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JURAJ MARUŠIAK – ZUZANA POLÁČKOVÁ ET AL.

**Foreign Policy
of the Slovak Republic**
–
**the Impact of
Socio-cultural and
Institutional Factors**



Chapter 6

Institutional Aspects of the Creation of Diplomatic Service of the Republic of Poland Compared to Slovakia⁷⁰

The end of the Cold War brought about fundamental changes in the global system of international relations. Despite the growing tendencies towards instability, new political and security risks are different in nature than those from the period when the lines between the political, economic and military power of the states were blurred and when the flow of information was still under the control of nation states. Now, the boundaries between countries are becoming significantly more permeable, and not only individuals, but also businesses, political non-governmental organisations as well as non-political and non-commercial NGOs respond to the tendency to “reject identification with their nation state and seek some kind of separate political status” (Krejčí, 2001, 231), at least on partial issues. If for example a representative of the realist school of international relations such as Henry Kissinger foresees a return to the symmetric model of the international system which will be dominated by the power factor and will primarily depend on the interaction of six major powers (USA, Europe, China, Japan, Russia and India) (Kissinger, 1999 17), for smaller and medium-sized states, but eventually even for large global players, thinking in terms of the classical Westphalian model does not guarantee satisfaction of their national interests. If for the major geopolitical actors the possibility of an imminent military threat poses a minor problem compared to other priorities (e.g. energy security, protection of economic interests, environmental risks, etc.), small and medium – size states in turn recognize limited potential for use of their military or economic potential in foreign policy, which is conceived of as ‘a broadly defined scope of activities performed by governments and oriented to the external environment of their own state with the aim of sustaining or changing it in some way’ (Carlsnaes – Sjørusen – White, 2004, 11). The growing volume of cross-border interaction, unprecedented in the history of nation states of the 19th and the first half of the 20th centuries, opens up the need to reform the institutions of traditional diplomacy; this need is also reflected in the cited definition of foreign policy as a broadly defined scope of activities. Reforms are underway in a number of countries with varying intensity and with diverse areas of emphasis depending on the international status, political traditions and foreign policy priorities

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of the states. For the Slovak Republic and Poland, the reference points are changes in the institutionally-based conceptualization and exercise of foreign policy as well as general trends in EU Member States and countries like Canada or the USA. In 2002, during the term of office of Joschka Fischer in the post of chief of diplomacy, Germany launched a massive reform of the sector whose main objectives were sustainability of international presence of the German foreign service and of its competence and efficiency thereby allowing Germany to have its say in the development of the world and particularly of Europe (Pleuger, 2002).

The necessity to reform the sector of diplomacy was caused by several factors, in the first place by the growing complexity of the external environment due to globalization trends and the deepening of integration processes. In this context, European integration becomes an important phenomenon with the EU institutions emerging not only as new actors in international politics, but also as an instrument of foreign policy of EU Member States and a room for fulfilling the Union’s multilateral and bilateral dimension, which has prompted several authors either to speak of the threat of extinction of bilateral diplomacy due to its “Brusselization” and domestication (i.e., the transfer of its agenda to other “domestic” ministries) (Bratberg, 2007, 535), or to think about a new type of diplomacy sui generis (Bátora, 2007, 10). As a result of integration and globalization processes, more actors enter into interactions with the external environment of nation states, including those who were previously engaged exclusively in domestic policy. Diplomatic activities are thus fragmented, erasing the line between domestic and foreign policy (Bátora – Hocking, 2007, 5). Such interpretation of Europeanization of the international system may result in limiting the role of the state while creating “new levels of democratic decision-making in domestic policy and in international relations” (Hloušek, 2004, 94). Traditionally conceived sovereignty has been replaced by a model of the post-sovereign or “late-sovereign” (Hloušek, 2004, 94; Walker, 2003, 3 – 32) international order. In this situation, as stated by Brian Hocking and David Spence, the role of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs is transformed from the position of a gate-keeper, i.e. an institution based on the principle of centrality of a territorially defined state and responsible for the control of national borders and for any kind of communication that crosses the boundaries, into the so-called boundary-spanner, which takes into account the mixed system of international actors, increasing permeability of national borders and multilevelness of foreign policy resulting in a growing demand for its interactivity and complexity (Carlsnaes – Sjørusen – White, 2004, 11).

Furthermore, in the post-communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe, Europeanization of the diplomatic sector also includes normative implications the essence of which is to identify with the values of liberal democracy and market economy. The ongoing democratic transformation in Slovakia and Poland raises the question of separation of the executive power, which also includes the sector of diplomacy, from political decision-making, as the transformation process presupposes political, philosophical and ideological neutrality of the state. At the same time, Europeanization has been manifested in the transitology area because the new EU

member states such as those that have applied either for EU membership or for the candidate status for EU membership and are transforming their political institutions in accordance with the models and processes taking place in the democratic states of Western Europe (Dančák – Fiala – Hloušek, 2005, 14).

If the process of formulation and implementation of foreign policy involves domestic political state and non-state actors, the role of target entities has to be re-defined as well. Hence, in addition to communicating with public institutions, diplomacy interacts with “internal political” ministries, but also with non-state actors such as businesses, NGOs, churches, the media, political parties or municipalities and regions. As a result of these changes, the need to pay greater attention to the issue of public diplomacy increases. Last but not least, institutional changes in the diplomatic sector are conditioned by reducing the state’s role in the economy, resulting in the cutting of funds that the state has at its disposal to perform its functions. This problem was particularly pronounced in the global economic and financial crisis after 2008.

I collected the bulk of information about the most important trends in the reform of the Polish Foreign Service during my internship at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland (MFA PR), which I completed in June – July 2009 on a fellowship received through the Polish Institute in Bratislava. My research largely relied on individual interviews with the Ministry staff as well as with the personnel of the Office of the Committee for European Integration (UKIE) and the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Slovakia⁷¹. In addition to official publications about the reform of the Slovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs, I also used interviews with the people working in the sector who, as common in Poland did not want their names to be mentioned in the study. Alongside the analysis of information gathered through interviews, I also applied comparative approaches and institutional analysis. The aim of the study is to compare the course of transformation of the diplomatic sector and foreign service in Poland and in Slovakia identifying similarities (“isomorphic” tendencies) (Bátora, 2007, 10) and differences between these processes in both countries as well as the ways in which the foreign ministries of the two states are responding to the challenges of Europeanization and globalization and to the growing external environment’s competitiveness. This will highlight the strengths and weaknesses of either ministry. The subject of comparison was chosen on the grounds of similarity in the political culture of both countries, which are undergoing the post-1989 political and economic transformation and whose close cooperation and bilateral contacts particularly in the area of security policy in the late 1990s and the NATO pre-accession period were likened to a “strategic partnership” by Slovak politicians (e.g. President of the Slovak Republic Michal Kováč or Prime Minister Mikuláš Dzurinda) (Duleba, 1999, 47), even though the Polish party did not describe the relationship as such. In addition, both sectors underwent an institutional re-

⁷¹ Since the vast majority of respondents preferred not to have their names published in the present study, I fully respect their wish.

form at approximately the same time; while in the Slovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs it began in 2007 (preparation) and took place between 2008 and 2009, in Poland the transformation of the sector began after the parliamentary elections in 2007 and was completed in 2010. In both cases the objectives of the reform were similar – modernization of the sector, streamlining its activities and adaptation to the changed foreign policy priorities in the post-integration period and ultimate improvement of communication with the public sector. Comparison between Poland and the Slovak Republic was chosen also because in the 1990s and in the early years of the 21st century, Polish experience with systemic transformation as well as methods applied in the Polish foreign policy offered significant know-how utilised by Slovakia both in theory – in the conceptual definition of priorities and in practice – e.g. integration into NATO, but also in the formulation of basic positions in its policy towards European states – successors of the former USSR. As both Poland and Slovakia are new to the EU, I also utilised the reform experience of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany, whose diplomacy has had a longer continuity than that of the two countries.

In the present analysis, I have focused on the following indicators, which may act as a positive impetus for Slovak diplomacy or which have undergone the most profound changes in the management of diplomatic sectors in both countries:

- relationship between diplomacy and the political sphere, which affects the institutional stability of the diplomatic sector in the context of constitutional changes and domestic political conflicts;
- changes in the organizational structure of the diplomatic sector;
- creation of a professional background and education system for diplomats;
- coordination of European affairs;
- creation of public diplomacy.

The present article, however, must equally take into account those input factors in which the foreign policies of the Slovak Republic and Poland differ. First, these differences arise from the size of the two countries which has a major effect on the number of employees working at the foreign ministries. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland employs more than 1,500 workforce, which is a twofold increase compared to 1990 when the sector employed 840 workers. By contrast, in 2009 the Slovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs employed a staff of 1,063 (*Foreign Policy 2009 ... 2010*, 58). The size of both countries also affects their position in the international arena and within the structures of the European Union and thus the scope of the agenda of both foreign ministries. Apart from the weight of “diplomatic hardware”, one can observe noticeable differences in what can be described as “diplomatic software”, i.e. differences in the length of existence of the diplomatic sector and the tradition of foreign political thought. While in Poland the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the overall functioning of the diplomatic sector may boast their institutional continuity since 1918, the Slovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs is a relatively young institution established in 1992 as a follow-up to the Department of International Relations at the Government Office and the Ministry of

International Relations of the Slovak Republic established in 1990 (Mojžița, 2004). Although at first glance these traditions argue in favour of greater efficiency of Polish diplomacy, this paper will ponder the extent to which these factors *really* may play against MFA SR.

The Relationship Between Diplomacy and the Political Sphere

Political changes in the years 1989 – 1990, when a government with the predominance of non-Communist forces was established in Poland, brought the reevaluation of the existing foreign political priorities of the Polish Republic with the aim of breaking away from the Soviet bloc and opting for a new foreign policy orientation towards entry into the European structures and later into NATO. At the same time, foreign policy was undergoing a process of democratization and de-ideologisation, which was a consequence of breaking the power monopoly of the Communist Party. These two major political changes were also reflected in the staffing of the sector, which had to get rid of a number of exponents of the previous regime and people associated with the enforcement of a policy of unilateral dependence of Poland on the USSR within the structures of the Warsaw Pact and Comecon. Personnel changes in Poland's Ministry of Foreign Affairs occurred mainly during the first period of the creation of new diplomacy – in 1990 – 1991; the largest number of new employees, not implicated in the previous political regime, joined the European Department (Kurski, 1992).

Interviews with the employees of Poland's MFA revealed that the problem of politicization of the sector like of other central bodies of state administration persisted in the later period and concerned mainly the filling of managerial positions at foreign diplomatic missions of the state which resulted in the exodus of experts from the foreign ministry following the parliamentary elections. In some cases these experts left the country often losing ties with their homeland. The question of personnel replacement was raised again after the ruling coalition of national-conservative Law and Justice (PiS) Party with christian – national League of Polish Families (LPR) and socio-populist Self-Defense in 2005 – 2007 came into power. One of the key policy priorities of the new government was accelerating and completing the process of “decommunization”, which due to the strong presence of negotiating element in the process of Poland's transition could not take a more radical course immediately after the political events of 1989. One of the elements of this campaign was the gradual dismissal of those employees of the ministry who had graduated from the Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO) launched after the appointment of Anna Fotyga as Sector Head. It was argued that these graduates could pose a security risk to the Polish state as they could have been recruited to cooperation with Soviet or Russian special services during their studies. This “presumption of guilt” approach, associated with politically motivated dismissals, was abandoned following the early parliamentary elections and the change at the

head of the diplomatic sector, when Radosław Sikorski became the new Minister of Foreign Affairs (Lorenc, 2007). With regard to the operation of MFA PR, media attention was focused on the question of financial backing, e.g. of furnishing ceremonial rooms (Wiśniewski, 2010), which can be seen as part of a populist discourse in post-communist societies. To a lesser extent the public debate centred around the very nature of exercise of foreign policy and the internal workings of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs particularly during political conflicts in the sector or as part of political struggle with the former or existing ministers as in the case of criticism of the work of Minister Andrzej Olechowski at the head of diplomatic sector in 1993 – 1995. At present, the political cabinet of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Polish Republic, i.e. the team of the closest associates of the minister who are political appointees, consists of two people.

The Slovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs as a new institution was marked by a higher degree of personal stability which was, particularly in the early stages of its existence, due the absence of relevant experts. More attention was given to building the institution into a full-fledged partner in the foreign relations of the newly established state, although in contrast to Poland the foreign policy agenda of the 1993 – 1998 period (with the exception of a short tenure of office by Jozef Moravčík in 1994) was not of primary interest to the then ruling elite. Disregard of the reservations on the part of Slovakia's allies in the EU and NATO about political development in Slovakia, which eventually led to the country's exclusion from the first wave of NATO enlargement and to non-invitation to the pre-accession negotiations with the EU in 1997, often led to a conflict between the Foreign Ministers and the Prime Minister Vladimír Mečiar (1993 – Milan Kňažko, 1994 – Jozef Moravčík, 1997 – Pavol Hamžík). If we also take into account the removal of Juraj Schenk (1996) and Zdenka Kramplová from the office of Minister of Foreign Affairs, we may state that prior to 1998 the leadership of this sector underwent frequent personnel changes which however, only slightly affected employee turnover. MFA SR maintained its apolitical character even before 1998, which may have been one of the reasons why in the eyes of the public in the area of foreign policy was a point of consensus in society. The operation of MFA SR and the exercise of foreign policy were marred by the conflict between the Prime Minister V. Mečiar and the President Michal Kováč, which showed during the President's visit to Poland in 1993 when V. Mečiar challenged the President's mandate and later the nominations of ambassadors (e.g. nomination of O. Keltošová for the post of Head of Mission of the Slovak Republic to the United Nations). Other political nominations for the posts of ambassadors facilitated the takeover of the President's powers by V. Mečiar in 1998, when M. Kováč's term of office ended. Since 1998, no similar conflicts arising from political or jurisdiction disagreements have been reported perhaps also because President Rudolf Schuster and Ivan Gašparovič had no ambitions to build a counterweight to the government, but also due to the consensus among political elites on Slovakia's foreign policy orientation. The Slovak diplomatic sector maintained a considerable degree of autonomy also in the years 2006 – 2010, when two non-party men (Ján Kubiš and Miroslav Lajčák) stood at its

head, and all ministers of foreign affairs from 1993 onwards were nominated by the strongest political party, which also produced the Prime Minister. This allowed consensual informal sharing of agenda between the Ministry and the Prime Minister, who was usually more actively engaged in issues that, due to their prestigious status, were given higher priority. So for example, the Prime Minister Mikuláš Dzurinda saw his priority in issues related to the integration of Slovakia into the EU, relations with the U.S. and partly in Visegrad cooperation; for the Prime Minister Robert Fico, the top priority in addition to Slovakia's membership in the EU, was relations with the Russian Federation. A change in the Foreign Ministry's attitude to the political elites came after the parliamentary elections in 2006, when there was a significant and, according to the sector employees, unprecedented increase in the number of political nominees in this institution, which upset the existing unofficial rule of the apolitical nature of the sector (Vavrová, 2010). In Slovakia, as evidenced by Norbert Kmeť⁷², political parties that are not associated with a major foreign policy think tank or academic institution play a relatively minor role in framing foreign policy priorities. An exception in this respect was the Centre for European Policy, headed by figures considered to be Christian Democratic Movement supporters. This institution, however, has given up on independent research or the role of a think tank and rather focuses on information and the popularization agenda.

By contrast, Poland's internal political conflicts have also significantly marked the foreign policy's institutional framework. These conflicts often resulted from different political affiliations of the Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs (e.g. in the 1997 – 2000 period) or from problematic "cohabitation" between the President and the Prime Minister, who came from different political backgrounds (e.g., 1993 – 1995, or 2007 – 2010). After 1989, one could observe a significant decrease in the role of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in defining the content and strategies of foreign policy in favour of other institutions such as the President, the Prime Minister, or institutions that were created at the governmental level in parallel with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

As mentioned above, in addition to MFA PR, it is the President who plays an important role in the foreign policy of the state. Previously, his status was significantly higher, confirmed constitutionally by the so-called Small Constitution of 1992, which regulated the relationship between the highest state authorities, allowing the directly elected President to assess candidates for the post of Minister of Foreign Affairs, Defence and Interior (Dudek, 2002, 305 – 308). However, in President Lech Wałęsa's interpretation, this gave him the right to veto their nominations and review the given departments as "presidential." Poland's new constitution adopted in 1997 halted this shift to the presidential form of governance.

On the other hand, the Prime Ministers have been building up their own sections of Foreign Affairs in the Office of the Council of Ministers (henceforth Prime Minister or Premiere) with the increase of their role in the situation where the Pri-

⁷² See Chapter 5 by Norbert Kmeť in the present publication.

me Minister and the Foreign Minister come from different political parties. The operation of this section showed markedly when Jerzy Buzek headed the government while Bronisław Geremek held the post of Foreign Minister (1997 – 2000).

The importance of the President's role in Poland's foreign policy is determined not only by his constitutional status, i.e. direct election, but also by a tradition of a strong head of state epitomised by Józef Piłsudski, whose political legacy was carried on by presidents L. Wałęsa and Lech Kaczyński (supported by the Law and Justice Party, PiS).

In this spirit the constitutional role of the President of the Polish Republic was conceived as one of "the supreme representatives of the Republic of Poland and the guarantor of the continuity of state power, as well as a person guarding the observance of the Constitution, standing on guard of the sovereignty and security of the state and also of the indivisibility and inviolability of its territory" (Konstytucja RP 1997).

Based on the Decree of the President of the Republic of January 31, 1991 the National Security Office (BBN) was established at the President's Office. In the early years, BBN was subordinated to the state minister for national security in the Office of President of the Polish Republic; currently he reports directly to the President. In addition, under Article 4, paragraph 6 of the General Conscription Act, the Polish President's role is "to initiate and maintain patronage over activities oriented to the formation of patriotic and defensive attitudes in society"⁷³. This symbolic role of the head of state defined not only by political tradition, but also by legislation greatly increases his status in the foreign and security policy area.

The president thus plays an important part in organizing celebrations commemorating historic events; under his supervision, BBN also focuses on the patriotic education of youth and provides financial backing for research projects and release of most significant book titles. He develops long-term cooperation with organizations and institutions that are focused on forming civic and defence attitudes or supervises veteran organizations and harcery (Polish equivalent of scouting). In addition, BBN initiates various events of educational nature.

Last but not least however, it operates as an Analytical Centre and auxiliary machinery of the Office of President of the Republic to work on draft legislative acts concerning the protection of national heritage, such as the "Corpus of veterans fighting for the independence of the Republic of Poland" draft law, which also involves current members of foreign military missions of Poland who showed exceptional bravery during their deployment. Hence, BBN represents a relatively strong institution with its own expertise; in addition to the construction of historical memory it also issues book publications and a professional journal "Bezpieczeństwo Narodowe" ("National Security") on matters of security.

Especially during L. Wałęsa's tenure as President of the Republic of Poland and prior to the adoption of the Small Constitution, BBN evolved as an institutional

⁷³ *Ustawa z dnia 21 listopada 1967 r. o powszechnym obowiązku obrony Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej* (Tekst jednolity) (Dz. U. z 2004 r. Nr 241, poz. 2416).

counterweight to MFA PR and, given the strained relationship between the President, the Prime Minister Jan Olszewski and the Defence Minister Jan Parys, it played an important role in the formulation of the President's policy even at a later period. Disagreements between the President or the presidential nominee in the post of Poland's Foreign Minister Andrzej Olechowski in the years 1993 – 1995, the ruling coalition of the Democratic Left Alliance (SLD) and the Polish Peasants' Party (PSL) led to the strengthening of the role of the Ministry of Economic Cooperation with Foreign Countries, headed by PSL's nominee Lesław Podkański. While in February 1994 minister Olechowski presented a program of the Partnership for Transformation oriented towards pragmatic cooperation with the Russian Federation in order to neutralize the contradictory perception of security issues on either sides, Minister Podkański spoke of the strengthening of cooperation with RF and in October 1994 a delegation of his Ministry signed a protocol in Moscow on military-technical cooperation (including the production of weapons) without consulting MFA PR. In May 1994, representatives of SLD in turn proposed the creation of the so-called Warsaw triangle (Berlin – Warsaw – Moscow) or the involvement of Russia in the Weimar Triangle, which was considered a disruption of the existing consensus on foreign policy priorities (Menkiszak – Piotrowski, 2002, 225).

The informal influence of the president on the foreign policy course grew in the years 2006 – 2007 when President Lech Kaczyński's collaborator Anna Fotyga became Poland's Minister of Foreign Affairs. In the following years tensions grew between President L. Kaczyński and Prime Minister Donald Tusk, who emerged from the early parliamentary elections as the leader of PiS's main rival – the Civic Platform (PO), when the President advocated a confrontational course towards the Russian Federation and the creation of a counterweight to its geopolitical influence through cooperation with Ukraine, the Baltic States and Georgia, while Prime Minister Donald Tusk was in favour of mitigation of tensions in bilateral Polish-Russian relations. With regard to long-term informal agenda sharing during the tenure of President Aleksander Kwaśniewski and L. Kaczyński, the President's domain were relations with Ukraine, the issue of energy security and cooperation with NATO, while issues related to the "European" dimension were within the Prime Minister's domain. After 2007, the Polish-German relations became the subject of specific attention of Prime Minister Tusk. The significance of this agenda was symbolised in the figure of the former Minister of Foreign Affairs PR (1995, 2000 – 2001) Władysław Bartoszewski, a supporter of Polish-German reconciliation, at the post of Prime Minister's Advisor.

In contrast to Slovakia, tensions and conflicts of jurisdiction between the highest constitutional officials on matters of foreign policy resulted in a disagreement over the participation of the Prime Minister and the President at the European Council's session. This dispute was resolved by the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Poland by a decision according to which the president had the right to attend the European Council's talks while decisions on the foreign policy of the country were to be adopted by the government. It also bound the president and government to

cooperate in the situation where they planned to jointly participate in the European Council. The President gained the right to comment on issues related to the government's position in the European Council's negotiations and was obliged to participate in meetings where amendments to agreements are discussed that pertain to the foundations of the EU's operation, which "could be related to the issues of sovereignty of the Republic" (*Trybunał Konstytucyjny, 2009*).

The Parliament's rights and responsibilities in the foreign policy of Poland as compared to the SR are stipulated only in general terms. The Sejm has the constitutional authority to take decisions on declaring a state of war and concluding peace (Art.116, par. 1), but his powers in this area are limited only to the case of an armed attack on the territory of the Republic of Poland, or if there is an obligation to participate in common defence against aggression, which flows from international agreements. If the session of the Sejm (i.e. the lower house of parliament) cannot take place, the decision to declare the state of war lies with the President (Art.116, par. 1). The principles of the use of armed forces outside the territory of the Republic of Poland is determined by a ratified international treaty or law, as is the case with the principles of stationing foreign troops on the territory of the Republic of Poland (Art. 117)⁷⁴.

The Slovak Constitution provides for the National Council's scope of operation in foreign policy in more detail. Its role is, particularly prior to the ratification of international conventions, to grant consent to international treaties on human rights and fundamental freedoms, to international political treaties, to international treaties of a military nature, to international treaties that give rise to the membership of the Slovak Republic in international organizations, to international economic treaties of a general nature, to international treaties whose implementation requires a law and to the international treaties which directly confer rights or obligations of natural or legal persons, and also to decide whether the international treaties fall under Article 7, par. 5 of the Constitution (Article 86, section d). Furthermore, it is authorised to decide on the declaration of war, if the Slovak Republic is attacked or if this stems from the obligations of international treaties on common defence against aggression, and, after the war, on concluding peace (Article 86, section j) or assent to the deployment of armed forces outside the territory of the Slovak Republic, unless in the case referred to in Art. 119, section p) (Article 86, section. k), or, to assent to the presence of foreign troops on the territory of the Slovak Republic (Article 86, section l)⁷⁵.

In addition to these constitutionally defined powers, the Parliaments of both countries have gained the unofficial power to exercise public control of foreign policy. While the Slovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs annually submits a Foreign Po-

⁷⁴ Konstytucja Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej z dnia 2 kwietnia 1997. Warszawa, Sejm RP. <http://www.sejm.gov.pl/prawo/konst/polski/kon1.htm>

⁷⁵ Constitution of the Slovak Republic No 460/1992 Coll. Bratislava, National Council of the Slovak Republic.

licy Strategy report for the current year, in Poland, the Minister of Foreign Affairs annually speaks before the Sejm, summarizing the most important achievements of the foreign policy for the past year and presenting tasks for the upcoming year. Apart from this, the foreign committees of both parliaments enjoy the power (legally unamended) of hearing candidates for ambassadors before finalizing their nominations and deployment to the country of operation. So for example in Poland the aforesaid procedure has been applied since 1990 and deputies strive to interpret this authority of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Sejm as binding and as a final act of nomination of the ambassador (Walendziak, 2001), although in legal terms the ultimate decision on the appointment lies within the authority of the President (Cimoszewicz, 2001). The conflict of powers between Sejm RP and the Office of President of the Republic on the question of hearing ambassador designates broke out in 2008, when President Lech Kaczyński decided to appoint ambassadors to the USA, Spain, Mexico and the OSCE without their hearing before the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Sejm, sparking discontent of the opposition MPs.

A similar resolution was adopted by the Foreign Affairs Committee of the National Council of the Slovak Republic (NC SR), but only as late as June 2008. According to this decision, all ambassadors have to submit to the Committee's members their own concept of diplomatic mission either before or after starting their mission. Hence, as in Poland, the position of the Foreign Affairs Committee is not legally binding, and in terms of the procedure of appointing ambassadors, the MPs only play an advisory role.

In Poland, as in Slovakia, political parties do not constitute separate centres where conceptual frameworks for the formulation of foreign policy are developed, and foreign policy agenda is not their priority. On the other hand, Poland is characterized by a substantially lower level of consensus on foreign policy direction than Slovakia from 2000 onwards. The conflict line is the issue of relations with Russia as well as views on the deepening of European integration. Some political parties are associated with certain analytical centres which formally act as independent think tanks. For example PO is close to Wyższa Szkoła Europejska, where the former foreign minister for SLD and now member of PO Dariusz Rosatti works, and to DemosEuropa, led by Paweł Świeboda, while by contrast Natolin European College in Warsaw and Jagiello Institute in Cracow are regarded as analytical centres close to PiS.

Changes in the Organizational Structure of Ministries of Foreign Affairs

The period of creation, or rather reconstruction of departments of diplomacy in terms of stabilization of foreign policy orientation of both countries and the consolidation of a democratic system was followed by a phase of stabilization of diplomatic service reflected in the adoption of specific legislative standards regulating the sta-

tus of Foreign Service. The rate of consolidation of diplomacy sectors as well as the degree of prioritization of foreign policy in the agenda of the governments of both countries is testified by the fact that while the Polish Foreign Service Act was passed in November 2001⁷⁶, NC SR passed a similar piece of legislation at the governmental level only after several postponements in March 2010⁷⁷.

With the evolution of foreign policy priorities of the diplomatic sector and with different styles of management demonstrated by individual ministers in Slovakia and Poland, the organizational structure of the Ministry changed as well. Recent reforms in both ministries have been implemented with the aim of achieving a more flexible response and reducing management levels, resulting in the division of department's agenda into smaller and more operational units, greater flexibility of departments, development of information systems and project management of the ministries. The subject of reform was also the area of economic diplomacy, which in both countries is aimed at removing dual subordination of representative offices to Ministries of Economy and of Foreign Affairs. In Poland yet another important objective was to increase the appeal of work in diplomacy and to draw young people to the sector.

The reform of MFA SR launched after 2006, whose main coordinator and initiator was then Head of the MFA Office Marcel Peško, was preceded by process, economic, organizational, operational, personnel and information audit and the introduction of continuous performance improvement of the ministry. The reform project was named TREFA (TRvalá EFektivita riadenia, Permanent Management Efficiency). The audit was conducted in 2007 with the active participation of employees in various working groups. Nearly a hundred personnel out of 470 of staff at the headquarters participated in the implementation of the analysis (Peško, 2008). The actual implementation of sector reforms took place in 2008 and 2009 (Peško, 2009). The initiators of the reform were partly inspired by an analogous sector reform in Denmark which pursued the simplification of the sector's management and its staff performance appraisal system by establishing performance objectives and quantifiable tasks, as well as the opening of the public sector also through regular reporting to the public on the Ministry's activities (Peško, 2007). The process analysis was conducted in 2008, focusing on the description of the status quo and specification of the tools and resources for its achievement through particular projects that had been implemented or whose implementation was planned in the future. The above analysis identified the primary and secondary processes and their executors. The aim of the reform was to link management and executive units of the Ministry and the creation of tools for continuous improvement of management quality, efficiency and professionalism of service (Peško, 2008).

⁷⁶ Ustaw z dnia 27 lipca 2001 r. o służbie zagranicznej. Dziennik Ustaw, 9 listopada 2001 r. See Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, official web site (<http://www.msz.gov.pl>)

⁷⁷ Act No 151/2010 Coll of March 9, 2010 on foreign service and on amendments to certain laws. Collection of Laws, 151/2010, item 61, pp. 1102. – 1117.

The result of the reform of the sector according to the organizers was management optimization, e.g. by reducing the number of managerial staff, reducing management levels from four to three (section, department, division), increasing the number of branches with narrower profiling in the political sections and dissolution of divisions within the political departments. New departments of economic and public diplomacy were established along with divisions to support process and project management. Instead of the original ten kinds of regulations, only three categories were created. In addition to the classic line management, a directive on project management was issued, allowing the creation of cross-cutting teams for the implementation of specific tasks across organisational units. On the other hand, M. Peško himself acknowledged that in the context of MFA SR “it was impossible to fully implement project management in the way it is applied in the private sector or in non-governmental organizations”. Hence, only the basic elements were implemented successfully (Peško, 2009). However, after 2010 a department of process and project management was re-created in the place of the department of project and operational management.

The TREFA project also involved the formulation of the MFA’s “Successful Slovakia in a safe world” strategy containing five strategic priorities – strengthening of bilateral cooperation and enforcing an efficient system of international relations; fostering economic development, prosperity and promoting the economic interests of the Slovak Republic; increased promotion of Slovakia’s interests in the EU and of its impact on the creation of common policies in the EU; protection of interests of the citizens of the Slovak Republic, optimization of the internal functioning of MFA (Úspešné Slovensko ..., 2008). This strategy is updated annually.

In the area of human resource management, the Career schedule of MFA was drawn up in the autumn of 2008, regulating the principles of career development in the sector. It includes a system of pre-service preparation and introductory adaptation training for new staff as well as adaptation training for workers who have returned to the headquarters after posting. Diplomats are required to attend one training course per year. The concept of primary and secondary expertise of diplomats has also been introduced. The posting period has been extended from three to five years and an opportunity to be sent to two postings in a row was created, where diplomats first operate in a “difficult” Embassy to be sent to a “less demanding” office afterwards.

Periodic competency evaluations performed early in the year, based on which the amount of personal bonuses and quarterly performance evaluations are determined as a basis for rewards for good performance of the duties, were also introduced. These are implemented via electronic forms.

Another important element of the reform was informatisation, which involved gradual integration of multiple stand-alone information systems and the implementation of a “paperless office” model. The security policy of information systems and the video conferencing system have undergone a number of changes as well; the N – VIS passport system has been introduced, enabling biometric data collection

(photograph, signature, fingerprints). What turned out as a problem was an on-going downsizing of the workforce with approximately half of the Slovak embassies abroad consisting of two employees. In 2008, one diplomatic mission of the SR accounted for 3.75 diplomats (SITA, Jun 10, 2008). Yet the results of the reforms were not accepted unequivocally; for example, Jozef Bátora stated that “MFA’s philosophy and organizational culture has been defined in a somewhat traditional way, where diplomats see themselves more as a privileged elite, entitled to manage foreign policy hierarchically”. He noted the persistence of traditional diplomatic culture and sluggish overcoming of the position of a “gate-keeper,” when even after the implementation of the TREFA project he labeled MFA a “diplomatic museum with newfangled organisation” (Bátora 2010, 163, 171).

Other organizational changes in MFA SR took place after the parliamentary elections in 2010, when a change in the ruling coalition led to the transformation of sector management, and Mikuláš Dzurinda replaced Miroslav Lajčák at the post of the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Major reform trends were outlined internally in the summer of 2011, and they are expected to continue the line of basic reform trends started by M. Peško. According to these plans, economic diplomacy should particularly focus on countries outside the EU; trade offices in 15 EU countries would be dissolved. With regard to labour migration of citizens of the SR, there are plans to establish the Consulate General of the Slovak Republic in Manchester to deepen consular cooperation with the countries of the Visegrad Group; MFA’s cadre staffing system has been revised to increase the transparency of evaluation of the staff performance, establish clear rules of rotation and of granting diplomatic ranks. Development of a new, comprehensive system of assessing the embassies is underway, and the system of internal and external communication within the ministry is also undergoing significant changes. In October 2011, a new organizational structure of the sector entered into force, reducing the number of sections by two (from the original seven), and the number of divisions by three compared to the original rules and regulations of 2010⁷⁸. Selection procedures were announced for the posts of economic diplomats; in 22 cases the participation of external candidates was assumed, and seven positions were to be filled by internal candidates.

Similar objectives to those pursued by the reform of MFA SR were also assumed by the reform of the Polish diplomacy sector. Its initiators emphasized the importance of economic diplomacy, when rather than enforcing a tough security regime in the country (a dominant agenda of the 1990s) the focus was shifted onto economic security, namely support for Poland’s economic interests including energy security. The reform also reflected an increase in the number of Polish citizens living abroad with associated growing demand for consular services, and Poland’s partici-

⁷⁸ See for example Directive No. 33/2010 of March 1, 2010, which regulates the Organisation rules and regulations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic. [http://www.mzv.sk/App/wcm/media.nsf/vw_ByID/ID_D3339FB5F4DF1530C125764900384EC6_SK/\\$File/Smernica_c_33_2010_reg_c_1_310_ktorou_sa_vydava_Organizacny_poriadok.pdf](http://www.mzv.sk/App/wcm/media.nsf/vw_ByID/ID_D3339FB5F4DF1530C125764900384EC6_SK/$File/Smernica_c_33_2010_reg_c_1_310_ktorou_sa_vydava_Organizacny_poriadok.pdf)

pation in the development assistance programs, which called for an increase in the representation of experts on humanitarian, social and infrastructural issues. Like in the SR, the authors of the sector's reform, such as Rafał Wiśniewski, who served as Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland in 2005 – 2007, and later in 2007 – 2010 as Director General of the Foreign Service in charge of the modernization program of the Ministry, promoted greater specialization of diplomats (Wiśniewski, 2009).

Another important element was technological modernization of the sector, e.g., by equipping diplomats with "blackberry" telephones, "secure laptops" and establishing Internet connections between the embassies and the headquarters. Despite austerity measures, the volume of funds allocated for public diplomacy programs increased. The Ministry opened itself to the arrival of workforce from the external environment, while some observers such as former Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Polish Sejm Paweł Zalewski, currently serving as a Member of the European Parliament for the ruling Civic Platform, criticized the reform for not contributing to the creation of systematic cadre policy (Rzeczpospolita, Sep18, 2010).

Unlike the reform of the Foreign Office of the Federal Republic of Germany introduced in 2002 – 2003 the reforms in Slovakia and Poland were focused on increasing the flow of information and improving the qualification structure of the workforce in the sector. The German reform implemented during the term in office of Joschka Fischer at the head of the sector was targeted at strengthening the security agenda (creating the Crisis Response Centre), crisis management control of the Federal Government and creating the post of Commissioner for international cooperation in preventing and combating terrorism and on the other hand at strengthening the multilateral dimension of German diplomacy through the creation of the Coordinating Group on EU affairs as well as the post of coordinator, whose role is to ensure the adequate representation of Germany in international organizations.

Another major element of the reform of the Foreign Office in Germany was an overhaul of human resources management by building the so-called corporate identity. To resolve the problems in relations between superiors and subordinates and conflicts in the workplace, a system of coaching, i.e. professional help in solving them was introduced. The aim of the reform was to prevent the aging of the senior management in the sector and the resulting tendency to stagnation. Measures were taken to increase the chances and motivation of junior workers in the sector, e.g. through temporary promotion to senior positions and personnel rotation of older workers. The use of the so-called local forces in the work of embassies also increased. In order to raise the appeal of the Foreign Service, mechanisms for faster career advancement for workers were developed allowing for the softening of the existing rigid rules.

To increase the efficiency of organization, working methods and procedures, delegation of powers to lower decision-making levels was introduced. With regard to the reduction in staffing and the need to cut public spending, the so-called "micro – missions" or "laptop embassies" were established abroad with one or two employees, whose task was to raise the profile of the German diplomatic mission in the

country concerned, but also to create conditions for enabling the prompt restoration of the mission to the previous size once the budgetary situation improved.

The next step was the opening of the Foreign Service to other actors involved in the field of external relations. For example employees of the Goethe Institute network may be, if the need arises, integrated into diplomatic missions and vice versa, diplomats – cultural advisors – may operate in Goethe Institutes abroad, although these institutions are mutually independent. The reform also enables the building of German Houses abroad, where several German institutions, whose aim is to represent German interests abroad, may operate together.

In order to improve its service, a helpline was set up in the Foreign Office for FRG citizens, specialising in legal and consular affairs (visas, assistance for German citizens abroad). As in the case of Poland or Slovakia, German diplomacy was faced with staff cutting as a result of the reform of the sector when in 2001 there were 7.8% fewer employees working with the Federal Foreign Office of Germany than in 1993 (Pleuger, 2002, 12).

Significant differences between Slovakia and Poland may be observed in approaching the problem of economic diplomacy. While after 2010, the SR embarked on the program of placing economic sections under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which had been its ambition for a long time and which was also a part of the intended TREFA project to ensure uniform exercise of foreign policy (Peško, 2007), in Poland an agreement was signed on February 7, 2006 at the level of the ministers of foreign affairs and economy, dissolving the existing economics and business sections, built as structures independent of Poland's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Instead, 99 economic sections and 9 economic offices were established in embassies which are subordinated to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Department of Foreign Economic Policy of MFA PR along with 45 sections for the promotion of trade and investment, subordinated to the Ministry of Economy. The role of economic sections is to promote intergovernmental economic contacts, analysis and monitoring of economic developments abroad, including the issue of energy security and identifying economic problems of a strategic nature or settling trade conflicts. In smaller embassies, these sections are integrated with political sections. The trade and investment sections provide immediate service for businesses, such as promotion of Poland and the Polish economy, support for Polish exporters and attracting foreign investors, assistance in establishing business contacts, search for relevant trading partners and providing information on trade and exhibition events or development of regional cooperation (Sejm RP, Jan 23, 2007).

Within the framework of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland in addition to the human rights department and the UN, a separate representation department has been established for proceedings before international organizations for the protection of human rights, which in the Slovak Republic operates under the Ministry of Justice. The Human Rights Section at MFA SR acts as a separate entity. In Poland, there is a specific post of the Minister Plenipotentiary for Foreign

Affairs for the issues of Eastern Partnership, while the agenda of the Visegrad cooperation is lower on the list in the sector of diplomacy; at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland, the national coordinator for V4 is in the position of a desk officer⁷⁹, while at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs SR this role is performed by the Director of the territorial department for Central and Northern Europe. The significance of the issue of energy security is also perceived differently. In Poland, the relevant plenipotentiary is appointed by the government, while in Slovakia he enjoys the status of a special representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The institutional reform of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland also involved increasing expenditure in the diplomatic sector (which was in stark contrast to the Slovak Republic, where there was a significant drop in spending in the years 2008 – 2010⁸⁰). The volume of finances began to increase after 2007 and in 2009 it increased by 84,586 thousand PLN in comparison to the previous year to the overall level of 1,265,047,000 PLN. Apart from covering exchange ratio losses due to the decline of the Polish zloty, the increased expenses were planned to allow higher spending on the operation of foreign diplomatic missions and to pay contributions to international organizations, while the investments and investment purchases in foreign embassies, foreign missions and the disposition fund expenditures decreased (PAP, July 15 2009).

The network of embassies and consulates has also undergone restructuring. Several embassies and consulates were closed both for austerity reasons and also because the need for their continued existence was reviewed. For example during 2009 approximately 150 positions were cancelled at foreign diplomatic missions, of which more than a hundred had been occupied by persons sent from Poland (Borkowski, 2010).

On the other hand, Poland is expanding its network of consulates in Ukraine as a result of the Ukrainians' interest in visiting EU countries and has invested funds in the construction of new Consulates General in Vinnitsa and in Lviv. Given the presence of numerous Polish immigrants, the establishment of Consulates General in Manchester and Iceland is also being prepared. New Polish Institutes focused on the dissemination of Polish culture have been set up in Madrid and Brussels and the construction of a new building of the Permanent Mission of Poland to the EU in Brussels is underway. The importance of bilateral agenda in Polish foreign policy despite Poland's membership in the EU has been confirmed by the decision to begin construction of a new embassy in Berlin in 2011 (Wiśniewski, 2010). However, this kind of agenda accounts for much less than 80 to 95 % of issues discussed in Brussels, as is the case in some other EU Member States (Bátora – Hocking, 2007; Gáblóvská, 2010). Still, the belief that bilateralism will have a significant position in the EU is ra-

⁷⁹ Currently the position of the National Coordinator for V4 of the Republic of Poland is held by the deputy director of the Department of the EU Policy

⁸⁰ Draft state budget for 2011. Bratislava, Ministry of Foreign Affairs SR 2011. http://www.rokovania.sk:80/File.aspx/ViewDocumentHtml/Mater-Dokum-124350?prefixFile=m_

ther widespread both in Polish diplomacy and in the political elites (Gáblóvská 2010, 17; Rzeczpospolita, Sep 18, 2010). Similarly, in other EU capitals the embassies maintain the original agenda while the issues associated with the country's membership in the EU play only a minor role (Gáblóvská, 2010, 17). On the other hand, a number of posts in embassies, such as that of the treasurer, have been cancelled. In the EU Member States in particular the share of the so-called local workforce in the total number of employees of diplomatic representations is increasing, which also indicates overcoming of the narrow state – centric framework and adoption of a specific European model of bilateralism. Substantial funds were invested in technological modernization of the sector, which has given rise to the so-called laptop embassies or mobile consulates. Their operation will enable passports to be released merely with the help of a laptop and a scanner, through which the consul may instantly obtain and process a citizen's biometric data. The unification of Internet servers of the MFA PR was the part of the reform (Wiśniewski, 2010).

Another objective of the reform at MFA RP was to increase the appeal of the sector to young people in order to prevent the sector's aging and decline in staff quality. While this does not apply to the SR due to the sector's relatively short existence, MFA will have to face this challenge in the future, drawing inspiration not only from Poland, but also from the experience of the Foreign Office of Germany (Pleuger, 2002). Poland's Ministry of Foreign Affairs offers budding diplomats a double increase in starting salaries compared to the original level. At the same time, conditions were created for accelerated career growth to allow employees under 40 to get to leadership positions. Creators of the Polish reform such as the former CEO of MFA PR Rafał Wiśniewski were alarmed at the trend of having on average only three candidates for a vacancy, while in Western Europe there are several dozens for each position. For the purpose of attracting young people, particularly among graduates, a special portal, DyploMACJA XXI, was set up to inform potential applicants about the opportunity to apply for a job at the Ministry. In this context it may be noted that the significance of a bilateral agenda and its future prospects are confirmed by the interest of people who are fluent not only in the languages spoken in the former USSR, but also in those used in smaller EU Member States, such as Slovak or Hungarian. At the same time the focus was also on specialists in the field of non-European cultures and languages such as the Iberoamerican studies, Sinology, African and Arabic studies, but also on professionals fluent in Japanese or Urdu or Pashto⁸¹. With a view to the need to obtain highly specialized professionals, MFA PR is also open to the recruitment of temporary workers from the external environment through open selection procedures. This however, applies in particular to cultural diplomacy; for other positions such as the Consulate General as a rule the selection procedures take place only at the ministry. MFA PR is flexible on the question of openness of selection procedures, depending on momentary needs and the ministry's own personnel background.

⁸¹ See Internet portal DyploMACJA XXI – <http://www.dyploMACJAXXI.msz.gov.pl>

In terms of personnel development, other themes have also been opened in the professional community of Poland pertaining to the growing demands for participatory equity such as the representation of women in the sector of diplomacy. If before 1989 women did not play an important role in Polish diplomacy – as according to the President of the Association of Families of Diplomats Ewa Pernal this sector is rather conservative in customary terms – the proportion of women has increased considerably following the political changes, even though this growth has been rather slow. In 1999, Barbara Tuge-Erecińska became the first woman – state vice-secretary in the sector and in 2006 Anna Fotyga took the post of the foreign minister as the first woman in Poland. After 2004, the post of the first EU Commissioner was held by Danuta Hübner. Although there were 489 women and 521 men working at the sector's headquarters in 2007, experts point to the so-called glass ceiling with regard to the overall proportion of women in senior positions of the ministry; in 2008, there was only one woman at top management – Secretary of State Grażyna Bernatowicz, and only five out of all the 27 section heads in the sector were women. Also, of the total of 179 posts of ambassadors, only thirteen were held by women (Kamińska, 2008). Although the proportion of women in top positions was higher in Slovakia (Zdenka Kramplová became the first Foreign Minister in 1998) and there were two female state secretaries (Olga Algajerová and Diana Štrofová) between 2006 and 2010, this occurred in governments which did not consider the sector of diplomacy a political priority.

Creating a Professional Background and the Training System for Diplomats

Unlike Slovakia, which resigned to having organizationally independent analytical centres at government offices, such as the former Slovak Institute for International Studies at the Foreign Ministry or the Institute for Security and Defence Studies (IBOŠ) at the Ministry of Defence (restored in 2013), there are several analytical centres at Poland's Ministry of Foreign Affairs whose status is regulated by law. The most important of these is the Polish Institute of International Studies (PISM), which issues a number of scientific journals (*Sprawy Międzynarodowe*, *The Polish Quarterly of International Affairs*, *Jevropa*) and hence has a strong academic standing. The institute operated at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs PR even before 1989; in 1994 it was incorporated as a separate department and in 1997 it resumed its activity as an independent organizational unit. Its status and political independence is regulated by a special law⁸². The statute of PISM is defined by the Prime Minister at the proposal of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the Prime Minister appoints

⁸² Ustawa z dnia 20 grudnia 1996 r. o Polskim Instytucie Spraw Międzynarodowych. *Dziennik Ustaw* 2001, nr. 128, poz. 1403.

and removes its director after hearing the Minister relevant to the Department of Foreign Affairs. The Minister also appoints the PISM Board members.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs PR also funds the activity of the Western Institute in Poznań, which focuses on German affairs, and the Institute for Central – Eastern Europe in Lublin. The Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Poland controlled the Centre for Eastern Studies (OSW) originally exclusively dedicated to monitoring and analysis of political, security, and economic situation in the countries of the former USSR. In 1998, OSW expanded the scope of its activity by the region of Central Europe and the Balkan Peninsula, and in 2005, the German section was established as well. Since 2012 the OSW has been placed under the control of The Chancellery of the Prime Minister of Republic of Poland.

Yet, the analytical centres do not have much influence on decision-making at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland, and communication between them and ministerial officials is relatively poor. The workers of the Ministry pointed out in interviews that the analytical community did not enjoy the trust of the Ministry; on the contrary, they preferred their own, internal expertise in the formulation of new political strategies, as was the case with the new strategy of eastern policy of Poland. By contrast, expert materials produced by Slovak think tanks, particularly of the Research Centre of the Slovak Foreign Policy Association (RC SFPA) established by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs together with the SFPA present a major source of analytical information used by the Ministry for framing materials of political and strategic nature.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic has adopted a similar training model as in Poland. In 2008, a Department of Diplomatic Academy was established under the auspices of MFA, which pursuant to the Law on Foreign Service provides education for new diplomats and offers continuous training to the MFA staff. Poland has an analogous institution – Diplomatic Academy, operating under PISM. Unlike its Slovak counterpart, however, it provides training courses not only for the newly recruited staff of MFA PR, but on a commercial basis also for those from the outside; the courses focus on diplomatic protocol, cultural diplomacy or foreign language teaching. The new employees of the Diplomatic Academy of the MFA PR undergo a mandatory 18-month program of diplomatic and consular application; the graduates receive a diplomatic rank and status of a Foreign Service worker. Every year as many as 600 candidates seek admission to the diplomatic – consular applications, of which only 20 to 40 are admitted. The Diplomatic Academy of the Slovak Republic only acts as an internal component of MFA.

On the other hand, the quality of professional background in Poland is reinforced by other requirements for professional growth of diplomats. For example employees of the Department of Strategy and Planning of the Polish ministry are expected to perform scientific research alongside their work. Polish diplomats were also supposed to publish regularly, but this requirement had been abandoned. Hence, a significant number of contributors to the periodically published Yearbook of

Polish foreign policy in the past came from MFA PR, while the Diplomatic Academy published their brief analyses or offprints. Currently, most of the authors of the Yearbook are employees of PISM. On the other hand, the personnel of the Department of Strategy and Planning, even despite the government's endorsement of the analytical centres and research into international relations, use the results of their work only to a limited extent, largely relying on the analytical work performed at their own expense. A number of documents of a strategic nature therefore mostly result from internal discussions in the ministry. Communication during the preparation of analytical materials from the ministry or from cooperating institutions is thus less interactive; in contrast to Slovakia, Poland holds no annual conferences in which diplomats would be able to communicate directly with the authors from the external environment.

Coordination of European Affairs

The role of policy coordination in matters of EU law is to prevent the outputs of its individual organizational units from getting into conflict of a fundamental nature. It should ensure not only coordination, but also coexistence of state institutions, and should restrict competition between them on issues of European integration as well as determine the division of roles and the sharing of tasks and resources. Models applied in Slovakia and in Poland are similar in nature, although there are some differences as well. During the 1990s, coordination was achieved through political leadership (Carlsnaes – Sjuren – White, 2004, 112 – 113), i.e. the crucial role was played by the Government Office of the Slovak Republic or the Office of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Poland. In Poland, a dedicated Office of the Committee for European Integration (UKIE) was created for this purpose directly subordinated to the Prime Minister, while in the Slovak Republic the key role was played by the European Affairs Section of the Government Office of the Slovak Republic.

The inception of UKIE in 1996 was conditioned by political conflicts in Polish society, i.e. by a jurisdictional dispute between the ruling Democratic Left Alliance (SLD) and the sector of diplomacy controlled by President L. Wałęsa as a presidential sector. Hence, UKIE replaced the office of the Government Plenipotentiary for European integration issues and foreign aid. The Committee for European Integration (KIE) served as an advisory body to the Prime Minister⁸³, however, its role gradually abated following Poland's entry into the EU, and after 2004 it ceased to convene meetings, although it was not officially dissolved. After 2004, European Affairs were coordinated at the working level by the European Committee of the Council of Ministers (KERM) headed by the prime minister. His deputy was State Se-

⁸³ The members of KIE included ministers of finance, economy, work, agriculture, state treasury, environment, transport, interior, foreign affairs, health and justice.

cretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs PR for European Affairs. UKIE in particular provided expert – base service for the prime minister's office, to which it was directly accountable, however expert units focusing on the issue of European integration also operated at MFA PR, which was why the ruling coalition SLD – PSL sought to repeal that authority after 2001. The Polish and Slovak models of managing European affairs were based on the needs of “strong” substantive coordination, which assumed understanding of the principles and rules of operation in the EU and taking into account the broader context in which administration operated, including the EU. Such a model of concentration of coordination mechanisms in one of the centres allowed for the combination of internal coordination function (e.g. informing the population about integration processes, launching public debate on the future of Europe, formulating a strategy of informing about integration processes) with the leadership of European policy in the international arena.

UKIE's merger with MFA RP early in 2010 meant the completion of the institutional reform of the foreign policy sector implemented by P. Wiśniewski. At government level, a new coordinating body – the European Affairs Committee (KSE) was established and then the Head of UKIE, Mikołaj Dowgielewicz became State Secretary of Foreign Affairs PR for European Affairs. The merger of the two institutions stirred discontent among the employees as the workers of MFA PR were afraid of new competition regarding the possibility of posting abroad, while the employees of UKIE feared the cutting of salaries, which at that time were higher in UKIE than in the ministry. At the same time, they were afraid of losing their status in the sector of MFA as they were not included in diplomatic service. With regard to the integration of the two institutions, there was a transitional period for the former employees of UKIE allowing them to gain diplomatic rank, e.g. through meeting the language requirements (proficiency in two foreign languages, while the Section for European Affairs required only lower-level language skills). Work at the section does not require a diplomatic rank (PAP, Jan 1, 2010).

The European Affairs Committee is composed of members of the Government (Council of Ministers), who may be represented by the Secretary of State or vice-Secretary, the Head of the Office of the Prime Minister or his nominee Secretary of State (or vice-secretary) in the Office of the Prime Minister. The Committee is chaired by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, whose deputy is Secretary of State for European Affairs. If the Prime Minister participates in the Committee meeting, he manages the work of the Committee. Decisions of the Committee are taken by consensus.

The Section for European Affairs at the Government Office of the Slovak Republic also acted as a cross-cutting analytical and coordination body. The shift of the scope of activity in coordination of implementation of EU policies at MFA took place after the parliamentary elections in 2010; this step was presumed by the electoral program of the strongest coalition party – the SDKÚ-DS (SDKÚ-DS, 2010, 41). Coordination of EU funds, however, was transferred to the newly established Ministry of Transport, Regional Development and Tourism. If the official justification for this

step was an effort to “achieve maximum efficiency in the field of foreign policy”⁸⁴, it came up during the coalition talks. Unlike in Poland, where the opposition Law and Justice party protested against the transfer of the management of European affairs, (Wprost24, Feb 13, 2009) and the Czech Republic, where the management of European affairs is a subject of political and substantive discussion (Karlás 2010, 31 – 50), in Slovakia, a similar discussion has not taken place. The issue of coordination of European affairs became the subject of political struggle within the dominant ruling party, when its chairman M. Dzurinda (after 2010 Minister of Foreign Affairs) in the proposed Statute of the Ministerial Council for EU Affairs a coordinating controlling and advisory body to the government planned to entrust the Minister of Foreign Affairs with the management of the Council; all members of the government with the exception of Prime Minister Iveta Radičová were to become its members with the right to vote. The Prime Minister rejected this proposal and a new formula of two-level Council system was adopted. Political decisions at the highest level are made under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister, while working issues at the level of State Secretaries and Directors General are coordinated from the level of the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Foreign Ministry (EurActiv.sk, Jan 4, 2011).

In both countries, after the highly centralized model of management of European affairs in the pre-accession period and in the first years of membership, a different model of medium centralization was adopted (Karlás 2010, 42). In Poland, the decision to change the institutional model of management of European affairs was influenced by other factors, such as the interest of Foreign Minister Radosław Sikorski in the rejuvenation of MFA PR (Pawlicki, 2008). The membership of the two countries in the EU, however, requires not only administrative changes justified by the reduced role of political factor during the meetings of European institutions and strengthening of the working nature of these contacts and also by the changing nature of political competition. While on the one hand political rivalry between the government and the opposition forces takes place also in the European institutions, especially in the European Parliament with potential participation of foreign partners, coordination of European policy also requires new forms of seeking political consensus. For example, Polish political parties represented in the European Parliament have created an informal coordinating body called the Polish Club, whose task is to discuss a joint approach to issues of key importance for Poland, such as seeking support for issues of redistribution of EU funds, or support for Polish candidates for leadership positions in European institutions. In Slovakia, the tendency to seek political consensus emerged between the ruling party SMER-SD and the then opposition party SDKÚ-DS in 2009 in connection with the nomination of Maroš Šefčovič for the post of EU Commissioner.

⁸⁴ The government bill, amending and supplementing Act No. 575/2001 Coll. on the organization of activities of the government and bodies of the central state administration, as amended, which amends and supplements other laws. Explanatory memorandum. Bratislava, National Council of the Slovak Republic, 2010.

Poland is characterized by a rapid process of Europeanisation of non-state actors and lobbyists. Already in September 2004, there were 12 offices representing Polish voivodships (provinces) at EU institutions in Brussels. The first to open its office was the province of Lublin in 2000; these offices were established with the help of municipalities, such as the office of the province of Łódź in partnership with the city of Łódź. In 2011, there were 17 offices representing Polish provinces and cities, and their activities were endorsed by the Permanent Representation of Poland to the EU, at least by putting the corresponding contact numbers on its website.

In May 2005, the House of Slovak Regions was established in Brussels as a joint representation of the eight regions of Slovakia. In the context of the global economic and financial crisis, its work began to stagnate after 2008, resulting in its closure late in 2010. According to the official information on its website, offices of the Bratislava, Košice, Prešov, Trenčín and Nitra Regions continued their work; however, the contacts for these offices were missing (House of Slovak Regions ...). After a failed attempt to create a representation of Polish NGOs in Brussels at the turn of 2000 – 2001, at the Federation of NGOs – Centrum Szpitalna, a so-called European program was established, funded by the Polish-American Freedom Foundation. The objective of this program is to provide NGOs with information on EU – its law, policies, initiatives, grant programs and the Structural Funds (NGO.pl, Dec 18, 2000 Program Europejski).

Public Diplomacy

Public diplomacy was one of the priority areas of “Wiśniewski’s” reform of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. When drawing up the institutional framework, the authors of the reform focused more on the experience of smaller countries, such as the Netherlands, Sweden, Norway, or Denmark or Israel, even though Poland does not normally rank itself among small states. Perhaps the authors of the reform had in mind the weaker economic position of the country and the need to develop its activity especially vis-à-vis its stronger partners.

Public diplomacy in Poland is subjected to vice-Secretary of State, who is in charge of global economic policy, promotion and culture. In addition to the section of cultural and public diplomacy, the department of economic diplomacy is also under the direction of the vice-Secretary. The concept of public diplomacy in Poland underwent a long period of preparation in 2008 – 2010. It was formed on the basis of opinion polls and analyses of media discourse conducted abroad by non-governmental entities (such as Instytut Spraw Publicznych). These enabled definition of the prevailing heterostereotypes in the perception of Poland abroad and to identify blind spots regarding the country.

Substantial funds have been allocated for the presentation of the country. Twenty one Polish institutes operate abroad in the area of public diplomacy under the direction of MFA, with a tendency to further expand their network, especially in

EU member states. An important aspect is the focus of public diplomacy on certain specific goals. One of them has been to transcend the existing image of Poland, so far associated only with Catholic Church and the Pope John Paul II. and represent it as a modern, dynamic country. The aim of Poland's presentation abroad has been to reveal to the public other values such as Poland's tourist appeal, cultural development, or Polish food. Another important, constantly monitored element of public diplomacy is overcoming the stereotypes of alleged Polish anti-Semitism, and especially the extended, simplified or even false interpretations of the history of the Holocaust and World War II epitomised in the thesis of "Polish concentration camps".

Investments in public diplomacy and in the presentation of the country were directed at the publication of inserts in the relevant print media, but also at advertising campaigns on foreign television channels such as CNN. Other activities involve study trips of journalists to Poland, including those who present critical views on the country. The government has also invested in the Internet portal <http://www.poland.gov.pl>, which in addition to the English and Polish versions contains versions in other languages such as German, Russian, Spanish, Arabic, Portuguese and Chinese. MFA PR also supports the production of brochures aimed at promoting Poland by initiating their publication in commercial publishing houses and purchasing their copies. A significant position in terms of public diplomacy is held by the promotion of non-governmental organizations, which receive around 2 million PLN annually in grant competitions. In addition to this amount, the MFA RP is able to support selected projects in the form of direct contracts.

Support for dissemination of Polish culture abroad plays a significant role in public diplomacy. In the field of cultural diplomacy MFA PR pursues a multiplier effect, i.e. at the same time raising the awareness of domestic public of Polish cultural heritage; attention is paid to promoting the translation of Polish literature abroad. Rather than holding concerts of Polish classical music, Poland's MFA PR sent musical scores to conductors of the Chinese philharmonic orchestra; rather than organising a concert in Prague, it supported the preparation of a program about Polish music on the Czech Radio. It also helped to stage a play on Broadway about Irene Gad – a Polish woman, who contributed to saving the lives of Jewish children during World War II.

Another measure aiming to change the perception of Poland abroad was initiating a program of Polish studies at foreign universities, such as Trinity College in Dublin, funded from private sources. An analogous state-funded program at the Columbia University, USA, was launched as a result of cooperation between the education sector and the sector of foreign affairs. The Polish diaspora abroad with Polish state – owned enterprises contributed to the establishment of this institution, donating 3 million USD. From a political perspective, support for Polish language centres abroad is equally significant.

Since 2009, Poland has been spending a total of 55 million PLN each year through MFA PR on public diplomacy programs. Approximately 30 million PLN is spent through embassies to support activities abroad, with one embassy accounting for

about 30 thousand PLN and 150 thousand PLN per one Polish Institute; the remaining funds are allocated through non-governmental organizations or are used for the funding of advertising campaigns in the media and education courses in Poland.

Meanwhile, there is an institution that is especially dedicated to the promotion of Polish culture abroad – the Adam Mickiewicz Institute; although it does not have any branch offices, it focuses on the support and coordination of activities aimed at the dissemination of Polish culture abroad. The organization was established in 2000 by the agreement between the MFA PR and the Ministry of Culture and the Arts, and is subordinated to the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage of the Republic of Poland. Together with the State Chamber of Commerce it develops activities aimed at joint promotion of Polish culture and economy. One of the chief activities of the Institute is the Internet portal Culture.pl in Polish and English, containing a database of biographical notes about the prominent figures of Polish culture, a database of descriptions of artworks, cultural institutions, texts and synthetic works dedicated to Polish culture as well as an archive of cultural events in Poland and abroad.

Drawing foreign investors is the task of the Polish Agency for Information and Foreign Investment, whose website contains information in English, Korean, Japanese, but also in Chinese, French, Russian, Italian and German. It focuses on the presentation of Polish regions and their economic potential, and the publication of promotional material on the economic potential of the country and its business environment.

Respondents have stated that in terms of cooperation between state and non-state actors in public diplomacy, including NGOs, there is a relatively low level of institutional coordination, causing dissatisfaction of all parties; on the other hand, an important point is the unity of goals and shared values.

In addition to the traditional activities in the field of public diplomacy, MFA PR initiates a dialogue through experts, intellectuals and members of the scientific community. One example of such a dialogue between close neighbours is the existence of the Polish – Czech Forum, aimed at stimulating a dialogue at the level of civil society, local governments, schools, academic institutions and other entities. Similar initiatives are implemented regarding those partners who share thorny, complicated issues of common history and unresolved problems at present.

For example, following the visit of Russian President Vladimir Putin to Poland in January 2002, the Polish-Russian Group on Difficult Matters was established, but ceased to operate after the first meeting in November 2002 due to the deterioration of mutual relations. Its activity was renewed in June 2008 under the leadership of former State Secretary of Foreign Affairs Adam Daniel Rotfeld from the Polish side and Rector of Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO) Anatoly Tokunov with the participation of experts, members of the scientific community and civil society representatives. Their group activity resulted in two large collective publications in Polish and Russian "White spots – black spots. Complex issues in Polish-Russian relations" (Moscow – Warsaw 2010) and "The crisis of 1939 in the

interpretations of Polish and Russian historians (Moscow – Warsaw 2009)⁸⁵. Hence, MFA PR does not act only as a coordinator and promoter of the activities in the field of public diplomacy, but directly initiates them with the participation of non-state actors.

Conclusion

Since the external environments of Slovakia and Poland are very similar, the shape of institutional reform of these sectors offers many analogies. If in the past, Poland served as a successful example of transition for Slovakia, at present, e.g. in terms of conforming to the requirements on the Ministries of Foreign Affairs with regard to the membership of both countries in the European Union, we can talk about the levelling of the quality of foreign services of both countries. After a period of significant weakening of the role of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, particularly in Poland, both counterpart establishments show an increase in their influence on public life after they had incorporated institutions or organizational units responsible for coordinating matters arising from EU membership in 2010. Also due to the growing consensus of the political elites on key issues of foreign policy, we are witnessing the consolidation of the diplomatic sector in both countries. Overall however, tighter integration within the EU increases the role of other sectors in the foreign policy of the two countries, so we cannot state that the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic or Poland are markedly inclined to the centralization of their foreign relations.

Poland's strength still lies in the high-quality professional background of the sector. Even though this background, concentrated both in the state and non-state analytical centres, does not interact with MFA PR staff, it creates room for critical appraisal of the issues of foreign policy by society, which is reflected upon by the media, civil society or political parties. What is also important is the requirement for scientific activities of diplomats, at least in the field of analysis and policy planning. On the other hand, the strength of the Slovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs is significantly higher interaction with the external environment, particularly with regard to the professional background. Perhaps this was the reason why the reform of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was implemented under the scrutiny of the public, which kept being informed through professional and daily press. The reform of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs PR proceeded without much attention from domestic general or professional public, which can be seen as a result of institutional closeness and certain inertia in the department's activity. Such inertia is also due to the long tradition of institutional continuity and the strong professional background

within the department apparatus, which does not require the immediate involvement of external institutions or experts in the reform process. In terms of taking on new challenges and the creative approach to interactions with the public and other partners operating outside the diplomatic sector, the Ministry's position is thus at a comparative advantage. The evidence of the sector's greater flexibility and openness to communication with the public was the setting up of a telephone hotline for citizens, while the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs confined itself to the provision of information through a static website. Another comparative advantage of the MFA SR is its lower dependence on the political twists and turns, with the resulting potential to act as a constructive player in building social consensus on foreign policy issues. On the other hand, the division of the foreign policy agenda among many political actors stimulates debate about the value content, strategies and tactical means to achieve the intended purpose. In this respect, the Polish political and expert communities, specialising in the issues of foreign policy, are becoming more diverse, which prevents the stagnation of foreign policy discourse in the country or monopolization of this sector in the hands of one actor.

⁸⁵ Rossijsko-polskaya gruppa po slozhnym voprosam. Moskva, MGIMO. Official website <http://www.mgimo.ru/rectorat/docs/document31591.phtml>