

Foreword

Diplomatic work is in permanent transformation. For this reason, the Matías Romero Institute is dedicating issue 121 of the *Revista Mexicana de Política Exterior* (RMPE) to analysing diplomatic work in the 21st century. The aim is to understand, from the perspectives of different diplomatic academies in various countries, how the training requirements of foreign service cadres have changed in recent years, given the new conditions imposed by the reality of the international context, the emergence of new issues and actors, and factors such as the acceleration of technological change.

This edition of the RMPE brings together and reflects on the proposals and experiences of the diplomatic academies of Brazil, China, United Arab Emirates, Spain, France, Poland and Mexico in the face of the changes and challenges to their work in recent years. The contemporary international agenda and the different aspects of the new diplomacy (public, cultural, sports, scientific) require professionalism, versatility and solid academic preparation to enable the diplomatic corps to assume its functions in a committed and effective manner.

Issues such as technological change have driven the need to use an interdisciplinary approach to deal with topics such as cybersecurity or artificial intelligence. There is now a need to train and sensitise individuals on the language and interaction involved in this transformation. The COVID-19 pandemic, on the other hand, has made it imperative to review the academic offer, intensifying the use of virtual tools and digital platforms for the delivery of courses and events such as seminars and conferences.

The training of diplomats also often faces the need to make better use of resources, both human and financial, in the provision of academic and training programmes. Another common challenge is to incorporate and emphasise the development of practical and cross-cutting skills and competencies such as conflict resolution and effective communication, which, along with theoretical rigour, allow for a comprehensive and proactive vision of the work of the foreign service. Collaboration as an instrument for improvement is also an important resource, whether with other diplomatic academies or with academic institutions and national and international think tanks.

In sum, this edition aims to showcase the experiences and strategies of various diplomatic academies to transform and adapt their academic programmes and educational and training tasks to the demands of new issues, contexts and challenges of the international agenda, as well as to the needs, vision and priorities of the foreign policy of their respective countries.

The International Research Centre