Emerging from the reforms of the second half of the 18\textsuperscript{th} century, the body of loyal civil servants gradually transformed itself into an efficient bureaucratic machine, which fully ensured the operation of the multinational Habsburg Monarchy until its disintegration. For many, a position within the civil service went hand in hand with attaining a certain prestige and rank within society, although the financial situation of lower and even mid-ranking civil servants was problematic at best. The foreign service, especially its diplomatic and central administration branch, undoubtedly ranked among the most prestigious parts of the civil service. Candidates, apart from being required to have the necessary level of educational attainment, were subject to a rigorous selection process focusing especially on their language skills. The diplomatic service also maintained its exclusivity by requiring candidates to provide proof of sufficient income, which limited access to candidates from among the wealthy elite, that is especially from among the traditional and new nobility as well as from among the well-off individuals of bourgeois descent.

The research has, however, also shown that obtaining a high position in the central administration service at the ministry of foreign affairs might well have been linked to internal politics, especially following the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867. For national and political reasons, the important positions of
Sektionschefs were awarded to people who did not meet the required criteria. The research has further demonstrated that despite the division of foreign service into diplomatic, consular and central administration service, it was fairly often for these different services to intertwine, in particular in cases where an official, having started his career in the consular service, would latter attain a higher position within the diplomatic or administration service. Education and studies at the prestigious Oriental Academy (Consular Academy), which was sponsored and financed by the government, also played a major role: success in consular examinations gave the able graduates a chance to attain influential positions in the consular as well as in the diplomatic services.

With the exception of the diplomatic service, which required candidates to meet the criteria mentioned above, the foreign service was in principle open to members of all of the Monarchy’s nations from a variety of social groups. The prerequisites for admission and promotion were meeting defined requirements and demonstrating loyalty to the interest of the Danubian Monarchy. Here, national conflicts were something completely unheard of, and fidelity to House Habsburg and the Habsburg Empire was an overarching principle.