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**The person and the activities of the Hungarian sports diplomat, as well as the functional,
diplomatic examination of the sports protocol's role in Hungarian sports diplomacy**

Ph.D. THESIS BOOKLET

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Introduction

Sport has appeared in almost all areas of life: science, education, economy, media, tourism, healthcare or diplomacy. As its social and political importance increases, there is a need and demand for scientific research into the processes and phenomena that can be observed in the world of people and institutions connected to sport. By the 20th century, sport had also become a global phenomenon, thereby increasing the value of sports diplomacy.

Sports results achieved in the past can lay the foundation for international recognition and credibility, but relying solely on previous professional results is not enough: a complex diplomatic specialist is capable of adequately representing the interests of the given sport or sports organization, articulating intentions, persuading people, and influencing processes.

One of the aims of this dissertation is to prove that, contrary to the colloquial (public) interpretation, sports diplomats can credibly fulfill their duties as qualified professional diplomats.

The purpose and significance of the research

The primary goal of this dissertation is to **examine Hungarian sports leaders and elected sports diplomats from the perspective of career diplomacy, and to determine the functional categories that can be established among Hungarian sports diplomats.**

The further aim of the research is to assess the general role of the sports protocol and to investigate the level of knowledge of the sports protocol of the sports diplomats. As a strategic sector, more and more venues are available, and obtaining the right to hold events is the task of capable and qualified sports diplomats. **For the first time, their sports diplomacy activities, knowledge, and insights can be seen** - to the best of our knowledge, such research has not been conducted at the international level, which is why we use the only survey conducted among foreign affairs diplomats as a sample when examining generic competences. For years, it has not been known how many Hungarian sports diplomats are active at the European and international level in Olympic and non-Olympic sports, so it is not possible to measure a trend, but at the same time it can be one of the quantitative measures of the strength and success of Hungarian sports diplomacy - it is also the basis for further research.

Research questions:

1. According to sports NGOs and sports diplomats, who can become a sports diplomat?
2. What are the personal and generic competences that sports diplomats and international sports leaders think are necessary to carry out sports diplomacy?
3. What are the main areas of sports diplomacy compared to career diplomacy?
4. How well do Hungarian sports diplomats and international sports leaders know the rules of the protocol and how important do they consider its application?
5. Is there a need for the development of personal and protocol competencies among sports managers and sports diplomats?

Hypotheses

I have divided my hypotheses into two major topics (sports diplomacy and sports protocol), which I want to verify with the help of the results of the studies examined during international, theoretical research on the one hand, and empirically experienced on the other hand, as well as with the help of questionnaire surveys and structured interviews.

Competences, qualification, education

H1 I assume that in the performance of activities related to Hungarian sports diplomacy, interpersonal and protocol competences are at least as important as sports professional knowledge, and a sports professional education is not a requirement.

H2 Similar to career diplomats, I assume that in the case of sports leaders and sports diplomats, the ability to build relationships will be one of the prominent generic sports diplomat competencies.

Protocol, sport protocol

H3 I assume that protocol is a competence regularly used in sports diplomacy, although at the same time there is a gap in its comprehensive knowledge, but there would be a need for training in this regard.

H4 I assume that the best application of sports protocol can contribute to the realization of the goals of sports diplomacy,

- a) since professional decisions are often made at protocol events,
- b) and because errors resulting from the lack of protocol knowledge can have a negative effect on sports diplomacy negotiations.

H5 I assume that sports protocol specialists can play an important role in the implementation of domestically organized international sports competitions, which can be identified as an indicator of sports diplomacy success, thereby they carry out multilateral diplomatic activities.

The person and activities of a sports diplomat

H6 I assume that the personality of the Hungarian sports diplomat is a more important factor than the athlete's past in the establishment and maintenance of sports diplomatic relations, so not only former athletes can become sports diplomats.

H7 I assume that the elected Hungarian sports diplomats and sports leaders primarily fulfill the function of representation and/or negotiation.

EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

The basis and starting point of my research is data collection, which means theoretical content analysis, i.e. several years of **secondary research** with the processing of domestic and international literature, printed and online content analysis ($n \geq 500$), and the use of my own publication results. After the theoretical research, I decided on the quantitative and qualitative tests, the elements of expert sampling, and compiled the questions for the questionnaires and the semi-structured interview.

Quantitative research

The target population means the most affected members of Hungarian sports diplomacy, so professional relevance and experience were the main criteria when determining the sampling.

I was interested in the opinion of those who can answer authentically, because they are:

- elected sports diplomats and/or
- sports leaders who are entitled to represent their organization internationally;
- organizers / hosts of prominent international events, and/or
- decision-makers/influencers of Hungarian sports policy, and/or
- they are regular participants of sports delegations, and/ or
- they played a role in the development of university sports diplomacy training.

In the absence of internationally validated questionnaire samples, I **created my own set of questions**, primarily based on the diplomatic regulations examined in theoretical research, as well as on active training programs and personal experiences. **I processed the results of the survey examining attitudes and opinions for the purpose of data communication in an Excel spreadsheet using a descriptive method, and primarily examined frequency and relative frequency.**

The results of the quantitative research

Determining the personal and generic competencies of the elected sports diplomats and international sports leaders, as well as assessing their foreign language and protocol competence as key competences

My primary empirical experience and the international survey conducted among career diplomats confirmed that the intercultural and general behavioral/social (interpersonal) competencies that are an integral part of the protocol are of decisive importance in the world of diplomacy. Based on this, I assumed that in the case of Hungarian sports diplomats, interpersonal and protocol competencies are at least as important as professional knowledge.

According to the sports diplomats participating in the research, personal and diplomatic competences may be more important in the performance of their activities than the learned, relevant professional knowledge (average of 4.7%). The agreement with the statement also received an average of 4.6 % among the leaders of sports associations. A high level of protocol and foreign language competence appears as a basic requirement in a higher proportion of sports diplomats compared to sports managers, but the result shows only a minimal difference, no significant difference can be made.

Among sports diplomats, I also examined the role of various foundational professional knowledge during their activities. Among the respondents, the most basic and necessary knowledge was communication skills and knowledge (both in the native tongue and in the English language environment). Next, I examined the generic competencies, and I will illustrate the results in a comparative way in the qualitative research section.

I also assumed that there is a gap in the comprehensive protocol knowledge in the civilian sports sector, but a need for training and further training can be identified. I primarily asked about knowledge of a foreign language and its specific application. According to the majority of respondents, they only know the diplomatic and political language on average (42.9%). Only 40% of the respondents know the intercultural language excellently, 33.3% know it on average, and 20% know it well. I also examined the question among the leaders entitled to international representation of the associations:

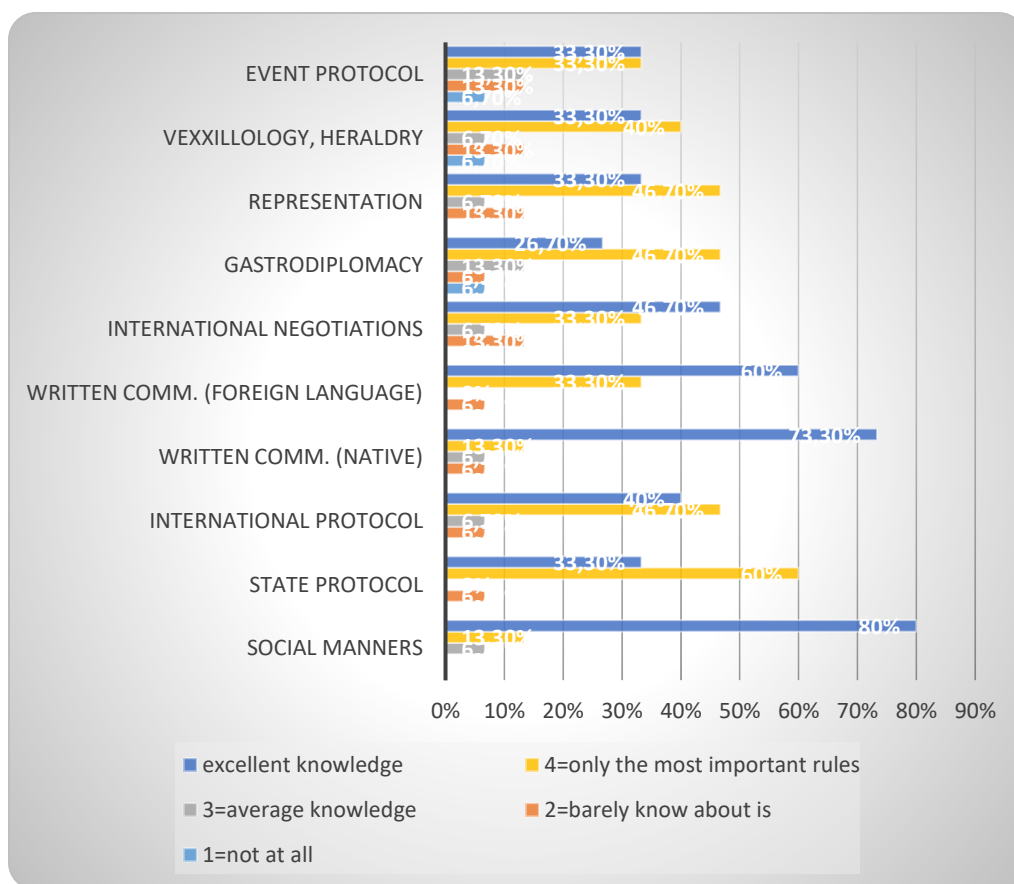
AREA	N	not at all	barely know it	average knowledge	know it well	know it very well (excellent)
Sport language	24	-	8.3%	29.2%	25%	37.5%
Diplomatic and political language	24	4.2%	25%	33.3%	29.2%	8.3%
Termonology of Protocol Event Management	23	4.3%	17.4%	43.5%	21.7%	13%
Intercultural language	23	-	26.1%	30.4%	30.4%	13%

Regardless of the target group, we consider the category "I know it very well" to be expected at these representative levels, i.e. flawless, confident language competence. It is very noticeable that very few of the responding sports leaders rated their knowledge as impeccable and conscious, so there is room for improvement here, especially because 48.1% of sports association managers and 53.3% of sports diplomats consider a high level of protocol and foreign language knowledge a basic requirement identified with full agreement, while 37% and 33.3% would rather agree. I also asked them whether they would participate in practical foreign language training.

The majority of sports diplomats completely agreed (46.7%) that it would be useful/necessary to organize a complex, intensive, outsourced practical program/training program containing international-level diplomatic and protocol knowledge specifically designed for sports diplomats, i.e. for both language and diplomatic and a high willingness rate can be identified for training and further training related to protocol knowledge (language knowledge was also the lowest measured data). The target group also assessed on a five-point scale how well they perceived themselves to be aware of the following areas of expertise:

- **- Social manners:** basic situations in domestic and international environments (arrival-punctuality, greetings, greetings, handshakes, introductions, introductions, exchange of business cards, greetings, greetings, etc.)
- **- State protocol:** written and verbal communication with public dignitaries and state-government representatives, their ranking, compilation of a protocol list, security of protected persons, etc.
- **- International protocol:** communication with foreign state and sports leaders, diplomatic representatives in writing and orally in a foreign language, ranking them, compiling a protocol list, etc.
- **- Written communication (Hungarian):** format and content requirements of an invitation letter, invitation card or other official letter for a Hungarian state leader
- **- Written communication (in a foreign language):** format and content requirements of an invitation letter, invitation card or other official letter for a foreign state or sports leader or diplomatic representative
- **- Knowledge of international negotiation techniques:** questions concerning different nations (e.g. hierarchies, knowledge of interpretation, seating order according to ranking, choosing a negotiation strategy, avoiding taboo topics, etc.)
- **- Gastrodiplomacy:** participation and organization in seated or standing protocol events: meal, venue/menu selection, table settings, types of serving, Hungarian dishes, timing for saying toasts, etc.
- **- Representation diplomacy:** form and content regulations regarding personal appearance, e.g. press communication, dress codes, invitations to speeches or giving speeches at hearings or opening/closing ceremonies, etc., as well as online protocol (online meetings, communication on websites, social portals)
- **- Vexillology, heraldry:** application of symbols (e.g. correct placement and hoisting of flags in stadiums, when announcing results; display of table flags on conference or dining tables, etc.)
- **- Event protocol:** official gift (who, what, in what value and packaging, when, to whom and how it can be given - taking national and cultural differences into account) cultural, touristic, hotel basics (program recommendation for foreign delegations, accompanying program organization); event organization (script, program compilation, preparation, execution, post-production)

In this case, too, we consider only level 5, i.e. *"I am fully aware of the issue and consciously apply the relevant domestic and international rules, I feel confident in the topic"* to be expected. The other levels contain the possibility of error, and only conscious and confident knowledge is sufficient for the effective/successful articulation and representation of interests. Protocol errors, as we also pointed out and the majority of respondents agreed, have a negative effect on sports relations and can block or freeze sports diplomatic negotiations. This feedback also supports the need for practice-oriented training courses that can be planned in these topics, both in the native language and in a foreign language (primarily English).



Knowledge of special areas, competencies (self-assessment) (N=27) (own editing)

Examining the education, qualification and sports background of the elected sports diplomats and international sports leaders

I assume that the **personality** of the Hungarian sports diplomat is a more important factor than the sportsman's past in the establishment and maintenance of sports diplomacy relations, so it is not only athletes who can become sports diplomats, and that sports diplomacy is not a condition for performing activities related to sports diplomacy.

The vast majority of sports diplomats (53.3%) rather agreed that an athlete's past is not a requirement when performing the functions of a sports diplomat, but it promotes the international recognition of the sports diplomat and the acceptance of his person in the given environment. According to 60% of sports leaders, not only athletes can become authentic sports diplomats, but anyone who has sufficient dedication, the necessary personal competencies, and acquires the necessary professional competencies (the proportion of those who fully agree is 26.7%, the proportion of those who rather agree is 46.7%). Therefore, sports diplomacy can be learned, and the study group has a high willingness to learn. The professional sport associations that participated in the survey primarily (74.1%) nominated the president as the person who provides the international representation of their association, followed by the general secretary (51.9%).

Out of the 27 persons interviewed, 15 presidents do not have a sports professional qualification or a sports degree (55.6%); only 4 have a sports professional qualification (BsC/MsC) (14.8%); and 8 have a secondary OKJ qualification (29.6%). Education levels of the general secretaries (N=12): 40.7% do not have any professional sports qualification or education, 29.6% have a higher education, 22.2% have a secondary education and 7.4% have a university education.

The majority of sports diplomats participating in the survey do not even plan to pursue higher education, 20% clearly rejected the opportunity, 13.3% plan to, and 66.7% are uncertain about the issue - this clearly shows the lack of demand for traditional university education, so training for them can be planned in the framework of other professional training to deal with the revealed protocol and foreign language gaps. After the qualifications, I examined the extent to which the respondents consider higher professional sports qualifications to be a requirement. The majority of respondents "neither agreed nor disagreed" (40%) with the statement that higher professional sports education is an advantage, but not a requirement. 33.3% rather agreed, 6.7% completely agreed, 6.7% rather disagreed, and 13.3% of the respondents did not agree at all.

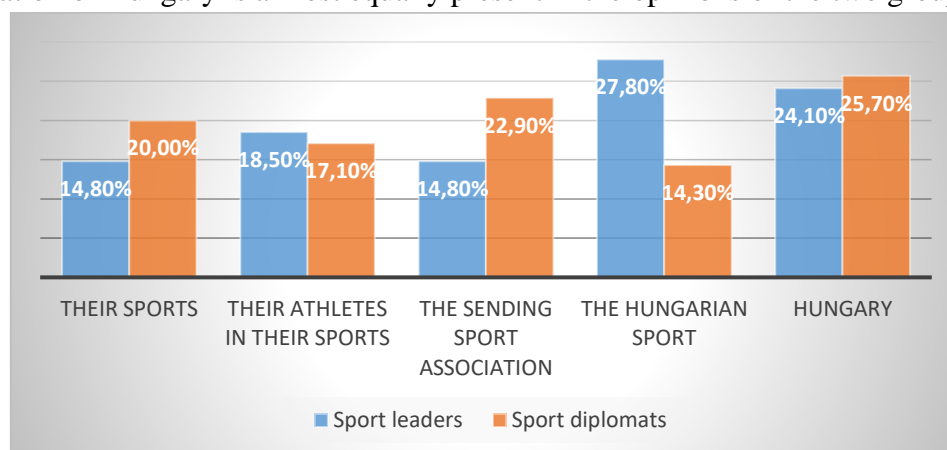
The scope of activity of the elected sports diplomat and the levels of sports diplomatic representation within it

Based on the professional definition of the person of the sports diplomat, I assumed that the persons of the Hungarian sports diplomats are the officials who are elected to a European or international association (i.e. at the international level), so they basically carry out their activities in an international context. 40% of the respondents completely agreed, and 26.7% rather agreed, 26.7% "both agreed and disagreed", and 1 person (6.7%) rather disagreed. With the assumption that the importance of sports diplomacy goes beyond its own competence as a policy implementer and it is able to contribute to the realization of foreign policy goals at the national level, the following results were achieved:

Respondents	N	do not agree	rather agree	both agree and disagree	rather agree	fully agree
Sport diplomats	15	-	6,7%	20%	33,3%	40%
Sport associations	27	3,7%	7,4%	11,1%	40,7%	37%

Do you agree that Hungarian sports diplomacy would contribute to the realization of Hungarian foreign policy goals and through sport, our country can build foreign relations and establish cooperation in other areas? (N1=15; N2=27)

I also examined what the members of the target groups think what the Hungarian sports diplomat represents. It is noticeable that, while according to the sports leaders, the sports diplomat is supposed to represent Hungarian sport as a whole, the sports diplomats consider the delegating Hungarian sports organization to be the object of their representation. The representation of Hungary is almost equally present in the opinions of the two groups.



What does the Hungarian sport diplomat represent? (N1=27; N2=15; own editing)

Among the five diplomatic functions (Vienna Convention of 1961), the **representative function** was chosen as their most frequent activity, which was further broken down and examined to see if, according to the respondents, they can provide relevant representation in addition to the official context, especially at social and protocol events, so that decisions can be made even on these occasions. The following results were obtained:

Responses	Sport diplomats	%	Sport leaders	%
	(N=15)		(N=27)	
1=do not agree at all	0	0%	0	0%
2=rather disagree	0	0%	0	0%
3=neutral	0	0%	0	0%
4=rather agree	4	26.7%	9	33.3%
5=fully agree	11	73.3%	18	66.7%

It is also true for sports leaders and elected sports diplomats that they support/represent sports, or Hungarian sports diplomacy interests, so they must take care of their behavior, appearance, and communication on these occasions as well.
(N=27) (own editing)

When examining the specific activities of sports diplomats, based on empirical experience, I assumed that due to different selection, training and work factors than career diplomats, the elected sports diplomats primarily fulfill the function of **representation and negotiation**. Among the sports diplomats participating in the research, I examined the appearance of the five basic functions (representation, negotiation, orientation, information, relationship building) defined for career diplomats by the Vienna Convention of 1961. In the survey, the respondents had to determine on a five-point scale the extent to which they perform these, detailing the activities related to the given function (1 – never or almost never and 5 – always, on a daily basis). It is important that, within each category, I deliberately made a distinction between official, visible, and unofficial, background negotiations, as well as between official and protocol occasions, in order to get as nuanced a picture as possible.

The answers show that the highest values (3.86 and 3.8) were given to the activities performed in the representative function (participation in sports events for the purpose of representation, including giving speeches and presentations, as well as participation in official trips and delegation programs). The majority of respondents only occasionally participate in political, diplomatic and social events, in a representative way, as invited guests, this is also confirmed by the average value of 3.06, on the other hand, according to their statement, they often and regularly participate in sports professional events and sports delegation programs. The second highest values were given to the negotiation function (3.8 and 3.7), where the most frequent task is conducting *official negotiations and meetings at domestic or foreign international sports events*, as well as conducting *official international negotiations and negotiations during trips and delegation programs*. The third most common (3.66) activity in the negotiation function is the *implementation of unofficial lobbying and lobbying activities at the protocol events of foreign or domestic sports events* (it received a higher value than the unofficial lobbying activities and background negotiations during delegation programs), which also strengthens the frequency and importance of the protocol in sports diplomatic relations.

The lowest values were given to the relationship-building and orientation/information functions.

The role and implementation of the sports protocol in sports diplomacy

As I highlighted in the theoretical research, due to its multidisciplinary nature, the protocol appears during the performance of all five diplomatic functions, so I assume that the protocol is a competence that is regularly used both in the official and social functions of elected sports diplomats and sports managers.

	N	Átlag	do not agree at all	rather agree	neutral	rather agree	fully agree
Sport associations	27	4,3	-	3,7%	7,4%	51,9%	37%
Sport diplomats	15	4,4	-	-	13,3%	33,3%	53,3%
Difference	-	-	-	3,7%	-5,9%	18,6%	-16,3%

Opinions that sports protocol is an essential competence in the performance of international tasks related to sports diplomacy (own editing)

A higher percentage (53.3%) of the sports diplomats completely agreed that the sports protocol appears during all international activities, thus it is a competency of primary importance in the performance of tasks related to sports diplomacy. The largest proportion of sports managers (51.9%) rather agreed with the statement.

The following opinion of sports diplomats is that not only during their official, professional activities, but also at protocol events, they support/represent sports and Hungarian sports diplomacy interests, so they must also take care of their behavior, appearance, and communication on these occasions, the vast majority of respondents completely agreed (66.7%) with the statement, and 33.3% rather agreed with it. There wasn't a person who didn't agree at least on some level. Sports managers also largely agreed with the statement (73.3% strongly agreed and 26.7% rather agreed).

I also assumed that the correct application of the sports protocol can contribute to the realization of the goals of sports diplomacy,

- a, since professional consultations and decisions are often made at the accompanying protocol events,
- b, and because errors resulting from a lack of protocol knowledge can have a negative effect on sports diplomacy negotiations.

66.7% of sports diplomats believe that violating or ignoring the rules of protocol (incorrect addressing, shaking hands, ranking, seating; ignoring national/religious differences, inadequate clothing, negotiation techniques, etc.) can clearly have a negative effect on the for sports diplomatic relations; in fact, it can block or even freeze negotiations. And there was no one who would deny all of this. According to 62.9% of sports association leaders, violating or ignoring protocol rules can clearly have a negative effect. It can also be concluded that there is no sports diplomacy without a sports protocol (average of 3.9 based on the answers of sports leaders, average of 3.7 based on the answers of sports diplomats).

Qualitative research

In order to ensure the representativeness of the research, I interviewed the leading representatives of all sectors and areas most involved in sports diplomacy in the form of individual, semi-structured interviews. My goal was to investigate as widely as possible the role of the sports diplomat and sports protocol as tools of sports diplomacy **from the perspective of sports management, sports politics, sports diplomacy, science, the media, and sports medicine.**

In response to the question of whether the success/efficiency of sports diplomacy can be measured at the national level, and how the strength of our country's sports diplomacy could be expressed quantitatively, all speakers indicated the following, starting with the most important factor:

- the number of awarded rights to organize major international sports events
- number of Hungarian sports professionals elected to European and international associations
- the quantifiable aspect of the international (recognition) of major sports events organized in Hungary (nations participating in the event, representatives of world organizations appearing, presidents of international federations, on-site spectators, broadcast media channels, geopolitical coverage, as the estimated number of countries reached and their spectators)
- the number and rate of acceptance of Hungarian sports initiatives
- international adoption of Hungarian innovations and practices
- number of bilateral cooperations.

The sports representatives prioritized the *number of sports diplomats*, while the government representatives prioritized the *number of sports events* as the most important possible metric.

Hungarian sports diplomacy was evaluated on a scale of 1-10, interpreted in the current period, since sport has been operating as a national strategic sector. An average rating of 6 was given, the standard deviation of the values was 4-8.

Sports associations (n=27): average of values between 3-10: 6.85 (most common value: 7)

Sports diplomats (n=15): average of values between 3-10: 6.133 (most common values: 5 and 6)

As part of the theoretical research, I proved that sport can support foreign policy communication, thus the achievement of political goals. In this regard, all of them, with one exception, considered it useful and necessary to create a strategy of a specifically diplomatic nature: the professional associations in total. 70.3%, and a total of sports diplomats. 86.6% agreed with the statement, to which 11 interviewees also agreed.

The person of the sport diplomat

Using the general interpretation, the approx.60% of my interviewees identified the elected sports diplomat, as well as international sports leaders (head of a sports association, public body), as well as active and former athletes as sports diplomats. The other respondents see the function of a sports diplomat as a profession, a profession that can be learned, where an athlete's background is not a requirement. Several people named the chiefs of protocol, judges, coaches, the technical staff preparing the athletes, as well as key players in the government sector in this capacity. Relatively few approached the question from the point of view of professional preparation or education.

The vast majority of respondents agreed with the statement that "*Anyone can become a sports diplomat who has sufficient dedication, the necessary personal competencies, and acquires the necessary professional competencies.*" On the other hand, with one exception, no one agreed with the statement that "*Only an athlete can become a real sports diplomat.*"

Examination of the protocol knowledge of sports diplomats

The preparedness of Hungarian sports diplomats and sports managers was typically characterized by almost all interviewees with a score of 2-3. There was a complete consensus regarding the fact that practical, competence-building training in all the listed subjects would be justified and necessary (even if taught in a foreign language), especially in the areas marked in bold, some managers would send their own employees on a mandatory basis.

Behavioral culture; **State protocol; International protocol**; Written communication (Hungarian); **Written communication (in a foreign language); Knowledge of international negotiation techniques; Intercultural and religious protocol; Gastrodiploacy skills; Representative diplomacy; Vexillology, Heraldry; Event protocol.**

Significance of protocol

All interviewees agreed that protocol is an important competence and an inalienable part of diplomacy. It plays a major role in international events, delegation programs and government communication. The interviewees mentioned several examples here. They also agreed that the protocol provides the framework for sports diplomacy and that mistakes made here can have more serious consequences than professional mistakes. They agreed that decisions can also be made at protocol events, and that in general, regardless of culture, nation or sport, impressions of the given representative are formed based on the triad of appearance-behaviour-communication, therefore sports diplomats and sports managers should also be made aware that in an informal context, in a private quality, they represent Hungarian sports both abroad and at home, even without a commission.

Generic competences

Results of all targeted groups:

Competence ranking	sport leaders n=27	sport diplomats n=15	interviewees n=12	international career diplomats n=70
1.	Building Relationships / Networking	Building Relationships / Networking	Building Relationships / Networking	Building Relationships / Networking
2.	Credibility	Credibility	Credibility	Stress Tolerance (
3.	Negotiation	Effective Leadership	Innovative Thinking	Self-Control

Comparison of the ranking of generic competences (first three occurrences) (own editing)

Summary of theses for the sports diplomat

- Interpersonal and protocol competences are at least as important as sports professional knowledge in the performance of sports diplomacy activities. Sports diplomacy is not a prerequisite for professional sports education.
- In the case of Hungarian sports diplomats and sports leaders, the ability to build relationships is a key competence.
- The person of the sports diplomat is of more decisive importance in sports diplomatic relations than the athlete's past. Not only an athlete can become a sports diplomat.
- The function of Hungarian sports diplomats is primarily representation and negotiation.

Summary of theses on sports protocol

- Protocol is a core competency in sports diplomacy. The knowledge of Hungarian sports diplomats and sports leaders in this area can be improved with targeted training, for which there is a real demand.
- The role of the sports protocol – if applied correctly – is significant in international sports relations, during which decisions and professional discussions are often made at the protocol events.
- The correct application of the rules of the sports protocol contributes to the realization of sports diplomacy goals, otherwise, its absence has a negative effect on sports diplomacy contacts and negotiations.
- International sports competitions are a measure of the success of Hungarian sports diplomacy.
- Sports protocol specialists play an important role in the implementation of sports events. Sports protocol specialists carry out multilateral sports diplomacy.

Summary

Considering the interdisciplinary topic and multifaceted objectives of my dissertation, I used several methods during data collection in order to achieve the most effective results. My research strategy is based on a broad content analysis based on many years of primary professional and educational experience: I compiled the research questions and hypotheses (n=7) using domestic and international literature research and online resources. The processing of sources relevant to the international political, diplomatic, protocol, and sporting aspects of the same can be found in the appendix. During my investigation of diplomatic and protocol history, I found significant events recorded only by international sources, which, although they happened about 2,500 years ago, clearly prove the first known use of ranking, a factor that still determines protocol today. I also compared the aspects of the development of behavior, morality and decorum in the ancient Byzantine and Roman Empires, examined the defining written records created in early India, China and Egypt, which were the first to record the norms that are still valid today and served as the basis for the later French and Spanish courts' royal the etiquette and the diplomatic etiquette of the 21st century. Among the international scientific sources on sports diplomacy, I used the most accepted theories with the highest citation index as a basis (Houlihan, Pigman, Murray), which helped me to propose a functional-based model of the actors of Hungarian sports diplomacy.

During the empirical research, I used three types of data collection methods: content analysis, survey method (n=27 and n=15) and semi-structured in-depth interview (n=12). During data

collection, I used both qualitative and quantitative approaches. I used quantitative data collection for the content analysis and the survey method, while the qualitative method was used for all three data collection methods I selected. I examined the obtained results in the individual groups and in comparison with each other, which enabled a comprehensive examination of the complex issues formulated in the seven hypotheses.

Novel results

- mapping of domestic and international sports diplomacy theories and their professional, functional approach from a diplomatic point of view,
- examination of the practice and actors of Hungarian sports diplomacy,
- a comparative examination of Hungarian sports diplomats, career diplomats, professional diplomats,
- presentation of the multivocality of the protocol and the activities of the protocol specialist,
- presentation of the complexity and application of the sports protocol field,
- presentation of the institution and practice of Hungarian diplomatic training,
- presentation of the complex system of tasks associated with the activities of a sports diplomat,
- examination of the protocol areas of prominent Hungarian state bodies,
- presentation of the definition and meaning of the protocol; the historical development of behavioral culture and etiquette; the presentation of the protocol's fields of expertise, subjects, regulators, and its role in the 21st century,
- presentation of the Hungarian sports professional secondary and sports diplomacy higher education courses and the presentation of the practice of national protocol education,
- presentation of international sports diplomacy strategies and examination of the success of Hungarian sports diplomacy,
- a comparative study of the attitudes of Hungarian sports managers and sports diplomats,
- comparative generic competence test with the survey conducted among international diplomats,
- the questions of the online questionnaire survey and the individual, semi-structured interviews, which can serve as a basis for further sports diplomacy research,
- proposal to define the person and activities of the sports diplomat,
- proposal for a general definition of sports diplomacy,
- proposal for the classification of Hungarian sports diplomacy actors,
- proposal for a functionally based model of Hungarian sports diplomacy.

Proposal for the definition of Hungarian sports diplomacy actors and their activities, as well as for a functional-based model of Hungarian sports diplomacy

When creating the concept, it is necessary to focus primarily on clarifying: (Hungarian) **sports diplomats are always elected in an international environment, and their activities are primarily carried out in an international environment** - in contrast, for example, to sports leaders defined as sports diplomats (e.g. HOC president, etc.) who use sports diplomacy they also carry out related activities, but they are elected in a domestic environment and functionally they operate primarily in a domestic environment and primarily represent the interests of Hungarian member organizations.

On the other hand, **the colloquial interpretation generalizes**: sports diplomats also refer to those who carry out activities related to sports diplomacy or support sports diplomatic interests (for example, those who also hold a representative function in the government sector; typically the government commissioner responsible for a prominent international organization or the state secretary responsible for sports are classified here).

With the appearance of actors working outside the non-governmental organization of Hungarian sport (e.g. in the government sector), **the following categories can be nominated in addition to the elected sports diplomats**:

1. the circle of persons engaged in permanent activities related to sports diplomacy: typically, having a work or civil law relationship with the given sports organization, they carry out their activities for the sake of the given sports organization, sport, or sports event. (e.g. heads of professional associations, public bodies, sports organizations, etc.)

2. ad hoc / ad interim range of persons carrying out activities and tasks supporting sports diplomacy: they carry out their official (job, position, mandate, invitation) activities on a case-by-case basis for the benefit of a prominent international sports event organized in Hungary (e.g. athletes, judges, chiefs of protocol, sports ambassadors, sports organizers, press chiefs, etc.)

3. ad hoc or permanent support of sports diplomacy: those who support Hungarian sports diplomacy indirectly or directly through their official (work, position, assignment, invitation) activities (e.g. researchers, trainers, sports medicine practitioners, volunteers, etc.)

I. Two groups can be distinguished in the civil sector of Hungarian sports:

1. In the framework of a permanent or fixed, longer-term assignment:

a, the. multilateral sports diplomats (officials elected in an international environment, primarily operating in an international environment, e.g. elected to European or international associations, but not management members (e.g. technical delegate)

b. supranational sports diplomats:

i. management officials representing collective interests elected to European and international associations,

ii. an official representing collective interests elected to a regional or world-level sports organization (e.g. IOC member)

c. international sports leaders: those performing activities related to sports diplomacy, elected at the domestic level, primarily functioning in the domestic environment, who can also operate at the international level (e.g. sports association leaders, presidents of public bodies, etc.)

2. In an ad hoc or short-term official capacity:

- those carrying out activities supporting sports diplomacy: (e.g. management of the organizing committee, heads of protocol, involved active athletes, former athletes as invited sports ambassadors, etc.)

- those who indirectly support sports diplomacy and perform other activities (e.g. volunteers, managers of sports facilities, technical organizers, etc.)

II. Apart from the civil sector of Hungarian sport, there are the following groups:

a) those engaged in bilateral sports diplomacy (MFA; Hungarian diplomatic and consular representatives)

- b) those carrying out activities supporting sports diplomatic interests in the Hungarian state and government sector (e.g. ministries, city leaders, etc.)**
- c) those performing activities related to supranational sports diplomacy at international intergovernmental organizations (e.g. former Sports Commissioner Tibor Navrasics)**
- d) those carrying out other activities supporting sports diplomatic interests in the civil, professional, scientific or business sphere (e.g. those active in sports education, healthcare, media, scientific fields, companies, community initiatives, private individuals, etc.).**

Proposal for a general, summary definition of international sports diplomacy

Based on domestic and international theories, as well as using the results of quantitative and qualitative research, I make the following proposal for the international definition of sports diplomacy:

Sports diplomacy is a specialized diplomatic area of public diplomacy within the set of diplomacy, which is both political and professional in nature; it does not appear independently, but as a subsystem in the state's system that realizes its foreign policy interests, and represents both an organization and an activity acting according to the principle of subsidiarity.

Sports diplomacy is the executive procedure system of sports politics (politics) primarily with its peaceful instrument system, through negotiations, at the multilateral or bilateral level, i.e. in an international context in all cases, and it is primarily operated by sports managers with the relevant authority, elected sports diplomats, acting with influence and powers appropriate to their level, from their station independently, abroad and/or domestically.

At the organizational level, it means the institutional system itself and its legal framework (sport policy), which represents the state or the government in the highest, intergovernmental context, primarily in a bilateral context; at the sports professional level, primarily in a multilateral context, it provides the international representation of the sport and of the institution it represents, in a broader sense in all matters affecting the sport as a whole, and also includes all those with diplomatic status.

Its toolset includes negotiations and lobbying activities, memberships in international organizations, prominent sports events, the person of the sports diplomat and the sports protocol.

At the activity level, the implementation of goals and strategies appearing in the foreign policy of a state, primarily defined by the sport policy, by peaceful means with the participation of international sports leaders and elected sports diplomats, who carry out their representation, negotiation, orientation and information, as well as contact activities abroad and at home, between formal and informal frameworks they can do both.

Proposal for a general definition of the actors of international sports diplomacy

Those can be considered sports diplomatic actors who act
 - in the name/representation/interest of the organization/sport of the client/represented

- at the level of the position held, with determinable influence and authority, in the given period (one day to one week, or several years of assignment)
- in an official capacity (represents, negotiates, organizes, competes, trains, manages, etc.)
- in formal and/or informal, official and/or social situation(s) (e.g. negotiation, delegation program, voting, sports event, gala dinner, working lunch, etc.)
- for the purpose of asserting sports diplomatic interests that correlate with the level of representation;
- primarily supporting a segment of sport in international exposure,
- and contribute to the realization of further bilateral or multilateral cooperations that can be established along sports - depending on the level and nature of the representation (professional or political).

This also includes those who

- in their unofficial capacity,
- they indirectly "perform" advocacy,
- pursue public opinion-forming activities (e.g. athletes, sports professionals as individuals, etc.), since a significant part of society identifies with them a specific sport, sports event, country, or, in general, the value represented by sport (fair play, teamwork, fighting spirit, etc.)
- act through all (positive or negative) visible (offline or online) representation related to their persons, thus they can also have an impact on sports diplomacy;
- and the "validity" of the representative quality does not expire with the end of the assignment and/or as a private individual, behavior appropriate to the role or position previously held can be expected.

List of publications

Related to the topic of the dissertation:

- **The changing role of protocol in the 21st century's diplomacy and international relations** In: UR JOURNAL OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES 18: 1 pp. 114-131. 18 p. (2021)
- **Women in Power - Power in Women: in the world of diplomacy and protocol** In: Aparna, Srivastava; Sevinc, Rahimova (ed.) II. INTERNATIONAL WORLD WOMEN CONFERENCE 11-12 February 2021 / AZERBAIJAN (THE BOOK OF ABSTRACTS) Baku, Azerbaijan: ISPEC Publishing House 406 p. pp. 218-218. 1 p. (2021)
- **The Changing Role of Protocol in the 21st century's Diplomacy and International Relations** In: Nagy, Henrietta (ed.) MEETING OF CULTURES IN SCIENCE - FUTURE SHAPING SCIENCE; MEETING OF CULTURES IN THE SCIENCE – SCIENCE FORMING THE FUTURE Budapest, Hungary: Tomori Pál College p. Nikoletta HOSSO: PLENARY KEYNOTE SPEECH ISBN: 9786158168496 (2020)
- **Protocol interpretation in the context of diplomacy and international relations. A guide – not just for interpreters.** Budapest, European Protocol and Event Organization Center Kft. 224 p. ISBN: 9786150091068 (2020)
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- **Protocol in Politics: Politicians are only human** In: CENTRAL EUROPEAN POLITICAL SCIENCE REVIEW 14: 54 pp. 64-81, 18 p. (2013)

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- **Politics and protocol: Behind the scenes of the first papal visit to Hungary from a 25-year perspective.** Budapest, CEPoliti Publishing House, 224 p. ISBN: 9786158047050 (2017)
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- **Book review: György Nanovszky: A multilingual diplomat's adventures on five continents. diplomat's adventures on five continents.** István Nemere (ed) NANO: Budapest, Alternative Publishing House 2013, 272 pp. In: CENTRAL EUROPEAN POLITICAL SCIENCE REVIEW 16: 59 pp. 157-160, 4 p. ISBN 978-963-918927-0 (2015)
- **Pál Koudela; Nikoletta Hossó: The British and the Union: The relationship between the United Kingdom and the European Union in some important issues online journal,** Kodolányisok Világa (2015)
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