DiPLO

Annual Report

2021

IMPRESSUM

[ ] This icon indicates that there is more
background material in the digital version.

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1. Introduction and message from the Director

This visual metaphor of fixing a plane while flying sums up Diplo's activities in 2021. It was a dynamic year where we had to fix our plane to remain a cutting-edge organisation while flying, i.e. delivering courses, conducting research, and organising events. My summary of 2021 focuses on these two aspects.

Fixing the plane – preparing Diplo 5.0

Since its inception, Diplo has had at least a three-year edge compared to similar academic and policy setups in terms of the use of technology and our understanding of digital developments. This was accomplished through strategic foresight in identifying key trends and the development of practical tools.

Diplo's pre-pandemic three-year edge of pioneering in online meetings and training started to dwindle as many big organisations began using online tools for training, meetings, and research in 2020. What was our exclusive niche in the late 1990s became a common space for many actors.

While we supported organisations in shifting online and achieving business continuity during the pandemic, we also reduced our strategic edge.

In 2020, we started laying the basis for Diplo 5.0 that would bring back our three-year edge going forward. This activity intensified in 2021 when Diplo 5.0 began to emerge around the smart interplay between digital, artificial intelligence (AI), and humans. At the core of this new approach is 'cognitive proximity' among humans, and between humans and

machines. In this nexus, new creative and organisational solutions are emerging from a new way of delivering courses to research and artistic support for Diplo's work.

In 2021, we laid the technical basis for a shift towards Diplo 5.0: We migrated all of our websites to a new platform, developed a new learning management system (LMS), and began using new AI-based tools.

Flying – delivering regular activities

While fixing the plane, we had to keep flying, i.e. delivering courses, organising events, and conducting research. As you can see in this report, we provided our regular services at the same quality and level as in previous years. Thus, our flying abilities were not damaged by dedicating a lot of energy to preparing Diplo 5.0.

Challenges and strategic planning

This transition was turbulent, putting a lot of pressure on our staff. With the return of in situ activities in Geneva, we experienced major pressure on our small Geneva staff who had to start organising and running physical events run remotely during the pandemic, mainly by tech experts based in Belgrade. This in situ pressure increased with the emergence of new organisations in the field of digital, technology, and science with strong funding and tens of staff members. For the 3–4 staff members in Diplo's office in Geneva, it became physically impossible to compete with these big systems.

At the same time, with weak funding and staff structures, we had to address a growing number of requests for support triggered by Diplo's high-quality, agile approach to courses, meeting organisation, and research. Additional demand was created by the increasing interest in digital diplomacy and governance, an area of Diplo's core expertise for decades.

To resolve this paradox of, on the one hand, a highly successful organisation and, on the other, weak and unsustainable funding, we initiated discussions with our core partners Malta and Switzerland regarding strategic support for Diplo. Currently, project funding without non-earmarked support puts a lot of pressure on us to do regular work (flying) while innovating (fixing the plane).

These discussions on the sustainability of Diplo's future are advancing well, and are hopefully laying the basis for a new funding and partnership framework in 2022 as we celebrate our 20th anniversary.

Thank you for your support and interest in our work.

Dr Jovan Kurbalija
Executive Director, DiploFoundation

2. Capacity development programmes and partnerships

Number of participants in online and blended courses

Year	Participants
2021	490
2020	547
2019	500

Course completion rate

Year	Rate
2021	89%
2020	89%
2019	91%
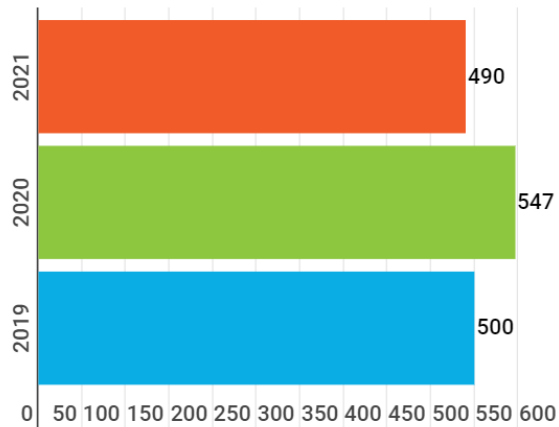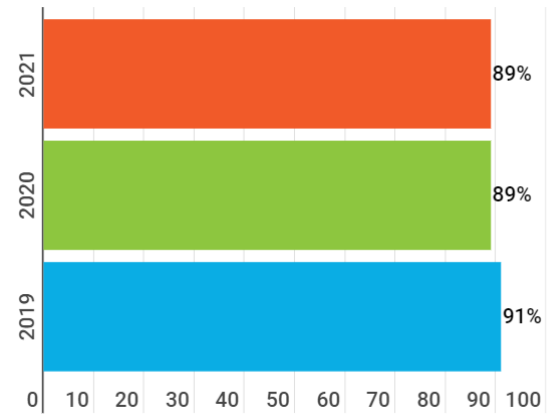
Number of countries represented

Year	Countries
2021	121
2020	132
2019	120
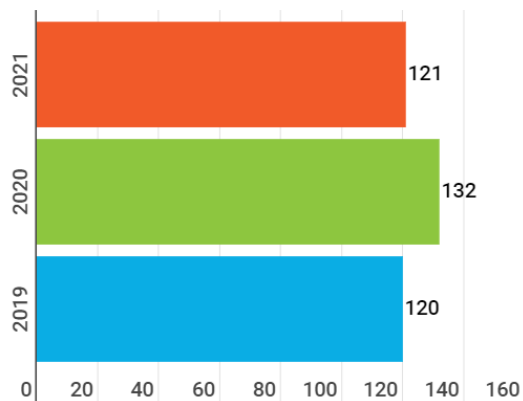
Number of lecturers, tutors, and course team members

Year	Members
2021	88, from 34 countries
2020	70, from 32 countries
2019	75, from 31 countries
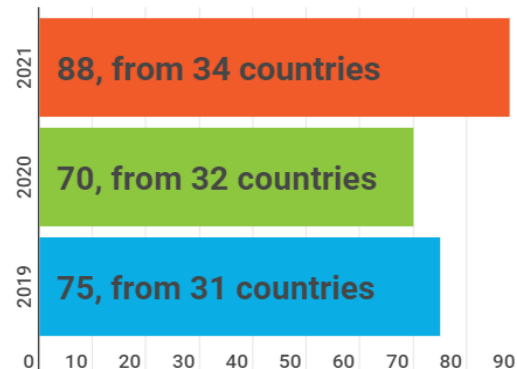
Number of online and blended courses

Year	Courses
2021	24
2020	26
2019	26

490 participants in 2021

490 participants in 2021

- Africa 131
- Europe 99
- North America 75
- Asia/Middle East 75
- Caribbean/C.America 49
- South America 47
- Australia/Oceania 14
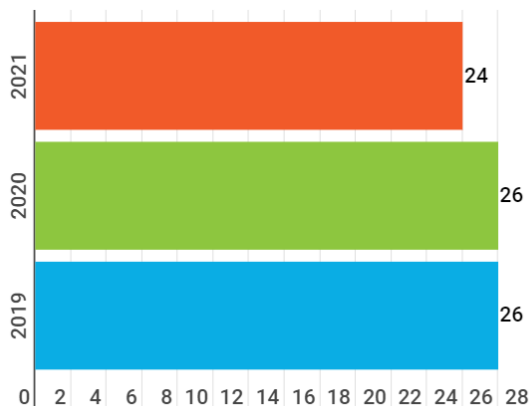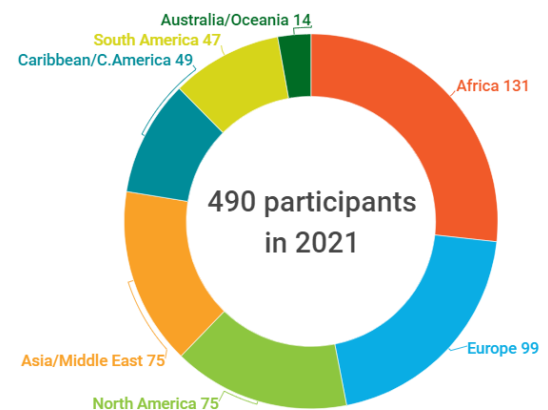
Origin
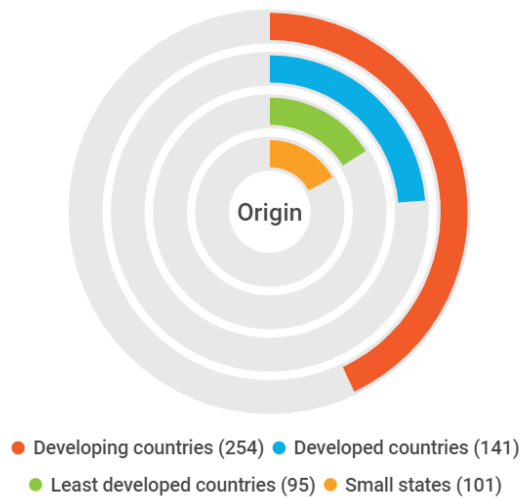
- Developing countries (254)
- Developed countries (141)
- Least developed countries (95)
- Small states (101)

- Developing countries (254)
- Developed countries (141)
- Least developed countries (95)

Gender

Gender

Male 271

Female 219

Sectors

Sector

Media and other sectors 7

Academia 25

Business 32

International organisations 69

Government 280

Civil society 77
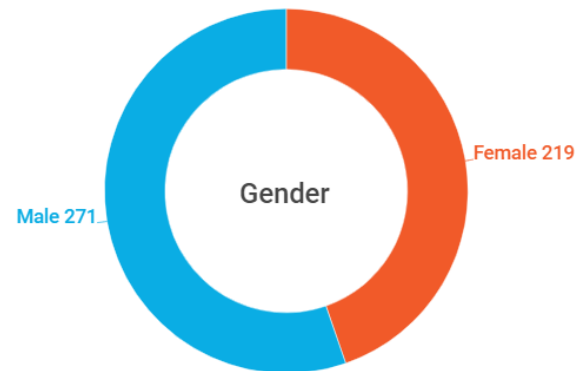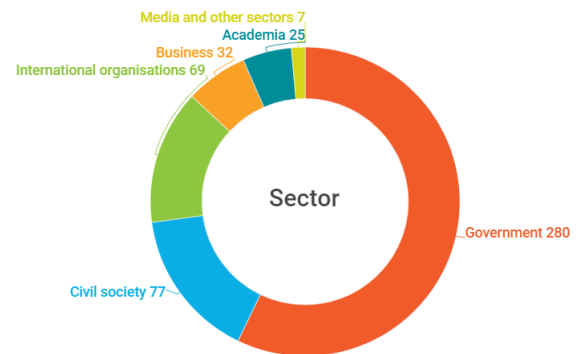
Participants made 18,879 hypertext entries (i.e. comments made by course participants on the texts provided in online classrooms), while moderators made 6,836 entries.

Diplo's capacity development programmes in 2021 included online courses and the Master in Contemporary Diplomacy programme, the Capacity Development for Knowledge and Agenda 2030 programme, and other blended and online programmes offered through collaboration with various partners.

2.1 Online courses and Master in Contemporary Diplomacy

Diplo offers an extensive range of online courses on diplomacy and internet governance aimed at diplomats and others working in the field of international relations, including civil servants and government officials, staff of international and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), academics, journalists, businesspeople, and students of diplomacy. Diplo's courses are offered through four different modes of study:

- Certificate courses (participants enrol with Diplo and receive a certificate from Diplo on successful completion).
- University of Malta accredited courses (participants enrol at the University of Malta and receive ECTS credits).[1]
- As part of the Master/Postgraduate Diploma in Contemporary Diplomacy offered in cooperation with the University of Malta.
- As part of the Advanced Diploma in Internet Governance (for courses with an internet governance focus).

2.1.1 Certificates and accredited courses

Participants in Diplo's interactive online courses learn in small groups of 12 to 25, led by an expert lecturer or lecturing team. Learning takes place in an online classroom where participants find course readings, learning activities, assignments, and tools for online learning. Each week, participants read and discuss the lecture text for that week, adding comments, questions, arguments, references, and other contributions using hypertext entries. Lecturers and other participants read and respond to these entries, creating interactions based on the text.

During the week, participants complete additional activities (e.g. further discussion via blogs or forums, quizzes, group tasks, simulations, or short assignments). At the end of the week, participants and lecturers meet online in a chat room to discuss the week's topic. Courses require a minimum of five to seven hours of study time per week.

In 2021, Diplo offered 19 certificate courses, most with a diplomacy or digital policy focus:
- 21st Century Diplomacy
- Artificial Intelligence: Technology, Governance, and Policy Frameworks
- Bilateral Diplomacy
- Capacity Development
- Cybersecurity
- Digital Commerce
- Diplomacy of Small States
- Diplomatic Law: Privileges and Immunities
- Diplomatic Theory and Practice

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[1] European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) is a standard means for comparing academic credits.

- E-Diplomacy
- Economic Diplomacy
- Internet Technology and Policy: Challenges and Solutions
- Introduction to Internet Governance
- Language and Diplomacy
- Multilateral Diplomacy
- Online Meetings and Conferences: How to Run Effective and Secure Events
- Public Diplomacy
- NEW! Cybersecurity Diplomacy
- NEW! Science Diplomacy

As in previous years, some course participants registered directly, while others were enrolled by their ministry of foreign affairs (MFA). Participants had the option of applying for most of these courses via the University of Malta to obtain ECTS credits.

Further online courses and training programmes were offered in cooperation with the Geneva Internet Platform (GIP) and various international partners (Section 2.5).

2.1.2 Master/Postgraduate Diploma in Contemporary Diplomacy

The Master/Postgraduate Diploma (PGD) in Contemporary Diplomacy[link], offered in cooperation with the University of Malta, is a 16–20-month blended learning programme involving an online workshop and courses, and a Master's dissertation. Participants in this programme can select a specialisation in internet governance by attending several required courses and writing their dissertation on an internet-governance-related topic.

In 2021, 19 participants – diplomats and other international relations professionals – were accepted to the Master/PGD in Contemporary Diplomacy. These included five participants who selected the internet governance specialisation. With the support of the government of Malta, Diplo offered partial scholarships (ranging from a 20% to 50% reduction in programme fees) to 11 participants from developing countries in Africa, Asia, and South America. Table 1 shows the geographical distribution of participants.

Table 1: Geographical distribution of Master/PGD 2021 participants

Africa	11
South America	2
North America	2
Europe	3
Pacific	1

Following Diplo's blended-learning approach, participants began the programme by attending a three-week online workshop which focused on building practical skills for diplomacy, in areas such as language and influence, diplomatic protocol and etiquette, internet governance, e-diplomacy, negotiation, public

diplomacy, and public speaking. Participants were also introduced to the online classroom and brushed up on their academic study skills.

During the online learning phase, participants selected and completed five courses from Diplo's catalogue. At this point, they were eligible to obtain the PGD in Contemporary Diplomacy or to begin writing their Master's dissertation (in the second year of the programme). Dissertation work involves individual research and writing, in close contact with a supervisor. Candidates are expected to prepare and submit a 25,000-word dissertation over a period of five months (full time) or nine months (part time).

In 2021, nine participants who had started the Master/PGD programme in 2020 began to write their dissertations (Table 2).

Table 2: Dissertations commenced in 2021

Name	Country	Dissertation Title
Tabitha Namulinda	Uganda	*Opportunities, risks and challenges of 5G wireless technology in developing countries.*
Rowena Farrugia	Malta	*Diplomats in cyberspace: A study of the role and challenges of the foreign policy community in the fifth operational domain*
Nanjira Sambuli	Kenya	*Global governance of digital technologies: A contemporary diplomacy challenge*
Stacy Danika Alcantara-Garcia	Philippines	*Smart consulates: Developing a blueprint for integrating emerging digital technologies into consular affairs*
Janet Charles	Dominica	*Rethinking diplomacy: How small states can leverage new media for the conduct of diplomacy in the digital age.*
Romancia Magloire	Saint Lucia	*A review of Consular Diplomacy of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) in the Caribbean Region amidst the COVID-19 pandemic: The impact of external factors in the decision making process undertaken by the OECS member states during the COVID-19 pandemic*
David Omwoyo	Kenya	*New wine, old wineskins: Challenges facing Kenyan content regulators in the internet era*
Bala Dada	Nigeria	*Access to digital and online resources in basic education for Nigerian children; challenges the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted and lessons for tomorrow.*
Adam Sofronijevic	Serbia	*Novel aspects of cultural diplomacy in the age of artificial intelligence*

Four of the candidates who started writing their dissertation in 2021 submitted their work and were to graduate during the COVID-delayed ceremony held in early 2022; two other candidates submitted their work at the end of 2021 and will graduate in 2022; the remaining candidates are currently finalising their

dissertations or waiting for examination results. They will graduate in 2023, following approval of their dissertations.

In November 2021, the University of Malta awarded the Master in Contemporary Diplomacy to seven candidates who began dissertation work in 2019 and 2020.

2.1.3 Advanced Diploma in Internet Governance

The Advanced Diploma in Internet Governance[link], introduced in 2016, gives current and future internet policymakers a solid foundation in the practical and diplomatic skills and techniques necessary to engage effectively in international global policy processes. To obtain the diploma, participants must successfully complete three of five technology-related courses (Introduction to Internet Governance; E-Diplomacy; Internet Technology and Policy: Challenges and Solutions; Cybersecurity; or Artificial Intelligence: Technology, Governance, and Policy Frameworks) within a three-year period. In 2021, eight participants were awarded the Advanced Diploma, while four other participants were actively pursuing the Diploma.

2.2 Scholarships offered by the government of Malta

The government of Malta is one of Diplo's most important partners in online learning. In 2021, they allocated funds to support scholarships for applicants from developing countries to attend Diplo courses:

- Through the *Small States Fellowship* programme, 34 participants from the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Guyana, Jamaica, Malta, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines,Samoa, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago attended various courses throughout 2021.
- Through the *Malta Scholarships* programme*,* full or partial support enabled 57 participants from 28 developing countries to attend online courses.
- Ten participants from Botswana, Brazil, Lesotho, Malta, Namibia, Peru, Senegal, Somalia, South Africa, and Tanzania were supported through partial scholarships to attend the Master/Postgraduate Diploma in Contemporary Diplomacy.

Funding from the government of Malta also supported updates and improvements to online course materials, research and development for new courses, and maintenance of the technology infrastructure to support online learning.

2.3 Capacity Development for Knowledge and Agenda 2030

Collaboration with the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) continued in 2021, thanks to a contract covering the years 2020–2022. Diplo has worked on:
- Developing and strengthening the capacity of small and developing countries to facilitate their participation in global digital policy processes. As part of this effort, scholarships were provided to assist seven candidates from SDC priority developing countries to attend Diplo's online courses on Capacity Development, Humanitarian Diplomacy, and Sustainable Development Diplomacy.
- Increasing Diplo's contribution to the 2030 Agenda and global support of UN reform, including contributing to the implementation of the Report of the UN High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation.
- Assisting the SDC with internal capacity building to reap the benefits of digitalisation through the organisation of tailored webinars for SDC staff.
- Strengthening Diplo's institutional effectiveness and set-up, thus strengthening its global impact.

2.4 Civil society in internet governance

In 2021, Diplo's work was again supported by funding to Diplo US from the Ford Foundation. Diplo supports the involvement of civil society actors in digital policy and internet governance.

Governments of small and developing countries can find it challenging to navigate the complex digital environment and its impact on everyday life. It is often difficult for them to involve other stakeholders – in particular the private sector and civil society (NGOs, the technical community, academia, and the media). These stakeholders should be able to directly participate in policy-shaping and impact decisions, providing they understand digital policies and the relevant political and diplomatic processes. They must be given the opportunity to meaningfully engage. Robust and inclusive internet governance must reflect the growing relevance of the internet for global economic, social, and political life. Many small and developing countries in general and their civil societies in particular are excluded from international digital processes for a wide range of reasons.

Through the support of the Ford Foundation, Diplo's work was strengthened and expanded to provide stronger support to civil society. It has helped boost participation of civil society in courses and training and provide 14 full and partial scholarships to course participants from civil society.

2.5 Training partnerships with MFAs, diplomatic academies, and other academic institutions

2.5.1 Instituto Matias Romero of the Mexican Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Diplo's cooperation with Instituto Matias Romero (IMR) of the Mexican MFA began in 2004, when the institute first enrolled participants in Diplo's online courses. The memorandum of understanding between Mexico, Malta, and Switzerland on diplomatic training, which provides a framework for this cooperation, was last renewed in 2018[link]. Through this agreement, the IMR enrols diplomats in Diplo's online courses and cooperates with Diplo on other educational initiatives.

Since 2004, more than 650 diplomats from Mexico have attended Diplo's online training courses, with 58 participants enrolling in 2021.

2.5.2 International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

In 2021, Diplo and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) continued to run the bi-annual 12-week Online Diploma Course in Humanitarian Diplomacy, marking the ninth year of cooperation. The course consists of an eight-week interactive online learning phase that introduces participants to humanitarian diplomacy concepts, actors, and tools, including persuasion and negotiation; and a four-week research phase during which participants prepare a 5,000-word paper on a topic of relevance to their professional development or interests.

In 2021, the course was offered to groups of 26 and 27 participants, starting in February and September, respectively. While the course materials and instruction were in English, participants were given the option to write their research papers in French or Spanish. Interest in the course remained high and the post-course feedback indicated a high level of satisfaction.

2.5.3 EIPA – European Institute of Public Administration

In 2021, Diplo delivered two training seminars on diplomatic protocol and etiquette for European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA) officials. The seminars were delivered by Diplo faculty member Olaph Terribile.

2.5.4 Asia-Europe Foundation Public Diplomacy Training

In 2021, Diplo delivered the 9th Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) Public Diplomacy Training (formerly the Asia-Europe Public Training Initiative) in cooperation with ASEF. The training consisted of a 6-week online course starting in October, offered to a group of 22 participants.

This programme was set up in 2013 by ASEF , Diplo, and the National Centre for Research on Europe – University of Canterbury, to help promote and facilitate skills training for diplomats and civil society actors. The aim of the initiative is to improve public diplomacy efforts between the countries of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) process.

Training sessions have been offered annually from 2014 to 2021, with nine tutored online courses and seven face-to-face training sessions held in Geneva (Switzerland), Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia), Bangkok (Thailand), The Hague (Netherlands), Jakarta (Indonesia), Vienna (Austria), and Siem Reap (Cambodia).

With positive feedback from participants, the project has generated great interest from all stakeholders, resulting in project continuation in 2022, with the 10th delivery of the online course scheduled for August 2022.

2.5.5 Organization of American States

Through Diplo's office in the USA, we initiated a new partnership with the Organization of American States (OAS), contributing to their capacity building efforts in digital policy for member states. After a successful run of the first course on Digital Policy and Diplomacy 2020, and following positive feedback from course participants, the same course was offered again in 2021 to a group of 21 participants from 15 OAS member states. The cooperation will continue in 2022.

2.5.6 Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF)

In 2021, in line with its core mission, Diplo initiated a new partnership with the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF) to strengthen the participation of francophone communities from developing countries in global and regional digital policy processes. This course set an important milestone for Diplo as it is the first ever programme on Internet Governance delivered fully in French. The course ran from January to March 2022 and was delivered to 27 participants from OIF member states and governments. Based on the success of this first pilot programme, Diplo is renewing its cooperation with the OIF and is planning a second iteration of the course in autumn 2022.

The cooperation framework also included the publication of seven issues (four in 2021, three in 2022) of the Digital Watch monthly newsletter in French with two additional pages of exclusive francophone content. More information in this regard can be found in Section 3.4.1 of this report.

2.5.7 International Trade Centre and CUTS International, Geneva

For the past five years, Diplo, the International Trade Centre (ITC), CUTS International, and the Geneva Internet Platform (GIP) have jointly offered the Digital Commerce Course, targeted at Geneva-based diplomats and capital-based officials from developing and least developed countries (LDCs). This course fulfils a two-fold aim: to provide diplomats with neutral and factual knowledge necessary to formulate their development-oriented priorities in e-commerce negotiations; and to enhance coherence between international and national policy-making in this area, contributing to embedding e-commerce in broader development strategies. The course has filled a crucial gap in the e-commerce capacity-building landscape by providing just-in-time policy-oriented support for government officials. It has also made a substantive impact in enhancing participants' knowledge of digital trade issues and their capacity to actively take part in e-commerce negotiations, as shown by the results of a tracer survey, conducted with course alumni. The impact of the course and the results of the tracer survey have been analysed in the publication Digital Commerce course: A five-year assessment (Section 6.8)

2.6 Diplo's alumni network

Diplo's alumni network continued to grow in 2021, reaching over 6,700 members from 208 countries and territories by the end of the year (refer to the interactive alumni map[link]). We engage with the alumni network regularly, keeping them up to date with activities, projects, study opportunities, new publications, and more.

In 2021, alumni continued to join the closed Facebook group created in 2017. The platform helps alumni share updates, brainstorm new ideas, and network in an informal setting. In 2021, the group membership increased to over 500 members.
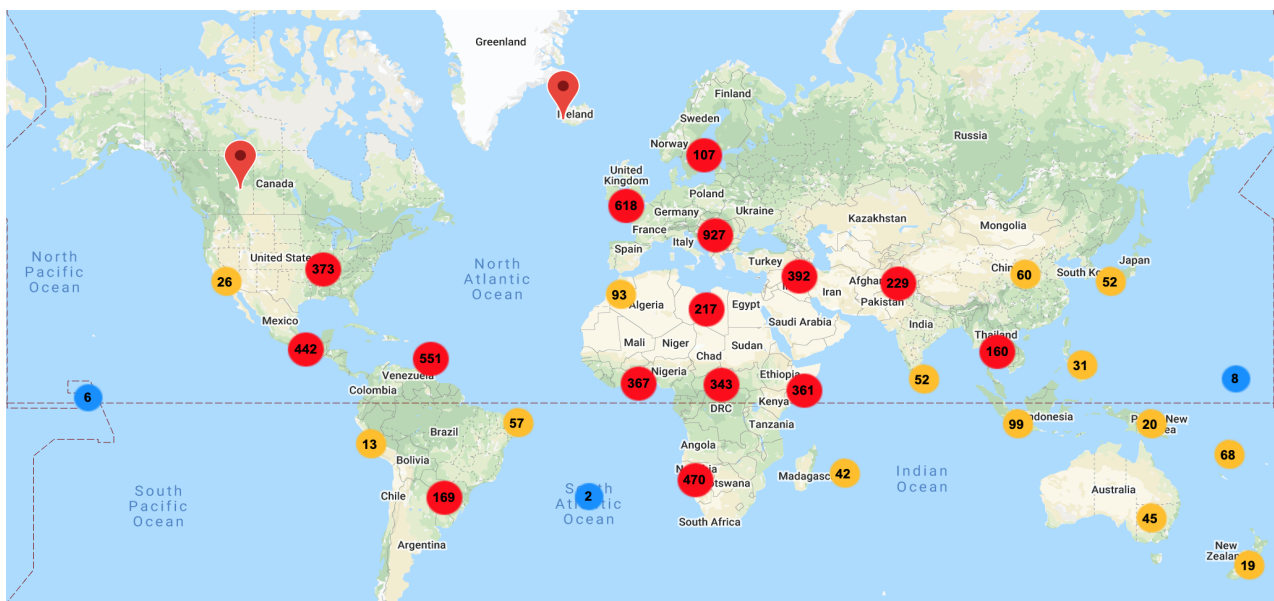
Diplo's alumni map

2.7 Work on the new learning management system

On 24 September 2021, Diplo and the Swiss Federal Department for Foreign Affairs (FDFA) signed a contract for a project: Enabling 'Next-Generation' E-Learning for Diplomats.

The goal of the project was to develop **a new e-learning environment,** an e-learning platform based on the capacity development methodology developed by Diplo over the last two decades. The new platform will enable Swiss authorities and Diplo to deliver next-generation e-learning for diplomats, meet the needs and expectations for contemporary capacity building, and follow the leading standards both in terms of security and user expectations.

The specific aims of the platform were set as follows:

- Enable next-generation e-learning for diplomats and professionals based on state-of-the-art technology and Diplo's unique capacity-building experience.
- Unlock the potential for advancements in e-learning methodology and didactics, given the particular needs and challenges of diplomats and professionals.
- Improve usability for busy professionals and diplomats, particularly taking into account those in developing countries.
- Allow Switzerland and Diplo to remain leaders in global online capacity building for diplomats.
- Showcase Switzerland as a supporter of capacity development programmes in digital policy, especially for small and developing countries.

The work on the new LMS that started in autumn 2021 will continue in 2022.

3. Geneva Internet Platform

The GIP in numbers

9 reporting initiatives from major internet governance events
10 Internet governance briefings
10 issues of the GIP Digital Watch newsletter in English and French
52 weekly digests

The GIP, an initiative supported by the Swiss authorities and operated by Diplo, completed its eighth year of operation.

3.1 Geneva Engage Awards

The annual Geneva Engage Awards recognise International Geneva actors in their social media outreach, online engagement, and efforts towards more inclusive online meetings. Geneva Engage examines links between International Geneva and communities from around the world that are affected by the policies discussed and negotiated in Geneva in areas such as development, human rights, and digital issues. The three categories of the Geneva Engage Awards are International Organisations, Non-Governmental Organisations and Associations, and Permanent Representations to the United Nations in Geneva.

The event took place on 18 February 2021.

3.2 Digital Watch observatory

The GIP Digital Watch observatory, launched in 2015, is a comprehensive internet governance and digital policy observatory. The platform provides a neutral one-stop shop for live developments, overviews and explanatory texts, events, resources, and other content related to internet governance and digital policy.

3.2.1 Website overhaul

In 2021, the observatory underwent a significant overhaul to improve its visibility on search engines and make it even more user friendly. Here are the main aspects of improvement:

- The website was migrated from Drupal to WordPress while preserving the site's distinctive design and structure to the greatest extent.
- The primary themes that Digital Watch keeps track of are no longer called issues but topics. This was done in order to harmonise different taxonomies across Diplo's websites and have a uniform tagging system.
- Transition to the new website made the most of the abundance of features and functionalities that WordPress offers; another advantage of this platform is its ease of use, which allows more people to create and edit content.
- Significant attention was given to search engine optimisation (SEO) in that the meta information on the content pages was updated for better SEO positioning on search engines.

3.2.2 Record-breaking number of visitors

Thanks to major improvements to the website and to communication efforts, which built on the work carried out in previous years, in 2021 dig.watch website attracted more users. The year-on-year comparison of users visiting dig.watch shows that 2021 had an increase of 46% over 2020.
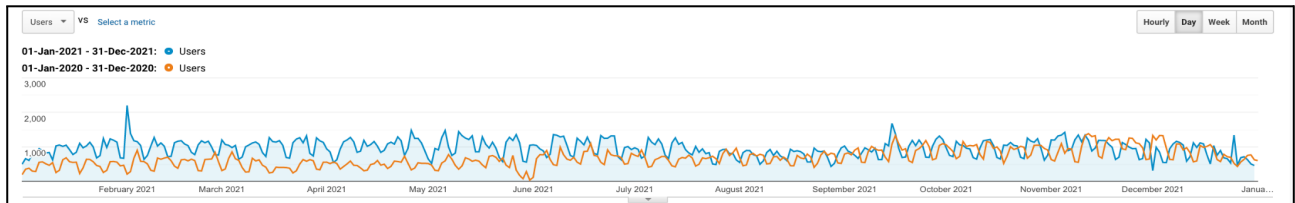
Comparison of number of users in 2021 vs 2020

As observed since the launch of the observatory, most users outside of Switzerland are from the biggest internet countries: the USA, India, the UK, and China. Developing countries remained among the top 10 countries for users.

3.3 Briefings and policy dialogues on digital policy

In 2021, the GIP organised and co-organised several policy dialogues. The main events are now described.

3.3.1 Monthly briefings

The GIP monthly briefings on internet governance and digital policy are a one-hour live event on the last Tuesday of every month (except July and December), for a total of 10 briefings a year.

The briefings, which have been running since the start of the GIP project, round up the main trends and the policy discussions of the month. The following briefings were held in 2021:

- 26 January – [Briefing #71] Internet governance in January 2021
- 23 February – [Briefing #72] Internet governance in February 2021
- 30 March – [Briefing #73] Internet governance in March 2021
- 27 April – [Briefing #74] Internet governance in April 2021
- 25 May – [Briefing #75] Internet governance in May 2021
- 29 June – [Briefing #76] Internet governance in June 2021
- 31 August – [Briefing #77] Internet governance in July and August 2021
- 28 September – [Briefing #78] Internet governance in September 2021
- 26 October – [Briefing #79] Internet governance in October 2021
- 30 November – [Briefing #80] Internet governance in November 2021

3.3.2 Tech Attachés circle

The GIP has created an informal network of diplomats covering digital policy issues at permanent missions in Geneva. Last year, this group has further settled and the membership has grown, reaching almost 50 members.

The GIP provides support to tech attachés, driven by their needs. We regularly communicate with them, meet them, and exchange ideas. We organise informal closed-door meetings and briefings on issues they need support with (e.g. e-commerce, ITU navigation, digital standards). Health measures permitting, we also provide networking opportunities.

3.3.3 From Geneva: Reflections on the Digital Future series

In the second half of 2021, the GIP partnered with the Permanent Mission of Slovenia (Slovenia held the EU presidency), the Permanent Mission of Switzerland, and the Delegation of the EU. We organised a series of dialogues titled *From Geneva: Reflections on digital future* which discussed issues of importance for the Geneva and global audiences:

22 September – Data economy: Human-centric approach at the forefront
14 October – Digitalisation powering environmental protection
3 November – Harnessing AI's power for health
15 December – Technology for Development

The well-attended events also provided an opportunity to showcase innovative hybrid events, delivered from the Geneva ConfTech space.

3.3.4 12 Tours to navigate digital Geneva

In November 2020, the GIP launched the Geneva Digital Atlas, a state-of-the-art mapping of current actors, processes, and legal instruments dealing with digital in Geneva. The Atlas showed that most of the issues and processes are cross-cutting and transversal to the work of many organisations. It serves as a basis for several build-up events.

Because of this wide variety, in 2021, the GIP's 12 Tours helped practitioners navigate Geneva's rich digital policy and cultural scene through monthly thematic discussions (i.e. tours).

More details of each tour can be found at https://dig.watch/12tours

3.3.5 Road to Bern via Geneva series of dialogues

Due to the pandemic, the 2020 UN World Data Forum was postponed to 2021, and the Road to Bern via Geneva series of dialogues was extended into 2021. This series of discussions was led by the GIP and the Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the UN in Geneva in preparation for the UN World Data Forum in Bern.

Following Diplo and the GIP's efforts in 2020 in four discussions and the launch of the Data Sandbox, two more dialogues were organised in 2021, together with the session How the international Geneva ecosystem can bring its contribution towards an enhanced data integration to better achieve SDGs at the UN World Data Forum in October 2021.

3.4 Digital Watch newsletter

Every month, the GIP publishes a range of materials, from newsletters and reports to flyers and awareness-raising content.

3.4.1 Monthly

The Digital Watch newsletter is the GIP's monthly newsletter, published with Diplo's support. The newsletter includes a summary of the main digital policy trends, a round-up of developments per thematic area, analyses of topical issues, a summary of the main discussions in Geneva, and a lighter section for announcements or crosswords.

Some French translations were published in collaboration with the OIF, and also included news from the organisation (Section 2.5.6).

The following issues were published in January–December 2021:
- Issue 56, January 2021 | Also available in French
- Issue 57, February 2021 | Also available in French
- Issue 58, March 2021 | Also available in French
- Issue 59, April 2021 | Also available in French
- Issue 60, May 2021 | Also available in French
- Issue 61, June 2021 | Also available in French
- Issue 62, September 2021 | Also available in French
- Issue 63, October 2021 | Also available in French
- Issue 64, November 2021 | Also available in French
- Issue 65, December 2021 | Also available in French

3.4.2 Weekly

The weekly digest, launched in 2020, continued providing weekly updates straight to people's inboxes, every Friday, for a total of 52 issues in 2021.

Weekly Digest 15 - 8 January 2021	Weekly Digest 41 - 9 July 2021
Weekly Digest 16 - 15 January 2021	Weekly Digest 42 - 16 July 2021
Weekly Digest 17 - 22 January 2021	Weekly Digest 43 - 23 July 2021
Weekly Digest 18 - 29 January 2021	Weekly Digest 44 - 30 July 2021
Weekly Digest 19 - 5 February 2021	Weekly Digest 45 - 6 August 2021
Weekly Digest 20 - 12 February 2021	Weekly Digest 46 - 13 August 2021
Weekly Digest 21 - 19 February 2021	Weekly Digest 47 - 20 August 2021
Weekly Digest 22 - 26 February 2021	Weekly Digest 48 - 27 August 2021
Weekly Digest 23 - 5 March 2021	Weekly Digest 49 - 4 September 2021
Weekly Digest 24 - 12 March 2021	Weekly Digest 50 - 10 September 2021
Weekly Digest 25 - 19 March 2021	Weekly Digest 51 - 18 September 2021
Weekly Digest 26 - 26 March 2021	Weekly Digest 52 - 24 September 2021
Weekly Digest 27 - 2 April 2021	Weekly Digest 53 - 1 October 2021
Weekly Digest 28 - 9 April 2021	Weekly Digest 54 - 8 October 2021
Weekly Digest 29 - 16 April 2021	Weekly Digest 55 - 15 October 2021
Weekly Digest 30 - 23 April 2021	Weekly Digest 56 - 22 October 2021
Weekly Digest 31 - 30 April 2021	Weekly Digest 57 - 29 October 2021
Weekly Digest 32 - 7 May 2021	Weekly Digest 58 - 5 November 2021

Weekly Digest 33 - 14 May 2021	Weekly Digest 59 - 12 November 2021
Weekly Digest 34 - 21 May 2021	Weekly Digest 60 - 19 November 2021
Weekly Digest 35 - 28 May 2021	Weekly Digest 61 - 26 November 2021
Weekly Digest 36 - 4 June 2021	Weekly Digest 62 - 3 December 2021
Weekly Digest 37 - 11 June 2021	Weekly Digest 63 - 10 December 2021
Weekly Digest 38 - 18 June 2021	Weekly Digest 64 - 17 December 2021
Weekly Digest 39 - 25 June 2021	Weekly Digest 65 - 24 December 2021
Weekly Digest 40 - 2 July 2021	Weekly Digest 66 - 31 December 2021

3.4.3 The monthly Cyber Detente Barometer

The meeting between US President Joe Biden and Russian President Vladimir Putin in Geneva, on 16 June 2021, was touted as a milestone in the relations between the two countries and marked the start of a cyber detente between Russia and the USA. The Digital Watch observatory continues to monitor the state of the cyber detente through the monthly Cyber Detente Barometer, which is symbolically sent to subscribers on the 16th of each month.

As of December 2021, six issues of the Cyber Detente Barometer had been published.
- Cyber Detente Barometer 1 – 16 July 2021
- Cyber Detente Barometer 2 – 16 August 2021
- Cyber Detente Barometer 3 – 16 September 2021
- Cyber Detente Barometer 4 – 16 October 2021
- Cyber Detente Barometer 5 – 16 November 2021
- Cyber Detente Barometer 6 – 16 December 2021

3.5 Just-in-time reporting initiatives

Between January and December 2021, the GIP team of rapporteurs published reports from many digital policy events. The just-in-time nature of GIP reporting initiatives ensured that all reports were published within hours of the end of any session.
- OEWG Third Substantive Session (8–13 March): A team of GIP rapporteurs followed the discussions extensively, reported from all sessions, and produced 11 reports.
- STI Forum 2021 (3–5 May): Six reports from selected sessions related to digital policy.
- 24th Session of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (17–21 May): Four reports from the main sessions.
- WSIS Forum 2021 Final Week (17-21 May): Ten reports covering all sessions in the final week of the WSIS Forum 2021.
- OEWG 2021-2025 Organisational Session (1 June): One report from the session.
- EuroDIG 2021 and EuroDIG Extra (28–30 June): The GIP was EuroDIG's official reporting partner for EuroDIG 2021. The team of rapporteurs provided key messages and 18 session reports covering all workshops.
- WTO Public Forum 2021 (28–30 September): Twelve reports from a selection of sessions on digital policy.

- [Internet Governance Forum (IGF) 2021](#) (6–10 Dec): During the IGF, the GIP team of rapporteurs published 107 session reports. Reporting from IGF2021 was a mix of two components: traditional rapporteuring and auto-generated summaries (Section 5.1). The first is the work of expert curators, who followed every session and reported on the most salient topics. The second is the work of Diplo's AI Lab, which created an AI-powered system for generating summaries. The automated summaries can be viewed by following the links at the bottom of each IGF session report. The GIP also prepared four newsletters ([IGF Daily 1](#), [IGF Daily 2](#), [IGF Daily 3](#), [IGF Daily 4](#)) during the IGF, summarising the discussions on a daily basis. At the end of the IGF, the team published the [IGF Report](#) comprising findings from data analysis of the transcripts and summarising the discussions. The IGF 2021 Final Report was prepared by the GIP and Diplo, with the support of the Internet Society.
- [UN OEWG 2021](#)–[2025 First Substantive Session](#) (13–17 Dec): Eight thematic reports covering all sessions. The team also prepared a map in collaboration with Diplo's AI Lab (Section 5.2), which shows the stances actors have taken when it comes to a number of open issues in cybersecurity negotiations.

4. ConfTech: From onsite to online

ConfTech in numbers in 2021

Training
1 course on online meetings
109 course participants from **58** countries

Help Desk
Assisted **20+** organisations, organising more than 20 sessions and conference tracks.

Resources
9 more online conferencing platforms analysed, bringing the total to 40
11 more how-to manuals, bringing the total to 35

In spring 2020, when restrictions began to be imposed globally due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Diplo saw an opportunity to share years of accumulated knowledge and assist practitioners and organisations in adjusting to the new, online working environment.The effort was sustained during 2021.

4.1 ConfTech Help desk

The ConfTech Help Desk provided direct assistance to over 20 international organisations (IOs), permanent missions, NGOs, and other stakeholders, ranging from one-time consultations to tailored hands-on assistance in organising and running online events.

We assisted missions in Geneva to conceptualise, organise, and conduct online events with a formal structure. One of those collaborations was with the Core Group on new technologies (Republic of Korea, Austria, Brazil, Denmark, Morocco, Singapore) and OHCHR in organising a High-Level Panel Discussion on the occasion of the 47th session of the Human Rights Council, [The role of the Human Rights Council in promoting a human rights-based approach to new and emerging technologies.](#)

The Help Desk also assisted RegHorizon to organise and run its [AI Policy Conference](#) by providing conceptual support, visual materials with the help of Diplo's Creative Lab, technical on-the-day support including assistance for breakout and networking sessions, expert and chat moderation, and event reporting. Similarly, we supported regional internet governance initiatives EuroDIG and [SEEDIG 6](#), as well as the Youth IGF Turkey Conference.

In addition, OHCHR, UNCTAD, WMO, and ITC, to name a few IOs, consulted the Help Desk about how to organise and run a meeting in the online environment. The consultations addressed challenges such as choosing the right platform, the security of the online events, moderation skills, interpreting, and other issues in focus for diplomats or IOs.

We also organised training sessions for ambassadors and diplomats based in Vienna focusing on organising and moderating online meetings. This longer-term cooperation led to the increased capacity of the team to embrace digital tools.

In collaboration with the Geneva Welcome Centre (CAGI), the Help Desk delivered a series of workshops for NGOs based in Geneva. In these workshops, we provided an insightful overview of the best practices for developing capacity within organisations. The aim was to help organisations with limited resources to cope with the increased number of online meetings held on the International Geneva scene; this is often an issue for small NGOs.

4.2 ConfTech Labs

ConfTech Labs, which was set up in 2020 in Diplo's Geneva and Belgrade offices, continued offering high-quality innovative hybrid events. By using some of the latest technology, ConfTech Labs bridges the gap between onsite and online events, and increases the quality of meetings and conferences.
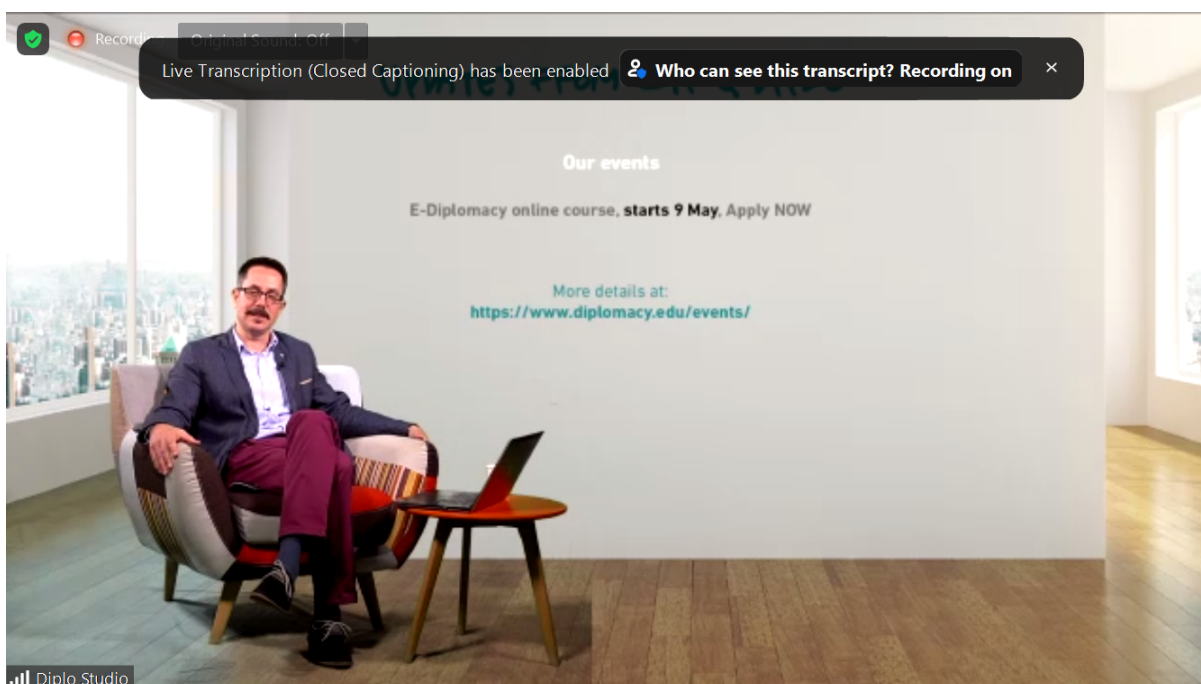
4.3 Research and analysis

In line with our mission to provide practical assistance, ConfTech continued publishing useful digests, online meeting platform analyses, and how-to manuals.

4.3.1 ConfTech Digest

With new online meeting platforms emerging, and new features and services being launched on a regular basis, the monthly ConfTech Digest brings together some of the most relevant updates in the world of online meeting platforms.

- [ConfTech Digest #1](#)
- [ConfTech Digest #2](#)
- [ConfTech Digest #3](#)
- [ConfTech Digest #4](#)
- [ConfTech Digest #5](#)
- [ConfTech Digest #6](#)

- [ConfTech Digest #7](#)
- [ConfTech Digest #8](#)
- [ConfTech Digest #9](#)
- [ConfTech Digest #10](#)
- [ConfTech Digest #11](#)

4.3.2 Guides and manuals

In 2021, ConfTech also [developed](#) 11 how-to manuals, bringing the total to 35; and 9 more online conferencing platform analyses, bringing the total to 40 since May 2020.

These analyses and manuals provide information on how to set up an online conferencing presentation, how to host events using new online conferencing platforms, and how to work with particular features in well-known online conferencing platforms.

5. Data and AI-driven analysis

Following the success of the [Speech Generator](#) and the [Data Sandbox](#), which were launched in 2020, in 2021 Diplo delved deeper into how data and AI can lend a helping hand in a wide range of activities, including diplomatic activities and Diplo's knowledge ecology.

5.1 IGF 2021 automated summaries

For IGF2021 (Section 3.5), Diplo created an AI-powered system for generating summaries.

By analysing the session transcripts and applying a number of natural language processing (NLP) algorithms, the system provided summaries of all sessions. This experiment complemented the traditional reporting done by Diplo and GIP experts.

The automated summaries can be viewed by following the links at the bottom of each [IGF 2021](#) session report.

5.2 OEWG review – Geography of cybersecurity negotiations

Diplo's AI Lab prepared a map for the UN OEWG 2021–2025 first substantive session (Section 3.5), which shows the stances actors have taken on a number of open issues in cybersecurity negotiations.

To develop this map, cybersecurity negotiations were divided into several topics, and each country's activity for each topic was included in the database feeding the map generator.

The final product allows the user to easily visualise the activity of every country on each cybersecurity topic. The [OEWG review map is available on Diplo's website](#).
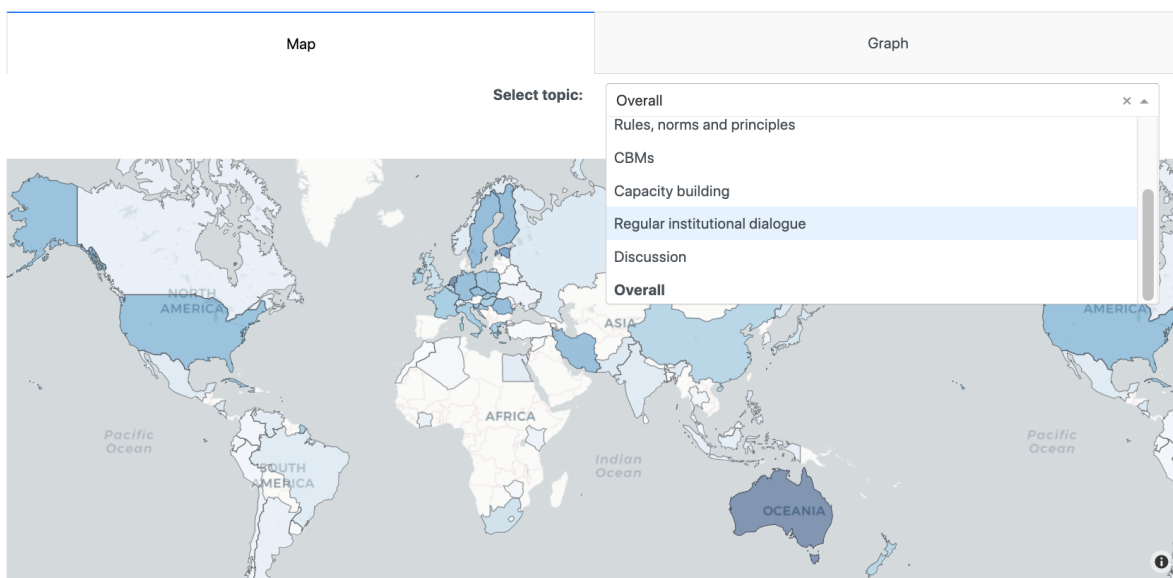
5.3 Country flag analysis

This application analyses the colours on flags. Country flags can be sorted based on the amount of certain colours. This application brings the concept of patterns closer to people, which is a driving principle in data visualisation, machine learning, and AI. When you take a closer look at flags, it is easy to notice certain colours, shapes, and symbols that create patterns. Many flags have common patterns shaped by history, culture, and identity. The Colors of Flags application is available on Diplo's website.

5.4 Comparison of countries to tech companies

Thanks to the speed of economic growth, some large private tech companies by far outweigh entire countries and/or an entire group of countries. To present this reality, Diplo's AI Lab created the Compare Countries to Tech Companies application that, based on data from the World Bank, displays the gross domestic product (GDP) of a selected country or group of countries and a company that has a similar revenue value. It also shows countries that have a similar GDP.
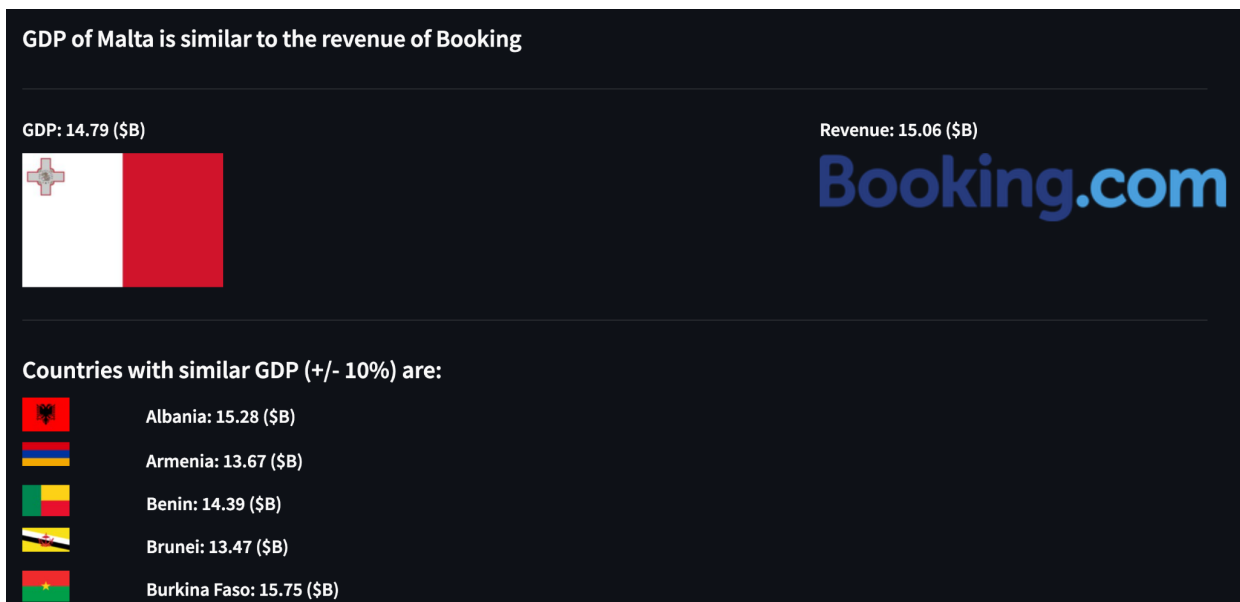

GDP of Malta is similar to the revenue of Booking

GDP: 14.79 ($B)   Revenue: 15.06 ($B)

Countries with similar GDP (+/- 10%) are:

Albania: 15.28 ($B)

Armenia: 13.67 ($B)

Benin: 14.39 ($B)

Brunei: 13.47 ($B)

Burkina Faso: 15.75 ($B)

5.5 Diplo's knowledge graphs

In 2021, work on Diplo's knowledge graphs started gaining speed and is a work-in-progress. The main idea of the knowledge graphs is to have the best possible base of the entire Diplo knowledge (defined as the information from the integrated diplomacy.edu and dig.watch websites) available for intelligent searching, question answering, and a recommendation system.

This can be achieved by increasing the informativeness of individual data items already present in Diplo's database.

It can also explore hidden connections that have not been available to use so far. For example, in the biography of a person, we can find information about organisations where they work. By connecting this data in our graph with the appropriate actors, data that was previously present only in the individual's biography is connected with relevant data from other actors.

The work on knowledge graphs will continue and deliver more tangible results in 2022.
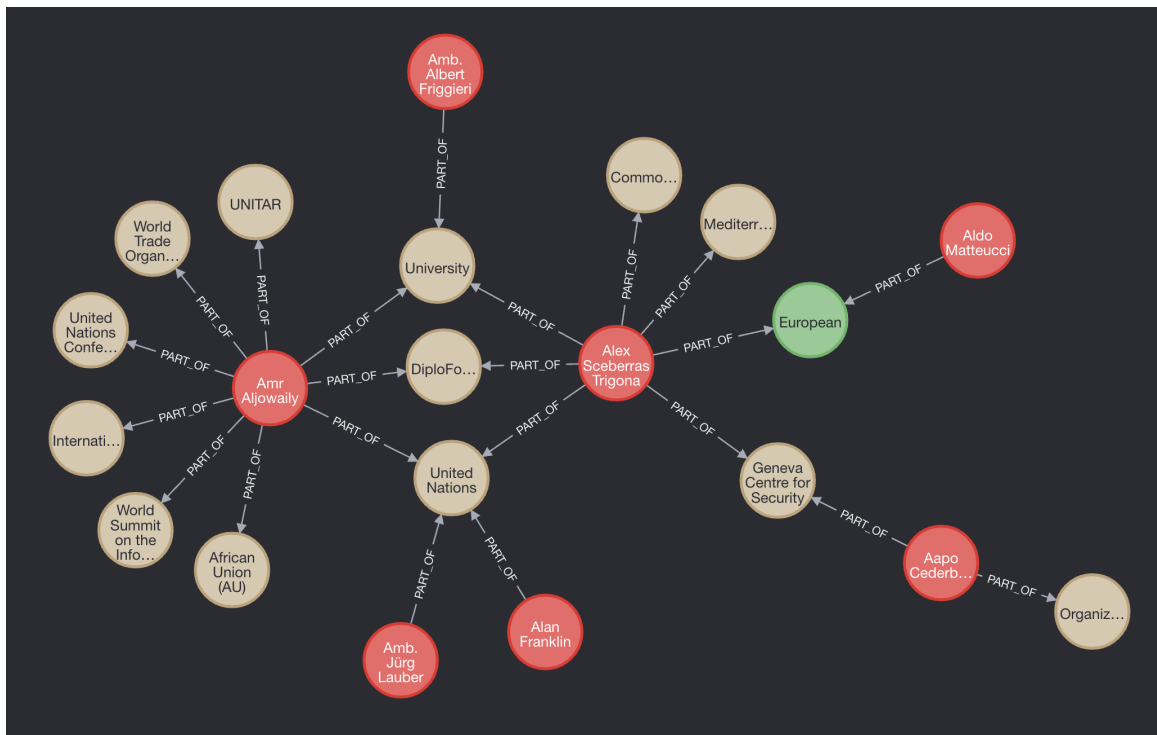
6. Projects, events, and publications

6.1 Geneva Dialogue on Responsible Behaviour of Actors in Cyberspace

In 2021, Geneva Dialogue – led by the Swiss FDFA and implemented by Diplo – unfolded in two tracks. Track 1 discussed baseline requirements for security of digital products, while Track 2 connected corporate practices with global policy processes.

The work carried out in 2021 produced the following tangible results:

- **Security of digital products and international standards – May 2021 (online event)**
  The event focused on the trends in the development and implementation of standards for the security of digital products. The event report is publicly available.
- **Security of digital products and the regulatory environment – September 2021 (online event)**
  The event focused on a need for greater dialogue and aligning national regulations more closely with industry good practices, international standards, and global norms and principles. The event report is publicly available.
- **Governance approaches to the security of digital products – September 2021 (policy research report)**
  The report provides an overview of public policies around the security of digital products. It summarises the challenges that public policymakers frequently face in this context and the solutions that have been adopted. It also elaborates how the relatively new policy area of digital product security can be distinguished from cybersecurity regulations around critical infrastructure protection and data security. The report is publicly available.

6.2 WebDebates in collaboration with the International Forum on Diplomatic Training

In 2021, Diplo continued its cooperation with the International Forum on Diplomatic Training (IFDT) by managing the IFDT's online portal and promoting training programmes and events organised by IFDT members. Diplo has been an active member of the network for several years.

The series of WebDebates, organised within the IFDT framework, continued in 2021. The WebDebates bring together diplomats, professionals involved in diplomacy, and researchers from all over the world, to discuss key topics related to the future of diplomacy.

In 2021, Diplo organised eight WebDebates:

- [WebDebate #45] Visual storytelling for diplomatic practice | 2 February
- [WebDebate #46] Unpacking the EU's digital diplomacy and foreign policy | 6 April
- [WebDebate #47] Current diplomatic responses to COVID-19 | 4 May
- [WebDebate #48] Virtual and hybrid diplomacy: What have we learned? | 8 June
- [WebDebate #49] Emojis in public diplomacy: Best practices and lessons learned | 6 July
- [WebDebate #50] Training cyber diplomats: Tools, gaps, and opportunities | 5 October
- [WebDebate #51] International organisations: Independence under threat? | 2 November
- [WebDebate #52] The recent climate negotiations: A perspective from the Global South | 7 December

6.3 Diplomacy and technology: A historical journey

Winston Churchill is quoted as saying: 'The longer you can look back, the farther you can look forward.'

In 2021, Diplo organised a series of online masterclasses **Diplomacy and technology: A historical journey**. In these masterclasses, Dr Jovan Kurbalija explained the link between diplomacy and technology in different periods of human history, including prehistory, Ancient Greece, the Renaissance, the invention of the telegraph and the telephone, radio and tv broadcasting, internet and social media, and the future.

These masterclasses were accompanied by an interactive timeline, extended readings, and interviews with leading experts such as Amb. Stefano Baldi (career diplomat), Tom Standage (editor of *The Economist*; author of the book *The Victorian Internet*), Prof. Jonathan Shepard (historian, expert on the Byzantine period), and Prof. Frans de Waal (biologist and ethologist; expert in primate behaviour). All resources are available on Diplo's website.

6.4 2021: The emergence of digital foreign policy

Since its very beginning, Diplo has embraced and studied the link between information and communication technology tools and the practice of diplomacy.

Given the situation that persisted with the COVID-19 pandemic, and following up on work carried out in 2020 (such as the report The future of (multilateral) diplomacy? Changes in response to COVID-19 and beyond) in March 2021 Diplo published the paper 2021: The emergence of digital foreign policy and organised an online conference with the same name.

The conference was opened by Federal Councillor Mr Ignazio Cassis (Head of the FDFA, Switzerland), Mr Houlin Zhao (Secretary General, International Telecommunication Union (ITU)), and Dr Jovan Kurbalija (Executive Director of DiploFoundation and Head of the GIP); and was addressed by 19 practitioners who shared insights from their work in digital foreign policy and diplomacy.

The online event also consisted of two Ambassador Roundtable discussions, and four parallel discussion tracks.

6.5 Kaspersky Interactive Protection Simulation (KIPS)

In 2021, Diplo collaborated with cybersecurity company Kaspersky on the development of a gamified virtual cybersecurity exercise for diplomats and professionals. In this partnership, Diplo provided knowledge related to cyber diplomacy - in the form of input to the development of the game, and debriefings after rounds of the game were delivered by Kaspersky to diplomats around the world (including from the OSCE, OAS, and ASEAN). Kaspersky provided its gaming platform and methodology and knowledge related to technical attribution, and delivered several rounds of game sessions including for participants of Diplo's Cybersecurity Diplomacy Course in 2021. The security training is based on the Kaspersky Interactive

Protection Simulation (KIPS), and focuses on technical attribution in cyberattacks. More information on the project can be found on the dedicated blog on Diplo's website.

This project was covered by several media outlets (Section 7.7) and was also demonstrated during IGF2021.

6.6 The geopolitics of digital standards: China's role in standard-setting organisations

The Geneva office of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation commissioned a study assessing the role of China in standards developing organisations, with a specific focus on Geneva-based organisations. The report, which also looks at the broader digital standardisation ecosystem, together with the event in which the report was presented, are available online.

6.7 Improving the practice of cyber diplomacy: A gap analysis of training, tools, and other resources

Cyber diplomacy, the conduct of diplomacy with respect to a state's interests in cyberspace, is too important to ignore. Yet, the participation of countries is far from ideal.

Improving the practice of cyber diplomacy: A gap analysis of training, tools, and other resources, a study prepared in two phases, analyses aspects of capacity development to increase the engagement of every country, that is, the availability of training opportunities, tools, and other resources and their reach and take-up.

This academic research report was commissioned by the Global Forum on Cyber Expertise (GFCE) as part of its Global Cyber Capacity Building Research Agenda 2021. The project was funded by Global Affairs Canada and Diplo conducted the research.

6.8 Digital Commerce course: A five-year assessment

Digital Commerce course: a five-year assessment evaluates the impact of the Digital Commerce course, which provides just-in-time policy-oriented support for government officials and other non-governmental trade professionals. This course has been offered for five years (2017–2021) by way of a partnership between Diplo, CUTS International Geneva, ITC, and the GIP (Section 2.5.6). This publication also presents the main results of a tracer survey conducted with course alumni.

6.9 Sustainable capacity building: Internet governance in Africa

Following the publication in November 2020 of the report Sustainable capacity building: Internet governance in Africa (commissioned by the African Union (AU) and part of the IG track of the Policy and Regulation Initiative for Digital Africa (PRIDA)), in March 2021 Diplo organised an event with the same name to discuss the contents of the report.

Leading experts in the field participated in the event , which was available in English with simultaneous French translation. Both English and French recordings of the event are available on Diplo's website.

6.10 Training for Internet Society fellows and briefings for diplomats

In 2021, Diplo delivered training sessions to the Internet Society's vibrant network of youth champions – Early Career fellows and IGF Youth Ambassadors – who learned how to engage in policy processes at their local or regional levels.

As part of the year-long project with the Internet Society, Diplo also delivered an online briefing for diplomats on inclusive connectivity on 2 December 2021. The briefing, organised with the participation of experts from Diplo and the Internet Society, tackled ways of closing the digital divide as a precondition to attaining the sustainable development goals (SDGs) as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and as one of the main priorities for governments worldwide.

6.11 Other events and dialogues

6.11.1 Diplo-organised events

In 2021, Diplo organised and co-organised a number of other events, covering several topics.
- Yellow Day and Green Diplomacy (11 February): Online event organised with the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the GIP, on the movement of sand and dust globally and its implications for global cooperation in science and technology.
- Book launch: Internet Governance at the Point of No Return (23 June): Launch of Prof. Rolf H. Weber's latest book.
- Discussion: Cyber detente after the Biden–Putin summit in Geneva (25 June): Online event to discuss the cyber detente started in Geneva with the meeting between US President Joe Biden and Russian President Vladimir Putin.
- Digital (and) Diplomacy: What are we actually talking about? (7 September): International online conference, featuring high-level speakers, on the meaning of digital diplomacy.
- [Webinar] Insights on the ninth meeting of the parties to the convention on the protection and use of transboundary watercourses and international lakes (8 November): Online event by the Geneva Water Hub, in partnership with Diplo and the Secretariat of the Convention on the Protection and Uses of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes.
- Capacity building on e-commerce: From lessons to solutions (11 November): Online event co-organised by Diplo, ITC, CUTS International Geneva, and the GIP.
- Our digital future: What Mediterranean wisdom can teach us (28 November): Online event linking Mediterranean history to the pressing debate on our digital future.

- [Promoting inclusiveness in e-commerce negotiations through capacity building](#) (1 December): Session organised by Diplo, ITC, and CUTS International Geneva, during the International Institute for Sustainable Development's (IISD) Trade + Sustainability Hub.
- [Sessions at IGF2021](#) (6–10 December): During IGF2021, Diplo participated in several sessions, either as session co-organiser, or through a Diplo expert taking part in the discussion.

6.11.2 External events with Diplo's participation

Diplo experts are frequently invited to speak at events on a variety of topics. What follows is a selection of these.

- Contributed to the development of the [Digital Trust Label](#), part of the Swiss Digital Initiative, with the participation of Dr Stephanie Borg Psaila as the chair of the Label Expert Committee.
- [CENSURE – Twitter et Facebook font la loi. Mais de quel droit?](#) (28 January): Dr Jovan Kurbalija spoke at the event organised by the Swiss Press Club (Club suisse de la presse). [Make future together: Young people in the Balkans speak up on digital issues](#) (5 May): Dr Stephanie Borg Psaila spoke during the online policy dialogue organised by the European Policy Centre.
- [E-commerce or digital trade or both? What's negotiated at the WTO in Geneva](#) (11 May): Ms Marilia Maciel spoke at the event organised by the European Internet Forum (EIF).
- [ARIN/CTU Caribbean Internet Public Policy Forum](#) (18 May): Dr Jovan Kurbalija spoke during the discussion on digital inclusion, in the event organised by the American Registry for Internet Numbers (ARIN) and the Caribbean Telecommunications Union (CTU).
- [Virtual diplomacy in the age of the pandemic: Evolution or revolution?](#) (20 May): Dr Jovan Kurbalija spoke at the event by Webster University Geneva's Department of International Relations.
- [Global Media Forum session: Innovation by disruption? How COVID-19 is changing diplomacy](#) (19 June): Dr Jovan Kurbalija and Dr Katharina E. Höne spoke at the event by the Development and Peace Foundation (sef:) as a partner session during the DW Global Media Forum 2021.
- [Connectivity, competition, collaboration: The 3Cs of digital trade – What policies for post-COVID success?](#) (22 June): Ms Marilia Maciel spoke at the event, part of the World Trade Organization's (WTO) *Simply Services — A Trade in Services Speaker Series*.
- [Future of mediation and peacemaking with emerging technologies](#) (29 June): Dr Katharina E. Höne speakingspokeat a Center on International Cooperation (CIC) event at New York University.
- [International regulation on the net: A necessity, but what about possibilities?](#) (9 July): Dr Jovan Kurbalija moderated a session at Cyber Polygon 2021.
- [Cyber security & geopolitics: 2021 eSecurity conference](#) (30 September): Mr Vladimir Radunović spoke at an eSecurity Association event.
- [2021 International Standards Summit for people, planet and prosperity](#) (28 October): Dr Jovan Kurbalija spoke at the World Standards Cooperation event, a high-level collaboration between the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC), the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), and the ITU.
- [The metaverse and international relations](#) (11 November): Dr Katharina E. Höne spoke at an event organised by ICR Research.
- [Making sense of data and digital diplomacy: ICDD 2021](#) (16 November): Dr Jovan Kurbalija spoke at the International Conference on Digital Diplomacy (ICDD).
- [Addressing AI-driven socio-economic inequality](#) (25 November):

Dr Katharina Höne spoke at the event organised by INDIAai.

- [Promoting integral human development and peace in the digital age](#) (9 December):
Dr Jovan Kurbalija spoke at the event organised by the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, the Vatican COVID-19 Commission.

6.12 Diplo blogs

Diplo's blogosphere has flourished over the years. In 2021, Diplo published 60 blog posts on a wide range of topics including digital politics, cybersecurity, capacity development, knowledge management, online learning, and contemporary diplomacy. Blog posts, written by Diplo's team and several guest authors, provide opportunities for further reflection on topical diplomacy and internet governance issues. These included blog posts from the Diplo Wisdom Circle, an initiative that fosters exchanges between our readers and eminent and innovative thinkers, professors, Diplo alumni, diplomats, activists, and business people Diplo has had the good fortune to work with over the years.

Testing was also carried out, linking the website with Diplo's email database, to implement an automated system where subscribers would be notified by email whenever a new blog is published.

6.13 Briefing papers

We published one new [Briefing Paper](#) in our ongoing series. In [Citizen diplomats: Exploring the links between community organising and humanitarian diplomacy](#), Ms Hannah Bird explores whether there is any middle ground between the generally top-down approaches to local involvement taken by organisations engaged in humanitarian diplomacy, and the often spontaneous grassroots citizen actions, which are frequently disparate and lack clear goals, and may be relatively short-term.

6.14 DiploCircle Magazine
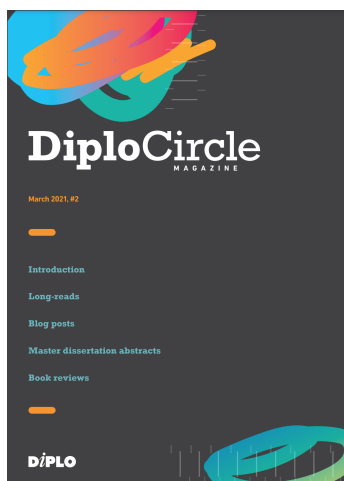
In 2021 we published our second issue of *[DiploCircle Magazine](#)*. The publication summarises the activities of people closely associated with Diplo. We asked our faculty, alumni, and staff to share their recent accomplishments and activities.

The second issue of the *DiploCircle Magazine* offers a selection of long-reads, blog posts, Master's dissertation abstracts, as well as book reviews.

6.15 Diplo in external publications and media

Diplo experts are regularly asked to feature in podcasts, interviews, publications, and articles. Here is a selection of these:

- [The era of digital foreign policy: Comprehensive approaches to digitalisation](#)

Article by Dr Jovan Kurbalija and Dr Katharina Höne published in the *International Political Review – July–December 2021*.

- Chrono-narcissism, philosophy & diplomacy in a high-tech world

  Podcast by the Global Arena Research Institute – Dr Jovan Kurbalija as guest speaker.

- Hybrid Diplomacy: How COVID-19 changes the way we negotiate

  Publication by the Development and Peace Foundation (Stiftung Entwicklung und Frieden - sef) – Article by Dr Jovan Kurbalija and Dr Katharina Höne.

- Interview with *Léman Bleu* television. Mr Marco Lotti speaks about Diplo's work and the visibility of digital International Geneva.

- A Genève, Joe Biden et Vladimir Poutine doivent conclure un «cessez-le-feu» numérique [In Geneva, Joe Biden and Vladimir Putin must conclude a digital 'ceasefire']. Article by Dr Jovan Kurbalija in *LeTemps*.

- Interview on cyber aspects in the Biden-Putin summit in Geneva. Dr Jovan Kurbalija interviewed on *RT Arabic*.

- Interview on the Biden-Putin summit. Dr Jovan Kurbalija interviewed on Czech Television (starts at 8 mins 30 seconds).

- Project Pegasus and the right to cultivate one's personal digital garden. Dr Jovan Kurbalija interviewed for an article by Geneva Solutions.

- How 9/11 shaped internet governance. Dr Jovan Kurbalija interviewed for an article by swissinfo.

- Schlimmer als im Kalten Krieg – China fordert auch bei technischen Standards die USA und Europa heraus [Worse than the Cold War – China also challenges the USA and Europe on technical standards]. Dr Jovan Kurbalija interviewed for an article by *Neue Zürcher Zeitung (NZZ)*.

- Time for AI to pull up a chair to the negotiating table. Dr Katharina Höne interviewed for an article in the *Financial Times*.

- Should citizens in Belgrade be concerned by newly installed surveillance cameras? Mr Vladimir Radunović interviewed on *Euronews*.

- Z kuchyně i v pyžamu. Z nouze lockdownu se zrodila nová hybridní diplomacie [From the kitchen and in pajamas. From the emergency of lockdown, a new hybrid diplomacy was born]. Dr Jovan Kurbalija interviewed for an article by *Deník N*.

- Trotz Cyberangriffen: Russland, China und die USA können sich bei der Cybersicherheit überraschend einigen [Despite cyberattacks: Russia, China and the USA surprisingly come to an agreement on cybersecurity]. Dr Jovan Kurbalija interviewed for an article by *Neue Zürcher Zeitung (NZZ)*.

For mentions of Diplo in the media, see Section 7.7.

7. Communications and Diplo's Creative Lab

Comms in 2021 highlights:
240 emails to different mailing lists
1,300 tweets from Diplo and GIP channels
1,400 new users following Diplo's LinkedIn page
1,100 new users following @DiplomacyEdu on Twitter
31,000 video views on YouTube

If a tree falls in a forest and no one is around to hear it, does it make a sound? If Diplo does great work, but nobody notices, was the work really and truly done?

Diplo's communication is a vital element rooted in all of Diplo's lines of work: courses, events, publications, research, and projects.

The different communication tools – websites, social media, email newsletters, community networks, and bilateral contacts – ensure as wide a reach as possible.

Communicating Diplo's courses, activities, events, research, and projects is one of our main priorities. Communication channels utilised in 2021 included websites, newsletters, social media networks, and alumni and community networks.

We promoted Diplo's work and the GIP initiatives – including the Digital Watch observatory – through a number of channels, including publications, mailing lists, and social media.

7.1 Data visualisation and illustrations

Diplo's Creative Lab worked on a new series of illustrations in 2021. These were used in publications, research projects, websites, and social media accounts managed by Diplo.

Digital standards, China, and geopolitics: What is at stake?

Tuesday, 14th December, 14:00–15:00 CET

Spring with Diplo!

Enroll in our certified diplomacy courses starting 10 May 2021

More at diplomacy.edu/courses

Hot summer

Cool DIPLO courses

www.diplomacy.edu/courses

The Geneva internet Platform invites you to the

6th Geneva Engage Awards

Thursday, 18 February 2021, 13:00–14:00 CET (12:00–13:00 UTC)

ONLINE

Monthly INTERNET GOVERNANCE BRIEFING Live

DIPLO Geneva Internet Platform

TUESDAY, 28 SEPTEMBER 2021 12 UTC (14 CEST)

Zoom, YouTube, Facebook

DIPLOMACY AND TECHNOLOGY: A HISTORICAL JOURNEY

AN INTRODUCTION

A masterclass with Jovan Kurbalija

28 January at 13:00 UTC

Digital Commerce course: a five-year assessment

Prepared by: Marilia Maciel Digital Policy Senior Researcher, DiploFoundation

November, 2021

The state of 5G in 2021

Investment in 5G ● 5G Launched ● 5G Partially launched

Hybrid diplomacy in the making

56% of countries delivered their speeches on-site

44% of countries delivered their speeches via pre-recorded videos

● in situ ● pre-recorded

Most frequent words

Prefix Monitor

| 2021 | 2020 | 2019 |

digital 32.40%
cyber 13.31%
e- 0.83%
net 10.02%
online 15.14%
virtual 1.31%
tech 26.99%

**Cyber detente barometer
16 September - 16 October**

Cooperation

Conflict

40
35
30
25
20

16 Sep   30 Sep   2 Oct   7 Oct   13 Oct   13 Oct
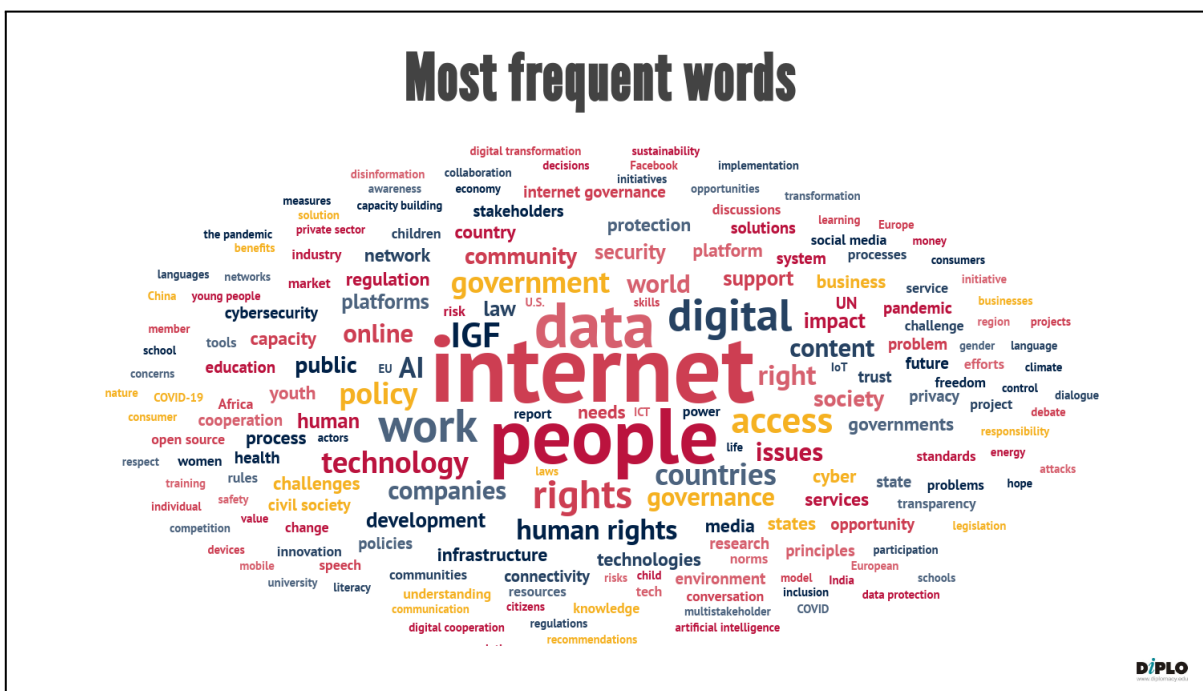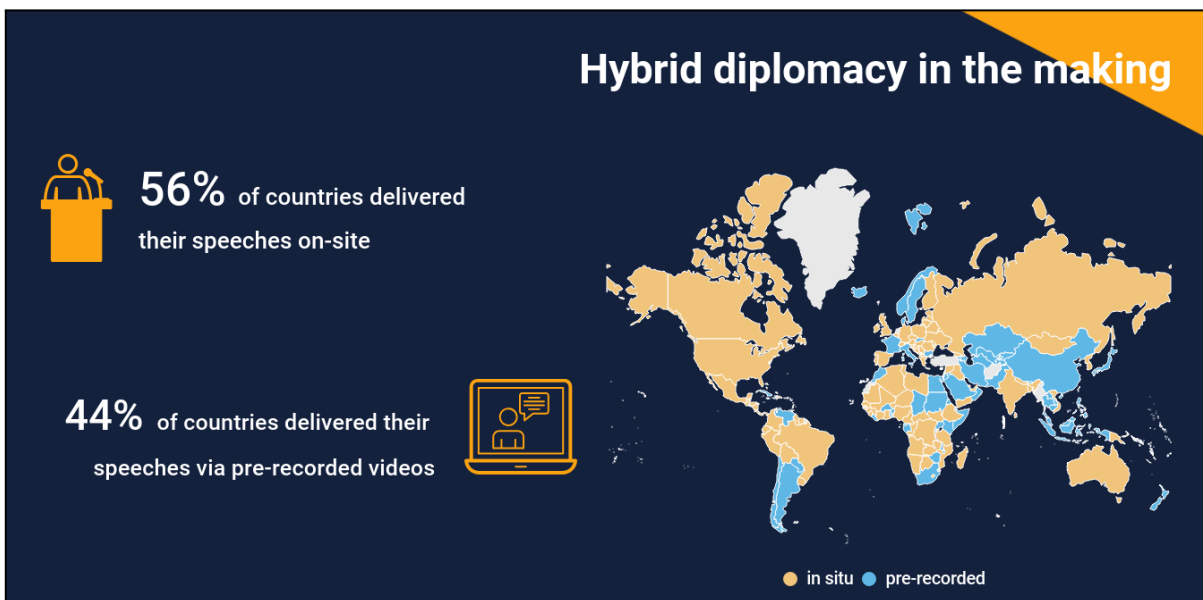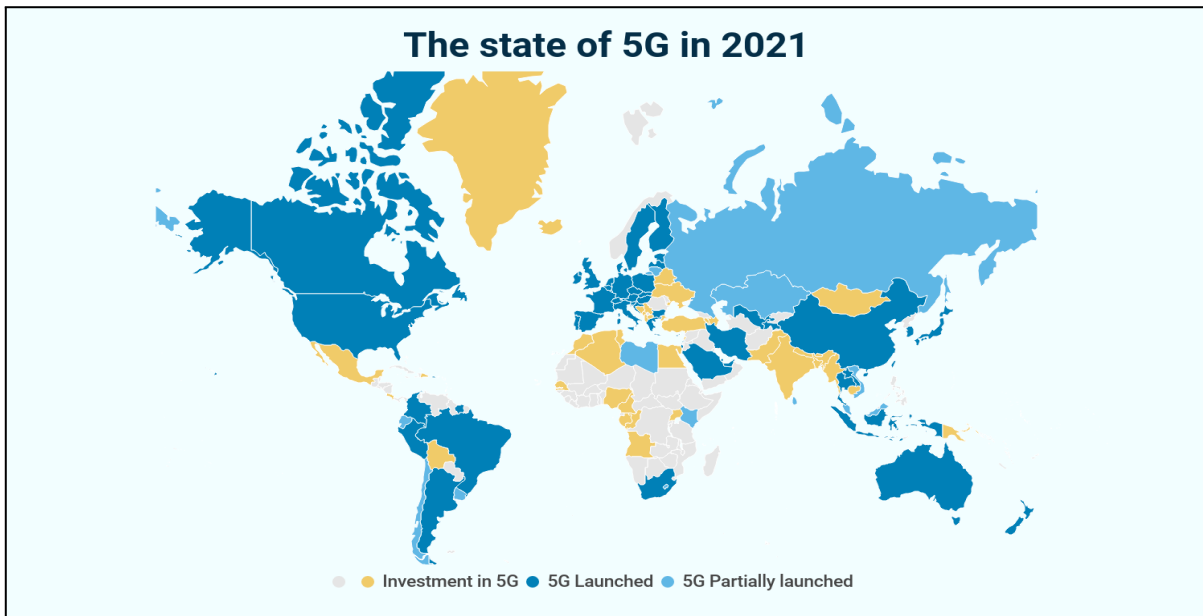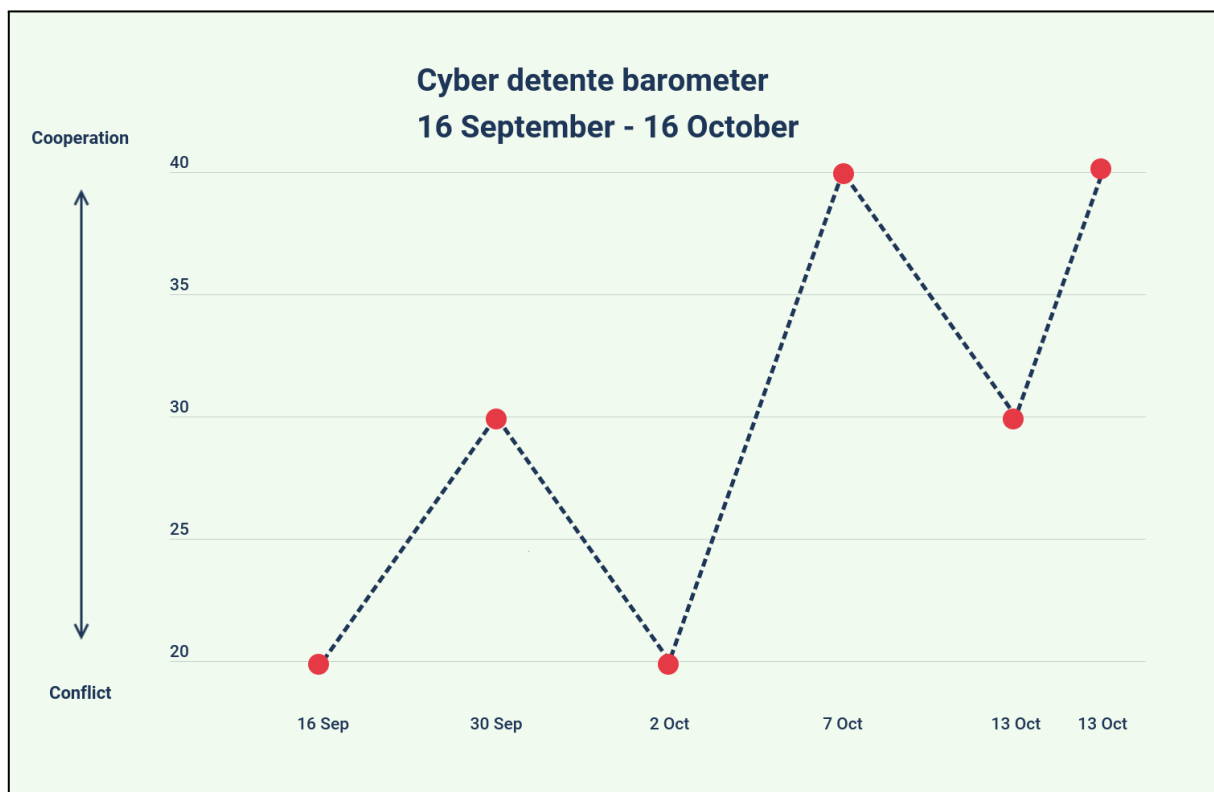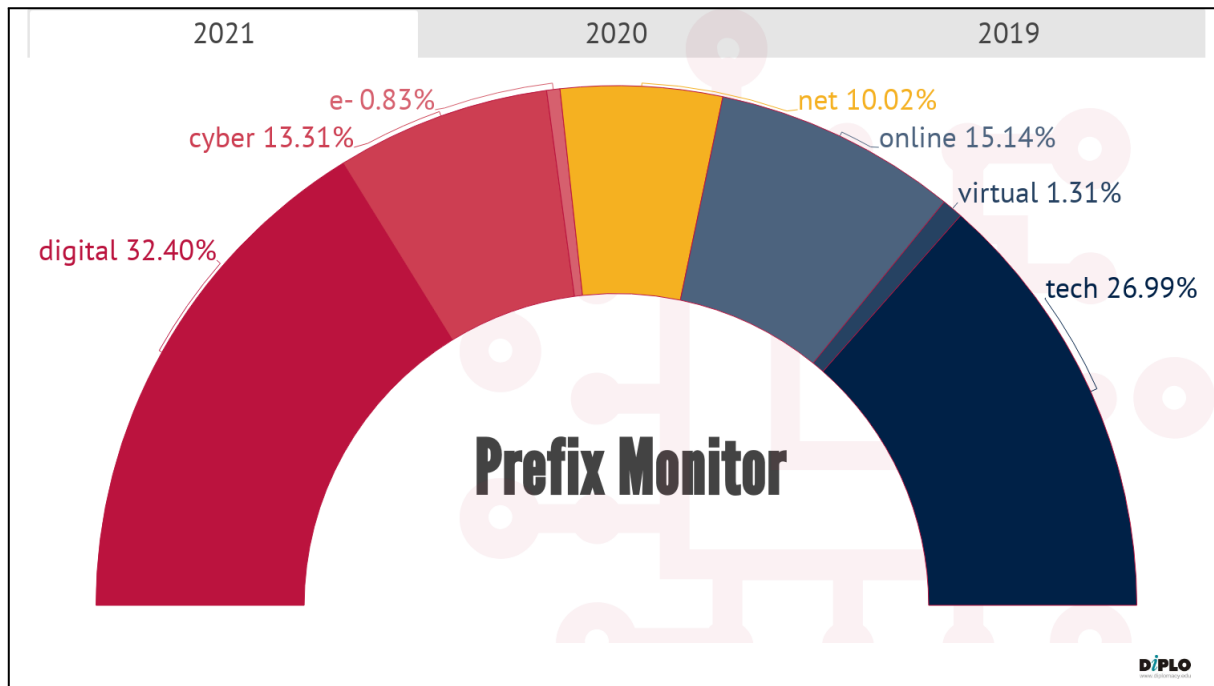
7.2 Videos

In 2021, Diplo's Creative Lab produced a number of videos to enhance online meetings and conferences as well as standalone videos with relevant content.

In *Diplo Experts Explain* videos,
Diplo experts discuss topics within their expertise in concise, easy-to-digest videos.

Various videos promote and support Diplo courses,

The Diplomat's Sofa videos feature talks with diplomats about their craft.

For the *12 Tours to Navigate Digital Geneva* events, Diplo created a series of fly-over videos.

7.3 Websites

In 2021, Diplo's technical team started migrating all of Diplo's websites from Drupal to a more flexible WordPress-based system. This would enable the integration of various elements of Diplo's knowledge ecology by combining the content and resources of Diplo, the GIP, and Digital Watch into a more useful and user-friendly experience for website visitors.

7.3.1 Diplo website (diplomacy.edu)

In 2021, Diplo's website registered an increase in the number of users, with a noticeable 10% increase in page views and longer session durations when compared to 2020.

Website traffic increased substantially – both from organic Google searches and direct access to the website. The top 10 countries visiting the website were the USA, India, the Philippines, the UK, Nigeria, Pakistan, Kenya, Indonesia, Trinidad & Tobago, and Canada.

7.3.2 GIP website (www.giplatform.org)

The GIP's institutional website www.giplatform.org was updated with new relevant content, and in 2021 saw a constant number of visitors. The website continues to serve as the institutional website for the project, with a focus on Geneva-based events and actors, and news related to the GIP. The team updates it to retain its formal and institutional aims, and at the same time showcase and link to the Digital Watch observatory, newsletters, just-in-time reporting initiatives, and other projects.

7.3.3 Digital Watch website (dig.watch)

The Digital Watch observatory https://dig.watch was also migrated to WordPress. This updated its look, but mostly its structure, to provide a smoother, more navigable journey for the user. The continual updates with timely and relevant information, together with their promotion resulted in an increase of over 45% in website users when compared to 2020.

7.3.4 Other websites

- IFDT (forum.diplomacy.edu)
  Diplo continued to manage the IFDT website https://forum.diplomacy.edu, which promotes the yearly Meeting of Deans and Directors of Diplomatic Academies and Institutes of International Relations, as well as training opportunities, events, and other resources.
- Diplo US (diplo.us)
  Diplo continued its international reach in the USA through https://diplo.us, Diplo's Washington office website, which was set up in 2018.
- humAInism (humainism.ai)
  Diplo continued hosting and working on https://humainism.ai – a new project that explores what AI can do for humanity and how humanity can best be served by it.

7.4 Mailing lists

In 2021, we continued to work on keeping Diplo's mailing database up to date. This involves attracting new subscribers, unifying the elements constituting Diplo's various branches of work, cleaning the database of inactive subscribers, improving the level and quality of data within the database, and segmenting the data for better usage for Diplo and a more pleasant experience for the user.

Users can subscribe to our mailing lists through the subscription form available at
https://www.diplomacy.edu/subscribe/

7.4.1 DiploNews

Diplo continued to publish its fortnightly newsletter, DiploNews, which updates readers – including partners, alumni, and faculty – on upcoming and past events, new programmes and activities, courses, and other initiatives. In 2021, Diplo published 24 editions distributed through a dedicated mailing list, shared with funders, and shared online through social media networks.

7.4.2 ConfTech Digest

Following the strong positive feedback to Diplo's ConfTech initiative, the ConfTech monthly digest was launched in 2021, updating subscribers on important happenings in the world of online meetings and conferences (Section 4.3.1).

7.4.3 Other mailing lists

We promote our activities through the alumni network and our mailing list. Other mailing lists for specific content – such as a mailing list dedicated to Diplo's courses – continued to be maintained in 2021.

The GIP's mailing list is an important bridge between the GIP's activities and the digital policy community. Among others, the Digital Watch weekly newsletter (Section 3.5.2), launched in 2020, has seen consistent growth and readership, and the newly launched Cyber Detente Barometer (out on the 16th of each month) (Section 3.5.3) analyses the state of the cyber detente following the meeting of US and Russia presidents in Geneva on 16 June 2021.

7.5 Social media networks

In the online space, social media is an important channel for Diplo. In 2021, we continued to make use of and expand our social media channels to promote activities with our community and complement the more traditional methods of communication. The pandemic and the increase in online events increased the importance of social media even further.

Twitter remained one of Diplo's most used channels. In 2021, our most popular accounts were @diplomacyedu, with a cumulative total of over 13,800 followers by the end of the year; @ediplomat, with over 15,800 followers; and @igcbp, with over 12,900 followers. The GIP's Twitter account, @GenevaGIP, had over 3,800 followers by the end of the year. Possibly our Twitter highlight for this year was the achievement of the coveted blue verified badge for @diplomacyedu. The badge 'lets people know that an account of public interest is authentic' as per Twitter's rules.

Another widely used tool is Facebook. In 2021, Diplo continued to maintain a number of Facebook pages that increased in popularity over the previous year. Our main channel www.facebook.com/DiploFoundation closed the year with 7,700 likes; the account dedicated to e-diplomacy https://www.facebook.com/ediplomacy/ closed with over 2,500 likes; while Diplo's account dedicated to internet governance issues www.facebook.com/igcbp had close to 2,100 likes by the end of the year. The GIP's Facebook page also gained in popularity, with over 2,150 page likes by the end of the year.

Diplo's main Facebook channel www.facebook.com/DiploFoundation was also used as a backup broadcast channel for Diplo's live events.

As LinkedIn has become more popular in recent years, Diplo's communication team increased its efforts in using this platform for outreach. For the second year running, Diplo's LinkedIn profile saw a growth of 36%. In fact, after gaining more than 1,000 new followers in 2020, in 2021, Diplo's LinkedIn account closed the year with over 5,300 followers, up by more than 1,400 (+36%) compared to the previous year.

Instagram is a favourite tool among the younger section of Diplo's target audience. After the revitalisation of Diplo's Instagram account in the latter part of 2020, 2021 saw a noticeable growth, from 358 to 654 followers.

Diplo's [YouTube channel](#) hosts recordings from webinars, WebDebates, and events with online participation, as well as interviews with Diplo experts, course reviews from alumni members, educational videos, and promotional videos. The channel is especially popular with practitioners of digital policy who tune in to view live broadcasts or recordings of the GIP briefings on internet governance.

In 2021, Diplo's YouTube channel had close to 1,700 subscribers – a noticeable increase from slightly over 1,000 subscribers one year before – and a total of over 190,000 video views since Diplo joined the network in 2007.

7.6 Podcasts

Given the trend of people consuming content while on the go, 2021 also saw an increase in the number of podcasts produced.

These varied from the mini-series *Diving into digital and The Diplomat's Sofa*, audio recordings of monthly Internet Governance Briefings, exclusive interviews, and more. Diplo's podcasts can be found on the dedicated Soundcloud channel: https://soundcloud.com/diplomacy

7.7 Diplo in the Media

Diplo constantly scans the web for any mention of Diplo and the work we carry out. What follows is a selection. For more on Diplo's appearances in the media, such as interviews, see section 6.8.

- [Studie: Chinas wachsendes Interesse an Normen und Standards ist bedenklich](#)[Study: China's growing interest in norms and standards is a cause for concern]. The article (in German) on Heise Online mentions the study *The geopolitics of digital standards: China's role in standard-setting organisations* (Section 6.6)
- [Von sechs auf 79 Sekretariate: Stiftungen warnen vor Chinas Dominanz bei der Normung](#) [From six to 79 secretariats: Foundations warn against China's dominance in standardisation]. The article (in German) on Handelsblatt mentions the study *The geopolitics of digital standards: China's role in standard-setting organisations* (Section 6.6)
- [Malta's global 'hidden gem' – Evarist Bartolo](#). Malta's then Foreign Minister wrote about Diplo as a key global player in digitalisation and international relations.
- Articles about the collaboration between Kaspersky and Diplo in developing a game aimed to help diplomats and professionals who lack a technical background understand cyberattacks and learn the complexities of technical attribution.
  - [Haberler.com](#) (in Turkish)
  - [TechCircle](#)
  - [MoveD](#) (in Greek)

- ○ [TechTrendsKE](#)
- ○ [Zougla](#) (in Greek)
- ○ [MSSPAlert](#)
- ○ [InfoSecurity](#)
- ○ [SC Media](#)
- [Could artificial intelligence prevent future wars?](#) The article on BRINK quotes Diplo's 2019 report *[Mediation and artificial intelligence: Notes on the future of international conflict resolution](#)*

8. Financial report

(Financial report will be added after approval by the Board of Administrators.)

9. People

9.1 Board of Administrators

- Amb. Victor Camilleri – President
  Former Permanent Ambassador of Malta to the United Nations in New York and Geneva
- Amb. Jürg Lauber
  Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the United Nations and the other international organisations in Geneva
- Amb. Saviour F. Borg *(retired in 2021)*
  Advisor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade Promotion of Malta
- Amb. Albert Friggieri
  Ambassador of Malta to Switzerland

- Amb. Maud Vuyelwa Dlomo
  Ambassador of South Africa to Madagascar
- Dr Isabelle Ragonesi
  Senior Lecturer, Department of International Relations, University of Malta
- Dr Jovan Kurbalija – Secretary of the Board
  Director of DiploFoundation
  Head of the Geneva Internet Platform

9.2 Coordination Team

- Dr Jovan Kurbalija – Executive Director of DiploFoundation, Head of the Geneva Internet Platform*
- Mr Patrick Borg, Director of Operations and Finance; Master in Contemporary Diplomacy Coordinator*
- Dr Stephanie Borg Psaila – Digital Policy Director*
- Dr Katharina Höne, Director of Research*
- Dr Tereza Horejsova – Project Development Director*
- Mr Vladimir Radunović – Cybersecurity and E-diplomacy Programmes Director*
- Mr Andrej Škrinjarić – Educational Programmes Director*

* Part of Diplo's lecturing team

9.3 Senior Fellows

- Prof. Geoff Berridge, Emeritus Professor of International Politics, University of Leicester
- Amb. Petru Dumitriu, United Nations Joint Inspection Unit*
- Mrs Liz Galvez, former Senior British Diplomat*
- Mr Ljupčo Gjorgjinski, Senior Advisor for Multilateral Affairs, MFA of North Macedonia*
- Mr Lee Hibbard, Administrator, Bioethics Unit, Council of Europe*
- Ms Anne-Rachel Inné, Office Director, ITU Regional Office for AfricaProf. Dr Milan Jazbec, Ambassador of Slovenia to North Macedonia*
- Prof. Dietrich Kappeler, Former Director, Diplomatic Studies Programme, Graduate Institute of International Studies Geneva
- Prof. Yolanda Kemp Spies, Associate Professor of International Studies at Zayed University, UAE; Former South African Diplomat

- Amb. Christopher Lamb, former Australian Ambassador and Humanitarian Diplomacy Head, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)*
- Amb. Asoke Mukerji (India)*
- Mr Aldo Matteucci, former Deputy Secretary General of EFTA
- Amb. Kishan Rana, Professor Emeritus, former Indian Ambassador, and a joint secretary to Prime Minister Indira Gandhi*
- Dr Alex Sceberras Trigona, Special Envoy for the Prime Minister of Malta*
- Dr Biljana Scott, Associate of the China Centre, University of Oxford*

* Part of Diplo's lecturing team

9.4 Staff

- Ms Katarina Anđelković, Researcher*
- Mr Robert Aquilina, Finance Manager
- Mr Miodrag Badnjar, Media Developer Online Courses
- Ms Cécile Desjours, Administrative and Event Coordinator
- Mr Dylan Farrell, Communications Officer
- Ms Andrijana Gavrilović, Researcher*
- Ms Pavlina Ittelson, Senior Program Officer*
- Ms Jelena Jakovljević, Web Manager and Designer
- Mr Đorđe Jančić, Internet Marketing Specialist
- Mr Arvin Kamberi, Multimedia Coordinator*
- Mr Rade Kotur, Online Programmes Assistant*
- Mr Marco Lotti, Project Manager*
- Ms Marília Maciel, Senior Researcher*
- Ms Dragana Markovski, Online Programmes Assistant*
- Ms Jovana Martić, Researcher
- Ms Anđelija Mijatović,
- Mr Viktor Mijatović, Publications Graphic Designer
- Ms Mina Mudrić, Publications Manager
- Mr Aleksandar Nedeljkov, Publications Designer
- Ms Tanja Nikolić, Course Admissions Coordinator*
- Dr Jovan Njegić, Head of Data and AI Team*
- Ms Virginia (Ginger) Paque, Internet Governance and E-diplomacy Programmes*
- Dr André Saramago, Online Learning and Research Assistant*
- Dr Vladimir Veljašević, Illustrator
- Ms Milica Virijević Konstantinović, Head of Operations Belgrade Office and Travel and Workshop Coordinator
- Mr Miloš Vujić,

* Part of Diplo's lecturing team

9.5 Lecturers, guest lecturers, workshop speakers, tutors, research fellows, and course coordinators

- Amb. Amr Aljowaily (Egypt)
- Dr Daniel Beaudoin (Israel)

- Ms Hannah Bird (UK)
- Ms Jessica Cadesky (Canada)
- Mr Aapo Cederberg (Finland)
- Mr Bipul Chatterjee (India)
- Ms Leila Chepkemboi (Kenya)
- Ms Solange Mike Cross (Trinidad and Tobago)
- Ms Priyanthi Daluwatte (Sri Lanka)
- Dr Avri Doria (USA)
- Ms Anaïs Faure Atger (Belgium)
- Mr Levi Helm (USA)
- Ms Marga Gual Soler (Spain)
- Mr Maxime Stauffer (Switzerland)
- Mr Nicolas Seidler (Switzerland)
- Ms Nikita Lad (India)
- Mr Nikola Bozic (Serbia)
- Mr Ryan Haupt (USA)
- Ms Sona Chowdhury (India)
- Ms Tara Illgner (USA)
- Dr Tim Flink (Germany)
  Mr Natapanu Nopakun (Thailand)
- Mr Tracy Hackshaw (Trinidad and Tobago)
- Ms Carol Kiangura (Kenya)
- Dr Anthony Land (UK)
- Dr Nadežda Markovski (Serbia)
- Mr Tim McInerny (Australia)
- Ms Morgan Mead (UK)
- Mr Jean-Michel Monod (Switzerland)
- Ms Mary Murphy (Hungary)
- Mr Valeriu Nicolae (Romania)
- Ms Sahar Okhovat (Australia)
- Mr Javier Ormeno (Peru)
- Ms Jenny Pearson (UK)
- Ms Judith Okite (Kenya)
- Mr Martin Rauchbauer (Austria)
- Mr Tore Svenning (Norway)
- Ms Sorina Teleanu (Romania)
- Amb. Olaph Terribile (Malta)
- Dr Tatiana Tropina (Germany)
- Ms Roberta Zuchenga (Italy)
- Ms Stefanie Frey (Switzerland)
- Mr Ian Peter (Australia)
- Ms Alexandra Lamb (Australia)
- Ms Thiwankee Wickramasinghe (Sri Lanka)
- Mr Alan Franklin (Canada)
- Mr Dejan Dincic (Switzerland)
- Ms Lee Tuthill (USA)
- Mr Quan Zhao (China)
- Mr Rashid S. Kaukab (Pakistan)

- Ms Yasmin Ismail (Egypt)
- Ms Carolina Aguerre (Argentina)
- Mr Rodrigo Márquez Lartigue (Mexico)
- Ms Aishatu Gwadabe (undisclosed)
- Ms Sophie-Charlotte Fischer (Germany)
- Dr Massimiliano Fusari (Italy)
- Prof. James N. Sater (Malta)
- Prof. Dominic Fenech (Malta)