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Making nonresident citizens' votes count: external voting in Latin American and Southern European Countries (1962-2021)

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Chapter 1

Emigrant Enfranchisement: An Overview of the Normative and Empirical Approaches

International migration has transformed the modern understanding of citizenship within a democratic context. Varying notions of citizenship (e.g., post-national, external, or transnational citizenship)—those seeking to theoretically incorporate human mobility—somewhat disrupt the guidelines stipulated in the Westphalian Pax, particularly the boundaries of territoriality and sovereignty (Bauböck, 1994; 2009; Collyer, 2014a; 2014b; Jakobson, 2014; Soysal, 1994). Recurrently, this dilemma between international migration and the nation-state, as well as the current challenges for democratic theory associated with the relative ease or the necessity to reside in another country as forced migration, have been largely studied in developed countries with a substantial number of immigrants, such as the US or Western European nations (e.g., Alba & Nee, 1997; Cornelius, 1978; De Haas & Vezzoli, 2011; Massey, 1981; Vertovec, 2004). It is over the last two decades that scholars have addressed the extension of emigrants and their descendants' political rights, using developing sending countries such as Mexico, Morocco, and Turkey as case studies (e.g., Brand, 2006; Mesenguer & Burgess, 2014; Østergaard-Nielsen, 2003a; Smith, 2003). As mentioned in the Introduction, this trend not only started with the debates in social science regarding citizenship but also by introducing the term transnationalism as a theoretical umbrella to tackle the economic, political, and socio-cultural activities that migrants might be able to develop between countries of origin and residence (Basch *et al.*, 1994/2005; Guarnizo *et al.*, 2003; Levitt & de la Dehesa, 2003; Martiniello & Lafleur, 2008; Østergaard-Nielsen, 2003b).

In this chapter, my goal is to revise the most recurrent arguments in favor of or against emigrant enfranchisement. As a prerequisite of nonresident citizens' voter turnout, which is the focus of this dissertation, emigrant enfranchisement is important to comprehensively understand both state- and individual-level narratives and motivations, particularly in Chapters 4 and 6.

This chapter is structured as follows. First, I discuss the connection between emigrant enfranchisement and democratic theory, considering the main challenges that contemporary democracies face in terms of migration, citizenship, and political participation. In this section, I outline five normative principles related to democratic polity and the inclusion of nonresident citizens: all affected, ethnic nationalism, republicanism, stakeholders, and territorial inclusion

principles. Second, I review the most recurrent socio-economic hypotheses of external voting rights. Third, I discuss the incidence of the international factor on emigrant enfranchisement. In the last section, I shed light on the strategic role of home-country political elites to enfranchise citizens residing abroad.

1.1. Inclusion versus Exclusion: (E)migrant Enfranchisement and Democratic Theory

Who should participate in elections? Who should compose the *demos* or be excluded from it? These are unavoidable questions in this section. In any democracy, individuals who possess full political rights constitute the *demos* (Bauböck, 2005; López-Guerra, 2005). Belonging to the *demos* goes beyond juridical recognition as a member of a political community (Bauböck, 2015). In other words, in a democratic context, even in some authoritarian settings, composing the *demos* implies more than a mere legal acknowledgment by the political institutions in government or by any representative authority. Bauböck (2015) employs the example of age minors (usually less than 18 years of age) to refer to the sizeable distinction between citizenry and *demos*. Even though they are citizens, age minors cannot participate in elections. Each liberal democratic polity should thus explicitly delineate its categories of exclusion and inclusion in what scholars and practitioners sketch as universal suffrage (Dahl, 1989).

Over the last century, the convention of universal suffrage has overcome controversies of all sorts among decision-makers (see a more compelling narrative in Paxton [2000]). Along with adult citizens with prison sentences or mental incapacities, noncitizen residents (i.e., citizenship-based restriction) and citizens living abroad (residence-based barrier) have often been excluded from the *demos* (Beckman, 2008; Caramani & Grotz, 2015; Palop-García & Pedroza, 2019). Thus, the notion of universal suffrage is dynamic and relational.

The debates around universal suffrage –who can vote– decade by decade, have been somewhat controversial. Dahl (1971) pinpoints two relevant dimensions to classify political regimes: (a) competition (or contestation) and (b) participation (or inclusion). Whereas contestation refers to the procedures of electoral competition in fair, transparent, and even ways; participation is largely concerned with who gets involved in the democratic process, particularly in elections. To label a jurisdiction as democratic, it must portray high degrees of both competition and participation. That is what Dahl (1971) coined as ‘polyarchy,’ due to ‘democracy’ being a political regime that is ideal and empirically unachievable in his perspective. If a given country has

only one of the two dimensions, the criteria of necessity and sufficiency to be a democracy are no longer fulfilled. Several manuals of comparative politics highlight the cases of South Africa under the Apartheid and Mexico in the 1970s and 1980s to illustrate this argument (e.g., Clark *et al.*, 2017; O’Neil, 2014). While South Africa under the Apartheid exhibited high levels of party contestation, only white adult citizens were entitled to participate in elections. In turn, Mexico in the 1970s and 1980s displayed high levels of inclusion, but the political arena was effectively dominated¹ by the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI). Thus, neither could be classified as a democracy.

For Dahl (1989, p. 233), high inclusion means that “practically all adults have the right to vote.” Here, the word ‘practically’ is of the utmost importance because not all have the right to vote and Dahl is assuming that those who do not enjoy political rights, should not possess them. This is what Finn (2021) calls the ‘normal suspects of exclusion’ outside the boundaries of democracy, interpreting Beckman’s (2008) normative appraisal of migration enfranchisement. In fact, “no country allows all adults (citizens) to vote. (...). Although the basic trend over the last 200 years has been to remove one barrier after another, many restrictions remain” (Katz, 1997, p. 216). Notably, a wide majority of states recently recognized women in their interpretation of universal suffrage, and therefore being or not being democratic is much more conceptually demanding as compared to when Samuel Huntington (1991) published the three waves of democracy (Paxton, 2000).

As a solution to this, some scholars argue that suffrage rights should be granted merely to citizens who reside in the same territory of their membership. These perspectives are widely known as the Republican tradition (Bauböck, 2006; Brubaker, 1992/2009; Collyer, 2014a) and the principle of territorial inclusion (Rubio-Marin, 2000). “A traditional republican position must reject both types of enlarged citizenship” (Bauböck, 2005, p. 685). Given an exponential trend in terms of globalization from the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 onwards, a growing number of countries worldwide have been enfranchising their noncitizens resident and nonresident citizens (Arrighi & Bauböck, 2017; Pedroza, 2019; Turcu & Urbatsch, 2015; Umpierrez de Reguero, Finn & Peltoniemi, forthcoming). Yet, some countries have a clear-cut preference to disfranchise nonresident citizens, either by imposing a lag of residence as a criterion to be eligible to vote, such as New Zealand or the UK (Collard, 2019; Gamlen, 2015; Hampshire, 2013), or directly by forbidding political rights because of the nonresident status (Collyer & Vathi, 2007; Lafleur, 2013). The best example in Latin America to embody the former scenario is Cuba. This country bans all types of political participation of nonresident citizens. By contrast, some countries exclude

¹ I wrote effectively dominated following the guidelines of Laakso and Taagepera (1979) and its index of the Effective Number of Political Parties.

noncitizen residents from the *demos* but include their compatriots living abroad, given an ethnic nationalist perspective related to cultural bonds (Bauböck, 2005). This is a common practice in Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia (Hartmann, 2015; Umpierrez de Reguero, Finn & Erdilmen, unpublished; Wellman, 2021).

1.1.1. Unpacking the Principle of ‘Full Political Inclusion’

Before discussing suffrage rights by the argument of ethnic nationalism or any other normative and empirical reasons, I navigate into the principle of full political inclusion and the dilemma between the principle of ‘all affected’ *vis-à-vis* ‘subjection to laws.’ The principle of full political inclusion does not only insinuate the crossing of a boundary but also entails a correspondence between an individual claim and a societal polity (Bauböck, 2018). Adapting this logic to a given migrant context means that not because an individual legally resides in a society other than his/her origin, (s)he is included in that polity.

According to political theorists, when one alludes to the *demos* and its shape (e.g., Bauböck, 2015; Beckman, 2009; López-Guerra, 2005; Young, 2002), one of the major difficulties lies in delimitating proper conditions for inclusion (or the lack thereof). Whelan (1983) claims that this dilemma of inclusion cannot be disentangled by employing democratic means. Conversely, the democratic theory requires a ‘well-defined’ *demos* to include and exclude citizens.

Being democratic goes beyond a procedural view; otherwise, it would be an ‘empty concept’ (López-Guerra, 2005). The intention behind this states that there is nothing inherently democratic about decision-making institutions as such. In fact, no obstacle halts an authoritarian regime from enacting voting rights and establishing consultation, participation, and representation rights among its members (Brand, 2014; Collyer, 2014b; Østergaard-Nielsen, 2003b). Although “higher levels of inclusion and contestation bring higher probabilities that a state adopts and implements emigrant enfranchisement”; over the twentieth century, external voting rights have also been present in electoral and closed autocracies (Umpierrez de Reguero *et al.*, 2021, p. 1). For instance, Algeria under the political leadership of Houari Boumédiène (1965–1978) enacted a provision for external voting in the 1976 Constitution (Brand, 2010). Currently, one can also find influential cases such as Turkey (see Arkilic, 2022; Öztürk, 2020; Şahin-Mencütek & Erdoğan, 2015; Yener-Roderburg, 2020).

If one agrees that the *demos* cannot be randomly conceptualized, one may presume that there should be a group of democratic principles leading to a subset of conditions for inclusion that all

representative authorities ought to identify after due logical reasoning (López-Guerra, 2005). Dahl (1989) coined the principle of full inclusion to associate all citizens subject to laws in a given territory, excluding individuals of evidenced incapacities. Accordingly, governments should bestow equal and fair consideration to the interest of each individual bound by the subjection of its laws. All adult citizens should be capable of taking part in the decision-making process, even when they need minor special arrangements to participate (e.g., priority access, according to the needs of people with physical disabilities), except when they demonstrate a considerable incapacity, usually related to age, mental health or imprisonment (Dahl, 1989).

Within a substantive view of democracy, the ideal view of self-determination or political freedom should always be discussed in democratic theory (Przeworski, 1991). The capacity for self-government is one of the essential features of democracy (Przeworski, 2006). Indeed, political freedom has been a characteristic value of democracy since Ancient Greece (Clark *et al.*, 2017; Hansen, 1991/1999). Whereas self-determination is understood as the act of voting or as to what extent citizens choose their representatives in fair, free and transparent elections; the repercussions are similar to the goal of demarcating who should enjoy full political rights within a democratic context. As moral judgments are universal – i.e., applicable to different individuals in similar circumstances (Kant, 1781/1908) – if one has been permitted to partake in the decision-making process, nobody subject to the binding decisions of a democratic setting should be rejected from his/her political rights, unless one offers a forceful motivation (López-Guerra, 2005).

When evaluating political institutions within a deontological ethics framework, one would ask whether the institutions are fair or good, in and of themselves (Van Staveren, 2007). Self-interest, in this perspective, would infringe upon the rule of generalization (Arrow, 1950; Ostrom, 1999). In political economy, there are several alternatives to determine the majority group decision (e.g., Condorcet's paradox and the Median Voter Theorem). Yet, one theorem is worth mentioning: Arrow's impossibility theorem. Arrow's fairness criteria (i.e., [a] non-dictatorship, [b] universal admissibility, [c] Pareto optimality, and [d] the independence from irrelevant options) demonstrate that each decision-making process that one may design has to sacrifice at least one of the above-mentioned conditions if the aspiration is to ensure group transitivity and stable outcomes (Arrow, 1950). Hence, if democratic theorists validate the ideal of self-government, everyone who is subject to the laws of a liberal democratic polity ought to be politically incorporated into the *demos* (Bauböck, 2015; López-Guerra, 2005). Namely, all the individuals who are subject to laws should be part of the *demos*, and therefore, enjoy full political rights within a self-government framework.

1.1.2. ‘All-Affected’, ‘Ethnic Nationalism’ and the ‘Stakeholder’ Principles

Another approach to grasp the connection between the principle of full inclusion and political freedom is by considering the principle of all-affected (Bauböck, 2005). There is a substantial difference between arguments to exclude individuals from participating in democratic procedures and arguments to exclude the same individuals from the payoffs resulting from other governmental ideals. Correspondingly, when enjoying full political rights enhances a major ideal of a liberal democratic polity, then anyone subject to those rules should be granted political rights and belong to the *demos* (López-Guerra 2005).

Overall, migrant enfranchisement can be structured from two principles directly associated with liberal democracy. While the first is denominated as territorial inclusion, the second is what Bauböck (2005, 686) rightly indicated as “*quod omnes tangit ab omnibus approbetur*” (what affects all shall be approved by all).” As mentioned, the principle of territorial inclusion is a synonym for subjection to laws. Anyone who resides permanently in a territorial jurisdiction should possess voting rights, whether by naturalization or by detaching political rights from formal citizenship status (Rubio-Marín, 2000). For instance, the latter is the case of immigrant voting in Commonwealth countries or when Portugal and Brazil signed a reciprocity agreement to extend political rights to certain noncitizen residents in each polity (Earnest, 2008; Pedroza, 2019). According to Bauböck (2005), suffrage rights for nonresident citizens are debatable, but still not mandatory from this perspective. It might even be perceived as an act of discouragement in terms of electoral integrity and democratic decision-making, since those who reside abroad for long should be able to impact neither the legislative outcomes nor the political preferences to which solely resident citizens are directly subjected (López-Guerra, 2005).

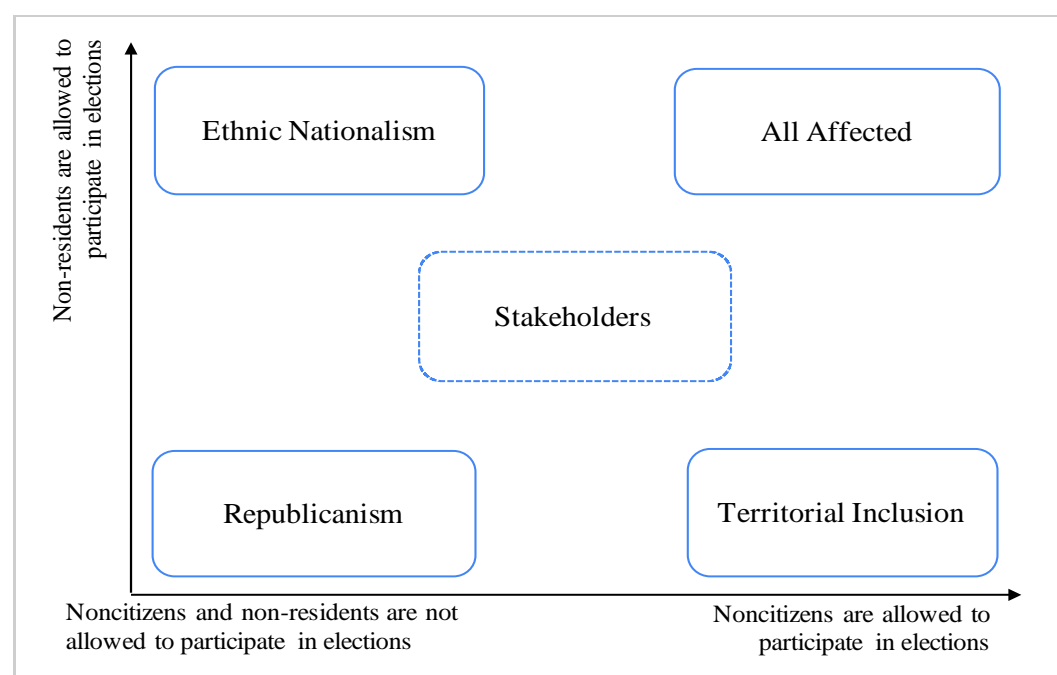
Bauböck (2005) presents two other principles that are part of the different formulae a country may use to politically incorporate international migration: ethnic nationalism and stakeholder principles. Ethnic nationalism can be perceived as the opposite of territorial inclusion. The concept of ‘residence’ is replaced by ‘citizenship’ and the culture associated with that legal status is an essential feature (Waterbury, 2014). Yet,

“A nation’s membership needs not to coincide with the resident population of a state where this nation is dominant. It is therefore imperative to include external citizens in national self-government and legitimate to exclude non-citizens who have not assimilated into the national community” (Bauböck, 2005, p. 685).

This means that the country should include citizens living abroad, and they may also add noncitizen residents as they see fit. *Ergo*, ethnic nationalism does not *a priori* exclude noncitizen residents, though the focus should be on nonresident citizens. In this dissertation, ethnic nationalism is perhaps the most relevant principle, as it allows the formal participation of emigrants and their descendants mainly by the notion of *ius sanguine*, even if the former has not lived in or visited the ‘country of origin’ or ‘perceived homeland.’ In brief, this principle pays close attention to the culture, values, and attitudes toward the country of origin.

The stakeholder principle is an alternative among the above-mentioned views and aims to avoid over-inclusion, which is the main critique of the all-affected interests’ principle. Bauböck (2007) merged the idea that citizenship is a legal status of full membership in a self-governing context and full political rights ought to be committed to such citizenship, coupled with a normative vector of inclusion that would grant ‘stakeholders’ an independent entitlement to membership and electoral rights. Consequently, stakeholders would permit voting rights for immigrants, preferably naturalized after a certain time of residence in a territory other than their country of origin. Likewise, it would allow – although possibly, not necessarily – granting emigrant enfranchisement. Nonetheless, it would exclude emphatically those who have never resided in the country of origin or those who are interested in obtaining citizenship rights associated with investments and tax evasion, as well as those who do not reside permanently in that territory (Bauböck, 2005).

Figure 2.1. State-Level Principles to Grant or Withhold Migrant Voting Rights



Source: Author’s own elaboration, based on Bauböck (2005; 2006); Rubio-Marin (2006).

Figure 2.1 summarizes how the five principles relate to each other. Importantly, these are state-level perspectives considering both noncitizen residents and nonresident citizens. However, in the next pages of this dissertation, I will narrow down the theoretical discussion to just nonresident citizens.

1.1.3. The Fairness Principle of Democracy

As each decision-making impacts the polity of territory A, and nonresident voters do not get necessarily affected by them, living in territory B, some scholars are concerned with the fairness principle of democracy (Bauböck, 2003; López-Guerra 2005). This normative strand suggests equal, or at least very similar, access to political rights for everyone who is part of the *demos*. Correspondingly, if a polity bestows one vote per citizen, nobody should have two or more votes, nor a vote with a different value between citizens *X* and citizens *Y*.

Indeed, the concerns related to the fairness principle of democracy yield several dilemmas. First, international migration complicates the fairness principle of democracy by granting migrants the possibility to vote in two or more locations. Whether with single or dual citizenship, with each passing decade more nonresident citizens can gradually participate in home-country elections, and vote in local and/or national elections in the country of residence as noncitizen residents (Arrighi & Bauböck, 2017; Finn, 2020b; Vintila & Martiniello, 2020). This is unfair for resident citizens (e.g., Brazilians in Brazil), without dual citizenship, who can only partake in one location.

Second, the values of overseas and domestic votes might be different. Leaving aside the political manipulation tools in electoral designs (e.g., gerrymandering and malapportionment), the voting weight can significantly vary in a democratic polity by including migrants. Perhaps the most evident case to illustrate this argument entails supranational elections. Although the European Union framework regulates that a Greek living in France only votes once in European Parliament elections (see Maastricht Treaty, 1992), a Peruvian residing in Ecuador can vote twice for the Andean Parliament, choosing representatives in two jurisdictions: Ecuador and Peru (Umpierrez de Reguero *et al.*, 2020).

Third, parliamentary and scholarly debates often revolve around the question of to what extent migrants should have the same political rights than resident citizens. As underscored from a traditional perspective in democratic theory, the *demos* should be composed only of members with political engagement and future stake in the polity (Bauböck, 2003). To a greater or lesser degree, international migration challenges these assumptions in manifold ways. Since nonresident

voters are exposed to other types of media coverage, propaganda, and contact with compatriots, the cost of information is probably higher than for those living in the country of origin (Bauböck, 2006; López-Guerra, 2005; Owen, 2012). Some accounts assure that geographical location and distance are less likely to be significant, owing to developments in communication technologies (Pogonyi, 2014). Yet, nonresident citizens' participation in homeland elections relies on a set of variables such as nostalgia, family, property ownership, and the perceived benefits stemming from both the countries of residence and origin, as well as the myth of return (Boccagni & Ramírez Gallegos, 2013; Collyer, 2014b; Guarnizo *et al.*, 2003; Østergaard-Nielsen, 2016). The amount of campaigning abroad and the other activities derived from the mobilization of political parties to capture overseas votes, such as organizing political rallies abroad, including selecting and training candidates in overseas districts, depend on the willingness of the host-country authorities (Kernalegenn & Van Haute, 2020; Østergaard-Nielsen & Ciornei, 2019; Paarlberg, 2017; Rashkova, 2020). As indicated in the Introduction of this dissertation, the case of the 2011 Tunisian election in Canada or the apropos limited campaigning for the indefinite reelection of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan in Austria, Denmark, and the Netherlands exemplify how a residence country may constrain propaganda and media coverage (Jakobson *et al.*, forthcoming; Lafleur, 2013). Thus, nonresident citizens require an additional effort to obtain information to vote responsibly, besides the perceptions and experiences of relatives and friends that reside in the country of origin.

Liberal democracies combine the rights of voice and exit (Hirschman, 1970), that is, they must allow dissent to be articulated in domestic political protest and free elections as well as through emigration. However, it is not obvious that those who have already exited should still retain a voice in deciding on a future that will no longer be theirs (Bauböck 2003, 713).

In this frame, there is a set of contextual objections against external voting rights, in particular the normative consequences of overseas votes. If a given state allows external voting rights to be enacted, regulated, and applied (following Palop-García and Pedroza [2019]), what happens if those overseas votes swing political preferences in the domestic arena, especially considering that nonresident citizens are not subject to the same laws as resident citizens? Beyond electoral preferences, what are the normative implications that external voting rights carry for nonresident citizens in terms of cost of information and mobilization? Last but not least, what is the role of political parties in this debate? Should they invest resources in campaigning abroad or not? Although these questions are going to be further discussed in the following chapters of this dissertation, the mechanical effects of nonresident citizens' voter turnout represent a set of

important contextual factors to understand why a state promulgates external voting rights. Beyond the estimated number of migrants who can participate in homeland elections, normative concerns related to contextual drivers, such as the characteristics of the target group and their electoral preferences, fuel fear in some parties to grant the same equivalent rights to migrants (Østergaard-Nielsen *et al.*, 2019; Turcu & Urbatsch, 2020b; Umpierrez de Reguero *et al.*, 2021). That is why no country probably extends the same number of political rights among the different categories of citizens.

1.2. The Nexus between Remittances, Emigrant Lobbying, and External Voting Rights

The discussion on the principles between democratic theory and migrant voting rights, especially the principles of all affected and stakeholders, brings a popular question back into this debate: ‘does taxation lead to political representation?’ Historically, the connection between representation and taxation has both empirical and theoretical relevance (Ross, 2004). Over the last decades, there has been a growing number of contributions seeking to examine both the causes of democracy and modern state-building. A part of these accounts has paid close attention to taxation as essential to the development and political institutionalization (e.g., Bates & Lien, 1985; Centeno, 2002; Evans *et al.*, 1999; Moore, 1966/1993; Tilly, 1985). Most studies were inspired by a prior generation of Central European scholars, such as Rudolf Goldscheid (1958) and Joseph Schumpeter (1954), who introduced the analysis of fiscal sociology. Taxation has been a fundamental piece of modern state-building, particularly towards the institutionalization of representative bodies into government (e.g., Schumpeter, 1954).

From historical to contemporary views, taxation as a direct influence on political development has been recurrent in academic circles. The possible explanation that higher taxes would yield higher levels of accountability in government is not only present in scholarly debates, but also in multiple international development organizations, which fear that aid will diminish the pressure on governments to democratize (Ross, 2004). Looking at this argument, what occurs if citizens neither live in the territory nor pay taxes,² but still want or enjoy the mechanisms of participation and representation?

² As an ‘extreme outlier’ (Bauböck, 2009, p. 490), some US nonresident citizens have tax obligations (toward their origin country) to be entitled to vote (Klekowski von Koppelfels, 2020).

In that respect, the existing literature has some responses. First, the relationship between personal remittances and the strategic engagement of several countries with their nonresident citizens as a recognition of their support to national economies. Second, an inclusive (mostly discursive) state-level perception of nonresident citizens when they represent a sizable population. Third, emigrant lobbying may support homeland politicians to promote their agenda, sponsoring plans and programs for the development of the origin country, among others. Therefore, nonresident citizens claim better channels of representation.

1.2.1. Remittance Dependence Effect and External Voting Rights

Remittances can be seen as an indirect form of taxation (Hartmann, 2015). Namely, sending personal remittances means person A, residing in a country of residence, sends money to person B, who lives in the country of origin. Person B has thus more money to spend. Most times, (s)he only requires paying value-added tax (VAT) per every item bought in the country of origin. To remit, Person A must cover the fees of sending the money from the residence country to the origin country. Once the money arrives in the country of origin, Person B must cover other fees, related to the currency exchange, banking costs, and/or other national income tax including VAT. Of course, there are country cases, such as Ecuador and Senegal, which have made exceptions of tax obligations to the remittances' recipients (Østergaard-Nielsen, 2016; Pedroza *et al.*, 2016).

Overall, migrants contribute to their origin countries through personal remittances in different ways: from helping vulnerable sectors of society, investing in properties (in the origin country), or assisting their compatriots when facing a national crisis or a natural disaster (Boccagni, 2011a; De Haas, 2010; Erdal, 2016; Leblang, 2015; Lundy, 2011; Umpierrez de Reguero *et al.*, 2018). In fact, personal remittances seem to be positively correlated with nonresident enfranchisement and voter turnout (Barry, 2006; Burgess & Tyburski, 2020; Ciornei & Østergaard-Nielsen, 2020; Erlingsson & Tuman, 2017; Nyblade & O'Mahony, 2014). Although the above-mentioned arguments are primarily empirical, economic contributions that migrants and their descendants send to their countries of origin, help scholars to normatively rethink the prerogative of including nonresident citizens in the *demos* (e.g., Bauböck, 2003).

The remittance dependence effect assumes that state-level motivations are intended to increase nonresident citizens' loyalty (following Hirschman [1978]). In some cases, such as Mexico or the Philippines, personal remittances appear to be fitting to claim nonresident enfranchisement as a political *quid pro quo*. However, there are at least two inconsistencies. First, if one fits migrants,

foreign investors, and philanthropists in the same container, one would be forced to admit that all of them should enjoy suffrage rights (López-Guerra 2005). With a naked eye, they all contribute to the national economy in one way or another.

Second, the empirical evidence of a global survey of emigrant enfranchisement contradicts this hypothesis (Lafleur, 2013). Mostly in developing countries such as Cape Verde and El Salvador, personal remittances are a key income in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), and thereby the strategic state-led motivation to promote transnational policies seems feasible. This driver has a specific resonance in the development of external voting rights in Sub-Saharan Africa as “globalization and the economic dependence of many states rather provide a generally fertile ground for strengthening the relationships to the emigrant communities” (Hartmann, 2015, p. 921). However, this argument is not a sufficient condition in all contexts since countries in the Global North are not dependent on remittances and most of them have granted political rights to their nonresident citizens. At the same time, there are countries highly dependent on personal remittances with no external voting rights (Østergaard-Nielsen, 2016).

1.2.2. Emigrant Lobbying and External Voting Rights

Instead of further theorizing that countries highly dependable on remittances are more prone to *de jure* and/or *de facto* emigrant enfranchisement, it is pertinent to recognize nonresident citizens as a source of international social capital, thereby as a part of states’ larger effort to better include themselves within the global economy (following Sherman [1999]). Bauböck (2003) has recognized that the relationship between nonresident citizens and their countries of origin can be bolstered by migrants’ perceived capabilities to transfer knowledge and political practices from one location to the other. By presenting nonresident citizens as key actors capable of creating new market niches, some parties such as the National Alliance in Italy, have supported the enactment of external voting (Østergaard-Nielsen *et al.*, 2019). Indeed, the ‘diaspora resource’ (Waterbury, 2010) comprises a solid motivation for countries worldwide to enact policies in favor of nonresident citizens from tax reduction to consultation institutions.

Along with personal remittances and the globalization adjustment, migrants’ actions, and their capacity to influence decision-making processes worldwide invite scholars and decision-makers to pay close attention to the agency rather than state-level motivation. Their actions and political leverage might work as another instrumental factor they can exchange for transnational politics, such as dual citizenship and external voting rights. Earlier contributions on ethnicity, lobbying,

and migrant transnationalism have highlighted migrants' capability to impulse policies in both their countries of origin and residence (e.g., Araujo, 2010; Lafleur, 2013; Vintila & Martiniello, 2020). Certainly, nonresident citizens can pressure homeland authorities to implement policies created for their own benefit such as external voting rights (Araujo, 2010). In parallel, they can become 'informal' ambassadors of their country of origin and push for agreements and a closed relation between the two locations. An illustrative example might be the Jewish diaspora in the US. Over the last century, the world has seen a mutual reinforcement in the diplomatic and non-diplomatic relations between Washington DC and Tel Aviv (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2006).

Emphasizing emigrant agency to explain enacting external voting rights also contains some contradictions. First, the role nonresident citizens have in the decision of homeland authorities to promulgate emigrant enfranchisement can be very limited, null, or by default negative, such as in the case of Uruguayans abroad (López Martínez, 2021; Margheritis, 2022). Second, the degree of influence depends largely on the level of migrants' organization (Lafleur, 2013). Yet, even in cases with large and relatively powerful communities abroad, no external voting provisions are conceivable (Collyer & Vathi, 2007; Levitt & de la Dehesa, 2003). Third, the representatives of the organized emigrant communities (e.g., the leaders of migrants' civil associations), who get involved in public debates on emigrant enfranchisement, are only a minority. In this context, the leadership of civil associations of migrants can rarely comprise a substantial representation (Martiniello, 1992). However, migrants' civil organizations can become a mechanism to indirectly increase nonresident citizens' voter turnout by promoting electoral rights, organizing round tables or meetings to discuss the different party and candidate manifestos among compatriots, or supporting the electoral logistics throughout the election cycle (Paarlberg, 2020b; Yener-Roderburg, 2022). They can work hand in hand with political parties campaigning abroad (Fliess, 2021). Likewise, their leaders can stand as candidates for special representation in homeland legislative institutions, such as in Ecuador and the Dominican Republic (Levitt & de la Dehesa, 2003; Palop-García, 2018; Umpierrez de Reguero & Dandoy, 2021). On average, migrants' civil associations rarely lobby homeland authorities for the enfranchisement of nonresident citizens, but when external voting is enacted and regulated, they usually promote their own agendas toward those rights (Lafleur, 2013).

1.3. Toward an International Approach to Emigrant Enfranchisement

International politics may connect the extensive research on democratization and norms diffusion (e.g., Kelley, 2012; Pevehouse, 2002) to emigrant enfranchisement. This connection suggests that external voting rights function as a sign to both domestic and international audiences, either as a

democratic imprint given the augment of overall levels of political inclusion or as proof of loyalty in authoritarian settings (Brand, 2010; Iheduru, 2011; Turcu & Urbatsch, 2015). In this section, I discuss three factors deriving from what Wellman (2015) calls the ‘international argument’ of emigrant enfranchisement: (1) the neighboring effect, (2) colonial, and (3) supranational ties.

1.3.1. Political Globalization as a Determinant of External Voting Rights

Since the 1990s, globalization has grown in relevance for states and agents (Earnest, 2015; Rodríguez-García, 2010). For most countries, the rise of novel notions of citizenship other than the one based on territory and sovereignty (Collyer, 2014a; Jakobson, 2014; Soysal, 1994) has broadened the role of human rights and international norms as predictors of granting emigrant enfranchisement (Lafleur, 2015). International institutions, non-governmental organizations, and international liberal norms “spread across borders through waves of diffusion and emulation” (Turcu & Urbatsch, 2015, p. 412). Then, they have the potential to shape countries’ migration, citizenship, and political participation laws and practices (Vink *et al.*, 2019).

In particular, political globalization interacts with the expansion of democratic norms and the normative prerogative to include nonresident citizens in politics. It refers to the interconnectedness among states through international and supranational organizations as well as their levels of embeddedness in the global governance system (Goryakin *et al.*, 2015). Measuring political globalization comprises the number of diplomatic offices located in a country, the degree to which states sign and ratify international treaties, and reciprocal agreements recognizing human rights (Gygli *et al.*, 2019). Overall, some contributions have reported a direct correspondence between political globalization and enfranchising nonresident citizens (e.g., Turcu & Urbatsch, 2015; Umpierrez de Reguero *et al.*, 2021).

Since Huntington’s (1991) seminal work on democratization, a set of studies have embraced the hypothesis of norm diffusion. Norm diffusion has been analyzed extensively in topics such as democratization (Rustow, 1970; Starr & Lindborg, 2003; Wejnert, 2005), transnational activism (Keck & Sikkink, 2000; Tarrow, 2005; Von Bülow, 2022), and regime change (O’Donnell *et al.*, 1986; Pevehouse, 2002), but it is also likely to expand across borders, such as waves of diffusion and replication. Thus, it happens when countries imitate similar governments’ decision-making in economic, political, or sociocultural terms (Elkins & Simmons, 2005). Determinants are often the sturdiest with neighboring countries such as Belgium and the Netherlands, whose inspiration is further reinforced by high information flows (Kopstein & Reilly, 2000).

When neighboring countries have attempted new policies and these have reached their intended objectives, it is more likely that another neighbor promulgates them to address similar domestic challenges (Cortell & Davis, 1996; Skrede-Gleditsch & Ward, 2006). Although there is some evidence that this effect can function differently³ usually by emulation, country A positively reinforced country B when A emulates B's policies. As such, the neighboring effect works as a constructive process over time within close geographies (Brinks & Coppedge, 2006; Turcu & Urbatsch, 2015).

1.3.2. Colonial Ties, Supranational Entities, and Emigrant Enfranchisement

Whereas a more interconnected world has played a role in granting external voting rights, more historic connections such as colonial ties have also led to changes in migration policies (Hartmann, 2015). Spatial dependence in enacting international norms appears to complement the exploratory factors above, particularly spreading enfranchisement policies that emerged from one neighbor to another (Elkins & Simmons, 2005). Ties arise from countries having shared an imperial past, previously living under the same political authority, and/or a cultural or linguistic affinity (Bauböck, 2005; Pedroza, 2019; Turcu & Urbatsch, 2015). Chaudhary (2018) demonstrates that colonial links between origin and residence countries have a positive incidence on migrant electoral behavior, given the shared cultural affinities within a bilateral or multilateral context. As underscored, the right to vote of Commonwealth citizens residing in the UK and the special agreement between the Portuguese and Brazilian governments granting reciprocal rights to vote, exemplify how colonial linkages contribute to enfranchising migrants (Koopmans & Michalowski, 2016; Pedroza, 2019).

While a supranational agreement allows EU citizens to vote in the local elections of other EU countries in which they live, Commonwealth citizens living in another member state can vote in elections; nevertheless, most of these states withhold voting rights for third-country nationals (Belton, 2019). All these examples point to the importance of colonial and political ties on migrant enfranchise decisions. One can expect that countries with colonial ties (i.e., colonized and colonizer) have a positive relationship with extending the franchise to migrants.

³ For instance, when neighboring countries (state B and C) have delayed or not enacted policies, state A may tend to remain stagnant too (Umpierrez de Reguero, forthcoming).

1.4. The Strategic Role of Political Elites on External Voting Rights⁴

Alongside democratic inclusion and the international argument, the extension of the voting franchise to emigrants and their descendants has been linked to studies on electoral preferences, in particular to the existing literature on the voter alignment of citizens residing abroad (e.g., Turcu & Urbatsch, 2020b; Verdery, 1998). A set of contributions have explored the growing interest of ruling parties and coalitions in enfranchising nonresident citizens – analogous to other minority groups over history – given a cost-benefit estimation (e.g., Wellman, 2021). This logic is contingent largely upon two theoretical arguments. First, electoral reform will only occur if ruling parties or the pre-electoral coalition in power are eager to include new actors into the political game (Boix, 1999; Teele, 2018).

“As long as the electoral arena does not change and the current electoral regime benefits the ruling parties, the electoral system is not altered. As the electoral arena changes (due to the entry of new voters or a change in voters’ preferences), the ruling parties modify the electoral system, depending on the emergence of new parties and the coordinating capacities of the old parties. When the new parties are strong, the old parties shift from plurality/majority to proportional representation if no old party enjoys a dominant position, but they do not do this if there is a dominant old party. When new entrants are weak, a system of non-proportional representation is maintained, regardless of the structure of the old party system” (Boix, 1999, p. 609).

Similar to this causal mechanism that elucidates a variation from a plurality-majority system to proportional representation when ruling parties want to, emigrant enfranchisement can be perceived as a rational-choice strategy for maintaining the *status quo*. In doing so, external voting rights can be calibrated to favor the incumbency, or contrarily, to minimize risks (Umpierrez de Reguero *et al.*, 2021).

The later intention between the incumbent and the degree of restrictiveness of external voting rights leads to a second explanation: ruling parties or pre-electoral coalitions might use coercion tactics to deter potential challengers, either emergent parties or outsiders, from the opposition parties (Geddes, 2005; Magaloni, 2006; Simpser, 2013). Whereas the first argument is most likely associated with a democratic setting, the second innately relates to the *de facto* hegemonic or authoritarian position of party systems (Wellman, 2021). By expecting that ruling parties or pre-

⁴ This section expands on one of the main theoretical arguments posited in Umpierrez de Reguero *et al.* (2021).

electoral coalitions will extend voting rights to nonresident citizens, these arguments lead homeland authorities to go after a new subset of potential voters who will support them.

The incumbent is unnecessarily the most interested in the niche of overseas voters, but undoubtedly the ideological ascription may provide some insights. In Europe, emigrant enfranchisement is often linked to mainstream right-wing parties (Østergaard-Nielsen *et al.*, 2019). For instance, in France and Spain, the citizenship reforms, in particular the rights of nonresident citizens, have been promoted by mainstream right-leaning parties (Joppke, 2003). In Latin America, external voting rights were also often endorsed by the right-wing parties, under the influence of ‘strongmen’ in office prior to the 1990s (Escobar, 2015). In the last two decades, the emergence of outsiders into politics –primarily represented by Evo Morales (Bolivia), Hugo Chávez (Venezuela) and Rafael Correa (Ecuador); i.e., the inclusionary radical left-wing populism– has been associated with the enactment and application of emigrant enfranchisement (Bermúdez *et al.*, 2017; Umpierrez de Reguero *et al.*, 2020). In Sub-Saharan Africa, the opposition parties, most likely guided by a cost-benefit calculation, often support emigrant enfranchisement because of the aversion that incumbent parties can generate from the diaspora. As Wellman (2021, p. 84) asserts, this aversion in the Sub-Saharan African context arises given the “domestic discontent, lack of opportunities, and conflicts”.

Beyond the left-right axis of party politics, it seems that citizens residing abroad are more prone to intent to vote for green, cosmopolitan, and in certain cases even populist, parties as compared to domestic voters (Jakobson *et al.*, 2020; Turcu & Urbatsch, 2020c; 2022; Umpierrez de Reguero & Jakobson, forthcoming;). In general, a growing number of homeland parties across countries are highly interested in campaigning across borders (Burgess, 2020; Jakobson *et al.*, 2021; Kernalegenn & van Haute, 2020; Østergaard-Nielsen & Ciornei, 2019b; Paarlberg, 2017). As the effective number of political parties in an election is an essential facet for identifying a mutually exclusive democracy-autocracy classification, I outline a rich discussion of party politics and external voting rights in Chapters 4 and 6. Similarly, I extend the nexus between party politics and nonresident citizens’ voter turnout in the next chapters.

Summary of this Chapter

In this chapter, I started discussing the connection between external voting rights and democratic theory. In doing so, in Section 1.1, I presented the convention of universal suffrage, the question of how one can delineate the *demos* and five interrelated normative principles (republicanism, ethnic nationalism, territorial inclusion, all-affected and stakeholder), each of them linked to the

dimension of democratic inclusion. Over these two last centuries, scholars and practitioners have seen how countries have lifted barriers to voting enfranchisement, including citizenship- and residence-based restrictions; hence, international migrants can now participate in home-country elections. By distinguishing *demos* from citizenry, one can normatively identify different state-level patterns of voting rights for migrants. First, the total absence of eligibility for both nonresident citizens and noncitizen residents is summarized in republicanism by the modern democratic theory (Bauböck, 2003; Brubaker, 1992/2009). Those who belong to the sovereign state and respect their culture and territory, are entitled to enjoy full voting rights. The second and third principles lean the balance to one of the two categories of citizens over the other. Whereas the ethnic nationalism principle tends to enfranchise nonresident citizens over the noncitizen residents; the principle of territorial inclusion often bans citizens living abroad from voting and extends suffrage rights to certain noncitizen residents (e.g., denizens after a period of residence and/or naturalized) (Bauböck, 2005; Rubio-Marin, 2000). Fourth, the all-affected principle relies on the assumption that if anyone is subject to the democratic polity, (s)he should be granted full political rights for doing so (Bauböck, 2005; López-Guerra, 2005; Owen, 2012). In effect, that individual should partake as a part of the *demos*. Thus, both nonresident citizens and noncitizen residents should be incorporated into the *demos*. To avoid over-inclusion, the stakeholder principle emerges as an alternative that bridges a more limited set of voting rights for migrants with democratic theory (Bauböck, 2006). Stakeholders' principle allows that noncitizen residents vote, preferably naturalized after a certain tenure abroad, as well as some subcategories of nonresident citizens, purposefully excluding, for example, those who have never resided in the country of origin.

This normative discussion of emigrant enfranchisement leads to a more empirical, even strategic, debate. Unlike the previous component, in Section 1.2 I presented the exogenous factors of emigrant enfranchisement such as the economic dependence, the diaspora organization and size; that is, the linkage between an economic argument and external voting rights. Here, I broadly introduced the leverage of personal remittances, as well as migrants' social activism to pressure their countries of origin for suffrage rights. This scholarly debate is largely contingent upon the geographic frames and nonresident citizens' resources to impact on home-country decision making.

In Section 1.3, I discussed other determinants of emigrant enfranchisement; on this occasion, associated with international politics. Connecting democratization with norms diffusion, I introduced the three following factors: the neighboring effect, colonial, and supranational ties. As waves of emulation and diffusion, democratic norms are significantly correlated with external voting rights. Given that globalization, technology, and communication have made it simpler to

disseminate practices and policies around the globe, now neighboring states can give-and-take information flows on institutional experiments, including external voting rights (Turcu & Urbatsch, 2015). In addition, historic connections such as colonial ties have shifted migration policies by introducing patterns of international and/or regional social interconnection, particularly spreading enfranchisement policies between colonizers and colonized countries (Hartmann, 2015). Ties arise from countries previously sharing the same political authority, and/or cultural–linguistic affinities, which are all reasons for the extension of external voting rights (Bauböck, 2005; Pedroza, 2019).

Shifting emigrant enfranchisement debate from democratic inclusion to political competition, in Section 1.4 I outlined the strategic role of political elites in extending or not external voting rights. Beyond the left-right axis or a concrete ideology, political elites support or reject emigrant enfranchisement for at least two reasons. First, electoral reform will only occur if incumbents are willing to invite new actors to the political arena (Boix, 1999; Teele, 2018). Second, ruling parties or coalitions may employ coercion tactics to daunt potential challengers, whether insiders, mavericks or full outsiders, from the opposition parties (Geddes, 2005; Magaloni, 2006; Simpser, 2013).