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# Bureaucratic Partisanship and State Building

## *The Case of the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry*

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The bureaucratic recruitment policies of Ukraine's first post-communist government led to the emergence of a firmly pro-Western, anti-Russian ideological and policy orientation within the Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Generational dynamics and lack of adequate financing have maintained it.

**D**IPLOMATS do not usually make headlines by expressing their political views. Yet Ukrainian diplomats voiced their opinions during the democratic Orange Revolution in late 2004. In an open letter addressed to the international community, more than 150 Ukrainian diplomats challenged the victory of the candidate favored by Russia, Viktor Yanukovich. Although Foreign Minister Konstantyn Hryshchenko urged Foreign Ministry employees not to get involved, the institution's official spokesperson released the following statement:

At this historic moment, the diplomats of Ukraine think that it is their professional and personal duty to clearly outline their civic stance. We cannot silently watch these developments, when Ukraine's commitment to democracy is put in doubt, and it faces the threat of international isolation.<sup>1</sup>

The ability of transitioning societies to generate the politically impartial bureaucracies that Max Weber and others have deemed necessary for both economic development<sup>2</sup> and democratic consolidation<sup>3</sup> varies substantially. Ukraine's Foreign Ministry represents an unlikely case of bureaucratic partisanship—a formal state institution with deep structural accountability to the executive, multiple institutional linkages to other branches of government, and charged with impartially representing Ukrainian state interests in the international community. Its task is that of policy implementation rather than policy-making. How did Ukraine's Foreign Ministry, despite the serious political divisions and deep social cleavages within Ukrainian society, manage to adopt and hold on to a united, ideologically charged position? What explains the staunchly pro-Western

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integration, anti-Russian “imperialism” stance of this bureaucratic institution in the face of changing governments with decidedly divergent approaches to Western integration and relations with Russia?

This article examines the mechanisms by which Ukraine’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a key state institution implementing the country’s foreign policy, built and sustained a united ideological front over the past twenty years. In doing so, it offers a rare glimpse into this largely nontransparent organization. Specifically, the bureaucratic recruitment policies employed by the country’s first post-communist government led to the emergence of a firmly pro-Western, anti-Russian ideological and policy orientation within Ukraine’s Foreign Ministry. This orientation was maintained by the generational dynamics inside the ministry and lack of adequate financing. Nevertheless, the institution’s deep structural accountability to the executive and, to a lesser extent, other branches of the government limits its ability to exercise full autonomy and pursue its own policy agenda on the international stage.

This study is based on formal interviews with members of the Ukrainian foreign policy establishment, including diplomats, ambassadors, and a former foreign minister, as well as leading policy experts.<sup>4</sup> The interviews were carried out in June and July 2009 in Kyiv, Ukraine.<sup>5</sup> Empirical evidence for this article also comes from systematic examination of secondary sources, including news articles and academic literature in Ukrainian, Russian, and English.

## The Path to Independence

The underpinnings of the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry’s ideological cohesiveness are fairly recent developments. The contemporary ministry draws on deep historical traditions, to be sure, but it was in the early 1990s that the institution achieved its current form as a principal institution of a sovereign state. Following a brief overview of the historical evolution of the ministry, the discussion focuses on the period when, to use Mark Beissinger’s phrase, “history thickened.”<sup>6</sup> That is, when structural conditions met with contingent events and leadership decisions about how quickly and effectively to staff a bureaucracy that was, particularly at that time, critical to state capacity. This was a time when state capacity in the international arena crucially shaped domestic capacity as Ukraine sought allies and, in effect, donors for its state-building project.

**Tracing Roots.** Ukraine’s Foreign Ministry traces its foreign service tradition to Kievan Rus and its Byzantine

and Roman predecessors. However, it was first established as a full-fledged state structure with the creation of the sovereign Ukrainian People’s Republic on June 10, 1917, after the collapse of the Russian empire in March 1917. The Ukrainian government established relations with France and Great Britain, and joined the peace negotiations in Brest, where, on January 27, 1918, the first peace treaty ending World War I was signed. When the German-sponsored government known as the hetmanate came to power in April 1918, Ukraine opened diplomatic missions in ten states, including Romania, Finland, Switzerland, and Sweden. A separate delegation for peace negotiations with Russia was appointed during the hetmanate, and the first national consular courses designed to provide the state with diplomatic and consular personnel were introduced.

After the second republican government (the Directory) seized power from the hetmanate in December 1918, it sent diplomatic envoys to even more countries, including the United States, Great Britain, Italy, Greece, and Belgium, and it opened embassies in Estonia, Latvia, Hungary, and the newly formed Czechoslovakia, among others. Meanwhile, the West Ukrainian National Republic, a commonwealth that existed in late 1918 and early 1919 in eastern Galicia, opened its own missions in Austria, Italy, Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia. It also sent special missions to the United States, Canada, and Brazil, which were home to a considerable number of Ukrainian emigrants.

In January 1919, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic was officially proclaimed, and subsequently it established diplomatic missions in Warsaw, Berlin, and Prague. In addition, Poland, Austria, Germany, and Czechoslovakia opened their own offices in Ukraine, but these focused mostly on trade-related issues and consular services.<sup>7</sup> In December 1922, when the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was established, all Ukrainian foreign political and economic ties became subordinated to Moscow, and Ukraine could no longer conduct its own foreign policy.

The formation of the United Nations in 1945 contributed to the founding of Ukraine’s own (albeit chiefly nominal) foreign policy institution, the People’s Commissariat of Foreign Affairs. The general secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union’s (CPSU’s) Central Committee, Joseph Stalin, had hoped that all fifteen Soviet republics would be individually represented in the UN General Assembly. He eventually reached a compromise with Britain’s prime minister Winston Churchill and U.S. president Franklin D. Roosevelt in which only Ukraine

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and Belarus, which had suffered tremendously from the Nazi invasion, would have seats in the General Assembly. Between 1944 and 1990, Ukraine's foreign policy was confined to multilateral settings and coordinated in Moscow. In addition to its membership in the UN, Ukraine participated in a number of international organizations, including the International Court of Justice (since 1945), the World Health Organization (since 1946), the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (since 1954), and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) (since 1957). It also served as a nonpermanent member of the UN Security Council in 1948–49 and 1984–85.<sup>8</sup>

On July 16, 1990, the Verkhovna Rada, the parliament of the Ukrainian SSR, adopted the Declaration of State Sovereignty of Ukraine. The declaration proclaimed the self-determination of the Ukrainian nation and Ukraine as an "equal participant in international affairs."<sup>9</sup> On August 24, 1991, in the face of an attempted hard-line communist coup in Moscow, the Act of Declaration of Independence of Ukraine was adopted, and the parliament called for a referendum on support of the Declaration of Independence. In a referendum held December 1, 1991, 90 percent of the Ukrainian public voted in favor of independence.

**A Critical Juncture.** Ukraine's Foreign Ministry immediately faced the challenges of broadening and implementing structural changes, as well as a new legal base for its conduct. In the first year of independence, Ukraine was recognized by 130 countries, of which 101 opened diplomatic relations.<sup>10</sup> Staffing posed a major problem for the ministry. In 1985, it employed eighty-seven diplomats and technical staff, in addition to the personnel of four small diplomatic missions (UN in New York, UNESCO in Paris, UN office in Geneva, and international organizations in Vienna). By 1991, the number of staff had more than doubled to 136.<sup>11</sup> Since then, the number of diplomats has increased to roughly 2,000, of which about 60 percent are stationed outside the country.

The unprecedented pace with which the Foreign Ministry expanded its operations in the 1990s necessitated an approach to hiring that was both creative and pragmatic. The ministry first turned to its existing diplomats and to nationals living abroad, especially in Russia, who had diplomatic experience. In the early 1990s, about 20 percent of the recruits of the Foreign Ministry came from the former Soviet government.<sup>12</sup> Many of them had a strong commitment to the idea of an independent Ukraine. They were willing to give up their livelihood in the relatively

more prosperous Moscow and move with their families to their newly independent national homeland.<sup>13</sup>

The ministry then turned to the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, recruiting accomplished scholars in various disciplines from history to chemistry who had foreign-language skills. These individuals were attracted to diplomatic service by the prospects of traveling abroad and career advancement. About 30 percent of Ukraine's diplomats in the 1990s were recruited from the Academy of Sciences.<sup>14</sup>

For its lower- and entry-level positions, the ministry hired massive numbers of young people. As one high-profile diplomat in the first wave of young recruits recalls, "In the mid-1990, there were many young people working at the Foreign Ministry. It was fun. [Former foreign minister Hennadiy] Udoenko used to say, 'We are up to our knees in children.' We were kids trying to learn by doing." Currently, about 60 percent of the personnel in the ministry's central office in Kyiv and 40 percent of those in foreign missions are younger than thirty years old.<sup>15</sup>

**The Ideological Core.** Diplomatic recruits needed to possess knowledge of foreign languages and an ability to communicate fluently in Ukrainian. Diplomats needed to be able to draft and analyze official reports, as well as correspond with peers and superiors, in fluent Ukrainian.<sup>18</sup> The candidates were tested to gauge their Ukrainian language proficiency. The Ukrainian language requirement, in effect, favored western Ukrainians, who generally had far superior command of the language, and disqualified many applicants from the more russophone eastern Ukraine. While many eastern Ukrainians, especially those from the eastern Ukrainian villages, had studied Ukrainian in primary and secondary school, most had far from a professional command of the language. At the same time, eastern Ukrainian villagers were much less likely to pursue diplomatic careers because of their generally limited educational background, so the eastern Ukrainian applicant pool was composed mostly of urbanites. The Ukrainian language proficiency of this group was significantly lower than that of their western counterparts. As David Laitin pointed out, the Russian language was highly assimilated into both formal and informal communication in the cities and towns of eastern Ukraine.<sup>16</sup> Even the government's more recent attempts to establish Ukrainian as the dominant language of Ukraine's civic and social life have faced public resistance, particularly in eastern Ukraine.<sup>17</sup>

The emphasis on language ability was embedded in the context of Ukraine's efforts to establish sovereign

## **Declaration of State Sovereignty of Ukraine**

### **July 16, 1990**

The Verkhovna Rada of the Ukrainian SSR,

Expressing the will of the people of Ukraine;  
Striving to create a democratic society;  
Acting on the need of comprehensive guarantees of human rights and freedoms;  
Respecting national rights of all nations;  
Caring for the full-fledged political, economic, social, and spiritual development of the people of Ukraine;  
Recognizing the necessity to develop a constitutional state;  
Aiming to establish the sovereignty and self-rule of the people of Ukraine;

### **PROCLAIMS**

State Sovereignty of Ukraine as supremacy, independence, integrity, and indivisibility of the Republic's authority within the boundaries of its territory, and its independence and equality in foreign relations.

#### **I. Self-Determination of the Ukrainian Nation**

The Ukrainian SSR as a sovereign national state develops within the existing boundaries to exercise the Ukrainian nation's inalienable right to self-determination.

The Ukrainian SSR protects and defends the national statehood of the Ukrainian people.

Any violent actions against the national statehood of Ukraine undertaken by political parties, non-governmental organization, other groups or individuals shall be legally prosecuted.

#### **II. Rule of the People**

Citizens of the Republic of all nationalities comprise the people of Ukraine.

The people of Ukraine are the sole source of state authority in the Republic.

The absolute authority of the people of Ukraine is exercised directly through the Republic's Constitution, as well as via people's deputies elected to the Verkhovna Rada and local councils of the Ukrainian SSR.

Only the Verkhovna Rada of the Ukrainian SSR can represent all the people. No political party, non-governmental organization, other group or individual can represent all the people of Ukraine.

#### **III. State Power**

The Ukrainian SSR is independent in determining any issue of its state affairs.

The Ukrainian SSR guarantees the supremacy of the Constitution and laws of the Republic on its territory.

State power in the Republic is exercised on the principle of its division into legislative, executive, and judicial branches.

The Prosecutor General of the Ukrainian SSR, appointed by the Verkhovna Rada of the Ukrainian SSR, and responsible and accountable only to it, has the highest authority in the oversight of the precise and uniform application of law.

#### **IV. Citizenship of the Ukrainian SSR**

The Ukrainian SSR has its own citizenship and guarantees each citizen the right to retain citizenship of the USSR.

The citizenship of the Ukrainian SSR is acquired and lost on the grounds determined by the law on citizenship of the Ukrainian SSR.

All citizens of the Ukrainian SSR are guaranteed the rights and freedoms stipulated by the Constitution of the Ukrainian SSR and standards of international law recognized by the Ukrainian SSR.

The Ukrainian SSR guarantees equal protection of the law to all citizens of the Republic regardless of their origin, social or economic status, racial or national identity, sex, education, language, political views, religious beliefs, type and character of occupation, place of residence or other circumstances.

The Ukrainian SSR regulates immigration procedures.

The Ukrainian SSR cares for and undertakes measures to protect and defend the interests of the Ukrainian citizens beyond the Republic's borders.

## **V. Territorial Supremacy**

The Ukrainian SSR has the supremacy over all of its territory.

The territory of the Ukrainian SSR within its existing boundaries is inviolable and cannot be changed or used without its consent.

The Ukrainian SSR is independent in determining the administrative and territorial system of the Republic and the procedures for establishing national and administrative units.

## **VI. Economic Independence**

The Ukrainian SSR independently determines its economic status and secures it by law.

The people of Ukraine have the exclusive right to control, use and direct the national resources of Ukraine.

The land, its interior (mineral wealth), air space, water and other natural resources found on the territory of the Ukrainian SSR, the natural resources of its continental shelf and exclusive (maritime) economic zone, and all economic and scientific-technical potential created on the territory of Ukraine are the property of its people, the material basis of the Republic's sovereignty, and is used to meet material and spiritual needs of its citizens.

The Ukrainian SSR has the right to its share of the all-union wealth, especially in all-union gemstone and hard currency stocks and gold reserves, which were created through the efforts of the people of the Republic.

Issues concerning the all-union property (joint property of all republics) are solved through agreements between the republics entitled to the above property.

Businesses, institutions, organizations, and objects belonging to other states and their citizens, and international organizations may be located on the territory of the Ukrainian SSR and may use the natural resources of Ukraine in accordance with the laws of the Ukrainian SSR.

The Ukrainian SSR independently establishes banking (including a foreign economic bank), pricing, financial, customs, and tax systems, develops a state budget, and, if necessary, introduces its own currency.

The highest credit institution of the Ukrainian SSR is the national bank of Ukraine accountable to the Verkhovna Rada of the Ukrainian SSR.

Businesses, institutions, organizations, and manufacturing companies located on the territory of the Ukrainian SSR pay a fee for the use of land and other natural and labour resources, and deductions from their foreign currency earnings, and pay taxes to local budgets.

The Ukrainian SSR guarantees protection to all forms of ownership.

## **VII. Environmental Safety**

The Ukrainian SSR independently determines procedures to organize nature protection on the territory of the Republic and procedures for the use of natural resources.

The Ukrainian SSR has its own national committee for protection of the population from radiation.

The Ukrainian SSR has the right to ban construction and to halt the operation of any businesses, institutions, organizations, and other objects that threaten environmental safety.

The Ukrainian SSR cares about the environmental safety of its citizens, about the gene pool of its people, and about its young generation.

The Ukrainian SSR has the right to compensation for the damages to the environment of Ukraine brought about by the acts of union authorities.

## **VIII. Cultural Development**

The Ukrainian SSR is independent in solving issues associated with science, education, as well as cultural and spiritual development of the Ukrainian nation and guarantees all nationalities living on the territory of the Republic the right to free national and cultural development.

The Ukrainian SSR guarantees national and cultural recovery of the Ukrainian nation, its historical consciousness and traditions, national and ethnographic characteristics, and functioning of the Ukrainian language in all spheres of social activity.

The Ukrainian SSR strives to meet national and cultural, as well as spiritual and linguistic needs of the Ukrainians living outside the Republic's borders.

National, cultural, and historical values located on the territory of the Ukrainian SSR belong exclusively to the people of the Republic.

The Ukrainian SSR has the right to return into the ownership of the people of Ukraine its national, cultural, and historical values found outside the borders of the Ukrainian SSR.

### **IX. External and Internal Security**

The Ukrainian SSR has the right to its own armed forces.

The Ukrainian SSR has its own internal armies and bodies of state security subordinated to the Verkhovna Rada of the Ukrainian SSR.

The Ukrainian SSR determines procedures for military service by citizens of the Republic.

Citizens of the Ukrainian SSR perform their military service, as a rule, on the territory of the Republic, and cannot be used for military purpose beyond its borders without the consent of the Verkhovna Rada of the Ukrainian SSR.

The Ukrainian SSR solemnly declares its intention of becoming a permanently neutral state that does not participate in military blocs and adheres to three nuclear free principles: to accept, to produce and to purchase no nuclear weapons.

### **X. International Relations**

The Ukrainian SSR, as an international law subject, maintains direct relations with other states, enters into agreements with them, exchanges diplomatic, consular and trade representatives, and participates in the activity of international organizations to the full extent necessary for effective guarantees of the Republic's national interests in political, economic, ecological, informational, scholarly, technical, cultural, and sports spheres.

The Ukrainian SSR acts as an equal participant in international affairs, actively promotes the reinforcement of general peace and international security, and directly participates in the general European process and European structures.

The Ukrainian SSR recognizes the prevalence of general human values over class values and the priority of generally accepted standards of international law over the standards of the domestic law.

Relations of the Ukrainian SSR with other Soviet republics are built on the basis of agreements concluded on the basis of the principles of equality, mutual respect, and non-interference in internal affairs.

The Declaration is the basis for a new constitution and laws of Ukraine and determines the positions of the Republic for the purpose of international agreements.

The principles of the Declaration of the Sovereignty of Ukraine are used for preparation of a new union agreement.

### **Passed by the Verkhovna Rada of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic**

Kyiv, July 16, 1990

Source: Official Web site of Verkhovna Rada, [http://gska2.rada.gov.ua/site/postanova\\_eng/Declaration\\_of\\_State\\_Sovereignty\\_of\\_Ukraine\\_rev1.htm](http://gska2.rada.gov.ua/site/postanova_eng/Declaration_of_State_Sovereignty_of_Ukraine_rev1.htm), accessed February 12, 2011.

statehood based on a distinct Ukrainian identity. Differentiating itself from its neighbor to the east was important for Ukraine's stability, if not survival, as both a state and a nation. The stringent language requirement contributed to the emergence of a young corps characterized by a staunchly pro-Western, anti-Russian ideological orientation that reflected the dominant western Ukrainian orientation.

Meanwhile, the higher-level officials, as the first post-Soviet Ukrainian foreign minister, Anatoliy Zlenko, put it, "all got behind textbooks of business Ukrainian."<sup>19</sup> The personnel policy for higher-ranking diplomats in the 1990s remained fairly flexible due to the deficit of qualified employees. However, during President Leonid Kuchma's second term (2000–2004), the process became fully non-transparent, unmeritocratic, and unsystematic. "Starting in about 1998, the Foreign Ministry was pressured to take in

virtually everyone who was dismissed from other government posts. And then their family members," recalled one ministry insider. The new recruits were usually hired as heads of mission or high-level ministry officials. Rumors were widespread that embassies were being opened just to create new ambassadorial posts.

While the senior positions, including that of foreign minister, remained in flux, with relatively high turnover, depending on who was running the country, the backbone of the ministry remained the ideologically cohesive young cohort. According to several interviewees, the members of this group were not exposed to partisan purges because they were deemed to have little political influence. Moreover, to purge them would have required firing and replacing nearly a thousand skilled bureaucrats—roughly half the staff of a key state institution—something that few states can afford to do. Firing high-ranking diplomats, am-

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bassadors, and ministers to get rid of opposition and send a message to opponents (as well as to the international community) is a common practice even outside the post-Soviet context. Firing a legion of bureaucrats, however, is not commonly done because of the bureaucrats' unique skills (which includes knowledge of foreign languages in this case) and, consequently, the high cost of replacing them. The strength and political clout of high-ranking officials turned into a serious weakness in periods of political transition because the new administration targeted them for replacement. The strength of the lower-level diplomats was thus their relatively scant political value and their larger numbers.

## Creating a Diplomatic Corps

The persistence of the Foreign Ministry's ideological commitments derives from mechanisms that perpetuate the profile through successive administrations. These mechanisms are generational waves and resource constraints.

**Generational Waves.** The sociologist who pioneered generation theory, Karl Mannheim, makes an important distinction among what he calls "generation location," "actual generation," and "generation unit." Generation location derives from biological factors. It positions individuals born at the same time on a "common location in the historical dimension of the social process," thereby exposing them to particular "natural data" that, because experienced directly at a critical time in youth, really "stick."<sup>20</sup> It is the shared experience of the "natural data" (i.e., "participation in the common destiny") at a time of dynamic societal destabilization that produces a real bond between members of a generation.<sup>21</sup> When such an experiential (not just biological) bond exists, a generation becomes an actuality. However, responses to the same traumatic social changes are not necessarily homogeneous or coherent. Mannheim thus adds the concept of generation unit to deal with the problem of subgroups and subdivisions within an actual generation.<sup>22</sup> Members of a generation unit share attitudes and principles (i.e., "mental data") that engender a certain "parallelism of responses."<sup>23</sup> The majority of the Foreign Ministry recruits of the 1990s represent such a generation unit.

Philip Abrams challenged the generation location thesis and argued that a generation need not be confined to a specific age group. As he explains, a generation represents a "fundamental freezing of consciousness" far beyond age-group membership, and thus a "sociological

generation" may encompass many biological generations.<sup>24</sup> Abrams, however, agreed with Mannheim that the concept of generation should be limited to particular subsets of social formation, such as young politicians, old manual workers, or some students, because "efforts to use the concept more ambitiously end up either as genealogy . . . or as waffle."<sup>25</sup>

Applying Mannheim's concept of a generation unit, while taking into account Abrams's modification that such a unit need not be confined to a specific age group, it is possible to trace the first generation of the modern Ukrainian Foreign Ministry as it carried its so-called mental data—its attitudes and principles—into the present, thereby creating a partisan bureaucracy. Nearly two decades since the arrival of the inaugural generation, one of its members explained with amusement, "We [who began as young recruits] are still considered young by the ministry's standards."<sup>26</sup> At the same time, those in the senior ranks who came driven by ideology and remained at the ministry have also helped to carry the ideological torch.

Another striking feature of the Foreign Ministry is its lack of (late) middle-aged officials. Many officials who were then middle-aged left the ministry in the 1990s to pursue other careers, especially in business.<sup>27</sup> The exodus of materially motivated personnel also contributed to the strengthening of the ideological core of the ministry. The material incentives (or lack thereof) that have shaped the population of Ukrainian diplomats are elaborated below.

The initial and enduring strength of the inaugural generation unit may be a rather intuitive explanation for the persistence of bureaucratic partisanship. Our theory, however, must also account for the possibility of new entrants diluting the cohesion. Indeed, the aforementioned mechanism is necessary, but not sufficient, in accounting for the outcome. It was the addition of resource constraints to the generational mechanism that has maintained the inaugural generation unit's effect within the Foreign Ministry.

**Resource Constraints.** Since Ukraine's independence and the establishment of its Foreign Ministry, the diplomatic workload has steadily increased. The ministry now has diplomatic relations with 166 countries and more than eighty missions in sixty countries. Ukraine is a member of more than a hundred international organizations, an initiator and member of the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development, an informal association of states that also includes Georgia, Uzbeki-

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stan, Azerbaijan, and Moldova (referred to collectively as GUUAM), and one of the initiators of the Organization of Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), a body designed to promote stability in the Black Sea region. The fledgling state also developed a Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with the European Union (EU), as well as a Ukraine-EU Action Plan within the context of the European Neighborhood Policy. Ukraine has also opened an "Intensified Dialogue" with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).<sup>28</sup>

The ministry's rising workload has not been accompanied by an expanding budget. The ensuing financial problems have not simply been an outcome of Ukraine's economic oscillations, but also reflect the ministry's position within the government's power structure and the frequent tug-of-war between major governmental institutions. Many of the financial difficulties facing the ministry have had an effect on its partisanship.

The wages of Ukrainian diplomats are very low relative to the cost of living in Kyiv. An attaché in the central apparatus in Kyiv receives a monthly base salary of about 1,200 hryvnias (\$158), while a midlevel diplomat gets about 1,500 hryvnias (\$197) per month. Even for those who own their apartments, these wages barely cover living expenses, especially in Kyiv. Diplomats have traditionally relied on foreign postings for higher income. The duration of such appointments has recently been reduced, however. Some may be completely eliminated. The ministry has also cut the number of business trips. In some cases, officials have had to fund their own travel.<sup>29</sup> In addition to their base salary, many diplomats receive bonuses and special privileges, such as discounted suits and free phone calls. Despite this, multiple observers have pointed out that subsistence on such modest compensation remains impossible.

In 2008, the wages of high-level Foreign Ministry officials were significantly increased. According to one source, the foreign minister now earns a base salary of roughly 10,000 hryvnias (\$1,313) per month. The salaries for other ministry employees were not changed, however. The situation is complicated by the official policy prohibiting ministry employees from earning supplemental income from such part-time activities as translating, as well as a Soviet-era policy prohibiting husbands and wives from working in the same embassy.

According to the head of the Foreign Ministry's trade union, which has roughly 2,500 members (2,000 of them diplomats), another major problem relates to housing. The Foreign Ministry has not generated new housing for its employees for the past six years. As of summer 2009,

the union offered twenty-eight individuals a modest monthly stipend of 40 hryvnias (\$5.25) to help alleviate living expenses.

Twenty percent of the vacant positions in all ministries were cut in 2009, but the Foreign Ministry trade union reports that no high-level diplomats were laid off. This across-the-board downsizing was not only due to the global economic crisis, which has hit Ukraine harder than perhaps any other East European country.<sup>30</sup> The belt-tightening was also a result of the months-long vacancy during which Ukraine had no foreign minister. During this period in which there was no incumbent to advocate for funding, several former foreign ministers (Borys Tarasiuk, Anatolii Zlenko, Arsenii Yatseniuk, and Henadii Udovenko) sent the president and the cabinet of ministers a letter explaining the need to increase funding for the ministry, but they never received a formal reply.<sup>31</sup>

Unlike some other government agencies, the Foreign Ministry is not a place where one can get rich under the table. The interview subjects agreed that the Foreign Ministry is far less corrupt than Ukraine's other government institutions. It is not completely free of questionable conduct, however. In December 2005, for example, the Foreign Ministry awarded a 12-million-hryvnia (\$1.5 million) contract to improve Ukraine's image abroad to a purportedly corrupt and noncompetitive tender, a Kharkiv-based company called Konglomerat. Less than a year after signing the contract, the Foreign Ministry sued the company for failing to deliver.<sup>32</sup> Such incidents are, nevertheless, rare, simply because the ministry seldom handles the types of projects that offer opportunities for bribes.

In addition to notoriously low pay scales, funds budgeted for Foreign Ministry operations have not been consistently provided. By 2009, the financing of Ukrainian diplomatic missions abroad had reached crisis levels. Embassies have had to drastically slash their spending.<sup>33</sup> The lack of funds made the professional and personal lives of Ukrainian diplomats increasingly more difficult. Many of them could no longer meet Ukrainian delegations or visit Ukrainians imprisoned abroad (which they are required to do twice a year) unless they paid travel expenses out of their own pockets. Ukrainian ambassadors in some countries have had to pay the rent of embassy premises themselves, hoping the state will later reimburse them.<sup>34</sup>

Financial difficulties have forced the Foreign Ministry to abandon plans to open new embassies, especially in Africa and Southeast Asia, and to expand some current missions. For example, there are at present only two



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According to Ukraine's constitution (Chap. IV, Art. 85), the Verkhovna Rada determines the principles of foreign policy. The Rada appoints the foreign minister upon nomination by the president and has the authority to dismiss the minister, as it did Volodymyr Ohryzko in March 2009. The power to appoint and dismiss the foreign minister (as well as Foreign Ministry department heads) has in the past generated rivalries between the president and parliament. In addition to formulating the general strategy of Ukraine's foreign policy and enacting the relevant legislation, the Rada approves the state budget and (through its Committee on the Budget) controls its implementation, thereby influencing the financing of the Foreign Ministry. The Committee on Foreign Affairs of the Rada coordinates the development of the foreign policy strategy, oversees the work of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and can recommend appointees to head missions. The implementation of the foreign policy principles as determined by the Rada is formally the function of the president. According to the constitution (Chap. V, Art. 106), the president administers the foreign political activities of the state, conducts negotiations, and concludes international treaties. The president also appoints and dismisses chiefs of diplomatic missions to other states and international organizations.

The president heads the Council of National Security and Defense, and also sets up as well as appoints and dismisses the head of the secretariat, the agency that offers analysis and advice to the president. Some senior Foreign Ministry officials view the nontransparent Foreign Policy Office within the presidential secretariat as the country's most influential foreign policy body. Depending on the president's leadership style, and also on his own, the head of the secretariat has at times played a leading role in Ukrainian foreign policy. One vivid example of a powerful chief of the presidential secretariat is Viktor Baloha, who was dismissed by President Viktor Yushchenko in May 2009. Before his dismissal, Baloha maintained a high public profile, and, according to several experts and insiders, he directly interfered in presidential appointments. A number of senior Foreign Ministry officials and experts also cite the influence of informal circles around the president, but agree that this influence is difficult to discern and, like that of the formal institutions, fluctuates.

The foreign minister and the heads of mission are directly accountable to the president. The relative influence of the Foreign Ministry on the formulation of foreign policy hinges on the personalistic and idiosyncratic influence of the foreign minister and the ministry's top officials in the presidential secretariat. Many of the secretariat's staffers are former Foreign

Ministry officials who maintain close ties with their old colleagues in the ministry.

The Cabinet of Ministers is the third key institution exercising influence on the Foreign Ministry and Ukrainian foreign policy. The foreign minister is a cabinet member. The prime minister does not officially conduct foreign policy but is an international public figure and as such can "complicate" the job of the foreign minister. For example, between 2005 and 2007 then-prime minister Viktor Yanukovich clashed with then-foreign minister Borys Tarasyuk. Yanukovich not only made "unsanctioned" public statements, but tried to exercise influence on the Foreign Ministry through the Ministry of Finance, which allocates the state budget. The Ministry of Finance has delayed payments to—and closed accounts of—the Foreign Ministry, complicating its operations. Consequently, some analysts believe that the prime minister has direct influence on the work of the Foreign Ministry. As one ministry insider put it about then-prime minister Yuliya Tymoshenko, "She decides what type of car the [foreign] minister will be driving, whether he will be driving at all, and how much gas he gets."

The foreign minister plays an important individual role in securing funding for the ministry. "Sometimes the prime minister and the Rada hold grudges for being circumvented," explained a high-ranking Foreign Ministry official. The foreign minister's ability to establish good relations not only with the president (and the presidential secretariat), but also with the cabinet and the parliament is key here. When these three centers of power are at odds, which is frequently the case, this is difficult to accomplish. The community council of research institutions and think tanks has only a nominal influence on the Foreign Ministry. The media, public opinion, and industrial-financial groups mostly have secondary (and variable) influence.

The volatile nature of Ukrainian politics, in which the competition among key political actors and institutions often turns uncivil, has had a significant influence on the Foreign Ministry's access to resources. The Foreign Ministry has repeatedly found itself in the middle of a tug-of-war among the president, the parliament, and the cabinet of ministers. The heavy burden of adhering to all sides of the deeply divided cast of political actors is a difficult one for the Foreign Ministry; consequently it has become a place where only the most dedicated endure.

## Conclusion

Partisan bureaucracies are generally viewed as obstructions to political and economic development. According

to the Weberian tradition, bureaucrats are professionals who carry out orders. Their policy preferences are irrelevant, and their expressions of ideology are inappropriate at best. Weberian bureaucrats certainly do not challenge election outcomes.

The mechanisms outlined in this article have led to the development and maintenance of a partisan Foreign Ministry in Ukraine, a rare situation in a post-communist state. A diplomat's conventional role is that of messenger. The impartiality of its diplomatic representatives is critical if a state is to effectively navigate the international environment and convey its messages to the international community. However, bureaucracies carry the imprint of their formative environment. They are created and they evolve within a context that has profound effects on their subsequent development. Institutional, structural, and financial constraints make Ukraine's Foreign Ministry an unpopular career choice for all but the most fervent ideologues.

### Notes

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