

Diaspora Diplomacy: Contemporary Problems of Countries in the Sustainable Development Context

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Abstract: In the globalization-driven world, the conceptual foundations of the entire system of international relations are undergoing considerable changes. The defining shifts concern the expansion of the range of international actors and the enrichment of the tools and functions of the diplomatic service. Diaspora is one of the emerging non-state actors that can potentially make impact at the international level, although most states continue to view it only as a means of achieving their national interests. As a result, the notion of “diaspora diplomacy” has emerged, emphasizing the importance of diaspora as a transnational, liminal actor capable of influencing both host and home countries as well as exert influence on international relations. States tend to make efforts to institutionalize relations with their diasporas, which indicates the strategic importance that states attach to it. Latvia, Ukraine and Uzbekistan are working to institutionalize diaspora diplomacy. While Latvia has come significantly closer to this ultimate goal by building an extensive infrastructure for relations with diaspora, diaspora policy in Ukraine is not yet a priority, though there is a willingness to cooperate on part of the diaspora. Uzbekistan has set the diaspora issue on the agenda, but it still lacks strategy as well as effective mechanisms for its implementation.


1 INTRODUCTION


The forces of globalization have led to the decline of traditional realistic visions of international relations and the significant reshaping of the world politics. The development of complex interdependence and transformation of the world into a large network, where people, goods, capital and information move freely, resulted in the diffusion of world power and the diminished role of the state. Instead, the outlines of new political actors are looming in the international arena. International governmental organizations as supranational institutions, non-governmental organizations as representatives of the


world civil society, private sector, non-state communities enter the international relations domain on their own rights and form new modes of global networking and transnational partnerships. The new configuration of the international system provides all its representatives to be included in the global development strategy and work together to implement it. An inclusive partnership with shared responsibility for the current and future development of the world, provides an opportunity to take a more comprehensive approach to achieving sustainable development goals. It is not only states and international organizations that are stakeholders in solving the problem of development, but also various

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non-state actors, representatives of civil society and so on.

Political advances and transformation of international environment resulted in forging new types of diplomacy in response of the need to rethink itself in new contexts. The old definition of diplomacy emphasizing formal communication and clear delineation of responsibilities is becoming increasingly irrelevant. The complex environment and multiple objectives diplomacy is expected to achieve, prescribe it to become more flexible, resilient and multifaceted.

The emergence of diaspora diplomacy is considered to be a significant part of this kind of transformations. By employing tools of public diplomacy as well as 'new' inclusive diplomacy it provides broad opportunities to address the problems essential for both states and international community. Diaspora diplomacy is becoming more prominent in states' foreign policies and the establishment of global infrastructure of diaspora engagement.

2 DIASPORA DIPLOMACY AS A SOFT POWER INSTRUMENT

2.1 Globalization Trends and Public Diplomacy Context

The traditional mode of diplomacy is now complemented by a range of new forms and offshoots that significantly extend its capacities and possibilities to exert influence under contemporary conditions (Melissen & Wang, 2019). One of the advanced forms of diplomatic practices is public diplomacy that focuses not so much on intergovernmental relations as on government-to-people communication; conveys important messages not to decision-makers but to an audience capable of influencing them. Public diplomacy is often seen as the one preoccupied to "win the war on hearts and minds" (Dolea, 2015).

Since the introduction of "soft power" concept by Joseph Nye, public diplomacy gained much attention as a tool of reputation management, building relationships through dialogue and networking activities. For a long time, it was viewed solely in the context of statecraft, but an array of actors and stakeholders has been recently included into its scope. Public diplomacy, as Melissen (2013) puts it, is "a metaphor for a democratization of diplomacy, with multiple actors playing a role in what was once an area restricted to a few".

The public, which throughout history has often fallen out of the spotlight of diplomatic practice, today acquires the role of an active agent, which determines the necessity to redefine public diplomacy. According to Hocking, there are several aspects that contribute to this redefinition. 1) Democratic responsibility as a determining feature of the new international environment. Previously diplomats were only aware of the potential impact of public opinion, but today they recognize the need for direct public involvement in diplomacy. 2) Globalization-driven changes in people's perceptions of local and global environments. They are connected with overgrowth of social networks transcending the geographical and political boundaries, intensification of these processes in conditions of compressed time and space. 3) Transformational impact of technological and communication innovations on foreign affairs and diplomacy. 4) Impact of media which evolved from the tool of government's public diplomacy to an agent that sets agenda, puts pressure on policy-makers, regulates the flows of information to public etc. 5) The growing importance of image and national branding in international politics. Unlike previous periods, the country's modern image and branding are seen not as elite's preoccupation, but rather as a public good (Hocking, 2005).

Public diplomacy is sometimes viewed as an immediate tool of foreign policy, and the close relation between the two is obvious: public diplomacy cannot be developed regardless of a country's foreign policy. On the other hand, instead of influencing specific policies and decision-making processes in a foreign country, public diplomacy is concerned with forming attitudes, influencing perceptions, and building trust. Therefore, its results are not immediate, but rather become visible over long distances (Sheludiakova et al., 2021).

By bonding communication and international relations frameworks, public diplomacy enables countries and international community to promote essential values, especially within Sustainable development goals strategy. There is a vast array of SDGs initiatives that employ public diplomacy toolkit to create awareness and "plug" the governments and societies into sustainable development contexts. At the same time, public diplomacy relies on SDGs as narratives capable of uniting countries and promoting cooperation. So, public diplomacy penetrates the SDG strategy by being both a goal and a means of SDGs (Jimenez, 2019).

Another innovation and the rise of the "new diplomacy" is connected with the pluralization of

actors in world politics, including supranational actors, NGOs, MNCs, indigenous communities etc. This range of studies goes beyond state-centric notions of diplomacy as the prerogative of the state. They assign the diplomatic agency to a number of non-state entities capable of promoting dialogue and interaction between states, societies and groups (Cornago, 2013). Thus, the hierarchy in diplomatic relations is being flattened, and non-state entities enter into diplomatic relations without the need for mutual recognition by other actors.

Multiplication of diplomatic actors also leads to the fact that the list of areas considered to be “diplomatic” is expanding. Accordingly, there is a transition from diplomacy as an institution to diplomacy as a practice. And this transition is closely intertwined with the process of formation of means, techniques and ways of conducting public diplomacy.

2.2 Diaspora as an Emerging Non-state Actor

Among non-state actors, diaspora occupies a special place, and its prominence in international relations is becoming increasingly salient. Diaspora as a political phenomenon has gained considerable attention from scholars who have studied its features as social formation, boundaries, conditions and motives of engagement, as well as the ways of diaspora involvement in political and cultural influences both on host country and country of origin.

According to the International Organization for Migration, diaspora includes “members of ethnic and national communities who have left, but maintain links with, their homelands” (Ionescu, 2006). In general, when defining diaspora, the traditional approach implies the need to include several aspects in its conceptualization: geographical distance from the country of origin; internal group solidarity; identification with the country of origin; acting as transnational population, etc. However, several adjustments should be made to this traditional set of defining features of diaspora, which expand this concept and at the same time concretize it.

First of all, the category of diaspora includes representatives both of states and of non-state communities in the host country, such as ethnic or religious groups.

The issue of identification is also not as simple as it seems at first glance. In general, different groups attribute different meanings to this concept. In particular, for diaspora, who think of themselves as part of a nation but outside the state, identity is more valuable than for people inside the country who

experience it in their daily lives. This is why diaspora takes an active part in activities that support and sustain national identity, as they nourish their self-image (Shain & Barth, 2003). However, members of diaspora do not necessarily identify with their country of origin, but may be identified as such by others. In addition, the identification of diaspora members is usually twofold: they identify themselves both with their country of origin and their country of residence. Culturally and historically, Docker defined this double identification as “a sense of belonging to more than one history, to more than one time and place, to more than one past and future” (Docker, 2001) At the same time, members of diaspora are also characterized by the idea of themselves as a separate group with a common background, experience and sense of connection that distinguishes them from other groups within the host country and from compatriots in the country of their origin.

An important aspect in defining diaspora is the process of its formation: diaspora members or their ancestors have been dispersed from an original “nucleus”, and according to some researchers, this process is often associated with forced emigration. Taking this factor into account helps to draw a line between the diaspora itself and indigenous ethnic enclaves that may be formed outside the homeland due to changing borders. Involuntary resettlement is a condition that has a special impact on relations with the country of origin, fundamentally different attitudes and spiritual connection with it.

Therefore, there are many variables that complicate the precise and unambiguous definition of diaspora. This allows Brubaker (2005) to say that diaspora is not a homogeneous, close-knit group of people, but rather a “category of practice, project, claim and stance”, thus giving this notion of multidimensionality.

Diaspora represents the connectivity and mobility of the globalized world. As a community that is geographically separated from the country of origin, diaspora in many cases appears as an extension of its capacities. As a result, states are changing the way they think about diaspora and try to build mutually beneficial relations with it. Instead of considering members of diaspora as “lost” to the state, governments tend to create networks, mobilize groups or individuals, and engage them in cooperation, viewing them as a powerful tool of soft power. However, by endowing diaspora with a certain subjectivity and trying to persuade it to defend nation’s interests, states also undertake to develop mechanisms to protect the rights of diaspora in the host’s environment (Bravo, 2015).

Diaspora serves as an additional opportunity to achieve diplomatic goals, but at the same time challenges traditional diplomatic theory and practice. Living outside the country of origin, diaspora still claims legitimate stake in it, thus undermining the established understanding of the state, its nature and borders, as well as such traditional political institutions as loyalty and citizenship.

One could even say that, in a global context, diaspora can also be seen as part of a populace living outside the state. Despite its geographical detachment, it can act as one of the internal groups, because it resides “within the people”. This leads to the de facto recognition of the role of diaspora as the internal interest group in both the home country and the host country, and thus to the conceptualization of diaspora as a transnational actor capable of influencing politics in both countries. This influence is implemented by various means, and directly affects the domestic policies and processes in the respective countries, but each of the processes has a foreign policy context. This gives grounds for some researchers to position diaspora as neither fully domestic nor fully foreign actors, which calls into question the distinction between domestic and foreign policy as separate areas.

Diaspora activities within the host country always aim to influence government decisions and foreign policy in general towards the home country. The main means of achieving this goal is the ethnic lobby, whose role in liberal democracies is twofold: on the one hand, it is a manifestation of pluralism and forces that balance traditional political elites in shaping national interests; and on the other are designed to promote national interests of home country leading to decisions that may jeopardize national security and be out of tune of the national interests of the host country itself. Weight in the host country is often the main prerequisite for diaspora’s ability to influence the home country and a determinant of its diplomatic value. Moreover, the range of tools for realizing this influence is extremely wide - from direct investment in the economy to acquiring the role of cultural ambassadors and image-makers of the homeland.

The growing interest of diaspora communities in the domestic policy of home country is associated with innovations that promote this involvement, in particular, the development of technology and related opportunities for bilateral communication, empowerment of diaspora through providing outside nationals dual citizenship and electoral rights, and in general providing diaspora members with formal ways to influence the politics of the country of origin. According to Koslowsky (2005), these developments

indicate the so-called “globalization of domestic policy”.

The contribution of diaspora to the development of the home country can be tangible and intangible. Tangible contributions include economic remittances and homeland investments motivated both by economic gains and patriotic feelings. Diaspora can also come up with intangible contributions, namely, professional expertise and skill transfers, political influence, international networking, diplomatic functions of communication and mediation as well as cultural ambassadorship and nation-branding (Ionescu, 2006).

Diaspora has the potential to act as a mediator in times of political crises and conflicts between domestic political forces within the home country. Diaspora representatives appear to be the promoters of peace-building initiatives and negotiations, highlight the human rights situation in the home country during the crisis and directly lobby certain issues in the host country government and international organizations. Fitting mediator role to diaspora is due to the fact that, being at a considerable distance from the epicenter of the conflict, it is able to be outside the conflict and give an objective assessment to it, but still remain an interested stakeholder.

The borderline position of diaspora, which belongs to two countries and two cultures at the same time, stipulates another diplomatic function, namely mediation referred to as the ability of diaspora to act as an intermediary in interstate relations. In addition to ethnic lobby, diaspora can facilitate bilateral relations between host and home countries, transfer values, function as a bridge between societies and form cross-community relationships that go beyond the official, i.e. perform a number of public diplomacy functions.

It would be improperly to overlook the prominent role of diaspora in a relatively new, but no less important, strategy for positioning the state in the international arena – nation-branding. Creating and maintaining an image in today’s networked international environment determines how a country is perceived by the rest of the world, what values and qualities are attributed to it, and how these connotations resonate with the citizens’ vision of the country and nurture their patriotic feelings. In this context, diaspora is a kind of “brand ambassador”. They are able to act as a trustworthy source and present the country’s brand on an interpersonal level, promote home country goods and generate publicity for its cultural products (Aikins & White, 2011).

Given the specific status of diaspora, its involvement in what is recognized as “foreign affairs”, its ability to independently exercise agency in this area, we can conclude that diaspora can be considered as an independent actor. Acquiring the role of a diplomatic actor and an independent entity in the field of international politics implies freedom in its activities and motives: diaspora does not necessarily defend the interests of the state, but also offers alternative projects, pursues its aspirations, promotes its own position and more. The change in the status of diaspora from a vehicle of diplomacy to the role of a new diplomatic actor and stakeholder in the implementation of foreign policy is reflected in the formation of the concept of “diaspora diplomacy”.

Although the relationship between diplomacy and diaspora has been thoroughly studied from different angles, the very concept of diaspora diplomacy remains rather crude. This is due to the relative novelty of this concept in academic field as well as international politics, where realistic views continue to dominate. Equally important is the fact that diaspora diplomacy, like any other type of diplomacy, does not have a universal formula, and is determined by the peculiarities of the country’s history, its economic condition, social processes and so on. These factors along with the level of communication and interaction with diaspora can be crucial for diaspora’s decision to take a passive or active role in foreign and domestic policies, to act as a constructive or destructive actor.

Reducing diaspora diplomacy purely to relations with host and home countries significantly narrows the perception of diaspora communities and their subjectivity in globalized world politics. According to Ho and McConnell (2019), the key actors of diaspora diplomacy include state actors that engage with diasporas, non-state and international actors who are targets of its diplomatic activities and with whom diaspora enters into mutually beneficial relations. Thus, diaspora diplomacy is defined as “diaspora assemblages composed of states, non-state and other international actors that function as constituent components of assemblages, connected through networks and flows of people, information and resources”.

At the same time, the attention of states to diaspora, government initiatives to incorporate relations with foreign compatriot communities into their foreign policy strategy and efforts to institutionalize these relations is one of the indicators that diasporas are gaining diplomatic status on their own rights.

3 INSTITUTIONALIZATIONS OF DIASPORA RELATIONS IN LATVIA, UKRAINE AND UZBEKISTAN

3.1 Latvia Scores in Diaspora Diplomacy

States are becoming increasingly aware of the strategic importance of diaspora as a transnational agent of change, and this is the reason for the surge in the activity of states to institutionalize relations with their diasporas. Starting from the last decade of the 20th century, governments began to establish ministries and offices to engage diasporas, to establish mutually beneficial relationships with their compatriots abroad, based on the networking capabilities of their embassies and consulates. Israel, Ireland, Armenia, Australia, etc. are classic examples of countries that have long focused on diaspora policy, but we can add to this list a large list of countries from around the world that are promoting changes in the diplomatic sector on diaspora policy. By creating special bodies and agencies for diaspora affairs governments formalize their relations, and it is considered to be a step towards the establishment of effective institutions and relevant infrastructure. The institutionalization is set to carry on the relations between the country and its diaspora on common normative standards and value patterns. It involves the establishment of institutions in order to coordinate the relations, and their acceptance as empirical regularities rather than formal rules. The institutionalization efforts are one of indicators of the considerable change in the way countries view diaspora. The latter appears to be an ally rather than an instrument; and diaspora relations tend to shift from situational and problem-solving to long-term fundamental and of strategic value.

Latvia is one of the countries that actively implements diaspora strategies and policies. Intensification of efforts to establish cooperation with diaspora was set on in the mid-2000s, when EU accession and the opening of the labor market led to significant outmigration of the Latvian population. Economic migrants have become quantitatively predominant only in the last twenty years, but they have not been the only source of diaspora formation in which a significant role is played by the “old” diaspora, which left its homeland during previous waves of emigration, particularly during the world wars. The main points of concentration of Latvian emigrants are the United Kingdom, the United States,

Germany, Sweden and others. The percentage of emigrants in relation to the total population of Latvia is quite high - 17.8%, which is 332,220 people, while the level of impact on the Latvian economy remains insignificant. Thus, remittances in Latvia’s GDP are 3.3% (according to EUGDF).

Table 1: Top countries of the Latvian diaspora destination.

| Host country | Number of Latvian nationals abroad |
|----------------|------------------------------------|
| Russia | 89,368 |
| United Kingdom | 46,248 |
| Germany | 32,305 |
| USA | 27,172 |
| Ireland | 24,291 |

The growth of Latvian nationals living outside Latvia in the early 21st century has been the starting point for the Latvian government’s initiatives to manage relations with diaspora. Today the country has unfolded a well-organized infrastructure for diaspora relations. The main authority for the implementation of policy in this direction is vested in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia and its subordinate system of diplomatic and consular missions. Previously the main documents of strategic importance that coordinated the activities of the Latvian Foreign Office were The Guidelines on National Identity, Civil Society and Integration Policy for 2012-2018 and National Identity, Civil Society and Integration Policy Implementation Plan for 2019-2020. Today the overarching framework of diaspora policy in Latvia is established by the Diaspora Law (2019). It regulates key issues of cooperation with diaspora communities, establishes its basic principles and objectives, and provides for the existence of certain mechanisms for their implementation.

The adoption of the law was preceded by a series of discussions and consultations between the government and representatives of those directly affected by the forthcoming legislation. The diaspora representatives advocated a fairly broad interpretation of the concept of “diaspora”, which would include different categories of people who identify themselves as related to Latvia. It is this broad approach that has formed the basis for defining diaspora contained in the law as ‘permanently residing outside Latvia citizens of Latvia, Latvians and others who have a connection to Latvia, as well as their family members’. We agree with Birka and Kļaviņš (2019), who consider this “victory” of the diaspora to be a manifestation of the power of diaspora diplomacy.

According to the Diaspora Law, diaspora policy in Latvia is to be carried out on a systematic basis and have stable funding from the state budget. Preservation of Latvian language and culture, return migration encouraging, support of civic and political participation of the diaspora are key engagement policies for Latvians living abroad.

In the context of Latvia’s diaspora policy, it should also be mentioned that the law allows the acquisition of dual citizenship in the country for persons residing in the EU,

NATO and countries with which Latvia has concluded relevant agreements. The issue of dual citizenship is an important component of ensuring the participation of the diaspora in the political life of the country by providing its representatives with the possibility of direct electoral influence.

In order to coordinate diaspora policy, involve members and organizations of the diaspora in the processes of setting priorities and evaluating the effectiveness of this policy, the Diaspora Advisory Council has been established in Latvia. It consists of representatives delegated by public administration authorities, local governments as well as diaspora organizations, who have the opportunity to participate in the development of regulations, determine the agenda of diaspora policy and directly influence the implementation of this policy. One of the most important participants that represents the diaspora organizations in these processes is the World Federation of Free Latvians (PBLA). It serves as an umbrella organization to coordinate the work of overseas associations of Latvians abroad as well as a representative of the diaspora at the highest level.

One of the results of the Council’s work is the development of a Plan for Work with the Diaspora for 2021-2023, which became the first cross-sectoral policy planning document, containing objectives, expected results, performance indicators and deadlines for the implementation of all institutions related to diaspora issues.

3.2 Ukrainian Perspective

The situation with diaspora policy in Ukraine is somewhat different. Despite the significant number of representatives of the Ukrainian diaspora and high rates of emigration in recent decades, Ukraine has failed to formulate and implement a more or less full-fledged policy on the diaspora. The reasons for this include the predominance of domestic policy issues on the agenda, institutional weakness, conflicts within the political elite, and so on. For a long time, interaction with diaspora was considered by the Ukrainian government mainly in the cultural and educational context, implementing state programs to establish cultural ties with the diaspora and strengthen the affiliation of Ukrainians abroad with Ukraine, but these were sporadic measures that couldn’t make a significant difference in relations with compatriots outside Ukraine, and more difficult was to gain political or economic benefits from it. Only after experiencing a serious political crisis, unfolding of a military conflict in Ukraine and the subsequent economic downturn, has the Ukrainian government become increasingly aware of the benefits and advantages of involving diaspora and its ability to act as a soft power in the international arena. Therefore, at the moment, Ukraine can be described as a country that is finding its way to diaspora politics and diplomacy.

The urgent importance of this issue is due to the significant quantitative indicators of the Ukrainian diaspora. According to European Union Global Diaspora Facility, there are 5,901,067 people outside Ukraine, who make a significant contribution to the country’s economy

through remittances of 13.6% of GDP (according to EUGDF).

Table 2: Top countries of the Ukrainian diaspora destination.

| Host country | Number of Ukrainian nationals abroad |
|--------------|--------------------------------------|
| Russia | 3,269,248 |
| USA | 414,206 |
| Kazakhstan | 353,225 |
| Italy | 246,367 |
| Germany | 241,486 |

If we take into account the “old” diaspora, the numbers are more impressive: there are more than 20 million people living outside Ukraine who position themselves as Ukrainians (UWC, 2021). The particular political urgency of the issue is caused by the fact that the largest Ukrainian diaspora is in Russia, which needs special attention from the government.

We cannot but mention that in terms of terminology, Ukraine deviates somewhat from the concept of “diaspora”, instead using the concept of “foreign Ukrainians” in legislation and policy documents. Thus, in the relevant law, a foreign Ukrainian is defined as “a person who is a citizen of another state or a stateless person, as well as a Ukrainian ethnic origin or origin from Ukraine”. Moreover, this concept is quite formalized, because the law prescribes a clearly defined application process and the procedure for obtaining the status of a foreign Ukrainian. Every foreign citizen or stateless person of Ukrainian origin can obtain a special certificate of a foreign Ukrainian, which helps to keep records of Ukrainian nationals outside the home country. Recently, the government has proposed several improvements in the process of registering the Ukrainian diaspora, having introduced a specially designed smartphone app, as well as the possibility of foreign citizens to voluntarily register as a Ukrainian living abroad to receive assistance from Ukraine in emergencies.

The set of tasks that the Law on Foreign Ukrainians assigns to the main promoter of relations with the diaspora, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is quite revealing. The tasks on the list include: to establish cooperation with foreign Ukrainians, to help meet their national, cultural, educational and linguistic needs etc., i.e. mostly culturally oriented goals of a reactive nature. This formulation and respective policy imply the perception of the diaspora as an object in need of protection and assistance in meeting needs, rather than a self-sufficient entity capable of transmitting values and messages of various kinds (not just cultural) among foreign countries.

One of the basic documents defining the priorities of Ukraine’s diaspora policy was the National Concept of Cooperation with Foreign Ukrainians (2006), which enshrines the values and priorities in cooperation with Ukrainian nationals abroad, but does not provide specific mechanisms for their implementation. The vehicle to implement it was initiated by the Ukrainian government in the form of short-term programs and plans for relations with

foreign Ukrainians. Thus, during 2018-2020, a number of such documents were adopted, within which the diaspora policy is embedded within the framework of migration policy and protecting rights of foreign Ukrainians abroad. So, there is a gap in the policy implementation chain: the concept is followed by the tactics of implementation, while the strategy that should link the two is omitted.

In 2021, the Ukrainian government presented a draft of the Concept of the State Target Program of Cooperation with Foreign Ukrainians for the period up to 2023. Recognizing the potential of Ukraine’s multimillion Ukrainian community abroad to effectively advance Ukraine’s national interests abroad, the concept focuses on supporting and meeting the needs of foreign Ukrainians by the state, which aims to establish long-term, systematic relationships and integrated policies for diaspora. The project provides for the possibility of establishing a central executive body or involving the relevant central and local authorities to coordinate cooperation with foreign Ukrainians.

The institutionalization issue covers the need of coordinating diaspora organizations as well. According to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ukrainian diplomatic institutions cooperate with more than 500 public associations of foreign Ukrainians of various orientations. Among them, the largest is the World Congress of Ukrainians claimed to be a coordination superstructure of Ukrainian communities in the diaspora with broad functions and areas of concern. Although the organization was founded in 1967, Ukrainian government has not still worked out the institutional mechanism to coordinate with the organization considered to be a global voice of Ukrainian diaspora. Nowadays, the progress of cooperation with the World Congress of Ukrainians is on the stage of signed Memorandum of Cooperation.

The existing infrastructure of diaspora relations in Ukraine has a number of drawbacks: there is a lack of coordination between legislative acts and government programs. It is the result of the absent holistic vision of diaspora strategy as a systematic policy aimed at developing and managing relations between homeland and diasporic populations.

According to Lapshyna (2019), the main obstacle to building diaspora diplomacy and full-fledged involvement of diaspora in Ukraine is the government’s underestimation of the diaspora’s contribution to the development of the country. A number of serious political and economic crises in Ukraine have been factors in mobilizing and increasing the cohesion of Ukrainians living abroad. They became more involved in Ukrainian affairs and claimed to hold a legitimate stake in them. In addition, the Ukrainian diaspora has sufficient resources and power, and, last but not least, a desire to interact with the home country. However, Ukraine fails to capitalize on the willingness of its diaspora to engage in its domestic and foreign policy. In the absence of a coherent and comprehensive diaspora policy, adequate government infrastructure, functioning channels for interaction and established relations and trust in government, these aspirations remain unrealized.

3.3 Diaspora Engagement in Uzbekistan

Uzbekistan has also begun to pay attention to the diaspora and take the first steps in developing a diaspora policy.

Table 3: Top countries of the Uzbekistan diaspora destination.

| Host country | Number of Uzbek nationals abroad |
|--------------|----------------------------------|
| Russia | 1,146,535 |
| Kazakhstan | 294,395 |
| Ukraine | 222,012 |
| Turkmenistan | 67,075 |
| USA | 66,093 |

Despite the fact that, according to the European Union Global Diaspora Facility, the percentage of emigrants from the total population of Uzbekistan is only 6% (1,979,523 people), their contribution to GDP is significant - about 12%, which is almost \$7 million.

Uzbekistan also does not adhere to the concept of "diaspora" in the legislation, using the term "compatriot" instead. It covers people who were born or previously lived in Uzbekistan (and their descendants) who are not citizens of Uzbekistan and live abroad. It also includes foreign nationals or stateless persons who identify themselves as Uzbeks or Karakalpaks and want to maintain ties with their historical homeland.

The main goals of the state policy on cooperation with compatriots are set by the Resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan of October 25, 2018 No. PP-3982 on "measures for further enhancement of the state policy of the Republic of Uzbekistan in the sphere of cooperation with compatriots living abroad". The document contains general directions for cooperation with foreign Uzbeks, such as promoting their rights and freedoms, preserving cultural and spiritual heritage, maintaining ties and encouraging investment in Uzbekistan, etc. Specific implementation of these goals is provided by the National Concept of the State Policy of the Republic of Uzbekistan in the Field of Interethnic Relations and the Road Map on Its Implementation in 2019-2021.

Cooperation with compatriots is carried out through The Committee for Inter-Ethnic and Friendly Relations with Foreign Countries under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan. However, the broad orientation of this committee, which

includes foreign organizations and international associations, hinders targeted communication with diaspora representatives and prevents it from functioning as an effective diaspora policy institution. An important aspect of Uzbek diaspora policy is the regulation of labor migration, protection of the rights of Uzbek migrants, and so on. Thus, in 2020 the Presidential Decree on Measures to Introduce a System of Safe, Orderly and Legal Labor Migration was introduced. It provides new standards and conditions for those who go to work abroad (training and certification, insurance, financial and social support) as well as labor migrants returning from foreign countries (reintegration, professional development etc.). An important innovation in recent years is the government's strategy to encourage Uzbek high-skilled professionals who live abroad to return home. The emergence of this goal in the list of government priorities can be considered the starting point of a conscious policy of diaspora engagement. This can be traced in several initiatives aimed at engaging the foreign Uzbek nationals to dialogue and discussion on the development strategy of Uzbekistan. Among them - the creation in 2018 of the expert council Buyuk Kelajak, the establishment of the El-Yurt Umidi Foundation and more. Moreover, a number of highly qualified Uzbek nationals from abroad have taken up various positions in Uzbek government.

Despite the intensification of efforts on diaspora diplomacy, the challenge for Uzbekistan is to launch effective mechanisms for their implementation and to establish productive cooperation between government agencies and diaspora organizations. This is partly due to the lack of a long-term strategy in this field, as well as the issue of trust between the state and Uzbeks abroad.

3 CONCLUSIONS

States continue to view diaspora as a means of promoting their national interests abroad and attracting the resources available to diaspora for their benefit. However, the tendency to build relations with diaspora as an independent political entity with its own interests, set of tools and spheres of influence is becoming more and more pronounced, which leads to the crystallization of the diplomatic subjectivity of diaspora. The point of entry of diaspora into the modern diplomatic configuration are strategies within public diplomacy and the so-called "new diplomacy" of plural actors.

Given its specificity as an emerging non-state actor, diaspora contributes to the extension of diplomatic tools to achieve goals, and contests acknowledged practices and notions in diplomacy and international politics, thus changing traditional notions of diplomacy. Combining the world of domestic and foreign policy, diaspora is the political subjectivity of liminal nature, and this borderline position can be a source of innovation and new transformations in international politics.

Diaspora diplomacy performs an important function of introducing the country to other countries and keeping it in touch with the world. It is performed through the communication and mediation activities as well as representation of a nation-brand in both political, culture and interpersonal areas.

The development of a strategy for interaction with diaspora is an individual process in the case of each country. The influencing factors include historical and cultural background, history of relations between the state and the diaspora, coherence of diaspora political strategies with government policy in the home country, and the availability and degree of development of legitimate channels for communication and interaction.

The efforts towards institutionalization of diaspora diplomacy show that the country's diaspora community is gaining significance in foreign policy strategy. Building institutions and infrastructure to foster the relations with diaspora testifies both changes of perspectives towards diaspora on the local level and systemic shifts in global policy-making discourse.

Latvia is one of the countries in the process of developing and implementing diaspora diplomacy. This is evidenced by the number of efforts made to create the legislative and organizational infrastructure of diaspora policy, laid foundations for the institutionalization of diaspora relations, providing channels of bilateral communication with its members and more. Thanks to conscious and purposeful government efforts, the Latvian diaspora community has the opportunity to directly influence political life through its voting rights and dual citizenship, engage in mutually beneficial cooperation in various sectors of interest, and actively influence its own status, both internationally and in the home country. An important achievement of the development of diaspora diplomacy is the creation of a separate diaspora legislative framework in the form of the Diaspora Law, as well as a range of mechanisms and tactics aimed at implementing its provisions and subordinated to the overall diaspora strategy.

Despite the number of laws and histories of the implementation of programs to establish relations with Ukrainians abroad, in Ukraine there is no holistic vision of diaspora policy and the tasks it can perform. As a result of scattered, mostly culturally oriented initiatives, overlooking the potential positive impact of multilevel relations with diaspora, ignoring the role of diaspora as a means and actor of diplomacy, Ukraine does not currently have a comprehensive diaspora engagement policy. Critical to the creation of a full-fledged diaspora diplomacy in Ukraine is the need to pursue a proactive, holistic strategic policy to engage the diaspora as part of the foreign policy strategy. Relations with diaspora communities will be effective if they are carried out on many levels and are not tied to the courses of political forces.

Diaspora policy has also been on the agenda of the Uzbek government, which is working to establish ties with Uzbeks abroad. There are a number of pieces of legislation in the country that regulate relations with the diaspora, but they are either culturally oriented, as in the case of Ukraine, or focused on regulating labor migration. A notable trend is the government's efforts to involve highly qualified specialists of Uzbek origin in the development of the country's development strategy, based on the "brain gain" policy. However, these initiatives remain largely unfulfilled and the diaspora policy infrastructure remains in its infancy due to the lack of a self-sufficient long-term and proactive strategy for diaspora engagement as well as the lack of atmosphere of trust and cooperation.

When considering relations with diasporas of Latvia, Ukraine and Uzbekistan, we took into account only the "external" dimension of this concept. At the same time, the so-called "internal diasporas" - representatives of other countries living in their territory - can exercise no less influence on state development. This aspect needs a separate study, because different mechanisms for promoting relations and interaction are enacted.

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