reflecting common patterns and insights from the interviews. Taguette (<https://www.taguette.org/>) and Qual Codder (<https://qualcoder.wordpress.com/>) software are utilized to assist in coding and organizing the data, facilitating a systematic analysis and ensuring that all relevant data points are captured and considered.

CHAPTER 4. Findings and Analysis

This section presents the findings from nine semi-structured expert interviews, examining the challenges and opportunities in modernizing Ukraine's diplomatic service. The analysis draws on insights from a diverse group of stakeholders, including middle, senior and top diplomatic service representatives, digital transformation specialists, diplomatic academy instructors, and foreign policy experts.

Key research questions addressed:

1. What are the main challenges facing modern Ukrainian diplomacy?
2. What opportunities exist for modernizing diplomatic services?

The complete version of the questionnaire is available in **Annex 1**.

Using Taguette and Qual Codder software, the interview data was systematically analyzed to uncover recurring themes, challenges, and opportunities in Ukraine's diplomatic modernization efforts.

4.1 Coding Process and Theme Development

The analysis of interview data followed a systematic coding approach to ensure comprehensive and reliable findings. The initial review of interview transcripts generated 127 unique codes, representing distinct concepts, ideas, and patterns mentioned by participants. These codes emerged from detailed line-by-line analysis of the interview data, capturing both explicit statements and implicit meanings.

Through an iterative process of analysis and comparison, these initial codes were consolidated into 25 secondary codes that represented broader categories of meaning. This consolidation process involved identifying commonalities and relationships between the initial codes, allowing for a more structured understanding of the data.

For example, initial codes such as "digital queue implementation," "online document submission," and "electronic services" were consolidated into the secondary code "Digital Service Delivery." Similarly, codes like "staff training needs," "professional development gaps," and "skills enhancement" were consolidated into "Training and Development." This consolidation process helped identify broader patterns while preserving the nuanced insights from the original coding.

These secondary codes were further analyzed and grouped into five main themes that form the core findings of this research: Institutional Structure and Governance, Digital Transformation, Human Resources Development, Economic Diplomacy, and Cultural Diplomacy. Each theme emerged as a distinct but interconnected aspect of diplomatic modernization. (Figure1)

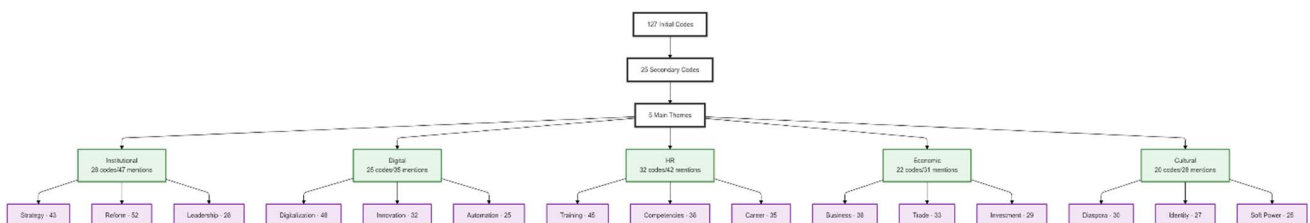


Figure1. Mermaid diagram syntax (mermaid.live) in VS Code (1.95.2 version), visualization of theme distribution in Ukrainian diplomatic modernization research, N = 127 initial codes consolidated into 25

secondary codes (marked in purple) and 5 main themes (marked in green), line connections indicate relationships between codes and themes, numbers show frequency of mentions in interviews.

Source: Developed by author.

The distribution demonstrates how diplomatic functions fundamentally interconnect with management challenges, revealing that modern diplomatic services required **systematic management approach** while respecting diplomatic principles. The frequency of codes mentioned suggests that their successful modernization would depend on the application of **management practices** to diplomatic functions, rather than treating them as a separate domains.

Theme saturation was reached after analyzing seven interviews, indicating the point at which new interviews were not generating substantially new insights. For instance, while the eighth and ninth interviews reinforced existing themes and provided additional examples, they did not introduce new major themes or significantly alter the established pattern of findings.

Here is the analysis of the theme saturation process, illustrating how the themes evolved and were refined throughout the research:

- Interviews 1-3: Established initial themes and major patterns
- Interviews 4-5: Added depth and nuance to existing themes
- Interviews 6-7: Confirmed patterns and completed theme structure
- Interviews 8-9: Provided additional supporting evidence but no new major themes

4.2 Analysis of Theme Distribution and Relationships

4.2.1 Theme Frequency Analysis

The analysis reveals five major thematic areas that emerged consistently across the interviews:

1. Institutional Structure and Governance
2. Digital Transformation Initiatives
3. Human Resources and Expertise Development
4. Economic and Business Diplomacy
5. Cultural and Public Diplomacy Integration

These themes are examined through the lens of both current challenges and future opportunities, with particular attention to the implications for developing a modern management framework for Ukrainian diplomacy (Table 1). The findings reflect the complex interplay between traditional diplomatic practices and the pressing need for modernization, especially in the context of wartime conditions and Ukraine's European integration aspirations.

Table 1. Theme frequency representation

Theme	Number of Mentions	Number of Sources	Representative Code Words
Institutional Structure	47	8/9	"hierarchy", "presidential office", "strategy", "independence"
Digital Transformation	35	7/9	"digitalization", "Diia", "AI", "automation"
Human Resources	42	9/9	"training", "merit", "career", "competencies"
Economic Diplomacy	31	6/9	"business", "trade", "investment", "markets"
Cultural Diplomacy	28	5/9	"culture", "diaspora", "soft power", "identity"

Source: Developed by author.

4.2.2 Key code words and co-occurrence analysis

The analysis of interview transcripts revealed significant patterns in the frequency and relationships of key code words, providing insight into the primary concerns and focus areas of diplomatic modernization. Table 2 presents the most frequently occurring code words and their thematic associations. **‘Reform’** emerged as the most frequently occurring code word (52 occurrences), primarily associated with institutional structure and human resources themes. This high frequency underscores the strong emphasis on systematic change within the diplomatic service, particularly in organizational structure and personnel management approaches.

‘Digital’ followed closely with 48 occurrences, exclusively linked to digital transformation initiatives. The prominence of this code word reflects the growing recognition of digitalization as a crucial modernization tool, particularly in service delivery and operational efficiency.

‘Training’ (45 occurrences) and **‘Strategy’** (43 occurrences) emerged as the next most frequent code words, highlighting the dual focus on human capital development and strategic planning. The strong presence of ‘Training’ in the discourse indicates significant attention to professional development needs, while the high frequency of ‘Strategy’ suggests ongoing concerns with long-term planning and direction-setting.

Business-related terminology (‘Business’, 38 occurrences) and cultural aspects (‘Culture’, 35 occurrences) showed moderate frequency, often appearing in conjunction with other themes. Notably, ‘Business’ frequently co-occurred with both ‘Digital’ and ‘Innovation’ (32 occurrences), suggesting a growing integration of economic diplomacy with technological advancement.

The presence of ‘Diaspora’ (30 occurrences) and ‘Leadership’ (28 occurrences) in the key code words highlights the importance of both external engagement and internal management in diplomatic modernization efforts. These terms often appeared in discussions about cultural initiatives and institutional reform, respectively.

‘Modernization’ (25 occurrences), while appearing less frequently, showed the broadest thematic association, connecting with all identified themes. This suggests its role as an overarching concept linking various aspects of diplomatic service transformation.

The co-occurrence patterns among these code words reveal important relationships between different aspects of diplomatic modernization. For instance, ‘Reform’ frequently appeared alongside ‘Strategy’ and ‘Leadership’, indicating the interconnected nature of institutional change initiatives. Similarly, ‘Digital’ showed strong co-occurrence with ‘Innovation’ and ‘Business’, suggesting the technological underpinning of modern economic diplomacy efforts.

Table 2: Primary code words and their frequency

Code Word	Frequency	Associated Themes
Reform	52	Institutional, HR
Digital	48	Digital Transformation
Training	45	HR Development
Strategy	43	Institutional
Business	38	Economic Diplomacy
Culture	35	Cultural Diplomacy
Innovation	32	Digital, Economic
Diaspora	30	Cultural
Leadership	28	Institutional, HR
Modernization	25	All Themes

Source: Developed by author.

4.2.3 Themes Co-Occurrence Analysis

The Theme Co-occurrence Network (Figure 1) illustrates the complex interconnections between the five main themes identified in the modernization of Ukrainian diplomatic service. This network visualization reveals significant patterns of relationship and influence between different aspects of diplomatic modernization.

Institutional Structure emerges as a central node in the network, showing direct connections to all other themes. This centrality reflects its foundational role in diplomatic modernization, where changes in

institutional framework and governance directly impact the implementation of other initiatives. As one Top Diplomatic Manager noted, "The procedures for developing and making decisions need to change. This is a problem not only for the MFA; it seems to be a broader issue in Ukraine and state institutions."

Digital Transformation demonstrates strong bilateral connections with both Human Resources and Economic Diplomacy. This triangulation suggests that technological modernization serves as both an enabler and a catalyst for improvements in personnel development and economic initiatives. The connection is particularly evident in the modernization of consular services and business support mechanisms.

The linkage between Cultural and Economic Diplomacy represents an emerging synergy in Ukraine's diplomatic efforts. This connection is exemplified through initiatives such as "Made in Ukraine" promotions and diaspora engagement programs, where cultural promotion directly supports economic objectives. As evidenced by interview data, this relationship has become increasingly important in post-2022 diplomatic strategy.

Human Resources maintains connections with all other themes, highlighting the critical role of personnel development and expertise in successful modernization across all areas. This comprehensive connectivity underscores the importance of human capital in implementing technological changes, maintaining cultural initiatives, and advancing economic diplomacy.

The network structure also reveals potential pathways for implementing change, suggesting that initiatives targeting connected themes might yield synergistic benefits. For example, improvements in digital infrastructure could simultaneously enhance both economic diplomacy capabilities and cultural outreach efforts.

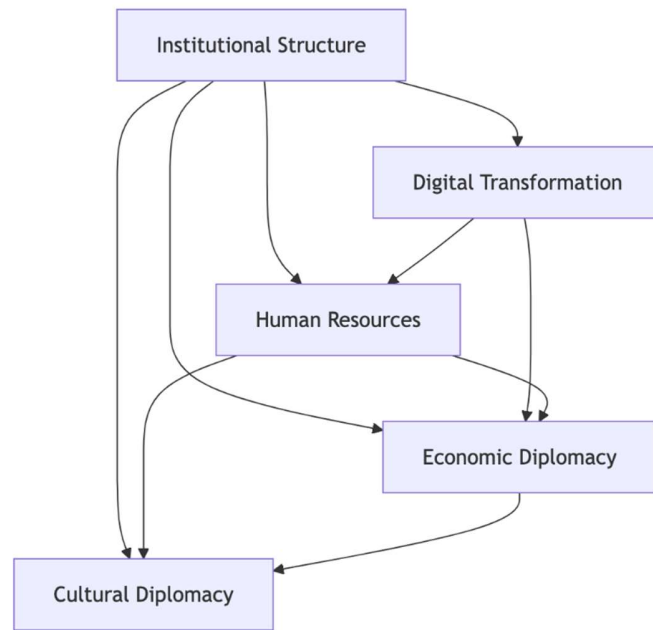


Figure 1: Theme interconnection network visualized using Mermaid diagram syntax (mermaid.live) in VS Code (1.95.2 version). The network demonstrates relationships and influences between main themes identified in the research (N=5), where arrows indicate direct connections and interactions between different aspects of diplomatic modernization.

Source: Developed by author.

4.3 Thematic Evolution Across Career Levels

Table 3: Priority Themes by Experience Level

Career Level	Primary Concern	Secondary Concern	Tertiary Concern
Senior Level	Institutional Structure (65%)	HR Development (45%)	Economic Diplomacy (35%)
Middle Level	Digital Transformation (58%)	HR Development (52%)	Cultural Diplomacy (42%)
Top Level	Digital Transformation (72%)	Economic Diplomacy (48%)	Institutional Structure (35%)

Source: Developed by author.

The analysis of priority themes across different career levels reveals variations in focus and concerns among diplomatic personnel, providing insights into how modernization priorities are perceived at different organizational levels. Table 3 presents the distribution of primary, secondary, and tertiary concerns across Senior, Middle, and Top levels of diplomatic service.

Hierarchical Perspective Differences:

1. Senior Level demonstrates strongest focus on Institutional Structure (65%), reflecting their engagement with strategic and organizational matters
2. Middle Level prioritizes Digital Transformation (58%), indicating their direct involvement with operational modernization
3. Top Level shows highest commitment to Digital Transformation (72%), suggesting strong support for technological innovation at strategic levels

Pattern Analysis:

1. Digital Transformation appears as a priority at both Middle and Top levels, indicating strong vertical alignment on technological modernization
2. HR Development appears as a secondary concern across two levels (Senior 45%, Middle 52%), suggesting consistent recognition of human capital importance
3. Economic Diplomacy shows varying priorities, from tertiary concern at Senior level (35%) to secondary priority at Top level (48%)

Strategic Implications: This distribution of priorities provides valuable insights for:

1. Understanding perspective differences across organizational levels
2. Identifying potential areas of alignment and misalignment in modernization efforts
3. Informing change management strategies
4. Developing targeted training and development programs

The differences in priorities between senior, middle, and top-level diplomats show the need of:

- Better coordination of modernization projects between all levels of the organization
- Clearer communication between different ranks of diplomatic staff
- Different approaches to managing change for each level, based on their specific needs and concerns
- Making sure everyone at all levels is working towards the same goals

For example, while top managers are highly focused on digital transformation (72%), senior-level staff are more concerned with institutional structure (65%). This difference in focus suggests that the organization needs better ways to bring these different priorities together and ensure everyone understands and supports each other's goals.

4.4 Key Thematic Findings Analysis: Challenges, Opportunities and Success Stories

Table 4 presents a comprehensive analysis of challenges and opportunities within each theme, supported by evidence from interview participants.

4.4.1 Analysis of Institutional Structure and Governance

The interviews revealed significant concerns about the institutional independence of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. As evidenced by senior diplomatic management perspectives, there is a clear tension between operational autonomy and executive oversight. This challenge is particularly evident in strategic planning processes, where, as TDM3 noted, "The MFA has nearly turned into an extension of the presidential office." Research findings revealed deeply rooted challenges in task management and information flow within the MFA. The most critical issue identified is the excessive concentration of responsibilities and information at senior leadership levels, particularly with deputy ministers. This centralization creates significant operational bottlenecks and institutional vulnerabilities, as decision-making and information sharing become dependent on a small number of overloaded individuals.

The current organizational structure lacks effective mechanisms for task delegation and clear responsibility distribution. When tasks are assigned, they often flow through multiple hierarchical layers, leading to delays and information distortion. Without systematic delegation protocols, middle management cannot effectively distribute workload or take independent action, forcing routine decisions to escalate to senior levels unnecessarily.

Success stories in Institutional Reform: The interviews revealed successful examples of institutional adaptation, particularly during crisis periods, at the beginning of full-scale invasion in February 2024. As one diplomat noted, "I believe at the beginning of the war, literally a few months in, there was a very good example of cooperation among various institutions and the public when we did not have internal political

disputes." This demonstrates the institution's capacity for effective coordination and rapid response when faced with extraordinary challenges.

4.4.2 Digital Transformation Initiatives

Digital transformation emerged as a critical modernization priority, with strong support from both Top Diplomatic Management (90%) and Middle Diplomatic Management (80%), (Figure 2). While one MDM participant candidly described it as "not a digital ministry," highlighting current limitations, there is significant potential for improvement. This could be achieved by adopting modern technologies already proven successful in other Ukrainian ministries and automating consular services.

Success Stories in Digital Innovation: A significant achievement in this area is Ukraine's accelerated digital development. As highlighted by a TDM2: "When digitalization efforts reached Ukraine's government, it managed to catch up with and surpass the achievements seen in Europe within just 3-4 years." The success of the 'Diia' platform, which has attracted interest from European countries for licensing, exemplifies Ukraine's potential for digital leadership.

4.4.3 Human Resources Development

The analysis reveals a significant challenge in balancing traditional diplomatic recruitment practices with modern professional development needs. The findings highlight a three-tier personnel system consisting of: 1) family-based appointments, 2) connection-based hires, and 3) regular hires through competitive selection. This stratified system creates inherent inequalities and limits career advancement opportunities for professionals entering through the competitive process, further reinforcing skill gaps by restricting access to diverse professional development and leadership roles.

In response to these challenges, there is strong consensus across all management levels supporting the implementation of enhanced training and career development programs. The emphasis is on transitioning to a merit-based advancement system that would better serve both institutional needs and individual professional growth.

Success Stories in Professional Development: The research identified examples of excellence in professional leadership and development. One participant shared a notable success story: "My first assignment was in Poland, with an absolutely professional team, where the ambassador had a diplomatic

education, many years of experience, and spoke three languages. His practice was based on a respectful approach." This example demonstrates the positive impact of professional expertise and leadership skills. Two other respondents highlighted that 20% of motivated professionals actively drive initiatives and are eager to support and share their expertise within the service.

4.4.4 Economic Diplomacy Transformation

Economic diplomacy has emerged as a crucial area for modernization, particularly in the context of Ukraine's post-war recovery and European integration aspirations. As evidenced by interview data, there is a strong focus on attracting both government and private investment, with diplomatic missions worldwide being tasked to promote Ukrainian business interests.

There is a significant challenge in the ability of Ukrainian businesses to effectively communicate and present themselves in international markets. This includes not only basic presentation skills but also strategic understanding of future market requirements, particularly concerning EU standards, environmental sustainability, and technological advancement.

Success Stories in Economic Initiatives: Several concrete achievements emerged in economic diplomacy. A striking example is the "Made in Ukraine" initiative in Toronto, where "The demand was so high that we now understand the Ukrainian side will not be able to meet this demand for the next month or two." Additionally, innovative approaches to supporting relocated Ukrainian businesses abroad demonstrate successful adaptation to wartime challenges.

4.4.5 Cultural Diplomacy Innovation

The research identified innovative approaches to diaspora engagement that combine traditional cultural promotion with digital and economic initiatives. With millions of Ukrainians having relocated internationally, there is a critical need to maintain cultural and emotional connections while integrating Ukrainian culture into host communities. This dual approach serves to both sustain Ukraine's presence in diaspora lives and maintain international attention on the ongoing political and military challenges.

Embassies' engagement with diaspora communities requires a creative and responsive approach, particularly given government funding limitations for cultural initiatives abroad. The research revealed opportunities to leverage diaspora potential and initiatives, suggesting a shift from traditional top-down

cultural diplomacy to more collaborative and community-driven approaches. This strategy helps overcome resource constraints and enhances the authenticity and impact of cultural promotion efforts.

Success Stories in Cultural Promotion: A notable victory in cultural diplomacy was the return of the Scythian gold collection to Ukraine. This achievement required extensive diplomatic efforts and legal expertise, representing not just the recovery of cultural artifacts but also establishing important precedents for protecting Ukrainian cultural heritage.

Table 4: Analysis of Key Themes: Challenges and Opportunities

Theme	Challenges	Opportunities	Evidence quotes
Institutional Structure and Governance	Limited institutional independence Concentrated decision-making Insufficient strategic planning involvement	Enhanced institutional framework Clear roles and responsibilities Modern management approaches	"The MFA has nearly turned into an extension of the presidential office, which undermines its independence and poses a risk. Ideally, the MFA should be creating the strategy and presenting it to the president." - TDM3
Digital Transformation	Resistance to technological change Limited digital infrastructure Paper-based processes	Integration of AI and modern technologies Digital consular services Enhanced efficiency through automation	"The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is not a digital ministry by itself... even at a basic level, the level of digitalization is low, and everything is quite sad." - MDM2
Human Resources Development	Personnel system inequalities Limited career development Insufficient training programs	Merit-based advancement Enhanced training programs International expertise development	"Changes are needed within the MFA, starting with hiring practices, performance evaluation, career advancement, and incentives." - MDM1

Economic Diplomacy	Limited business support resources Complex bureaucratic procedures Communication gaps	Enhanced business support mechanisms Integrated economic diplomacy Modern trade promotion approaches	"The role of the MFA in economic diplomacy is more practical. We are on the ground, implementing and achieving the goals and priorities defined by our economic department." - TDM1
Cultural Diplomacy	Limited funding for cultural initiatives Diaspora engagement difficulties Need for coordinated strategy	Integration with economic diplomacy Digital cultural promotion Diaspora network development	"Cultural diplomacy is also very important. The state must invest in cinema, art, music, and other Ukrainian media products. This is crucial for our presence abroad." - TDM1

Source: Developed by author.

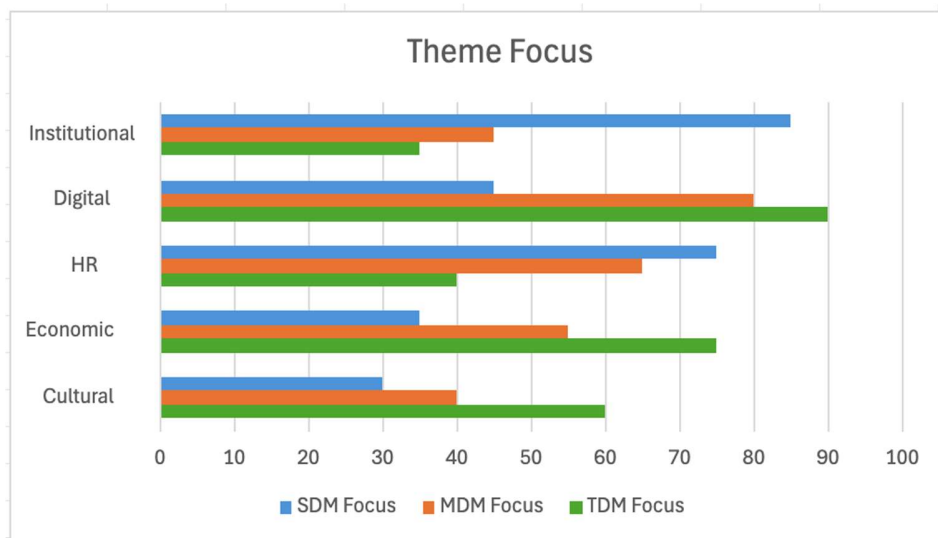


Figure 2: Theme Focus Map created using Excel "Horizontal Chart Bar" displaying intensity distribution of thematic focus across management levels in Ukrainian diplomatic services.

Source: Developed by author.

The analysis of focus areas across senior, middle, and top diplomatic management (SDM, MDM, TDM) highlights the need for a differentiated yet cohesive approach to transforming Ukraine's diplomatic service. Each management level prioritizes distinct domains, reflecting their operational roles and strategic influence. **Senior managers (SDM)** emphasize **institutional development (85%)** and **HR (75%)**, suggesting the need for a strong organizational foundation, efficient human capital management, and clear operational processes. This insight points to the importance of institutional restructuring and capacity-building initiatives at the senior level.

Conversely, **top-level managers (TDM)** prioritize **digital transformation (90%)** and **economic diplomacy (75%)**, reflecting the strategic emphasis on modernization, technological adoption, and economic engagement. **Middle managers (MDM)** balance a blend of institutional (45%), HR (65%), and **digital priorities (80%)**, suggesting their role as facilitators of operational alignment and integration of new technologies. These findings suggest that the management framework for diplomatic transformation should adopt a **multi-tiered approach**. Senior managers should lead on institutional reform and HR development, middle managers should serve as operational change agents ensuring smooth transitions, and top-level managers should drive strategic priorities like digital transformation and economic diplomacy. This integrated approach aligns each level's focus with the broader objectives of diplomatic modernization and agility.

4.5 Emergent Finding: The paradox of motivation and burnout

While not initially targeted by the research questions, the analysis revealed a significant paradox in diplomatic service talent management. Highly motivated employees, particularly those most invested in institutional improvement, demonstrated the highest rates of professional burnout. This unexpected pattern emerged from multiple interview narratives, where respondents who "wanted to do more for the system" ultimately left the service due to misaligned expectations and systemic constraints.

This finding aligns with Public Service Motivation (PSM) theory, which suggests that individuals with high PSM levels invest more emotional energy in their work, driven by a desire to serve the public. While this can enhance job satisfaction and performance, it can also lead to high expectations for oneself (Perry & Wise, 1990). When these expectations are not met—due to resource limitations, bureaucratic challenges, or public criticism—it can result in feelings of frustration and helplessness, contributing to burnout. (Brunetto, Y., & Farr-Wharton, R. (2008).

This burnout phenomenon directly impacts organizational change potential. According to Lewin's Change Management Model, successful institutional transformation requires a critical mass of change agents. (Lewin, K.1947). When talented, motivated employees leave the organization due to burnout, it depletes this potential critical mass, effectively stalling meaningful organizational evolution. The research identified at least three former diplomats who maintained positive attitudes toward the institution despite their negative experiences, indicating untapped potential for future transformation. The findings point to a crucial gap in institutional talent retention strategies. While the diplomatic service attracts highly motivated professionals, it lacks mechanisms to harness and sustain their change-driving potential. This creates a cyclical problem where the departure of change-oriented employees reinforces institutional stagnation. However, the expressed willingness of former employees to return under improved conditions suggests an opportunity for institutional renewal if appropriate talent management strategies are implemented.

These findings, particularly the strong interconnections between different aspects of diplomatic service and varying priorities across management levels, suggest the need for a comprehensive management framework to guide modernization efforts. Building on these insights, Chapter 5 presents a proposed management framework that addresses the identified challenges while leveraging existing opportunities and successful practices. The framework is designed to integrate the five key themes identified in the research, taking into account both the immediate needs for modernization and long-term strategic objectives of Ukrainian diplomacy.

CHAPTER 5. Management Framework for Ukrainian Diplomatic Service Modernization

5.1 Framework Structure

Vision and Mission

The framework's overarching vision is to establish the Ukrainian diplomatic service as an innovative, efficient, and influential force in international relations. The aim is to position Ukraine as a respected and impactful player on the global stage, capable of effectively representing the country's interests and priorities.

The mission of this framework is to transform the diplomatic service into a modern, digitally-enabled institution that attracts and retains top talent while delivering excellent services to the people of Ukraine and the international community. This involves modernizing the organizational structure, processes, and capabilities of the MFA to meet the evolving demands of 21st century diplomacy.

Key elements of this mission include:

- Strengthening the MFA's institutional capacity and strategic autonomy through innovative management practices and evidence-based decision-making.
- Implementing comprehensive digital transformation to enhance the efficiency and accessibility of diplomatic services.
- Developing the professional expertise and leadership skills of diplomatic personnel to drive excellence in representation and negotiations.
- Bolstering Ukraine's economic diplomacy capabilities to support trade, investment, and international business development.
- Expanding Ukraine's cultural influence and preserving its distinct identity on the global stage.

Core Values

The framework is built upon core values that emerged from research findings: professionalism, innovation, accountability, and service excellence. These values reflect both traditional diplomatic principles and modern management approaches, emphasizing the need for institutional independence, transparent decision-making, and continuous professional development.

Strategic Objectives

The framework's strategic objectives focus on transforming the Ukrainian diplomatic service through a set of integrated modernization efforts. These objectives address specific challenges identified through research and build upon existing successful practices within the MFA.

1. **Strengthen Institutional Capacity:** This objective aims to enhance the MFA's strategic autonomy, decision-making capabilities, and organizational efficiency. Key initiatives include establishing an Analytical Office to provide evidence-based insights, implementing modern management systems

to streamline workflows and communication, and fostering a culture of accountability and continuous improvement.

2. **Implement Comprehensive Digital Transformation:** This objective seeks to leverage digital technologies to improve the delivery of both external and internal diplomatic services. Initiatives include enhancing e-diplomacy tools, automating administrative processes, and integrating smart systems to increase responsiveness and accessibility for citizens and international partners.
3. **Develop Professional Expertise:** This objective focuses on attracting, retaining, and upskilling diplomatic personnel to meet the evolving demands of modern diplomacy. Proposed changes include simulation-based training for crisis response, structured career development paths, and performance management systems aligned with merit-based principles.
4. **Enhance Economic Diplomacy Capabilities:** This objective aims to empower the MFA to support Ukrainian businesses in accessing international markets and attracting foreign investment. Key strategies involve integrating AI-powered business support services within diplomatic missions and strengthening the role of embassies as facilitators of international trade and economic cooperation.
5. **Expand Cultural Influence:** This objective recognizes the importance of cultural diplomacy in strengthening Ukraine's global presence and countering historical narratives that have diminished its distinct identity. Initiatives include promoting Ukrainian cultural figures and heritage, engaging with diaspora communities, and developing strategic partnerships to amplify Ukraine's artistic, intellectual, and social contributions.

Key Elements

The framework encompasses five interconnected elements: Institutional Structure, Digital Transformation, Human Resources Development, Economic Diplomacy, and Cultural Diplomacy.

Organizational Structure

The proposed organizational structure maintains necessary hierarchical elements while incorporating modern management approaches, emphasizing horizontal communication and efficient decision-making processes.

Leadership: Minister of MFA, Deputy Ministers, and Secretary-General.

Divisions:

- Regional Bureaus (e.g., Americas, Europe, Asia-Pacific).
- Functional Units (e.g., Economic Diplomacy, Public Affairs, IT).
- Consular Offices and Embassies globally.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

The framework's performance measurement system integrates both traditional diplomatic metrics and modern management indicators. This balanced approach ensures that the evaluation of the diplomatic service's modernization efforts captures not only successful outcomes, but also the efficiency and strategic impact of its operations.

Diplomatic Impact

- Success rates of diplomatic agreements, negotiations, and conflict resolutions
- Improved rankings in global diplomacy indexes and perception surveys
- Increased international media coverage and positive sentiment analysis

Service Delivery

- Citizen satisfaction with consular services and emergency response capabilities
- Timeliness and quality of information and assistance provided to Ukrainian citizens abroad
- Accessibility and usability of digital diplomatic services

Operational Efficiency

- Reduction in administrative processing times and costs
- Improved resource utilization and budgetary optimization
- Increased productivity and task completion rates

Strategic Influence

- Growth in trade, investment, and economic cooperation facilitated by diplomatic efforts
- Expansion of Ukraine's cultural footprint and diaspora engagement
- Increased recognition of Ukraine's unique identity and contributions on the global stage

Organizational Transformation

- Successful implementation of modernization initiatives and associated KPIs
- Improved employee satisfaction, retention, and professional development metrics
- Effective change management and stakeholder engagement measures

By monitoring these KPIs, the Ukrainian diplomatic service can systematically evaluate the impact of its modernization efforts. The KPIs would be regularly reviewed and updated to ensure they remain relevant and aligned with the evolving priorities and challenges facing the diplomatic service. This continuous evaluation and adaptation would cultivate performance excellence and organizational learning within the MFA.

5.2 Key elements of the Framework

The management framework for modernizing the Ukrainian diplomatic service comprises five interconnected process domains, each with its own set of challenges and implementation focus areas. Figure 3 provides a visual overview of this integrated transformation process

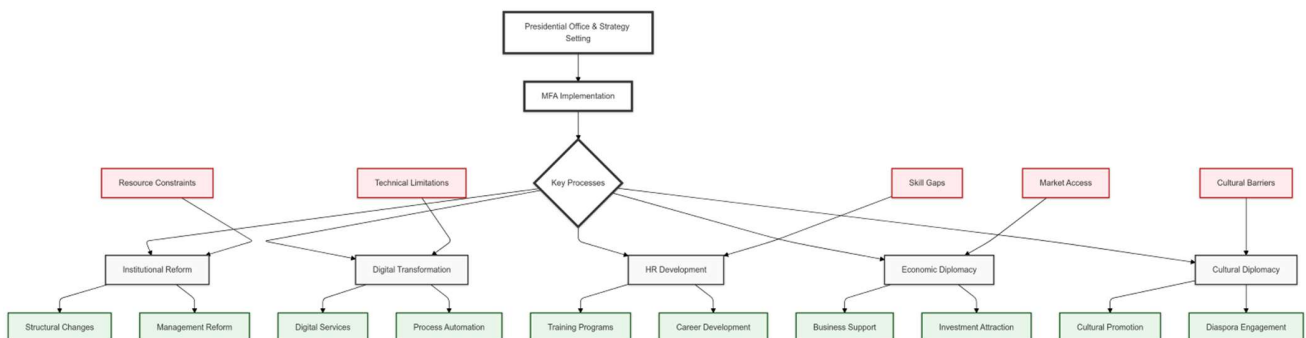


Figure 3 The diagram was created using Microsoft Visio 2019. Visualization of the MFA modernization process and its key challenges (Version 1.0), depicting 5 main process domains with their associated challenges and implementation areas.

This diagram illustrates how the overarching strategic direction from the President's Office cascades down through the execution by the MFA. Each of the five key process domains - Institutional Reform, Digital Transformation, Human Resources Development, Economic Diplomacy, and Cultural Diplomacy - faces specific challenges (shown in red) that directly impact the implementation capacity. However, the framework also identifies the corresponding implementation focus areas (shown in green) for each domain.

These represent the concrete deliverables and outcomes that will contribute to the overall diplomatic service modernization.

The interconnected nature of these process domains underscores the need for a holistic and coordinated approach to transformation. The challenges and implementation areas within each domain interact and reinforce one another, requiring the MFA to carefully orchestrate its modernization efforts across the various functional and operational components.

5.2.1 Institutional Reform: Strategic independence through structural changes

Research reveals that while the MFA operates within resource limitations and presidential office dependencies, these challenges present opportunities for innovative organizational development and enhanced strategic autonomy. The cornerstone of structural reform centers on establishing a dedicated Analytical Office, a decision supported by research findings. Unlike traditional diplomatic reporting structures, this office would serve as a strategic think tank within the MFA, providing evidence-based insights that strengthen the ministry's position in decision-making processes OP ↔ MFA. In essence, diplomatic services, departments, or missions primarily need analytical support dedicated to generating verified global news, information and analysis (covering America, Asia, Arab countries, etc.) and distributing it to mid and senior-level staff. This streamlines operations by freeing diplomats from routine information gathering and processing tasks.

Methodology Implementation.

1. Event-impact assessment would systematically evaluate the immediate and long-term impacts of diplomatic initiatives, considering multiple stakeholder perspectives to gain a more nuanced understanding of diplomatic effectiveness.
2. Pattern recognition analysis would systematically document and analyze cross-countries diplomatic interactions to identify successful approaches in different contexts. This would include examination of

cultural factors, timing considerations, and communication channel effectiveness. The resulting insights would inform the development of more sophisticated diplomatic strategies.

3. Comparative Framework methodology would establish clear metrics for diplomatic success, moving beyond traditional output measures to assess real impact and influence of Ukraine's foreign policy. This framework would combine quantitative indicators with qualitative assessments of relationship strength and diplomatic impact.

4. Knowledge management. The Analytical Office would serve as a central repository for diplomatic expertise and institutional memory, systematically documenting and analyzing diplomatic practices to build a valuable knowledge base that informs future strategic planning and initiatives. This approach would help preserve institutional knowledge despite personnel changes and ensure consistency in diplomatic approaches across different regions and contexts.

For a detailed overview of recommended tools and systems that would enhance the Analytical Office's capabilities, please refer to Annex 2.

Management Reform: Enhancing Organizational Efficiency

The management reform addresses organizational effectiveness through three interconnected systems that enhance both vertical and horizontal communication while optimizing resource utilization.

1. Task Management system would transform traditional hierarchical processes into an efficient workflow mechanism. Through digital platforms like ServiceNow or Jira, it implements standardized task delegation and tracking, automatically triggering necessary actions and notifications. The system enables department heads to delegate effectively while maintaining oversight through real-time progress monitoring and quality control.

2. Information sharing workflow based on modern collaboration platforms such as Microsoft Teams or any other customized diplomatic workflow system, which reveals significant opportunities for improving cross-departmental collaboration. Proposed workflow includes:

- Regular (weekly) strategic coordination forums that bring together diverse expertise, with meeting notes and follow up mechanism.
- Digital platforms that facilitate real-time information sharing and collaboration

- Improved visibility and transparency of ongoing diplomatic initiatives and their progress

3. Accountability Framework. This system makes it clear who is responsible for what while giving teams the freedom to do their work effectively. Using digital tools, each diplomatic project has a clear roadmap. Everyone involved can see this information on their dashboard, making it easy to track progress and coordinate work. The system would reward good work and innovation, rather than just focusing on mistakes and help teams understand how their contributions align with broader diplomatic goals.

These systems are unified through a digital ecosystem that supports both vertical and horizontal communication flows. For instance, a single diplomatic initiative would be visible across all three systems: task management tracks progress, information flow ensures relevant updates reach all stakeholders, and accountability framework monitors performance against objectives. For detailed implementation tools and systems, see Annex 2.

5.2.2 Digital Transformation

Research findings demonstrate that effective digital transformation requires integration of e-diplomacy capabilities with both digital services and process automation. As illustrated in Figure 4, this integration creates a comprehensive digital ecosystem for modern diplomatic operations.

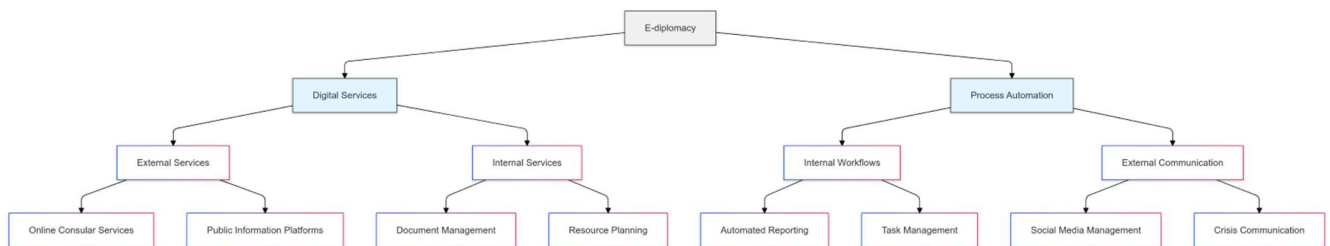


Figure 4 The diagram, created using Microsoft Visio 2019, illustrates the framework implementation workflow.

Digital Services Enhancement

The framework proposes a systematic approach to digital enhancement that builds on existing successes like the Diia platform while addressing current operational gaps. E-diplomacy tools enable enhancement of both external and internal services. External services would focus on modernizing public-facing solutions, such as:

- Integration of consular services with the Trembita system for seamless digital interactions

- Online document submission and processing with secure digital identity verification
- Automated appointment scheduling and virtual consultation capabilities
- AI-assisted services to enhance responsiveness and accessibility

Internal digital services would concentrate on streamlining administrative processes through solutions like:

- Comprehensive digital document management workflows
- Automated routine task handling and AI-assisted document processing
- Performance tracking and reporting tools to enhance operational efficiency

Process Automation Development

Process automation leverages e-diplomacy capabilities to streamline both internal workflows and external communication. Internal automation would include:

- Integrated digital reporting systems
- Comprehensive task management and project tracking solutions
- AI-powered document analysis and decision support tools

External communication processes would be enhanced through:

- Integrated social media management and monitoring systems
- Standardized crisis communication protocols and rapid response capabilities

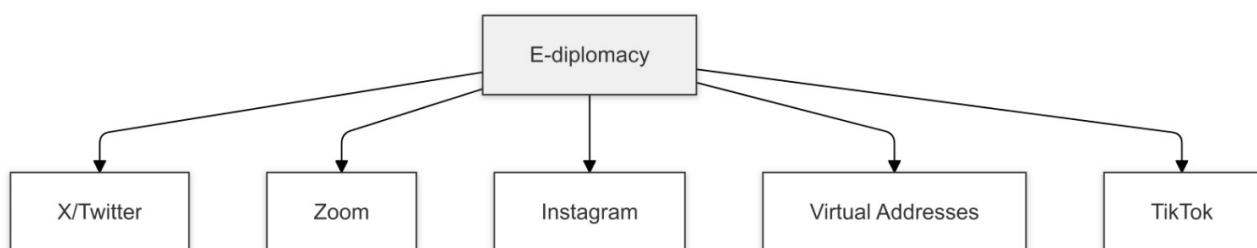


Figure 5. E-diplomacy Platform Structure in Ukrainian Diplomatic Service. The diagram illustrates key digital platforms utilized in modern diplomatic communication, including social media channels (X/Twitter, Instagram, TikTok), virtual meeting solutions (Zoom), and virtual addresses, demonstrating

the multi-channel approach to digital diplomatic engagement. The diagram was created using Microsoft Visio 2019.

Source: Developed by author.

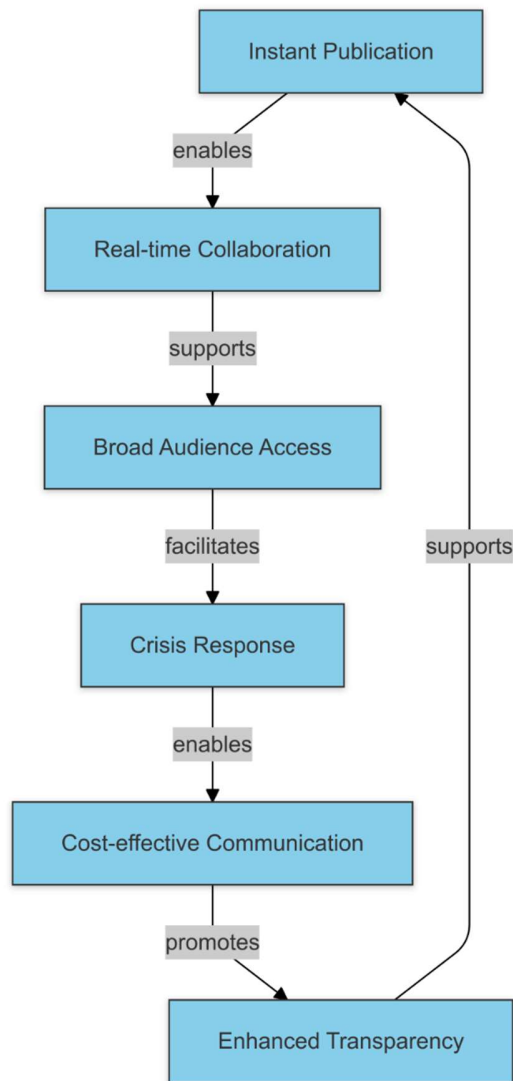


Figure 6. The diagram was created using Microsoft Visio 2019. Benefits Cycle of E-diplomacy Implementation. The circular diagram presents six interconnected advantages of e-diplomacy: instant information publication, real-time collaboration, broad international audience access, crisis response capability, cost-effective global communication, and enhanced diplomatic transparency. The cyclic nature illustrates how these benefits reinforce each other in strengthening diplomatic effectiveness.

Source: developed by author

By seamlessly integrating these digital services and automation processes, the MFA can transform its operations, improving responsiveness, transparency, and overall diplomatic effectiveness

5.2.3. Human resources development

Research identifies both challenges and proven success patterns in professional development. Building on documented success examples where professional leadership fostered excellence, the framework proposes systematic approach to HR development. The findings reveal that approximately 20% of motivated professionals actively drive positive changes. These change agents demonstrate strong potential for knowledge sharing and mentoring.

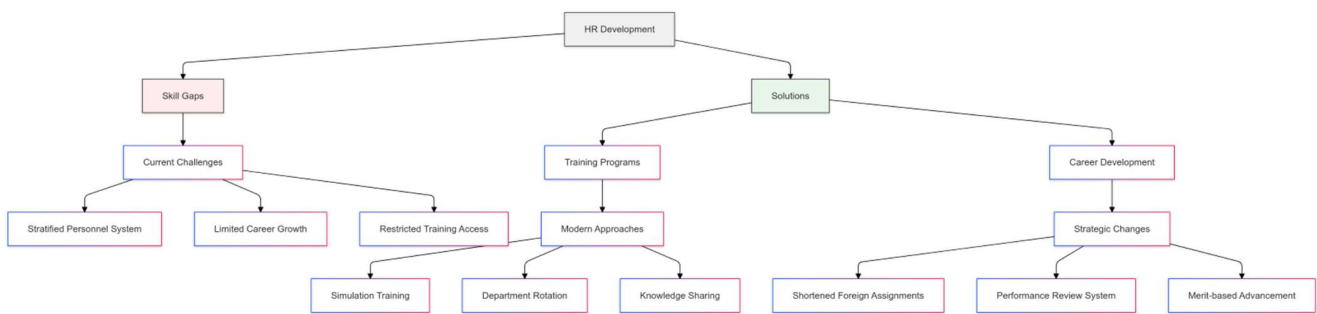


Figure 7. The diagram was created using Microsoft Visio 2019 and illustrates implementation workflow aimed at mitigating existing challenges and developing modernized HR approach.

Source: Developed by author.

The framework acknowledges the current skill gaps and stratified nature of the diplomatic service and proposes a systematic approach to HR development that promotes merit-based advancement and professional growth.

Key innovations include implementation of simulation-based training programs for crisis response, structured rotation between departments, and optimized foreign assignments. The framework introduces one to two-year mission rotations to maintain stronger connections with the central office while building international expertise. Knowledge retention improves through systematic engagement of retired diplomats in training and recruitment processes.

Performance management transforms through introduction of transparent review systems based on clear metrics and regular feedback, using modern HR management software, such as Bamboo HR or similar.

These changes include:

- Annually performance evaluations
- Competency-based assessments: Professional (language proficiency, cross-cultural communication, digital literacy, negotiation capabilities), Area specific metrics (results and impact of Public, Economic and cultural diplomacy by diaspora engagement, investments attracted), Leadership (team management efficiency, resource optimization ability, crisis management and strategic planning skills).
- 360-degree feedback mechanisms
- Structured career advancement paths

These changes replace post-Soviet evaluation practices with modern HR management approaches, supporting merit-based professional development and cultivating continuous learning and improvement within the diplomatic service.

5.2.4. Economic Diplomacy

Economic diplomacy emerges as a crucial element for Ukraine's post-war recovery and European integration. Research findings reveal both challenges in market access and opportunities for enhanced business support through diplomatic missions. Ukrainian businesses face significant hurdles in international market entry, particularly regarding EU or other countries standards compliance, effective self-presentation, evolving market requirements for environmental sustainability and technological advancement.

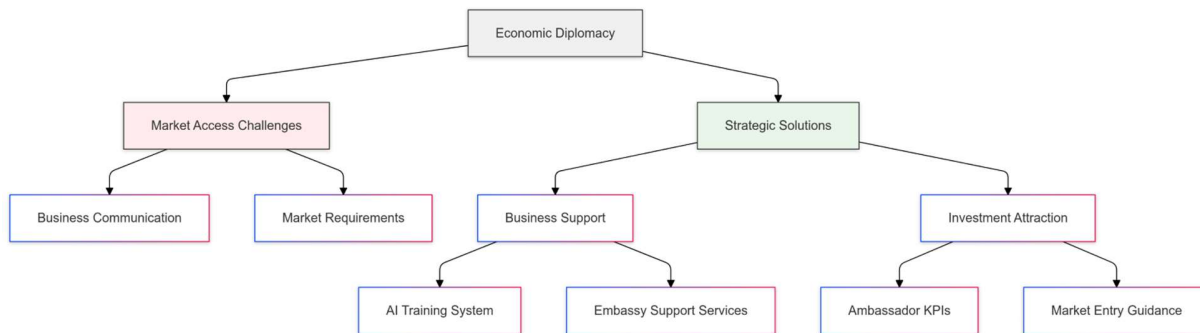


Figure 9. The diagram was created using Microsoft Visio 2019 and illustrates the implementation framework for challenges and solutions.

Source: Developed by author.

The framework addresses these challenges by enhancing embassy capabilities along with leveraging technological solutions. Through integration of AI-powered systems and structured business support services, diplomatic missions transform into effective facilitators of international business development and investment attraction. Business support improvement through AI-training platform implementation includes:

- Market entry tutorials and simulations
- Interactive presentation skills development
- Automated compliance checking for EU or other countries standards
- Technology advancement roadmaps

Embassy Business Support:

- Centralized contact point
- Compliance navigation assistance
- Business networking facilitation
- Investment matchmaking
- Market research and intelligence

Both systems integrate to provide comprehensive business support while optimizing diplomatic resources through automated solutions. The AI platform handles routine training and guidance, allowing embassy staff to focus on strategic relationship building and complex business facilitation.

5.2.5 Cultural Diplomacy Enhancement

Cultural diplomacy serves as a vital tool for strengthening Ukraine's international presence by introducing Ukrainian traditions, history, and art, especially given the long history of Russian propaganda and appropriation of Ukrainian heritage. The recent international recognition of Ukraine's distinct cultural identity requires sustained information support and awareness campaigns to maintain momentum and deepen understanding.

Diaspora engagement faces two distinct challenges. First, the significant wave of immigration in 2022 creates a need to maintain emotional connections with recent emigrants who, despite feeling homesick and supporting Ukrainian culture in their host countries, may gradually lose their active engagement. Second, earlier waves of emigrants who left Ukraine before 2014 and 2022, during the early stages of national identity formation, often carry perspectives influenced by centuries of Russian cultural dominance. These communities require targeted programs to rebuild their connection with modern Ukraine and its cultural renaissance.

The framework addresses these challenges through systematic promotion of Ukrainian culture and enhanced diaspora engagement, recognizing the distinct needs of different emigrant waves and the importance of countering historical narratives that diminished Ukraine's cultural sovereignty.

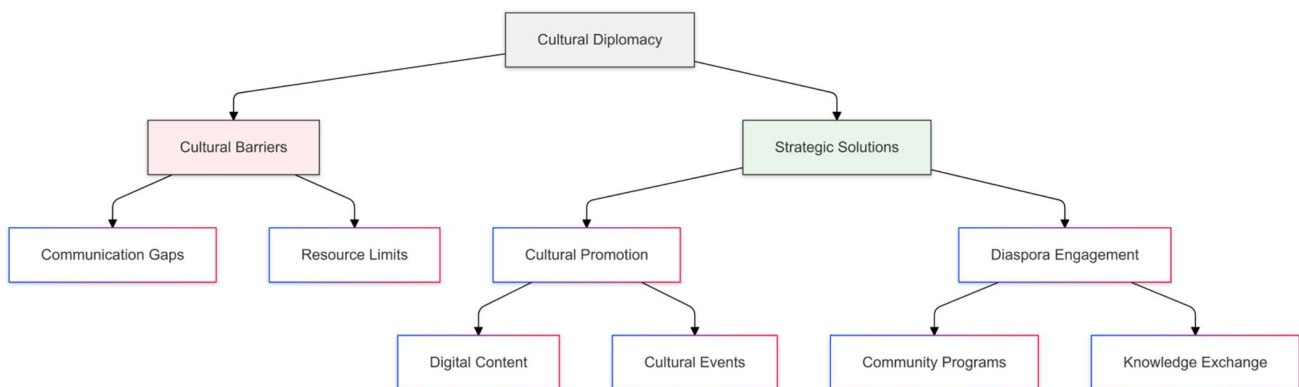


Figure 8. The diagram was created using Microsoft Visio 2019 and illustrates the implementation of framework components.

Source: Developed by author.

Digital cultural content distribution “The Voice of MFA”

- Support for prominent Ukrainian cultural voices - such as writers, philosophers, artists- who promote Ukraine independently (I.Karpa, O.Zabuzhko, and others) without support from the government, Ministry of Culture, or MFA in both international and national media outlets.
- Development of digital platforms for Ukrainian cultural promotion. There are several initiatives¹ by external organization already underway that require strong support from the MFA
- Enhancement of social media presence for cultural figures, both historical and contemporary, across various fields such as art, science, sports, and more.
- Developing strategic media partnerships for effective content distribution on both national and international levels.

Strategic cultural events and historical recognition

- Identifying and marking Ukrainian historical presence abroad, placing memorial plaques, monuments, at the places of residence of famous Ukrainians figures would serve to honor the contributions of notable Ukrainian figures and reinforces their historical significance in and connection with different regions.
- Recognition of Ukrainian contributions to world culture: literature, music, dance, culinary traditions can act as educational tools for both Ukrainians and non-Ukrainians.
- Correction of historical narratives (e.g., proper attribution of artworks like Degas' "Ukrainian Dancers") would contribute to cultural identity.
- Development of Ukrainian cultural routes in European cities would serve as valuable tool for cultural exchange, tourism, and education.

Diaspora community support

- Language programs, with a particular focus on eastern Ukrainian communities, abroad is essential for preserving cultural identity and address practical need considering the program of potential returns to Ukraine.
- Cultural integration support for new diaspora members
- Educational resources for maintaining Ukrainian identity: cultural workshops and classes, access to Ukrainian streaming services, Online Groups and Forums.
- Support for Ukrainian weekend schools

Knowledge exchange and heritage preservation

- Enhancement of Ukrainian Institute's activities through partnerships and collaboration with foreign institution, exchange programs, joint research initiatives.
- Translation and promotion of Ukrainian literature
- Historical research and documentation: archival and field research, publications of findings.
- Cultural heritage protection initiatives: collaborative efforts between countries, NGOs, and individuals through shared resources, expertise, and funding.

Innovative Partnership Development

- Engagement with successful diaspora business leaders, such as successful Ukrainian-Argentinian business leaders, who have made significant contributions to both countries' economies and cultural exchanges (D.Mikhailov, A.Gurevich)
- Creation of cultural ambassador programs in educational Institutions, Community organizations, Diasporas.
- Public-private partnerships for cultural initiatives
- Diaspora investment in cultural projects

This approach transforms current volunteer-based initiatives into systematic, supported programs while maintaining the authentic voice of Ukrainian culture through its prominent representatives.

5.3 Framework Implementation

5.6.1 DOD criteria implementation.

To ensure the successful implementation of the MFA modernization framework, it is recommended to establish clear Definition of Done (DoD) criteria at each stage. The concept of a Definition of Done, commonly used in **Agile project management**, can be adapted to track progress and ensure quality in the transformation of diplomatic services. The DoD promotes transparency and ensures alignment across all stakeholder teams. The DoD criteria should be defined collaboratively by the MFA leadership, department heads, and implementation teams. These criteria provide a shared understanding of what it means for each component or milestone to be truly "done" and ready for the next phase. By applying the DoD approach and developing a robust implementation roadmap, the MFA can enhance the chances of successful and

sustainable modernization, promoting a culture of transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement.

The DoD criteria should address the following areas:

- Organizational alignment and resource readiness
- Streamlined process workflows
- Robust technological infrastructure
- Clear performance measurement and accountability

5.6.2 Recommended Implementation roadmap

The MFA should develop a detailed implementation roadmap referring to the recommended outlined sequence of activities. The roadmap suggests milestones and preliminary timeline. The final version of the roadmap should be evaluated by the MFA in alignment with the DoD criteria, clear timelines, responsible parties, and progress tracking mechanisms. To facilitate smooth implementation, the MFA should consider adopting an agile, iterative approach that allows for flexibility and rapid adaptation to changing circumstances. This may involve breaking down the implementation into smaller, manageable phases, each with its own DoD criteria and review process.






Pre-Implementation Requirements

1. Stakeholder Alignment
 - Secure leadership commitment
 - Establish change management team
 - Define communication protocols
 - Identify key stakeholders and drivers
2. Resource Assessment
 - Map required technical resources (See Annex 2)
 - Identify skills and competency gaps
 - Ensure sufficient budget availability
 - Plan resource allocation

Phase 1: Foundation (0-6 months)

Objective: Establish management systems and operational baselines

Process	Systems and Activities	Definition of Done (DoD)	KPIs
Digital Workflow System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Trembita integration <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Digital document management <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Automate administrative processes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Train staff on digital document management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Routine processes digitized (80%) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Security protocols verified <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff trained and actively using system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 80% of routine processes digitized <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 100% of security protocols verified <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 80% of staff trained and using system
HR Digitalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Launch Competency assessment platform <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Set up Performance tracking system <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Develop Online training system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 70% of staff competency assessed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff training initiated <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Performance tracking tools active 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 70% of staff evaluated <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 70% participation in training <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 100% of performance tracking tools active
Online Consular Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Digital application platform <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biometric data collection <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GDPR- compliant data storage <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Train AI chat for FAQs and guidance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Online submission and review process live <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biometric collection operational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GDPR compliance confirmed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AI chat support active 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X% of applications processed online <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 100% GDPR compliance verified <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Y% AI support success rate

<p>Cultural Digital Platforms</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Digital content distribution platforms enhancement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> User-friendly official website <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partnerships with cultural ambassadors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Content distribution platform active <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> User-friendly website launched <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Active partnerships with cultural ambassadors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Number of cultural ambassador partnerships  User engagement (clicks, views) on platform  Time spent on website
<p>Data Analysis & Reporting</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Implement Reporting platform & protocols <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Build Data automation system <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Develop Dashboard for reporting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 50% of data gathering automated <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reporting system live <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 70% pattern recognition accuracy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  50% of data gathering automated  70% pattern recognition accuracy

Implementation Guidelines for Digital Systems:



- Start with pilot programs in selected departments
- Implement feedback loops for early system adjustments
- Provide immediate technical support
- Document lessons learned











Change Management Actions:

- Conduct regular staff orientation sessions
- Establish help desk for user support
- Create quick-win opportunities
- Celebrate early successes

Phase 2: Development (6-18 months)

Objective: Develop and enhance operational efficiency and process optimization

Area	Key Activities	Definition of Done (DoD)	KPIs
Management Systems Enhancement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Full integration of digital services (90% system uptime) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Implementation of quality management system <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Establishment of performance measurement frameworks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Service level agreements met <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Quality metrics achieved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  90% system uptime  Quality management system operational  Performance measurement framework established
Talent Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Career development programs operational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Retention strategies implemented <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Performance review system active 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> min 60 % staff satisfaction achieved <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reduced turnover rates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  min 60% staff satisfaction  Reduced turnover rates
Process Optimization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AI-enhanced workflows operational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cross-departmental coordination mechanisms <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Resource optimization systems in place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Efficiency gains documented <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Process improvements measured 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Efficiency gains documented  Measured process improvements

<p>Analytical Capabilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Predictive analysis tools in use <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Outcome tracking system implemented <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strategic planning support active 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Outcome tracking system operational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Predictive analysis tools verified for accuracy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Strategic planning supported by predictive analysis  Outcome tracking accuracy at 100%
<p>Integrated Digital Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Full consular automation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advanced AI business support <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cross-department workflows 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consular services fully automated <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advanced AI support operational 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Consular process fully automated  Advanced AI support requests fulfilled at 100%
<p>HR Systems</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rotation management platform <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Performance review system <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Career tracking tools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rotation system operational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Performance review system live 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Career tracking system usage at 100%  Performance review completion rate at 100%
<p>Business Support Expansion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Investment matching AI <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partnership management platform <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Market intelligence platform 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initial business requests processed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partnership management platform live 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Number of partnerships managed: X%  Market intelligent platform accuracy: Y%
<p>Cultural Programs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interactive language platform <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Automated content distribution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Language learning platform operational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Diaspora engagement metrics achieved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  User engagement on language platform: X%  Diaspora engagement increase Y%

	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Diaspora network system		
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Implementation approach

Scale-up Guidelines:

- Expand successful pilots to other departments
- Adjust systems based on Phase 1 feedback
- Enhance integration between components
- Strengthen cross-departmental cooperation









Quality Control:

- Regular system performance reviews
- User satisfaction surveys
- Process efficiency measurements
- Continuous improvement workshops

Phase 3: Optimization (18-24 months)

Objective: Sustainable operational efficiency and process optimization.

Area	Key Activities	Definition of Done (DoD)	KPIs
System Integration	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Complete digital ecosystem operational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advanced analytics capabilities <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Full workflow automation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Systems fully integrated <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Performance targets met	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 100% workflow automation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 90% advanced analytics usage

Quality Assurance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Regular audit procedures <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continuous improvement mechanisms	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Quality standards met <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Improvement processes established	 100% audit completion  95% compliance rate
Advanced Analytics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AI-powered scenario planning <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Risk assessment automation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policy impact prediction	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advanced analytics integration <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Risk assessment automation	 85% predictive accuracy  90% risk identification rate
Service Enhancement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advanced digital services <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Predictive support systems	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Enhanced service offerings <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Predictive support active	 95% user satisfaction  80% automated support requests
Partnership Networks	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Integrated business platform <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cultural exchange activities and system <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Diaspora collaboration activities and tools	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partnership tools operational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Collaboration networks active	 X% new partnerships  Y% increase in collaboration

Sustainability Guidelines:

- Establish permanent support structures
- Create knowledge transfer mechanisms
- Develop continuous improvement processes
- Build long-term maintenance plans

IMPORTANT NOTES: Regular progress reviews and DoD criteria assessment, stakeholder feedback sessions, and course corrections will be critical to ensure the framework is delivering the intended benefits and meeting the evolving needs of the Ukrainian diplomatic service.

CHAPTER 6. Recommendations and Discussion

6.1 Research Limitations

The chosen research methodology provided valuable insight into the specific features, challenges, and positive developments within the Ukrainian MFA. However, it's important to note that the findings of this study cannot be broadly generalized to represent the experiences of all professionals in the diplomatic field.

This research project had a targeted and limited scope, involving a series of in-depth interviews with a select group of experts. While these interviews yielded rich qualitative data, the sample size cannot be considered fully representative of the diverse experiences and perspectives that exist across the Ukrainian diplomatic corps.

Additionally, the research design did not include input from representatives of foreign diplomatic missions. As a result, the analysis is missing an external viewpoint on the collaborative dynamics and working relationships between Ukrainian diplomats and their international counterparts. This is a notable gap, as cross-cultural exchanges and global partnerships are crucial elements of modern diplomacy.

Furthermore, the study does not delve into the deeper cultural and managerial contexts that shape organizational practices within the Ukrainian government and its affiliated institutions. The legacy of hierarchical, top-down leadership structures inherited from the Soviet era continues to influence decision-making processes and workplace dynamics in this field. This entrenched cultural dynamic poses a significant challenge for implementing more transparent, collaborative, and innovative approaches to diplomacy.

In light of these limitations, the findings of this research should be interpreted as an initial exploration of the MFA, rather than a comprehensive assessment. The insights gleaned provide a valuable starting point, but further investigation is necessary to fully capture the nuances and complexities of the Ukrainian diplomatic landscape. Expanding the scope of the research to include a wider range of participants, cross-cultural perspectives, and organizational cultural analyses would help to generate a more holistic understanding of the sector.

6.2 Potential Research Biases.

The design and execution of this research study on the Ukrainian diplomatic field inevitably carried certain biases that should be acknowledged. One key area of concern is selection bias, with 4 out of 9 interview participants being retired diplomats or those who had already left diplomatic service. Active diplomats currently serving within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs showed a notable reluctance to participate in the study. This skew towards the experiences of former personnel may have resulted in a disproportionate emphasis on reform-minded viewpoints and a lack of representation from those still embedded within the existing system. Additionally, the geographical coverage of diplomatic missions included in the research was limited, further restricting the diversity of perspectives.

Another potential source of bias stems from the temporal context in which the research was conducted. Given that the study took place during the ongoing war in Ukraine, the recent experiences and current challenges faced by the diplomatic corps may have overshadowed longer-term historical trends and systemic issues. The urgent pressures of the wartime environment could have led to a disproportionate focus on immediate concerns, potentially obscuring deeper-seated problems or overlooking more gradual, incremental changes within the diplomatic field.

Finally, the personal background and professional orientation of the researcher may have introduced biases into the interpretation of the data. A focus on modernization and the adoption of Western management concepts, for instance, might have led to an undervaluation of traditional diplomatic approaches and the nuances of established organizational practices. Similarly, the reform-oriented perspectives could have influenced analysis of existing functional systems, potentially overlooking the merits of traditional methods in favor of technological solutions or other novel interventions.

To mitigate these biases in future research, diversifying the participant pool and incorporating more holistic analytical approaches would be beneficial.

6.3 Recommendations

The Ukrainian MFA faces a multifaceted set of challenges and opportunities in its operating environment. While the ministry is constrained by the dominant influence of the OP, it has demonstrated remarkable resilience, professionalism, and a drive for positive change. The ministry's ability to adapt and respond to

the evolving needs of the country, even in the face of a full-scale war, is a testament to the caliber of its leadership and the dedication of its staff.

However, the ministry's transformation efforts are hampered by resistance from a significant number of stakeholders in the broader government. These individuals remain reluctant to embrace the changes and modernization needed to bring the MFA in line with contemporary diplomatic best practices. This resistance underscores the difficulty of implementing long-term institutional reform against entrenched interests and a legacy of hierarchical decision-making. Nonetheless, the MFA possesses a critical asset in the form of its professional leaders, motivated specialists, and passionate patriots. These individuals can serve as the driving force behind the ministry's transformation, provided they are empowered and given the necessary resources and autonomy to implement their vision.

As the MFA continues to navigate the complexities of Ukraine's geopolitical landscape, it should consider the following comprehensive recommendations:

1. Strengthen institutional autonomy: **Advocate** for greater institutional autonomy and insulation from direct OP influence, allowing the MFA to operate with increased independence and accountability. Leverage Lewin's Change Management Model to build a critical mass of change drivers within the ministry, empowering them to overcome resistance and institutionalize transformative efforts.
2. Embrace innovative diplomacy: Ukraine emerged as a recognized leader in digital transformation. To leverage this position, the MFA should strengthen its cooperation with the Ministry of Digital transformation of Ukraine to integrate best practices of digitalization. Establish strategic partnership with "Big 5" leading software development companies in Ukraine to promote digital innovation. This partnership would provide a foundation to enhance diplomatic capabilities, such as automating and streamlining consular services, analyzing market trends for economic diplomacy, and personalizing public diplomacy initiatives, as well as would support adoption of cutting-edge technologies, AI, big data. Additionally, foster knowledge-sharing in e-diplomacy by learning from best practices adopted by Estonia, the UK and other digitally mature countries. This will enable the MFA to build operational effective, agile, technologically progressive diplomatic services, capable of facing global challenges.
3. Prioritize stakeholder engagement: promote transparent communication with both internal and external stakeholders, including the media and civil society. Cultivate an approach of openness

and cooperation, rather than a competitive mindset, to maximize the MFA's impact and influence. Establish stable mechanisms for regular feedback, dialogue, and collaborative problem-solving to build trust, address concerns, and garner broader support for the ministry's reform agenda.

4. Advance intergovernmental coordination: strengthen collaborative mechanisms and information-sharing protocols with other government agencies, facilitating a unified government approach to foreign policy formulation and implementation. Actively engage with the Ministry of Economy, the Ministry of Culture and other relevant ministries to ensure government's foreign policy strategy is aligned with MFA's initiatives.
5. Optimize diaspora engagement: develop comprehensive programs and initiatives to engage with Ukrainians abroad, strengthening their emotional and practical connections to the homeland. Implement targeted outreach and support mechanisms to prevent gradual disengagement of Ukrainians who have relocated abroad, especially since the start of the full-scale invasion. Establish strategic partnerships with the Ukrainian diaspora to leverage their expertise, networks, and resources in support of the MFA's diplomatic efforts.
6. Cultivate private sector partnerships: Explore opportunities for collaboration with Ukrainian and international businesses to support the MFA's diplomatic activities and enhance the ministry's image. Actively promote and frame the actions of Ukrainian business leaders and entrepreneurs who are contributing to the country's global reputation, while avoiding the temptation to overshadow or neglect their endeavors.

By embracing these recommendations, the MFA can position itself as a driving force for positive change, contributing to Ukraine's long-term resilience and prosperity.

6.4 Future Research Directions

Building upon the insights gained from this study of the Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, future research should adopt a more nuanced approach to understanding the complexities of diplomatic service in a transformative national context.

The current research, while valuable, revealed significant gaps that future studies must address. A primary focus should be expanding the research scope beyond the limited sample of interviewed diplomats. This means developing more inclusive sample that captures perspectives from active diplomats, representatives from diverse geographical missions, and international counterparts.

The unique context of Ukraine's ongoing conflict and its diplomatic transformation offers rich ground for scholarly exploration. Researchers should delve deeper into the intersections of organizational culture, technological innovation, and diplomatic practice. Of particular interest are the ways diplomatic institutions adapt to complex geopolitical challenges, navigate institutional change, and leverage digital technologies.

Moreover, future studies should pay careful attention to the human dynamics of diplomatic transformation. This includes understanding the psychological barriers to institutional change, exploring how diplomats negotiate between traditional hierarchical structures and modern collaborative approaches, and examining the role of individual agency in driving systemic reforms.

The Ukrainian diaspora's potential as a diplomatic resource represents another promising avenue for research. Investigating how expatriate networks contribute to national soft power, maintain emotional connections with the homeland, and support diplomatic objectives could provide nuanced insights into contemporary diplomatic strategies.

Methodologically, future research must prioritize a balanced approach that neither romanticizes reform nor dismisses existing institutional knowledge. By adopting a holistic, contextually sensitive research strategy, scholars can contribute meaningful understanding to the evolving landscape of diplomatic practice in challenging national environments.

6.5 Conclusion

The research delves into the Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, highlighting significant structural challenges and the pressing need for institutional transformation. Despite glimpses of resilience, the diplomatic service remains constrained by legacy practices that compromise operational effectiveness.

The study illuminates critical systemic issues, including hierarchical decision-making, centralized information flows, and inefficient task management. A small but motivated core of professionals – approximately 20% of the diplomatic corps – demonstrates a capacity for change, with key observations emerging in digital transformation and cultural diplomacy approaches to maintaining global connections.

However, substantial challenges persist. The MFA must address fundamental systemic issues, including the current recruitment system's inherent inequalities, opaque decision-making processes, and the need for greater institutional autonomy. The potential for transformation is evident, but requires comprehensive, strategic interventions.

As Ukraine navigates its complex geopolitical landscape, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs represents a critical institution at a pivotal moment of potential renewal. The conclusion underscores the urgent need for a comprehensive approach to diplomatic service reform, recognizing both the existing constraints and the latent potential for meaningful institutional development.

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Annexes

Annex 1 Questionnaire for the Semi-structured Interview with Diplomats.

Interviews have been held online via ZOOM/Teams. Interviewees were contacted through professional network and LinkedIn.

Interview criteria:

- Professors and staff of the Diplomatic Academy of Ukraine
- Foreign diplomats assigned as representatives of their countries to Ukraine
- Sex (female/male)
- Middle, Senior, Top level professional in foreign or within country mission.

Strategy

1. How has Ukraine's diplomatic strategy changed due to the war with Russia and other geopolitical challenges?
2. What is the MFA's role in building Ukraine's diplomatic strategy? Is it effective?
3. Who makes decisions regarding Ukraine's foreign policy?
4. Is there interaction between the MFA and other services, agencies, ministries? Is it productive?
5. What are the main difficulties Ukraine faces in cooperation with Europe and the US?
6. How do you see Ukraine's effectiveness in regional politics?
7. In cooperation with the European Union and adoption of state reforms regarding transparency in governance (which is a significant challenge for bureaucratic post-Soviet diplomacy), what successful approaches should Ukraine develop?

Crisis Management

8. Which crisis management strategies proved most effective for Ukrainian diplomacy?
9. Have any new strategies emerged?
10. How much more complicated have MFA's tasks become during the full-scale invasion?

Digital Diplomacy and Technology

11. How has digital diplomacy changed Ukraine's approach to international relations, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic and war?
12. Are face-to-face meetings better than online communication in diplomacy?

13. Are there examples where digital tools helped improve Ukraine's diplomatic communications?
14. What role do social networks play in shaping public opinion about Ukraine abroad?
15. **What can be improved?**
16. **What needs to be changed: approaches, hierarchy, procedures, etc.?**
17. Does Ukraine's MFA use artificial intelligence or data analysis in its decision-making? (uncertainty time, descriptive, predictive, prescriptive analysis) - Could this be useful?
18. What risks or difficulties might arise from using technologies in diplomacy?

Public Diplomacy

19. Has Ukraine been successful in countering Russian disinformation and strengthening its international image?
20. **What new approaches helped gain international public support in the war with Russia?**
21. **Cooperation with Non-State Actors**
22. How does the MFA interact with non-state actors? What role do they play in supporting Ukraine's foreign policy? (Non-government actors)
23. What can the MFA do to ensure their actions align with the country's diplomatic goals?
24. Are there examples of successful cooperation with non-state actors or businesses in diplomatic achievements?

Adaptation to New Diplomatic Challenges

25. Which global trends (for example, cybersecurity, environmental diplomacy) are important for Ukraine's future strategy?
26. How does Ukraine prepare its diplomats for modern challenges? Are there suggestions for improvement?
27. How does the MFA ensure flexibility and ability to respond quickly to new global challenges?

Development of Modern Diplomatic Structure

28. What key factors should be considered when creating a modern management structure for Ukrainian diplomacy?
29. What lessons from recent successes or failures of Ukrainian diplomacy should be considered when creating this structure?
30. How does information flow within the MFA organization (between departments, missions, and management levels)? What works well and what needs improvement?

Annex 2 Recommended Analytical Tools and Systems for MFA Office

Category	Tool/System	Purpose	Key Features
Data Analysis			
	IBM SPSS Statistics	Statistical analysis of diplomatic outcomes	Pattern recognition Trend analysis Predictive modeling
	Open-Source Intelligence (OSINT)	Data gathering and visualization	Data collection Keyword and trend analysis Analysis and visualization
	R/RStudio	Advanced statistical computing	Custom analysis scripts Data visualization Integration with other tools
	Python with Pandas	Data manipulation and analysis	Large dataset handling Automated reporting Machine learning capabilities
Visualization Tools			
	Tableau	Interactive data visualization	Real-time dashboards Geographic mapping Shareable insights
	Power BI	Business intelligence and reporting	Data modeling Interactive reports Integration with MS Office
Text Analysis			
	NVivo	Qualitative data analysis	Document analysis Theme identification Sentiment analysis
	LexisNexis	Media and document analysis	News monitoring Legal document analysis Risk assessment
Project Management			
	Jira	Workflow management	Task tracking Progress monitoring Team collaboration

	Asana	Teamwork management	Task management Collaboration Reporting and dashboards
	MS Project	Project planning and tracking	Timeline management Resource allocation Dependencies tracking
Knowledge Management			
	SharePoint	Document management	Version control Collaboration Knowledge sharing
	Confluence	Internal documentation	Knowledge base Team collaboration Process documentation
Communication			
	MS Teams	Team collaboration	Secure messaging Video conferencing File sharing
	Slack	Internal communication	Channel-based messaging Integration capabilities Search functionality
Specialized Diplomatic Tools			
	Crisis Management Software	Emergency response coordination	Real-time alerts Situation monitoring Response coordination
	Diplomatic Protocol Database	Protocol management	Precedent tracking Contact management Ceremony planning

Note: Tool selection should consider

- Integration capabilities
- User training needs
- Budget constraints
- Scalability options