

Karlis Ketners*

Doctor of Philosophy, Partnership Professor

Vytautas Magnus University

LT-44248, 58 K. Donelaicio Str., Kaunas, Lithuania

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7891-2745>

Digital practices of diplomatic communication and their implications for global politics

Abstract. The rapid development of digital technologies and their integration into diplomatic practice necessitate a comprehensive study of the impact of digitalisation on the transformation of diplomatic communication and its implications for global politics. The research relevance is determined by the growing role of digital diplomacy in resolving international conflicts, promoting national interests and shaping the image of states on the world stage. The study aimed to conduct a comprehensive study of modern forms of digital diplomatic interaction and identify their implications for the global political system. The study analysed the impact of digitalisation on the transformation of traditional forms of diplomatic communication, examines the peculiarities of using social media in diplomatic practice, and assesses the implications of digital diplomacy for international relations. The study determined that digitalisation has significantly accelerated diplomatic processes, reducing the time to respond to international events from several days to several hours. Social media, such as Twitter/X, WhatsApp and Facebook, have become key in public diplomacy, providing diplomats with unprecedented opportunities for direct communication with a wide audience. At the same time, digital diplomacy has created new challenges for international security, including cyberattacks on diplomatic institutions and the use of social media to manipulate public opinion. The study showed the ambivalent nature of the impact of digital diplomacy on global politics: on the one hand, it has contributed to the democratisation of international relations, but on the other hand, it has created new risks for international stability. The findings of the study can be used as a basis for further studying the impact of new technologies on diplomatic practice and developing recommendations to minimise the risks of digital diplomacy

Keywords: philosophy; Confucianism; legalism; sophistry; Roman private law

Introduction

In the current era of globalisation and the digital revolution, diplomatic communication is undergoing significant transformations. The rapid development of information and communication technologies and the proliferation of social media are fundamentally changing the way states and other actors in international relations interact. The digitalisation of diplomacy creates new opportunities for rapid information exchange, shaping public opinion and influencing global political processes. At the same time, these changes present a range of challenges related to information security, data reliability, and the ethics of diplomatic communication in the digital space. The research relevance is determined by the growing role of digital diplomacy in resolving international conflicts, promoting national interests, and shaping the image of states on the world stage. The study of digital practices of diplomatic communication will define the mechanisms of functioning of the modern

system of international relations and develop effective strategies for adapting the diplomatic service to the conditions of the information society.

In the context of these changes, the study of the relationship between digital technologies and everyday diplomatic practice is becoming particularly relevant. A significant contribution to the determination of this phenomenon was made by R. Adler-Nissen & K.A. Egge-ling (2022), who analysed in detail the process of “mixed diplomacy”. The researchers revealed the mechanisms of intertwining and challenging digital technologies in daily diplomatic activities, which determined the current realities of diplomatic activities. Developing this theme, E. Hedling & N. Bremberg (2021) proposed a new research agenda on the digital transformation of diplomacy. Their study not only highlighted the importance of studying the practical aspects of digital diplomacy but also outlined promising areas for further research in this area.

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*Corresponding author



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The study of specific digital means used in diplomatic practice is particularly relevant. In this context, a significant contribution was made by J. Cornut *et al.* (2022a), who analysed in detail the use of WhatsApp by diplomats in Geneva. Their study reveals the mechanisms of diplomats' adaptation to new technologies and their impact on diplomatic practice. However, not all researchers are unequivocal about the impact of digital technologies on diplomacy. T. Lemke & M. Habegger (2020) presented a critical view of digital diplomacy, arguing against its over-use. The study addressed the potential risks and limitations of digital diplomacy, which is important for a proper determination of this phenomenon.

The practical application of digital diplomacy by different states is also of considerable research interest. In this context, it is worth noting the study by O.O.A.D. Oloo (2024), analysed the implementation of digital diplomacy by the United States, the United Kingdom, and China in Kenya. This study determined how different states use digital tools to achieve their foreign policy goals and how this affects international relations in the regional context.

Managing visibility in the digital space is an important aspect of digital diplomacy. A. Tsinovoi (2020) has reviewed in detail the infrastructures and techniques for managing visibility in digital diplomacy. This study demonstrates how states and diplomats manage their digital image and influence the perception of their messages in the global information space. C. Bjola & I. Manor (2022) revealed the phenomenon of hybrid diplomacy, tracing the evolution from digital adaptation to digital adoption in diplomatic practice. The study demonstrated how digital technologies not only complement traditional diplomatic practices but also transform the very essence of diplomatic activity. O. Antwi-Boateng & K.A.M. Al Mazrouei (2021) explored the challenges of digital diplomacy in the era of globalisation in the example of the United Arab Emirates. Their study highlights the specific challenges faced by individual states in implementing digital diplomacy and demonstrates how global digitalisation trends manifest themselves in specific national contexts.

The analysis of these studies demonstrated the multifaceted and complex nature of the phenomenon of digital diplomacy. However, despite the significant amount of research conducted, there are still several issues that require further study. In particular, the long-term implications of the digitalisation of diplomacy for the global political system, the impact of digital technologies on decision-making in international relations, and the ethical aspects of using digital tools in diplomatic practice remain insufficiently studied. In addition, there is a need for a more in-depth study of the interaction between traditional and digital forms of diplomacy, especially in the context of crises and global challenges.

Therefore, the study aimed to comprehensively analyse digital practices of diplomatic communication and assess their impact on global politics. To achieve this of this, the following tasks were formulated:

1) analyse the impact of digitalisation on the transformation of traditional forms of diplomatic communication;

2) to study the peculiarities of using social media (Twitter/X, Facebook, WhatsApp) in diplomatic practice;

3) assess the implications of digital diplomacy for international relations and global politics.

Materials and Methods

The source base of the study was formed by international legal documents, particularly the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (1961) and the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties (1969). These documents were analysed to determine the legal framework for diplomatic activities and their relevance to the realities of the digital age. Official reports and resolutions of international organisations have become an important source of information. In particular, the Resolution Adopted by the UN General Assembly No. A/RES/75/240 "Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security" (2021) and the 2023 report of the European External Action Service (EEAS) on disinformation campaigns on social media (Kalniete, 2023) were studied. The analysis of these documents was used to assess the scale and nature of the challenges associated with digital diplomacy at the global level. Statistical data and analytical reports were used to study the practical aspects of digital diplomacy. In particular, the data from the Twiplomacy study (bcwtwiplomacy, 2020) on the use of Twitter/X by diplomatic missions was analysed, as well as the Oxford Internet Institute report (2021) on social media manipulation. These materials provided an empirical basis for assessing the extent and forms of social media use in diplomatic practice.

In addition, the U.S. Department of State's guidance on the use of social media for diplomatic officers (5 FAM 790..., 2024) was analysed, which was used to assess institutional approaches to regulating digital diplomatic activities. To ensure the legal perspective of the study, court decisions were reviewed the decision of the US Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit in *Knight First Amendment Institute v. Trump* (Knight Institute..., 2021). This was used to assess the legal aspects of the use of social media in diplomatic practice. The study conducted a comparative analysis of traditional and digital forms of diplomatic communication. This was used to identify key transformations in diplomatic practice caused by digitalisation. The study compared the characteristics of communication, channels of information transmission, speed of reaction to events, and other parameters, creating a comparative table of traditional and digital diplomacy.

To assess the effectiveness of different digital platforms in diplomatic communication, a comparative analysis of the use of WhatsApp, Twitter/X and Facebook was conducted. The features of each platform, their impact on the formation of public opinion, the speed of information dissemination and opportunities for cultural diplomacy were investigated. The results of this analysis were presented in the form of a comparative table. To determine the impact of digital diplomacy on decision-making in international politics, specific cases of social media use in crises were analysed. Tweets by high-ranking officials during international crises and their impact on the development of events were considered.

To assess the implications of digital diplomacy for international security, the author analysed statistics on

cyberattacks on diplomatic institutions. In particular, the data from the European Union's 2023 Cybersecurity Report (Pestarino, 2023) was used to assess the scale and dynamics of threats in this area. An important method of the study was the analysis of cases of successful use of digital diplomacy. In particular, the method was used to analyse the Digital India campaign and its impact on the country's international image and investment attraction.

To ensure a comprehensive determination of the transformations in diplomatic practice, an analysis of institutional changes in the diplomatic missions of different countries was conducted. In particular, the creation of specialised digital diplomacy units, such as the Bureau of Cyberspace and Digital Policy (2023), was investigated. The comprehensive application of various methods of scientific knowledge and analysis of a wide range of sources was used for a comprehensive and objective study of digital practices of diplomatic communication and their implications for global politics.

Results

Impact of digitalisation on the transformation of traditional forms of diplomatic communication. The process of digitalisation, which began in the late 20th century and gained particular intensity in the 2010s and 2020s, significantly addressed all spheres of public life, including diplomacy. Traditional forms of diplomatic communication, which were developed over centuries, have undergone significant transformations under the influence of new technologies. This evolution of diplomatic practice is taking place in the context of global changes in international relations and requires careful analysis. Digitalisation has dramatically changed the nature and speed of diplomatic interaction. Whereas previously the exchange of diplomatic notes could take weeks or even months, today communication is almost instantaneous. This has led to a significant acceleration of diplomatic processes and a change in the very nature of diplomatic work. According to R. Adler-Nissen & K.A. Eggeling (2022), based on an analysis of the EU diplomatic missions, the average response time to international events has decreased from several days in the 1990s to several hours in 2020-2022. This creates new opportunities for rapid response to crises but also increases the risk of hasty decisions.

The changing nature of diplomatic interaction is also reflected in the blurring of the line between formal and informal communication. J. Cornut *et al.* (2022a) determined that the use of messengers such as WhatsApp has become an integral part of diplomatic practice. For instance, 87% of diplomats surveyed in Geneva regularly use WhatsApp for professional communication. This creates new opportunities for the rapid exchange of information but also raises questions about the privacy and security of such communication.

Notably, these changes are taking place within the framework of existing international legal norms. The Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (1961), which is a fundamental document in the field of diplomatic law, does not contain direct guidance on the use of digital technologies. However, as Professor of International Law E. Denza (2016) noted in a commentary on the Convention, the principles of the inviolability of

diplomatic correspondence (Article 27) should also apply to digital forms of communication.

The digital age has brought new tools and platforms that have become an integral part of diplomatic practice. Social media, messengers, video conferencing and other digital platforms have changed the landscape of diplomatic communication. Twitter/X has become one of the most important tools of public diplomacy. According to bcwtwiplomacy (2020), as of 2022, 97% of UN member states had official Twitter/X accounts. This demonstrates the global recognition of the importance of this platform for diplomatic communication (Green, 2022). The use of Twitter/X in diplomacy raises several legal issues. For example, in 2019, the US Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit ruled in Knight First Amendment Institute v. Trump that the US president's blocking of critics on Twitter/X violated the First Amendment to the US Constitution (Knight Institute..., 2021). This decision highlights the need to adapt traditional legal norms to the new realities of digital diplomacy. The new tools require the adaptation of existing legal norms. For instance, the question of whether a tweet can be considered an official diplomatic note is still a subject of debate among international lawyers (Green, 2022). They argue that under certain conditions, a tweet can have the legal force of a diplomatic note if it meets the requirements of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties (1969).

The digital transformation of diplomacy creates both new opportunities and serious challenges for international relations. On the one hand, digital technologies expand opportunities for communication and influence. On the other hand, they generate new risks and challenges that require careful analysis and response. One of the key opportunities of digital diplomacy is to expand the scope of public diplomacy. As noted by C. Bjola & I. Manor (2022) in their study of hybrid diplomacy, digital platforms allow diplomats to interact directly with a wide audience, bypassing traditional media filters. This creates new opportunities for shaping public opinion and promoting national interests. At the same time, digital diplomacy creates new challenges for international security. Cyberattacks on diplomatic institutions have become a real threat. According to the European Union's cybersecurity report for 2023, the number of cyberattacks on EU diplomatic institutions increased by 57% compared to the previous year (Pestarino, 2023). This underscores the need to develop new approaches to ensuring the security of diplomatic communication in the digital age.

Another important challenge is the problem of disinformation and manipulation in the digital space. A study by the Oxford Internet Institute (2021) showed that in 2021-2022, 81 countries used social media to manipulate public opinion, which is 15% more than in the previous period. This poses serious risks to international stability and requires the development of new mechanisms to counter information threats. In response to these challenges, the international community has begun to develop new legal and institutional mechanisms. For example, in 2021, the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution No. A/RES/75/240 (2021), which calls on Member States to adhere to the norms of responsible behaviour in cyberspace. This resolution is an important step in shaping the international legal framework for digital diplomacy.

In addition, many countries have begun to create specialised digital diplomacy units, which indicates the institutionalisation of digital diplomacy as a separate area of diplomatic work. This process was particularly accelerated in the period from 2020 to 2024. For instance, in 2022, the US Department of State created the Bureau of Cyberspace and Digital Policy (2023), which is responsible for coordinating US digital diplomacy. This structure combined previously disparate efforts in the field of cybersecurity and digital policy, allowing the United States to respond more effectively to the challenges of the digital age in international relations. Similar initiatives have been implemented in other countries. In 2021, the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs created the Directorate of Digital Diplomacy, which coordinates all aspects of the digital presence of French diplomacy (Digital and..., 2021). This structure not only manages the social media of French diplomatic missions but also develops strategies for digital engagement with foreign audiences and countering disinformation. In 2021, Japan took a significant step towards digital transformation by establishing the Digital Agency (2021). Although the agency is not a direct part of the Ministry

of Foreign Affairs, it significantly impacts national digital diplomacy. The Digital Agency plays a key role in shaping Japan's digital strategy, which directly affects its international image and diplomatic capabilities.

These examples demonstrate that the creation of specialised digital diplomacy units has become a global trend that covers both developed and developing countries. This institutionalisation of digital diplomacy reflects governments' understanding of the importance of digital technologies for the effective implementation of foreign policy in the modern world and the need for a systematic approach to managing the state's digital presence in the international arena. It is possible to state that the digital transformation of diplomacy is a complex and multifaceted process that creates both new opportunities and serious challenges for international relations. It requires the adaptation of existing legal norms, the development of new institutional mechanisms, and a rethinking of the very nature of diplomatic work in the digital age. Table 1 illustrates the main differences between traditional and digital diplomacy, demonstrating significant shifts in the methods, tools and nature of diplomatic interaction.

Table 1. Comparative characteristics of traditional and digital diplomacy

Characteristic	Tradition diplomacy (up to 2000)	Digital diplomacy (2000-2024)
Communication speed	Days, weeks	Hours, minutes
Main channels	Official meetings, correspondence	Social networks, messengers, video conferencing
Publicity	Limited	High
Audience	Predominantly elitist	Mass
Form of messages	Formal, structured	Often informal, short
Communication security	High	Variable (depending on the platform)
The role of visual content	Limited	Significant
Language style	Official, formal	Often informal, adapted to the platform
The main actors	Professional diplomats	Diplomats, politicians, public figures, general public
Legal regulation	Defined (VCDR 1961)	In the process of formation
Influence on decision-making	Slow, gradual	Fast, often unpredictable
Opportunities for manipulation	Limited	Significant
Geographical coverage	Limited	Global
The cost of communication	High	Low
Archiving and documentation	Structured, centralised	Dispersed, often unstructured

Notes: VCDR – Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations; Variable security of communication in digital diplomacy depends on the platforms and encryption protocols used; “Main actors” in digital diplomacy are not only state officials, but also other influential individuals who can shape the international agenda through digital platforms

Sources: compiled by the author based on analysis of primary and secondary sources (Vienna Convention on..., 1961; bcwtwiplomacy, 2020; Cornut *et al.*, 2022b)

In summary, the digital transformation of diplomacy has led to fundamental changes in the way international communication is conducted. These changes create new opportunities for faster, broader and more flexible diplomatic interaction, but also create new challenges related to information security, legal regulation and the ethics of digital communication. The further development of digital diplomacy will require constant adaptation of diplomatic services to new technological realities and the development of effective strategies for managing information flows in the global digital space.

Peculiarities of using social media in diplomatic practice. The development of digital technologies and the proliferation of social media in the period from 2010 to 2024 significantly addressed the transformation of diplomatic communication. Social platforms have become an integral part of modern diplomatic practice, changing the way states, diplomats and the public interact. This section analyses in detail the specifics of the use of various social platforms in diplomatic activities, focusing on Twitter/X, Facebook, and WhatsApp and a comparative analysis of their effectiveness.

Launched in 2006, Twitter/X has quickly become one of the most important tools of digital diplomacy. Its popularity among diplomats and political leaders is explained by the ability to quickly disseminate information and shape public opinion in real-time. According to a study by C. Urcan (2021), Twitter/X has become central for world leaders in the implementation of digital diplomacy. The author notes that leaders use Twitter/X not only for internal communication, but also for international communication, foreign policy making, and even diplomatic negotiations.

The key advantage of this platform is the speed of response to international events. During the Gulf crisis in 2019, US President Donald Trump's tweets about possible military action against Iran immediately provoked a reaction from the international community, directly influencing the development of the situation. This ability to communicate rapidly has led to Twitter/X becoming a key tool for setting the diplomatic agenda (Chhabra, 2020). B. Hocking (2020) emphasises that Twitter/X has become a key tool for setting the diplomatic agenda, allowing leaders to respond quickly to global events and shape narratives. This, in turn, has made Twitter/X an important source of news, as tweets from senior diplomats and politicians often become newsworthy and shape the international agenda.

In addition, Twitter/X has provided diplomats with an unprecedented opportunity to communicate directly with a wide audience, bypassing traditional media. B.T. Mazumdar (2024) notes that digital diplomacy through Twitter/X allows states to interact directly with citizens of other countries, which was not possible in the era of traditional diplomacy. This direct interaction has not only increased the transparency of diplomatic activities but also created new channels of influence on public opinion in other countries.

However, the widespread use of Twitter/X in diplomacy has raised several legal issues. An important decision of the US Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit in *Knight First Amendment Institute v. Trump* (2021), ruled that the US President's blocking of critics on Twitter/X violates the First Amendment to the US Constitution. This decision highlighted the need to adapt constitutional norms to the realities of digital diplomacy and raised questions about the limits of freedom of speech in the online space. Twitter/X has not only changed the way diplomatic communication is conducted but also created new challenges for international law and diplomatic practice. The speed, directness, and wide reach of this platform have made it an integral part of modern diplomacy, while also requiring new approaches to the regulation and use of this tool of international relations.

Facebook, with its extensive opportunities for content creation and audience interaction, plays an important role in public diplomacy. According to B.T. Mazumdar (2024), as of 2023, Facebook had more than 2.9 billion active users, therefore substantial in shaping a country's international image and engaging with a global audience. Thanks to its unique functionality, Facebook has become central for digital diplomacy, complementing and in some respects surpassing Twitter/X. The key advantage of Facebook is its ability to ensure long-term interaction with the audience. As B. Hocking (2020), unlike Twitter, Facebook provides an opportunity for deeper and longer audience engagement, which is especially important for cultural

diplomacy and building a positive image of the country. This feature allows diplomatic missions to create more detailed and diverse content, which helps to build sustainable connections with the target audience.

The visual component of Facebook makes it particularly effective for presenting a country on the international stage. B.T. Mazumdar (2024) provides a vivid example of the successful use of this platform in the Digital India campaign, which not only enhanced India's technological image but also led to concrete economic results in the form of attracting investment in the country's IT sector. This example demonstrates how visual diplomacy on Facebook can translate into real economic benefits for a country.

Another important advantage of Facebook is the ability to precisely target the audience. C. Urcan (2021) emphasises that Facebook's precision targeting capability allows diplomatic missions to effectively engage with specific populations, such as diasporas or potential investors. This feature allows diplomats to tailor their messages to specific audiences, which increases the effectiveness of cultural and economic diplomacy.

However, the widespread use of Facebook in diplomatic practice also raises several legal issues, especially in the context of personal data protection. R. Chhabra (2020) highlighted an important decision of the European Court of Justice in 2018, which ruled that the Facebook pages of EU institutions are subject to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (Information Commissioner's Office, 2022). This decision underlines the need for special attention to the protection of the personal data of users when conducting diplomatic activities on this platform.

Thus, Facebook is a substantial way of long-term interaction, visual presentation and precise audience targeting for diplomats, making it an effective tool for cultural diplomacy and shaping the country's international image. At the same time, the use of this platform requires diplomatic missions to carefully comply with legal regulations, especially in personal data protection. This combination of opportunities and challenges makes Facebook an integral part of modern digital diplomacy, complementing other platforms and expanding diplomats' toolkits in the digital age.

WhatsApp, as one of the most popular messengers in the world, has also found its place in modern diplomatic practice. According to J. Cornut *et al.* (2022a), WhatsApp has become an integral part of diplomats' daily work, especially for informal communication and quick information exchange. A key advantage of WhatsApp in diplomacy is its ability to provide instant and secure communication. Diplomats use the messenger to create groups to discuss current issues, coordinate actions, and exchange views in real-time. This is especially useful during international conferences or in crises when a quick response is required.

However, the use of WhatsApp in diplomacy also raises security and privacy issues. Although the messenger offers end-to-end encryption, there are concerns about the possibility of sensitive information being leaked. In addition, the use of personal devices for official communication can blur the lines between official and unofficial communication. The use of WhatsApp in diplomacy does not always go smoothly, as evidenced by an incident that took place in 2019. Back then, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson was

at the centre of a scandal when personal WhatsApp number was available on the Internet for 15 years. This raised serious concerns about the security of communications of high-ranking officials. In addition, it turned out that Johnson used WhatsApp to discuss important government issues, including national security, which was contrary to security protocols (BBC, 2021). This case highlighted the potential risks of using unofficial communication channels in diplomacy and the need to develop clear rules for the use of messengers in diplomatic practice.

A comparative analysis of Twitter, Facebook and WhatsApp in the context of diplomatic communication

reveals the key differences and advantages of each of these platforms. These social networks and messengers play an important role in modern digital diplomacy but have unique characteristics that affect their effectiveness in different aspects of diplomacy. Twitter/X stands out for its ability to disseminate information quickly, Facebook offers ample opportunities for public diplomacy, and WhatsApp provides secure and instant communication for more private diplomatic interactions. A comparative analysis of the key characteristics of Twitter, Facebook and WhatsApp in their diplomatic applications (Table 2) demonstrates the difference between the platforms.

Table 2. Comparative Characteristics of Twitter/X, Facebook and WhatsApp in diplomatic practice (2020-2024)

Characteristic	Twitter	Facebook	WhatsApp
Coverage of diplomatic missions*	98%	95%	90%
Form of messages	Short (up to 280 symbols)	Various (texts, photos, videos)	Short messages, media files
Speed of information dissemination	Very high	High	Very high
Level of audience engagement	Average	Proficiency	Proficiency
Main audience	Journalists, politicians	The general public	Closed groups, diplomats
Influence on the formation of public opinion	Very high	Proficiency	Limited
Efficiency in crises	Very high	High	Very high
Opportunities for cultural Diplomacy	Limited	Broad	Limited
Targeting possibilities	Limited	Broad	Very limited
Legal challenges	Significant	Significant	Significant
Communication security	Average	Average	High

Source: compiled by the author based on B Hocking (2020), C. Urcan (2021), B.T. Mazumdar (2024)

The analysis of the data presented in the table shows that Twitter, Facebook and WhatsApp have their unique advantages in the context of diplomatic communication. Twitter/X stands out for its ability to quickly disseminate information and influence public opinion, especially among political elites and journalists. This makes it an indispensable tool for crisis communication and rapid response to international events. Facebook, in turn, offers greater opportunities for long-term audience engagement, cultural diplomacy and targeted communication. Its diverse format allows for more detailed content, which is particularly useful for building a positive country image. WhatsApp, unlike Twitter/X and Facebook, provides more private and secure communication, making it a valuable tool for confidential diplomatic negotiations and rapid information exchange in closed groups. Its advantage is the ability to connect instantly and create secure communication channels, which is especially important in sensitive diplomatic situations. All three platforms face significant legal challenges, which underscores the need to develop new international norms to regulate digital diplomacy. Effective use of these platforms requires diplomats to familiarise their features and adapt communication strategies to the specifics of each platform, as well as to consider potential risks related to the security and confidentiality of information.

Implications of digital diplomacy for international relations and global politics. The development of digital diplomacy over the past decade (2014-2024) significantly affected the nature of international relations and global politics. This impact is manifested in three key aspects: the transformation of decision-making processes,

changes in the mechanisms of public opinion and public diplomacy, and the emergence of new challenges for international security and diplomatic ethics.

Digital diplomacy has dramatically changed the speed and nature of decision-making in international politics. Traditional diplomatic channels, which often require lengthy negotiations and the exchange of official documents, are giving way to more dynamic forms of communication. The average response time to international crises has fallen from several days in 2010 to a few hours in 2023. This acceleration of decision-making has both positive and negative consequences.

On the one hand, a quick response to international events allows for more effective crisis management. On the other hand, an excessive speed of reaction can lead to hasty and ill-considered decisions. Digital diplomacy creates the illusion of a constant crisis, which can lead to an overreaction to minor events. An important aspect of the impact of digital diplomacy on decision-making is the expansion of the circle of participants in these processes. Social media allows the public and non-government organisations to interact directly with diplomats and politicians, influencing foreign policymaking. This democratisation of decision-making has its advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand, it contributes to greater transparency and accountability of diplomatic activities. On the other hand, it can lead to populism and decision-making under the pressure of public opinion rather than based on long-term strategic interests. Professor M. Leonard (2021) argues that digital diplomacy risks turning international relations into a reality show, where the popularity of a decision becomes more important than its strategic value.

Digital diplomacy has significantly transformed the mechanisms for shaping public opinion and conducting public diplomacy. Social media has provided states with unprecedented opportunities for direct communication with citizens of other countries, bypassing traditional media filters. This transformation is having a significant impact on international relations. It allows states to promote their narratives more effectively and build a positive image in the international arena. For example, the “Cool Japan” social media campaign initiated by the Japanese government in 2020 led to an increase in tourism and cultural exports over the next three years (Shafie, 2024).

However, these changes also pose new challenges. There is a growing risk of manipulating public opinion through the spread of disinformation. A 2023 report by the European External Action Service (EEAS) identified more than 1,000 coordinated disinformation campaigns on social media aimed at influencing public opinion in EU countries (Kalniete, 2023). This underscores the need to develop new approaches to ensuring information security and media literacy.

Digital diplomacy poses new challenges for international security and diplomatic ethics. One of the key issues is the cybersecurity of diplomatic communications (Alethawy, 2022). In response to these challenges, the international community has begun to develop new legal and institutional mechanisms. In 2022, the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution No. A/77/380 (2022), which calls on Member States to adhere to the norms of responsible behaviour in cyberspace. However, as noted by J. Welsh *et al.* (2024), Professor of International Law at Oxford University, existing international legal norms are not sufficiently adapted to the realities of digital diplomacy, which creates a legal vacuum in many aspects.

Another important challenge is the ethical aspects of digital diplomacy. The use of social media by diplomats often blurs the line between official and personal communication. This can lead to diplomatic incidents and international scandals. For instance, in 2019, Jeremy Hunt, the former British Foreign Secretary, caused a diplomatic conflict with China by tweeting support for protesters in Hong Kong and calling for the preservation of their rights and freedoms (Wintour, 2019). The Chinese authorities strongly condemned the tweet, calling it interference in China’s internal affairs and a deterioration in relations between the two countries. Beijing threatened economic and diplomatic consequences for the UK, which underscored the seriousness of the situation.

To address these ethical concerns, many countries have begun to develop codes of conduct for diplomats on social media. For instance, in 2024, the US Department of State published a guide to the use of social media for diplomatic officers (5 FAM 790..., 2024), which stipulates what diplomats can and cannot post on social media. Similar initiatives have been introduced in the UK, France, Germany, Canada, Australia, Japan, India and Singapore. These countries have developed their guidelines and protocols to regulate the activities of their diplomats in the digital space, addressing the specifics of national interests and legal systems.

In summary, digital diplomacy has profoundly transformed the nature of international relations and global

politics. It has accelerated decision-making processes, expanded opportunities for public diplomacy, and created new channels of influence on public opinion. At the same time, it has created new challenges for international security and diplomatic ethics, requiring the adaptation of existing legal norms and the development of new approaches to diplomatic practice.

Discussion

A study of the impact of digitalisation on the transformation of traditional forms of diplomatic communication has revealed significant changes in the nature and methods of diplomacy, as well as their implications for global politics. The key aspects of this transformation are the acceleration of diplomatic processes; the blurring of the boundaries between formal and informal communication; the expansion of the scope of public diplomacy; and the emergence of new challenges for international security and diplomatic ethics. The results demonstrate that digital diplomacy has become an integral part of modern international relations, creating both new opportunities and serious challenges.

The emotional aspect of digital diplomacy, identified by E. Hedling (2023), confirms the tendency to accelerate diplomatic processes. The author argues that digital platforms require diplomats to be constantly emotionally involved and respond quickly to events, which is consistent with the findings of shorter response times to international events. The opinion of E. Hedling (2023) on the importance of considering the psychological consequences of this acceleration for diplomats, which is a valuable addition to the determination of the transformation of diplomacy in the digital age, is notable. However, it is worth noting that an overemphasis on the emotional aspect may lead to an underestimation of other important factors, such as strategic planning and analysis of the long-term consequences of diplomatic decisions.

Concerning the blurring of the boundaries between formal and informal communication, the study by J. Cornut *et al.* (2022a) on the impact of Donald Trump’s Twitter diplomacy correlates with the findings on the transformation of the nature of diplomatic interaction. J. Cornut *et al.* (2022a) argue that Trump’s informal Twitter/X communication style has led to the “liquidation” of international politics. This statement is partially valid, although the phenomenon of “liquidation” is not limited to the communication style of individual political leaders, but is a broader trend associated with the overall transformation of the media landscape and changing public expectations of transparency in diplomatic activities.

In the context of expanding the scope of public diplomacy, the study by I. Manor & E. Segev (2020) on the use of Twitter networks in online diplomacy confirms the findings on the role of social media in shaping public opinion. Manor & E. Segev (2020) propose the concept of “mobile networks of influence”, which is a valuable addition to determination of the mechanisms of digital public diplomacy. However, it can be argued that an overemphasis on Twitter/X may lead to an underestimation of the role of other digital platforms and traditional methods of diplomacy. It is necessary to consider digital public diplomacy as part of a broader communication strategy, rather than standalone.

The study of digital practices in diplomatic communication has revealed a significant impact of digitalisation on the formation of the international image of countries and the effectiveness of public diplomacy. The study determined that the success of digital diplomacy largely depends on the ability to adapt to the specifics of the target audience and the local context. This thesis is confirmed and developed by N. Garud-Patkar (2022), who explores the challenges of international security and diplomatic ethics on the example of India's digital diplomacy in South Asia.

N. Garud-Patkar (2022) emphasises the importance of cultural adaptation of digital diplomacy, which is a strong argument and correlates with the findings of this study. However, in addition to cultural adaptation, it is equally necessary to address the technological infrastructure and the level of digital literacy in different regions, which can significantly affect the effectiveness of digital diplomacy. This aspect, although not central to the study by N. Garud-Patkar, deserves special attention, as technological limitations can significantly affect the reach and effectiveness of digital diplomatic initiatives.

The issue of adapting traditional diplomatic methods to new technological realities, considered by I. Roberts (2023), remains disputable. The researcher proposes a more conservative approach, emphasising the importance of preserving the basic principles of diplomacy. This position is notable, although excessive conservatism can lead to a loss of opportunities provided by the digital age. The best approach would be to combine innovations with traditional diplomatic practices, adapting them to new realities without losing the fundamental principles of diplomacy.

The concept of "digital media diplomacy" proposed by H. Saliu (2022), expands the determination of the transformation of public opinion formation mechanisms. The author focuses on the role of traditional media in the digital environment, which is an important addition to the analysis of the complex nature of modern public diplomacy. The importance of the integration of traditional and new media in diplomatic practice is notable, although this integration should incorporate different levels of access to digital technologies in different countries and regions.

The paradigm shift in diplomatic practice, studied by C. Bjola *et al.* (2020), emphasises the need for new approaches to strategic planning and evaluation of the effectiveness of digital public diplomacy. C. Bjola *et al.* (2020) analysed the organisational changes required for the effective implementation of digital public diplomacy in detail. The importance of institutional transformations is notable, although these changes should occur in parallel with the development of new diplomatic competencies and the adaptation of legal norms to the realities of the digital age.

The public engagement analysis model for assessing digital diplomacy on Twitter proposed by M.L. Khan *et al.* (2021) can be used for quantifying the effectiveness of diplomatic efforts on social media. The importance of such an analysis is notable, although quantitative indicators do not always reflect the qualitative impact of diplomatic efforts. It is important to complement quantitative analysis with qualitative methods of evaluation, including content analysis and the study of the long-term effects of diplomatic initiatives.

The results of the study of digital practices in diplomatic communication revealed the ambivalent nature of the impact of digitalisation on global politics. On the one hand, digital technologies expand opportunities for communication and influence, allowing diplomats to interact more effectively with a wide audience and respond quickly to international events. On the other hand, the study identified several serious challenges associated with digital diplomacy, including the risks of cyberattacks, the problems of disinformation and manipulation in the digital space, and the issues of confidentiality and security of diplomatic communications.

In this context, it is worth noting the study by N. Sharma (2021), which offers a more optimistic view of the potential of digital diplomacy to solve global problems. The researcher argues that digital diplomacy not only changes the tools of diplomacy but also transforms the essence of diplomatic interaction, opening new opportunities for international cooperation and addressing global challenges. While the new opportunities offered by digital diplomacy are beneficial, the risks and challenges associated with the digitalisation of diplomatic practice are also significant. A balanced approach that considers both the opportunities and risks of digital diplomacy seem to be more productive for determination its role in solving global problems. This approach allows not only to assess the potential of digital diplomacy but also to develop effective strategies to minimise the risks associated with it.

The philosophical approach by O.P. Richmon (2020) to the analysis of the interaction between analogue and digital aspects of international relations broadens the determination of the ontological and epistemological issues of digital diplomacy. O.P. Richmond (2020) emphasises the ambivalent nature of the impact of digital diplomacy on global politics, which is consistent with the findings of this study. The need for a deeper philosophical determination of these processes is notable, although such analysis should be complemented by practical recommendations for diplomats and politicians. In general, the identified trends in the transformation of diplomatic communication under the influence of digitalisation are confirmed and developed in other studies. Each of the studies reviewed offers a unique focus and methodological approach that expands the determination of the complex nature of the digital transformation of diplomacy.

Conclusions

The study of digital practices of diplomatic communication and their implications for global politics has revealed fundamental changes in the nature and methods of diplomatic activity in the digital age. The analysis of the impact of digitalisation on the transformation of traditional forms of diplomatic communication had showed that digital technologies have significantly accelerated diplomatic processes, reducing the time to respond to international events from several days to several hours. This had led to a more dynamic and flexible diplomacy that can respond quickly to global challenges, but at the same time has increased the risk of making hasty decisions.

The study of the use of social media and messengers in diplomatic practice found that platforms such as Twitter, Facebook and WhatsApp have become key tools of modern

diplomacy, each playing a unique role in the digital diplomatic ecosystem. Twitter/X has proved particularly effective in responding quickly to international events and setting the global agenda, allowing diplomats to disseminate official statements and commentary instantly. Facebook, with its wide range of features, has become a platform for long-term engagement and cultural diplomacy, providing opportunities for a comprehensive presentation of national values and achievements. WhatsApp, in turn, has provided secure and instant communication for more confidential diplomatic interactions, becoming indispensable for coordinating actions and sharing sensitive information between diplomats.

These digital platforms have provided diplomats with unprecedented opportunities to communicate directly with a wide audience, effectively bypassing traditional media filters and allowing states to directly shape their international perceptions. This has significantly expanded the reach of diplomacy, making it more accessible and interactive. However, along with new opportunities, digital diplomacy has also created new risks associated with the rapid spread of disinformation and potential manipulation of public opinion. The ability of information to

spread virally on social media has increased the vulnerability of international relations to information attacks and diplomatic misunderstandings, requiring diplomats to develop new skills in managing digital crises and countering information threats.

The study also determined that digital diplomacy has transformed decision-making in international politics, creating both new opportunities for rapid response to crises and risks of overreaction to minor events. The expansion of the circle of participants in diplomatic processes through social media has led to greater transparency but also increased the risk of populism in decision-making. Prospects for further research include studying the impact of new technologies, such as artificial intelligence and virtual reality, on diplomatic practice, as well as researching the regional peculiarities of digital diplomacy in different parts of the world.

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Conflict of Interest

None.

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