

Technical Support Instrument

Supporting reforms in 27 Member States

Support towards the digitalization and modernization of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' organizational structure and operational governance.

Deliverable 7 – Final Presentation

September 26th, 2024



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Contents and Agenda

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Project Scope

Project Scope

Scope



- Assessment of the governance, operational, organizational and digitalization framework, **current state** of MFA
- Identification of **current issues** and challenges and requirements to address these
- Study of good practices adopted by other MFAs and EU institutions
- Identification of **gaps** for meeting desired-to-be state of digitalization and organisational related requirements
- Definition of **future state** following the implementation of recommendations
- Development of **action plan**

- Support towards the **digitalization of MFA** processes and activities
- Support towards the **modernization** of the Ministry's **organisational structure** and **operational governance**
- Provision of **support** to the MFA in the **implementation** and monitoring of **action plan**



Focus

Digitalization

Organizational Structure
& Operational
Governance

Project Delivery Approach



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Delivery Approach

Phases	Inception Oct – Dec 2022	Current State Analysis Mid Feb – Aug 2023	Future State Design & Action Plan Development Sep – Nov 2023
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Kick-off meeting organisation ▪ Inception phase meetings ▪ Inception report preparation 	<p>Current situation of MFA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Governance & Operational Framework ▪ Operational structure and functional capabilities ▪ Information technology operating model & digitalisation ▪ Current state assessment ▪ Risk assessment & Root cause analysis <p>Needs assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Needs definition and assessment ▪ Good practices identification, analysis and assessment ▪ Systems interoperability requirements definition 	<p>Gap Analysis and Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Requirements prioritisation ▪ Digital tools prioritisation ▪ Desired-to-be state of digitalisation and organisational related requirements ▪ Gap analysis ▪ Alternative options and recommendations <p>Action Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Action plan development and communication
Deliverables	<p>Deliverable 1: Inception Report</p>	<p>Deliverable 2: Report on current situation of MFA, focusing on digital capabilities of current organisational and governance model</p> <p>Deliverable 3: Needs-assessment report including good practices</p>	<p>Deliverable 4: Gap analysis and recommendation report</p> <p>Deliverable 5: To-be situation and action plan on modernisation of MFA</p>
Project Management Activities and Deliverables (including progress reports, progress meetings and steering committee meetings)			

Delivery Approach (Cont.)

Phases	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>Action Plan Adoption Monitoring</p> <p>Dec 2023 – Sept 2024</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>Closing</p> <p>Sept 2024</p> </div> </div>	
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Action Plan adoption, support and monitoring ▪ Technical requirements definition ▪ Public procurement support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Final presentation preparation ▪ Project summary preparation ▪ Final meeting ▪ Closing Steering Committee presentation
Deliverables	<p>Deliverable 6: Report summarising activities delivered supporting the implementation of the action plan</p>	<p>Deliverable 7: Communication material on the project</p>
<p>Project Management Activities and Deliverables (including progress reports, progress meetings and steering committee meetings)</p>		

Key Activities Completed

Key Activities Completed



Inception

1. Defined **project scope**, key **objectives** and project delivery approach
2. Defined detailed **methodology** for project deliverables
3. Analysed **project management framework**, project risks and mitigation measures
4. Conducted inception phase meetings
5. Submission of Deliverable 1 - Inception report



Current State

1. Analysed and assessed **current organizational, operational and digitalisation framework** of MFA through workshops with key personnel and identified **issues**, challenges, and future needs
2. Mapped and analysed **main functional processes** and **operational workflows**, including key activities, responsible departments, involved stakeholders
3. Identified key **information technology systems** currently **in use**
4. Performed **digital capacity maturity** assessment, **risk assessment** and root cause analysis
5. Submission of Deliverable 2 – Current State Report



Needs Assessment

1. Gathered and analysed **requirements to address** the **challenges** identified in current state
2. Analysed **good practices** adopted by **other MFAs** and **EU institutions**: Ireland, United Kingdom, Estonia, Germany, Denmark, Malta, European External Action Service (EEAS) and General Secretariat of the Council of the EU
3. Attended a **study visit** in Brussels at the **EEAS** Technology Department, Digital Solutions Division.
4. Identified **29 initiatives** categorized based on the level of value impact and complexity of implementation
5. Submission of Deliverable 3 – Needs Assessment report including good practices

Key Activities Completed



Gap Analysis and Recommendation

1. Performed **needs prioritisation** exercise and identified **most important** and **feasible organisational elements** and **digital tools** for implementation
2. Analysed the **desired-to-be state** of all **29 digitalisation and organisational** related **needs** and **linked** to those associated **good practices** of other EU MFAs and institutions
3. Identified the **gaps** to be filled for **meeting** the **desired-to-be state** by comparing the findings of current state with good practices and the desired-to-be state
4. Analysed **recommendations** and **alternative options** to achieve the desired-to-be state for each organisational and technology initiative and provided suggested option to facilitate decision-making process
5. Submission of Deliverable 4 – Gap analysis and recommendation report



To-be Situation and Action Plan

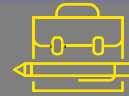
1. Analysed and elaborated further the desired to-be state of all 29 digitalisation and organisational needs and presented the **future state** envisioned **following the implementation** of **selected recommendation**
2. Analysed various **dimensions** for selected recommendation option to **derive the actions** (e.g. organisational structure, governance, technology and digital landscape)
3. Developed a **detailed action plan** and **timeline** of **35 actions** to achieve future state outlining **key action parameters** (action description, owner, key work steps, stakeholders, expected outcomes)
4. Submission of Deliverable 5 – To be Situation and Action Plan

Key Activities Completed



Action Plan Monitoring

1. Conducted a **workshop** with all action owners to discuss the action plan, received ownership and commitment
2. Provided support and **subject matter** expertise for action plan implementation
3. Conducted **meetings** with various **stakeholders** necessary towards action plan implementation
4. MFA selected **three digital tools** for the preparation of technical specifications: *Workflow and Process Management tool, Intranet Portal, Employee repository tool including functionality for tracking diplomats' end of term*
5. Prepared **functional and non-functional requirements** for selected tools
6. Provided support with tender documentation preparation for selected tools
7. Submission of Deliverable 6 – Action Plan Monitoring Progress Report



Closing

1. Final presentation preparation
2. Project summary preparation
3. Closing Steering Committee presentation
4. Submission of Deliverable 7 – Final Presentation and Project Description Summary

Key Findings

Governance, Operational & Organisational Framework

Key Findings – Governance, Operational & Organisational Framework



Current State Challenges and Gaps

- **Frequent changes** in governance structure due to **high frequency of diplomats' rotation** and **short-term service** of senior diplomats in **Permanent Secretary's (PS) role**
- **Gaps** in knowledge continuity and **institutional memory**

- **Need for systematic planning** for workforce allocation



Future State Recommendations and Required Actions

- Establishment of a **core structure** with a more **'permanent' element**, comprised with specific roles, **not subject to rotations**, to build knowledge and expertise in **specific thematic areas** enabling the preservation of institutional memory (e.g. specialized skilled IT Officers)
 - **Re-design** of current **PS role** or **separation** of **administrative responsibilities** and their assumption by a new role (i.e., Chief Operating Officer) to help establish a more stable and continuous work and operating environment
 - Establishment of a **Management Committee** to act as an **advisory body** to PS and decision-making group
-
- Establishment of a **formalized** and **systematic workforce planning** process to ensure workforce is appropriately sized, skilled, and assigned to meet current and future needs based on MFA strategic plan
 - Implementation of an **annual process** for the **planning** of **international postings**

Key Findings – Governance, Operational & Organisational Framework



Current State Challenges and Gaps

- **Need for** targeted and **appropriate learning and training** activities for MFA staff
- **Understaffing** and **workforce capacity issues** in relation to diplomatic staff in the Central and Foreign Service, and staff with technology/digital knowledge, expertise, and skills
- **Need for specialized resources**



Future State Recommendations and Required Actions

- Establishment of **systematic, structured**, and ongoing **learning and development practices** leading to appropriate skills, knowledge, and experience to deliver on current and future demands aligned with MFA's strategic priorities
- Development and **implementation** of a **Learning and Development Policy** as framework for assessing workforce learning and development needs and developing a plan for meeting these needs
- **Reinstatement** and smooth operation of the **Diplomatic Academy** for the development of **required staff capabilities** and competencies, and for meeting current and future training and learning needs
- **Revision** of **mandate, responsibilities** and units' division of Archives and Communications Department to reflect current and future needs (i.e. execution and delivery of large technology transformation projects).
- Re-organization of the Department in five separate units to ensure appropriate capacity and required specialized IT-related capabilities.

Key Findings

Information Technology and Digitalisation Framework

Key Findings – Information Technology and Digitalisation Framework



Current State Challenges and Gaps

- Large volume of **manual processing** of information
- **Requirement** for **workflow and process management tools** and capabilities
- **Need** for necessary **portals** and centralized organisational information
- **Need** for **data repositories** and associated **tools** for data storage and efficient retrieval of information

- **Requirement of** technology **tools** for efficient **collaboration** and improved communication between headquarters and diplomatic missions



Future State Recommendations and Required Actions

- Establishment of an **intranet portal** as a centralized intranet hub and **central repositories** using digital tools for the systematic management and enhanced retrieval process of information
- Development of a **workflow process management tool** to streamline existing MFA processes involving non-classified information (e.g. leave requests, expenses, benefits)
- Linking of intranet portal to workflow management platform to allow users to identify and access information
- Acquire budget, define technical requirements, procure external resources to develop and implement Workflow and Process Management tool, Intranet Portal and Repositories, define appropriate usage policy and provide end user training

- Utilisation of existing internal collaboration tools for improved communication by making necessary adjustments (i.e. assess licensing needs and accesses, define policies, deliver end user training)

Key Findings – Information Technology and Digitalisation Framework



Current State Challenges and Gaps

- Need for **defined policies**, procedures and guidelines for the use of **available systems**
- **Limitations** in the process of handling and disseminating information of above confidential and restricted classified information while on the go
- Need for **standardized end user tools**/devices policy including access to required information while **on the go**
- Limitations in the effective planning of frequent diplomats' rotation and **need for dedicated tool** to facilitate **rotations scheduling and monitoring**



Future State Recommendations and Required Actions

- Establishment of **standardized operating procedures** and best practices to normalize the utilization of business system and facilitate consistent and effective operations
- Appointment of an assigned individual per department to maintain content, use of existing Learning Management System platform and Intranet Portal for content storage and access
- Improvements in processing and distribution of above confidential information by **installing SKYTALE system to all diplomatic missions** and grant required accesses
- Adoption of specialized devices (dual boots laptops) for accessing classified restricted and non-classified information from a single device
- Effective planning of frequent diplomatic staff rotations utilizing a **technology solution** with **monitoring and tracking** capabilities of diplomats' term end date
- Acquire budget, define technical requirements, procure external resources to develop and implement system, define appropriate usage policy and provide end user training

Action Plan Monitoring Progress



Action Plan Monitoring Progress



Action Plan Development



- **35 actions** and subsequent activities defined in action plan
 - **13 organisational initiatives**
 - **22 digitalisation initiatives**
- Overall progress of action plan implementation:
 - **82% actions in progress**
 - **18% pending actions**

Action Plan Implementation Completion expected end of 2026



Digitalisation Initiatives



Key progress updates:

- Launched new MFA website utilising government template (gov.cy)
- Enhanced network infrastructure, VOIP telephone system and system for processing and distribution of above confidential information (SKYTALE) in most diplomatic missions
- Defined functional and non-functional requirements for workflow management, intranet portal and personnel repository tools
- Tender documentation preparation for selected digital tools currently in progress
- Support requested for the reinstatement of the Diplomatic Academy
- Other digital initiatives are progressing (VIS, ConnectCY)



Organisational Initiatives



Key progress updates:

- Archives and Communications Department implemented the proposed organizational structure, assigned resources and allocated responsibilities
- Efforts made to increase capacity and resources at Archives and Communications Department
- Merged Political Directorates (C & D) with similar and inter-related responsibilities into one single Political Directorate
- Progressed with subsequent activities to establish a workforce planning process (identified personnel profiles required and headcount needs, requested budget for hiring needs)
- Number of MFA policies and procedures documented by various departments

Lessons Learned

Lessons Learned



- Implementing technological changes is considered more straightforward than implementing organizational changes
- The long-term organizational restructuring is essential, even though it is a complex matter, for the optimization of the ministry's operations
- Archives and Communication Department is currently under-resourced; therefore, going forward this must be a continuous domain of focus either by staffing or expanding services
- Current organizational structure makes it challenging for diplomats to focus on and take responsibility for internal initiatives, hence a more focused approach is needed to holistically address the challenges identified within the organizational structure

Next Steps



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Next Steps

Next steps for MFA to ensure action plan implementation continuity

1

- Receive approval on Project Fiche from Deputy Ministry of Research, Innovation and Digital Policy to proceed with the public procurement of three digital tools (*workflow management, intranet portal, personnel repository*)

2

- Finalise public procurement documentation for selected digital tools
- Call for tenders
- Proposals evaluation and preferred provider selection

3

- Development and implementation of digital tools, delivery of end user trainings

4

- Assign a high-ranking officer as Project Owner on behalf of MFA for action plan monitoring and controlling
- Involvement in decision-making of action plan implementation

5

- Continuous monitoring of action plan implementation by appointed MFA Project Manager
- Obtain regular progress reports from action owners and escalate issues to Project Owner and Management Committee

6

- Revisit actions currently on hold and reassess and determine the timeline for their implementation within the next quarter

7

- Ensure continuity of Project Manager and Project Owner roles for successful action plan implementation and monitoring

8

- Procure external services for specialized knowledge and expertise to support the implementation of digitalisation initiatives

Appendix



Appendix

- (A) Kick off Meeting Social Media Post

 **EU Reform Support**  
@EU_reforms

NEW We are glad to launch another project today with the @CyprusMFA, with @kkorneliou and @EU_MarioNava, aiming towards the #modernisation of the 🇨🇵 Ministry, by supporting its #digitalisation and reinforcing effective governance and coordination.

Translation of the publication



 European Commission in Cyprus and Daniele Dotto

1:26 PM · Mar 13, 2023 · Time viewed **31.3K**

Appendix

- (B) Visuals



Appendix

■ (C) Project Deliverables

All deliverables of the project are included in the following reports:

- Deliverable 1: Project Inception Report
- Deliverable 2: Report on the current situation of the MFA, focusing on the digital capabilities within the existing organisational and governance model
- Deliverable 3: Needs Assessment Report, including good practices from other EU Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Institutes
- Deliverable 4: Gap Analysis & Recommendations Report
- Deliverable 5: To-be Situation and Action Plan on the modernisation of the MFA
- Deliverable 6: Report summarising activities delivered supporting the implementation of the action plan

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