

Vilnius University  
INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND POLITICAL SCIENCE

Eastern European and Russian Studies Programme

RYOTARO, MINOURA  
2<sup>nd</sup> year

**Expanding Influence Beyond Continents: Lithuania's  
Digital Public Diplomacy towards Japan**

*Master's thesis*

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10 January 2025

Vilnius

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## BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ENTRY

***Ryotaro Minoura: "Expanding Influence Beyond Continents: Lithuania's Digital Public Diplomacy towards Japan"***: Master in Eastern European and Russian studies program, Master thesis / Vilnius University Institute of International Relations and Political Science; tutor: Vilius Mačkinis Vilnius, 2025. – 51 pages

**Key words:** Public diplomacy, Bilateral relations, Digital public diplomacy, Soft power, Japan–Lithuania relations

### Summary

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Public diplomacy, particularly through digital means, has become an essential tool for advancing national interests, especially for small states with limited resources. Lithuania, in response to rising security concerns from Russia, faces needs to effectively employ digital diplomacy to strengthen its global influence, including in the Indo-Pacific region. This paper examines how Lithuania's Ambassador to Japan, Aurelijus Zykas, utilized the social media platform X (formerly Twitter) to engage Japanese audiences and promote bilateral relations.

The study analyzes the Ambassador's social media posts, revealing that topics such as personal life, culture, and embassy affairs, issues in Central-Eastern European region were highlighted as well as garnered significant engagement. These posts demonstrate how Lithuania utilized digital diplomacy to set agendas, expand its presence, and foster interactive dialogue with Japanese digital publics. The study confirmed these posts stressed Lithuania as an independent and freedom-lasting country while they also contained transparency, self-disclosure, and respect for local culture. This study underscores the potential of digital public diplomacy for

small states like Lithuania, illustrating how they can leverage social media to enhance soft power.

LT

Viešoji diplomacija, ypač skaitmeninėmis priemonėmis, tampa esminiu įrankiu nacionalinių interesų skatinimui, ypač mažoms valstybėms, kurios ribotai disponuoja ištekliais. Lietuva, reaguodama į augančias saugumo grėsmes iš Rusijos, susiduria su būtinybe efektyviai taikyti skaitmeninę diplomaciją, siekiant sustiprinti savo įtaką pasaulyje, taip pat ir Indijos-Ramiojo vandenyno regione. Šis straipsnis tiria, kaip Lietuvos ambasadorius Japonijoje, Aurelijus Zykas, pasitelkę socialinės žiniasklaidos platformą „X“ (anksčiau žinomą kaip „Twitter“), siekdamas įtraukti Japonijos auditoriją ir skatinti dvišalius ryšius.

Analizuojant ambasadoriaus skaitmeninės žiniasklaidos įrašus, atskleidžiama, jog tokios temos kaip asmeninis gyvenimas, kultūra, ambasados veikla bei Vidurio ir Rytų Europos regiono klausimai buvo akcentuojamos ir sulaukė reikšmingo įsitraukimo. Šie įrašai demonstruoja, kaip Lietuva pasitelkę skaitmeninę diplomaciją siekdama nustatyti darbotvarkes, plėsti savo buvimą bei skatinti interaktyvų dialogą su Japonijos skaitmenine auditorija. Tyrimas patvirtino, jog šie įrašai pabrėžė Lietuvą kaip nepriklausomą bei laisvę puoselėjančią valstybę, tuo pat metu perteikdami skaidrumą, atvirumą ir pagarbą vietos kultūrai. Šis tyrimas išryškina skaitmeninės viešosios diplomatijos potencialą mažoms valstybėms, tokioms kaip Lietuva, atskleidžiant, kaip jos gali pasinaudoti socialine žiniasklaida savo minkštosios galios stiprinimui.

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## Introduction

Public diplomacy employed by many actors, from individuals to state and independent organizations, is often used as a tool to advance national interests by engaging foreign audiences. While the detailed definition and evaluation of public diplomacy varies among scholars, they agree that it serves as a means for entities to influence the foreign government indirectly by shaping public opinion abroad. Unlike the traditional diplomacy, this soft power-based practice is particularly relevant for the states with limited resources, which are traditionally defined as small states. In recent years, advanced social media has become a new means for diplomatic communication and has also enabled more effective public diplomacy, fostering scholarly interest in concepts such as digital diplomacy.

Since Russia's military and hybrid threat has increased highlighted by its annexation of Crimea and invasion of Ukraine, Lithuania has put a lot of effort to address heightened security concerns along Europe's eastern border<sup>1</sup>. These realities could have enlarged the need for Lithuania to improve its status in foreign society and strengthen its bilateral relationships with other countries to evoke advantageous policies to influence foreign policy in ways that ensure its security. Despite its small size and resource constraints, Lithuania has increasingly sought to build alliances outside Europe, particularly in the Indo-Pacific region, as part of its broader foreign policy agenda. Establishing such relationships, however, requires overcoming significant challenges, including geographical, cultural and language distances. Nevertheless, Lithuania has successfully strengthened ties with the states in Indo-Pacific region in recent years in various spheres, an accomplishment partially attributable to its innovative use of digital diplomacy. This study seeks to explore how Lithuania utilized digital diplomacy in the Indo-

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<sup>1</sup> BNS, "NATO must help Ukraine with military means to avoid World War – Lithuanian president to Blinken", LRT, Accessed January 15, 2024, <https://www.lrt.lt/en/news-in-english/19/1637118/nato-must-help-ukraine-with-military-means-to-avoid-world-war-lithuanian-president-to-blinken>

Pacific region to pursue its strategic goals and expand its global influence. The research aims to analyse the practice of digital public diplomacy of Lithuania's embassy in Japan as a case study. As a result of its new policy focusing on Indo-Pacific region, Lithuania has intensified its outreach to Japan, one of its like-minded states in the region, aiming to secure strategic partnerships that align with its security and economic priorities. Bearing in mind Lithuania's limited resources the intensifying relations with Japan, including the strategic partnership agreement, makes it successful showcase of Lithuanian diplomacy. Therefore, this thesis is based on the research puzzle related to Lithuania's success despite its relative smallness: how has Lithuania utilized digital public diplomacy to overcome its small-state limitations when engaging with Japan? The analysis centres on social media engagement of Lithuania's diplomatic representative, the Lithuanian Ambassador to Japan.

While certain scholars have ventured to examine Lithuanian public and digital diplomacy, thereby paving a path for subsequent inquiry, no study thus far has illuminated the endeavors of the Lithuanian diplomatic mission in Indo-Pacific region within the domain of public diplomacy. For instance, Dumčiuvienė's work, which scrutinized Twitter accounts of Lithuania's institutions and diplomats, posited that these accounts serve as a sole tool of soft power to promote ideas resonant with the nation's foreign policy objectives. Similarly, a comparative analysis conducted on Lithuanian embassies in four nations revealed shortcomings in utilizing social media to cultivate interactive relations and foster dialogic engagement. However, this research confined their focus to the embassies' interactions with the Lithuanian diaspora, leaving unexamined the social media efforts aimed at engaging non-Lithuanian foreign publics. Moreover, in the study authored by Dodd and Collins, which analyzed the Twitter activity of embassies from Central and Eastern European states in Western countries, Lithuanian representation was characterized as primarily engaging in cultural diplomacy without any outstanding mentions. Such findings, though insightful, leave a

conspicuous void concerning Lithuania's public diplomacy in the Indo-Pacific region. This absence of research underscores the importance and necessity of the present study, which seeks to address this lacuna and shed light upon the Lithuanian embassy's strategic employment of social media in Japan to engage both digital audiences in the country.

Lithuanian Government appointed Aurelijus Zykas, Japonologist and former associate professor at the Vytautas Magnus University, as the Ambassador to Japan in May 2022<sup>2</sup>. Two months after his arrival, he opened his account on Twitter (then) platform, which is one of the most popular and influential social network services in Japan. The strategic partnership agreement between Lithuania and Japan, which emphasized cooperation in politics, defense and diplomacy based on shared values and promised economic, cultural and humanitarian cooperation, had been signed in October 2022 while Lithuanian Prime Minister, Ingrida Simonyte was on official visit to Japan. It marked Japan as a first strategic partner of Lithuania among states in the Indo-Pacific region. This study examines how Lithuania's Ambassador to Japan has utilized social media to promote bilateral ties, focusing on the key messages and themes highlighted in his posts on the X platform postulating a research question: what key messages and themes were emphasized and what communicative strategies can be discerned in the communication of the Lithuanian Ambassador to Japan on the X platform in order to engage Japanese audiences, promote shared interests and build public support for a closer bilateral relationship? This paper provides following contents: in the next chapter, the author provides brief description of the inter-continental diplomatic practice of Lithuania and Japan, which serves as the background of the thesis. The third chapter presents the theoretical framework, concentrating on public diplomacy as a means of enhancing soft power and effect of digitalisation of public diplomacy. The fourth chapter is devoted to introduction of

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<sup>2</sup> Ignas Jačauskas & BNS, "Vyriausybė ambasadoriumi Japonijoje siūlo skirti japonologą Aurelijų Zyką", LRT, accessed 19 November 2024, <https://www.lrt.lt/naujienos/verslas/4/1687331/vyriausybe-ambasadoriumi-japonijoje-siulo-skirti-japonologa-aureliju-zyka>



methodology. The quantitative analysis based on Bjola and Jiang's three-dimensional framework were applied to investigate whether and how Lithuanian ambassador transmitted those posts about emphasized themes to Japanese public. Qualitative analysis on each post is also applied to reveal embedded value, message that the Lithuanian representative intended to convey as well as strategies to provoke audiences' reaction. In the analysis it is revealed that Lithuanian ambassador to Japan's X post emphasizes four main topics: his personal life, cultural, Central and Eastern European issues, and embassy affairs. The posts about each topic have gained highest level of engagement among Japanese population. Content analysis of the posts allows to discern digital communicative strategies. In conclusion, the author insists that Lithuania has truly utilized social media to conduct its public diplomacy, and the ambassador fulfills the role of an intermediary from Lithuania to Japanese population.

## Background

### Installation of digital tools to Lithuanian MFA

According to Manor<sup>3</sup>, Lithuania's digitalization of public diplomacy begun in 2013, followed by establishment of strategic communication division which conducts campaigns on specific issues. Later, combining divisions of strategic communication, public information and monitoring, horizontal digital team has been established to generate campaign that promote Lithuanian policy goal against foreign narratives, to listen online public to send relative feedback to the desk and to create digital contents suit with needs of digital public. Apparently, not only the MFA is an agent of digital public diplomacy practice. Since digital diplomats are asked to regard digital public as information source that will be reflected to the policy forming process. Furthermore, ambassadors to be dispatched to important countries must have a time to discuss with Communication division about utilization of digital tool that enhance embassy

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<sup>3</sup> Ilan Manor, "Exploring the Semiotics of Public Diplomacy," *CPD Perspectives* 2 (2022).

activities while the MFA constantly distribute document about example of digital public diplomacy practice.

According to Dumčiuvienė, “The goal of Lithuanian public diplomacy is to support Lithuania’s foreign policy goals and priorities”; therefore, public diplomacy serves as a strategic instrument of soft power, which is used to “convince societies of other states about the rightness of these ideas”<sup>4</sup> by not hard power means. As posited by Manor<sup>5</sup>, the social media campaigns orchestrated by Lithuanian institutions are founded upon core messages that shape the worldview of the digital public, weaving narratives of global events and key actors. As of 2018, based on the interview with Lithuanian government official, Lithuanian MFA set several goals of its digital public diplomacy<sup>6</sup> : to unveil Lithuanian policies to global elite community to intensify attention to policies that are important for Lithuania, to promote Lithuania’s support for cooperative framework such as NATO and EU, to overcome physical challenges of the institution including lack of embassies and personal, to deepen ties with diaspora, to improve image of Lithuania against Russian narrative, other informational dissemination. Among unveiled data, the latest information is policy paper delivered from the MFA of Lithuania to all embassies, in which three communication pillars, or core messages, are emphasized. The core messages consist of 1. Safe neighborhood, in which participation in and contribution to the NATO alliance is stressed, 2. My Europe, which refers to historical strong tie of Lithuania with Europe and 3. Freedom fighter, which dealt with Lithuania’s restoration of independence and contribution to freedom. Yet, in the context of Japan’s digital audience, it appears less prudent to emphasize the former two themes. Thus, in the execution of public diplomacy, the

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<sup>4</sup> Aušra Dumčiuvienė, “Twiplomacy: The Meaning of Social Media to Public Diplomacy and Foreign Policy of Lithuania,” *Lithuanian Foreign Policy Review* 35, no. 1 (June 1, 2016): 92–118, <https://doi.org/10.1515/lfpr-2016-0025>, P.111

<sup>5</sup> Manor, “Exploring the Semiotics of Public Diplomacy.”

<sup>6</sup> Ilan Manor, *The Digitalization of Public Diplomacy* (Springer, 2019). PP.202-203.

Lithuanian envoy in Japan might more fittingly underscore the third pillar—Lithuania as an independent nation steadfastly championing universal value.

### Lithuania's Indo-Pacific policy

Since the conservative party came to power after the parliamentary election in October 2020, Lithuania's government adopted a foreign policy that was more sceptical of Beijing, while it intends to enlarge its presence in the Indo-Pacific region. China's massive economic sanctions toward Lithuania following the announcement of the opening of "Taiwan representative office" in Vilnius was, of course, a pivotal point for Lithuania to accelerate its deepening its diplomatic relations with its "like-minded" partners in the Indo-Pacific region. However, the previous government had already announced the implementation of a "values-based foreign policy" aimed at reassessing relations with China, and the development of ties with Taiwan had not solely driven by the conservatives. The trend has been brought by the security concern reflecting regional instability and eroded security since 2008 due to the established strategic partnership between Russia and China<sup>7</sup>. Besides, new heads of the Ministry of Foreign who "pledged to establish Lithuania as a regional and global hub of democracy and human rights promotion" looked towards not only the EaP countries but also East Asia and beyond, Indo-Pacific region<sup>8</sup>.

In July 2023, a few days before NATO's Vilnius summit, the MFA of Lithuania published a foreign policy strategy in the Indo-Pacific region<sup>9</sup>, where the necessity of cooperation with countries that share common international values. When it was published, Lithuania is one of few countries publishing such a kind of Indo-Pacific strategy in the Central Eastern European

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<sup>7</sup> Konstantinas Andrijauskas, "An Analysis of China's Economic Coercion against Lithuania," *Council on Foreign Relations* 7 (2022).

<sup>8</sup> Žilvinas Švedkauskas, "A Newfound Hub of Global Democracy Promotion: Lithuania Playing to Its Strengths," *Alternatives* 49, no. 2 (2024): 155–69.

<sup>9</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania, "Lithuania's Indo-Pacific strategy", Republic of Lithuania, accessed January 9, 2025, <https://urm.lt/uploads/default/documents/ENG%20Strategy.pdf>

region along the Czech Republic.<sup>10</sup> The strategy has three pillars on which it rests; 1) increasing security and fostering political dialogue with countries in the Indo-Pacific, 2) Developing economic cooperation with countries in the region in a mutually beneficial manner to achieve the objectives of strategic diversification, and 3) Soft power – establishing networks through people-to-people contacts.

This policy has already resulted in remarkable consequences; the government has raised diplomatic representation in its like-minded countries by newly opening its embassies in Korea (October 2021), Australia (February 2022), and Singapore (October 2023)<sup>11</sup>. In the meantime, India opened an embassy in Vilnius while South Korea announced its intention to do so, and Australia opened its trade representative there<sup>12</sup>. The first U.S.-Lithuania Strategic Dialogue on the Indo-Pacific took place in November 2021, where the heads discussed the cooperation with the partners in the Indo-Pacific, emphasizing democratic values, security, trade, and addressing cyber and technological challenges<sup>13</sup>. With regards to economic relationship, “the trade with Australia grew by 44%, with India by 57%, Indonesia by 106%, Japan by 16%, Malaysia by 34%, Republic of Korea by 22%, Taiwan by 50%, Thailand by 36%, and Vietnam by 20% in from 2021 to 2022”<sup>14</sup>. Lithuania is steadily broadening its opportunity for cooperation with Korea, Japan, Taiwan in the sphere of security and defence; during meetings held in October 2023 Lithuania agreed with Japan to strengthen the cooperation in this area,

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<sup>10</sup> John Garrick and Konstantinas Andrijauskas, “Several European countries have released their own Indo-Pacific strategies, but Lithuania’s stands out in using particularly strong language regarding China”, *The diplomat*, (2023). <https://thediplomat.com/2023/10/why-does-lithuania-need-an-indo-pacific-strategy/>.

<sup>11</sup> BNS, “Lithuanian embassy opens in Singapore”, LRT, accessed 9 January 2025, <https://www.lrt.lt/en/news-in-english/19/2112306/lithuanian-embassy-opens-in-singapore>

<sup>12</sup> Aleksandra Kuczyńska-Zonik and Marlena Gołębiowska, “Lithuanian strategy towards the Indo-Pacific region”, Instytut Europy Środkowej, accessed 9 January 2025, <https://ies.lublin.pl/en/comments/lithuanian-strategy-towards-the-indo-pacific-region/>

<sup>13</sup> The White House, “Statement by NSC Spokesperson Emily Horne on the U.S.-Lithuania Strategic Dialogue on the Indo-Pacific”, accessed 9 January 2025, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/11/23/statement-by-nsc-spokesperson-emily-horne-on-the-u-s-lithuania-strategic-dialogue-on-the-indo-pacific/>

<sup>14</sup> European Interest, “The Indo-Pacific Strategy: Strengthening cooperation between Lithuania and the region”, accessed 9 January 2025, <https://www.europeaninterest.eu/the-indo-pacific-strategy-strengthening-cooperation-between-lithuania-and-the-region/>

while it continues discussion with Korea and Taiwan about Opportunities for cooperation in armament<sup>15</sup>. These events displayed that Lithuania's policy was not a lip service but a planning with substance.

### Japan's increasing attention to Central-Eastern Europe

Japan has developed its ties with the Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries since the end of Cold War, which overlaps with one of Japan's traditional foreign policy pillars, "cooperation with the free nation". It has been driven mainly by the economic interests as the newly democratised CEE countries with newly opened economies, skilled, but cheap labor forces, while political push towards integration with the EU were also attractive to Tokyo<sup>16</sup>. In the 2010s, under the increasing China's presence with its rapid economic growth, strengthening the cooperation with the CEE countries is observed for Japan as a means of countering the Belt and Road initiative in the region as a <sup>17</sup>. As the region became reappealing destination of FDI instead the UK after the approval of Brexit was announced in 2016,<sup>18</sup> the FDI flow into CEE countries experienced significant growth<sup>19</sup>.

"Value oriented" and the "Arc of Freedom and Prosperity", which was a newly introduced foreign policy concept under the first Abe government in 2007 and was designed to extend Japan's international commitments beyond the regional context. It also provided the theoretical foundation for Japan's shift in the 2000s from a tradition of prolonged passivism in its foreign

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<sup>15</sup> Ministry of National Defence of Republic of Lithuania, "Steps towards stronger security and defence cooperation between Lithuania and South Korea taken in Seoul", accessed 9 January 2025 <https://kam.lt/en/steps-towards-stronger-security-and-defence-cooperation-between-lithuania-and-south-korea-taken-in-seoul/>; BNS, "Lithuanians and Taiwanese eye joint opportunities to develop drone tech", accessed 9 January 10, 2025, <https://www.lrt.lt/en/news-in-english/19/2419773/lithuanians-and-taiwanese-eye-joint-opportunities-to-develop-drone-tech>

<sup>16</sup> Michal Kolmaš, "Diverging Perceptions of the 'Visegrad Four+' Format and the Limits of the V4+ Japan Cooperation," *Asia Europe Journal* 21, no. 1 (2023): 101–16.

<sup>17</sup> Atsuko Higashino, "Japan's Relations with Visegrád 4 (V4) and the Central and Eastern European Countries (CEECs): Adjusting Mismatches?," *Foreign Policy Review* 14, no. 1 (2021): 111–23.

<sup>18</sup> Michito Tsuruoka, "The European Union as Seen by Japan in an Age of Uncertainty," *Shaping the EU Global Strategy: Partners and Perceptions*, 2019, 127–46.

<sup>19</sup> Bank of Japan, "Statistics", accessed 9 January 2025, [https://www.boj.or.jp/statistics/br/bop\\_06/bpdata/index.htm](https://www.boj.or.jp/statistics/br/bop_06/bpdata/index.htm)

policy to a more assertive internationalism<sup>20</sup>. Though this policy had disappeared from the official government as under the following governments were concerned about the relations with China, the second Abe cabinet had restored it, stressing the importance of the freedom and the rule of law<sup>21</sup>. The 2010s saw a considerable number of the summit and VIPs' visits to/from the CEE region, leading to bolstering the bilateral relations and relations through the regional frameworks such as Visegrad 4 plus Japan (V4+Japan) and Nordics Baltics + Japan (NB+Japan). Abe's foreign policy has also characterized its pragmatism when it comes to its Russian policy, where he sought to diversify energy resources and resolve the territorial issue by developing the economic cooperation. This discrepancy in the policy brought by the difference between the international value and Japan's "real interest"<sup>22</sup> had almost disappeared when prime minister Kishida immediately reacted to Russia's invasion of Ukraine with condemnation of it. At the NATO summit, which he attended for the first time for the Japanese prime minister and insisted that the invasion undermines the foundation of the international order associating the security issue with the expected crisis in the Indo-Pacific region<sup>23</sup>. This pivotal shift in Japanese foreign policy might have led to further multi-dimensional cooperation with the CEE countries including politics, economy and defense in the following period.

### Development of relations between Lithuania and Japan

On January 3, 1919, the Japanese government recognized Lithuania's de facto independence as the second after Sweden to recognize the new Lithuanian government and on December 20, 1922, it recognized the Lithuanian State de jure, as the first among Asian countries. Though the action was motivated by practical reason to weaken and fragment its new geopolitical threat,

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<sup>20</sup> Yongwook Ryu, "The Road to Japan's 'Normalization': Japan's Foreign Policy Orientation since the 1990s," *The Korean Journal of Defense Analysis* 19, no. 2 (2007): 63–88.

<sup>21</sup> Karol Żakowski, "Values or Interests? Japan's Relations with European Countries under the Abe Administration," in *Power Shifts in East Asia and Their Implications for Asia–Europe Relations* (Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, 2019), 213–29.

<sup>22</sup> Żakowski.

<sup>23</sup> Takuya Yuasa, "Evaluating Kishida's Diplomacy — The Success of Pursuing Diplomacy Which Protects Universal Values of the International Community", accessed 9 January 2025, [https://www.spf.org/iina/en/articles/yuasa\\_02.html](https://www.spf.org/iina/en/articles/yuasa_02.html)

Russian government, the recognition inspired confidence and courage for the Lithuanians in strengthening their statehood<sup>24</sup>. The Japanese representative office to maintain diplomatic relations with the newly independent states, including Lithuania was however in Riga since 1919, while in 1939 the consulate of Japan was opened in Kaunas. Before its closing down in the following year because of Lithuania's annexation to the Soviet Union, the fact Japanese Consul Chiune Sugihara has provided local Jewish people under the violation by Soviet with transfer visa to Japan happened. Given the humanitarian act which made him famous, he has been perceived as a symbolical bridge between both countries after his death<sup>25</sup>.

In September 1991 when the restoration of independence was ensured, Japan recognized the new Baltic country after sending diplomatic delegation, and diplomatic relations between the two countries resumes in October of that year. Japan opened its embassy in Lithuania in 1997, and overcoming its shortage of budget Lithuania did in 1999 respectively, which became the first high representative in the East Asia region. Till Lithuania become the member of EU in 2004, Japan continued its ODA programme towards the country. Given that Japan attempted to intensify its relations with states beyond the region as mentioned before since the 2010s, then Prime minister Abe made his visit to Lithuania for the first time as Japanese prime minister. On the summit meeting with each Baltic states, establishment of a dialogue framework to promote future cooperation in various field "Japan-Baltic Cooperation Dialogue" was agreed, therefore it was held four times till now.

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<sup>24</sup> Juozas Skirius, "A Centenary of Diplomatic Relations Between Lithuania and Japan: An Overview of the Relations Between the Two Nations.," *Lituanus* 69, no. 1 (2023).

<sup>25</sup> On official diplomatic presses issued by MFA of Japan he is often mentioned; for example, "The two leaders confirmed the ties between Japan and Lithuania established by Mr. Chiune Sugihara, and shared the view that Mr. Sugihara's courageous actions had significant humanitarian implications even today." Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, "Japan-Lithuania Summit meeting", accessed August 15, 2024, <https://urm.lt/uploads/default/documents/ENG%20Strategy.pdf>

It is notable that the conclusion of the strategic partnership agreement between Japan and Lithuania occurred during Lithuanian Prime Minister Ingrida Šimonytė's visit to Japan on October 26, 2022. This agreement reflects a broader historical trend, emphasizing shared democratic values and mutual security concerns. Key aspects of the partnership include:

- Political and defense cooperation, with a commitment to regular consultations on global security, particularly in response to threats from Russia and rising tensions in the Indo-Pacific.
- Economic collaboration, aimed at fostering trade and investment.
- Cultural exchange, strengthening people-to-people ties.
- Humanitarian cooperation, addressing global challenges like climate change and pandemics.<sup>26</sup>

Whether the essence of these aspects is reflected in the Ambassador's is also a focus of the qualitative analysis discussed in the following section. One year after, the two countries concluded bilateral agreement on closer cooperation in the field of defense.<sup>27</sup>

Although political ties between two countries have been strengthened and deepened, from economic and civil-society perspective, it is developing. Though Euro-Japan economic taxation agreement promoted bilateral trade, as mentioned in the previous section, compared to South Korea, the growth of bilateral trade amount between Lithuania and Japan is gradual. Japanese external trade organization (JETRO), which opens its office in 54 countries, does not possess its branch in any Baltic states<sup>28</sup>. On the other hand, the number of Japanese tourists to

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<sup>26</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, "Joint Statement on Strategic Partnership between the Government of Japan and the Government of the Republic of Lithuania", accessed 9 January 2025, <https://www.mofa.go.jp/files/100412172.pdf>

<sup>27</sup> Ministry of Defence of Japan, "Signing Ceremony of Memorandum and Meeting between Vice Minister of Defense for International Affairs Serizawa with Deputy Minister of National Defence of Lithuania Greta Monika Tučkutė", accessed 9 January 2025, <https://www.mod.go.jp/en/article/2023/10/af00fe094a26249646e009b44c03d87b988d5111.html>

<sup>28</sup> Ugnė Jonaitytė, "Lithuanian food sends shockwaves through Japan", LRT, accessed 9 January 2025,



Lithuania saw increase in the 2010s, almost tripling from 9.5 thousand in 2012 to 27.3 thousand in 2019<sup>29</sup>. However, To the general Japanese public, Lithuania remains a largely unfamiliar country, its recognition clouded by geographical remoteness and historical distance<sup>30</sup>. This situation is delivering to Lithuania another scope where it can utilise public diplomacy as a means to elevate its visibility itself and promote its policies more effectively.

## Theoretical Framework

### Study on Small states

The literature on small states first appeared during the period of the decolonization process around the 1960s to answer the increasing need to analyse the role and influence these states brought without big power in international society. While the measurement to define the smallness of the states the scholars traditionally consider was the size of its territory, population, or economy,<sup>31</sup> recent studies focus more on their relativity of the size and subjective perception of these elements.<sup>32</sup> From the realist viewpoint, the consensus was that to respond to security threats, small states are limited in what actions they can take and typically have to rely on cooperation with other states, employing soft power and the art of persuasion.<sup>33</sup> On the other hand, recent scholars on small states argue that these states considered materially small often have a significance and motive that prompts them to behave as they are "larger states", to quest

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<https://www.lrt.lt/en/news-in-english/19/2412550/lithuanian-food-sends-shockwaves-through-japan>

<sup>29</sup> Japan Tourism Statistics, "Trends of Japanese Visitors", accessed 9 January 2025,

<https://statistics.jnto.go.jp/graph/#graph--Japanese--Trends>

<sup>30</sup> Japan External Trade Organisation, "JETRO Worldwide", accessed 9 January 2025,

<https://www.jetro.go.jp/en/jetro/worldwide/>

<sup>31</sup> Robert O Keohane, "Lilliputians' Dilemmas: Small States in Internatinal Politics," *International Organization* 23, no. 2 (1969): 291–310. cited from Baldur Thorhallsson, "Studying small states: a review". *Small States & Territories* 1, no. 1 (2018); 17-34.

<sup>32</sup> Ausra Park and Gerda Jakstaite-Confortola, "Small State Status-Seeking: Lithuania's Foreign Policy Status Aspirations," *Europe-Asia Studies* 73, no. 7 (2021): 1279–1302.; Matthew Crandall and Ingrid Varov, "Developing Status as a Small State: Estonia's Foreign Aid Strategy," *East European Politics* 32, no. 4 (2016): 405–25.

<sup>33</sup> Annika Björkdahl, "Norm advocacy: a small state strategy to influence the EU." *Journal of European Public Policy* 15, no. 1 (2008): 135-154, cited from Baldur Thorhallsson, "Studying small states: a review". *Small States & Territories* 1, no. 1 (2018); 17-34; Jeremy W. Lamoreaux, and David J. Galbreath. "The Baltic States as 'small states': Negotiating the 'East' by engaging the 'West'." *Journal of Baltic studies* 39, no. 1 (2008): 1-14.

for higher status in international society.<sup>34</sup> These scholars notably have applied constructivist psychological theory to elucidate such phenomena in the small state discipline. This research will mainly take the traditional approach, which defines smallness based on materialistic size and comparison with surrounding countries.

### Digitalised Public diplomacy

The concept of public diplomacy first appeared among scholars during the Cold War era to describe nations' attempts to achieve foreign policy goals by communicating with and attracting the public of foreign countries, as opposed to traditional intergovernmental communication.<sup>35</sup> Some scholars see public diplomacy as a fashionable word that represents "white propaganda", as the birth of the term was among the attempts to cover the bad nuance of overseas information work from public.<sup>36</sup> Others deny the identification of Public Diplomacy with propaganda, insisting that "while propaganda tries to tell people what to think and to close their minds, public diplomacy seeks two-way communication where it listens to what the audience has to say".<sup>37</sup> According to Nye, public diplomacy is based on three pillars of soft power: culture, political value, and foreign policy, as these elements are essential for influencing foreign audiences without coercion.<sup>38</sup> Therefore, it is considered a soft power tool encompassing broad means that aim to attract and persuade foreign public by promoting a country's cultural attributes and values.

The rise of social media networks led to almost a consensus among scholars and practitioners of public diplomacy, for the phenomenon consisting in the emergence of a "new" public

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<sup>34</sup> Park and Jakstaite-Confortola. "Small state status-seeking,"; Crandall and Varov. "Developing status as a."

<sup>35</sup> James Pamment, "Articulating Influence: Toward a Research Agenda for Interpreting the Evaluation of Soft Power, Public Diplomacy and Nation Brands," *Public Relations Review* 40, no. 1 (2014): 50–59.

<sup>36</sup> Geoff R Berridge, *Diplomacy: Theory and Practice* (Springer Nature, 2022), pp.199-201

<sup>37</sup> Iyaylo Iaydjiev, "Searching for Influence and Persuasion in Network-Oriented Public Diplomacy: What Role for 'Small States'?", *Exchange: The Journal of Public Diplomacy* 2, no. 1 (2011): 4.

<sup>38</sup> Joseph Nye Jr, Joseph S. "Public diplomacy and soft power." *The annals of the American academy of political and social science* 616, no. 1 (2008): 94-109, cited from Aušra Dumčiuvienė, "Twiplomacy: The Meaning of Social Media to Public Diplomacy and Foreign Policy of Lithuania," *Lithuanian Foreign Policy Review* 35, no. 1 (2016): 92–118.

diplomacy facing a media environment transformed all over the world. The phenomena of exploitation of social media in diplomacy is described by several concepts, including digital diplomacy, social media diplomacy, cyber diplomacy, Twiplomacy, Public Diplomacy 2.0, and so on.

Scholars on such a “digital public diplomacy” argue that the features of social media enlarge possibility of public diplomacy in several aspects. Because social media provide diplomatic missions with direct access to citizens in the virtual sphere, it promotes the functions of public diplomacy, which is by its nature aimed at targeting foreign populations<sup>39</sup>. Social media platforms lead to ease government institutions and agents to transmit the governments’ either opinion or foreign policy to foreign populations, allowing created content to be disseminated to an indefinite number of people around the world. Brought openness of the diplomat by appearing in social media and thus multiple information sources can help to increase transparency and accountability of sending government among audience<sup>40</sup>. Moreover, scholars argue that given the channel between diplomats and foreign populations appeared the digitalised public diplomacy facilitates the transition from monologic to dialogic diplomacy<sup>41</sup>. Despite broad opportunities to enlarge dialogic channel, it does not always require financial investments, therefore the advent of social media can contribute to reducing financial cost in public diplomacy.

Despite their limited administrative resources, weak bargaining power, and institutional arrangements, using public diplomacy in a specified and well-defined way small states can bring significant positive results and can be achieved with lesser cost.<sup>42</sup> The evolution of social

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<sup>39</sup> Olubukola S. Adesina, “Foreign Policy in an Era of Digital Diplomacy,” ed. James Summers, *Cogent Social Sciences* 3, no. 1 (January 1, 2017): 1297175, <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2017.1297175>.

<sup>40</sup> Dumčiuvienė, “Twiplomacy.”

<sup>41</sup> James Pamment, “What became of the”, ;Geoffrey Cowan and Amelia Arsenault, “Moving from Monologue to Dialogue to Collaboration: The Three Layers of Public Diplomacy,” *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 616, no. 1 (2008): 10–30.

<sup>42</sup> Genc Mekaj, “Public Diplomacy of Small States: Case of Kosovo,” *ILIRIA International Review* 10, no. 2

media might prove further beneficial for countries with limited resources bringing cost-effective public diplomacy means<sup>43</sup>. Digital technologies might be leveling the playing field between large and small states, enabling them to conduct public diplomacy on equal footing within the newly developed virtual arena of online space<sup>44</sup>. Though it still requires representatives much trained manpower to generate create quality post on SNS, the immediacy of social networking may be compatible with the nimble strategic development of small states. Interacting with and advocating to the general local population, which the virtual space now enables for state representatives, was previously difficult due to limited budgets and personnel. Therefore, the very fact that small state of Lithuania's policy shift necessitated an immediate intensification of diplomatic efforts in one of the partner states in Indo-Pacific region in pursuit of diplomatic goal would serve as a good precondition for the introduction of its digitalized public diplomacy.

The introduction of digital technology into diplomacy is also changing roles of institutions and diplomatic actors. To borrow the word from Manor, digitalization is a "process" in diplomacy which gradually brings influence on norm and custom of diplomats<sup>45</sup>. Foreign embassies are reducing its mediator role between two countries since the technology allows capitals to communicate directly and to collect various information through online while the direct interaction with digital foreign public is increasingly required<sup>46</sup>. To this end, many foreign embassies and even ambassadors launched their virtual entity in social network services; For instance, a researcher identified Facebook pages and Twitter (then) accounts of 119 embassies based in Japan<sup>47</sup>.

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(2020): 289–300.; Iaydjiev, 2011.

<sup>43</sup> Adesina, "Foreign Policy in an Era of Digital Diplomacy."

<sup>44</sup> Manor, *The Digitalization of Public Diplomacy*., p.189

<sup>45</sup> Manor, "Exploring the Semiotics of Public Diplomacy."

<sup>46</sup> Manor, *The Digitalization of Public Diplomacy*., p185.

<sup>47</sup> Junko NISHIKAWA, "Comparative Analysis of the Operation of Social Media Channels by 156 Foreign Embassies in Japan: Focusing on the Use of Twitter and Facebook Accounts in Communication with Japan,"

In such a stream of such a digitalisation of public diplomacy, scholars focused on how actors utilise social media as a tool of public diplomacy. Bijola and Jiang<sup>48</sup> proposed a dimensional framework to examine the effectiveness of digital public diplomacy of foreign embassy, which encompasses three key aspects “agenda setting,” “presence expansion,” and “conversation generating.” The first dimension refers to the elements of what kind of information is being used to inform and influence the public, which is, according to the researchers, a centric task in public diplomacy; “for the public diplomacy, informing is the prerequisite for interaction because real dialogue must be based on topic familiarity, shared understandings and common interests”<sup>49</sup>. The concept of presence expansion is described as the extent to which these selected posts garners exposure. When the subject matter of these exposed posts aligns harmoniously with the agenda emphasized by their originators—the foreign representatives—such alignment is deemed to enhance the visibility and influence of their communications. Sentiment discrepancies between message sender and audience can emerge when the population's perception and the actual theme in their social media does not fit<sup>50</sup> which leads to insufficient spread of information or backlash. The development of new technology allowed reputative presentation of certain topics to entrance public attention, which compels creation of preferable national images and advancements, while it can cause excessive floods of information, resulting in dilution of key points<sup>51</sup>. Therefore, it should be understood that skilfully manipulating agenda setting is the core of digital public diplomacy.

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*Journal of Socio-Informatics* 15, no. 1 (2022): 15–32..

<sup>48</sup> Bjola and Jiang, “Social Media and Public.”; Neil Collins and Kristina Bekenova, “Digital Diplomacy: Success at Your Fingertips,” *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy* 15, no. 1 (March 2019): 1–11, <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41254-017-0087-1..>

<sup>49</sup> Ibid, p.7

<sup>50</sup> Yu-Chin Tseng, “China’s Twitter Diplomacy in Germany: Practices, Reactions, and Discrepancies.,” *Journal of Contemporary China*, March 23, 2023, 1–19.

<sup>51</sup> Corneliu Bjola and Lu Jiang, “Social Media and Public Diplomacy,” *Digital Diplomacy: Theory and Practice*, 2015, 71–88.p.9

Another dimension, conversation generating means the interaction between officials and public social network users, which refers whether set agenda results in public engagement and dialogic engagement between institute and foreign population<sup>52</sup>. According to Bjola and Jiang, it is essential for public diplomacy as it helps to readjust the agenda, resolve misunderstandings, and foster mutual understanding. In addition, from the public-centric communication approach, Anton and Lacatus maintained that dialogic digital diplomacy enhance credence of diplomatic institution as audiences feel their opinion heard while it also results in constructing relationship based on sympathy and psychological ties<sup>53</sup>.

Bjola and Jiang concluded that western embassies to China succussed in setting their agenda to convey their message, while they failed to conduct any dialogic conversation with the audiences. Some other scholars observed practices largely failing to foster a two-way dialogue, with previous research highlighting the lack of public engagement in embassy accounts<sup>54</sup>. On the other hand, to bring the set agenda to foreign public and facilitate interaction requires certain strategies. Khan et.al argued that the principles governing diplomatic communication within the realm of social media remain consistent with those established in traditional diplomacy. Thus, “diplomatic communication should be respectful and courteous; positive and constructive, ambiguous so as to be indirect and not taking sides and balanced and moderate”<sup>55</sup>. However, they further posited that social media introduces an additional dimension—namely, interactivity and engagement with both domestic and international audiences. They stated three

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid, p.9

<sup>53</sup> Anca Anton and Mara Lăcătuș, “Digital Diplomacy: The Case of the Embassy of Sweden in Bucharest,” *Diplomacy, Organisations and Citizens: A European Communication Perspective*, 2022, 199–218.

<sup>54</sup> S. M. Palash, “Public Diplomacy in Social Media: An Examination of Twitter Use by Foreign Embassies in the US” (Doctoral thesis, University of Okrahoma, 2021), <https://shareok.org/handle/11244/329852..> Collins and Bekenova, “Digital Diplomacy.”

<sup>55</sup> M. Laeeq Khan et al., “Public Engagement Model to Analyze Digital Diplomacy on Twitter: A Social Media Analytics Framework,” *International Journal of Communication* 15 (2021): 29., P.1744

key elements in generated post will enhance engagement of the post: self-disclosure, positive attitude and inquisitiveness, being inspired by public relation discipline.

## Method of Analysis

This research employs a case study approach, examining the Lithuanian ambassador to Japan X platform to analyse small states' employment of digital diplomacy. There are several reasons for this selection; first, analysis of Lithuania's digital public diplomacy in Japan offers a clear example of how a small state leverages digital tools to navigate structural challenges. When judging countries as "small states" based on the absolute smallness of the country, as mentioned above, traditionally, territory, population, and economy (GDP) is considered.<sup>56</sup> In comparison with other countries in European Union, its territory (65,286 km<sup>2</sup>),<sup>57</sup> population (2,831,639, in 2023),<sup>58</sup> GDP (\$70.97 billion)<sup>59</sup> puts Lithuania at lower levels in the list, 16th, 21st, and 22nd out of total of 27 countries, respectively. Moving the focus into the Indo-Pacific region, Lithuania's relative smallness becomes much more pronounced as there are much more larger states in terms of economic and population scale. These structural challenges require Lithuania to adopt approaches relying on soft power, such as leveraging digital tools, to overcome smallness in terms of large power and sustain its international presence.

In addition, in recent years, Lithuania's government, has postulated intentions to enlarge its presence in the Indo-Pacific region by cooperating countries in the region. In the summer of 2023, building on earlier statements, the MFA of Lithuania unveiled a foreign policy strategy for the Indo-Pacific region, emphasizing collaboration with nations that shared international

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<sup>56</sup> Baldur Thorhallsson, "Studying Small States: A Review," 2018.

<sup>57</sup> United Nations, "Demographic Yearbook 2021", accessed 24 June, 2024, [https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic-social/products/dyb/dyb\\_2021/](https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic-social/products/dyb/dyb_2021/)

<sup>58</sup> Eurostat, "Population on 1 January", updated June 15, 2024, <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/bookmark/94251cc9-a09f-4b86-974d-87db952d0e2b?lang=en>,

<sup>59</sup> World bank, "GDP (current US\$) – Lithuania", accessed on 24 June 2024, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.CD?locations=LT>

values. Even prior to this strategic announcement, the Lithuanian government had already demonstrated its commitment through several initiatives, such as establishing bi- and multilateral economic agreements and opening famous "Taiwan Representative Office" in Vilnius. These measures reflect a growing determination to enhance engagement in the Indo-Pacific, the details of which will be elaborated upon in subsequent sections. However, even if Lithuania shares the value of freedom and democracy and have continued to cooperate bilaterally and through relations with targeted like mind country including Japan<sup>60</sup>, there is a structural obstacle to deepening their relationship. Significant physical and cultural-language distance might prohibit mutual understanding while Lithuania's smallness might not be enough to attract agents in these nations. This circumstance requires a broader strategy of utilising soft power, aligning with theories that small states often seek status enhancement through innovative diplomatic practices; in particular, the effective use of digital diplomacy offers an avenue to overcome such barriers. Thus, evaluating Lithuania's digital diplomacy conducted in parallel with the policy will also contribute to analysing how a small state aligns its online activities with broader foreign policy goals, especially in a distant and strategically significant region.

In addition, Japan is the second largest twitter user around the world with over 65 million<sup>61</sup>, which means that nearly 50% of Japanese 120 million population have their Twitter accounts, much higher proportion compared to other countries. Analysis of the success in the engagement with audience in such a country where the social media is "democratised" could have implications to further research of other region, however, there has not been any research concentrating on X/Twitter usage of foreign embassy in Japan. The objective of the analysis in

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<sup>60</sup> For example, in their joint statement published in 2022 they acknowledge themselves to be "partners sharing fundamental values such as freedom, democracy, rule of law, and human rights". cited from "Joint Statement on Strategic Partnership between the Government of Japan and the Government of the Republic of Lithuania" Ministry of foreign affairs of Japan, accessed September 12, 2023 <https://www.mofa.go.jp/files/100412172.pdf>

<sup>61</sup> Statista, "Leading countries based on number of X (formerly Twitter) users as of April 2024", accessed 24 June, 2024, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/242606/number-of-active-twitter-users-in-selected-countries/>



the research will be the Twitter account of the incumbent Lithuanian ambassador in Japan, Aurelijus Zykas<sup>62</sup>, who has been in charge of the current position since May 31, 2022.<sup>63</sup> As of December 2024, his account, mainly post contents in Japanese and English language, had more than 33,000 followers. The period of analysis will be two years and three months, from July 2nd, 2022, when he opened the account, to September 31st, 2024. This period can illustrate the changes in the contents following continuity of the war in Ukraine and corresponds almost to the second half of the current Lithuanian government. During the same period, Lithuania and Japan concluded the strategic partnership agreement to be mentioned later; therefore, it appears that his public diplomacy activities were consistent with the broader efforts to advance the agreement.

The analysis of this research consists of two parts: the first one is aimed at revealing which theme Lithuania's ambassador intended to transmit to Japanese population and whether it provoked responses. To this end, the author applies Bjola and Jiang's method for measurement of three-dimensional framework to evaluate effectiveness of public diplomacy. The second part, content and thematic analysis of the posts is devoted to exploring what kind of intension or values the Lithuanian Ambassador's contents contains and what kind of tactics are used there.

Bjola and Jiang created the framework to assess the effectiveness of the Western countries' digital diplomacy toward China, where the state censorship challenges conducting public diplomacy. This study applies this framework to analyse Lithuania's public diplomacy, as it faces similar structural challenges, overcoming cultural and physical distance as mentioned following section, which parallels the obstacles posed by state censorship in the case of China.

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<sup>62</sup> Aurelijus Zykas (@AurelijusZykas), “駐日リトアニア大使 Aurelijus Zykas オーレリウス・ジーカス”, Twitter account, accessed 9 January 2025, <https://x.com/AurelijusZykas/>

<sup>63</sup> Embassy of Republic of Lithuania in Japan, “Ambassador”, accessed June 2, 2024, <https://jp.mfa.lt/jp/en/about-us/the-embassy/ambassador>

Besides, this framework's three perspective serves as effective metrics to assess the extent Lithuania's digital diplomacy has contributed to deepening its relationship between Japan.

To examine "agenda setting" dimension, it is needed to collect and categorise the posts themselves; the researcher employed a Google Chrome extension service Twexportly,<sup>64</sup> which allows obtaining posts from specific users with the data, the sentence, type of posts, types of used photos, used hashtags, and numbers of received likes, reposts, bookmarks, replies, views. The data set is composed of 2085 X posts.

First, all posts were manually distinguished into categories. The author firstly selected random 100 posts to create leading categories, then applied these categories to all posts to be examined adding additional categories if needed. Following the similar research, it was decided that topics that amounted to 10% of all posts would be regarded as highlighted issues<sup>65</sup>, therefore this study follows this criterion. For reference of discussion, retweets, the posts which the Ambassador shared, which are also included in the dataset were also analysed in the same manner.

Then, to analyse the "presence expansion" Bjola and Jiang focusses on those relatively influential posts from the perspective of the audiences to analyze how it reaches other users and how their topics accords with the senders' agenda. While in the scholars could not gain the view counts, the "reposting counts" refers how many times a post is circulated among users and large number of commenting means a post generates discussion among population. The researchers then examined how presence of each post expanded, by looking at the expansion route of the those posts with higher commenting and reposting scores with special tool that

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<sup>64</sup> TwExportly, "TwExportly: Export Tweets From Any Account", accessed June 24, 2024, <https://chromewebstore.google.com/detail/twexportly-export-tweets/hbibehafoapglhcgfhlpiagloecmhfh?hl=en&pli=1>

<sup>65</sup>Manor, *The Digitalization of Public Diplomacy.*, P. 198

show the layers and the number of repost. To test how successful presence expansion was, the researchers examined if those posts' topics converged with the agenda emphasized by the message senders, the foreign representatives<sup>66</sup>.

Due to the API restriction of X, this research hardly delves into the expansion of the posts, which is how the posts transmitted from followers to others via users reposting. Instead, view count<sup>67</sup> enables not only to reveal how many times each post has been viewed by other users but also to judge if the post reached to users other than followers of the message sender. When the view count of a post significantly exceeds the number of followers of the message sender, it means the post has been expanded to other users including those who do not follow the message sender. It suggests plural layers of repost happened, again, and that the influence of the post achieves beyond the certain group of followers to a wider range, being carried by users with strong influence.

Abundant variety of key elements in the data set allows to investigate the successful presence expansion. While 'repost' and 'comments' retain the same meaning as their counterparts in the research of Bjola and Jiang, the 'favourite' and 'bookmark' counts, for the former, indicate how message receivers felt about a post—whether they were pleased with or interested in it, and for the latter, how they perceived it as useful for future reference. The favourite count also reflects the circulation of posts, as adding a favourite to a post increases the likelihood that it will appear on the user's feed. Thus, in this paper, the author treats these elements separately to investigate the characteristics of these posts with higher scores according to different criteria: favourite count, repost count, bookmark count, reply count, and view count. The comparison of emphasised topics between the posts and the agenda setting strategy examined in the

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<sup>66</sup> Bjola and Jiang, "Social Media and Public Diplomacy."

<sup>67</sup> It became visible only from December, 2022. Elon Musk (@Elonmusk), "Twitter is rolling out View Count, so you can see how many times a tweet has been seen!" Twitter post, 22 December, 2022 <https://x.com/elonmusk/status/1605957811162054656>

previous section was conducted to examine whether there is accordance or not. This accordance means the agenda set by Ambassador are accepted by Japanese public as important or interesting, which demonstrate his success in choosing appropriate themes to deliver to them.

The final dimension identified by Bjola and Jiang is conversation generating, which, according to their statement, is essential for public diplomacy as it helps to readjust the agenda, resolve misunderstandings, and foster mutual understanding. Citing Cull's 'listening' dimension (to interpret the emotion, needs, cause of foreign public voice) it is the most important as a foundation for conversation generation, the researchers firstly looked at accounts the research object is following. This study adopts a similar strategy. If consistent reactions from the ambassador to audience comments on an original post are observed, it demonstrates that the ambassador utilizes social networking platforms in a way that actively fosters engagement and interaction.

Next, the author conducts quantitative content analysis and thematic analysis by categories mainly focusing on those posts which gained higher reactions. The aim of the analysis is to identify intentions and priorities in the ambassador's content and reveal whether specific communicative strategies have been employed. To this end, the author cites two elements of Khan et al.'s public engagement model<sup>68</sup>, therefore in the analysis the appearance of the three features: self-disclosure and inquisitiveness factors which have invoked audiences' interaction - sharing, commenting - with contents, is explored. Delving into Zykas's posts within each category to determine whether they embody the three essences of the public engagement model, the author examined the following aspects: the presence of positive sentiments; the expression of inquisitiveness, as indicated by the inclusion of the “?” symbol and interrogative particles such as 'すか (suka)' or 'しょうか (shoka)'; and the incorporation of self-referential messages.

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<sup>68</sup> Khan et al., “Public Engagement Model to Analyze Digital Diplomacy on Twitter.”.

As mentioned prior, the author also paid attention whether any subjects mentioned in strategic partnership agreement appears on the sentences.

## Results

The study analyses the X content of the Lithuanian Ambassador to Japan from July 2nd, 2022, to September 31st, 2024. The dataset is composed by 2085 posts: of those, 1136 Tweets, which the Ambassador himself posted from his account, 324 Retweets, Tweet of another user's which he reposted to share his followers, and 625 Replies he sent to either another user's or his Tweet. Quoted Tweet, when a user reposts another user's tweet and adds their own comment or thoughts to it, was classified as ordinary Tweet. For the qualitative analysis, the study used the Ambassador's Tweets and Retweets to compare the peculiarities of each post type. Firstly, the author classified these original posts into ten categories.

### Culture

This theme included tweets that referred to Lithuanian and Japanese culture, and cultural exchange activities. Lithuanian culture is presented in various ways; from introduction of national craftwork, architecture and natural landscape, to frames in which ambassador are about to enjoy traditional Lithuanian sweets made by his wife. On the other hand, there were also posts about Japanese culture, such as food, clothing, tourism, customs, and sub-culture. It is worth to note that in most cases, he published that which he experienced through his life - no regard to public or private; for instance, one tweet is about Lithuanian prime minister's delegation stopping at Pokémon shop in pursuit of grabbing souvenirs at the last moment of their visit to Japan. Despite the number is relatively low, some posts introduced cultural exchange, such as event introducing Japan in Lithuania and vice versa, Lithuanian food appearing in Japanese catering chain.

### Ambassador's personal life

This theme included posts that referred to the Ambassador Zykas's private lifetime; the researcher judged it from whether his costume was informal, and the contents exceed the diplomatic obligations. These posts are about family event including birthdays and trips, his haircut, walking, visit to museum, pet and private eating out and so on. Some of posts were accompanied with selfies of him appreciating Japanese customs in various ways.

### International cooperations

The ambassador also highlighted international cooperation framework, those Japan and Lithuania. During the time, Japanese representatives had participated in three sea initiatives, Bucharest 9, Japan Baltic Dialogue and NATO, as an observer status, while Lithuania and Japan had signed strategic partnership agreement, memorandum of cooperation and exchange in defense. Scenes from bilateral summit meeting, high government official meeting, the attendance of Japanese representative to these events were introduced by the Ambassador one after another. Other topics were including cooperation in the UN or EU; for instance, Lithuania's effort to reduce EU regulation on Japanese agricultural product.

### CEE affairs

In many posts, the ambassador commented about CEE affairs, especially about Russia's invasion of Ukraine. While he emphasized Russia's cruelty mentioning airstrikes and slaughter in Bucha and Izyum, he also promotes Lithuania's role in CEE area by presenting its massive support for Ukraine and showing solidarity with Ukraine. Besides, remembrances of historical event, such as Lithuania's independence and its restoration, Soviet deportation of Lithuanians, Baltic human Chain on each co-Memorial Day were also commonly observed.

### Society

Many posts in this category deals with report from Lithuania including results of international sports competition, city of Kaunas's inclusion into UNESCO world heritage site, world happiness report in which Lithuania was ranked in third for under 30. He actively promoted Japanese TV entertainment programs in which Lithuania is presented regardless of his presence there. On the other hand, he mentioned news in Japan such as again the result of Olympic, national holiday while expressed of condolence to death of politicians, famous personals, war victims and damage from disasters.

#### Embassy

This category includes those posts introducing ambassador's public work including participating ceremonies and embassy's official announcement while posts about official trips to nationwide occupy majority in the category. These trips, highlighted by meetings with heads of municipalities or officials were aimed at reinforcement or newly conclusion of sister city agreement, assistance of economic or scientific cooperation between institutions of both countries, courtesy visit to Lithuanian honorable council. Another similar topic is lots of official calls to the embassy by governors, mayors and companies' officials. On the other hand, repetitive official visit of Lithuanian politicians to Japan were also presented.

#### Economy

The ambassador also features Lithuania's products imported to Japan such as linen, amber, wooden house, lasers, naming the shops where they are available and the business expos in which Lithuanian major industrial company were to participate, promoting audience to visit. Posts highlighted its Energy policy concentrating on renewable source, energy independence from Russia, economic growth after its independence.

#### World affairs

There were few posts dealing with political issues in Indo-Pacific region and that of worldwide other than CEER region. Post that focused on Indo-Pacific region tended to highlight Lithuania's official visit to Taiwan and articles or posts about deepening relations between Lithuania and Taiwan. The posts about world affairs other than Russo-Ukrainian war were only observed when a huge earthquake happened in Turkey and Syria in February 2023, and Hamas attacked on Israel in October 2023.

### Agenda setting

The posts had eventually been coded with the themes of politics of Central Eastern Europe and Russia (CEER) /Indo-Pacific region/other regions, bilateral (political/economic) cooperation, economy, society (of Lithuania/Japan), culture (of Lithuania/Japan/exchange), Ambassador's personal life, and embassy affairs.

Since the concept of Agenda setting analysis seeks to know topics the ambassador devoted to, the study counted the number of the Tweets and Retweets separately by categories. The study did not engage in counting Replies as most Replies are limited to simple greetings or gratitude expressed. The result are presented in the table. To compare the peculiarities of each post type, the study also compared the components of Retweets. The result was world affairs; 14, Society; 12, Politics in Indo Pacific region; 7, Politics in CEER; 105, embassy; 1, culture; 81(with 3 focusing on Japanese and 78 on Lithuanian), and bilateral cooperation; 16. Following Manor and Jiang's decision, in this study the themes occupying more than 10% of total number are regarded to be emphasized number. Thus, Ambassador's personal life, culture, Embassy, CEER issues are considered to be such themes which the message sender would particularly highlight to convey to the audience.

Table 1



Category	number	proportion
Ambassador's personal life	148	13,03 %
bilateral cooperation	47	4,14 %
Culture	513	45,33 %
Economy	47	4,14 %
Embassy activities	182	16,11 %
CEE affairs	121	10,65 %
Issues in IPA	5	0,53 %
politics in other regions	6	0,53 %
Society	63	5,55 %
Grand Total	1133	100%

### Presence expansion

Whether the agenda is set in the social network space is only clarified after being evaluated if these topics facilitate audience's reactions and those posts are specifically expanded. To analyze how and to what extent these posts were expanded and reacted, the author firstly sorted the data set by the number of engagement count; view, retweet (share), bookmark, favourite, reply. Sample of higher 10% (114 posts, if the 114<sup>th</sup> post has same number as the others, the researcher has included all the post) in each engagement count are object of the analysis. Table shows the prevalence of most viewed, retweeted, bookmarked, favored, replied post by categories compared by details of full post, analyzed in the previous section.

The result are as in the table 2; it shows those posts that dealt with priorities take up roughly 80% among those posts obtaining higher engagement. The pattern of the posts sent by the Ambassador Zykas and that of the 114 posts with highest engagement level overlap each other. Thus, this research found that the Lithuanian ambassador can set the agenda for discussions with their Facebook followers.

Notably, over 150 posts saw view count exceeding 30,000, the number followers of his account, suggesting the

Table 2

Category	ALL	View count	Retweet	Book mark	Favourite	Reply	AVR.
Ambassador's personal life	13,06 %	14,91 %	9,65 %	5,93 %	29,82 %	30,25 %	18,11%
bilateral cooperation	4,15 %	4,39 %	4,39 %	3,39 %	0,88 %		3,26%
Culture	45,28 %	29,82 %	31,58 %	41,53 %	29,82 %	31,93 %	32,94%
Economy	4,15 %	2,63 %	2,63 %	5,93 %	1,75 %	0,84 %	2,76%
Embassy activities	16,06 %	18,42 %	14,91 %	11,02 %	16,67 %	15,97 %	15,40%
CEE affairs	10,68 %	21,05 %	26,32 %	21,19 %	9,65 %	10,08 %	17,66%
Issues in IPA	0,53 %						
World affairs	0,53 %	0,88 %		0,85 %			0,85%
Society	5,56 %	7,89 %	10,53 %	10,17 %	11,40 %	10,92 %	10,18%
Grand Total							

Values in this table are percent

### Conversation generating

The number of accounts followed by the Lithuanian Ambassador Zykas is 564, which is small number compared to his followers (over 33,000). As X system no longer displays full list of the followings, it is impossible to find out any trend of persons who followed by him.

During the period of analysis, the original posts of Zykas received 22,203 replies, 19.5 on average for one post, while he sent 628 replies and 560 out of them were to other users. Even though he gave up replying 98% of comments, the total number of reply he sent is significant as in the previous research Lithuanian embassies' Facebook account replies to followers only

few times based on sample of 280 Facebook posts<sup>69</sup>. In other words, the Lithuanian Ambassador to Japan commented on roughly half of its original posts to respond to received comments, level of interaction is comparable to that observed on the Facebook page of the Swedish embassy in Bucharest, which is noted for its responsiveness.<sup>70</sup> Furthermore, even when the ambassador did not reply to comments directly, he might still demonstrate recognition and affiliation by liking the comments. However, this cannot be verified due to changes in the visibility settings on X<sup>71</sup>.

### Public engagement model analysis

Regarding to elements of Public engagement model in 50 tweets of all original tweet Zykas uses the “?” symbol and interrogative particles to display inquisitiveness of the message sender. It partially contributed to gaining higher comments from audiences, which leads to dialogic engagement between the ambassador and digital public while it did not boost engagement count other than comment; over half of these posts gained relatively lower engagement. The other components of PEM, self-disclosure was found to be contributing factor to enhance engagement to public. While many post dealing with Ambassador Zykas’s personal life garnered a high level of engagement, such highlighted individual and family life appeared in posts classified under the other categories, especially, cultural.

### Qualitative analysis

The result of agenda-setting shows the representative of Lithuania firstly engages in providing information related to culture. While this category includes a balanced mix of references to Lithuania, Japan, and a combination of the two, 100 tweets referenced Japanese culture, 309

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<sup>69</sup> Manor, *The Digitalization of Public Diplomacy*., p209

<sup>70</sup> Anton and Lăcătuș, “Digital Diplomacy: The Case of the Embassy of Sweden in Bucharest.”, p208

<sup>71</sup> When the author commented on his post in August 2024 using private anonymous account, a like from the Ambassador was recognized.

highlighted Lithuanian culture, cultural exchange was highlighted with 100 posts mentioning individuals who introduced Lithuanian culture to Japan or vice versa. Therefore, the emphasis by the Lithuanian Ambassador's account overlaps with the tendency of the embassy accounts of CEE countries that "concentrate their efforts on promotion of tourism, education, and culture of their own countries"<sup>72</sup>.

The analysis of reposted tweet, on the other hand, suggest undeniable emphasis on political matters in CEE. This contradiction suggests that he adopted a tailored approach based on the audience's attributes; for those who are distant from or less interested in politics—which constitutes most of the population—posts featuring cultural topics accompanied by captivating images are likely to garner more attention than posts focusing on Eastern European affairs. Even though their proportion in original posts is lower than cultural posts, the ambassador constantly mentions topics such as bilateral relationship between Japan and Lithuania, CEE affairs.

When analyzing presence expansion of posts, it is indicated that the proportion of posts about culture among those with higher engagement is lower than the proportion of such posts in the total number of posts. On the other hand, each proportion of those posts about Ambassador's personal life, Issues in CEE, Society exceeds the proportion of such posts in the total number of posts. This suggests that certain proportion of cultural post were not fascinating enough to attract huge engagement, while some posts dealing with social theme contains elements of effective communicational strategies. In the following section, each theme's posts are analysed to identify intentions and priorities in the ambassador's content and reveal whether specific communicative strategies have been employed.

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<sup>72</sup> Melissa D Dodd and Steve J Collins, "Public Relations Message Strategies and Public Diplomacy 2.0: An Empirical Analysis Using Central-Eastern European and Western Embassy Twitter Accounts," *Public Relations Review* 43, no. 2 (2017): 417–25.

The result of the present expansion analysis shows most engaging posts. The most liked and retweeted post was about him with his wife tasting Lithuanian Maltinukas (cutlet) in Japanese fast-food chain when it started temporary campaign<sup>73</sup>, followed by a post introducing Lithuanian escargots served in another low-cost food chain with cheap price<sup>74</sup>. Through these posts, the author's implicit intentions to promote the presence of Lithuanian culture and economy among the Japanese population, particularly through the medium of food, subtly emerge. The ambassador himself recognised the importance of food culture among Japanese society as he stated “it’s far more effective to shape a country's image through gastronomy”<sup>75</sup>. Similarly, cultural posts mentioning baking šakotis (Lithuanian Baumkuchen) in a traditional way<sup>76</sup>, cucumber and henny as a symbolic taste of Lithuanian summer<sup>77</sup> attracted higher engagement score.

From a cultural perspective, the ambassador frequently shares images of himself, and his family dressed in traditional Japanese attire, likely as a gesture of empathy and appreciation for the local culture; the first<sup>78</sup>, second, fifth, seventh most replied posts are all accompanied with such full-length portraits. Among posts categorized under embassy affairs, particularly those announcing the Ambassador's participation in traditional ceremonies of the Japanese Imperial Family, garnered over four thousand likes. These posts highlighted specific Japanese customs and cultural practices in the ceremonies, which might have resonated with the audience. It is worth noticing that as mentioned in first paragraph, significant number of posts refers among

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<sup>73</sup> Aurelijus Zykas (@AurelijusZykas), “やった!”, Twitter post, 30 August 2024, <https://x.com/AurelijusZykas/status/1829394045199905179>

<sup>74</sup> Aurelijus Zykas (@AurelijusZykas), “今日のランチは千葉のサイゼリアです!”, Twitter post, 14 March 2024, <https://x.com/AurelijusZykas/status/1768100727103393838>

<sup>75</sup> Ugnė Jonaitytė, “Lithuanian food sends shockwaves”.

<sup>76</sup> Aurelijus Zykas (@AurelijusZykas), “リトアニア 🇱🇹 風バウムクーヘン”, Twitter post, 2 September 2022, <https://x.com/AurelijusZykas/status/1565671325506699265>

<sup>77</sup> Aurelijus Zykas (@AurelijusZykas), 摘みたてのキュウリ 🍆 に出来立ての蜂蜜”, Twitter post, 19 June 2023, <https://x.com/AurelijusZykas/status/1670577893481775104>

<sup>78</sup> Aurelijus Zykas (@AurelijusZykas), “成人の日、おめでとうございます”, Twitter post, 8 January 2024, <https://x.com/AurelijusZykas/status/1744233809128857609>

total posts. Such an empathy for the host society is also shown in expression of condolence to death of politicians and famous persons and damage from disasters. The posts about him commemorating for victims of Nagasaki and Hiroshima, post that displayed concern on earthquake in western Japan (January 2024) and that on attendance of State Funeral of the former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, mourning for Akira Toriyama, a famous comic drawer attracted higher engagement score.

Two posts from CEE issues marked outstanding engagement score; in one post ambassador Zykas presented that Lithuania's contribution to support for Ukraine per GDP making 1st place in the world<sup>79</sup>. The other one is with a photograph of Baltic human chain in August 1989 commenting '... The forceful action showed a deep desire for freedom and democracy with peaceful protest against the illegal occupation of the USSR.'<sup>80</sup>. Both posts can bring an impression that Lithuania and its nation is actively fighting against Russia in pursuit of ensuring freedom, democracy and peace. In addition, these posts feature Lithuania's solidarity with other like-minded nations and support independence. Accentuation of Lithuania's restoration of independence and contribution to freedom is one of core messages emphasized Lithuanian MFA, 'Freedom Fighters'. Importantly, these posts have captured a considerable amount of user engagement; over 2000 likes. Another post published on May seventh, the day when Lithuanian language restriction has been abolished, also captured a considerable amount of user interaction; 135 bookmarks and 3700 likes. Briefly summarising the history of repression

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<sup>79</sup> Aurelijus Zykas (@AurelijusZykas), “ウクライナ🇺🇦侵攻が始まってから、リトアニア🇱🇹は支援し続けています。”, Twitter post, 8 January 2024, <https://x.com/AurelijusZykas/status/1744138849796988964>

<sup>80</sup> Aurelijus Zykas (@AurelijusZykas), “35 年前、約 200 万人が手をつないで、🇱🇹リトアニア🇸🇰スロバキア🇪🇪エストニアの三国をつなぐ 650km にわたる人間の鎖を形成しました”, Twitter post, 23 August 2024, <https://x.com/AurelijusZykas/status/1826756226979672545> .

of Lithuanian language under Russian empire and continued grassroots Lithuanian lessons thanks to book smugglers, it stressed sense of Lithuanian national resilience<sup>81</sup>.

Posts in category of international cooperation demonstrated friendship and cooperation between two countries, presenting both announcements similar to official press release and off-shots of major Lithuanian representatives. There are many posts in embassy category which official trips to nationwide occupy majority in the category, that were, likewise, intended to serve as symbolic of good relations from state level to regional level between Japan and Lithuania. Another significant effect of such posts that unveil the back side of Ambassador's work, which ordinary people never be able to see. As Causey and Howard insisted credence to diplomats is generated as a result of balancing between official and unofficial<sup>82</sup>.

One of important pillars of strategic partnership is promotion of bilateral trade and investment to Lithuania. In some posts classified under economy category the Ambassador periodically underscores positive appeal of Lithuania as a safe, developed arena for potential investors or cooperators. On the one hand, continuous and stable GDP growth rate are reiterated and on the other hand, development of sustainable energy sources and LNG terminal which realized energy dependence from Russia are introduced. These descriptions also aimed at countering Russian narratives which describes Baltic state as a failed nation. Like posts under theme of culture and CEE, the ambassador attempted to deliver advantageous image of the country, its history as well as the regional circumstances in order to narrative competitions against Russia.

It is worth noticing that approximately 85% of Zykas's posts (973) are accompanied by visual media such as videos and photographs. Even if a post does not contain such original content,

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<sup>81</sup> Aurelijus Zykas (@AurelijusZykas), "120 年前、1904 年 5 月 7 日、リトアニア🇱🇹語の禁令が解禁された日です", Twitter post, 7 May 2024, <https://x.com/AurelijusZykas/status/1787653266500702471>.

<sup>82</sup> Charles Causey, and Philip N. Howard. "Delivering digital public diplomacy: Information technologies and the changing business of diplomacy." *In Relational, networked and collaborative approaches to public diplomacy*, pp. 144-156. Routledge, 2014. Cited from Manor, *The Digitalization of Public Diplomacy*. P.308

in many cases it referred third-party post with photos, rendering nearly all his contents as rich in visual presentation. Visual media attached to a post contributes to draw an attention to the post and enables to expand message while word limit, or to simplify the word contents. These media depicting Ambassador himself and surrounding people might well serve to construct a robust persona of the Ambassador to be presented to digital audience, allowing them to perceive the ambassador as an abstract entity, but rather as a tangible and relatable individual. In addition, the ambassador's exploitation of photographic media when introducing embassy's activities might enhance trust in these activities and state because the audience was granted a clearer transparency into the workings of the embassy. Finally, the archival photo featuring historic issue fortifies the credibility of the institution as these media bare a certain truth (figure 1).



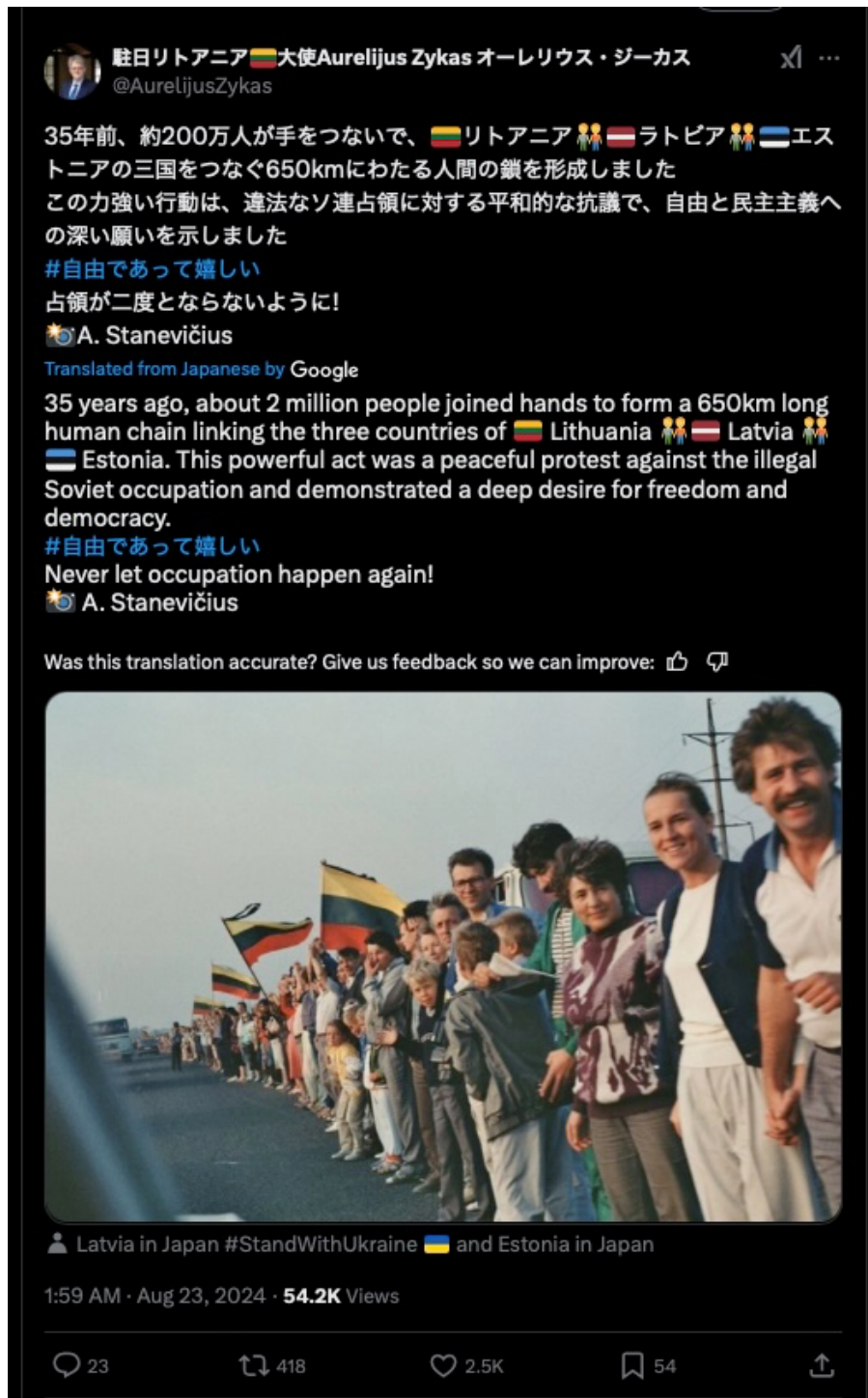


Figure 1. a post dealing with Baltic human chain

On certain occasions, his tweets were highlighted and had an impact extending beyond the X platform. Even about trifling theme, sometimes Japanese internet news media referred his posts; for instance, the post mentioning specific old type of carriage during his business trip

was introduced media on traffic<sup>83</sup>. Another case is when Zykas sent a comment in February 2024<sup>84</sup> to an official account of food chain which promoted beginning of temporary menu featuring Polish cutlet, offering another collaboration with Lithuanian cuisine. The official account reacted this comment with pleasure and after several meeting that has resulted in appearance of Lithuanian cutlet in Japanese fast-food chain, which, though temporarily, made Lithuanian food available nationwide. In each case, thanks to Ambassador's activities on X, Lithuania's presence reached out over the platform but other medias as well as off-line contents.

## Conclusion

This paper explores the concept of public diplomacy as a tool of soft power, employed to influence foreign societies in pursuit of statepolitical objectives. The employment of technologies has supplied opportunities to public diplomacy because it enables quicker information dissemination and public involvement, which led to creation of digital public diplomacy concept. As a means of soft power, because of its easiness in terms of cost and unlimited access to the virtual space of social network, digital public diplomacy may be particularly beneficial for small states, which traditionally are regarded as states with limited hard power resources. Among some concepts of “successful digital public diplomacy”, this study has focused on Bjola and Jiang's three-dimensional framework; agenda setting, presence expansion and conversation generating, which are fundamentals of digitalized public diplomacy.

This research has revealed that Lithuanian ambassador to Japan successfully employs X to set agenda in Japanese digital public space for discussions with audiences, providing them with opportunities of dialogic communications. To borrow the words of Manor, the ambassador and the embassy successfully “offer a prism through which events shaping the nation and the world

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<sup>83</sup> 乗り物ニュース, “「日本の電車が大好き！」外国大使 引退近づく国鉄型「やくも」にご満悦 予期せぬトラブルも楽しんだ!?”, accessed 9 January 2025, <https://trafficnews.jp/post/131972>.

<sup>84</sup> Aurelijus Zykas (@AurelijusZykas), “リトアニアの料理もぜひ紹介してください”, Twitter post, 29 February 2024, <https://x.com/AurelijusZykas/status/1762970128822702209>.

may be understood<sup>85</sup>”. High number of scores such as favourite, retweet, view count the posts gained indicates his posts have spread across Japanese audience beyond his followers, attracting many audiences across the country. It is found that while his posts overarched various topics, he strongly addresses topics related to ambassador’s personal life, culture, CEE affairs, and embassy affairs while the posts about these featured topics have gained higher reactions from audience. Unlike many cases observed in the previous literatures, the ambassador also actively conducts two-way communication with his audiences, which can provoke feedback from the audiences and credibility of the institution from the population. It is also confirmed that those posts with higher engagement contain the principles of public engagement model, especially self-disclosure.

Regarding the contents published, Lithuania’s representative took the opportunity to deliver image of the country as an independent state that aspires to common values, which aligns with its MFA’s digital diplomatic policies, thereby strengthening the legitimacy of bilateral relationship with Japan. On the other hand, some posts were intended to enhance the transparency of work in the Embassy and their actions, which helped elevate the institution’s creativity among the audiences. Additionally, showing deep respect for native culture and customs may have contributed to gaining acceptance among Japanese digital audiences as a credible and respected diplomat, thereby fostering further interactions. Moreover, specific posts triggered interaction with other actors beyond social network tool; appearance in media and realization of cultural exchange events. All of these elements might cultivate public support for the advancement of a closer bilateral relationship. Therefore, the author insists that Lithuania has utilized social media to conduct its public diplomacy, and the ambassador fulfills the role of an intermediary from Lithuania to Japanese population. Public diplomacy through social media could serve as a tool of soft power enhancement in Indo-Pacific region, where Lithuania’s government sought to reinforce its relationships with states.

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<sup>85</sup> Manor, *The Digitalization of Public Diplomacy*., P.210

Since there is no study without any limitations, this research possesses some disadvantages. Theoretically, since this study have conducted analysis on process of message sending mainly focusing on state representative, it was impossible to evaluate any effect of Ambassador's digital activity to offline politics mediated by populations. The in-depth discourse analysis of the Ambassador's posts is also beyond the scope of this research. The comparison of framing or emphasis on certain events with the narratives published from Lithuania's MFA social media account might bring fruitful result to the constructivist research. From the methodological perspective, lack of comparison between platforms, nations' representatives, institutions (of Lithuania) fail to demonstrate its representativeness. Futural study on practice of Lithuanian digital public diplomacy may overcome these challenges.

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## Appendix

Table 3. Cited posts generated by Lithuanian Ambassador to Japan, Aurelijus Zykas

text	Category	discription	language	type	bookmark	favorite	retweet	reply	view
<p><a href="#">やった!</a></p> <p><a href="#">妻と一緒に❤️松屋💙🍷の六本木店に参りました</a></p> <p><a href="#">初めて #リトアニア風ホワイトソースハンバーグ を</a></p> <p><a href="#">試食して、キノコの風味が効いて濃厚な味で本当に美味しかったです👍</a></p> <p><a href="#">リトアニアのおフクロウの味ですよ</a></p> <p><a href="#">皆さん、お薦めします! https://t.co/lqv2t8kJaD</a></p>	Culture	praising Lithuanian style cutlet at Matsuya	ja	Tweet	536	31973	4160	207	1820365
<p><a href="#">成人の日、おめでとうございます! 娘は、二人共、成人式にまだ早いですが、下の娘の振り袖姿はいかがでしょうか? https://t.co/vso6vmi5e0</a></p>	Culture	coming of age day	ja	Tweet	85	29750	1096	609	814917
<p><a href="#">今日のランチは千葉のサイゼリアです!</a></p> <p><a href="#">サイゼリアのエスカルゴは、100%リトアニア🇱🇹産ですよ!</a></p> <p><a href="#">💰364円って、安いです!👍</a></p> <p><a href="#">Lithuanian🇱🇹 escargots in Saizeria for today's lunch! So tasty and cheap 😊 https://t.co/CMxzGJUV0i</a></p>	Economy	Lithuanian escargots in Saizeria, catering chain, for cheap price	ja	Tweet	359	15540	3542	112	2435008
<p><a href="#">120年前、1904年5月7日、リトアニア🇱🇹語の禁令が解禁された日です</a></p> <p><a href="#">ロシア帝国で40年も🇱🇹語の読み書きが禁じられていました。言葉を守るために、写真の様な人達(knygnešys)は、外国で出版された本をこっそりと村々で配って、母親たちは子供に文字を教え続けました</a></p> <p><a href="#">🇱🇹語を守ってくれて、ありがとう!</a></p> <p><a href="#">https://t.co/gvRRrkz82a</a></p>	CEE affairs	the day when Lithuanian language restriction has been abolished, book smugglers	ja	Tweet	124	3736	769	33	152358
<p><a href="#">リトアニア🇱🇹風バウムクーヘン シャコティス(šakotis)の作り方 超美味しいですよ。</a></p> <p><a href="#">Making traditional Lithuanian cake šakotis at Vilnius street.</a></p> <p><a href="#">https://t.co/n1aiCOBtj8</a></p>	Culture	šakotis	ja	Tweet	69	3670	862	63	1337642
<p><a href="#">35年前、約200万人が手をつないで、🇱🇹リトアニア🇸🇰ラトビア🇵🇪エストニアの三国をつなぐ650kmにわたる人間の鎖を形成しました</a></p> <p><a href="#">この力強い行動は、違法なソ連占領に対する平和的な抗議で、自由と民主主義への深い願いを示しました</a></p>	CEE affairs	Baltic road against Soviet occupation, presenting fight for liberty and democracy	ja	Tweet	51	2530	410	41	38204


<a href="#">#自由であって嬉しい</a> <a href="#">占領が二度とならないように!</a>  A. Stanevičius <a href="https://t.co/xPcf3I8dII">https://t.co/xPcf3I8dII</a>									
<a href="#">ウクライナ🇺🇦侵攻が始まってから、リトアニア🇱🇹は支援し続けています。小国ですが、GDP 当たりの支援で一位になりました</a> <a href="#">日本🇯🇵も支援してくださって、ありがとうございます!</a> <a href="https://x.com/AurelijusZykas/status/1744138849796988964">https://x.com/AurelijusZykas/status/1744138849796988964</a>	CEE affairs	Lithuania's support for Ukraine per GDP making 1st place among the world	ja	Tweet	26	2042	273	47	45334

Table 4. data set; All original tweet from Lithuanian ambassador to Japan, Aurelijus Zykas from July 2022 to September 2024 is available from the link below:

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1Z7OLem6HcnNtSK-rU0hjBIYcCRyJuK1R/edit?usp=share\\_link&ouid=110354419819159315089&rtpof=true&sd=true](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1Z7OLem6HcnNtSK-rU0hjBIYcCRyJuK1R/edit?usp=share_link&ouid=110354419819159315089&rtpof=true&sd=true)