



# The political participation of immigrants in host countries : an interpretative framework from the perspective of origin countries and societies

Ricard Zapata-Barrero, Lorenzo Gabrielli, Elena Sanchez-Montijano, Thibaut Jaulin

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## **INTERACT – RESEARCHING THIRD COUNTRY NATIONALS’ INTEGRATION AS A THREE-WAY PROCESS - IMMIGRANTS, COUNTRIES OF EMIGRATION AND COUNTRIES OF IMMIGRATION AS ACTORS OF INTEGRATION**

Co-financed by the European Union

### ***The political participation of immigrants in host countries: An interpretative framework from the perspective of origin countries and societies***

**Ricard Zapata-Barrero**  
**Lorenzo Gabrielli**  
**Elena Sánchez-Montijano**  
**Thibaut Jaulin**

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**INTERACT**  
**Researching Third Country Nationals' Integration as a Three-way Process -**  
**Immigrants, Countries of Emigration and Countries of Immigration as Actors of**  
**Integration**

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**The political participation of immigrants in host countries:**  
**An interpretative framework from the perspective of**  
**origin countries and societies**

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## **INTERACT - Researching Third Country Nationals' Integration as a Three-way Process - Immigrants, Countries of Emigration and Countries of Immigration as Actors of Integration**

Around 25 million persons born in a third country (TCNs) are currently living in the European Union (EU), representing 5% of its total population. Integrating immigrants, i.e. allowing them to participate in the host society at the same level as natives, is an active, not a passive, process that involves two parties, the host society and the immigrants, working together to build a cohesive society.

Policy-making on integration is commonly regarded as primarily a matter of concern for the receiving state, with general disregard for the role of the sending state. However, migrants belong to two places: first, where they come and second, where they now live. While integration takes place in the latter, migrants maintain a variety of links with the former. New means of communication facilitating contact between migrants and their homes, globalisation bringing greater cultural diversity to host countries, and nation-building in source countries seeing expatriate nationals as a strategic resource have all transformed the way migrants interact with their home country.

INTERACT project looks at the ways governments and non-governmental institutions in origin countries, including the media, make transnational bonds a reality, and have developed tools that operate economically (to boost financial transfers and investments); culturally (to maintain or revive cultural heritage); politically (to expand the constituency); legally (to support their rights).

INTERACT project explores several important questions: To what extent do policies pursued by EU member states to integrate immigrants, and policies pursued by governments and non-state actors in origin countries regarding expatriates, complement or contradict each other? What effective contribution do they make to the successful integration of migrants and what obstacles do they put in their way?

A considerable amount of high-quality research on the integration of migrants has been produced in the EU. Building on existing research to investigate the impact of origin countries on the integration of migrants in the host country remains to be done.

INTERACT is co-financed by the European Union and is implemented by a consortium built by CEDEM, UPF and MPI Europe.

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## **Abstract**

The main goal of the present position paper is to create an interpretative framework for the role of origin countries and societies in influencing the political participation of immigrants.

Considering that we are opening a new line of research within the literature on political participation of immigrants and integration, we first consider the more classic methodological approaches in this field: this is to understand better any gaps. Second we consider other fields in the literature, namely diaspora policies and transnational politics. This is to allow a deeper identification of the influence of the countries and societies of origin.

Then, we map state and non-state actors implicated in the countries of origin, their strategies, and how they overcome difficulties in their actions. On the one hand, we consider state actors' strategies and interactions with emigrants, both in conventional and unconventional forms of political participation: as well as the issue of external voting, as a paradigmatic example of conventional political participation towards origin countries. On the other hand, we look at non-state actors and their strategies to influence migrant political participation, both towards origin and destination countries.

In parallel, we introduce some relevant case studies underlining and exemplifying the role and the impact of origin countries' actors on the political participation of migrants, both in their host and home countries.

Afterwards, we propose a framework to interpret the relations between the different actors in origin countries and migrants in the field of political participation. Finally, we identify gaps in scientific knowledge that deserve to be covered in the next steps of the Interact project, we point out the key factors influencing migrants' political participation that deserve more research, and we set out the specific questions to fill gaps in our knowledge of those interactions.

## 1. Introduction: the role of countries of origin in the political participation of immigrants.

The main goal of the present report is to set an interpretative framework for the role of origin countries in immigrant political participation, understood in the broader sense, in the country of reception and origin. We propose here to consider the political participation of migrants in destination countries towards origin countries in a broad sense as well. We are determined not to restrict the analysis to the *conventional forms* of political participation, like the voting process or the possibility of standing for election. It is necessary because of the difficulties experienced by immigrants in participating in conventional forms of political life in destination countries, and sometimes also in origin countries. It is, therefore, only right to take into consideration the *non-conventional forms* of migrant political participation including protest, demonstrations, sit-ins, hunger strikes, etc.

- *Conventional forms of political participation*, namely voting or standing for election, referenda, participation in advisory councils and arenas of dialogue, membership in political parties, pressure groups, and NGOs and lobbying activities.
- *Non-conventional and extra-parliamentary forms of political participation*, e.g. protests, demonstrations, sit-ins, political strikes, hunger strikes, civil disobedience and boycotts.

A similar form of political participation classification is the state/non-state political participation of migrants.

- *state political participation* includes electoral policy, parliamentary policy and consultative policy;
- *non-state political participation* embraces political parties involvement, union politics, other pressure groups, ethnic and communitarian mobilisations, etc

In order to understand the context in which the different forms of migrant political participation take place, we consider: the broad framework of voting and political rights; the structures of political opportunities; and also the electoral systems, in both destination and origin countries.

It is essential to operate a fundamental distinction when speaking about country of origin and reception, between state actors and non-state actors, or civil society actors. These two categories of actors do not generally use the same tools, and often they may not share the same goals: it makes sense, then, to classify them apart. In the following sections dedicated to the identification of actors, tools and strategies, as well as in the section dedicated to the interpretative framework, we will look at this distinction in more detail. According to the Interact project, the final purpose is to propose a set of key-questions to frame a survey to be implemented in the countries of origin in the second phase.

Within the literature on political participation, the novelty of this interpretative framework is that we will consider the country of origin, and the role it plays in fostering the 'active immigrant' as a determinant variable (Vogel, 2007; Zapata-Barrero and Gropas, 2012). Put in other terms we consider immigrants not as passive individuals, or even as only receiver of social services, or as *homo economicus* or, for that matter, workers, but as agents that can participate both in the country of reception and origin. We take, then, into consideration the active dimension of migrants, instead of writing them off, as public policy so often does, as passive elements. More specifically, in the present report we will identify the main factors driving how origin countries influence migrant political participation.

Political participation is central to democratic governance for several reasons. But two are particularly relevant here. First, political participation offers individuals the opportunity to influence the outcomes of the decision-making processes. Thereby, these same individuals can defend their interests or the interests of groups to which they belong. Second, participation in commonly binding decisions may have a 'socialization' function in terms of enriching citizens' feelings of belonging and shared identities (Lindekilde, 2009). Both dimensions are crucial to social integration, cohesion and



the development of a dynamic democratic polity increasingly characterized by diversity (R. Zapata-Barrero and R. Gropas, 2012, 169)

We are opening here a new line of research on the political participation of migrants. As such we need to elaborate an interpretative framework of how origin countries' actors intervene in migrants' political participation, both in destination and origin countries. Our first step is to look at what has been done and what can be drawn on from the literature for our purposes (§ 2). First, we will consider the main methodological approaches in trying to identify the influence of the countries and societies of origin (§ 2.1). Then, we will enlarge the focus to other fields of the literature studying migrant political participation towards origin countries, namely diaspora policies and transnational politics (§ 2.2). This will help us to map both state and non-state actors implicated in the countries of origin, their strategies, and the question of how they can overcome difficulties through their actions (§ 3). On the one hand, we will specifically consider state actors' strategies and interactions with migrants (§ 3.1), both in conventional and unconventional forms of political participation. We will also look at the issue of external voting, as a paradigmatic example of conventional political participation towards origin countries (§ 3.2). We will look, too, at non-state actors and their strategies in influencing migrant political participation, directed to destination and origin countries (§ 3.3). In parallel, we will introduce some relevant case studies embracing and exemplifying the role and the impact of origin countries' actors on the political participation of migrants, both in their host and home countries. Afterwards, we will propose an interpretative framework (§ 4). Finally, we will identify gaps in scientific knowledge that deserve to be covered in the next steps of the Interact project. We will point to the key factors influencing migrant political participation that deserve deeper research, and we will underline the questions necessary to get to grips with those interactions (§ 5).

## **2. The state of the question: the two standpoints on migrant political participation in the literature**

In this section we will start considering the more 'classical' literature on the political participation of immigrants in destination countries, and the links between this issue and the integration debate. However, immigrants' political participation is not only oriented towards the destination countries. It also takes place between migrants and their home countries. Then, in the second part of this section, we will focus on other research fields, exploring the transnational political linkages and activities between home countries and societies, on the one hand, and migrants, on the other. We are referring to research focused on 'diaspora policies' and 'diaspora engagement policies', as well as on 'transnational political practices'. It has to be underlined that, generally, the literature on immigrant political participation in destination countries concentrates on *micro level* variables of political behaviour. The bibliography on diaspora policies, and transnational political ties and interactions focuses, meanwhile, more on a *macro level*, constituted by actors, strategies, and tools.

### **2.1 The classical view of the political participation of immigrants in host countries: motivating conditions.**

Political participation belongs to one of the four dimensions of the political incorporation of immigrants, together with the rights granted to immigrants by the host society: the immigrant's identification with host society; and the adoption of democratic norms and values by the immigrant, something often presented as a necessary condition for political integration (Martiniello, 2005: 2). Moreover, these practices include a variety of activities, both conventional (voting or running for elections, for instance) and non-conventional (demonstrations, protests, hunger strikes, boycotts...) (see, among others, Leyton Henry, 1993; Martiniello, 2005; Levitt and Jaworski, 2007: 136).

The key-question guiding the literature concerns the relationship between the effective political participation of immigrants and the integration process. Today it is widely recognised that migrants have become important political stakeholder for both countries; they can tip the balance in favour of one political party or a specific policy, as happens with Hispanics in the US, for example. The immigrant political integration has to do with, first, self-identification with the political system, if they feel represented by it; second, active political participation, through voting or participation in the public sphere; and third, the perception of being heard by the authorities (Kaldur *et al.*, 2012: 3).

In this framework, it must be pointed out that participation in the political process depends both on the country of origin and destination, as well as the specific characteristics of the migrant. First, immigrants participate to a greater or lesser extent depending on: the context of the country of destination; immigration policy (borders and accommodation of diversity); and the integration of immigrants. Thus, the political participation of immigrants depends on changes in the political opportunity structure that arise in a specific host society. As Morales and Giugni (2011) point out, not only political but also discursive opportunity structures in receiving countries are a decisive factor permitting the political inclusion of immigrants. More specifically, they refer to: local policies towards immigrants associations; the openness of public authorities and formal institutions; the configuration of local power; general policies towards immigrants; and prevailing discourses on immigration and immigrants.

As far as destination is concerned, access to naturalization allows foreign nationals the opportunity to vote and to stand for election. It gives the same legal protection and political rights to immigrants, as well as to nationals. Citizenship has been repeatedly identified as the primary measure of immigrant integration in democratic societies. Once naturalized, citizens can extend their political incorporation through voting. The vote is the pathway through which immigrant groups become political communities and through which they can alter the political system with elected representatives (Fennema and Tillie 1999). In fact, some authors suggest that voting is a better indicator of political incorporation than naturalization (Simpson Bueker, 2005: 108). The idea that political participation is a clear indicator of integration could be applied to both ‘conventional’ and ‘non-conventional’ political participation.

The general literature on political participation isolates a number of variables explaining differences in this activity, some of them general, others specific to immigrants. Through their actions, origin states and societies can affect some of those elements and intervene in the political participation of their expatriates. The main question we have to approach here is: which variables of political participation can be influenced by the action of origin states and societies?

On the one hand, more ‘traditional’ variables are useful to explain general political participation, independently from a previous migration experience or from the origin of the subject (i.e. see Lipset, 1960; Almond and Verba, 1963; Verba and Nie, 1972; Milbrath and Goel, 1977; Wolfinger and Rosenstone, 1980; Verba *et al.*, 1995). More specifically, we are referring to: age/generational cohort, gender, ideas and values, level of education, linguistic skills, place of residence, social capital, and socio-economic status. For one of those ‘traditional’ variables, namely gender, the framework is more complex: gender seems to be more connected to immigrants’ origin. Nevertheless, the literature on those specific variables is particularly limited (Wu and Wang, 2007; Gildengil and Stolle, 2009), and it would be useful to consider the gender issue in the following Interact activities.

On the other hand, other explaining factors of political participation are ‘immigrant-specific’. Martiniello (2005), points out that the reasons why an immigrant participates in the political sphere are given for rational choice or self-identification and for the feeling of belonging in host countries. Thus, socio-economic theories confirm that to participate or not also depends on issues such as income and education (Portes and Rumbaut, 2006; Smith and Edmonston, 1997), or demographic characteristics (Yang 1994). Other researchers have underlined the importance of knowledge of a given political system, the political socialisation and re-socialisation, previous involvement in politics, social capital

and density of social networks (Jones-Correa, 1998; Adamson, 2007; White *et al.*, 2008; Li and Jones, 2011; De Rooij, 2012; Prokic-Breuer and al., 2012). Some authors have identified language competencies and access to reliable information as additional variables (Rumbaut, 1999; Zapata-Barrero and Gropas, 2012), while others scholars emphasize the mode of migration, the length of stay and the ‘structural’ (or socio-economic) position in the receiving country (Landolt *et al.*, 1999; Østergaard-Nielsen, 2001; Portes, 1999). These last three elements are connected, more or less directly, with the origin of the immigrants. If we look at counties and societies of origin, the ‘mode of migration’ is also linked to: existing emigration policies and bilateral agreements on worker recruitment, on the one hand; and on familiar and home-societal strategies of migration, on the other. Referring to the ‘structural position’, this is linked to homeland socio-economic conditions prior to departure, as well as to the migration mode. Moreover, the length of stay can also depend on homeland situation, on the return policy of the home country, and on family and societal strategies.

Among all the variables of immigrants’ political participation, just some of them are related to an origin country’s political and socio-economic situation, and also to eventual labour emigration policies and regulations. However, most of these policies and regulations relate specifically to migrants’ situation in the homeland before their departure; in some case they may be targeted by origin countries and societies only with pre-departure measures. The greater part of those variables is independent from the action that origin countries’ and societies’ may develop towards emigrants outside the country. Then, we have to consider that most micro-level factors explaining political participation are to be considered, for the present research, as ‘independent variables’. We mean this in the sense that they are generally independent from the origin countries’ and origin societies’ action towards migrants.

Some scholars have focused on the existence of a ‘source country effect’, which would explain differences in immigrants’ political participation depending on the country of origin. Following Simpson Bueker (2005: 105-ff), this ‘source country effect’ is constituted by the following elements:

- reversibility hypothesis: the political participation of an immigrant is inversely related to the ease with which he or she can reverse their migratory course and return home<sup>1</sup>;
- translation/transferability hypothesis: political participation of an immigrant is directly related to the ability to apply prior political knowledge to a new political environment. This hypothesis is strictly connected with the ‘political re-socialization’ of immigrants;
- mobilisation hypothesis: the political participation of an immigrant is directly related to the level of mobilisation of the reference group or community<sup>2</sup>;
- gender hypothesis: the origin of immigrants should vary the effect of gender on political incorporation processes;

We consider that those elements underlined by the ‘source country effect’ constitute some valuable inspiration in analysing origin countries and societies’ role at the micro level of immigrant political behaviour. However, as the same authors note, origin countries ‘may be acting as a proxy’ for distance, previous political experience, or ‘linguistic congruity’. They must not only be considered as a ‘main effect’, because the origin of a migrant mediates the effects of others factors

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<sup>1</sup> The clearest examples is the case of migrants installed in the US from China, the former Soviet Union, Cuba, the countries of the South-East Asia, the Philippines and India; following this hypothesis, the opposite trend is predictable in the case of immigrants in the US from Mexico, Canada, Great Britain, and Italy.

<sup>2</sup> Following this hypothesis, the initial reception of immigrants, in terms of financial aid and assistance, would have implications for the following political incorporation in the country. An example might be the Cuban community in the US. Settlement patterns seems to be also significant in this process, considering that immigrant concentrations would help integrate the latest arrivals in the political and economic systems, and also increase the ‘voting bloc’ effect, pushing the interest of major political parties.

At this point, a key question that we must address is whether the main methodological approaches for researching immigrants' political participation are practical. In other terms do they allow us to identify the influence of the countries and societies of origin. The existing literature on the political participation of migrants in host countries, after all, permits only a limited identification of the influences that countries and societies of origin can have here.

## 2.2 A broader view of the literature: diaspora policies and transnational politics.

Contemporary migrants, and their predecessors, have maintained, and still maintain, a variety of links with their origin countries; while at the same time, they are incorporated into the countries in which they are settled. Migration has never been a one-way process, but rather it is one in which migrants interact simultaneously in the different spheres in which they live. Most aspects of their lives occur and take place across borders (Levitt and Jaworski, 2007). The new sphere of political activities deals with the challenges of the currently nation-state, both supra-national and regional dimension, and with the large flows caused by migration (Basch et al., 1994). Political participation develops, then, at multiples sovereignty levels, as well as the transnational level.

In the present analysis, our interest is in understanding the transnational political links between the societies and the countries of origin with their emigrants.

As we are interested in state actors influence on political participation, we are going to consider the 'emigration policy' of origin countries, their 'diaspora policies' or 'diaspora engagement policies'. This is a research field that is crucial if we want to understand the role that origin countries can play in political behaviour and the participation of migrants, as well as the influence they can have on these processes. More particularly, this literature will help us to understand the role played by different state-actors, their actions, and the interests driving their transnational activities towards citizens abroad.

'Diaspora engagement policies' is a new field of research that draws attention to state actors' influence on emigrants' political activities. Following Sheffer (2003: 9-10), an ethno-national diaspora can be defined as 'a social-political formation, created as a result of either voluntary or forced migration, whose members regard themselves as of the same ethno-national origin and who permanently reside as minorities in one or several host countries'. As Saideman *et al.* (2011: 2) notes 'given the striking number of ethnic diasporas that exist, it is actually surprising that more of these 'diasporic segments' do not mobilize around their ethnic identity once in their host state'. Gamlen (2008: 842) identifies two broad frameworks of action through which the country of origin remains connected and interacts with his citizens abroad. The first mechanism is a 'diaspora building', addressed to recognize pre-existing diaspora communities or cultivate new ones. The second mechanism, called 'diaspora integration', looks at what pull emigrants into a 'web of rights and obligations'. The 'diaspora building' mechanism is filled with 'capacity building policies' that, as Gamlen points out, are 'aimed at discursively producing a state-centric 'transnational national society', and developing a set of corresponding state institutions' (2006: 5-6). Always according to the same author, the 'diaspora integration' mechanism is composed of two different dimensions: the first one is aimed at 'extending rights to the diaspora', and then building a legitimate transnational sovereignty; the second one is, instead, to 'extract obligations' from the diaspora, with the notion that citizens abroad 'owe' loyalty to this 'legitimate' home country. In the following pages, we will observe, in greater detail, the typology of transnational political actions that develop in these areas between homelands and their diasporas.

However, the analysis produced by the 'diaspora policies' literature enlightens almost exclusively 'top down' transnational political activities: namely those carried out by states and institutional actors, in connection with emigrants and diasporas. One of our goals is to understand how these non-state actors build up their linkages, which tools they use, which actions they carry out, and what motivations and interests drive these transnational activities in the political field. To understand the role of non-state, or civil society actors we will need to focus on 'bottom up' transnational dynamics,

and transnational networks. For that purpose, it is necessary to consider the literature on transnational political practices.

Some scholars concentrate on the implications of transnational political practices in terms of the international relation's level. Koslowsky (2004), for example, details several kinds of emigrant political activity and its recent expansion through increased migrations and defines those activities as 'the globalization of domestic politics'. The same author also notes how the democratization processes of home countries are linked with the participation of emigrants, increasing their possibilities for influencing homeland politics (Koslowsky, 2004: 5). Another scholar who has long studied transnational political activities, from the point of view of 'diaspora politics', is Sheffer (1986; 2006). This author focuses his analysis specifically on diaspora groups, which are possibly different from migrant groups, due to their stronger structure and their more homogenous group identity. Østergaard-Nielsen (2001), for example, notes that for some authors, diaspora politics is a subset of transnational politics concerning groups 'that are barred from direct political participation in the political system of their homeland – or who do not even have a homeland political regime to support/oppose', and is closer to the less common concept of 'émigré politics' (Cohen, 1997). Nevertheless, we think that some of his considerations on the political activities of the diasporas, their objectives, their strategies and their tools represent a key feature for a broader understanding of the role that origin countries can play towards their emigrants' political participation.

Some authors are more specifically interested in 'transnational political practices'. Østergaard-Nielsen (2001: 2-ff), for example, notes that the 'proliferation of political ties, networks, and practices across borders', is a phenomenon strictly linked to 'the sending countries' particular politico-economic incentives to mobilize their citizens and former citizens abroad', among others factors. As to the definitions of the concept of 'transnational political practices', significant differences emerge in research. These range, on the one hand, from a narrow definition, considering only the actual membership of parties or hometown associations. Then, at the other extreme, we have all the political consequences of transnational ties between migrants and their countries of origin, and also migration, as 'unintentional political action' affecting national and international level. Other scholars emphasize the identification of more durable patterns as a 'continuum of different practices'. Itzigsohn (2000: 1130) gives the following definition of 'immigrants' political transnational field': 'recurrent and institutionalized interactions and exchanges between, on the one hand, immigrants and their social and political organizations and, on the other hand, the political institutions and the state apparatus of the country of origin'.

Østergaard-Nielsen concentrates on 'intentional' transnational political practices, and focuses on 'transnational political networks' (2001: 5). She distinguishes different types of transnational political practices, depending on whether the political activities are directed towards host or home countries. She defines as 'immigrant politics' the political actions undertaken by immigrants and refugees to improve their situation in the host country. Some examples are the activities carried out to obtain more political, social and economic rights, or to fight against discrimination. When the home country supports 'their' emigrants' activities, then 'immigrant politics' becomes transnational. Otherwise, when the political actions of immigrants and refugees are addressed to the domestic policy of their homeland, or to the foreign policy of the latter, they are defined as 'homeland politics'. In this framework, immigrant and refugee activities may take the form of opposition or support for the current political regime in the origin country or its foreign policy.

The external voting of migrants is another research field that can add useful elements to our analysis on the role that origin countries and societies play in the political participation practices of migrants. International IDEA (2007: 248) was the first to propose external voting as the 'provisions and procedures, which enable some or all electors of a country who are temporarily or permanently outside the country to exercise their voting rights from outside the territory of the country'. Jean Michel Lafleur (2012: 31), who improved such definitions, defines external voting as: 'the active and passive voting rights of qualified individuals, independently of their professional status, to take part

from outside the national territory in referenda or in supranational, national, subnational, or primary elections held in an country of which they hold citizenship but where they permanently or temporarily do not reside'. International IDEA's and Lafleur's definitions both exclude citizens travelling back to their country of origin on polling day to vote<sup>3</sup>. Lafleur's definition further emphasizes the fact that external voting concerns all citizens overseas, while historically only soldiers fighting wars abroad and diplomats and civil servants abroad voted from abroad. However, other criteria may apply to the right to vote from abroad such as the length of time spent abroad or the place of residence<sup>4</sup>. Adopting Lafleur's definition of external voting for the Interact project will facilitate the comparison between various case studies of electoral participation at distance. However, it is crucial that country reports do not neglect other forms of migrant and diaspora political participation.

The literature on external voting also includes normative political theory. There are authors that point at the logistical and political issues specific to external elections (costs, risks of fraud, foreign interference, etc.) (Nohlen and Grotz, 2000). There are also several who have discussed whether it is legitimate for non-resident citizens to vote from abroad (e.g. Rubin-Martin, 2006; Bauböck, 2005, 2007a; Bach, 2011; Kull, 2008). Bauböck (2007a: 2394), for instance, suggests that refugees and migrants should be entitled to external voting, but not 'generations born abroad who have no stake in the country of origin'. Lafleur (2012: 45) eventually argues that there is not a single model of external voting legislation that would fit all countries willing to implement it.

However, not all actors are comfortable with the political participation of immigrants in host societies, given their relationship with origin communities and continuing their double political link or affiliation. The political and academic debates turn on the question of whether immigrants' political relations with their origin countries, and their persistence over time, could be a facilitating factor for the integration of immigrants at destination. In the early years of this century, the academic literature explored whether this link with the countries of origin is an obstacle to the integration of immigrants (Nieswand, 2011; Snel *et al.*, 2006); they also asked whether the relationship between integration and transnational relations is positive or negative (Guarnizo *et al.*, 2003, Portes 2003); or if the positive or negative relations depend, for example, on which social class migrants belong to (Levitt, 2003; Morawska, 2003b). Although there is a relationship between transnationalism and the integration of immigrants in the host countries, mainstream discourses have been kept separate.

In European receiving countries, more than in other migrants destinations, states seems not to welcome transnational political practices of immigrants particularly, independently from their exclusive or inclusive political systems (Østergaard-Nielsen, 2001). This situation is progressively changing in the European receiving countries, as is suggested by the growing admittance to double or multiple citizenship (Faist and Kivisto, 2008). However, the issue of 'double loyalty' linked to immigrants' political participation in both host and home-countries is still at the centre of the debate.

At the core of the research debate is the question of the nature of the relations between immigrant political participation in host-countries and towards their homeland. Some scholars argue for a 'zero-sum game', in which the more migrants are involved in their homeland, the less they will be involved in receiving countries politics. Some researchers suggest that maintaining links with homeland countries, particular identities and ethnic enclaves, hinders full assimilation and integration into 'mainstream' society and politics (Huntington, 2004).

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<sup>3</sup> Some countries specifically forbid the participation of non-resident citizens abroad in elections. Moreover, in some countries, the return of the citizens abroad for the election is a crucial political issue: for example, in Lebanon, political parties offer plane tickets to travel back and vote in disputed constituencies (Tabar, 2009).

<sup>4</sup> For example, Italy requires a minimum of one year of residence abroad, while Canada requires a maximum of five years abroad. Furthermore, Bolivia has implemented external voting in four countries only, which host the largest Bolivian communities abroad: Argentina, Brazil, Spain and the USA. Lebanon requires a minimum of 200 electors *per* constituency and *per* consulate to vote from abroad.

On the other hand, some authors disagree with this ‘zero sum’ interpretation and links migrants’ home countries and integration/assimilation in host countries. An extensive literature has suggested that transnational practices represents an alternative path of immigrant incorporation and adaptation: it is not an obstacle (Basch *et al.*, 1994; Morawska, 2003a). The same scholars suggest that transnational practices may even foster immigrants’ engagement in receiving-country politics (Portes and Rumbaut, 2006; Vertovec, 2003; Morales and Morariu, 2011). Eva Morawska (2003), for example, challenges the idea that transnational practices and assimilation are concurrent processes for migrants and their children. Following Kivisto and Faist (2010: 150), ‘simultaneity’ is the characteristic relationship between assimilation and transnationalism. Some scholars note how transnationalism provides alternative resources facilitating social mobility in the host countries, and how transnational practices create skills that migrants can transfer to their lives in destination countries (Portes *et al.*, 1999; Portes, 1999). Levitt (2003: 178-ff), for example, speaks of a ‘false dichotomy between assimilation and transnationalism’ and considers that transnational practices foster political integration ‘when they generate transferable skills that are useful for engaging in receiving-country politics’. Fibbi and D’Amato (2008) carried out a study based on a quantitative methodology, comparing different immigrants groups in the same countries, and the same group in several countries. They note the fact that integration and transnational engagement are not a zero-sum game (Fibbi and D’Amato, 2008). A similar study, based on a quantitative methodology, and verifying whether home-directed activities are a ‘distraction’ towards political integration in the host country, gives results going in the same direction (Morales and Morariu, 2011). Then, the expertise that migrants acquire through their political activities towards their home countries promotes their ability to get involved in other political arenas (in host countries, but also at the international level) at the same time.

To sum up, we consider that combining the inputs of the literature produced in all these different fields (political participation of immigrants, diaspora and diaspora engagement policies transnational political practices, and external voting) is a profitable process. It will permit us to identify, in the next section, the different origin countries’ actors, and also to better understand their specific interests, as well as the action and the tools they use to influence migrants’ political participation.

### **3. The focus: the role of actors in the country of origin and their strategies.**

In this section we will identify the different actors interacting with migrants in order to influence their political participation, both towards the homeland and their destination country<sup>5</sup>. In a broad framework, the actors involved in migrants’ political participation belong to three main categories: the host country actors, the migrants, and home countries actors. We will focus on two different groups of actors, state and non-state actors, to understand the diverse interest that guide the way they operate, and the different tools they use to influence the political participation of migrants.

Even if, in the present section, we focus mostly on the countries of origin, it is important to understand what may be their counterparts in host countries. In the first place we are referring to political initiatives carried out by origin and destination countries: for instance bilateral and multilateral agreements. We are referring mainly to bilateral agreements that permit reciprocal participation in national or local elections of migrants from the signatory countries. But we also refers to other kinds of, more or less formal, agreements concerning other fields, like for example ‘national targeted’ regularisation programs in the destination countries, giving access to immigrants who are legal residents, a key stone in permitting their formal political participation in the destination countries. Bilateral agreements may also address different issues, influencing, in a more or less direct way, migrants’ political participation, as foreign workers recruitment conditions, circular mobility,

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<sup>5</sup> To better illustrate the actors and their strategies in the countries of origin, we will introduce, in this section, some boxes with specific examples.

extension of rights, rights' portability, the readmission of irregular migrants, broader migration cooperation, among other topics. In destination countries, non-state actors can also be targeted, directly or indirectly, by the political actions of homeland actors. We are referring particularly to NGOs, civil society groups, political parties, pro-migrants associations, as well as the same migrants' groups and associations. In some way, the last can be regarded at the same time as host-countries non-state actors, but also as transnational actors linking home and host countries, and then creating a 'transnational public sphere' (Smith and Edmonston, 1997).

### 3.1 The state actors in home countries, their strategies and actions

Looking at origin countries, there may be multiple actors developing political activities towards emigrants. As Gamlen (2006: 4) clearly explains, 'diaspora engagement policies are more a 'constellation' of different institutional and legislative initiatives implemented at different times, at different levels, and for different reasons. They are not a unitary and coordinated state strategy. Fitzgerald (2006: 260), for example, argues that emigration policies 'are best understood by a 'neopluralist' approach disaggregating 'the state' into a multilevel organization of distinct component units in which state incumbents and other political actors compete for their interests'. This author criticizes the realist interpretation of the state as a unitary actor pursuing 'national interests', and competing with other states. He suggest that accounts like this do not capture the multilevel internal struggles to determine those interests. This is true not only in the economic sense, but also in the realm of political, ideological and economic terms (Fitzgerald, 2006: 261). Considering all these remarks we have to take into account whether initiatives carried out by origin countries are specific and *ad hoc* initiatives, or whether they are part of an overarching strategic orientation.

In view of these multiplicity of state actors, it is difficult to define 'the interests' of each country. Consequently, it is also complicated to define when the interests of sending and receiving countries are diverging or converging. Nevertheless, at the core of the question there is the 'loyalty' of migrants towards origin countries and destination countries. The question at stake is: are double or multiple loyalties possible, and is migrants' political participation a zero-sum game or not? In some cases, as Sheffer (2006: 2001) clearly pointed out, host countries try to take advantage of emigrants' disagreements with destination countries' governments. On these occasions, destination countries can back the criticisms of migrants towards political regimes in their homeland, and, at times, these same destination governments encourage migrant activities against homeland governments. Here there is the risk of creating a political confrontation between origin and destination countries<sup>6</sup>.

If we look at the large explanatory framework of home-countries' actions, the work of Gamlen (2006: 5-ff) can be very useful. This author considers that states, in their 'capacity building policies', try to create a transnational 'relationship of communication', based upon the idea of the nation that he defines as 'a system of symbols and signs within which states can immerse the exercise of power'. A second step is the creation of the state's 'objective capacities for the realization of power relations', and its building of specific diaspora institutions. A third step of this 'transnational exercise of state power' consists in what he calls the 'finalized activities', or 'specific effects', a kind of 'transnationalized citizenship' composed at the same time by the extension of rights and the extraction of obligations from emigrants.

As he explains, symbolic nation building policies are addressed to create 'a homogeneous national 'diaspora', with close ties of allegiance to the home-state'. This is done through initiatives that increase the sense of belonging of migrants to a transnational community and that enhance the place of the state within the community. More specifically, Gamlen (2006: 6-ff) encompasses the following initiatives in this axis:

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<sup>6</sup> One of the clearest examples of this situation is the activities of Cuban diaspora in the US against their homeland.



- high-level rhetorical or symbolic gestures, celebrating emigrants as national heroes, and bestowing them with prizes and accolade, aimed at ‘(re)including’ emigrants within the national population.

As in the cases of Mexico, Morocco, and China, this stance very often represents an important shift, considering that previously, various states denounced emigrants as deserters.

- paternalistic (or materialistic) claims that expatriates are an ‘offshore part’ of the national population, or an ‘extra administrative district’ of the state’s territory, and attempts at asserting representative governance

The idea of emigrants’ off-shore district of the state is materially covered by some specific electoral systems. This is the case with Ecuador and Italy, where external electoral constituencies are created as special representation for emigrants. Some other examples of these actions, but in a more paternalistic form, include Mexico (Martínez-Saldana 2003), Haiti (Glick Schiller and Fouron 1999) and Ireland.

- establishing or support programmes to teach national language and history, and observing national celebration and cultural events within expatriate communities;
- shaping expatriate-targeted media (newspaper, websites and satellite television channels), communications and public relations, addressed to support an ‘alignment’ of emigrants and to send specific messages designed to mobilize diasporas in specific ways (to help advance ‘national interests’ abroad, to remit money, to return...)
- organizing large conference and conventions, to show that the home country listens to emigrants, but also to gather diaspora ‘representatives’ and eventually to establish patronage relations with them, or to transmit state position on specific issues and solicit help, and to broadcast messages.

Some of the main examples are those of India (<http://indiandiaspora.nic.in>), Armenia and Cyprus; more recent examples include Ukraine (One Eyed Cat 2006) and Jamaica ([www.jamaicandiaspora.org](http://www.jamaicandiaspora.org)) (Gamlen (2006: 7).

As the same author clearly explains, these policies share the states’ interest to produce among emigrants ‘a communal mentality amongst non-residents; a sense of common belonging to the home-state that renders expatriates governable’ (Gamlen, 2006: 7). This kind of state actors’ activity in relation to emigrants is addressed to (re)establish loyalty toward home countries among the citizens abroad. About this issue, Brubaker (2010: 77) talks about ‘new forms of external membership’ that constitute forms of ‘transborder nationalism’ and he also uses the concept of ‘external politics of belonging’, that concern those ‘who are long-term residents (and perhaps citizens) of other states, yet who can be represented as belonging, in some sense, to a ‘homeland’ or ‘kin’ state or to ‘its ‘eponymous nation’.

A further step in state actors’ activities towards emigrants is what Gamlen (2006; 2008) defines as an ‘institution-building policy’: that is policies addressed to create bureaucratic instruments and systems giving home countries the opportunity of promoting their political and economic interests towards emigrants. The most common initiatives highlighted in this field are:

- the implementation of surveillance, through the foreign service or migration bureaucracy, addressed to collect statistics on which to base the state’s strategies towards emigrants and to select strategic actors among emigrants to establish a long-term relationship with these actors;
- the creation, by the home-state, of its own transnational migrant organizations, often acting as consultative institutions, in order to avoid existing political tensions and eventually to contain possible future conflicts with emigrants;

- the creation of specific government offices, sometimes at the ministerial level, generally when a critical mass of governmental activities addressed to emigrant is reached and requires coordination.

In this regard, Itzingsohn (2000) suggests that home countries engagement towards emigrants is based on two main interests: on the one hand, the political containment of emigrants, namely control over the impact of emigrants political activities on homeland politics; on the other hand, mobilizing emigrants' support as lobbyists in destination countries. As Sheffer (2006) explains, when emigrant communities are better-organized and richer they engage in elaborate advocacy activities intended to increase acceptance of the general diaspora phenomenon and tolerance of specific diasporas and their respective homelands at the political level. Another important issue where citizens abroad can push the home countries interest is the promotion of cooperation between host and home countries and also the liberalisation of tariffs and commercial flows. Finally, through their lobbying, emigrants can also stop or relieve economic boycotts, as well as limitations on exports and imports to and from origin countries (Sheffer, 2006).

Nevertheless, the search for home countries to co-opt emigrants as a lobbyist or influential spokespersons is not only oriented towards host countries, but also towards transnational or international actors. This includes public institutions, but also private companies. Following Gamen (2006: 18), origin countries search thus to influence capitalist elites, for the purpose of concluding new strategic alliances, to attract foreign direct investments and to bring in technology transfers.

**An example of origin countries actions aimed at co-opting influential expatriates through standing for election in external constituencies. The cases of Ecuador and Mexico.**

In 2000, the Ecuadorian state began to open '*casas ecuatorianas*' (Ecuadorian homes) abroad, to maintain a strict link to the diaspora, one strong axes of Correa's political action. One of the objectives of this policy is to ensure that representatives of the diaspora are not dissident voices; another goal is to use this voice on behalf of Ecuador in destination countries.

About this issue, we note particularly the case of Dora Aguirre, founder and former president of the Spanish-Ecuadorian association '*Rumiñahui*', one of the most important migrant associations in Spain. In the 2009 Ecuadorian legislative elections, she was standing as a candidate in an external constituency. Dora Aguirre was elected as one of the representatives of Ecuadorians abroad in the Parliament, and she was re-elected again in the 2013. It is interesting to note that she was strictly linked with the Catalan branch of the PSOE (Spanish Socialist and Workers Party) and she was a candidate in Ecuador with the ruling party, namely the *Alianza PAIS* (*Patria Altiva y Soberana*), the same as the president Rafael Correa.

It is particularly interesting that, during his electoral campaign for the 2013 elections, the main points of Dora Aguirre's program were linked with Ecuadorian emigrants. Among them, she declared the need to 'continue working for the protection of the rights of migrants and their families', and to 'reinvent' the National Secretariat for Migrants (SENAMI), based on workshops and population surveys. Furthermore, she proposed to remodel the state's action toward migrants, focusing on current demands of expatriates, like employment, mortgage advice and support for a return to Ecuador<sup>7</sup>. This representative appears to be very active in defending Ecuadorian migrants from house expropriation in Spain.

Similarly, some scholars (Gamlen, 2006: 5) suggest that the Mexican state seeks to extend its governance of Mexican nationals into the urban and community scales of organization, containing and co-opting migrant political activity by inserting state representatives into civic associations.

<sup>7</sup> See *El Diario*, 12 January 2013, [http://www.eldiario.es/politica/Candidata-Asamblea-Ecuador-defendiendo-migrantes\\_0\\_89591256.html](http://www.eldiario.es/politica/Candidata-Asamblea-Ecuador-defendiendo-migrantes_0_89591256.html)

**Examples of origin countries aiming to co-opt influential expatriates and to emigrants lobbying. The cases of Argentina, Turkey, Mexico, Israel, Iraq and New Zealand.**

A very interesting case is Argentina, at the time of the crisis over the Malvinas Islands in 2012. The government of Cristina Fernández de Kirchner sent letters to influential emigrants to support the state's position on those issue in destination countries, as well as at the international level. More specifically, well placed expatriates received two letters. The first one invited the Argentinean abroad to mobilize and attend informative meetings at embassies (including a briefing on the latest news about the issue, and distribution of multimedia material). The second letter was sent by the embassy and invited influential figures in the emigrant community, to sign it and send it to the special decolonization committee of the UN, as members of the '*Grupo de Apoyo a la Cuestión Malvinas*' (*Support group to the Malvinas issue*). This case represents a clear example of 'selective mobilization' of emigrants to create public opinion abroad and to push state interests at the international level.

The case of Turkey is another clear example of a state's action addressed to outline citizens abroad as providers of political support and lobbying. Turkey also tried to engage influential expatriates and emigrant associations in Europe, in order to push EU membership on behalf of the Turkish state (Østergaard-Nielsen 2003b). This state also sponsored academic exchanges and academic chairs, as a tool for pushing pro-Turkish ideologies, screening candidates according to their view on the massacres on Armenians (Østergaard-Nielsen, 2001).

In this light, it is interesting to review the efforts of the American Turkish community at different stages of the Cyprus crisis in the 1970s, and also the countermeasures taken by the much larger American Greek communities (Sheffer, 2006). This case represents a good example of emigrants group lobbying towards the host-state to promote the home-state interests in a very specific issue of the international relations. In this case, the lobbying activities came from the diaspora groups of both implicated states.

As we explained earlier, another field where the lobbying activities of emigrates can prove particularly useful for home countries is in influencing host country policymakers about tariffs and commercial regimes. For example, the Mexican diaspora in the United States has successfully influenced policymakers to agree to moratoriums on loans to their homelands (Sheffer, 2006).

There is also lobbying to end economic boycotts and commercial limitations. One of the clearest examples here is the action of the Jewish diaspora in U.S., lobbying for the end of economic boycott of South Africa under apartheid, in order to help the Jewish diaspora living in this country. This naturally generated tensions not only within the diaspora, but also within other communities lobbying for the boycott, like Afro-Americans. An analogue case is that of Chinese diaspora lobbying in the U.S. for political and economic openings towards China. (Sheffer, 2006).

Emigrants can, contrarily, engage in lobbying activities to impose boycotts and sanctions on their home countries. A fine example here are the Cuban and Iranian diasporas in the United States: but there is also the Iraqi diaspora in Europe, mobilised against the regime of Saddam Hussein (Sheffer, 2006).

As to emigrants' lobbying activities addressed to supranational organization, it is interesting to note the case of New Zealand. There the state sees diaspora engagement as a device to climb its way back up the OECD country rankings (Gamlen, 2006).

If we look more specifically at home countries actions affecting the formal political participation of emigrants, we need to stress the permission for double citizenship. This allows emigrants to participate in destination countries' elections. However, we will not go into detail here, since this issue is dealt with in another Interact paper.

Looking at how origin countries can affect the political participation of emigrants towards their homelands, the clearest and most significant action is to allow external voting. Considering the relevance of this issue, we will analyse it in depth along the lines suggested by Table 1 below.

**Table 1. State Actors in Home countries: Strategies and Actions**

| State actors  | Strategies  | Actions  |
|---|---|--|
| Different Ministries (Interior, Foreign Affairs, specific Ministries for emigrants or expatriates affairs), embassies, specific emigrants state-agencies, local authorities, ruling parties in authoritarian states or in restricted democratic systems, state owned transnational migrants institutions, consultative bodies | Transnational relations with communication between state actors and migrants (addressed to create a homogeneous national diaspora)  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- rhetorical and symbolic gestures, prizes, accolades, celebrating the emigrant as part of national population</li> <li>- paternalistic and materialistic claims</li> <li>- teaching national languages, observing and supporting national celebration and cultural events</li> <li>- shaping expatriate-targeted media, communication and public relations</li> <li>- conference and convention (to listen to emigrants, gather emigrants representatives, and eventually establishing patronage)</li> </ul> |
|   | Institution Policies aimed at building specific diaspora/migrants institution (political containment of emigrants and mobilisations of migrants as a home-state lobbyist) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- statistic collection, selection of strategic actors, and surveillance (through foreign service and migration bureaucracy)</li> <li>- creation of state owned transnational migrant organisation, sometimes acting as consultative institutions (to avoid political tensions and to contain potential future conflicts)</li> <li>- creation of specific government offices</li> </ul>  |
|   | Finalized activities - specific effects (extension of rights and extraction of obligations)   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- external voting provisions</li> <li>- requests to emigrants or key actors in migrant communities of pro home-state lobbying activities towards destination countries and at the international level (on political, economic and commercial issues)</li> </ul>   |

### 3.2 Conventional political participation of immigrants towards their origin countries: the example of external voting

External voting, as with general voting, is a conventional form of political participation. External voting usually requires the approval of Parliament and, in some cases, of the Constitutional council, or a relevant judicial body. This is especially the case when severe disputes occur on whether it is legitimate/legal for non-resident citizens to vote from abroad. Once external voting provisions are adopted, the body in charge of organizing the election (the Ministry of Interior, the electoral commission,...) implement it. They usually do so in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign affairs

to coordinate the action of consulates. The implementation of external voting is often crucial because of the impact of voting procedures on the number and the quality of the voters (see Table 2 below).

The adoption and the implementation of external voting involves non-governmental actors, in particular political parties and migrants' organisations. Of course, these actors may not agree on whether and under what conditions citizens abroad should vote. Political parties often view external voting in terms of whether the participation of citizens abroad is, they believe, favourable or detrimental for them, in electoral terms. In contrast, migrant associations usually support external voting, with some being very active in demanding voting rights, but it is often difficult to assess to what extent such associations are representative of migrant communities abroad. In any case, the extent to which political and civil society actors are willing to, and capable of, putting sufficient pressure on the government and the parliament to adopt, or to reject, external voting provisions, through lobbying and opinion campaigns, often proves crucial.

Foreign actors may also be involved in the adoption and implementation of external voting. International organizations may assist a country in organizing an election abroad, which usually occurs when external voting aims at the participation of refugees in post-conflict elections. Moreover, civil-society organization, in particular those specialized in the promotion of democracy, as well as international experts, may be solicited by a country to provide advice on how to design external voting procedures.

For example, after the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003, the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq (IECI), which was in charge of organizing the 2005 election, asked the International organization for migration (IOM) to implement an out-of-country voting program on its behalf. Note that such cooperation was not renewed because of the very high cost of this program (92M\$ or 300/400\$ *per* voter). Iraqis abroad retained though their right to external voting (Guetcheva, 2012).

Last, but not least, host countries authorities have a key role in the implementation of external elections. First, the host country's local authorities often support the organization of external elections when polling stations are set up outside consulates. For example, they may provide (free of charge or otherwise) a space to vote, the required equipment (urns, etc.), and the human resources, including police surveillance when necessary. Furthermore, host country authorities may refuse permission to organize an external election on its territory (Sánchez-Montijano, 2012).

Canada, for example, is quite reluctant toward the organisation of external elections, as the participation of Canadian dual citizens is considered to be foreign interference, and the Canadian authorities imposed specific conditions for external election on several occasions (e.g. for France, Tunisia).

Finally, the host country and the country of origin may have convergent or divergent opinions toward external voting depending on the expected impact of the external elections on homeland politics and, thus, on their bilateral relations.

For example, according to the Moroccan media, the King of Morocco Mohammed VI and the former French president Nicolas Sarkozy both agreed in 2011 that the Moroccans abroad (who mainly reside in France) should not have external voting rights. They did so because they feared such rights would be beneficial to the Moroccan Islamist party. In contrast, France actively supported the adoption of external voting provisions by the Lebanese government after the assassination of Rafic al-Hariri in 2005, as it is considered that the Lebanese abroad are more supportive of the anti-Syrian political coalition.

Actors in the countries of origin often have contrasting opinions on external voting. Schematically, some argue that external voting contributes to maintaining the sense of belonging among emigrants and, thus, strengthen ties with the country of origin, while others consider that migrants should not have a say in homeland politics, especially when they do not pay taxes and hold another citizenship.

Beyond such debate, the actions of the actors involved in the adoption and implementation of external voting can be classified according to three main questions:

1. ***Why do states enfranchise their citizens abroad?*** Lafleur (2012) identifies three main variables in explaining why States enfranchise their citizens abroad: a) emigrant lobbying; b) economic dependence on emigration; and c) “domestic politics”.
  - a) The lobbying of emigrant organizations often consists in on-line petitions, media campaign, and networking: these aim at persuading the government and the parliament representatives to draft and adopt external voting provisions. However, the impact of such actions should not be overemphasized. Indeed, it is usually when the demands of the emigrant organization meet the interests of the government and/or of the ruling political parties that external voting provisions have been adopted.
  - b) The second variable that explains why states enfranchise their citizens abroad is economic dependence on migration. As mentioned above, labour sending countries often expect that external voting will contribute to strengthen their ties with the emigrant communities. They will thus increase the flow of remittances and emigrants’ economic investments. However, as mentioned above, countries that do not depend on remittances (labour receiving countries, countries with few citizens abroad) have also adopted external voting provisions. Lafleur (2012: 47) notes that ‘the need to form closer connections with the citizens abroad in an attempt to better integrate into the global economy is a point that was repeatedly used by supporters of external voting in Italy’. Further research is, therefore, needed to assess if there is a correlation between economic dependency on remittances and the adoption of external voting. It would also be useful to understand to what extent the argument according to which closer connections with the citizens abroad contribute to a better integration in the global economy is well founded.
  - c) The third variable, ‘domestic politics’, actually includes two quite different political developments: institutional reforms and competition between domestic actors. The former concerns all forms of structural political change, in particular democratization and electoral reforms, as recently typified by the cases of post-revolution Tunisia and Egypt, as well as regionalization processes, as in the case of the EU. In such cases, the adoption of external voting responds to broader concerns regarding the extension of democratic participation. In contrast, the competition between domestic actors may lead to the adoption of external voting, when one or more political parties consider that they will obtain more votes among citizens abroad than among other parties. It is noteworthy that this kind of political game sometimes proves counter-productive when the dynamics of the voting behaviour of the citizens abroad change: e.g. as in the last French presidential and legislative election. Furthermore, it is important to insist that authoritarian regimes may also adopt external voting provisions with the aim of extending their legitimacy, especially when they face protests or civil strife, as shown in the cases of Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria in the 1980s and 1990s. In such cases, any forms of political activity among the emigrant communities are closely monitored by the regime (Brand, 2010).

Finally, different reasons explain why states do not enfranchise citizens abroad. First, external voting is often perceived as a threat against the independence and the sovereignty of the State. This is particularly the case when the diaspora outnumbers the domestic population or when the diaspora’s influence is disproportionate in regard with political and economic power in the country of origin. For example, neither Armenia, nor Israel, have adopted external voting provisions. Relations between the State and the diaspora are of crucial importance, but they are also complex and changing, from mutual support to open conflict, depending on the political and economic context.

Moreover, the second reason is the lack of legal/policy incentives at the national and international level. Indeed, international conventions (on democracy, political participation, etc.) do not include provisions for the promotion of external voting. The only exception here is the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrants and their Families (1990)<sup>8</sup>. As a consequence, and with the exception of external voting programs for refugees, in contexts of post-conflict political reconciliation, international organizations rarely promote external voting.

2. ***What are the voting procedures in voting from abroad?*** Identifying the voting procedures to vote from abroad is key in analysing the actions of the actors involved. First, it is noteworthy that external voting rarely applies to local elections, but usually only to referenda, presidential elections (including party's primaries), legislative elections, and/or supranational elections (such as EU elections). Moreover, the rules and the mechanisms (a) for registering voters abroad, b) for casting the ballots abroad, and c) for counting the ballots abroad are key to stimulating or to undermining the participation of citizens abroad in the election.
  - a) As mentioned above, the rules for voting from abroad may depend on specific criteria, such as the length of time spent abroad (minimum and/or maximum), or the size of the emigrants' community in one country and/or one city. In addition to these criteria, the administrative procedures to register on the electoral lists also affect the participation of citizens abroad in the election: for example, when electors have to register in the consulate (*versus* on-line), when various official documents are required (*versus* only ID), and when the deadline to register is far ahead of the election. The impact of the registration procedure appears to be greater in external elections than in domestic elections because citizens abroad are dispersed in various countries and regions. As a result the main source for identifying and localising them are the consulate records, which are very often inaccurate and outdated.
  - b) Furthermore, how ballots are cast abroad also affects participation. In external elections, ballots can be cast through postal, proxy or electronic voting or in polling stations abroad. Electronic voting is (still) exceptional, for various reasons that are beyond the scope of this paper (on electronic voting, see International IDEA, 2012), as well as proxy voting. In contrast, several countries have adopted postal voting for external elections, including the USA, but the procedures to send the ballots by post may negatively impact participation if too complicated. Alternatively, many countries have chosen to set up polling stations abroad, but what matters are the number and the location of the polling stations. For example, when the polling stations are located only in the consulates, electors who live far away (in large host countries) have real problems. This is likewise the case when the consular network is limited to major host countries. In contrast, only a few countries of origin (e.g. Tunisia, Bolivia) have multiplied the number of polling stations abroad to reach more than one hundred per host country (in major destination countries only). This, of course, is much more costly and demanding. In such case, cooperation with the local authorities appears to be crucial as they often provide the place and the tools to vote (a room in a public building, urns, etc.).
  - c) Finally, the method by which external ballots are counted also matters a great deal in external election. The method affects how the voters abroad are represented and to

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<sup>8</sup> This convention, mostly signed by labour sending countries, stipulates that: "*migrant workers and members of their families shall have the right to participate in public affairs of their State of origin and to vote and to be elected at elections of that State, in accordance with its legislation*" (Article 41). The last part of this article (*in accordance with its legislation*) confirms the above, that is to say that there is not a single model of external voting legislation that would fit all countries willing to implement it.

what extent they have an influence on the homeland's politics. Elections can be based on a unique constituency (proportional, referenda, etc.), but the ballots of the voters abroad can be counted, instead, in domestic constituencies or in overseas constituencies. The former includes various formulas: the voters abroad vote in the constituency where they last registered (or their constituency of origin, as is the case in Lebanon); in the constituency of his/her choice (as in Belgium, but this formula is rare); or in a specific constituency (as in Poland, in the city centre of Warsaw). Moreover, when ballots are counted in overseas constituencies it means that reserved seats in the Parliament and/or in the Senate are allocated to the citizens abroad and that these seats are distributed among several new electoral districts. These usually correspond to the world regions or the main host countries, depending of world's repartition of the citizens abroad. This formula, which has been adopted by a dozen countries only, often aims at containing the influence of citizens abroad on homeland's politics: when the number voters abroad *per* seat is much higher than at home. However, this formula may also represents a innovative solution to better promote the emigrant claims and interests, an issue which has prompted discussions among academics on whether it is legitimate for citizens abroad to have special representatives (Bauböck, 2007b).

3. ***What are the characteristics of voter turnout and voting behaviour abroad?*** Many studies look at the impact of the voting procedures on the participation of the citizens abroad in external elections. On the contrary, there are few studies that deal with voter turnout and voting behaviour in external elections. External voting is often considered as a positive step because it enhances political participation and thus strengthens democracy. However, such views have been called into question. First, external elections are usually characterized by low voter turnout, which raises the question whether this should be explained by a lack of interest on the part of citizens abroad in homeland politics. Second, various authors argue that the contribution of external voters to the deepening of democracy, towards more participative and deliberative forms, is limited because the votes are often co-opted (e.g. Itzigsohn and Villacres, 2009; Tintori, 2011).

However, Lafleur's study on external voting in Italy, Mexico, and Bolivia offers nuances to such conclusions (2012). He argues that migrants are usually interested in homeland politics, but that the voter turnout depends on: the voting procedures (registration, type of election, representation); the presence of (homeland) political parties abroad; the local dynamics in the emigrant community; and the migrants' socio-demographic characteristics. Moreover, Lafleur (2012: 132) acknowledges the role of migrants' organization and political parties in shaping migrant voting behaviour, but also identifies a series of *pre* and *post* migration variables that affect the voting behaviour of external migrants: gender, age, region of origin in the homeland, education, reason to migrate, experiences of discrimination in the host country, use of the host-country language. He concludes that "just like domestic voters, the voting behaviours of emigrants are not determined once for all" and he suggests "to envisage the formation of political opinions abroad as a dynamic process". Similarly, Jaulin's (2013) study of the 2011 Tunisian election identifies very significant differences in the voter turnout and the voting behaviour of the Tunisians abroad. These differences depend largely on the country of residence and, within each country, on the place of residence.

To sum up, existing studies on external voting show that immigrant integration in the host country are not contradictory with political participation in the country of origin. However, more research is needed to understand if, and to what extent, political participation in the country of origin actually fosters (political) integration in the host country (Jaulin, 2013a, 2013b).



### The case of external voting in Tunisian 2011 election<sup>9</sup>

In April 2011, after the Tunisian uprising forced Ben Ali out of power, a new electoral law was adopted for the election of the Constituent Assembly and an independent body was created to supervise and organize the election (ISIE - *Instance Supérieure Indépendante pour les Elections*) (Lieckefett, 2012). After meeting with delegates of the Tunisian associations abroad, the ISIE announced that the Tunisians abroad would elect 18 representatives in six extraterritorial constituencies<sup>10</sup>, thus guaranteeing fair representation for the Tunisians abroad in the Constituent Assembly. Although the ISIE faced numerous challenges to organize the election, in particular the difficulty of setting up hundreds of polling stations abroad and registering citizens abroad on the electoral lists, the voter turnout abroad was estimated at 30% of the voting age population. This figure is actually quite high in comparison with other external elections. The voter turnout abroad varied significantly from one constituency to another, with a minimum of 21% in Germany and a maximum of 40% in the North America.

The results of the election in the constituencies abroad first show that voters abroad tend to vote more than domestic voters for the major parties. The reason might be that the Tunisians abroad have a limited knowledge of the Tunisian political arena, due to the fact that small parties rarely appear in the media and face greater challenges in campaigning abroad (due to limited financial resources and supporters). However, it is noteworthy that independent candidates managed to obtain quite high scores in a few polling stations abroad, which indicate that community organisation and leaders play a key role in external elections.

The results of the Tunisian election abroad also show that voting behaviour is strongly territorialized. For example, the Islamist party En-Nahda obtained a very high score in Italy, in contrast with the constituencies of France 1 (north of France) and North America/other European countries. Further research is, therefore, needed to assess the impact of the following variables on the emigrants' voting behaviour: migrants' socio-economic profile; presence of political parties abroad; local dynamics with the migrants' community; and the impact of local social and political issues.

**Table 2. Actors implicated in external voting**

| In origin countries   | In destination countries and at international level  |
|---|--|
| <p><u>State actors in origin countries:</u> Interior and Foreign Affairs Ministries, embassies and consulates,</p> <p><u>Non-state actors:</u> political parties and migrants' organisations.</p> | <p><u>Destination countries state actors:</u> regional local authorities, police forces.</p> <p><u>International actors:</u> international organizations (assistance in post conflict cases), international and transnational civil societies organisations, international experts.</p> <p><u>Non-state actors:</u> emigrant organisations</p> |

<sup>9</sup> The following stems from on-going research on voter turnout and voting behaviour among Tunisians abroad during the Tunisian external election 23 October, 2011 (Jaulin, 2013). The results of the election are available on the website of ISIE (<http://www.isie.tn>).

<sup>10</sup> 5 seats for the North of France (consulates of Paris, Pantin, Strasbourg); 5 seats for the South of France (consulates of Lyon, Marseille, Toulouse, Grenoble, Nice); 3 seats for Italy; 1 seat for Germany; 2 seats for North America and other European countries; 2 seats for Arab countries and the rest of the world.

### 3.3 Non-state actors in the sending societies and their strategies

Establishing a complete and fully-inclusive list of non-state actors in origin countries is more complex. Nevertheless, it is possible to flag up some of the main actors: political parties (specifically, opposition party in case of authoritarian regimes, and ‘separatist’ parties or ethnic minority parties in multi-ethnic countries), NGO’s, different civil society’s groups and associations, and religious groups. In the following pages we will concentrate particularly on some specific actions carried out by these non-state actors in the destination countries. We will concentrate particularly on those actions that have a more international relation oriented focus. Another piece of research in the Interact project, specifically focused on civic participation, will complete the analysis on non-state actors at local level.

Regarding non-state actors in origin countries, and their interests, it is certain that voting and standing for election may be the most obvious way in which emigrants can influence policy at home and abroad. But other activities of emigrants, fostered by sending societies can affect the political arena. Koslowsky (2004: 14) suggests that “a less visible, but perhaps more influential, way may be through campaign contribution and other support for contending political parties”. He points out the importance of the different weight of external currencies, compared to home country currencies, in the election process. He suggests that in the first free election in the Eastern European countries, for example a 50 dollars donation coming from a Polish resident in the US equalled a third of the monthly wage of a worker residing in Poland<sup>11</sup>.

#### **Emigrants founding of political party in origin countries: the case of Croatia**

A very clear example in this sense is the supporters of Franjo Tudjiman, leader of the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ), that started to raise funds from emigrants in the US, even before non-communist parties were legalized in Yugoslavia. Apparently, around 80% of the expenses of Croatian political parties in the 1990 election were covered with funds coming from Croatian emigrants and their descendents. The Croats emigrants in Canada were the most active community, under the organization of Gojko Susak, a refugee arrived in Canada from Herzegovina in 1967 and particularly successful in the pizza business. It is also very interesting to note that after that Franjo Tudjiman won the election, Gojko Susak became the Defence Minister (Koslowsky, 2004: 14).

As the same author remarks, another clearer way to influence home countries politics is when emigrants are appointed as Ministers, and particularly as Foreign Affairs Ministers, in newly ‘democratized’ countries (Koslowsky, 2004: 16).

Apart from the case of Gojko Susak in Croatia (noted in the text box above), this happened in Estonia, where Alexander Eiseln, an Estonian emigrant with American citizenship, became the head of the army. It is also the case of two other emigrants with American citizenship: Raffi Hovannisian, that became foreign ministers of Armenia, as well as Muhammed Sacriby, who had the same position in Bosnia-Herzegovina (Koslowsky, 2004: 16).

Another case where emigrants’ action can influence homeland politics, following the agenda of some specific non-state actors in origin countries is that of supporting identity-groups alternatives to the dominant ones. Emigrants can inspire, with economic backing and also lead movements focussed on national visions that transcend existing state boundaries: they can also revive ‘dormant’ sub-national identities (Koslowsky, 2004: 21). In this case, the challenges set by this kind of emigrant actions for multinational origin countries are evident.

<sup>11</sup> Considering a monthly average wage of 1.770.000 zloty, in 1991 ([http://www.stat.gov.pl/gus/5840\\_1630\\_ENG\\_HTML.htm](http://www.stat.gov.pl/gus/5840_1630_ENG_HTML.htm)), that is around 160 dollars (at the exchange rate at this time, that’s is 11.100 polish zloty/1 dollar [<http://www.nytimes.com/1991/05/18/world/abortion-ban-sought-by-church-is-rejected-by-polish-parliament.html?pagewanted=2>]. Koslowsky (2004 : 14) gives different figures regards, equalling 50 dollars with a Polish monthly salary.

### **Emigrants supporting identity-groups alternative to the dominant ones in origin countries. The case of Kurds and Croatians.**

The case of Kurdish diaspora is particularly relevant for the role that emigrants can play in movements pursuing a national project that transcend the existing state boundaries of several nation-states (Koslowsky, 2004: 22). Some parts of the Kurdish diaspora in Europe have been instrumental in internationalizing the politics of Kurdish separatism and bringing Turkey's treatment of its Kurdish minority to the attention of European countries through different activities (hunger strikes, protest marches and terrorist bombing in Germany) (Lyon and Uçarer, 2004).

Again, the case of Croatian emigrants is particularly relevant in terms of reviving 'dormant' sub-national identities. We are referring to the role that they play as a lobbying group in the case of German diplomatic recognition of independence. They contribute to mobilising the Bavarian Christian Social Union (CSU) and to establishing 'back-channel contacts' between Franjo Tudjman and the government of Helmut Kohl, before Croatia declared his independence. They organise public demonstrations, in May 1991, and thousand of Croatians called for German recognition of Croatia's right to self-determination and independence. Similarly, Croatian emigrants in the US helped establish Croatian diplomatic offices in Washington and also use lobbying activities to push the US into the diplomatic recognition of Croatia, after Germany and the EU (Koslowsky, 2004: 16)

Similar cases took place in other parts of the former Yugoslavia, Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia, where emigrants helped foster nationalist revivals, which led to the dismantling of multiethnic states. A parallel role was played also by Kosovo-Albanian emigrants in the Kosovar self-determination movement.

As Østergaard-Nielsen (2001: 13) suggests, it is important to consider that homeland political organizations can coordinate their campaigns with sister organisations elsewhere. In this way they can pool financial resources and draw on expertise and manpower from elsewhere, or with political counterparts in other countries, producing joint informational material or organizing and co-ordinating confrontational activities (demonstrations/mass meetings). The links and networks between home societies and emigrant groups in different destination countries carry out political activities towards origin and destination countries. These represent a complex but fundamental question that deserves more in-depth analysis in the following activities of the Interact project.

A very fashionable debate, above all after the 'Arab spring' is the role of diasporas in the democratization process of their origin countries. This case suggest that the action of home societies in the field of political participation is more important when non-state actors at home have diverging interests *vis-à-vis* state institutions. Also, when emigrants communities find it difficult to participate at home, it is possible that they will be politically more active outside the country to change the situation in their origin country. It is important to note that these activities are not exclusive to Arab countries; for example, Chinese citizens outside the country have supported movements for political change in their homeland (Freedman 2004).

In this sense, two forms of actions can be profitable for non-state actors in home societies in pushing forward their agendas, and in permitting emigrants groups to criticise their home government. These actions also allow emigrant groups to transmit demands concerning the expected behaviour of governments in origin countries.

The first way that origin countries' non-state actors can choose to strengthen their action, is to use global institutional structures to facilitate transnational political practices. We are referring particularly to international organizations that, under the umbrella of human rights, can provide an essential framework for negotiation between transnational political networks and home countries. As Østergaard-Nielsen (2001: 15) pointed out, 'transnational political networks who oppose a state, which has strong allies in their host-states or simply is too powerful for other states to meddle with, may turn to international organizations such as the UN, OSCE, European Council, and the like'. As the same

author suggests, in this framework, the role of NGOs in ‘trans-state advocacy’ can be very useful in facilitating contacts between those transnational political networks and the level of policymaking, which that will be unlikely to reach emigrant groups.

Some examples of these strategies are the case of PLO’s (Palestinian Liberation Organization) longstanding lobbying activities for recognition of Palestine as a member of the UN. Similarly, the international advocacy by Tibetan diaspora to support independence claims and respect for the human rights in the region by the Chinese state. Another example is provided by the actions of Kurdish expatriates.

The second option that non-state actors have to push forward their agenda through transnational political activities involving the diaspora is provided by new technologies. Sheffer (2006) notes the importance of these new technologies, mainly internet connections, but also satellite broadcasting, and new electronic medias for diasporas activities. As the same author explains, these changes substantially transform the nature of interactions between diaspora groups and governmental and non-governmental organizations, in origin and destination countries (Sheffer, 2006). Considering the explosive increase in the use of the internet, in the 90s, it is necessary to take into account this field in the Interact project. It is necessary in order to understand the influence of home societies towards emigrant political participation in both homelands and host countries. Nevertheless, we figure that it is probably a very complex field to explore, due to multiple potential interactions at this level, and also given their fast changing nature.

Always Sheffer (2006: 182) stresses that “[...] the range and the quality of diasporas’ activities have been increased by the availability, low cost, and, most important, the reach and interactivity of this medium, this increasing their number of audiences, their efficacy, and the impact of their media. Those activities now include [...] mobilization and transfer of economic, cultural, and political resources to homelands and other diaspora communities, creation of trans-state political communities, and communication with local and global NGOs and IGOs”

Then, the technological changes, and the large diffusion of this new means of communication gives more and more emigrants groups access to public opinion and to policymakers. This is so regardless of their economic and political resources, and irrespective of their location.

It appears particularly important to consider the centrality of new communication technologies in the case of interactions between emigrants and home societies, or parts of them, when the home-government or some majority or dominant social groups are unfriendly or unsympathetic with the specific emigrant group (Sheffer, 2006: 184). It can be the case of ethno-linguistic minority groups in the home country, linked with their specific diaspora, and of emigrant activities, linked with opposition homeland groups, against totalitarian or authoritarian regimes in origin countries. The whole picture of non-state actors’ Strategies and Actions are summarised in Table 3 below.

**Table 3: Non-State Actors' Strategies and Actions**

| Non-state actors   | Strategies  | Actions  |
|--|---|--|
| Political parties, NGOs, national and transnational civil societies groups, associations, private companies, trade unions, churches and religious groups | Transnational political activities to support political parties and democratization concerns    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• external voting</li> <li>• electoral campaign monetary contribution</li> <li>• electoral campaign non-monetary support</li> <li>• including key migrants actors in new governments (as Ministry or in other positions)</li> <li>• supporting identity-groups alternatives to the dominants: economic back-up and support to movement projecting national visions transcending existing state boundaries; or reviving dormant sub-national identities</li> <li>• creating a transnational network between homeland political organisations and sister organisations elsewhere</li> <li>• trans-state advocacy and lobbying towards destination countries' institutions and NGOs, to obtain sanctions and boycotts against home countries</li> <li>• trans-state advocacy and lobbying towards global institutions (mainly human rights focused international organisations), and NGOs</li> <li>• migrants' support and implication in satellite broadcasting, and new electronic medias and <i>fora</i></li> </ul> |
|  | Transnational political activities to support identity-groups alternatives to the dominant ones | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• economic back-up and support to movements projecting national visions transcending existing state boundaries</li> <li>• economic back-up and support to movements reviving dormant sub-national identities</li> <li>• trans-state advocacy and lobbying towards destination countries' institutions and NGOs, addressed to obtain sanctions and boycotts towards the home countries</li> <li>• trans-state advocacy and lobbying towards global institutions (mainly human rights focused international organisations), and NGOs</li> <li>• migrants' support and implication in satellite broadcasting, and new electronic medias and <i>fora</i></li> </ul>   |

#### 4. The proposal: an interpretative framework

The starting analytical premise we propose to found this line of research is to distinguish ‘society’ and ‘state’ of origin<sup>12</sup>. Both have different dynamics and interests towards emigrants, and develop different actions and activities. Our purpose is to make them visible and also to work to understand better on their relations. The existing literature generally does not differentiate between these two main categories, and most of the time uses them interchangeably.

Considering state actions in origin countries, we propose an analytical framework that differentiates three different elements structuring political relations with emigrants at different levels:

1. *The legal framework*: norms permitting double citizenship or prescribing exclusive citizenship; bilateral treaties between origin and destination countries; diplomatic relations
2. *The policies framework*: explicit or implicit policies regulating emigration, relations with emigrants communities and diaspora groups.
3. *The transnational structures*: formal and informal arrangements, organisations and institutions connecting and interacting with emigrants.

Also considering that, as noted above, inside the state there are multiple actors interacting with emigrants, it will be necessary to break down the state action. Furthermore, it will be necessary to identify all the main actors implicated in transnational political actions in each specific case, as well as the typology of the relations between them.

Considering origin societies, we propose a framework allowing us to individuate:

1. *Actor’s identification*: detection of the different actors in the origin society implicated in building, structuring and sustaining political relations with emigrants and diaspora groups.
2. *Inter-actors relations*: analysis of the collaborative, competitive or neutral relations between those actor implicated in transnational political ties with emigrants.
3. *Transnational practices*: identification of the typologies of practices developed in the transnational space by societal actors.

We consider this distinction as a fundamental interpretative framework for transnational political practices between origin countries actors and emigrants.

At the same time, it is necessary to understand the relations between state and non-state actors, as well as their strategies for overcoming the difficulties.

Looking at strategies and actions of state and non-state actors in origin countries, we consider that Hirschman’s (1970; 1978) well-known distinction between *voice*, *exit*, and *loyalty* constitutes a very useful interpretative framework. As Hofmann (2008: 16) notes, a critical reappraisal of Hirschman’s framework “can be of significant heuristic value to our understanding of the dynamics of present-day migration and its social and political implications”. Hirschman articulated these options as mutually exclusive, but in a re-actualization of this scheme it would be necessary to conceive the three options as overlapping and simultaneous.

We can distinguish, then, actions that go towards a specific combination of these three options. Exit may lead to the internationalisation of the voice option. The transnational action of origin societies towards emigrants can be considered, in that case, as a transnational *voice option*. We also consider the *exit option* as a participation action in itself. As Hofmann (2008: 10) explains, “if a citizen, by

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<sup>12</sup> We use these two terms from a political science perspective. The term *State* does not exclude other sub-national governmental levels, as local authorities, which policies may have quite important transnational effects. The term *Society* does not exclude us from looking at local or the closest networks of migrants.

choosing the exit option, can free himself from the conditions that have impeded the articulation of voice domestically, he might raise his voice all the louder from the outside after emigration”.

We consider that these three actions are options in the hand of migrants, but can also be constructed and managed by origin states and societies. We assume also that, in spite of migrants having used the *exit option*, the State of origin wants to keep the *loyalty option* of their emigrants. For instance, the origin state can develop specific policies, or even create dedicated structures to keep the loyalty of their emigrants, as we note in section 3.1 of this paper. Origin state actors can also search for the political containment of their citizens abroad, and can try to avoid the voice option.

However, certain groups from the society of origin might be interested in developing the voice option outside the territory, through the activities of migrants, in spite of a more or less strong opposition from state actors. This voice option can be directed to produce changes in the political landscape of the origin countries, as well as promoting and supporting sub-national or transnational form of ethno-linguistic identities.

## 5. Conclusions

In view of the forthcoming activities of the Interact project, the final purpose of this paper is to propose a set of key-questions to frame a survey to be implemented in the countries of origin in the second phase.

Our main analytical distinction is to divide actors into state-actors and non-state actors, to consider the double face of political participation: in countries of origin and destination, and to consider as the main independent variable the policies and the activities of non-state actors in the country of origin. Given these distinctions and the variables identified in the current literature, we can organize the key-questions into three main categories:

### Framework

- a) *The legal framework*: can you describe the legal framework of the emigration policies of your country, in terms of the promotion of political participation of emigrants in both your country (transnational political practice) and the country of destination (conventional and non-conventional forms)
- b) *The policies framework*: What are the policies in favour of the political participation of emigrants in your country?
- c) *The transnational structures*: What are the main state/non-state actors contributing to the political participation of emigrants?

### Actors

- a) Could you identify the state actors implicated (Ministries of Interior, Foreign Affairs, specific Ministries for emigrants or expatriates affairs, embassies, specific emigrants' state-agencies, local authorities, ruling parties in authoritarian states or in restricted democratic systems, state owned transnational migrants institutions, consultative bodies)?
- b) Could you identify the non-state actions implicated (political parties, NGOs, national and transnational civil-society groups, associations, private companies, trade unions, churches and religious groups)?
- c) Could you map the networks between different actors, as well the competitive relations between them?

### **Strategies and actions**

- a) Can you say that there is a concrete strategy of your country for promoting the political participation of emigrants? How can you define it in terms of purposes and objectives?
- b) Can you identify the different concrete practices of political participation of the emigrants your country promotes
- c) Describe the different channels of communication between emigrants and non-state actors in your country

Another goal of the present survey is to find the shortcomings of our knowledge, where Interact should undertake research. We consider it particularly important to deepen research into origin societies' transnational political action that, considering the different configuration of each origin country, is particularly complicated to abstract and theorize. The configuration of political linkages and networks between home societies and emigrants groups in different destination countries may vary greatly from one context to another. Then, that complex but fundamental matter deserves more in-depth analysis in the survey phase of the Interact project. The same difficulties occur also in the field of state action towards citizens abroad, even if to a lesser extent than non-state actors. This is due to the more institutionalised character of actors and actions.

Considering the influence that the political participation of immigrants can have on other dimensions of migrant integration (like civic participation, social interaction, labour market integration, educational and religious practices, residential integration or access to nationality) the scientific literature is surprisingly silent on this issue. The question of those effects constitutes surely an interesting research line to explore in the next analytical steps of the project.

Another issue that deserves attention in the field of political linkages between home countries and societies and emigrants is the use of new technologies in medias and communication tools. Despite it being a very complex field to explore, due to multiple potential interactions at this level, and also to their fast changing nature, it is necessary to take these into account in the following phases of the Interact project. This is particularly the case in order to understand the influence of home societies towards emigrants.

Looking at the micro-level variables of immigrant's political participation, we have previously noted that gender, and its influence in the political participation of migrants is particularly important: it is also understudied. It would be useful then to give special consideration to the gender issue in the following Interact activities.

In order to translate all the variables in a coherent way in the surveys, it will be useful to compare the results of this survey on some specific issues with the results obtained in the Interact project. We refer specifically to the surveys carried out on other dimensions, namely those on 'access to nationality' and 'civic participation' (on civic political participation and non-state actors and their actions).



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