

SPORTS DIPLOMACY

ABSTRACT

Traditional sports diplomacy is part of international relations. It is most often defined as the use of sports events to achieve certain goals of the state's foreign policy and is used to supplement or improve diplomatic relations, that is, to emphasize a diplomatic message. Sports diplomacy is considered a form of soft power, which in the globalized world is becoming the dominant form of achieving foreign policy goals, but also the promotion of a particular country. The paper reviews the "geopolitical economy of sports" and deals with three basic categories of intersection of diplomatic goals of states and the football industry: the organization of major football competitions, investment in the ownership of sports brands and sponsorship investments in football competitions. Also, four general reasons why governments move towards sports diplomacy and its possible outcomes are analyzed. The paper will show how Croatia (doesn't) use the resources of sports diplomacy with a special focus on football successes and the possibilities of sports diplomacy through the prism of the football successes of the national team.

Keywords: sport; diplomacy; soft power; football; strategy; Croatia.