Digital Diplomacy During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Change of Direction of Communication and Quasi-Media Diplomacy

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ABSTRACT
The COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted the functioning of people, states, and public institutions over a very short time. E-diplomacy, functioning until the beginning of 2020 as one of the forms of diplomacy, gained importance during the pandemic, and what is more—for a brief period it became its main (and only) form. **Purpose:** the paper mainly refers to the area of digital public diplomacy. Taking into consideration various changes taking place in diplomacy during the COVID-19 pandemic, efforts were made to emphasize two of them—those related to the direction of communication and the role of the media in digital public diplomacy. **Research methods:** a non-standardized observation and a description of selected cases were used, referring to the literature and research on diplomacy in the pandemic. **Conclusions:** in the period under observation (2020), both the intensification of existing activities with the use of new technologies, including new media and social media, and the development of completely new approaches to digital diplomacy could be observed. **Originality and cognitive value:** the advantage of this paper is the description of the condition of digital diplomacy during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and its new forms (including in particular quasi-media diplomacy) together with the key changes that have occurred in this area.

KEYWORDS
digital diplomacy, public diplomacy, COVID-19 pandemic