

Transnational Politics and the State

The External Voting Rights of Diasporas

Jean-Michel Lafleur

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State**
The External Voting Rights of
Diasporas
Jean-Michel Lafleur

To Evelyn

Contents

| | |
|--|------------|
| <i>List of Tables</i> | xi |
| <i>List of Abbreviations</i> | xiii |
| <i>Acknowledgments</i> | xvii |
| Introduction | 1 |
| 1 Conceptualizing External Voting | 13 |
| 2 Understanding the Development of External Voting Rights Worldwide: The Legal, Normative, and Sociopolitical Arguments | 32 |
| 3 Mexico: Enfranchising Emigrants under Conditions of Democratic Transition | 50 |
| 4 Italy: Electoral Benefits and the Enfranchisement of Citizens Abroad | 74 |
| 5 Responding to the Call: The Implementation of External Voting and Voter Turnout Abroad | 94 |
| 6 Affinities across Borders: Emigrant Voters and the Formation of Political Opinions Abroad | 117 |
| 7 “Do You Hear Me Now?” External Voting, Reserved Seats, and Emigrant Power in the Home and Host Societies | 133 |
| Conclusion | 149 |
| <i>Appendix A: Methodology</i> | 161 |
| <i>Appendix B: Interview Details</i> | 165 |
| <i>Notes</i> | 169 |
| <i>References</i> | 175 |
| <i>Index</i> | 187 |

Tables

| | | |
|-----|---|-----|
| 1.1 | Countries and Territories with Legislative or Constitutional Provisions for External Voting | 19 |
| 1.2 | Countries that Implemented External Voting Policies for the First Time in the 1990s and 2000s | 25 |
| 5.1 | Electoral Results and Political Preferences of Emigrant Voters in 2006 and 2012 | 102 |
| 5.2 | Most Participative Italian Emigrant Groups, by Host Country (House of Representatives, 2006) | 107 |
| 5.3 | Participation in the 2006 and 2008 Elections Abroad (House of Representatives) | 110 |
| 6.1 | 2009 Bolivian Presidential Election Results (%) | 120 |
| 6.2 | Variables Influencing Emigrants' Vote in Favor of/against Evo Morales | 121 |
| 6.3 | Variables Influencing Emigrants' Approval of Evo Morales's Government | 122 |
| 6.4 | Electoral Results Abroad—2006 Italian Legislative Elections | 129 |

Abbreviations

| | |
|---------|--|
| ACLI | Associazioni Cristiane dei Lavoratori Italiani (Christian Association of Italian Workers) |
| AIRE | Anagrafe degli Italiani Residenti all'Estero (Registry of Italian Citizens Residing Abroad) |
| AMSE | Asamblea Mexicana por el Sufragio Efectivo (Mexican Assembly for Effective Voting) |
| AN | Alleanza Nazionale (National Alliance Party, Italy) |
| CCIME | Consejo Consultivo del Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior (Consultative Council of the Institute of Mexicans Abroad) |
| CCME | Conseil de la Communauté Marocaine à l'Etranger (Consultative Council for the Moroccan Community Abroad) |
| CDPME | Coalición por los Derechos Políticos de los Mexicanos en el Extranjero (Coalition of Mexicans Abroad for the Right to Vote) |
| CEDEM | Centre d'Etudes de l'Ethnicité et des Migrations (Center for Ethnic and Migration Studies of the University of Liège, Belgium) |
| CGIE | Consiglio Generale degli Italiani all'Estero (General Council of Italians Abroad) |
| CMENV | Coalición de Mexicanos en el Exterior—Nuestro Voto en el 2000 (Coalition of Mexicans Abroad—Our Vote in 2000) |
| CNE | Consulta Nazionale dell'Emigrazione (National Council on Emigration, Italy) |
| CNE | Corte Nacional Electoral (National Electoral Court, Bolivia) |
| COFIPE | Código Federal de Instituciones y Procedimientos Electorales (Institutional and Electoral Proceedings Federal Code, Mexico) |
| COMITES | Comitati degli Italiani all'Estero (Committees of Italians Residing Abroad) |
| CONAGO | Conferencia Nacional de Gobernadores (National Conference of Governors, Mexico) |

xiv *Abbreviations*

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| COVE | Coordinación del Voto de los Mexicanos Residentes en el Extranjero (Coordination for the Vote of Mexicans Residing Abroad) |
| CUD | Commission Universitaire pour le Développement (Belgian University Commission for Development) |
| CUNY | City University of New York, USA |
| DC | Democrazia Cristiana (Christian Democracy Party, Italy) |
| DS | Democratici di Sinistra (Democrats of the Left Party, Italy) |
| EC | European Community |
| ECHR | European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights |
| ECSC | European Coal and Steel Community |
| EP | European Parliament |
| EU | European Union |
| FECLI | Federazione delle Colonie Libere Italiane (Federation of the Free Italian Colonies) |
| FRS-FNRS | Fonds de la Recherche Scientifique (National Fund for Scientific Research, Belgium) |
| G7 | Group of Seven |
| HTA | Hometown association |
| IDEA | International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance |
| IFE | Instituto Federal Electoral (Federal Electoral Institute, Mexico) |
| IME | Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior (Institute of Mexicans Abroad) |
| LULAC | League of United Latin American Citizens (USA) |
| MAS | Movimiento al Socialismo (Movement for Socialism Party, Bolivia) |
| MEP | Member of the European Parliament |
| MP | Member of Parliament |
| MSI | Movimento Sociale Italiano (Italian Social Movement Party) |
| NAFTA | North American Free Trade Agreement |
| OPME | Oficina Presidencial Para Mexicanos en el Exterior (Presidential Office for Mexicans Abroad) |
| PAN | Partido Acción Nacional (National Action Party, Mexico) |
| PCI | Partito Comunista Italiano (Italian Communist Party) |
| PCME | Programa para las Comunidades Mexicanas en el Exterior (Program for Mexican Communities Abroad) |
| PD | Partito Democratico (Democratic Party, Italy) |
| PDS | Partito Democratico della Sinistra Democratic (Democratic Party of the Left, Italy) |
| PNA | Partido Nacional Antireeleccionista (National Anti-Reelectionist Party, Mexico) |
| PODEMOS | Poder Democrático Social (Social and Democratic Power Party, Bolivia) |

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|-------|---|
| PRD | Partido de la Revolución Democrática (Party of the Democratic Revolution, Mexico) |
| PRI | Partido Revolucionario Institucional (Institutional Revolutionary Party, Mexico) |
| PS | Parti Socialiste (Socialist Party, Belgium) |
| PSI | Partito Socialista Italiano (Italian Socialist Party) |
| RC | Rifondazione Comunista (Communist Refoundation Party, Italy) |
| SPD | Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (Social Democratic Party, Germany) |
| UCLA | University of California, Los Angeles |
| UMSS | Universidad Mayor de San Simón (San Simón University in Cochabamba, Bolivia) |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNHCR | United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees |

Acknowledgments

My interest in emigrant involvement in home-country politics goes back to my undergraduate studies at Florida International University in 2001. In observing the mobilization of the Cuban diaspora in Miami, I realized how emigrants have a political impact from abroad even when the avenues for their formal participation are closed. This initial observation triggered my interest in works on immigrant transnationalism, which since the end of the 1990s was occupying a growing place in migration literature. Despite its success among migration scholars, the concept of transnationalism rapidly came under fire for its lack of conceptual clarity. I too perceived that most works on transnationalism were focusing strongly on migrant agency and forgetting that sending states, too, played a role in emigrants' capacity to maintain cross-border ties. For this reason, I decided to focus my doctoral research on external voting: a policy by which sending states formally recognize their citizens abroad as political actors.

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This book comes out at a time when, as it has repeatedly happened in the past, emigrant ties with their home societies are perceived with suspicion. In the current political climate in Europe and North America, researching and writing on these practices, which challenge the model of migrant assimilation desired by some policymakers, seems all the more important. Without making the argument that transnational political participation is desirable *per se*, this book modestly seeks to demonstrate that these practices can also constitute an opportunity to strengthen ties between diasporas, sending societies, and receiving societies.

Jean-Michel Lafleur
London, March 2012

Introduction

This book is about how emigrants and their descendants continue to be formal political actors in their home countries despite the fact they do not live on their territories. It is about the enfranchisement of populations who are increasingly perceived as economic and political assets for their home societies. Yet, this book is also primarily concerned with the internal political dynamics within migrant-sending societies that lead those states to adopt policies that may affect existing electoral balances. The external voting rights of citizens living abroad raise sensitive issues regarding state-diaspora relations, the definition of polity membership, dual loyalty, and migrant integration in host societies. However, over the past two decades, numerous states have enfranchised citizens abroad with mixed results in terms of participation and impact on home-country politics. In 2006 alone, two historically large emigration states—Mexico and Italy—allowed their emigrants to vote from abroad for the first time. These experiences, however, had tremendously different impacts on home-country politics. In Italy, over a million emigrants participated in a process that gave birth to serious accusations of fraud but that, at the same time, led to the election of emigrant parliamentarians who gave decisive support to Romano Prodi's governing coalition. In Mexico, on the contrary, legislators put in place an extremely bureaucratic external voting mechanism, resulting in a very limited number of emigrants who took part in the presidential election. In the context of this heavily disputed election, the participation of Mexican emigrants thus went unnoticed.

Despite the fact that there is very limited literature on external voting today, this practice has fostered debates on the legitimacy of exercising the right to vote without residing on the national territory as well as debates on migrants' capacities to be politically active in two spaces at the same time. While these debates have put in balance the existence of external voting rights with Westphalian notions of loyalty, they have also tended to avoid answering questions about the reasons for states to take this path and external voting's impact. This book thus seeks to answer three central questions: Why do states grant voting rights to citizens abroad? How do emigrants respond to their enfranchisement? And how does external voting affect emigrants' relations with home and host societies?

2 *Transnational Politics and the State*

Existing literature on external voting has not yet dealt with these questions, for the few existing comparative works mostly rely on describing the development of the practice on the global level without discussing the causes. Other scholars have given significant attention to external voting but mostly from a normative viewpoint and asking how it is compatible with existing definitions of the political community. Finally, scholars working on the involvement of emigrants in home-country politics have discussed, on an individual basis, cases of extending enfranchisement to citizens abroad with a strong emphasis on country-specific variables. Because the existing literature on external voting does not satisfactorily approach the development and impact of external voting, this research was built on two related bodies of literature. The first one is research on immigrant transnationalism that has sought to integrate external voting as one such practice. The second is the literature on home-state policies towards citizens abroad.

TRANSNATIONALISM AND MIGRANTS AS POLITICAL ACTORS IN THE HOME COUNTRY

Despite an important wave of research on immigrant transnationalism beginning in the 1990s, the emergence of transnationalism as a scientific concept for studying migration phenomena is considerably older. In the early 20th century, Randolph Bourne (1916) wrote an article that cast doubt on the melting-pot hypothesis and argued instead for the creation of a “Trans-national America.” Without naming it as such, Sayad (1975) also introduced a transnational perspective in French sociological studies of migration. For him, studying emigration was indispensable to understanding immigration more fully, and he accordingly considered migrants not to be citizens who simply cut their links with their home countries on the day of arrival in their host countries.

The 1990s thus saw a reappearance of the concept in new research programs, the creation of new journals, and the publication of numerous books and special issues of journals discussing, for example, the impact of emigrant remittances on home communities, emigrants’ involvement in home-country political campaigns, the transformation of cultural and religious practices through migration, and the development of migrant businesses across borders. This infatuation with the concept of transnationalism was especially visible in North America, particularly in the context of Latin American migration in the United States (Martiniello and Lafleur 2008).

Following the heavily cited work of Basch, Glick Schiller, and Blanc-Szanton (1994), the concept of immigrant transnationalism forced scholars to reconsider two previous assumptions. First, and contrary to assimilationist views of migration, the links between the individual and the nation-state are not exclusive but multiple. Migrants involved in transnational activities develop simultaneous social, religious, cultural, political, and economic

involvements in several countries. Second, the spaces within which migrants work; conduct their social, political, and religious lives; and even raise their families cannot be clearly divided between the home and receiving countries but are rather, as Faist puts it, “combinations of social and symbolic ties, positions in networks and organizations that can be found in at least two geographically and internationally distinct places” (1998: 8). Transnational spaces are thus not static but rather dynamic entities that can change over time (Lafleur 2005b). Also, as Landolt (2008: 54) underscores, migrants’ transnational activities (epitomized by the circulation of ideas, resources, and symbols) may be oriented “toward people and institutions in places of origin—a transnational orientation—toward the place of settlement—an assimilationist orientation—or toward a multisited, decentered, and potentially diasporic orientation.”

The quantity of literature produced on the topic soon revealed a major controversy over its origins, its magnitude, and its pertinence. Does transnationalism describe a new reality or is it just old wine in new bottle? Do most migrants engage in transnational activities or do they just concern a minority? These are only two of the questions that animated long debates and led authors such as Kivisto (2001), Castles (2002), and Waldinger and Fitzgerald (2004) to underline the concept’s lack of conceptual clarity.

Among the difficulties surrounding the concept of transnationalism, questions on the significance of transnational practices among migrant communities have attracted significant attention. Early research on immigrant transnationalism indeed underscored the importance of marginalization as a trigger for migrants to engage in such activities (Basch, Glick Schiller, and Szanton Blanc 1994; Roberts, Frank, and Lozano-Ascencio 1999). On this basis, it was assumed that many immigrants were engaged in transnational activities on a recurring basis, and that these activities actually empowered them, by making them aware of their own capacity to mobilize (Østergaard-Nielsen 2001; Guarnizo, Portes, and Haller 2003), and helped to make them legitimate actors in the host country (Shain 1999). Assuming that immigrants would, by millions, engage in sustained cross-border activities with their home countries, several North American scholars also opposed transnational activities as a threat to the American assimilationist model and, altogether, contrary to the interests of the United States (Brimelow and Donnelly 2000; Smith 2000; Huntington 2004). Other scholars offered a more nuanced analysis underlining the negative effects of transnational practices when they are conducted at the expense of mobilization on integration issues (Glick Schiller and Fouron 1999) or when transnational networks act as disincentive to learn the language or establish social contacts within the country of residence (Schmidtke 2001). However, with the contribution of works by Portes and colleagues, it came to be accepted that only a minority of emigrants engage in sustained and regular transnational activities and that, contrary to previous assumptions, the socioeconomic profile of emigrants is not the only factor explaining

4 *Transnational Politics and the State*

transnational engagement (Guarnizo, Portes, and Haller 2003; Portes, Escobar, and Radford 2007). In this book, I also postulate that only a minority of emigrants actively become engaged in transnational lobbying efforts to request the right to vote from abroad in home-country elections. Nonetheless, as rightly underscored by different scholars, it does not require a majority of emigrants within a community to significantly alter home communities (Kyle 2000; Levitt, DeWind, and Vertovec 2003).

Another important point of contention in the literature on transnationalism has been the debate over the concept's novelty and added value compared to existing concepts on immigrant practices (Kivisto 2001; Castles 2002; Kennedy and Roudometof 2002; Waldinger and Fitzgerald 2004). With the increase in the production of literature using the concept of transnationalism, scholars insisted that migrants had already been involved in home-country politics or in sending money home as early as the 19th century and wondered if transnationalism was just the "new academic buzzword" (Abelmann 1998). Early Italian migrants in the United States, for example, were known as birds of passage for operating several trips between Europe and the New World (Piore 1979) and even attempting to control social behavior in their home communities through letters (Pries 2001). With respect to politics, Italians abroad also played a crucial part in the unification efforts of the early 19th century despite the fact that they had left before the creation of the Italian state (Gabaccia 2000). Later on, the fascist regime explicitly tried to instrumentalize Italians abroad for nationalistic purposes, but many communities abroad rebuked Mussolini's strategy in a period that saw heavy emigrant involvement in home-country politics (Bertonha 2001).

To several scholars, today's transnational practices are qualitatively different from these early forms of migrants' transborder engagement: increased human mobility resulting from new transportation technologies (e.g., faster and cheaper air transportation) and new communication technologies (e.g., e-mail, mobile phones, electronic social networks, etc.) have allowed emigrants to connect more frequently and sustainably with their kin and other state and nonstate actors in their home countries (Smith and Guarnizo 1998; Pries 2001; Vertovec 2004; Koslowski 2005). Responding to Waldinger and Fitzgerald's critiques (2004: 1187), according to which, by claiming "a qualitative distinction between an ill-defined and unperiodized now and then," transnationalism's scholars were dehistoricizing the present, Levitt and Jaworsky (2007) insisted that, in addition to the role of technology, today's transnational practices happen in a very different context. On the one hand, today's low-skilled immigrants do not face the same socioeconomic opportunities in receiving countries compared to the 19th-century immigrants in the United States. Lack of opportunities in host societies may thus encourage immigrants to engage in transnational strategies to increase their chances of economic success. On the other hand, sending countries have become increasingly dependent

on remittances, which have turned into a source of income that those states seek to protect through different means.

With respect to external voting, it is interesting to note that it has progressively been included in studies on transnational political participation, despite the fact that some states have had such an electoral mechanism for decades. External voting can therefore not be considered a novel form of migrant involvement in home-country political affairs (see Chapter 1). In trying to conceptualize new forms of migrant political involvement in the home society, scholars have also lacked conceptual clarity in some instances. For instance, Portes and colleagues (1999: 221), in an attempt to clarify the meaning of political transnationalism, came up with a very broad definition covering “the political activities of party officials, governmental functionaries, or community leaders whose main goals are the achievement of political power and influence in the sending or receiving countries.” In later work with Guarnizo and Haller, Portes, however, refined this definition by focusing on migrant influence in the home country and differentiating electoral activities (participating in campaigns from abroad, membership in parties, voting from abroad) from nonelectoral activities—such as those of migrant associations sponsoring projects in the home country that are “political because they influence local and regional governments by determining which projects receive migrants’ financial support” (Guarnizo, Portes, and Haller 2003: 1223). Such a focus on migrant activities conducted directly in the home country or the mobilization of home-country political actors from abroad neglected activities that Østergaard-Nielsen (2003) and Koopmans and Statham (2001) have described as seeking to achieve influence in the home country by using political opportunities and institutions in the country of residence.

The use of host-country institutions to achieve influence in the home country is not a recent phenomenon. In the United States, the Irish American lobby was already pressuring the US government to act on the Irish independence issue as early as the 19th century. Later on, suspicions about Italian Americans’ loyalty towards Mussolini’s government during World War II shed a negative light on transnational linkages. During this period, hundreds of thousands of citizens from countries at war with the Allied forces were incarcerated on US territory (Lothrop 2001; Scherini 2001; Tintori 2004). After this episode, ethnic lobbies such as the Cuban American lobby benefited from the anticommunist sentiment in the United States to gain significant leverage on this country’s policy towards Cuba (Portes and Stepick 1994; Lafleur 2005a).

These examples show that emigrants’ use of the host-country political opportunity structure to achieve influence in the home country is not new and also not necessarily transnational even though its impact may be. More recent events, however, show that ethnic lobbying may take a transnational form when it leads to concerted actions of migrants from the same country of origin but residing in different receiving countries (Martiniello

and Lafleur 2008). In an attempt to classify different forms of immigrant transnationalism, Østergaard-Nielsen (2003) categorizes “migrants’ and refugees’ political activities pertaining to the domestic or foreign policy of the homeland” as homeland politics.¹ She then isolates two subsets of homeland political participation. One, which has just been discussed, covers the political actions of groups such as Kurds in Europe or Cubans in the United States who are barred from direct involvement in the home country’s political system, and is called diaspora politics. The other is called emigrant politics and covers the claims migrants make towards home-country authorities concerning their legal, economic, and political status there. Emigrant politics, she continues, is migrants’ mobilization “towards the institutionalization of their transnational status as residents abroad but also economically, socially and politically engaged in their country of origin” (Østergaard-Nielsen 2003: 21). Emigrant politics is accordingly the exact kind of migrants’ transnational political practices I will be focusing on in this book. Emigrants’ requests to have the right to vote in home-country elections from abroad are indeed requests for status in the homeland (i.e., the status of voter) while acknowledging no intention to return in the near future.

Altogether, by considering migrants’ simultaneous involvement in two spaces and by underlining the impact migrants may have on the home country despite their absence on the territory, the transnational approach to migrant practices provides a useful framework of analysis for the purpose of this book in two respects. First, transnationalism’s focus on migrant agency across borders helps to build a hypothesis according to which emigrant lobbying and its influence on home-country political actors is a decisive variable in explaining the extension of external voting rights. In this sense, considering migrants as transnational political actors helps us to understand why states grant emigrants external voting rights. Second, the literature on immigrant transnationalism shows that migrants can get involved in a wide range of transnational activities that can potentially all have an impact on home-country politics (e.g., funding infrastructure projects in hometowns, supporting political parties, financing churches based in the home country, etc.). Independently of emigrants’ requests to vote in home-country elections, the importance of these activities for some actors in the home country might constitute incentives for them to support the enfranchisement of emigrants.

GLOBALIZATION AND HOME-STATE ENGAGEMENT WITH POPULATIONS ABROAD

If the concept of immigrant transnationalism proves useful to underscore the role of immigrants, its focus on migrant agency has often neglected the role of the state in fostering immigrant transnational practices or its

reaction to migrants' attempts to influence the home country. However, as rightly observed by Bauböck, home states increasingly adopt policies (e.g., dual citizenship or external voting) that promote migrants' transnational political participation by increasing their ability to be politically active both in the home and host state without having to choose (Bauböck 2003). Robert Smith (2003b) sums up the problem of conceptualizing the role of the state by noting that both broader literature on globalization and immigrant transnationalism literature may have precipitously announced the demise of the nation-state. The former includes discussions on global forces as a factor reshaping power relations among state and nonstate actors (Appadurai 1996), predictions that a transnational civil society might better respond to marginalized groups' needs than the nation-state (Tarrow 1998), and calls for a postnational citizenship through which citizens could make claims based on notions such as human rights (Soysal 1994). Smith (2003a) also notes that the early literature on immigrant transnationalism similarly misconceived the state's resilience in the age of globalization by stressing the state's lack of coercive power on citizens abroad (Kearney 1991; Basch, Glick Schiller, and Szanton Blanc 1994). Doing so, it neglected the role of citizenship in migrants' capacities to be transnationally active as well as the role of the state itself in creating a transnational sphere through which migrants are invited to become involved in home-country affairs. Later work has partly responded to this issue by emphasizing state responses to immigrant transnational practices by setting up programs to capture remittances or by channeling emigrant influence in home-country politics (Portes, Guarnizo, and Landolt 1999; Roberts, Frank, and Lozano-Ascencio 1999; Bakker and Smith 2003; Østergaard-Nielsen 2003). Nonetheless, as Smith (2003b: 302) rightly notes, most of the literature on immigrant transnationalism long did not "discuss how state-migrant dynamics attempt to redefine the terms and limits of membership in a political community."

The limits of this literature in capturing home states' relations with citizens abroad reveals the necessity to combine it with older literature on the role of sending states in migration policies and more recent work on the development of diaspora engagement policies. Since the work of Hirschman (1978a), we have come to understand that emigration states may have an interest in using emigration as a safety valve against social unrest in weak states, and more generally that emigration may trigger subsequent political changes in sending states. Miller and Martin (1982) pushed the idea further, insisting that emigration states pursue their own interests in the management of emigration rather than being quiet actors observing the departure of its citizens without reacting. To this end, emigration states attempt to maintain the umbilical cord between the homeland and emigrants. Basing herself on the assumption that long-term but temporary migration is more beneficial to the sending state than settlement, Schmitter Heisler (1985) argues that the emigration state may thus explicitly encourage the creation of emigrant organizations and reject the idea of assimilation to support

instead the formation of “states within states” or “political exclaves” (Sheffer 1986). During the 1980s, the idea that migrant relations with the homeland deserved as much attention as their relations with the host country had thus made significant progress.

As discussed above, the focus of early transnationalism research on migrant agency and on the power modifications brought about by globalization has led scholars to neglect the role of sending countries in the development of transnational exchanges with emigrants. Contemporary scholars nonetheless remembered that migrants’ relations with the home-state could not be neglected (Sherman 1999; Hollifield 2004). A more recent wave of research focused on policies developed by home states to engage with citizens living abroad (González Gutiérrez 2003; Gamlen 2006; Brand 2006; Waterbury 2010a; Waterbury 2010b). In particular, Smith (2003a) developed the concept of diasporic policies that create and limit opportunities for emigrants to be active in the home society. These policies establish “a form of diasporic membership fostering new forms of political participation for both migrants and the home state.” In this book, I therefore consider external voting as one such diasporic policy that grants citizens abroad formal membership to the political community despite their residence abroad.

The use of the concept of diaspora should not be interpreted as an attempt to limit the scope of this book to a very narrowly defined form of population abroad. With the development of research, the definition of diaspora has become less restrictive, and more constructivist approaches have focused on the role of both states and migrant communities in the creation of imagined communities. This effort has rendered the concept of diaspora applicable to both old and new forms of migration (Dufoix 2008; Gamlen 2008). Common traits for this constructivist approach on the use of “diaspora” include three characteristics: a dispersion in a least two distinct states, a shared sense of belonging that is sustained overtime, and an orientation towards the homeland (Cohen 1997; Schnapper 2001; Shain and Barth 2003; Sanjek 2003).

Literature on diaspora engagement proves useful in understanding the role of the state in the development of external voting policies. This literature has indeed stressed how engaging with the diaspora is often perceived by the state as way to adjust to globalization. First, and this is particularly the case among scholars looking at migrants from poorer sending countries, attracting emigrant remittances to alleviate poverty (or to have an influx of foreign currency that benefits the home country’s balance of payment) appears to be a strong incentive to develop diasporic policies. The underlying idea is obviously that stimulating emigrant involvement and connections with the home country through dual citizenship or external voting rights will maintain higher levels of loyalty and, consequently, higher levels of remittances. Second, in a globalized economy in which the exporting of goods and services abroad is crucial for economic growth at home, home countries have increasingly perceived emigrant communities as strategic

economic resources to open markets abroad. Altogether, because it puts a greater focus on the role of the state as an agent engaging in constructing a relationship with its population abroad, the literature on sending states' policies offers an interesting counterweight to the transnational perspective on migration in understanding the development of external voting.

RESEARCH STRATEGY AND STRUCTURE OF CHAPTERS

As I previously stated, this book is about finding out the reasons why states give voting privileges to citizens residing abroad, understanding the responses of emigrants to their enfranchisement, and determining external voting's impact on the relations between emigrants and their host and home societies. To do so, I begin this book by defining external voting and documenting its development. As argued previously, external voting policies, like other diasporic policies, create new forms of membership to the home state for citizens living abroad. In Chapter 1, I therefore discuss the development of this new status for emigrants in relation to the home state by discussing the concept of external citizenship and its three dimensions of consultation, participation, and representation. Subsequently, I focus on the concept of external voting itself and underscore how this policy has evolved. From being a right limited to citizens temporarily serving the interest of the state from abroad in the early 20th century, external voting has become an explicit recognition of the fact that emigration does not exclude citizens from the home country political community in the 21st century. By discussing this evolution, I construct an operational definition of external voting as a right for citizens abroad to take part in home-country politics independently of their desires to return.

In Chapter 2, I examine three possible routes to understanding growing state interest in the enfranchisement of citizens abroad. The first route is the development of international norms and instruments that could constrain states in adopting such policies. However, I demonstrate that—except in cases of conflict-forced migration—international norms hardly encourage states to implement external voting today. The second route focuses on the development of external voting from a normative standpoint. This approach shows the controversial nature of external voting policies as they develop in different parts of the world. Even though political theory isolates possible grounds to justify or prevent the adoption of external voting policies, it lacks the empirical dimension to satisfactorily explain its global development today. I conclude Chapter 2 by arguing that a sociopolitical approach is most appropriate. Engaging with contemporary literature on transnationalism and diaspora policies, I identify a series of variables that need to be looked at to fully comprehend the reasons why states enfranchise citizens abroad today. These variables are: emigrant lobbying, home-state dependence on remittances, home-state desire to use emigrants as resources

in the global economy, regime transformation in the home country, and the electoral interests of domestic political parties.

In Chapters 3 and 4, I look precisely at the processes that led to the enfranchisement of citizens abroad in two emblematic emigration states: Italy and Mexico. Reconstructing the path that led to the adoption of external voting policies after decades of debates, these chapters shed light on the articulation of the different variables presented above and hint at others that have been neglected by existing research. As I elucidate in these chapters, Italy and Mexico share many similarities in terms of their migration histories, the sizes of their populations abroad, the organization of their populations abroad, and the economic relevance of their emigration movements. They also share the experience of having adopted external voting policies in the early 21st century, when the first debates on this issue already took place in the early 20th century. Yet, while Italy and Mexico have both recently enfranchised their citizens abroad, they have adopted dramatically different pieces of legislation which have had tremendous impacts on emigrants' ability to actually exercise their right to vote. For this reason, Chapters 3 and 4 do not only look at why states enfranchise citizens abroad, but they also aim to understand why states adopt restrictive or liberal external voting policies.

Chapter 3 examines the case of Mexico, where the history of the external voting debate is tightly linked to the process of democratic transition that began in the 1980s. This process progressively empowered a series of domestic actors, including regional governments, the electoral authority, and opposition political parties, who all had important stakes in influencing the outcome of the external voting debate. Simultaneously, the strategic importance of emigration within the neoliberal economic model adopted by the government also led Mexican authorities to pay more attention to citizens abroad. This chapter therefore underscores how the adoption of external voting policies is the result of a complex interaction between emigrants on the one hand and a multiplicity of domestic actors on the other hand. In isolating the causes that led to the enfranchisement of emigrants, I therefore demonstrate how the adoption of restrictive external voting legislation was dictated by interest protection for key actors within Mexican politics.

Chapter 4 is devoted to the enfranchisement of Italian citizens living abroad, and it starts by stressing the fact that the debate on external voting began to gain importance as soon as mass emigration ended. However, the external voting debate was also related to the long-standing politicization of Italian emigrant communities. In particular, the success of Mussolini's fascist programs among certain emigrant communities before World War II shaped domestic debates on external voting. It led Italian political parties to believe that citizens abroad would mostly support center-right political parties if they were to be enfranchised. The Italian case therefore illustrates how homeland political parties' positions on external voting were mostly dictated by the expected impact of voters abroad on

electoral results. This expected impact of voters abroad paralyzed legislative debates for decades until the creation of a foreign constituency—a constituency covering the territories outside of Italy where a limited number of parliamentarians are elected directly by citizens living abroad. This chapter shows that once the potential impact of voters abroad on overall electoral results in Italy was guaranteed to be under control, legislators were less reluctant to adopt a liberal external voting policy that automatically registered millions of voters abroad.

In Chapters 5 and 6, I turn to the second question that this book aims to answer: How do emigrants respond to their enfranchisement? Chapter 5 focuses on the issue of voter turnout. Starting from the idea that most emigrants are often considered to be uninterested in voting from abroad, this chapter demonstrates the potential biases in linking emigrants' interest in home-country politics and voter turnout abroad. Analyzing the implementation of Mexico's and Italy's legislation, I demonstrate how administrative barriers strongly impacted emigrant capacity to exercise the right to vote from abroad. Chapter 5 concludes by drawing a more complex picture of voter turnout and identifying the many variables that affect participation from abroad.

In Chapter 6, I pay special attention to emigrants who actually make use of their right to vote from abroad and try to determine how home-country political opinions are shaped within communities abroad. First, I posit that voting behavior of citizens abroad is dictated by both a set of sociodemographic characteristics defined prior to migration and the migration experience. To make this point, I rely on a survey I conducted among Bolivian emigrant voters in four different countries during the 2009 presidential election. Second, I examine the electoral campaigns conducted by Italian political parties abroad to underscore the limited—though real—capacity of homeland political parties to reach voters in different parts of the world.

The last chapter of this book seeks to answer a third question: How does external voting affect the relations of emigrants with host and home countries? Emigrants demanding external voting rights are convinced that enfranchisement will empower them in their home societies because it forces political parties to pay attention to their concerns. I, however, argue that the capacity of voters abroad to be heard at home is strongly dependent on their ability to influence electoral results. In this respect, the design of external voting policies plays a role of crucial importance. As a growing number of states also allow citizens to elect their own parliamentarians in a foreign constituency, I also look at the capacities of these elected officials to represent emigrants' interests in the home country. In the second part of this chapter, I then look at how the practice of voting from abroad affects emigrants' relations with their countries of residence. While external voting raises loyalty, security, and integration concerns in some countries, this chapter concludes by demonstrating that external voting does not prevent

emigrants' involvement in host-country politics, and that it opens new opportunities of transnational cooperation between political parties in the host and home societies.

To conclude this introduction, I wish to mention that this book relies on extensive empirical material collected during fieldwork between 2005 and 2010 on the external voting policies of Italy, Mexico, and Bolivia. This work consisted of a thorough analysis of the debates on external voting in each country, focusing on the roles played by migrants themselves and the roles of domestic actors. Methodologically speaking, it relies on a large-scale qualitative analysis of documents on external voting, including scientific literature, the press, political parties, and emigrant associations' archives and parliamentary minutes (see Appendix A for a note on methodology). In addition, 63 semistructured interviews were conducted with different kinds of actors involved in the debates on external voting: civil servants, political party representatives, elected officials, representatives of emigrant associations, academics, representatives of trade unions, and representatives of emigration consultative councils (see Appendix B for a list of interviewees). The study of these policies' implementation also meant that I—together with colleagues working under my direction—conducted fieldwork among emigrant voters in several receiving countries (United States, Argentina, Brazil, Spain, and Belgium). Altogether, because this book relies on a large amount of original data, it has the ambition to be an important empirically based contribution to understanding the development of external voting policies and their consequences.

1 Conceptualizing External Voting

EXTERNAL CITIZENSHIP IN THE GLOBAL AGE

The development of external voting, defined as a specific type of diasporic policy, is a phenomenon that needs to be related to the changing perceptions sending states have on their citizens abroad. These states—which traditionally saw their citizens abroad as poor workers emigrating in search of better economic opportunities—were indeed for the most part uninterested in keeping links with this population. There are obvious historical exceptions to this situation. Different states tried to capture emigrant remittances or their political support from abroad during the 19th century (Schmitter Heisler 1984). In such instances, flattering discourses towards citizens abroad have been pronounced and assistance policies towards emigrants have been implemented. Even a country like Mexico, where the state has been traditionally said to have forgotten its emigrants abroad, the government has adopted assistance policies towards its citizens abroad (Delano 2009).

In recent years, however, policies and discourses developed by sending-state authorities in favor of citizens abroad have become widely adopted across the globe. At the discursive level, Waterbury (2010b) has rightly pointed out that many homeland governments have drafted new discourses on the “global nation,” which extends beyond the traditional borders of the nation-state to encompass the diaspora. In the different countries where home states try to engage with their citizens abroad, they often produce these new discourses, presenting them as a valuable resource (or even as national heroes) in an attempt to stimulate their allegiances (Gamlen 2006). One of the best examples of such a discourse is Mexico. During the larger part of the 20th century, Mexican migrants were considered second-class citizens and the derogative term *pochó* was commonly used to stress the cultural distance that Mexico was trying to impose on its citizens abroad. This came to an end with the election of Vicente Fox in 2000. Fox declared emigrants to be Mexico’s new heroes, in a move that acknowledged the political and economic importance that he considered this population to have. In many other states, this type of discourse has consisted in reaffirming the fact that citizens abroad belong to the national community despite

distance. In extreme cases such as Haiti, which Laguerre (1999) studied, discursive changes on emigration have even led to the symbolic redefinition of national boundaries; the nation is viewed as an extraterritorial entity that encompasses the multiple spaces where the diaspora is located. As discussed previously, it has been common to put the development of positive discourses on emigration in perspective with the extraordinary increase in remittance sending observed globally over the last two decades. This has led some scholars to argue that home states seek to strengthen their connections with emigrants through the adoption of diasporic policies in hope of economic gains (Barry 2006).

While a positive discourse directed towards citizens abroad might foster emigrants' linkages with the home state, these dialectical changes have most importantly been accompanied by policy changes. These policies address issues that emigrants face when dealing with their home country (e.g., tax issues, access to consular services, investment in the home country, etc.). They can also primarily seek to strengthen emigrants' feelings of belonging to the home country (e.g., dual citizenship, language courses, cultural programs abroad, etc.). The development of dual nationality legislation in countries that formerly prohibited it and the increase in rights attached to the status of citizens residing abroad confirm the desire of many states to strengthen relations with their communities abroad (Spiro 2006).

For Bauböck (2003), a major change in recent years has been the development of external citizenship as a status allowing migrants to be members of two political communities without necessarily having to choose between them. Several scholars insist that external citizenship is both a legal status—the status of holding the citizenship of a state where one does not live—and a form of belonging to the polity—by voting in home-country elections from outside the national territory (Rubio-Marín 2006; Bauböck 2007). The capacity to hold a legal status and to exercise the citizenship rights attached to it outside of the territorially bounded nation-state has been best defined by Barry (2006: 26), who defines external citizenship as:

[T]he ongoing relationship between emigration states and their citizens who have moved temporarily or permanently to immigration states. It involves emigrants' and emigration states' efforts to preserve links to one another. External citizenship also encompasses emigrants' efforts to remain a part of the societies they left behind, independent of the state, that is, their ongoing engagement with the national community not limited to the national polity.

External citizenship is thus as much a status granted by the state as the result of migrant practices. These practices, while always aiming to impact the home country, do not only concern the national polity. External citizens may try to have an impact on regional or municipal authorities as well as nongovernmental actors, such as their relatives or the community they used to live in. In that

sense, external citizenship is the status that acknowledges the transnational character of some migrants' lives and recognizes their capacity to remain active in the home country despite their absence on the national territory.

In the development of external citizenship over the last two decades, it is important to note that sending states have given significant attention to the political aspects of external citizenship. External political citizenship consists of three dimensions that qualify both political status and a sense of belonging in the home country: consultation, representation, and participation. The first dimension is the capacity of migrants to be consulted by home-country authorities. In recent years, different countries have shown a willingness to better take emigrants' interests into consideration by fostering the exchange of information. Defending the interests of emigrants in the home country has often been the task of emigrant associations, home country trade unions, and political parties present in countries of residence. The strong presence of Italian trade unions in many countries of residence throughout the 20th century is one example of this phenomenon. Increasingly however, home states have consulted with emigrants through meetings, forums, conferences, and conventions (Gamlen 2006). In addition, sending countries are now financing academic research on topics related to the presence of citizens abroad. But most importantly, it is the creation of dedicated agencies (such as the Institute for Mexicans Abroad in Mexico and the National Secretariat for Migrants in Ecuador) or specific ministries (such as Italy's Ministry for Italians Abroad) that support this new trend for consultation. Independently of the state's desire to instrumentalize emigrant communities, these bodies have indeed been designed and presented to citizens abroad as tools to monitor their needs and foster the adoption of policies to respond to their interests.

The second dimension of external political citizenship is the representation of emigrants in the home country. As I mentioned, emigrants have traditionally had informal ways of being heard and indirectly represented in the home country through associations, as well as home-country political parties and labor unions lobbying in their name. In recent years, however, many sending countries have formalized emigrant representation through the development of consultative bodies. These organs are composed of representatives discussing emigration issues with home-country authorities in the name of emigrants. With respect to the composition of these councils, their members can either be chosen by the emigrant community itself after specific elections are held abroad (e.g., the Representatives Council of Brazilians Living Abroad) or appointed by home-country authorities (e.g., the Consultative Council for Moroccans Abroad, CCME). Also, because these bodies mainly serve to facilitate consultation with citizens abroad, they often include nonmigrant actors who have stakes in the dialogue between the home state and the diaspora. These actors can be specific institutions (e.g., regional authorities have a seat in Mexico's Consultative Council, CCIME) or nongovernmental institutions (e.g., trade unions in Italy's General Council of Italians Abroad, CGIE).

In addition to the creation of consultative bodies, a few states have also formalized the representation of emigrants by granting them seats in their legislative assemblies. This situation occurs when emigrants are granted passive electoral rights in addition to active ones. Contrarily to the members of consultative bodies, whose opinions are nonbinding, the voices of emigrant members in parliament are equally important to those of parliamentarians elected in the national territory.¹ These reserved seats are attributed in one or several foreign constituencies. In Italy, for example, legislators created a single foreign constituency but split it into four geographical districts in which a certain number of MPs and senators are elected according to the size of the Italian population in that area of the world. In Mozambique, emigrants elect two MPs in single-member constituencies (one for Africa and one for the rest of the world). The real weight of these few emigrant MPs (their numbers vary from one in Colombia to 12 in Italy) in large assemblies is obviously questionable (see Chapter 7). They nevertheless constitute a binding emigrant voice in the drafting of legislation and the control of government. While the creation of such seats is debated in many parts of the world, only 13 countries in Europe, Latin America, and Africa have provisions for such a system of legislative representation: Algeria, Angola, Cape Verde, Colombia, Croatia, Ecuador, France, Italy, Mozambique, Panama, Portugal, Romania and Tunisia.

The third dimension of external political citizenship is the participation of emigrants in home-country political affairs. As I discussed earlier, important literature on political transnationalism has shed light on the many ways emigrants can get involved in home-country politics: raising money for political candidates in the home country, lobbying host country authorities to take certain domestic actions, financing infrastructure in the home community with or without the support of local authorities, and so on. Participation in home-country political affairs has also been given a formal status in an increasing number of states by granting emigrants the right to vote from abroad. Even though voting in home-country elections is not the only practice attached to external citizenship, it is the one that most formally reflects membership in the home-state polity².

The specific development of external political citizenship has gained little attention in general, though literature on it has been quickly growing. A large share of this literature approaches external voting from a normative viewpoint (Nohlen and Grotz 2000). Over the last few years, different comparative studies on external voting have attempted to make an inventory of the different systems and, in some cases, shed light on the relevant motivations of states to adopt such legislation (Calderón Chelius 2003; Levitt and de la Dehesa 2003; Tager 2006; Collyer and Vathi 2007; IDEA and IFE 2007; Rhodes and Harutyunyan 2010). The recent growth of this literature illustrated the widespread application of this policy and further stimulated academic interest on the topic.

CITIZENS ABROAD AND HOME-COUNTRY ELECTIONS

Provisions granting citizens abroad the right to take part in home country elections have been given many names, including external voting, emigrant voting, expatriate voting, diaspora voting, absentee voting, absent voting, out-of-country voting, extraterritorial voting, distance voting, and remote voting. However, these concepts do not necessarily always cover the exact same kind of practices.

Allowing citizens residing abroad to vote in home-country elections is not an extraordinary practice. Historically, many states never formally excluded citizens abroad from taking part in home-country elections. For this reason, emigration cannot be as such considered a widespread condition for stripping citizens of their electoral rights in the home country. Italy, for instance, before it changed its legislation in 2001, had long allowed its citizens abroad to take part in home-country elections provided that they returned to Italy on Election Day. To facilitate this exercise, the state prevented emigrants from being erased from voters' registries after departure and even reimbursed train tickets for emigrant voters returning to their home constituencies.³ This form of emigrant franchise—which is still in place in some countries such as Turkey or Israel—is referred to as in-country voting. This procedure does not, however, belong to the realm of external political citizenship, for it does not allow political participation from abroad. In other words, the absence from the national territory remains a legitimate reason for political exclusion.

The Development of External Voting as a Set of Electoral Operations

The practice of casting votes from outside the national territory is not new. As rightly underlined by Ellis (2007), the first documented experiences preceded the era of modern democracies. Indeed, the Roman Emperor Augustus allowed senators in newly founded colonies to send their votes for the city offices of Rome by mail. This scholar also argues that, much later on, the US state of Wisconsin was the first to allow its soldiers fighting for the Union during the Civil War to cast external votes in 1862.⁴

From the turn of the 20th century to World War II, external voting legislation was implemented in different parts of the world. They all shared the characteristic of restricting the possibility to vote from abroad to specific professional categories of citizens. New Zealand (1890) and Australia (1902), for instance, restricted external voting rights to seafarers in the first pieces of legislation they adopted. Most of the restrictions, however, limited the exercise of this right to citizens serving the home country from abroad. Military and diplomatic personnel stationed abroad were traditionally the citizens who had most rapidly been allowed to vote from outside the national territory.

The reason for such a development is in line with the way emigrants were perceived in their home countries at the time. As discussed above, because sending states considered emigrants as poor citizens who were leaving for good, many lacked incentives to try to maintain links with their emigrants. Most importantly, national sovereignty was a main concern for these countries in the early 20th century. Allowing citizens abroad, who may have developed possible allegiances to other nations, to vote in home-country elections was perceived as dangerous. This rationale obviously did not apply to citizens serving the nation-state from abroad, such as soldiers and diplomats. For this reason, countries like Canada allowed military personnel abroad to take part in elections by mail in 1915, with the United States following in 1942 and India in 1950. Similarly, France adopted specific legislation for administrators stationed in the occupied Rhineland in 1924, while the United Kingdom invited citizens who were working abroad in matters of critical national importance to vote in 1945.

After World War II, more countries passed external voting legislation—particularly in the former French and British colonies. Indonesia's (1953) and Colombia's (1961) legislation, however, marked a turning point in the evolution of external voting because they were both drafted with the intent of widely enfranchising citizens abroad. The absence of activity-related provisions in their legislation marked the difference between external voting as a set of electoral procedures and external voting as a right acknowledging that residence abroad is not a valid ground for exclusion from the polity.

As mentioned, early developments of external voting focused on the enfranchisement of individuals temporarily abroad who were serving the national interests of the sending state. While the fact that these service members and diplomats were nationals was indispensable to the possibility of voting from abroad, citizenship was not the main argument on which voting rights were given. Instead, it was the type of activity that they conducted abroad that made them members of the polity, despite their absence from the national territory. The case for diplomats was even clearer in the sense that, from a legal viewpoint, they were not residing outside of the national territory.

Because the electoral participation of these categories of citizens was usually numerically limited, less politically contentious, and less logistically complex to organize, such legislation spread worldwide.⁵ Indeed, today most states possess legislative provisions allowing at least some citizens abroad to take part in home-country elections. More precisely, Collyer and Vathi (2007) argue that historically the number of countries allowing external voting has been underestimated and conclude, as does the *International IDEA Handbook on External Voting* (2007), that external voting—understood as a set of procedures allowing some or all citizens of a country to vote in home-country elections from outside the national territory—is widespread today at the international level. This does not, however, hide the fact that there exist large differences between the different pieces of

Table 1.1 Countries and Territories with Legislative or Constitutional Provisions for External Voting

| <i>Region</i> | <i>Country</i> |
|---------------|---|
| Africa (31) | Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Lesotho, Mali, Morocco, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Rwanda, São Tomé and Príncipe, Senegal, South Africa, Sudan, Togo, Tunisia, Zimbabwe |
| Americas (17) | Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Falkland Islands, Guyana, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, United States, Venezuela |
| Asia (20) | Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Malaysia, Oman, Philippines, Singapore, Syria, Tajikistan, Thailand, Uzbekistan, Yemen |
| Europe (41) | Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Gibraltar, Greece, Guernsey, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Jersey, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Isle of Man, Moldova, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom |
| Pacific (10) | Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, New Zealand, Palau, Pitcairn Islands, Vanuatu |
| Total: 119 | |

Source: IDEA and IFE (2007) and own research.

external voting legislation worldwide, and that some states have failed to adopt additional legislation that would render external voting effective in fully enfranchising all nationals living abroad. Turkey and Greece, for example, have adopted formal constitutional provisions on external voting but still lack proper legislation to implement them.

External voting, when understood as a set of administrative and technical procedures, is composed of three important steps: voters' registration, ballot casting, and counting.

Registering Voters Abroad

Voter registration abroad refers to the operation by which qualified non-resident citizens, as identified in the electoral legislation, are added to the electoral roll of citizens residing abroad. Registration may either be passive (citizens abroad are automatically added to the voter registries) or active (they must request registration). Passive registration implies that all citizens

abroad identified by home-country authorities as qualified external voters are added to the voter registries of an election without having to express the will to participate (e.g., Italy). In most cases, however, citizens abroad are required to request a ballot by submitting an administrative form to the relevant home-country authority.

Identifying citizens abroad that are entitled to an external vote is one of the biggest challenges for sending countries attempting to enfranchise citizens abroad. In trying to reach out to citizens abroad and inviting them to register, electoral authorities often rely on consular registries. However, just as these registries often fail to give an accurate estimate of the number of citizens abroad, they also present flaws in trying to set up voter registries abroad. First, even though many countries oblige their citizens to inform home authorities of their intention to permanently or temporarily reside abroad, this rule is difficult to put into practice. Registration with consular authorities is often voluntary and, unless citizens have administrative reasons to get in touch with home-country authorities (e.g., to renew a passport) or want to be easily contacted to facilitate repatriation when they live in unstable countries, they often have little incentive to do so. Second, citizens who register with consular authorities in their first country of destination may then move to different countries without necessarily informing authorities. This is particularly true for some transnational migrants who, for example, conduct professional activities across different countries. Third, citizens abroad who oppose the political regime of their home country may be unwilling to communicate their current address to consular authorities due to a lack of trust. Despite these limitations, consular registries are frequently used to establish electoral rolls of citizens residing abroad. However, there exist alternatives for states willing to get in touch with potential voters abroad. Mexico and Bolivia, for instance, explicitly prohibit their consular authorities from getting involved in electoral operations. Electoral authorities therefore set up their own voter registries independently of consular registries by reaching out to potential voters through information campaigns in destination countries.

In addition to the abovementioned difficulties, registration operations may further be complicated with undocumented migrants and refugees. Registering citizens who sojourn without proper documentation on another state's territory creates at least two complications for electoral authorities. First, legal insecurity and fear of deportation are strong incentives to keep good distance from authorities, whether they represent the home or the host country. In the case of Mexican migrants living in the United States, even though registration information is obviously not communicated to US authorities, some undocumented migrants have been reluctant to communicate their current addresses. Second, migrants trying to enter a country without documentation with the help of smugglers may be coerced into throwing away all of their identity documents. As I demonstrate in Chapter 5, the Federal Electoral Institute (IFE) of Mexico has faced difficulties

in trying to register Mexican voters in the United States. They indeed had little idea about the number of undocumented emigrants who still had their Mexican voter ID cards (indispensable in order to vote from abroad, even though it is only issued on the Mexican territory). In short, the two frequent problems identified above—reluctance to communicate with authorities and absence of proper documentation—render undocumented migrants a difficult population to register as voters abroad.

Another category of citizens abroad that is particularly difficult to register is the refugee population. This is especially true when it comes to the participation of refugees in postconflict elections (a specific kind of election that is discussed in Chapter 2). Even though the participation of this population is often presented as a central element in reconciliation efforts, it poses a serious dilemma to electoral authorities and international organizations involved in the electoral process by adding further complexity to the registration process. In addition to the difficulty of registering a population that has fled the country, postconflict elections held abroad may create issues with authorities of the refugees' host country. On the one hand, the host state may indeed be afraid of seeing a foreign conflict exported on its territory. On the other hand, the host state may also use these elections as a sign of improving conditions that could encourage refugees to return sooner (Gallagher and Schowengerdt 1998).

Overall, the specific categories of refugees and undocumented migrants underscore the difficulties of enfranchising citizens residing on another state's territory and the sovereignty issues it may cause.

Casting a Ballot from Abroad

Once voter registries abroad are set up, the next operation involves casting the ballot. Four procedures exist for emigrants to cast ballots without having to return to the national territory. The most widespread procedure is voting in person, which can take place either at embassies and consulates or at polling stations abroad. In both cases, it may appear necessary for home-country authorities to sign agreements with host-country authorities (or at least inform them) in order to find appropriate locations for polling stations and/or deal with the flow of voters on Election Day. For example, the Peruvian government organizes elections in countries where it has diplomatic representation but also cooperates with local authorities to find polling stations in cities where the emigrant community is most concentrated. In the 2007 presidential election, this effort permitted the organization of 254 polling stations in Italy, of which 113 were in the city of Milan alone (Tin-tori and Tarantino 2009).

The second procedure is postal voting, through which citizens abroad receive an electoral package at home and send it back to the home country's electoral authority by mail. Compared to voting in person, postal voting may prove to be a cheaper and more convenient solution for the large

participation of citizens abroad who may live far away from polling stations (Thompson 2007). It is, however, dependent on the existence of reliable postal services in host countries and offers few guarantees with respect to the secrecy of the vote. As we shall see in Chapter 5, Italy experienced difficulties with postal voting from abroad during the legislative elections of 2006 and 2008, as some citizens collected electoral packages of other voters and returned them in their name.

The third procedure is voting by proxy. Because the actual casting of the ballot takes place on the national territory by somebody else in the name of the voter, Nohlen and Grotz (2007) argue that—technically speaking—it might not be considered external voting. I, however, argue otherwise by considering external voting as an operation that enables citizens abroad to cast a vote without having to return to the national territory. In addition, countries like Belgium allow citizens abroad to use proxies in their countries of residence when casting a ballot at an embassy. For home countries, proxy voting presents an obvious advantage of limiting the budget and logistical implications of external voting. On the other hand, it may hurt the principle of equality among voters when nonemigrant voters are not offered the option of using a proxy. This modality is also criticized for not respecting the secrecy of the vote.

The fourth procedure, which is rarely used, is voting through telecommunications technologies. It includes the vote by fax as practiced by New Zealand and some states in the United States. It also covers electronic voting on the Internet. Making registration documents available on the Web for citizens to download and return by regular mail is a practice observed in different parts of the world. However, only a few European countries—Austria, France, the Netherlands, Spain, and Switzerland—and the United States have launched pilot projects to allow citizens abroad to cast ballots on secured voting Web sites. As underscored by Braun (2007), electronic voting is a controversial topic in many countries independently of its extension to emigrants or not. Despite its obvious practical advantage of enabling voters who have difficulties reaching voting stations to cast their ballots, issues of voter equality, the costs of setting up the system, and the security of the electoral process are all frequently questioned.

Counting the Emigrants' Votes

After emigrant ballots are cast, the third operation consists of counting and tabulating the votes. Depending on the voting procedure involved, the type of election in which citizens abroad take part, and the constituency in which they cast their ballots, this procedure may take different forms. It must also be noted that ballots may be opened and counted by electoral officers outside of the constituencies where these votes are actually attributed. For example, ballots cast by Italians abroad are opened and counted in Rome, even though they are allocated to the foreign constituency.

With regard to the geographic location where ballots are counted and tabulated, there exist two options: counting in the country of residence or repatriating the ballots to the home country. First, ballots can be opened and counted in the country of residence. This operation may take place in embassies, consulates, or polling stations abroad and may be performed by consular personnel or by representatives of the electoral authority who subsequently communicate the results to the home country. Second, in the case of postal voting, citizens may also send their ballots directly to the home country, where they are opened in a central counting station operated by the Foreign Affairs Ministry or the Electoral Authority. Alternatively, ballots can also be opened at a polling station in the constituency where the vote of the emigrant is allocated. For example, Belgian citizens living abroad may choose the constituency in which they want to take part in the Federal Legislative Election. If they choose to vote by mail, they can return their ballot to the central bureau of that constituency, where the envelope containing his/her vote is mixed with the ballots cast by resident voters.

The system of constituency allocation for the votes cast abroad is of critical importance in determining where the votes are counted, but also in determining the weight of citizens abroad on the electoral process. For this reason, determining the constituency where the votes of citizens abroad in legislative elections are counted is a central issue in the drafting of external voting legislation (in the case of referenda and presidential elections, external voters are included in the single national constituency). Most countries allowing external voting invite their citizens abroad to cast their ballots in constituencies located in the home country. The determination of the home constituency may be based on the free choice of the voter, such as in the case of Belgium mentioned above, or on criteria such as the citizen's last municipality of residence. The voter may also simply be designated to the constituency of the capital city. As the French elections of 1982 demonstrated, and more recently Belgium (see Lafleur 2011), leaving the choice of the constituency to the voter or her/his proxy may trigger controversies if this choice appears solely guided by a desire to impact electoral results in disputed constituencies. An additional issue related to the repatriation of ballots in home constituencies is that it may delay the publication of electoral results and, in cases where votes abroad are counted last, it increases the perception that these votes may be decisive. This situation of counting votes cast abroad after the votes cast on the national territory has shed light on the Spanish region of Galicia. There, citizens abroad (representing around 10 percent of all voters) have repeatedly been presented as having a crucial importance in the determination of the region's governing majority (see Hooper 2006).

An alternative to allowing citizens abroad to vote in home-country constituencies is to create one or several extraterritorial constituencies in which citizens abroad cast ballots for candidates who—like themselves—live abroad. The creation of these “reserved seats” for citizens abroad

obviously prevents ballots cast abroad from influencing the attribution of seats in home constituencies. As we shall see in Chapter 7, which provides an analysis of the relative power of Italy's emigrant parliamentarians, this does not necessarily prevent citizens abroad from having a decisive impact on electoral results.

The Development of External Voting as a Right for Citizens Abroad

As previously stated, the permission for certain categories of citizens who are not present on the national territory to vote in home-country elections is not a new phenomenon nor is it limited to only a few countries. The development of external voting as a right for the emigrant population as a whole to take part in home-country elections is a different matter. Since World War II—but especially over the last two decades—the number of countries allowing citizens to vote from abroad independently of holding a job that directly involves serving the home country has strongly increased. As shown in Table 1.2, numerous countries decided in the 1990s and 2000s that being absent from the national territory should not prevent the exercise of political rights abroad. While this does not mean that other barriers and criteria may not prevent some citizens abroad to vote, this increase illustrates the growing interest of sending countries to officially recognize citizens abroad as members of the polity. In addition to the technical definition of external voting as a set of electoral procedures, presented above, we can now add a political element to its definition by acknowledging the fact that external voting has also become a right to be a politically active citizen while living abroad. In other words, the condition of being an emigrant is not, *per se*, deemed incompatible with the exercise of voting rights in the home country.

It should be noted at this stage that, in a limited number of cases, voting from abroad is not only a right but also an obligation for emigrants. Failure to fulfill this civic duty may even lead to fines and sanctions. Some countries, such as Ecuador and Bolivia, may, however, waive the obligation to vote for citizens residing abroad (Araujo 2010). Others, such as Brazil, Australia, and Belgium, may try to enforce it abroad, although they have compulsory voting rules at home that apply differently to their emigrant population. In Australia, absence from the territory is a valid reason not to vote but may lead the removal of the voter from the register of external voters, therefore preventing him/her from exercising his/her right in the future. Brazil penalizes migrants with a fine if they do not comply with their voting duties. Brazilian citizens abroad may also suffer from administrative sanctions that prevent them from accessing certain jobs or obtaining certain official documents upon return to the home country if they are unable to prove that they exercised franchise while living abroad (Calderón Chelius 2007). In Belgium, while voting is mandatory for both resident and external voters, Belgians residing abroad are only subjected to the obligation to

Table 1.2 Countries that Implemented External Voting Policies for the First Time in the 1990s and 2000s

| <i>Decade</i> | <i>Country (date)</i> |
|---------------|--|
| 1990s (27) | Argentina (1993), Austria (1990), Belarus (1994), Belgium (1999), Bosnia and Herzegovina (1996), Botswana (1997), Bulgaria (1990), Cape Verde (1991), Côte d'Ivoire (1995), Croatia (1992), Estonia (1992), Georgia (1995), Guinea (1993), Kazakhstan (1994), Latvia (1992), Lithuania (1992), Moldova (1993), Namibia (1994), Poland (1990), Romania (1990), Senegal (1993), Slovenia (1992), South Africa (1994), Tajikistan (1994), Ukraine (1994), Uzbekistan (1994), Venezuela (1998) |
| 2000s (29) | Afghanistan (2004), Bolivia (2009), Cameroon (2011), Chad (2001), Czech Republic (2002), Dominican Republic (2004), Ecuador (2006), Egypt (2011), Gabon (2009), Ghana (2008), Honduras (2001), Hungary (2004), India (2004), Iraq (2004), Italy (2003), Japan (2002), Kyrgyzstan (2000), Laos (2006), Liechtenstein (2004), Mexico (2006), Monaco (2007), Mozambique (2004), Nauru (2004), Philippines (2004), Pitcairn Islands (2001), Rwanda (2003), Singapore (2006), Thailand (2000), Tunisia (2004) |
| Total: 56 | |

Source: IDEA and IFE (2007) and own research.

vote if they are listed on a consular registry. Emigrants whose names are in the consular registries but fail to vote or to register as voters are therefore breaching the principle of mandatory voting.⁶

For the purpose of this study, I shall, however, refer to external voting as a right exercised by citizens residing abroad rather than an obligation, even in countries that have mandatory voting. Indeed, even in the few cases of mandatory voting abroad the prime consequence of external voting legislation is still to enfranchise citizens abroad. In my understanding of external voting as a right for citizens abroad, I identify several defining characteristics.

Citizenship as a Requisite for Participation in Elections from Abroad

External voting implies that the nationals of a country are capable of casting their vote from outside the territory of the country where this election is held. As underscored by Nohlen and Grotz (2000), external voting must therefore be distinguished from two other rights. First, external voting does not comprise the right for foreigners to participate in host-country elections. In normative literature and public debates in some countries like Belgium, external voting rights and the right of foreigners to vote in host-country elections are often discussed together. These two rights are, however,

clearly different: External voting is the right for an individual to participate in the elections of a country where s/he holds citizenship.⁷ Further, external voting does not cover cases where emigrants are allowed to participate in home-country elections under the condition that they return to the national territory to cast their votes on Election Day. The characteristic of exercising a right without having to be physically present on the national territory differentiates external voting from the practice of in-country voting as described above (see also Chapter 5).

External Voting Rights Are Reserved to Qualified Citizens

External voting is a right that only citizens abroad who are qualified according to specific legislation can enjoy. Different countries mention the right to vote from abroad in their constitutions but have failed to pass appropriate legislation regulating the exercise of this right. In such cases, while constitutional principles seem to secure this right, there are no external voting provisions for nationals abroad. Other countries may have passed appropriate legislation but legal, technical, operational, or administrative barriers may *de facto* restrict the ability of citizens to exercise their rights to vote from abroad, even when the legislation is not limited to specific professional categories of citizens abroad. In Mexico, for instance, the obligation to hold a voter-identity card that can only be issued on the national territory has excluded a large share of the emigrant population from being able to register to vote from abroad.

Aside from the lack of proper implementation and the existence of different administrative barriers, the right to vote from abroad may be subjected to a series of qualification criteria. Obviously, the traditional restrictions that apply to voters residing within the national territory, such as being below the voting age or being deprived of civic rights (e.g., because of a criminal conviction or a prolonged state of immaturity), also apply to voters abroad. In addition, external voting legislation may contain special restrictions for citizens abroad. Qualification criteria related to the duration of residence abroad, the place of residence abroad, and the size of the emigrant community are indeed frequently used in different parts of the world. As we shall see later on, these criteria can be implemented (just like administrative barriers) for purely political purposes. This means that home-country authorities may adopt specific qualification criteria in order to stimulate or undermine the political participation of certain sectors of the emigrant community and therefore control their impact on the elections results.

Because some countries consider that a longer residence period outside of the national territory means a lack of interest, commitment, or stake in home-country affairs, they indeed exclude emigrants from taking part in home-country elections after a certain amount of time spent abroad. In Germany, the United Kingdom, and Canada, the number of years after which an emigrant can no longer take part in elections from abroad is,

respectively, 25, 15, and 5 years (Navarro Fierro, Morales, and Gratschew 2007). In other countries, however, the time restriction might play in the opposite direction. In Italy, emigrants who wish to vote ought to be registered in the consular registry but registration is only allowed for citizens intending to stay at least a year abroad. Italian citizens who conduct business trips on Election Day or students doing exchange programs in another country are excluded from the scope of the external voting legislation.

The emigrant's country of residence may be another criterion affecting the qualification of a voter from abroad. As I show in Chapter 5, registration and electoral processes abroad may be complex, burdensome, or costly for home-country authorities. For this reason, they may try to limit the participation of citizens to those residing in certain countries only. Senegal, for instance, allows citizens to register and vote in countries of residence where it has diplomatic representation. Bolivia, on the other hand, opted to limit the right to vote in presidential elections from abroad to citizens residing in the four largest receiving countries of Bolivian migrants (Argentina, Brazil, the United States, and Spain). Bolivia and Senegal are also good illustrations of a third kind of qualification criterion that has to do with the size of the emigrant population abroad. Here again, the financial, logistical, and—most importantly—political consequences of the electoral participation of emigrants may encourage sending countries to limit the number of voters from abroad independently of considerations for the principle of equal rights for citizens residing abroad. In the case of Senegal, registered voters in a particular destination country are only able to exercise their right to vote from abroad if at least 500 emigrants have registered in the electoral roll of citizens residing abroad in that country. In Bolivia, the numerical restriction applied to voters abroad is twofold. First, the total number of emigrants who can register to vote abroad cannot exceed 10 percent of the resident voting population. Second, none of the four countries of residence in which registration is allowed may register more than half of the total emigrant voting population.

These different examples of qualification criteria applied to citizens abroad show how the right for emigrants to vote can be limited despite the absence of professional status restrictions. In explaining why and how states enfranchise citizens abroad, I will later devote significant attention to these restrictions to underscore the motivations of the different actors involved in the adoption process of external voting legislation.

External Voting Concerns Different Types of Elections

The right to vote in home-country elections may concern different types of elections: legislative elections, presidential elections, subnational elections, and referenda (both national and subnational). Even though 14 countries allow citizens abroad to vote only in presidential elections, most countries allowing external voting apply it to legislative elections often in

combination with one or several other types of elections (Navarro Fierro, Morales, and Gratschew 2007).

In a similar way to the adoption of qualification criteria, deciding which elections emigrants are allowed to participate in may be guided by logistical, financial, and political reasons. However, with the increasing desire of sending countries to stay closely connected with their citizens abroad, this decision may also be guided by a willingness to give emigrants a voice in home-country affairs. Legislators in countries like Mexico and Italy were guided by different motivations to determine the elections in which emigrants could take part. In Mexico, emigrants always preferred to be able to vote in legislative elections for emigrant candidates (i.e., a reserved-seat system). Independently of the legal, logistical, and political complications that this demand raised, some lawmakers also argued that voting in presidential elections was most appropriate for emigrants. Their idea was that, as the president is the head of the country's external relations, he would better defend the interest of emigrants abroad. In the state of Michoacán, the discussion on allowing emigrants the right to vote in subnational elections also led to the approval of a limited franchise to gubernatorial elections, while an indirect form of emigrant representation in the regional assembly was implemented. In Italy, legislators decided to allow emigrants to vote for emigrant parliamentarians partly because it would give them a voice in their home-country affairs, but most importantly because political parties thought it would limit the impact of external voters to a predetermined number of seats. With respect to the right to vote in referenda, it could be argued that Italian emigrants' right to participate in abrogative and constitutional referenda aimed at giving them a voice in decisions that affect the structure of the state. Yet, in practice, the very specific questions to which emigrants were invited to answer along with resident voters in 2003 (i.e., on country planning and labor-law issues) hardly touched upon the interests of citizens who didn't live on the home-state territory anymore.

In addition to presidential, legislative, and subnational elections and referenda, a limited number of countries also allow citizens abroad to participate in two specific forms of elections: supranational and primary elections. Perhaps the most interesting case of emigrant participation in supranational elections is that of the European parliamentary elections (see Chapter 2). With the first direct European election in 1979, Member States of the European Community (EC) sought to create a stronger sense of European identity for citizens living on its territory. To this end, citizens of EC Member States were given the right to elect their own Members of the European Parliament (MEP). To ensure that the development of this European identity would not be undermined by mobility, EC citizens who were living in another country than their country of citizenship were given the opportunity to vote for European Parliament (EP) candidates in their country of residence. This provision also spurred countries to allow emigrants to vote from abroad for MEP candidates in their country of origin.

Italy, for instance, implemented external voting legislation for these elections that were largely considered of secondary importance. Yet, this experience demonstrated the feasibility of such a mechanism to lawmakers, who had previously considered external voting impossible to implement for their own national elections. The second example of the right to vote in a supranational body's election is the Andean Parliament. Contrarily to the European Parliament, this assembly does not have legislative power and can only make recommendations. Several of its member states, such as Ecuador and Colombia, have, however, taken steps to allow citizens residing abroad (whether they reside in another Andean Community Member State or not) to participate in these elections as well.

The last type of election in which emigrants may be invited to vote is that of primary elections. The particularity of these elections is that they may have different qualification criteria to be a voter from abroad than the criteria in other types of elections. The typical additional criterion is that one should be a member of the political party that is holding the primary election. This is, for example, the case of the Democratic Party in the United States, which allows its members abroad to participate in primary elections by electronic vote to select a Democratic nominee for the presidential election. The rules to qualify as a voter in primary elections from abroad may also be more lax than for other types of elections. In the case of Italy, the Partito Democratico allowed citizens abroad as young as 16 years of age to participate in the primary election before the 2008 legislative election, when the actual voting age is 18 for the election of the house and 25 for the senate. Furthermore, citizens who are temporarily abroad, or who are not registered with consular authorities (and therefore may not vote from abroad in legislative elections), are allowed to take part in the primaries (Partito Democratico 2008).

A major difference between primary elections held abroad by political parties and the other types of elections is that their organization is not necessarily ruled by formal legislation but rather by internal rules adopted by the party itself.⁸ In such cases, the enfranchisement of citizens abroad is not a state policy. However, political parties that support external voting legislation may find it appropriate to also give emigrants a voice within their party structure through the organization of primaries. They may want to do so to ensure that emigrant views are still represented in the home country. Political parties may also be tempted to hold primaries abroad to gather momentum before an upcoming election.

External Voting Includes the Right to Be Elected from Abroad

Even though the issue is debated in many different parts of the world, only a limited number of countries that have legislation permitting external voting also have provisions on the passive electoral rights of emigrants (Algeria, Angola, Cape Verde, Colombia, Croatia, Ecuador, France, Italy,

Mozambique, Panama, Portugal, and Tunisia). Such provisions allow citizens abroad to stand as candidates in home-country elections. As explained above, the development of external voting is a recognition by home-country authorities that their citizens abroad remain members of the polity despite their physical absence from the territory. This symbolic recognition goes even further with passive electoral rights because it is an acknowledgment by the home state that emigrant interests need to be represented in legislative assemblies. It therefore acknowledges that citizens abroad have specific claims towards their home country that can be voiced directly in parliament. With reserved seats in parliament, the distinction becomes clearer between external voting legislation of the early 20th century and contemporary legislation. Old legislation on external voting limited enfranchisement to certain categories of citizens who, for the most part, were serving the national interests from abroad. The enfranchisement of these citizens who were recognized as having particular qualities was thus an exception to a principle that reserved ballots to citizens residing in the national territory. Contemporary legislation on external voting (and particularly those that include passive electoral rights) recognizes, on the contrary, that residence abroad is not a cause for exclusion from the political community but rather a new ground upon which political rights are granted.

Contemporary external voting policies are thus redefining the geographical borders of the political community because they clearly suggest that the condition of an emigrant residing on another state's territory is not incompatible with polity membership. This deterritorialization of the political community is more obvious when looking at foreign constituencies. These constituencies are often subdivisions of the planet covering the different areas of the world where emigrant communities are located. Each of these divisions allows citizens abroad to elect a determined number of MPs who live abroad just like them. As we shall see with the analysis of the Italian external voting system, such reserved seats for emigrant MPs may create the impression that an "imperative mandate" exists between the emigrants and the MPs (i.e., that emigrant MPs can only legislate in the interest of citizens abroad). However, most parliamentary democracies prohibit such a mandate, as MPs are expected to represent the nation as a whole. With the case of Italy in Chapter 4, we will also have the opportunity to see how foreign constituencies may appear to be appropriate solutions to control the impact of emigrants on national politics.

AN OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF EXTERNAL VOTING

In this chapter, I have demonstrated that external voting is not a new or exceptional public policy. Despite important variations in the content, scope, and grade of different countries' legislation, a majority of states in the world today have provisions that allow at least some citizens abroad to

vote in home-country elections without having to return. In the 1990s and 2000s, a substantial increase in the number of states that have implemented such policies was observed. I argue that this acceleration demonstrates that external voting is no longer just a set of administrative and technical procedures regulating the registration, voting modality, and count of votes cast abroad. Today, external voting has increasingly become a right by which citizens abroad are recognized as having formal membership in the polity independently of their desire to ever return to the homeland. Based on the above discussion and for the purpose of this book, the following chapters aim at explaining the motivations of states to grant citizens abroad external voting rights, defined 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 a country of which they hold citizenship but where they permanently or temporarily do not reside.

2 Understanding the Development of External Voting Rights Worldwide

The Legal, Normative, and Sociopolitical Arguments

Considering the number of countries that have developed formal external voting legislation, it can be argued that this policy has become widely spread across the globe. Despite this worldwide development, legislation can vary substantially from one country to another according to the procedures involved, the criteria for entitlement to vote from abroad, and the type of election in which emigrants can take part. Because of these variations, different external voting regimes coexist at the international level. Some countries, particularly those that adopted external voting in earlier years, have adopted restrictive legislation that only allows specific categories of citizens to vote from abroad. In these cases, external voting appears to be a “privilege” granted by the state only to some categories of citizens living abroad who are recognized as having particular merits (e.g., military service members). In recent years, however, states have tended to adopt more liberal external voting systems that concern large sectors of the population abroad. For these states, residence abroad is no longer a legitimate basis for excluding emigrants from the polity. In these cases, external voting has become a “right” for citizens living abroad.

The worldwide adoption of external voting policies over the past two decades can be studied from three different perspectives. The first is the legal perspective, which implies looking at the evolution of international norms on political rights as an incentive for states to grant voting rights to their citizens abroad. Second, a normative perspective on the development of external voting can also be adopted. In recent years, several political theory scholars have been debating the legitimacy for emigrants to cast votes from abroad. Third is a sociopolitical approach; sociologists and political scientists active in the fields of migration, transnationalism, and citizenship have also tried to understand why sending states try to reach out to their citizens abroad through different policies. In this chapter, I ultimately opt for this third approach to identify several sociopolitical variables that could explain why states enfranchise their citizens abroad. In Chapters 3 and 4, where I look at the external voting debates in Mexico and Italy, I will then try to measure the influence of each of these variables.

INTERNATIONAL NORMS AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF EXTERNAL VOTING

Since the end of World War II, a series of global and regional legal instruments have promoted the rights of individuals to participate in free and fair elections. These treaties, charters, declaration, and rulings have different binding powers and different geographic areas of application. They, however, rarely address directly the right of citizens abroad to take part in the elections of the country where they hold citizenship.

Two instruments adopted by the UN General Assembly laid the groundwork for the progressive recognition of the right to participate in free and fair elections as a universal right. First, Article 21 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights provides for the right of individuals to participate in the government of their country:

Everyone has the right to take part in the government of their country, directly or through freely chosen representatives. . . . The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.

While this declaration does not have the same binding power as a treaty, its near-universal acceptance has transformed it into a sort of “international bill of rights”(Grace 2003). Second, the case for a universal right to participate in free and fair elections has been strengthened by the adoption of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights by the UN General Assembly in 1966. Article 25 of the treaty states:

Every citizen shall have the right and the opportunity, without any of the distinctions mentioned in article 2 and without unreasonable restrictions . . . to vote and to be elected at genuine periodic elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret ballot, guaranteeing the free expression of the will of the electors.

In addition to the two abovementioned texts, a series of regional treaties such as the Charter of the Organization of American States (1948), the Statute of the Council of Europe (1949), and the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights (1981) support the principle of free participation in government.

Despite their universal character and their emphasis on nondiscrimination, no specific right to participate in home-country elections from abroad can be derived from the abovementioned instruments. With time, the interpretations given to some of these texts have, however, progressively

recognized a stronger case for refugees to participate in home-country elections than for international migrants.

The 1951 United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees defines a refugee as a person “owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country.” Yet, the convention does not explicitly discuss the issue of refugees’ political rights. For Gallagher and Schowengerdt (1998: 199), their entitlement to participate in home-country elections nonetheless receives little discussion because:

Refugees have not in any way relinquished their citizenship by seeking asylum, but rather cannot avail themselves of the protection of their country of origin because current conditions therein pose a threat to either their lives or livelihood. As citizens, therefore, they have the right to participate in the electoral processes of their country.

Despite this interpretation, the participation of refugees is still not considered by the international community as a criterion to declare elections free and fair. For this reason, numerous countries still prevent refugees from participating in postconflict elections. Reasons for excluding refugees include the complexity of enfranchising them, the cost of organizing an election abroad, and concerns about the refugees’ impact on the electoral process (Grace 2003). Nonetheless, postconflict elections that enfranchise refugees are sometimes considered by the international community as a necessary step in reconciliation processes and in the repatriation of refugees (Fischer 2007).

From a practical viewpoint, the participation of refugees in home-country elections does not necessarily imply external voting; voter registration and ballot-casting operations may actually take place in the country of origin to encourage repatriation. On the contrary, recent examples such as the popular consultation on independence in East Timor, the municipal and legislative elections in Kosovo in 2000 and 2001, and the 2005 Transitional National Assembly Election in Iraq permitted registration and ballot casting in the refugees’ countries of residence. In those cases, the involvement of the international community in electoral processes was decisive. For United Nations’ agencies and bodies (e.g., the Electoral Assistance Division), intergovernmental organizations such as the International Organization for Migration, regional organizations such as the European Union, and individual states, helping to organize elections is part of a strategy to support the reconciliation process after a conflict.

These examples tend to demonstrate that the principle of refugee participation in postconflict elections is increasingly accepted at the international level despite a lack of legal standards. In other words, the status of being

a conflict-forced refugee has become a valid ground for political participation from abroad. This status, however, is specific because external voting procedures are not necessarily maintained for subsequent elections once former war-torn countries are on the path to reconciliation. Policies enfranchising conflict-forced migrants are thus often implemented with the idea of encouraging repatriation. This makes these policies qualitatively different from the policies enfranchising citizens abroad independently of their willingness to return, which I discussed in Chapter 1.

The world counts 15.2 million refugees across the globe today. These individuals seem to have a strong case for political participation from abroad. But what about the other 214 million international migrants in the world?¹ As I previously stated, sending states remain free to enfranchise citizens abroad or not. For the most part, states that do not allow external voting do not explicitly prohibit migrants from participating either. Rather, they do not have the proper legislation to organize elections abroad. The obligation for voters to reside on the national territory is the most frequent barrier to emigrant participation in home-country elections. In some cases, citizens residing abroad are allowed to vote provided that they travel to the national territory on Election Day. This mechanism, which is known as in-country voting, differs from external voting because it does not allow for votes to be cast outside the national territory.

Two international bodies have touched upon the issue of voters' residency. First, there is the United Nations' Human Rights Committee, which monitors states' compliance with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. It does not call for the removal of residency requirements, but it insists that they must be reasonable.² Second, the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission) issued guidelines on elections in 2002. The guidelines reaffirm the principle of universal suffrage but recognize that it should be subject to certain conditions including residence. The commission also acknowledges that the right to vote and to be elected may be given to citizens residing abroad but stresses possible risks attached to this practice.³ Overall, both the UN Human Rights Committee and the Venice Commission leave states tremendous latitude in defining residency requirements (Grace 2003).

The first international instrument to directly address the issue of emigrants' rights to participate in home-country elections is the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families. It was adopted in 1990 by the UN General Assembly and came into force in 2003. In Article 41, the convention states, "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. . . . The States concerned shall, as appropriate and in accordance with their legislation, facilitate the exercise of these rights."⁴ Further, in Article 42, the convention encourages receiving states to grant migrants voting rights in local elections. Even though

the convention clearly outlines international migrants' entitlement to a right to vote in their home countries, it has two weaknesses that limit its scope. First, its signatories are almost exclusively emigrant-sending states. Second, the text only addresses the rights of documented migrant workers and their families, while leaving aside the political rights of undocumented migrants (Navarro 2007).

Only a few years after this convention came into force, the Committee of the Ministers of the Council of Europe adopted in 2007 Recommendation CM/Rec(2007)10, a recommendation "to Member States on co-development and migrants working for development in their countries of origin." This recommendation does not address the issue of external voting in particular. Instead, it recommends that authorities in both sending and receiving countries provide migrants with an environment that encourages codevelopment practices (i.e., activities by which emigrants contribute to the development of their home countries). With regard to the governments of sending countries in particular, it states that they should improve "the recognition and visibility of their emigrants' contribution at all levels: cultural, political, economic and social" and "should take legal and administrative measures facilitating the efforts of migrants and their associations."⁵ Despite the absence of provisions on external voting, these recommendations draw a clear relationship between the potential socioeconomic benefits that emigrants can bring to their home countries and the need for governments to adopt policies favorable to their citizens abroad. The most obvious examples of these policies are dual nationality laws that facilitate movement between sending and receiving areas. Specific tax policies or programs to encourage the sending of remittances also belong to this realm.

Legal Developments in Europe

The previous discussion showed that states are largely unconstrained by international norms when shaping external voting policies. They are free to decide whom to enfranchise and how to deal with the political rights of citizens abroad. On the regional level, however, I have already hinted at some noteworthy supranational norms that impact migrants' political rights. Europe is a notable example of this. Regional organizations like the Council of Europe and the European Union have been particularly active in the field of political rights.

A central document in Europe is Protocol No. 1 of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ECHR) of 1952. In Article 3, it obliges states to hold "free elections at reasonable intervals" and "ensure the free expression of the opinion of the people in the choice of the legislature." As observed by Kochenov (2009), this principle has led the European Court of Human Rights to regard limitations to the political rights of certain groups of citizens with

suspicion. Nonetheless, the adoption of residence requirements preventing emigrants to take part in home-country elections from abroad is still considered an acceptable limitation. Indeed, the European Commission for Human Rights confirmed in 1979 that preventing citizens who have voluntarily left the country from voting is not discriminatory in the eyes of the ECHR. At the basis of the decision, we find several arguments that are also observed in national debates on external voting, such as the idea that nonresident citizens are less directly concerned and have less knowledge of their home countries' day-to-day problems; the impracticability and sometimes undesirability of campaigning abroad; and the fact that emigrants voters are less directly affected by acts of the political bodies they elect than resident voters.⁶

Different recommendations encourage Member States to facilitate the exercise of their own emigrants' electoral rights by providing absentee voting procedures, such as the Committee of Ministers' Recommendation No. R (86) 8 and Parliamentary Assembly Resolution 1459 (2005). In 2012, in a court case between Greece and some of its citizens wanting to vote from abroad, the European Court of Human Rights, however, confirmed that the abovementioned recommendation—according to which states should enable their nonresident citizens to participate to the fullest extent possible—was not mandatory. The court also found that the obligation for citizens abroad to travel back to the home country to vote on Election Day was not encroaching on their right to vote. Accordingly, the court decided that the absence of external voting provisions did not breach Greek emigrants' human rights.⁷

The Council of Europe is not the only international organization in Europe to be active in the field of voting rights. The European Union has been at the source of important changes in the exercise of political rights by emigrants on the local and supranational levels. As we shall see in Chapter 4, the EU has also influenced external voting legislation in some of its Member States.

The development of electoral rights on the EU level goes back to the creation of the Common Assembly of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). This assembly was originally composed of parliamentarians delegated by the national parliaments of Member States. These parliamentarians soon realized that the freedom of movement of European workers was disenfranchising them in their places of residence (Shaw 2007). In 1951, Member States of the ECSC contemplated the possibility for each state to elect representatives in the assembly by direct universal suffrage. In the 1960s parliamentarians concerned with the idea of "building Europe" also launched a discussion on whether EU citizens who reside in a Member State other than their own should have the right to vote in European parliamentary elections in their country of residence (*op. cit.*). This proposal, however, was not included in the act concerning the election of the members of the European Parliament by direct universal suffrage (20 September

1976). The failure to adopt a uniform electoral procedure for EP elections in 1976, and the failure to do so since that opportunity, means that each Member State remains sovereign to determine the electoral procedures for EP elections on its territory.⁸

As far as political participation in host-country elections is concerned, EU citizens living in another country gained new rights with the adoption of the Maastricht Treaty in 1991. The treaty established the right for EU citizens to vote and run as candidates in European and local elections in their countries of residence. However, this important development in the field of political citizenship in Europe did not create a European supranational citizenship. Indeed, Member State nationality remained the indispensable condition to enjoy European citizenship rights (O'Leary 1996). For European elections in particular, the Council Directive 93/109/EC of 6 December 1993 established the free choice of EU citizens to vote in their Member State of residence or in their home country. The directive also confirmed that EU citizens residing in another Member State who wish to vote in that country must satisfy the same conditions as a national of that Member State.

With respect to external voting, each Member State remains free to decide whether or not to set up external voting mechanisms to allow its citizens living abroad to vote for EP candidates running in their home country. Accordingly, three EU countries (Bulgaria, Ireland, and Slovakia) still limit the right to participate in EU elections to EU citizens residing on their territory. In other words, these states do not allow their own citizens living abroad to vote in home country EP elections. Furthermore, even for those states that allow some form of external voting, we can observe differences between countries allowing participation from abroad only to their nationals living in another Member State (Belgium, Denmark, Greece, Italy, and Portugal) and countries allowing all citizens living overseas to vote in EP elections (Austria, the Netherlands, Spain, Finland, France, and Sweden) (European Parliament 2009).

With regard to national elections, some observers have noted that EU citizens using their freedom-of-movement rights can be disenfranchised in national elections (Kochenov 2009). In the absence of European legislation on external voting, Member States can prevent their citizens abroad from voting in national elections; Cyprus, Hungary, Ireland, and Malta do not permit such participation. Other states severely restrict the exercise of this right. For example, German and British citizens living abroad are eligible to vote from abroad only for a limited period after their departure from the home country.

To conclude this section on the international norms on external voting, we have seen that no global or regional binding instruments currently force states to implement external voting legislation. Yet, extensive interpretations of international norms on the right to political participation have made a strong case for electoral process inclusion for refugees fleeing

conflicts. Their inclusion may indeed be perceived as a necessary step in the reconciliation process, or as a measure aimed to stimulate repatriation. With respect to emigrants, however, the weakness of international norms on external voting fails to explain why states in different parts of the world are adopting this policy nowadays. For this reason, we need to look at alternative explanations.

NORMATIVE THEORY AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF EXTERNAL VOTING

Only a limited number of normative political theory scholars have started to study external voting with the aim of answering the following question: Should emigrants participate in home-country elections? The present book does not have the ambition to develop a new theoretical approach to legitimize or delegitimize external voting. My interest in normative theory is therefore limited to determining whether or not it helps in understanding why so many states are adopting external voting legislation in different parts of the world. I confront the normative arguments developed in the literature with a preliminary analysis of the arguments I collected from my observations of national debates on external voting, primarily in Italy and Mexico.

In a frequently cited work on external voting, Nohlen and Grotz (2000) identify what they qualify as the “problems” that external voting poses to democracies. Based on this work, as well as the works of other scholars and my own empirical observations, I, however, suggest a slightly different classification. First, states that consider enfranchising citizens abroad often struggle with the issue of emigrant representation in the country where they no longer reside. One of their main concerns is that emigrants are not affected by electoral results in the same ways as resident voters. Second, the sociodemographic characteristics of the emigrant population may also raise concerns in certain countries. This is the case, for example, when diasporas represent a significant share of the total electoral body. Third, issues of campaign supervision, electoral processes, costs, transparency, and judicial control over electoral processes abroad are frequently raised in the literature and in parliamentary debates on external voting. These questions belong to a single category of organizational issues related to external voting.

The Issue of the Political Representation of Emigrants

As I mentioned previously, states that do not allow external voting rarely explicitly forbid it. Instead, restrictions to external voting are usually found in electoral laws where residence requirements *de facto* prevent citizens residing outside of the country from participating in elections from abroad. For scholars inspired by Dahl’s principle of full inclusion, according to which the demos of a democratic polity comprises “all adults subject to the

binding collective decisions of the association” (1989: 129), the residency requirement is not just a practical limitation to external voting. López-Guerra, for instance, justifies his opposition to external voting by the fact that “the demos of a democratic polity must exclude all individuals who are not subject to the laws” (2005: 225). In other words, he believes that citizens abroad would not be affected by the laws passed by the representatives they would vote for. For this reason, they should focus on participating in the politics of their countries of residence (provided that they qualify). Based on this territorially based vision of citizenship, citizens abroad should not be allowed to vote.

In my interviews with Italian supporters of external voting, the question of “affected interests” revealed important disagreements. In Italy, some lawmakers indeed defended the idea that Italians abroad should concentrate on integrating in the host country, whose government has a stronger impact on their daily lives. An intermediate position consisted of acknowledging that emigrants have some valid claims with respect to the home country, but that the creation of a consultative council in which emigrant representatives can meet elected officials would be enough. Others, in contrast with López-Guerra’s viewpoint, supported the idea that some citizens’ interests may be affected by different states at the same time, and that an ethnic affiliation to the Italian nation was sufficient ground to grant political rights.

Different scholars, including Bauböck (2007) and Owen (2009), reject the idea that citizens living abroad are freed from any obligation towards the home country. Examples of states that conscript citizens abroad to military service or tax their income earned abroad are very telling in this respect. They also denounce the illusion that citizens abroad are not affected by decisions taken in the home country when, for example, home-country authorities can take decisions to limit nonresident citizens’ access to health care or state pensions in the home country. In addition, the development of transnational practices by which some migrants engage in economic, political, or social activities in their home countries further supports the idea that citizens abroad may have their interests affected by political decisions taken in that country (Lafleur and Martiniello 2009). However, Bauböck (2007: 2422) considers the principle of affected interest too vague as a basis to allocate political rights. He prefers the concept of stakeholding instead, to suggest that beyond having a fundamental interest in the outcomes of the political process, citizens abroad must also have a claim to be represented as participants in that process. Using stakeholding as a yardstick, Bauböck concludes that temporary emigrants, diplomats, conflict-forced migrants, and first-generation migrants have a legitimate right to participate in home-country elections from abroad. Generations born abroad, on the contrary, have no stakes in their forebears’ home country. Accordingly, they should only be allowed to participate when they fulfill additional conditions such as a period of prior residence in the home country. In this sense, Bauböck’s recommendation is consistent with Nohlen and Grotz’s differentiated

approach, according to which there is not a single external voting policy that is appropriate for all states that consider implementing such a policy.

The Issues Created by Some Sociodemographic Characteristics of the Emigrant Population

Normative arguments on external voting do not only address the issue of whether emigrant interests should be represented in the home country. They also question whether emigrant participation is affecting the interests of the nonemigrant voters. In this regard, external voting may face substantial opposition when the population abroad is perceived as having a potentially decisive impact on electoral results. This fear arises particularly when the population abroad presents certain characteristics.

First, when citizens abroad outnumber domestic voters or represent a large share of the overall voting population, the fear arises that electoral results will be dictated by citizens abroad. Only a few states in the world have a majority of their citizens residing outside of the national territory. However, more states have large diasporas that could potentially represent an important share of the overall voting population. These states are generally cautious about implementing external voting provisions despite persistent debates (Grace 2007). In Mexico, the size of the voting population abroad was a central issue in the debates on external voting during the 1990s. Indeed, some estimates indicated that up to 10 million people could vote from abroad, when domestic voters represented around 40 million people (IFE 1998). In Bolivia too, uncertainties around the number of citizens abroad (estimates range between 1.2 to 2 million people) complicated the debate on external voting. In both cases, the fear was that citizens who live abroad could determine the outcome of the election.

Second, the legitimacy of external voting is also questioned when electoral results abroad are expected to be significantly different from the domestic vote. Continuing with the example of Bolivia, the parliamentary discussions on external voting were also delayed by political calculations. Bolivia's main right-wing party assumed that Bolivians abroad were socio-economically disadvantaged workers whose votes would heavily benefit the Left. This kind of political calculation is a recurring element in debates on the enfranchisement of citizens abroad.

As I show in the next chapters, the anticipated impact of external voting on electoral results is a crucial variable in the adoption of such a policy. From a normative viewpoint, however, Bauböck (2007) distinguishes the fear of swamping the domestic electorate (when voters abroad are more numerous than domestic voters) and the tipping scenario (when the votes cast abroad change the outcome of an election). In the first case, he argues that supporting external voting does not mean that it is legitimate for domestic voters to be structurally dominated by external voters. Arguing that the fear of external domination might be reasonable, even in cases

when external voters are not more numerous than domestic voters, he thus suggests limitations to emigrants' voting rights can be acceptable in certain conditions. These restrictions include prohibiting external voting and only allowing in-country voting instead. Reserved seats in parliament can also be created to decrease the electoral weight of voters abroad.⁹ From a normative viewpoint, Spiro (2006) argues that the fact that emigrants may have specific interests can justify the creation of reserved seats. Bauböck (2007), following his concept of stakeholder citizenship, suggests, on the contrary, that "The claims of expatriates to political participation are legitimate only to the extent that they can be regarded as being inside the political community" (2007: 2433). For this reason, the specific interests of emigrants do not justify the creation of such seats because associations and consultative bodies are sufficient to take them in consideration.

These debates clearly materialized in Italy, where the creation of a foreign constituency was deliberated for a long time. On the one hand, some politicians underlined the advantage of reserved seats to decrease the potential impact of the Italian diaspora on electoral results. Migrant associations also supported such a constituency because they felt it would give them a voice in parliament. On the other hand, critics feared that it would create a sort of "Indian reservation" within the Italian Parliament, where representatives would not represent the general citizenry but only the citizens residing abroad.

With respect to the tipping scenario, different examples have attracted the media's attention in recent years. During the 2005 regional election in the Spanish region of Galicia, the responsibility of ousting the long-standing right-wing government was attributed to voters abroad whose votes were counted last. In Romania in 2009, the victory of presidential candidate Traian Basescu was equally attributed to the diaspora after he won the overall election with the slight margin of 71,000 votes but took almost 80 percent of the votes cast abroad (Dumbrava 2009). Attributing electoral victories and defeats to external voters rather than other social groups, however, seems unreasonable. Bauböck (2007) sums up the illegitimacy of such opposition to external voting with the following example: If a majority of women and urban voters have all supported a candidate who won the external vote, why would the fact that this candidate would have lost without external voters be more significant than the fact that s/he would have lost without the urban or female vote?

The Organizational Issues

A last set of arguments against external voting has to do with the practical consequences of organizing elections abroad. More precisely, it concerns external voters' access to information, the cost of external voting, the transparency of electoral processes, the enforcement of electoral rules abroad, and the relations with the emigrants' countries of residence.

The idea that voters abroad are not informed about home-country politics supposes that distance and time spent abroad limit emigrants' access to information on home-country politics. Contrary to domestic voters, who are assumed to be well-informed, voters abroad would thus be insufficiently informed about the stakes of a particular election. Yet, with the development of satellite television, emigrants who wish to do so are able to follow home-country news on a daily basis. Ethnic media outlets targeting large migrant communities in certain destination countries play a similar role: They provide information of interest to the emigrant, whether it concerns the country of residence or the country of origin (e.g., Latino media in the United States). Most importantly, new information and communication technologies provide migrants with permanent and instantaneous means to follow home-country news. Nowadays, emigrants can access newspapers' Web sites, read political platforms online during electoral campaigns, and take part in political discussions using social networks. While the use of these technologies requires economic and educational means that not all emigrants have, they increasingly reduce the gap between domestic and external voters with regard to access to information on political issues (see Chapter 6 for further discussion on this issue).

The cost of organizing elections abroad is another recurring argument in the opposition to external voting. The IDEA handbook on external voting, for instance, indicates that the 2006 presidential election in Mexico cost the authorities about 27.7 million USD (around 850 USD per vote), while it cost Canada around 210,000 USD to organize its 2004 general election abroad (around 20 USD per vote). Comparing cost estimates does not make much sense if we do not take into consideration the specifics of each country (e.g., the size and dispersion of the voting population abroad, the efforts that are made to facilitate registration, the voting procedures, etc.).

Even though there are little data on the real costs of external voting, external voting is often presented as an unfair cost to be borne by the state. Except in the few countries that tax their citizens abroad, the fact that citizens do not contribute to the tax system (yet benefit from certain privileges like diplomatic and consular assistance) is used as an argument against external voting. In response to this recurring claim, supporters of external voting in Mexico and Italy have always countered that emigrants have contributed economically to their home countries in different ways—mainly by sending remittances. Because of the crucial importance of remittances for some sending societies, some argue that being able to vote from abroad is a fair reward. Rubio-Marín (2006) argues, however, that there is something inherently problematic with contribution-based claims to voting rights. Sending remittances is a matter of personal choice, aimed at maximizing individual profit or advancing personal interests. Despite the advantage this money gives to the home country at the macroeconomic level, remittances do not result from the citizen's duty towards his or her home country in exchange for political rights.

A third set of organizational issues concerns the transparency and judicial control of electoral processes abroad. By definition, electoral authorities have limited means to control external voting processes that happen simultaneously in different countries. In addition, electoral authorities have limited power to exercise supervision on operations happening on the territories of other sovereign states. For many opponents of external voting, these difficulties increase risks of electoral fraud. Depending on the legislation and the voting procedure, irregularities abroad may indeed arise during the registration stage, electoral campaign, voting operations, or counting operations. These irregularities—like any irregularity that could happen on the national territory—may altogether hurt the legitimacy of the electoral process. This may be particularly detrimental in post-conflict situations or in young democracies (Nohlen and Grotz 2000).

To prevent electoral fraud abroad, states tend to implement different rules that tend to negatively affect electoral participation abroad in the process. For example, to avoid having to control electoral spending of Mexican parties abroad, legislators decided to prohibit all campaigns abroad. This decision has naturally had a negative impact on participation abroad, considering that parties generally encourage emigrants to register and vote. In Italy, on the contrary, legislators were less cautious about preventing electoral fraud and focused, instead, on facilitating actual electoral participation for the largest possible number of emigrants. To this end, citizens abroad do not have to request a ballot before each election. Instead, electoral authorities automatically send millions of ballots to citizens abroad who do not explicitly request to vote. This system has led certain candidates to collect ballots among voters abroad in an attempt to fraudulently influence the election. The Mexican and Italian examples show that adopting external voting legislation often implies a trade-off between the reliability and transparency of the electoral process abroad on the one hand and the inclusion of the largest number of external voters on the other hand (see Chapter 5 for a complete discussion on the issues of electoral participation and voter turnout abroad). In this sense, they confirm Nohlen and Grotz's (2000) assumption that there is an undeniably greater risk of fraud abroad because of electoral authorities' inability to exercise similar levels of control abroad as within the national territory.

The last organizational issue concerns relations with host countries. Previous research has shown that the involvement of migrants in home-country politics through demonstrations and lobbying held in countries of residence is sometimes viewed with suspicion in those destination countries (see, among others, Smith [2000] and Østergaard-Nielsen [2003]). Countries of residence may be reluctant to see foreign elections materialize on their territory. From a security viewpoint, receiving states may be concerned with the possibility of violence between emigrant supporters of opposing political parties. For example, the aggressive reactions of local police to the long lines of Bolivian voters in front of polling stations in Madrid and Buenos

Aires during the 2009 presidential election confirm that local authorities may see large crowds waiting to cast a vote in person as a potential threat to public safety. This example illustrates the necessity for electoral authorities to set up dialogue with authorities in the emigrants' countries of residence in order to anticipate certain problems.

In addition to these pragmatic issues, authorities in the country of residence may take larger issue with external voting when it involves dual citizens.¹⁰ In the case of dual nationals, both the state of origin and the state of residence may be concerned with the loyalty of these citizens. In response to these concerns, scholars like Aleinikoff (1999) and Martin (2003) have suggested that dual voting should be prohibited. Others, such as Spiro (2003) and Bauböck (2007), argue that the concept of single loyalty is inappropriate, because citizens' mobility is increasing and with it their transnational attachments (see Chapter 7 for a complete discussion on the issue of loyalty and receiving states' perspectives on external voting).

In conclusion to this brief discussion of some of the normative issues surrounding external voting, it cannot be argued that it provides a satisfactory explanation to the wide-scale adoption of this policy. Even though normative-theory scholars may have an influence on national debates on external voting, their goal is less to explain why states enfranchise citizens abroad than determining whether or not these policies are legitimate. Unsurprisingly, there is no consensus among scholars on the necessity for states to adopt such legislation. On the contrary, this discussion demonstrated the highly contextual nature of the arguments exposed in favor of or against external voting. For this reason, current literature is unable to recommend a single model of external voting legislation that would fit all countries willing to implement it.

TOWARDS A SOCIOPOLITICAL APPROACH ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF EXTERNAL VOTING

In comparison to the two perspectives presented above, the sociopolitical literature on migration, transnationalism, and citizenship has more directly touched upon the issue of external voting and its worldwide development. Over the last few years, different comparative studies have indeed attempted to make an inventory of the different systems and, in some cases, shed light on the relevant state motivations (Itzigsohn 2000; Levitt and de la Dehesa 2003; Gamlen 2006; Collyer and Vathi 2007; IDEA and IFE 2007; Escobar 2007; Rhodes and Harutyunyan 2010; Waterbury 2010b). This literature, however, features two major flaws. First, they are often broad comparative works that comprise a very large number of countries (Gamlen 2006; Collyer and Vathi 2007; Rhodes and Harutyunyan 2010; Waterbury 2010b), which shows that similar policies are being adopted in different parts of the world. They do not, however, satisfactorily identify the decisive variables

explaining home states' motivations. Second, other scholars focus on single-country studies or several countries from the same region, which, in both cases, does not allow the conclusions to be drawn on a larger scale (Itzigsohn 2000; Calderón Chelius 2003; Levitt and de la Dehesa 2003; Escobar 2007). Building on this literature, I, however, identify three possible variables (and associated subvariables) explaining why states decide to enfranchise their citizens abroad.

This first variable is called the "emigrant lobbying" variable. It proposes to look at emigrants' capacity to lobby home-state authorities to push them to adopt policies, such as external voting, in favor of citizens abroad. Previous works on ethnic lobbies have underscored emigrants' capacity to shape public policies in the host country (Shain 1999; Smith 2000). Literature on immigrant transnationalism—which shows how emigrants are capable of influencing economic, social, political, and religious practices in their home states from abroad—also highlights migrants' power (i.e., their agency) to influence the design of sending-states policies towards citizens abroad. Similarly, the increasing influence that nonstate actors have on state behavior has been repeatedly stressed in recent international relations studies (Tarrow 1998; see Tager 2006). With the "emigrant lobbying" variable, I thus intend to look at how emigrants are capable of forming pressure groups, which can mobilize to persuade home states to act in their favor.

The focus on migrant agency as a factor in explaining the adoption of external voting legislation also presents some issues. It could lead to over-emphasizing the role that the emigrant population has in the decision for home-country authorities to adopt external voting legislation. This interpretation, for instance, could discard the possibility that small or badly organized emigrant communities could also win the right to vote from abroad (such as Belgian migrants), while large diasporas organized into powerful lobbies still may not win enfranchisement (e.g., Turkish migrants) (Levitt and de la Dehesa 2003; Collyer and Vathi 2007).

Another issue with the focus on migrant agency is that it exclusively concerns emigrants who get involved in the debates on external voting. These citizens, however, generally represent a minority of the organized emigrants belonging to lobbies and migrant associations within their communities. The representative character of migrant associations has been a subject of contention for many years in migration research (Martiniello 1992). Emigrant associations can rarely be considered as representative of the community as a whole. In the case of external voting, not every emigrant association has equal interest in the issue. Some might focus on integration in countries of residence, while others have their activities completely oriented towards the homeland. In the latter case, associations can greatly benefit from external voting policies. By increasing the political salience of citizens abroad, external voting can transform associations into "voices of voters abroad" in home-country political scenes. In addition, because of their close connections with citizens abroad, members of emigrant associations can also form useful partnerships with political parties trying to reach out to citizens abroad

during electoral campaigns. For this reason, association leaders are also in a good position to become elected as emigrant MPs when such positions exist. These different considerations demonstrate that emigrant associations may have their own agendas when promoting external voting. Furthermore, the assumption that migrant associations have a truly representative character of the diaspora may not be completely true, due to the personal ambitions of some of their leaders (see Chapter 5).

A second variable focuses on the economic dependence of sending states on emigration. Roberts, Frank, and Lozano-Ascencio (1999), as well as Itzigsohn (2000), explain the development of diasporic policies using Hirschman's (1978) concepts of "exit," "voice," and "loyalty." Comparing sending states to poorly performing organizations, these scholars have hypothesized that states are stimulating emigrants' loyalty (e.g., through discourses presenting emigrants as national heroes) and giving them a voice (e.g., by adopting external voting legislation) in order to counter the economic risks of permanent emigration. These risks include a decline of the workforce and a decrease in emigrants' remittances. By looking at the "economic dependence" variable, I propose to examine how the economic role of emigrants in supporting the home country's wealth pushes authorities to adopt external voting legislation. This policy, along with other diasporic policies, strengthens the ties with emigrants and consequently aids in sustaining transnational solidarity overtime. Two different subvariables can be deducted from the economic dependence variable according to the type of economic support emigrants represent for their home countries.

The "remittance dependence" subvariable supposes that sending states adopt diasporic policies to foster emigrant loyalty in hope that it will sustain the flow of remittances over time. This subvariable implies that for countries where remittances are not of critical economic importance, there is less interest in adopting diasporic policies (Levitt and de la Dehesa 2003; Wucker 2004; Tager 2006; Croucher 2009). However, a closer look at the list of countries allowing external voting (see Chapter 1) contradicts this hypothesis, as numerous states who receive small amounts of remittances have also passed external voting legislation in recent years (Gamlen 2006; Collyer and Vathi 2007).

Rather than postulating that economically dependent countries are more likely to adopt external voting legislation, it seems more relevant to consider, like Sherman (1999), that diasporic policies are part of a state's larger effort to integrate itself within the global economy. Even though remittances are crucial sources of income for many countries, sending states are also interested in migrants' capacities to transfer knowledge and to open markets abroad. For this reason, I argue that another subvariable deserving of attention is the "globalization adjustment" variable.

As we shall see below, the need to form closer connections with 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. By presenting emigrants as actors capable of opening markets abroad, Italian

supporters of external voting justified the adoption of such a law. This argument was still used long after mass emigration had ended and after remittances had steeply declined. In the case of Mexico, I will also discuss how, beyond the country's dependence on remittances, the desire to join the North American Free Trade Agreement was a key incentive in the adoption of diasporic policies, in order to instrumentalize Mexican Americans to lobby in Mexico's favor. In short, the following chapter will look at how, in a context where national economies feel the need to compete at the global level, the "diaspora resource" (Waterbury 2010b) constitutes an incentive for sending states to adopt policies that engage with citizens abroad.

The focus on economic variables also seems to present some limits. While this approach counterbalances the role of emigrants themselves in the debate over their enfranchisement, it still considers the adoption of external voting, for the most part, as the state's reaction to migrants' transnational practices. In this respect, migrants can still be considered as giving the impulse to domestic debates on external voting, whereas the state—as a monolithic actor—is simply reacting to a changing international context in which diasporas have become a resource.

It appears problematic, however, to present the state as a monolithic actor, pursuing only one single interest in shaping diasporic policies. Enfranchising citizens abroad may be beneficial to the sending state's economy while, at the same time, be detrimental to the electoral performances of some parties. Similarly, some state agencies may see the organization of elections abroad as a chance to expand the realm of their activity, while others may be concerned about the administrative burden or legal challenges that such practice may present them with. For this reason, it seems necessary to note Fitzgerald's view on the emigration state (2006): The state must be disaggregated into a multilevel set of units, which each defends particular interests. With respect to external voting, these units therefore push the debates in different directions.

Looking at the different interests of home-state actors in external voting debates prompts us to reconsider the weight of migrant lobbying and migrants' economic input as the only variables explaining the adoption of this legislation. Different scholars have tried, in a similar way to Smith (2003a: 746), to relate the development of external voting rights to larger changes in the home-country political scene. Escobar (2007: 56), for instance, observes a correlation between regime change and the adoption of external voting, and he argues that "the wave of democratization in Latin America in the last two decades served as the context for the extension of political rights to nationals beyond the national territories." Others, like Rhodes and Harutyunyan (2010: 487), point out the fact that competitive electoral regimes lead countries to implement and expand various components of external citizenship (e.g., dual citizenship and external voting). To them, the inclusion of emigrants as voters proceeds from the same logic of competition between political parties that led to enfranchising women worldwide.

From the abovementioned works, two elements serve as a basis in identifying a third kind of variable, called the “domestic politics” variable. With this variable, I first intend to focus on the processes of institutional reforms through which the modes of governance in sending countries are being modified (democratization, but also electoral reforms, regionalization, integration in international or supranational institutions, etc.). More precisely, I aim to determine if these reforms constitute windows of opportunities for supporters of external voting (whether they are emigrants or domestic actors) to promote the adoption of such legislation. Second, I argue that, beyond electoral competition, we need to look at the competition between domestic actors (i.e., political parties, but also the different administrations and institutions concerned with external voting) to understand why states adopt this legislation.

In the following chapters, I also go further by demonstrating that competition between domestic actors may not only explain the adoption of external voting itself, but it can also help to understand the specific content of the legislation adopted (e.g., voting procedures, registration requirements, the creation of a foreign constituency, etc.). Indeed, one can observe large variations in the content of external voting legislation worldwide. Beyond the reasons that push states to adopt such policies, it is also relevant to look at the reasons for adopting more or less liberal policies. Looking at the interests of domestic actors, I postulate that once homeland political parties determine what the potential effect of external voters on overall electoral results will be, they support or block legislation (or certain provisions of that legislation) according to expected electoral gains or losses. Similarly, administrations, state agencies, and other institutions that feel that their interests may be affected by external voting may try to influence the legislative process. As I shall demonstrate, the impact of external voters on electoral processes is often little known, and may accordingly create fear among domestic actors. This fear may lead supporters of external voting to accept to limit the weight of external voters on the electoral process (through registration procedures, voting mechanisms, constituencies, etc.) in order to reach the necessary parliamentary majority to pass the electoral reform. In this sense, the adoption of external voting legislation and its content also reflects the balance of power between different domestic actors.

In this chapter, I have demonstrated that international law does not satisfactorily explain the growing interest of states to enfranchise citizens abroad. Through a normative discussion on external voting, I managed to isolate different points of contention that are recurring in the debates on this topic worldwide. Yet, I also argued that the development of external voting can be explained by using a sociopolitical approach to state-diaspora relations. Looking at different variables identified in this chapter, I shall therefore attempt to demonstrate what part they played in the adoption of external voting policies in Mexico and Italy.

3 Mexico

Enfranchising Emigrants under Conditions of Democratic Transition

Enfranchising emigrants when they represent millions of potential voters abroad is a challenge for states. The logistical, financial, and political consequences of such a policy can profoundly impact the functioning of these states and their representative institutions. As I previously hypothesized, sending states may be subjected to the pressure of migrant organizations lobbying for external voting. In addition, the economic input that migrants represent for many sending societies may encourage the strengthening of ties with populations abroad through various diasporic policies such as external voting. But the processes that lead to the adoption of these policies remain largely unknown. How do emigrant associations and lobbies impact sending states' decisions to enfranchise emigrants? What role do the processes of democratic transition play in this debate? How do political parties' speculation on external voters' impact on electoral results shape the content of external voting legislation? These are the questions that I try to address by discussing the debate over enfranchising Mexican emigrants.

ORIGINS OF THE EXTERNAL VOTING DEBATE

The roots of the external voting debate in Mexico are firmly tied to the evolution of the Mexican and Mexican-origin presence in the United States and its significance for both states. This presence first became a reality before the start of emigration when the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo ended the Mexican-American War in 1848. A large part of Mexico's territory consequently went under US sovereignty and the Mexican population living there became the first migrant generation by virtue of the border change (Cano and Déllano 2007). Until the beginning of the 20th century, back-and-forth movement of Mexican migrants across the border was relatively frequent, as neither of the two countries felt a need to heavily police the border.

Mexico's emigration policy has historically been influenced by the 19th-century foreign policy principle of nonintervention in other countries' domestic affairs (also known as the Estrada doctrine). This explains the country's traditional lack of reaction to US migration policy and its reluctance to sign

a bilateral migration agreement with the United States. However, Mexican authorities have also tried, in some instances, to reach out to Mexicans in the United States, mostly for protection purposes. In this regard, consulates supported emigrants in cases of discrimination, violation of property rights, and labor disputes, but also in the development of migrant organizations (Santamaría Gómez 2003; Durand 2006; Delano 2009).

With the 1910 Mexican Revolution, Mexicans in the United States became important actors in Mexican politics, providing military backing, troops, propaganda, financial support, and political lobbying in Washington for the revolutionaries (Gómez Quiñonez 1983). The revolutionaries in power did not forget the support they received from the emigrants and developed a strong nationalist discourse towards citizens abroad. As demonstrated by the failure to transform this action in policies, this attempt to emphasize the emigrants' national identity and to bring back home the "sons of the nation" proved to be primarily a rhetorical exercise for the new government to consolidate itself (Santamaría Gómez 2003; Delano 2009). It is in this particular context that the demand for external voting first arose in the 1920s under the leadership of the revolutionary figure and subsequent education minister, José Vasconcelos. For this political leader, who had developed a deep knowledge of the Mexican population in the United States, "*los Mexicanos de afuera*" (Mexicans abroad) were a diaspora whose ultimate goal was to come back to Mexico. In the meantime, however, he believed that they had to stay included in Mexican affairs (Santamaría Gómez 2001).

In 1929, Vasconcelos was the presidential candidate of the National Anti-Reelectionist party (PNA). He campaigned strongly among Mexicans abroad, as he understood that emigrants had some influence on the votes of their relatives back home. To support his candidacy, migrants set up committees in different parts of the United States (especially in Texas and California) that collected money to finance the campaign. These committees also expressed political demands, such as the 14-point program of the *Vasconcelista* delegation in California, which explicitly requested that Mexicans be granted full citizenship rights and obligations outside the national territory. This can be considered as the first explicit demand for external voting on behalf of the Mexican community abroad. Yet, the enthusiasm created abroad by Vasconcelos's candidacy in 1929 was short-lived and the movement died soon after the election that same year (Santamaría Gómez 2001).

The topic sporadically reappeared in Mexican politics a few years later. In 1945, MP Jiménez unsuccessfully sought to include external voting in electoral reforms. Other MPs opposed the proposal on the grounds that Mexico's sovereignty could be put in jeopardy (Valadés 2004). Similarly, the electoral reform of 1977 gave way to the adoption of Article 125 of the new electoral law, allowing Mexicans abroad to register on the electoral roll. Nonetheless, neither the 1977 reform nor subsequent legislation

indicated how this would take place, and the article eventually disappeared with the following 1982 electoral reform (Martínez Saldaña 2003b).

It is important to note that Mexican citizens abroad were never formally prohibited from voting in home-country elections. However, the main legal obstacle to their participation was historically the constitutional principle that established the obligation for Mexican citizens “to vote in popular elections in the electoral district to which they belong” (art. 36). While Mexican emigrants could not exercise their right to vote from abroad, they were not prevented from voting if they were present in their home electoral districts on Election Day.

DEMOCRATIC TRANSITION AND THE (RE) BIRTH OF THE EXTERNAL VOTING DEBATE

Postrevolutionary Mexican politics is characterized by the progressive domination of a single political party, the *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* (PRI). After the Second World War, this party strengthened its grip on the Mexican political system in two ways: by reinforcing the presidential character of the regime and by incorporating opponents into the regime rather than seeking their elimination. Through this corporatist system of governance, the PRI had thus put in place a pragmatic and moderately authoritarian civilian regime (P. H. Smith 2003a). Abroad, however, the government encountered more difficulties in controlling the Mexican population despite its policies of protecting citizens abroad and its attempt to organize migrant workers' unions in the United States (González 1994).

For the larger part of the 20th century, the Mexican government showed decreasing interest in its emigrants and the Mexican-origin population in the United States (Durand 2004). During World War II, Mexico negotiated the “Bracero” labor agreements with the United States, which organized the temporary migration of Mexican workers until 1963. Subsequently, Mexican authorities opted for a “laissez-faire” emigration policy that was also known as the “policy of not having a policy” in the 1970s and early 1980s (García y Griego and Vereá 1988). With respect to US citizens of Mexican origin in particular, authorities developed an antagonistic discourse considering them as traitors to the nation (de la Garza and Vargas 1991). Also, the derogatory term of *pocho* soon came to label those Mexican American citizens considered as having forgotten their Mexican roots.

In the 1960s, in the context of the post-Bracero era and the civil rights movement in the United States, the Chicano movement developed to support Mexican American citizens in their fight to have both their rights as US citizens and their Chicano identities respected (Cano and Délano 2007: 706). The early 1970s was a period of reconstruction between the Mexican authorities and the Mexican community in the United States. For the Chicanos, the objective was to obtain the support of their homeland

in their struggle for a better status in the United States. Mexico's reaction, initially shy under the Echevarría presidency (1970–1976), intensified with López Portillo and the creation of an Office of Chicano Affairs within the Labor Ministry.

Mexico's attempts to reconstruct its relationship with its diaspora, however, overlooked a portion of the Mexican community in the United States. Mexican authorities at the time considered Mexican American and Hispanic associations as the only valid representatives of the Mexican immigrant communities. Some of these, like the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), had been created after the Mexican revolution to address the needs of Mexican Americans. Hometown associations (HTAs), traditionally led by first-generation immigrants, had, on the contrary, specific requests such as external voting that their home country government was not ready to respond to (Santamaría 2007: 31–32).

The PRI government was indeed very reluctant to enfranchise a potentially politically hostile population upon which it did not have the same level of control as the domestic population. At the core of the party's reasoning was a recurring questioning among parties trying to define their position on external voting: How would emigrants affect electoral results if they were enfranchised? As indicated by Genaro Borrego Estrada, former PRI president and former governor of Zacatecas, the party was primarily concerned that emigrant voters would not support it: “[F]undamentally there was no other major argument [against external voting] but that emigrants would vote against us and that, in cases of very competitive elections, this could be decisive against the PRI” (Interview, 24 July 2007).

The position of the PRI was partly justified by the fact that, because it had neglected its relations with Mexican citizens abroad, it did not have much knowledge of their political leanings. As underscored by Silvia Hernández, a former PRI senator, other parties that were better connected with the emigrant community abroad also stoked this fear: “The PRI was scared of a discourse built by the *Partido Acción Nacional* [which suggested that] emigrants had to leave because the PRI had not done enough for them to stay” (Interview, 28 August 2007). The PRI's fear was not completely irrational. Other parties indeed had stronger connections with citizens abroad, and some emigrant associations were openly critical of the Mexican regime. Yet those within the PRI who were reluctant to consider external voting were also uninformed about how many emigrants would be interested in voting, and if those who mobilized would indeed be those migrants who had issues with the PRI. This situation illustrates a recurring element in external voting debates: political parties are influenced as much by hard data as by impressions or even stereotypes about the population abroad when it comes to analyzing the impact of citizens abroad in home-country politics.

If the abovementioned reasons explain why external voting was never a priority for the successive PRI governments, they do not explain why

emigrants themselves were not vocal in demanding such a right until the 1980s. One explanation is that the act of voting was not necessarily meaningful in Mexico for most of the 20th century. Indeed, Martínez Saldaña (1998: 156) postulates that the PRI regime “fostered alienation and apathy in Mexican society. It made the nation’s electoral processes mere rituals that served the purpose of confirming the hegemony of the forces in power and could not, therefore, be regarded as exercises in the free expression of the popular will.” In this particular context where elections existed solely to legitimize the regime in place and where fraud was recurrent, requesting the right to vote from abroad could hardly be a priority for citizens abroad.

This context, however, changed in the early 1980s thanks to a combination of several factors that weakened the PRI’s grip on Mexican politics. First, the Mexican economy entered a period of crisis that culminated in the 1982 Peso Crisis. Second, and most importantly for the emigrants, in 1986 three political figures from the PRI—Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, Ifigenia Martínez, and Profirio Muñoz Ledo—decided to create a left-wing movement (*Corriente Democrática*) within Mexico’s ruling party. Following the expulsion of Cárdenas from the PRI in 1987, Mexican emigrants set up the *Corriente Democrática California*. A group of businessmen and community leaders also created the Chicano support committee for Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, who benefited from a very positive image among emigrants.¹ Emigrant support for Cárdenas in the United States thus developed in parallel to *Cardenismo* in Mexico.

In this context of contestation to the PRI regime, Mexican emigrants started demanding the right to vote. During the 1988 presidential election between Cárdenas and the PRI candidate Salinas de Gortari, various associations made public calls and wrote to President de la Madrid to demand participation (and also publicly called for the elections to be fair). Associations such as the *Asamblea Mexicana por el Sufragio Efectivo* (AMSE) even organized symbolic elections in front of the Mexican consulate in Los Angeles (and again in 1994). As the Mexican regime began showing signs of weakness, emigrants thus started to see elections, and external voting in particular, with new eyes. As a leader from the Coalition of Mexicans Abroad for the Right to Vote (CDPME) explained, “We wanted to be part of what was happening in Mexico and . . . we did not want to keep being second-class citizens” (Interview, 26 June 2007). As the country was moving on a path towards democracy, emigrants gained interest in having their voices heard in the home-country political arena because they started to believe that voting could actually make a difference. By the late 1980s, vocal opposition to the PRI’s grip on Mexican politics began to echo among emigrant communities in the United States. The path towards democracy that Mexico had started to follow reactivated emigrants’ desire to vote in home-country elections.

STATE REFORMS AND THE INCREASED SALIENCE OF EMIGRATION

After the narrow victory of the PRI's presidential candidate Salinas de Gortari in 1988 in a fraudulent electoral process, the government engaged in a series of reforms that affected the functioning of the regime. These reforms did not, however, permit the adoption of external voting legislation. The PRI was indeed not ready to concede voting rights to an emigrant population that had proved to be very supportive of Cárdenas during the last election. For this reason, Salinas proposed in 1990 that the electoral law be modified to strengthen the constitutional barriers to external voting by explicitly specifying that votes in the presidential elections must be cast on the national territory. This attitude confirmed the emigrant community's impression that they would not be invited to vote in the 1994 election, which pushed them to register a complaint signed by 10,000 migrants to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights on the grounds that their constitutional rights to vote as Mexican citizens were not being respected (Calderón Chelius and Martínez Cossío 2004). Despite the emigrants' inability to vote from abroad in the 1990s, three institutional reforms adopted during this decade indirectly increased the salience of the external voting reform in Mexican politics: Mexico's entry in the North American Free Trade Agreement, the creation of the Federal Electoral Institute, and the regionalization of the state.

Entry in the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)

The coming to power of President Salinas de Gortari in 1988 marked a shift in Mexico's attitude towards the United States as the administration sought for Mexico to join the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Previous decades of expansionist economic policies had indeed led the country into the 1982 Peso Crisis. Accordingly, a new generation of leaders and civil servants within the PRI was ready to transform Mexico into a neoliberal economy (Massey, Durand, and Malone 2002).

Salinas proposed to extend the free trade agreement negotiated between Canada and the United States to Mexico. He did not, however, seek an opportunity in the NAFTA negotiations to develop a common migration policy, in fear that the US Congress would reject such an agreement (Alarcón 1995: 38). When the Mexican government launched a lobbying campaign in the United States to promote the ratification of NAFTA, it not only employed private lobbies, but it also called on the Mexican American population and their associations to pressure the US Congress. Mexicans in the United States, however, were not convinced that NAFTA would benefit the emigrant community, and prominent Hispanic associations actually sided with opponents of the treaty. While some scholars argue that

there is actually no proof that the Mexican American community had any influence on Congress's decision to vote for NAFTA (see de la Garza and Desipio 1998: 408; Leiken 2000), the campaign led by Mexican authorities demonstrated a willingness to engage with Mexicans abroad.

The entry of Mexico into NAFTA on 1 January 1994 eventually turned into a public-relations nightmare for the PRI government. Indeed, the Chiapas rebels chose that date to launch their movement of opposition to the trade agreement. Even though the PRI had control of executive and legislative power, it felt the need to negotiate with the opposition to ensure the country's political and economic stability. In this context, the issue of external voting was introduced into the discussions on the reform of the electoral system. In the eyes of the left-wing PRD, this issue was, however, central and the party offered to support the dialogue process in Chiapas in exchange for the PRI and the PAN's support of the electoral reforms (Calderón Chelius and Martínez Cossío 2004).

In a large political agreement reached by the parties, emigrants were given little space; they agreed on a proposal to modify Article 36.III of the constitution to suppress the obligation to vote in the electoral district where the voter is registered. The constitutional reform, entered into force in August 1996, therefore accepted the principle of external voting but left the legislature the responsibility to define the conditions. Altogether, it can be argued that the entry of Mexico into NAFTA had unintended consequences on the PRI regime's posture towards Mexicans abroad, by pushing it to adopt an instrumental approach to its relations with the diaspora. Furthermore, in dealing with the consequences of joining NAFTA, the Mexican government was forced to make important concessions to opposition parties by removing a constitutional barrier to external voting.

The Creation of the Federal Electoral Institute (IFE)

On the electoral level, a major reform after the fraudulent 1988 presidential election was the creation of the Federal Electoral Institute (IFE) in 1990 to ensure that elections were held in a regular and fair manner. Traditionally in Mexico, elections had been organized by the executive power with limited involvement of political parties. With the 1989 constitutional reform, the IFE was granted electoral authority but under the supervision of the executive and legislative branches together with representatives of political parties and citizens. In subsequent reforms, the impartiality of the IFE increased along with the growing role of citizen representatives within the institution. One of the major decisions of the IFE to increase the reliability of electoral registries was the creation of voter identity cards (*credenciales de elector*), whose lack of issuance abroad by the IFE would later prove a key issue in the external voting debate.

As noted above, the 1996 constitutional reform left it to the legislators to implement the principle of external voting by passing legislation. Yet,

the new electoral law approved in November 1996 (the Institutional and Electoral Proceedings Federal Code, COFIPE) did not set rules for external voting to take place. Instead, it reaffirmed the need for legislation to be passed by congress to make external voting possible and, to this end, recommended the creation of an experts' commission within the Federal Electoral Institute (IFE) to study the modalities through which this vote could take place (Mijangos y González 2002).

With constitutional reform and the new electoral law, some observers believed that a political willingness existed to make it possible for migrants to vote in the 2000 presidential election. Yet, the process slowed down in 1997, as both the IFE and the secretary of the interior did not start working on the tasks set by the legislators. The situation changed early in 1998 when a delegation of 20 external voting activists from California, Iowa, Arizona, and Texas came to Mexico City and pressed the IFE and lawmakers for the process to be given a new impulse. In March, MPs from the PAN and PRD agreed to set up an interparty parliamentary commission to discuss the legislative steps that needed to be taken. A month later the IFE declared that its commission of specialists was ready to start working on the modalities to make it possible for migrants to vote in 2000.

One of the most interesting results of this visit was also that it set the basis for these migrant activists to create, together with Mexican academics, the *Coalición de Mexicanos en el Exterior—Nuestro voto en el 2000* (later called *Coalición para la derechos políticos de los Mexicanos en el extranjero—CDPME*), a lobby group whose main task was to convince key players in the debate on external voting to support the cause (see below). By 1998, the debate on external voting had thus gained new speed in parliamentary discussions. It also gained momentum with the organization of conferences, forums, and other debates including representatives of political parties, of the emigrants, and of the authorities on both sides of the border.

The IFE's commission of specialists was an *ad hoc* group of 13 experts examining the issue of external voting from a legal, demographic, political, and logistical viewpoint. Its mandate was not to determine whether or not the emigrant vote was desirable, but rather to determine how it could take place. The commission was thus not expressing the institutional viewpoint of the IFE on external voting. Nonetheless, political parties had understood that the opinion expressed by this commission would have a big impact on the orientation of the external voting debate. It was for this reason—as Rodrigo Morales Manzanares, members of the experts' commission, and later electoral advisor to the IFE pointed out—that representatives of the PRI pressured members of the commission to express a negative opinion (Interview 5 July 2007). The commission's report, published in November 1998, nonetheless concluded that it was technically viable to enfranchise Mexicans abroad on time for the 2000 presidential election (IFE 1998).

After the publication of the commission's report, the IFE, as the institution responsible for the organization of federal elections in Mexico,

continued to have a role in the external voting debate. Within this institution, however, different perspectives coexisted with respect to the nature of this role. On one hand, the electoral advisors who were appointed to set up electoral proceedings in Mexico independently of political parties had some room to develop their own agenda within the institution. Emilio Zebadúa, who served as an advisor between 1996 and 2000 before being elected as a federal MP for the PRD, explicitly recognized that his role was to “extend the political rights of Mexican citizens be they Mexican migrants in the United States or Indigenous in Chiapas” (Interview 21 June 2007).

The IFE’s civil servants, on the other hand, did not consider that their role was to defend an agenda, but rather to simply implement the existing electoral legislation. In this sense, a civil servant whom I interviewed under conditions of anonymity acknowledged, “The IFE’s contribution had little to do with [the question of] whether or not the emigrant vote was desirable. . . . Our [contribution] had to do with [the question of] whether it was really possible and technically feasible But the IFE did not participate in a doctrinal discussion” (Interview 20 June 2007). One of his colleagues, however, tempered this view by arguing instead that, because it first had to express a general opinion on the feasibility of external voting, the IFE might have appeared favorable to external voting. After the 2000 presidential election, however, when the adoption of such legislation became more realistic, the IFE had to express detailed technical opinions on the modalities of external voting. In this sense, they might have appeared less enthusiastic about external voting because their institutional mission was to make sure that the integrity of the electoral process would be preserved (Interview 30 July 2007). Furthermore, the IFE had a real stake in the outcome of the external voting debate because of the potential administrative burdens such legislation could create (e.g., by obliging the IFE to set up voting booths in hundreds of American cities).

The IFE’s impact on the debate on external voting can therefore be considered as real but ambiguous. It provided data for several years that fuelled the political debate on external voting through the various technical opinions it produced. Notwithstanding, the IFE was itself an actor that had strong interests in the debate on external voting. As the institution in charge of organizing federal elections in Mexico, the IFE feared that the inclusion of citizens abroad would be logistically complex. In addition, because it would not have the same supervision capacity abroad as it did on Mexican territory, the IFE feared that external voting would harm its ability to hold fair elections.

The Regionalization of Mexican Politics

Another important actor in the debate on external voting in Mexico was the regional state. Due to the pressure of the World Bank, Mexico engaged in 1994 in a process called *Nuevo Federalismo*, which aimed at transferring

greater administrative and fiscal responsibility to states and municipalities. One effect of this was the federal government's transfer of some prerogatives in the field of migration to regional bodies (see Goldring 2002). Mexican states had traditionally paid more attention to migration issues than the federal authority. The reason for this lies in the fact that the connections between migrants and the home country are mainly established at the local level (states and municipalities). Indeed, municipal and regional politicians in large sending states such as Zacatecas and Michoacán are the ones primarily confronted with migrants' families and are well aware of the difficulties faced by those who leave and those who stay. Accordingly, the confrontation of local politicians with the reality of migration renders them more willing to legislate in favor of migrants' rights.

The state of Zacatecas, in particular, has been particularly active in reaching out to the emigrant community. On many occasions, Zacatecan migrant associations and individuals have become involved in local politics despite the impossibility of voting from abroad.² As a result of their transnational activism, Zacatecan associations successfully pushed a legislative proposal aiming to officially recognize the transnational character of migrants' lives. The text provides that these citizens who have "binational residence" can be candidates in municipal and regional elections, and that at least two migrants be present in the State Congress (Moctezuma Longoria 2003; Bakker and Smith 2003; Santamaría Gómez 2007).

But how could the developments of diasporic policies on the regional state level influence the debate on external voting on the federal level? State congresses, in Zacatecas and Michoacán, for instance, passed resolutions calling the federal congress to act to immediately address the issue of external voting. The receptive ear migrant associations found in these states encouraged them to lobby their local politicians to push external voting on the federal level. For a leader of the *Frente Binacional Michoacano* in Illinois, this kind of lobbying was made principally in large migrant-sending states because "there, you are talking about migrants representing almost half of the population. . . . In these states all politicians talk about migration in good terms because we sustain the economy" (Interview 4 July 2007).

Another way for regional politicians to respond to migrants' pressure was through an informal coordination group called the National Conference of Governors (CONAGO), created in 2002. In the respect of the constitutional prohibition for Mexican states to form coalitions, the CONAGO "seeks to coincide with the federal government in the search for solutions to social demands" (CONAGO 2007). With regard to external voting, governors from large sending regions used the CONAGO to pressure members of the federal congress. Governors especially singled out federal MPs and senators elected in their regional states. For Juan José García Ochoa, PRD federal MP between 2003 and 2006, the governors' strategy was successful in increasing the political cost for federal politicians to oppose external

voting because: “When the governors expressed themselves, the parliamentary groups could only get out of the agreement with difficulty. We did not know yet to which agreement we would come but we did know that . . . the one [parliamentary group] expressing itself against the vote would lose the political game” (Interview 6 August 2007). As these examples demonstrate, certain Mexican states became real partners for emigrant lobbyists in the struggle for external voting.

Institutional Transformations and the Adoption of Diasporic Policies

As I have just shown, the 1988 presidential election significantly altered the context in which the external voting issue was debated for the decade to come: Opposition parties were given more room to express their opinions, such as with the election of senators and deputies through proportional mechanisms (see Orozco Henríquez 1998). Further, actors such as the IFE and governors took stances on the external voting debate, and the entry into NAFTA changed the government’s perception on some Mexicans abroad. The process of democratization in which Mexico had entered was slowly weakening the PRI’s grip on the political system. For Mexicans abroad, this period marked the end of the policy of ignorance that had prevailed until then. While external voting remained inaccessible, the adoption of three main policies illustrated the changing nature of the relationship between Mexican emigrants and the home state.

The first one is the “Paisano” program created in 1989 to make the journey safer for emigrants returning to visit relatives. To this end, stronger controls were put in place at major transit points to gradually decrease extortions and bad treatment that some civil servants inflicted on emigrants. For the authorities, this was a way of showing that they were taking concrete measure to address a pressing need of emigrant communities and to improve their image abroad. The creation of the Program for Mexican Communities Abroad (PCME), set up within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs by a presidential decree in 1990, was even more explicit in this regard. The program had three major goals: strengthening relations between Mexican citizens on both sides of the border in areas such as business, education, and even culture; improving the image of Mexican Americans in Mexico; and improving the image of Mexico among Mexicans in the United States (González Gutiérrez 1993). As underscored by Alarcón (2006), the PCME also encouraged Mexican associations in the United States to form coalitions on the state level to facilitate communications with Mexican civil servants on local, regional, and federal levels.

The second notable policy is the 1992 federal adoption of the so-called “two for one” matching fund program that started in Zacatecas. This program encouraged migrants organized in hometown associations to cofund infrastructure (such as roads, wells, and schools) together with local authorities in

their home communities (Figueroa-Aramoni 1999; Goldring 2002). As such, it contributed to empower communities abroad by recognizing migrants as valid interlocutors in their home communities. However, the implementation of the “two for one” program on the federal level was not solely revealing of the greater attention that Mexican authorities were giving to emigrants in a context of democratic transition, but it was also a clear attempt to maximize the domestic benefits of emigrant remittances. Between 1980 and 1989, remittances had indeed moved from 698 million to 1.68 billion dollars, and 660,000 Mexican households were regularly receiving remittances by 1992 (Tuirán 2002). Throughout the 1990s, the growing importance of remittances for the Mexican economy became obvious to authorities, who subsequently developed policies to maximize their impact. Yet, the remittances’ influence on the external voting debate was never obvious. On the one hand, the increase in remittances helped the supporters of external voting to demonstrate the connections that emigrants maintained with the home country. Remittances data also served to oppose possible critiques on the cost of organizing elections abroad. On the other hand, the economic contribution of emigrants was never brought up in legislative debates as valid grounds upon which political rights should be granted.

The third important policy adopted in the 1990s revealed that Mexico’s increasing concern for its citizens abroad was not only dominated by domestic issues. The adoption in 1994 of Proposition 187 by the citizens of California, aiming to deny access to social services by the undocumented immigrant population, shed light on growing hostility towards Mexicans in the United States. Mexico’s response to this situation was to reform its nationality law. Because of the PRI’s historical concern for possible foreign influences in Mexican politics, political parties agreed to introduce dual citizenship with certain limitations attached to this status³ (Calderón Chelius and Martínez Cossío 2004; Fitzgerald 2005). The 1998 reform thus suppressed the rule according to which a Mexican citizen automatically loses his/her nationality by taking that of another state. In other words, authorities sought to make it easier for immigrants (who were traditionally reluctant to give up their Mexican nationality) to apply for US citizenship. Doing so, Mexican authorities not only hoped that US citizenship would give migrants a full set of rights in that country, but they also believed it would discourage US politicians from openly promoting anti-immigrant policies (*La Jornada* 1995).

The Lead-Up to the 2000 Presidential Election

Altogether, with the ongoing process of democratic transition, the debate on external voting in Mexico was also gaining speed: migrants were openly requesting the right to vote, the development of Mexico’s diasporic policies was giving them a voice on the domestic scene, and the IFE commission was demonstrating that it was technically feasible to carry out the 2000 election

abroad. On the political level too, PRD and PAN MPs were pushing for external voting reforms through law proposals and proposals to amend the constitution. Despite the PRI's consistent rejection of these initiatives, the PAN and the PRD kept on trying and included external voting in a package of electoral reforms presented to the PRI-dominated senate in April 1999. All these attempts were unsuccessful, though, and migrants were prevented once again from voting in the 2000 presidential election.

With congress's failure to legislate, emigrants were left with two options to make their voices heard during the 2000 electoral process. First, as they did in previous elections, migrant associations organized symbolic elections in different cities within the United States; 16,318 votes were cast in the 76 polling stations spread across the US territory (Martínez Saldaña 2003a). These symbolic elections confirmed the PRI's impression that if emigrants would take part in Mexican politics, they would not favor this party. Second, migrants had the ability to vote at polling stations located in Mexican border cities. Indeed, with the 1996 modification of the constitution and the suppression of the obligation for Mexican citizens to vote in the electoral districts where they are registered, the IFE decided to set up 64 special polling stations (*casillas especiales*) reserved for Mexican citizens who found themselves out of their districts on the day of the election. In addition to the people in transit, these special polling stations offered an opportunity for Mexican emigrants to travel to the closest Mexican border town to cast their votes in person on the day of the election. Yet this possibility was limited by the obligations to have a voter identity card, having regular status in the United States (to travel back and forth), and an IFE rule that limited the number of votes to be cast in each of these special polling stations to 750. In a study on special polling stations located in three electoral districts along the US border, Mexican scholars found that, even though migrant organizations encouraged people to travel and vote, only 15 percent of the votes there had been cast by emigrants (Espinoza Valle 2004).

REGIME CHANGE AND THE ROLE OF EMIGRANTS IN THE DEBATE ON THEIR ENFRANCHISEMENT

The election as president of Vicente Fox Quesada from the PAN in 2000 was a turning point in Mexican history, as he became the first president who did not belong to the PRI in 71 years. The big expectations created by his election were nonetheless tempered by the fact that he was taking power without a parliamentarian majority to back him. As former governor of the state of Guanajuato, Fox had understood the importance of migration and, like other candidates before him, traveled repeatedly to the United States during his presidential bid to meet with his support committees over

there. One of Fox's mottos was indeed that his government would act for all Mexicans, whether they resided on the national territory or not. Simultaneously he developed a new discourse on emigration, breaking away from the derogative concept of "pocho" to refer instead to emigrants as Mexico's new heroes. Most importantly, he promised to enfranchise citizens abroad by the end of his term.

The Institute of Mexicans Abroad

The new rhetorical approach to emigration materialized into the further development of diasporic policies. The creation of the Institute of Mexicans Abroad (IME) best exemplified Fox's desire to engage with the diaspora.⁴ The goal of the IME's creation was to strengthen the relationship with the emigrant community in order to allow the state and emigrants to pursue common goals in the United States and Mexico in the future (González Gutiérrez 2003). The most innovative feature of the IME's institutional structure is the creation of the Consultative Council (CCIME) integrating 105 community leaders elected by the emigrants themselves in addition to a series of appointed members representing other actors' interests (such as Latino associations in the United States or Mexican federal entities). The CCIME is organized around seven working groups (business, education, legal affairs, political affairs, health, border issues, and the media) and its main task is to make recommendations to the state with regard to issues concerning the Mexican emigrant community.

The CCIME arose as a latecomer in the external voting debate and its role was somehow ambiguous. A former CCIME councilor interviewed under conditions of anonymity recalled that his election to the CCIME greatly facilitated his lobbying activities because the IME was an official institution created by the president (Interview 19 June 2007). The director of the IME between 2006 and 2009 (and also former migration scholar) Carlos Gonzalez Gutierrez expressed similar enthusiasm by underlining the fact that the CCIME gave emigrant lobbyists the chance to enter into a direct dialogue with Mexican authorities and let them realize that Mexican institutions were not unanimously opposed to external voting (Interview 7 June 2007).

Although the CCIME gave institutional support to the emigrants' request to vote in home-country elections, not all of its members supported external voting. In addition, emigrant associations who were not represented in the CCIME expressed doubts about its legitimacy and Mexican politicians' real willingness to listen to the council (Santamaría Gómez 2007: 27–29). Some external voting activists, like the Chicago-based Concilio Hispano activist whom I interviewed under conditions of anonymity, argued that the CCIME did not play an influential role in emigrant enfranchisement because most of the lobbying work had been done before its establishment

(Interview 3 July 2007). But despite the CCIME's late arrival in the debate under the new Fox administration, political parties at this time still largely disagreed on the necessity to legislate and even more on the modalities through which external voting could be implemented. For this reason, the CCIME's role as a dialogue facilitator between emigrants and the state cannot be neglected.

Lobbying for the Right to Vote: The Case of the CDPME

During the decade-long debates on external voting, strategies used by emigrant associations and lobbies were diverse and numerous. Examples include encounters with national and regional Mexican politicians visiting the United States, the organization of symbolic elections, the organization of meetings and conferences, and demonstrations in front of consulates. However, as these activities were almost exclusively conducted on US territory, they had, at best, an indirect effect on the legislative debate over external voting in the Mexican Congress. The pressure of emigrant leaders on Mexican politicians of the PRD was reflected in this party's pro-emigrant position on many issues. Emigrant lobbying activities also contributed to the visibility of the external voting issue, which some opponents had tried to describe as an elite-driven debate in which most emigrants had little interest. Nonetheless, all these activities had a marginal impact on parliamentary activities concerning external voting.

This situation changed after the 1998 visit to Mexico of around 20 migrant activists from California, Iowa, Arizona, and Texas, who asked the IFE and congress to act on external voting. The same group of activists met with other supporters of external voting and academics and decided together to create the *Coalición de Mexicanos en el Exterior—Nuestro Voto en el 2000* (CMENV). After congress's failure to legislate on time for the 2000 presidential election, these activists met again in Zacatecas in 2001 to develop a lobbying strategy in the new political context in Mexico, characterized by the election of a non-PRI president. Sharing the idea that Mexico was a nation without borders and that the vote would strengthen Mexico's transition to democracy, these activists created an organization to advocate for Mexican emigrants' political rights: the *Coalición por los Derechos Políticos de los Mexicanos en el Extranjero* (CDPME).

The creation of this lobby group broke away from the emigrants' traditional approach to the issue of external voting for several reasons. First, even though binational connections existed before, this movement was the first attempt to create a structure aimed at developing a coordinated cross-border activist strategy with members established in both countries (Santamaría Gómez 2007). Initiated by a core group of migration scholars, the CDPME was later joined by political activists. As a founding member of the CDPME explained in an interview, the organization was therefore less of a migrant association in the traditional sense (i.e., composed of leaders speaking in the name of their migrant members) than a group of key players

developing a concerted cross-border strategy to lobby key political figures in Mexico (Interview 26 June 2007).

Because they lacked the grassroots support that traditional emigrant associations normally had, CDPME lobbyists reached out to these associations to ensure the legitimacy of the lobbying effort they were conducting in the name of the community. Doing so, they were trying to demonstrate that external voting was not an elite-driven issue. For the associations, the advantage was that they had a team of lobbyists in Mexico who were ready to act in their name, when these associations did not necessarily have the expertise and resources to do so themselves. In different interviews with leaders of migrant associations based in the United States, such as *Frente Binacional Michoacano*, this cooperation was thus described as a “win-win relationship” (Interview 4 July 2007; Interview 19 June 2007). To a large extent, the CDPME’s effort to coordinate with grassroots organizations was recognized by elected officials, who saw this group as a legitimate spokesperson for Mexicans abroad. This was confirmed by Juan José García Ochoa, PRD federal MP between 2003 and 2006: “[T]hose who were doing lobbying were a small group but they had the support of different [migrant] generations and many large migrant groups in the United States. Therefore, it was difficult to say ‘no’ to them . . .” (Interview 6 August 2007).

The second defining characteristic of the CDPME was that electronic networks played an important role in ensuring coordination on both sides of the border. A founding member of the coalition established in Illinois confirmed that electronic networks were decisive in two regards. First, key players in the coalition split in different geographical locations would use electronic networks to coordinate their activities. Second, the CDPME used a second listserv called *Derechos políticos sin fronteras* comprising 500 individuals where, in addition to the activists, association leaders, journalists, and other people interested in external voting were active. According to my interview with a founding member of the CDPME, it served as a place of exchange to stimulate dialogue and debate among people interested in the right to vote in general, but also to mobilize and define strategies to pressure Mexican authorities at home or in the United States (Interview 26 June 2007). These electronic networks were thus not used by the CDPME to lobby directly, but rather as a means to coordinate their actions and achieve grassroots support. In this sense, they contributed to broaden the support basis for external voting.

Third, the CDPME differentiated itself from other associations working on external voting through its lobbying strategy, which can be characterized as both pragmatic and aggressive. Their lobbying efforts only targeted key players on the issue of external voting in the executive power (president, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of the Interior, state governors), the legislative power (key parliamentarians of all political parties), and the electoral authorities (IFE). The politicians they lobbied were, on the one hand, elected officials from states where migration was a big issue and could contribute to keeping the issue alive in the assemblies. On the other

hand, the coalition targeted influential politicians who had no particular interest in the external voting issue but had sufficient weight to change the opinions of their colleagues who opposed it.

CDPME lobbyists were also pragmatic because they quickly realized that an overly ambitious request for external voting would have fewer chances to be approved before the 2006 presidential election. For this reason, they eventually dropped their request for the legislation to include the modality of voting in person in Mexican consulates abroad and the creation of an extraterritorial constituency (referred to as the sixth constituency) where 40 emigrant MPs and 10 senators would be elected. Their hope was that the first experience of external voting in Mexico would diminish fears around it and pave the way for more reforms (Interview with founding member of the CDPME 29 June 2007). This pragmatic approach had two main consequences. First, some emigrants resented that core demands, such as guaranteed seats in parliament, were abandoned by supporters of external voting.⁵ But second, as underscored by former PRD MP José García Ochoa during an interview, the coalition's limited demands helped to create a dialogue with skeptical politicians because, by focusing on the issues upon which a political consensus could be built, they worked to discredit the most extreme positions defended by some emigrants and political elites (Interview 6 August 2007).

Lastly, the CDPME's lobbying strategy was also aggressive at times because they understood very well that no party was willing to take the risk of opposing external voting too openly. Indeed, there existed a common belief among Mexican politicians that emigrants had a strong influence on their relatives' votes and that, accordingly, opposing external voting would also have electoral consequences among domestic voters. Knowing that opponents to external voting would therefore dislike to be publicly identified as such, CDPME lobbyists developed a strategy of pointing the finger at anyone they considered as obstructing the adoption of external voting legislation (MPs, senators, members of government, or civil servants). These people would subsequently be accused as "enemies of the vote" in the lobby's own magazine or in the press.

Altogether, the case of the CDPME demonstrates that emigrants played an important role in the external voting debate by pressuring key domestic actors and making concrete proposals to feed the legislative debate on external voting. Doing so, they helped to build support for external voting within the country's key political parties.

POLITICAL PARTIES AND CONSENSUS BUILDING ON EXTERNAL VOTING

After Vicente Fox's election in 2000 and his promise to enfranchise emigrants, numerous external voting proposals were tabled in parliament. Despite the efforts of emigrant lobbies such as the CDPME, strong

disagreement still existed within political parties because of the uncertainties concerning the impact of external voters on electoral results.

Regime Change and Political Parties' Uncertainties on External Voting

Even within President Fox's own party, the PAN, there was no consensus on external voting. Since its creation, this party had been more concerned with the middle class, as well as small and medium-sized entrepreneurs, than with emigrants and their families. Contrary to the PAN's general stance, Fox (who had been the governor of the large sending state of Guanajuato) felt that a share of the emigrant population was ready to support his party. Even though migrants were not allowed to participate in the 2000 election from abroad, Fox engaged with emigrants during his campaign by, for example, distributing calling cards abroad to encourage migrants to call their relatives and tell them to vote for Fox in 2000 (Martínez Cosío 2001). As Pablo López Núñez, a PAN federal MP, pointed out, Fox faced the opposition of some PAN MPs and senators who considered that the party's future electoral performance would suffer from external voting (Interview 17 August 2007). The challenge for Fox was thus to convince members of his own government and federal parliamentarians of his own party of the necessity to pass such legislation.

The PRI had traditionally opted for a distrustful approach towards external voting. Through the years, the PRI developed a threefold opposition strategy towards external voting. First, PRI MPs and PRI civil servants tried to delay and oppose the debate as much as possible in order to make it unfeasible to adopt the legislation on time. Second, PRI members tried to discredit the principle of the emigrant vote as much as possible by questioning its legitimacy. Third, they simultaneously expressed public support to the emigrant vote but stressed that too many logistical obstacles remained to make it actually possible. The PRI's position evolved after it lost power in 2000. The party indeed realized that emigrants had played a part in Fox's success and individuals within this party therefore began to vocally support the reform. They were, however, faced with the suspicion of colleagues who thought that they were supporting external voting to further weaken the party. Indeed, in parliament, the PRI was increasingly divided between supporters of two potential candidates for the 2006 presidential election. For this reason, it became indispensable for PRI supporters of external voting to convince important members of the party (whose loyalty to the party could not be questioned) to join them in this debate.

Because the PRD had historically been the first Mexican party to be present on both sides of the border, external voting was one of its central concerns (Santamaría Gómez 1994). While its members had tabled numerous legislative proposals on external voting, these proposals were often too vague or were part of larger reform packages that were taken out at the last moment

because of political bargaining with other parties. In 1996, the party nonetheless successfully managed to push for revisions of Article 36.III of the constitution, which suppressed the obligation for Mexicans to vote in their constituency of origin, as part of a larger package of reforms adopted after the start of the Chiapas rebellion. Not treating external voting as a separate issue, however, opened the way for political bargaining and the impossibility of passing external voting legislation before the 2000 election.

After this episode, the PRD decided to change its strategy and treated the external voting debate separately from other issues to avoid horse-trading (Interview with Juan José García Ochoa, 6 August 2007). However, the coming to power of Fox and his promise to support external voting had put an end to the PRD's monopoly on this issue. The PRD thus found itself in an uncomfortable situation. On the one hand, it could work closely with the PAN and increase the chances of passing legislation. Doing so, the PRD would also risk not being able to take any credit for it. On the other hand, it could follow the more radical approach of PRD members in California, who opposed any reform that did not include the extraterritorial constituency. Overall, the PRD, like other parties, was divided on this issue. Some of its members thus started to work on building an internal consensus by suggesting to their colleagues to accept a limited reform before the 2006 election and reserve the proposal for the creation of a foreign constituency for a second reform later on.

Fox's Strategy to Build Interparty Consensus

Even though his party had no absolute majority in either chamber of congress, President Fox started to act after the renewal of the house in 2003. At the time, he set up a twofold strategy to build consensus. On the executive level, he made his deputy secretary of the interior responsible for drafting a law proposal upon which political parties could agree. On the legislative level, he assigned the subcoordinator of the PAN parliamentary group the duty to consult with other parliamentary groups on the issue of external voting. Setting up this strategy, Fox confirmed that he intended to deliver on his promise to enfranchise citizens abroad before the 2006 election.

According to the deputy secretary of the interior, Paoli Bolio, the president did not want him "to come up with a draft containing ideal modalities but rather with feasible modalities that could lead to a law approved by various political forces and that would encompass the aspirations of the migrants" (Interview, 4 July 2007). The agreement, signed by the PRI, PAN, PRD, Convergencia, and Partido del Trabajo on 6 April 2004, defined the next step in the legislative procedure and a few basic elements of the law in broad terms.⁶ First, it was agreed that all signatories would work towards convincing their own parliamentary group of the necessity to approve a law permitting external voting for the 2006 presidential election. Second, the signatories agreed that the IFE would be in charge of facilitating the participation of emigrant

voters, that a registry of emigrant voters abroad would be created, and that political campaigns abroad would be forbidden.

The signing of this agreement confirms that Fox's consensus-building strategy worked because it increased the political costs of opposing this policy. Indeed, the political parties' fear of publicly opposing external voting because of possible electoral retaliation put them in no position to refuse this agreement despite the fact that they were all still internally debating the idea. However, the agreement was no guarantee that legislation would be passed on time before the 2006 election.

Three main reasons could still prevent legislation from being adopted. First, the interparty agreement was vague and left the possibility for opponents to argue, as they did in the past, that they agreed with the principle of external voting but thought it was logistically impossible to set up before the next election. Many PRI lawmakers belonged to this category of parliamentarians who wanted to block legislation without being identified as obstructers. Second, among the parliamentarians who supported the adoption of legislation before 2006, many wanted to make sure that their political party would take credit for the reform. This visibility would indeed provide political parties with good arguments to win the votes of emigrants and those of their relatives living in Mexico. Third, the political agreement did not specify the tasks that the IFE (and possibly other state agencies) would have to conduct in order to enfranchise citizens abroad. As these tasks could strongly affect the interests of these domestic actors, it could be expected that they too would try to influence the outcome of the external voting debate.

IMPACT CONTROL AND THE ADOPTION OF THE 2005 EXTERNAL VOTING LAW

After the 2004 agreement, President Fox took the initiative of providing his own legislative proposal to congress in the hope that political parties would adopt it as such.⁷ As Andrés Dardon Velazquez, PRD parliamentary assistant, pointed out, the PRI and the PRD were not willing to ratify a text that would give the PAN and President Fox all the political visibility, especially when the emigrant community's eyes were focusing on congress (Interview 25 June 2007). All political parties thus tabled their own proposals on external voting. Within the PRI, however, opponents to external voting decided to table an extremely liberal law proposal that did not respect the terms of the 2004 agreement.⁸ This proposal included four items on which there was no political consensus: the creation of the foreign constituency (which *de facto* enfranchised emigrants for legislative elections), the possibility for parties to campaign abroad, the obligation for the IFE to issue voter identity cards abroad, and the introduction of the vote in person in polling stations abroad.

This proposal, introduced in November 2004, required so much implementation work from the IFE and the consular network that it could clearly not be done on time before the 2006 presidential election. Under the guise of proposing liberal legislation on external voting, some within the PRI were, on the contrary, trying to prevent emigrants from participating in the 2006 election without being held responsible for it. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs indeed warned that voting in person abroad would prove logistically impossible. Also, it feared that this voting modality could create possible tensions with local authorities in the United States if thousands of Mexicans gathered around polling stations all over the country on Election Day. As for the IFE, it considered that it could not reasonably be expected to monitor electoral spending abroad nor the presence of Mexican political parties in foreign media.

Despite the fact that they were conscious that this law could never be implemented as such on time for the 2006 election, the PRD and the PAN decided to support this proposal in the house of representatives on 22 February 2005. This vote was motivated by two reasons. First, stopping the legislative process at this stage would have made it impossible to adopt any legislation on time for the 2006 election. However, both parties were not ready to bear the political costs of refusing emigrant enfranchisement before the 2006 election. Second—as Pablo López Núñez, PAN federal MP, and Juan José García Ochoa, PRD federal MP, pointed out—these two parties were aware that the PRI proposal could be significantly amended in the senate and subsequently sent back to the house for final approval (Interview 6 August 2007; Interview 17 August 2007).

Once it reached the senate, the text was welcomed with great skepticism. Even the PRI senators disagreed with the work of fellow party members from the house and considered their proposal as “something unanimously aberrant in order to get rid of the responsibility of the [emigrant] vote and leave the senators to say no to the [emigrant] vote” (Interview with PRI Senator Silvia Hernández 28 August 2007). For the PAN and PRD senators too, this proposal was considered impossible to implement (Interview with PAN senator Cecilia Romero Castillo 8 August 2007). Faced with the possibility to reject, accept as such, or amend and resubmit to the house, the senators agreed to substantially amend the proposal to come up with an acceptable text for all parties. To this end, a working group of experts in electoral law was invited to participate in senatorial hearings to help build the new proposal. The creation of this group is one further proof that there existed, at this stage, a large political willingness in Mexico to enfranchise emigrants, but that the political parties’ cost-and-benefit analyses were at risk to undermine the legislative process.

The solution found by the different parliamentary groups in the senate involved a strong limitation of the exercise of the right to vote from abroad. Just as with the 2004 interparty agreement, political parties agreed to pass external voting legislation if its overall impact on Mexican politics was

limited and somewhat predictable. With the adoption of four general principles, the senators therefore increased the predictability of the emigrants' impact on the upcoming election. These principles simultaneously preserved the interests of the IFE and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which would have been most affected by the PRI proposal. First, a sixth constituency could not be created at this stage, and the voting right was to be limited to presidential elections. Second, only emigrants who had a voter identity card would be able to vote and the IFE would not deliver these cards abroad. In other words, emigrants who did not have such a card and were unable to travel to Mexico to get it (e.g., undocumented migrants) would be prevented from voting. Third, campaigning and raising funds abroad were forbidden for Mexican political parties. Fourth, registered voters would only be able to cast their votes by mail.

On 27 April 2005, senators approved a corrected law proposal around these guidelines and sent it back to the house for final approval. With the legislative period coming to an end, it was clear for migrant activists that their last chance to be able to vote in 2006 depended on the approval of the text sent to the house by the senate without modification. At this stage, emigrant lobbyists from the CDPME specifically pressured PRI MPs by telling them that those who rejected the legislation would pay an electoral price for that attitude (Interview with CDPME lobbyist, 29 June 2007). On 28 June 2005, during the extended legislative period, the house finally approved the text modified by the senate with 455 votes in favor, 6 against and 6 abstentions. With just one year before the presidential election, many administrative questions still needed to be resolved, but all the legislative requirements were met for the first, but limited, electoral participation of emigrants in the presidential election in the home country.

The legislation thus placed the IFE at the center of electoral proceedings abroad. The IFE was the key actor in the political parties' strategy to limit the impact of emigrant voters on electoral results. Indeed, the IFE was to ensure that no political campaign be conducted abroad and that no foreign money be injected into Mexican politics. Most importantly, the fact that the IFE had no institutional presence abroad and was not allowed to deliver voter identity cards to emigrants was a guarantee that participation abroad was going to be limited. If legislators had wanted larger participation from abroad, it would, on the contrary, have allowed the dense consular network to cooperate with the IFE in enfranchising citizens abroad.⁹

During the entire legislative debate on external voting, political parties had speculated about the number of potential voters abroad and had feared that massive mobilization among the 12 million Mexicans residing in the United States could be decisive in presidential elections. Past estimates of the IFE indicated that only between 1.5 and 4 million Mexicans in the United States possessed a voter ID card (many emigrants, for instance, could have left the country before voting age or could have discarded their documentation when crossing the border). Even the more conservative participation

figures, which ranged between 100,000 and 400,000 voters abroad, still worried political parties, considering that the 2006 presidential election was expected to be very disputed (see Chapter 5).

The key to convince the three major political parties to enfranchise emigrants was thus to ensure, through different measures, that their participation would not affect overall electoral results. The exclusion of the consular network from electoral operations, the prohibition to campaign abroad, and the requirement to hold a voter ID card that could not be delivered abroad achieved just that.

CONCLUSION: WHY DID MEXICO ENFRANCHISE ITS CITIZENS ABROAD?

Throughout this chapter, I have shown that while the external voting debate originally started at the beginning of the 20th century, the issue disappeared from the emigrants' and the political parties' agendas for most of the century. The process of democratic transition and institutional transformation that began in the 1980s gave birth to a new wave of activism in favor of external voting that was visible in three main instances. First, the democratic transition led to the empowerment of different actors who had strong interests in defending the political rights of citizens abroad. Regional actors used their growing influence in Mexican politics to support external voting within their own parties. The PRD seized a new space of expression to voice a similar demand in favor of emigrants that had proved supportive of this party since its creation. Second, the process of democratic transition, accompanied by increased reliability of electoral processes, stimulated emigrants' desire to take part in home-country elections. After decades of indifference to participating in elections that solely legitimized the party in power, emigrants thus began to organize lobbying campaigns to demand the right to vote. Third, Mexico's desire to join the North American Free Trade Agreement and the growing importance of remittances in the Mexican economy changed authorities' attitudes towards citizens abroad. From being largely ignored by previous PRI governments, emigrants progressively made their way into their home country's political agenda. The adoption of the 1996 constitutional reform and the development of different diasporic policies abundantly demonstrate this point.

The democratic transition and the institutional transformations of the 1990s increased external voting's salience in Mexican politics. Despite numerous legislative proposals on this topic, the failure to secure external voting into law until 2005 was revealing of an absence of consensus on this issue in Mexico. This lack of agreement was visible on three levels. First, divisions appeared within each political party on the necessity to allow external voting. Second, divisions appeared between different political parties on the practicalities of voting from abroad, if it were to be

implemented. Third, Mexican administrative bodies, such as the IFE and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, warned legislators that an overly ambitious text on external voting would be impossible for them to implement. These divisions revealed that domestic actors in Mexico were primarily concerned about the preservation of their own interests when defining their positions on external voting. For political parties, the fear was that emigrants could vote by millions and influence the results of elections. For the administrative bodies, the fear was that the organization of an election abroad for millions of voters would prove to be a logistical nightmare.

With the regime change that accompanied Vicente Fox's coming to power in 2000, the strategy of the president focused on finding the minimal conditions upon which all of the domestic actors who felt threatened by external voting could agree. In this task, Fox was helped by emigrant lobbies who targeted influential lawmakers to help tip the balance in favor of external voting within each political party. These two elements also contributed to increasing the political costs of publicly opposing external voting. The strategy of consensus building on minimal conditions proved decisive in two moments. In 2004, the Ministry of the Interior managed to have all political parties commit to the principle of external voting. In 2005, the senatorial committee working on a very liberal law proposal sent by the house rewrote the text to allow a very restrictive form of enfranchisement abroad. These two agreements helped political parties and the administration predict the possible impact of emigrant voters, which subsequently lifted their opposition. Indeed, by reducing the voting population abroad to those holding a voter identity card, potential participation from abroad was ensured to be significantly lower. As such, the ability for emigrant votes to be decisive was greatly limited, and this created less uncertainty for political parties. Simultaneously, these agreements protected administrative bodies' interests by keeping the Ministry of Foreign Affairs outside of the electoral process and by strongly reducing the tasks that the IFE needed to execute. In this sense, the Mexican debate also demonstrates that in order to understand why states enfranchise citizens abroad, it is equally relevant to look at the very content of the legislation they consider adopting.

4 Italy

Electoral Benefits and the Enfranchisement of Citizens Abroad

Enfranchising emigrants when mass emigration is no longer occurring may seem a surprising decision. While Italy had traditionally been a country that reached out to its citizens abroad, the external voting debate only took off in the early 1970s after the end of mass emigration. How did emigrant associations manage to increase the salience of the topic after migration flows decreased? Why did political parties develop an interest in external voting so late? What role did the political and economic transformations of Italy play in the legislative debates on the issue? In examining Italy's external voting debate, I point out the role of the following variables: institutional transformation of the home country, elites' desire to strengthen linkages with citizens abroad, the role of emigrant associations, and, most importantly, the role of electoral competition.

THE POLITICS AND POLICIES OF ITALIAN EMIGRATION

Italy has a very long history of emigration—it has often been said that people were leaving the country before Italy even existed as one unified nation-state. Indeed, many emigrants who left before 1871 only became Italians after they moved abroad. In addition to this peculiar characteristic, early Italian emigrants (particularly those who moved to the United States) were also called “birds of passage” in reference to their intention to return and to the emotional and economic contacts they kept with the home country from abroad (Piore 1979; Pries 2001). As demonstrated by Gabaccia (2000), Italian emigrants have also traditionally been involved in home-country politics: As early as the first half of the 19th century, charismatic leaders such as Giuseppe Garibaldi, Celeste Menotti, and Felice Argenti tried to transform labor migrants into supporters of Italian unification.

In addition to the early transnational political involvement of its emigrants, the case of Italy also distinguishes itself by the engagement of the state in managing emigration and its consequences. After the creation of the unitary state, emigration intensified and 14 million people left the country during the 1876–1915 period known as the *Grande Emigrazione*. Contrary

to Mexico, the Italian state reacted to mass emigration. For the state, emigration was a safety valve that helped the country's political stability. Italian authorities were also convinced that emigration could even be economically beneficial if it were temporary and properly managed (Schmitter Heisler 1984). Following this rationale, they developed a series of diasporic policies during the early 20th century that included subsidizing Italian associations abroad, facilitating resumption of Italian citizenship, and maximizing the benefits of emigrant workers' remittances, which at the time represented about 30 percent of Italy's trade with the rest of the world (Smith 2003a; Fondazione Migrantes 2006).

After World War I, a parliamentary commission decided to materialize the prewar project of creating a representative body of Italian emigrants chosen by the emigrants themselves. These talks confirmed Italy's pioneer approach in dealing with citizens abroad. Indeed, many sending states only took interest in creating such bodies around the turn of the 21st century. However, the coming to power of the Fascists in 1922 prevented the project's realization (Colucci 2002: 604).

While in power, the Fascists' approach to emigration went through different phases, but it consistently sought to instrumentalize citizens abroad for nationalistic purposes. Until 1927, Italian authorities encouraged emigration with the purpose of expanding the country's influence in the world. They also lobbied destination countries to take in more migrants. Later, the regime developed a new demographic policy that aimed at increasing the country's population. Emigration thus became undesirable and policies were set up to restrict departures. From a rhetorical viewpoint, Italians living abroad stopped being emigrants, but were rather considered as citizens temporarily residing abroad (Cometti 1958; Cannistraro and Rosoli 1979).

For Mussolini, emigration was one aspect of the country's foreign policy by which Italy could achieve influence on other countries. To this end, the Office for the Fascists Abroad was created. However, there was disagreement within government on the exact role citizens abroad should play. On the one hand, some believed that Fascists organizations had to replace emigrant associations abroad. This move would ensure the spreading of the fascist ideology. On the other hand, some within the fascist regime were reluctant to let emigrants develop a foreign policy that was independent of the Italian state. They were also concerned about the conflicts that such a policy could create within Italian communities abroad. In the United States, for example, emigrants who were supportive of Mussolini's policies came into conflict with others who were strongly antifascist (Bertonha 2001; Luconi 2004). Altogether, the politicization of the Italian community in the United States had severe consequences during World War II, leading to the arrest of emigrants considered as "enemy aliens."¹

The Fascist period is a decisive moment in Italy's emigration history with long-lasting consequences on the external voting debate. Just like Mussolini's Fascist party, its political heir in the new democratic Italy—*Movimento*

Sociale Italiano (MSI)—considered that Italian emigrants could serve its interests from abroad. As we shall see below, the parliamentary support of this party to external voting led, in turn, other parties to be very cautious to act in this policy area.

ORIGINS AND EVOLUTION OF THE EXTERNAL VOTING DEBATE IN ITALY

Origins of the Debate

As underscored previously, Italian authorities developed an interest for reaching out to citizens abroad in the early 20th century. In 1908, the First Congress of Italians Abroad was held and participants debated whether emigrants should favor the right to vote in the country of origin or in the country of residence. At the Second Congress in 1911, participants discussed the creation of reserved seats for deputies representing emigrants within parliament, but this idea was ultimately rejected on the basis that it would promote a particularistic vision of the nation's problems that could hurt Italy's national interests (Napolitano and Di Stefano 1969). Nonetheless, these proposals were particularly innovative, considering that Italy only implemented universal male suffrage in 1912.

In parliament, the question of external voting was also discussed in 1909, 1914, and 1923. The main obstacles to the adoption of such legislation were twofold. On the technical side, the actual organization of elections abroad was deemed materially too complicated. On the political side, representatives of different parties feared the impact of voters from abroad: Some within the Left were afraid of the possible manipulation of votes cast in consulates while the Right feared the expansion of socialism in Italy through the emigrant vote (Elia 2000: 65).

As discussed above, the Fascist regime was determined to use emigration for nationalistic purposes but did not want to leave room for emigrants to engage in political activities abroad without proper supervision. With the idea of preventing assimilation in some countries such as the United States, the executive Government and the Chamber of Deputies discussed—without success—the possibility to grant naturalized Italians living abroad the right to vote in home-country elections (Cannistraro and Rosoli 1979). At the turn of World War II, despite a decade-long discussion on these issues, Italian emigrants neither represented in an official consultative body nor had the right to vote from abroad.

The External Voting Debate in the Italian Republic

With the creation of the Italian Republic after World War II, a new constitution had to be designed to protect the democratic standards endangered

by the Fascist regime. In this context, the issue of the political participation and representation of emigrants quickly reappeared. Indeed, MPs unsuccessfully tried to include in the constitution an explicit recognition of emigrants' right to vote from abroad as well as the creation of a consultative body in charge of representing emigrants' interests (Elia 2000: 65–66). The lack of a constitutional provision on external voting did not, however, mean that emigrants were prohibited from taking part in Italian elections. It meant that if they wanted to exercise their right to vote as Italian citizens, they had to come back to Italy on Election Day.

The postwar period also relaunched mass Italian emigration, with around 5.6 million people leaving the country, mostly to Northern Europe, between 1946 and 1965. For the Christian Democratic party *Democrazia Cristiana* (DC) that was in power, postwar emigration represented an opportunity to solve the country's problems of unemployment and to attract investment through remittances. Using a peaceful discourse on the expansion of Italy, DC naturally supported emigration. The left side of the political spectrum, on the contrary, blamed the government for not creating enough economic opportunities to prevent citizens from leaving.

In the first two decades following the war, political parties focused on emigration as a reality affecting the country and requiring policy management. They did not pay much attention to external voting, yet the question repeatedly gained temporary exposure around election time. The Communist party (*Partito Comunista Italiano*, PCI), for instance, came up with the slogan "Return to vote, vote to return." Such a message was obviously designed to win votes from the few emigrants who actually traveled back to Italy on Election Day (Colucci 2002: 598–600).

During the second, third, fourth, and fifth legislative terms, a total of 10 proposals were drafted in order to make it possible for emigrants to vote from abroad (all between 1955 and 1971). Between 1972 and 1982, another 29 proposals failed to reach consensus. Different arguments were used to express opposition to external voting. First, there was the idea that emigrant participation in home-country elections lacked legitimacy. As postwar Italian emigrants were settling down in destination countries and having children who could gain Italian nationality, concerns arose about enfranchising citizens abroad with very limited connections to Italy. Second, the reliability of electoral operations abroad was another point of contention. Parliamentarians like Gian Giacomo Migone, for example, repeatedly warned of the risks of electoral fraud abroad and its consequences on the credibility of the Italian electoral process (Interview 5 March 2007).

Most importantly, however, Italian political elites were concerned with the uncertainty surrounding the impact of external voters on electoral results. The Communist party, in particular, was concerned that electoral colleges, which traditionally voted for the Left in the South of Italy, could be lost if emigrants were enfranchised. The assumption was that, since many emigrants were from the South, the impact of these new voters on the

party's results would be particularly felt in those colleges where the Communist party was strong. With the exception of the MSI, Italian political parties were particularly resistant to enfranchising emigrants. Most legislative proposals on external voting were indeed tabled by the neofascists. To them, the success of Mussolini among certain emigrants was proof that there existed support for nationalistic platforms abroad. Enfranchising emigrants in the new democratic Italy therefore belonged to a strategy to improve their electoral performance by adding supposedly favorable new voters to the electoral roll.

Despite the number of proposals on external voting tabled in the four decades following World War II, Italian emigrants remained prevented from voting from abroad. In terms of political rights, improvements were actually limited to two reforms. First, Presidential Decree No. 361 of 30 March 1957 granted free train tickets to emigrants willing to travel to Italy on Election Day to vote.² Second, Act No. 40 of 7 February 1979³ made it possible for citizens who left Italy to remain on the electoral roll without any time limit. These laws constituted *de facto* recognitions that residence abroad was not a valid ground for exclusion from the political community.

Three elements progressively changed political parties' positions to favor external voting: 1) The economic development of Italy and the end of mass emigration, 2) the transformation of the domestic political scene, and 3) the efforts of emigrants to broker a deal on external voting between political parties.

THE END OF MASS MIGRATION AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF ITALY'S DIASPORIC POLICIES

Economic Development and Emigrants' Ties with the Home Country

In the 1970s, Italy progressively became an immigration country. From being a labor-exporting country dependent on migrant remittances, Italy turned into one of the world's largest industrial powers (epitomized by its integration into the G7 in 1975). In this context, the salience of the emigration issue within Italian politics progressively faded and governing parties found it to be less of a source of embarrassment than before (Pugliese 2006).

In this improving socioeconomic context, Italian authorities were willing to design a new approach to emigration by opening up dialogue with citizens abroad. In 1975, the government organized a National Conference on Emigration in Rome, where discussions focused on the factors causing migration, job market policies, mechanisms of assistance, and ways for emigrants to participate in the design of new diasporic policies.

From a discursive viewpoint, the transformation of Italy's economy and the end of mass emigration gave birth to a new discourse on emigrants being an asset for their home country beyond remittances.⁴ Breaking away

with a more traditional discourse on Italians abroad being poor emigrants requiring the home state's assistance, some political leaders began to argue that Italians abroad were a resource for the internationalization of Italy's economy. In their own words, migrants could turn into the "ambassadors" of products bearing the sign "Made in Italy." During my fieldwork, almost all of the senators and MPs elected abroad whom I interviewed insisted that citizens abroad were a potential economic resource. For example, Franco Narducci, former emigrant leader in Switzerland who is now an Italian MP, confirmed the existence of a utilitarian view on citizens abroad after the end of mass migration: "Italians abroad are a strategic resource that can contribute to the development of Italy. To have such a network, it is a big asset. . . . finding products and people all over the world is an advantage. This can help [economic] development and help international relations" (Interview 19 February 2007).

Today, some political leaders, such as Salvatore Ferrigno, former emigrant MP from the United States elected on the *Forza Italia* list, pushed this instrumentalist view on emigration to the extreme by arguing that emigrants should be rewarded with different kinds of diasporic policies in exchange for their support to the Italian economy (Interview 1 March 2007). Other parliamentarians mix economic arguments with nationalistic ones in order to justify emigrant enfranchisement. Antonio Razzi, emigrant MP from Switzerland elected on the *Italia dei Valori* list, argued, "Italians living abroad are more Italian than Italians living in Italy. . . . [They] are not ashamed of waving the Italian flag" (Interview 9 July 2009). In the debate on external voting, this discourse on emigration as a resource to a global economy and an asset for the image of Italy abroad proved useful. It convinced lawmakers that external voting—along with other diasporic policies—stimulates emigrant loyalty and therefore benefits the home country's economy.

The Adoption of New Diasporic Policies

Between the early 1980s and the early 1990s, Italian authorities confirmed that they wished to strengthen their relations with citizens abroad through four key policies. The first two policies responded to the longtime emigrant demand to have official channels of discussions with the home country. First, the *COMITES* (Committees of Italians Residing Abroad) were created in 1985, with the goal of promoting social and cultural activities within communities abroad. Their members are citizens elected abroad in consular districts with at least 3,000 citizens. In close connection with the consular services, members of the *COMITES* work to promote activities in the social and cultural arenas with special attention to issues related to youth, equal opportunities, social assistance, and schooling.

Second, the General Council of Italians Abroad (CGIE) was created in 1989 as a so-called "second-degree" representative body. It is composed

of 94 members, of which 65 are elected by the members of the *COMITES* and representatives of Italian associations abroad. The other 29 members are appointed by the government to represent national emigration associations, the press, trade unions, and parties with representation in parliament. During the council members' five-year mandates, their main functions are to encourage Italians abroad to continue to participate in the political, economic, and cultural life of the home country; facilitate their well-being and integration in host societies; and ensure that Italian authorities are attending to their needs. The CGIE also has the capacity to formulate nonbinding recommendations to parliament and government agencies on emigration-related issues.

Third, in 1988 Italian legislators created the Registry of Italian Citizens Residing Abroad (AIRE) and established a decennial census of this population in coordination with the resident population census.⁵ Consequently, every Italian municipality is to hold a register of its citizens permanently residing abroad and has to communicate this information to the Ministry of the Interior. While this policy did not have a concrete impact on the linkages of emigrants with the home country, it helped to determine how many holders of Italian citizenship actually reside abroad. The creation of the AIRE thus played an important role in the external voting debate, as it gave political parties reliable data on the number of emigrants who could potentially take part in elections from abroad (De Bonis 1998: 223). Instead of speculating about the possible enfranchisement of tens of millions of Italians abroad who would swamp the domestic vote, the AIRE showed that the number of Italian voters abroad would not exceed 3 million.

The fourth policy was the 1992 nationality law.⁶ Despite Italy's transformation into a country of immigration, this law did not address the needs of foreigners as it asked them to reside on the national territory for 10 years before being able to naturalize. However, this law responded to Italians' long-requested appeal for the ability to hold dual nationality. Because the acquisition of Italian nationality is based on the principle of *jus sanguinis*, the 1992 reform therefore opened the way for third, fourth, and fifth generations of ethnic Italians to acquire citizenship while living abroad. In this sense, it can be argued that the nationality law served to strengthen linkages with ethnic Italians abroad (Pastore 2002; Zincone 2006; Tintori 2011).

THE TRANSFORMATION OF ITALY'S DOMESTIC POLITICAL SCENE

As stated above, economic development and the end of mass emigration fostered the adoption of new diasporic policies. With regard to external voting, however, political parties remained distrustful because of its potential electoral implications. Between the 1970s and early 1990s, the balance

of power between supporters and opponents of external voting progressively changed with the transformation of the Italian political scene. This transformation consisted, for the most part, of institutional reforms and the weakening (or disappearance) of traditionally powerful parties.

On the institutional level, Italian politics were reconfigured in two respects during this period. First, the increased regionalization of the state in 1970 granted Italian regions substantial powers in the field of emigration. Ever since this change, they have been eager to help Italians abroad create emigrant associations on a regional basis and the number of these associations has thus boomed (Martiniello 1993; Palidda 2005). To foster dialogue between emigrants and authorities in their region of origin, each Italian region set up a Regional Consultative Council on Emigration (known as a *Consulta*). As argued by Ivo Cremonini, former president of the Emilia-Romagna Region's *Consulta*, regions increasingly sought to instrumentalize migrant associations for their own benefit because they were interested in having associations abroad that would help them establish commercial and cultural contacts in destination countries (Interview 8 March 2007). Following this rationale, any policy that helped strengthen relations with emigrant communities would get the support of regional authorities. For this reason, many regional governments became supporters of emigrants' enfranchisement in national elections.

Second, with the integration of Italy within the European Community (EC), the external voting debate experienced an unexpected turn. In 1979, the Italian Parliament responded to the EC's obligation to organize European parliamentary elections by direct universal suffrage and allowed EU citizens living in Italy to take part in European elections. Simultaneously, Italian legislators decided to grant Italian emigrants living in another EU Member State the right to vote for Italian European Parliament candidates in polling stations abroad. Act No. 18 of 24 January 1979 therefore gave the possibility to Italian emigrants—who chose not to vote for EP candidates of their countries of residence—to vote for Italian candidates without having to return.⁷ For political parties, allowing emigrants to take part in EP elections from abroad was less controversial than enfranchising them in national legislative elections, since EP elections were considered second-order elections with low stakes. In addition, emigrants residing outside of Europe (who were thought to favor right-wing parties) were not eligible to participate. Overall, while emigrants' enfranchisement in EP elections did not spill over to national legislative elections, it demonstrated Italy's capacity to organize elections abroad.

Next to the abovementioned institutional reforms, Italy's domestic political scene was changed by the dissolution of its three most powerful parties in the 1990s and the emergence of new political forces. First, the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 forced the Communist party (PCI) to split into two distinct political parties in 1991: The dominant stream created the social-democratic *Partito Democratico della Sinistra* (PDS), wishing

to transform the communist party into a European social-democratic one. The minority stream created the *Partito della Rifondazione Comunista* (RC), which adhered to a reformed communist ideology (Guarnieri 2006). These parties both performed poorly in the 1992 elections and confirmed the decline of the traditionally powerful communist movement in Italian politics. Nonetheless, the creation of the PDS softened the communists' position on external voting and new PDS parliamentarians tabled a law proposal on the topic for the first time in 1992.

Second, the *Mani Pulite* (clean hands) operations revealed large-scale corruption within Italian politics in the early 1990s. These revelations led to the dissolution of two major government parties—*Democrazia Cristiana* (DC) and the *Partito Socialista Italiano* (PSI).⁸ This event led to a period of instability in Italian politics that led to major reforms in the electoral system and a profound reconfiguration of the domestic political scene. After the 1994 parliamentary election, 71 percent of the elected MPs were new. Further, Silvio Berlusconi managed to assemble a new center-right coalition that coalesced the apparently diverging interests of *Democrazia Cristiana*, *Alleanza Nazionale*, and the *Lega Nord*. For supporters of external voting, this meant two important things: 1) the parties that long opposed emigrants' enfranchisement disappeared or transformed, and 2) the *Alleanza Nazionale's* coming of power in the coalition government gave this party more leverage to promote reforms in this field.

EMIGRANTS AND THEIR REPRESENTATIVES AS DEAL BROKERS

Even though the enfranchisement of emigrants could only happen through legislative reforms, Italian emigrants and their representative associations were always actively promoting external voting in debates and discussions outside of parliament. Italian associations abroad ranged from associations born in Italy that worked in favor of emigrants (trade unions, Catholic organizations, etc.) to community-based associations founded abroad (cultural, recreational, folkloric, and regional associations, as well as ethnic media outlets). Because these organizations were created for different purposes and had different goals, not all emigrant associations were active in the external voting debate. Some associations indeed considered it more important to lobby for the integration of Italians in destination countries.

Nonetheless, as underscored by Claudio Micheloni, leader of FECLI (one of the largest Italian associations in Switzerland), emigrant lobbies that fought for external voting never believed that it should happen at the expense of the struggle for integration in destination countries (Interview 27 February 2007). Political struggles for integration in the host country were thus to be led in parallel with the recognition of political rights in the home country.

The General Council of Italians Abroad

The first major achievement of emigrant associations happened during the 1988 National Emigration Conference, where emigrant associations and Italian authorities jointly expressed their commitment to external voting. However, it is through the framework of the General Council of Italians Abroad (CGIE) that emigrants managed to repeatedly bring up the issue with Italian domestic actors (Ruberti 1994). Three parallel strategies were pursued. First, with the CGIE, emigrant associations took advantage of the political crisis of the 1990s to argue that the transformation of Italian politics was an opportunity to enfranchise citizens abroad. Second, emigrant associations developed a new discourse that broke away with the image of the emigrant in need of assistance. Instead, they focused on the economic benefits that the population abroad could bring to Italy. Third, the CGIE opted for supporting the creation of a foreign constituency, in a move to reassure political parties that were afraid of the emigrant vote's impact (see below).

Despite the associations' effort within the CGIE, this new strategy did not produce any immediate results. The lack of results could be attributed in large part to the fact that political parties' representatives within the CGIE were second-class officials who had limited leverage within their own parties. In addition, behind their apparent unanimous support for external voting, members of the CGIE expressed different preferences for the voting modality through which citizens abroad should be able to vote. Nonetheless, as underscored by a former secretary-general of the CGIE, Franco Narducci, this institution gave supporters of external voting an arena to discuss the issue with Italian authorities. He explains: "The right to vote was the flag of the CGIE. . . . We had a network of contacts because the CGIE is like a Parliament, we have people from all parties elected abroad and appointed by the government. All together, we pressured the political parties, the press . . . We mobilized the communities abroad telling them to pressure elected officials who were visiting [communities abroad]" (Interview 19 February 2007). For this reason, it can be argued that the CGIE increased the political costs of opposing external voting because it forced political parties to take a stance on this issue. The CGIE's status as an official Italian institution facilitated this.

Emigrant Associations as Deal Brokers

After decades of failed attempts to create legislation enfranchising citizens abroad, it became clear to the supporters of external voting that they should seek a different approach. Even MP Tremaglia of *Alleanza Nazionale*, who had tirelessly supported the enfranchisement of emigrants in parliament, acknowledged that a consensus had first to be found outside the assemblies before submitting new legislative proposals (Tremaglia 2000). Emigrant

leaders themselves were convinced that political parties needed to be reassured about the impact of external voters on future electoral results before they would consider enfranchising emigrants. As discussed previously, the fear had historically been that emigrants would negatively influence the electoral performance of some political parties. Letting emigrants vote in their home constituencies could thus theoretically alter electoral results in all electoral districts. By the 1990s, supporters of external voting had found one solution to reassure political parties on the impact of external voters: the creation of a foreign constituency in which emigrants would elect a limited number of MPs and senators who would themselves be emigrants.

This solution faced two initial difficulties. First, the creation of a foreign constituency complicated the legislative process. Indeed, MP Mirko Tremaglia (MSI) officially proposed to create such a constituency in 1993. It was, however, rejected in parliament on the basis that the creation of electoral districts abroad required a modification of Article 57 of the constitution to allow senators to be elected on a nonregional basis. Second, some parliamentarians expressed doubts about the capacity of these senators and MPs elected abroad to represent the nation and not just the interest of citizens living abroad. This fear was clearly expressed during the interview with MP Dario Rivolta (*Forza Italia*): “I’m elected in an electoral college but I do not represent only the citizens of my college. According to the Constitution, I represent any Italian citizen. It must be the same for those elected abroad. Them, they cannot be considered as union stewards for Italians living abroad” (Interview 1 March 2007). Supporters of the foreign constituency argued in response that parliamentarians elected abroad would be elected by Italian citizens, just like any other parliamentarian, and therefore there was no valid reason to question their loyalty (Interview with Claudio Michelsoni, leader of FECLI, 27 February 2007).

Despite these obstacles, emigrant associations in Switzerland pushed very strongly for the creation of a foreign constituency. On 18 February 1995, the *Federazione delle Colonie Libere* in Switzerland (FECLI, a large Italian antifascist workers’ association), the *Patronato ACLI* (Christian Association of Italian Workers) and regional associations in Switzerland convened Italian politicians from the neofascist *Alleanza Nazionale*, the Christian-Democratic *Partito Popolare Italiano*, and the ex-Communist *Partito Democratico della Sinistra* to an emigration conference in the city of Basel. The meeting led to the so-called “Basel Pact” by which the representatives of these parties agreed to commit themselves not only to granting Italians abroad the right to vote, but also the right to be elected from abroad (i.e., passive electoral rights).

By the middle of the 1990s, the combined effort of the CGIE and of emigrant associations such those who promoted the Basel Pact had led many political parties to accept external voting. Impact control was the key element that explained this growing consensus. With a foreign constituency, political parties felt reassured about emigrants’ impact in future elections.

At this stage, three reforms still had to be implemented before emigrants could be allowed to cast votes from abroad. First, parliament had to introduce external voting and the creation of a foreign constituency in Article 48 of the constitution (which addresses the conditions of access to political rights in Italy). Second, legislators had to modify Articles 56 and 57 to set the number of MPs and senators to be elected abroad, and, in the case of senatorial elections, introduce an exception to the general principle that senators be elected on a regional basis. Third, parliament had to pass a regular law setting the modalities and requisites to vote from abroad.

THE INTRODUCTION OF EXTERNAL VOTING IN THE ITALIAN CONSTITUTION

Following the terms of the Basel Pact, *Alleanza Nazionale*, the former Communists of PDS, the Christian-Democrats of CCD and PPI all tabled their own proposals to modify the constitution and create a foreign constituency. In total, no less than 40 legislative proposals were submitted on the topic of external voting during the 13th legislative term (1996–2001). Nonetheless, the failure of these proposals to gather sufficient votes demonstrated that, beyond fear of emigrants' impact on electoral results, political parties still disagreed on different aspects of external voting reform.

The Creation of the Foreign Constituency

One particular draft legislation, proposal AC 105,⁹ was rejected in the very last step of the legislative process in the summer of 1998. This situation triggered further reaction from emigrants. In September of that same year, a collective of associations¹⁰ forming the *Consulta Nazionale dell'emigrazione* (CNE) took advantage of being invited to a hearing to the house to reiterate their position. There, the associations stressed the asset that having a population abroad represented for Italy and reaffirmed the necessity to put an end to the discrimination against Italians abroad by granting comparable political rights. To this end, the associations requested that political parties approve the same legislative proposal as the one they rejected a few weeks earlier. They also asked parliamentary group leaders to publicly reaffirm their commitment to external voting.¹¹ A few days later, the CGIE made a similar call during one of its meetings and stressed that further delays in the approval of the reform might undermine the credibility of Italian institutions in the eyes of Italians abroad (Emigrazione Notizie 1998).

Moving away from the role of deal brokers that had characterized the position of emigrants in the beginning of the 1990s, associations were now more aggressively requesting that legislation be passed. This change of attitude was also revealing that emigrants were aware that, unlike in the early postwar period, Italian authorities were now interested in engaging with

its diaspora. By warning that failing to enfranchise citizens abroad could result in severed ties with this population, emigrant supporters of external voting were therefore betting on the authorities' fears of losing the economic benefits associated with the Italian population abroad.

Emigrants' reaction to the failed reforms of June 1998 did not leave political parties indifferent. For the center-left government—and for DS in particular—the need to clarify its position on external voting became obvious. This clarification came from Piero Fasino, the secretary general of DS and member of the Prodi government, who explicitly declared himself in favor of the creation of a foreign constituency. The stance of this influential leader put his party at the forefront of the external voting debate. After two rounds of parliamentary readings of a similar text to the one that had been rejected earlier, an overwhelming majority in the senate eventually approved the text on 29 September 1999.¹² The reform added the following clause to Article 48 of the constitution:

The law lays down the requirements and modalities for citizens residing abroad to exercise their right to vote and guarantees that this right is effective. A constituency of Italians abroad shall be established for elections to the Houses of Parliament; the number of seats of such constituency is set forth in a constitutional provision according to criteria established by law. (Constitutional Law No. 1/2000)¹³

Despite the historical distrust of Italian left-wing parties towards external voting, this first reform, which opened the path to emigrant enfranchisement, had been passed by a center-left dominated parliament.

Determining the Number of Parliamentarians Elected Abroad

The second constitutional reform concerned Articles 56 and 57 on the number of parliamentarians elected abroad and on the possibility for senators to be elected on a nonregional basis. Deciding how many parliamentarians would be elected abroad was a particularly controversial issue. On the one hand, a limited number of seats would render emigrants' capacity to be heard in parliament as mostly symbolic. On the other hand, some politicians feared that a larger number of emigrant parliamentarians would give them too much power to influence domestic politics. MPs Giuseppe Calderisi and Marco Boato, for instance, warned their colleagues that the creation of a foreign constituency could prove useless in reducing the potential impact of emigrants on electoral results. Indeed, because parliamentary majorities sometimes rely on a very small difference of seats, individual MPs and senators elected abroad could be decisive under certain circumstances.¹⁴ In addition, Italian legislators also had to decide whether parliamentarians elected abroad would increase the existing number of seats

(630 MPs and 315 senators), or if they would replace some of the seats of parliamentarians formerly elected on the national territory.

Legislators eventually responded to these questions in Constitutional Law No. 1 on 23 January 2001. Due to pressure to reduce the overall number of parliamentarians, it left the overall number of MPs and senators untouched, which *de facto* implied that the number of parliamentarians elected on the Italian territory was reduced. In addition, the reform set the number of MPs elected abroad to 12 and senators to six.

THE APPROVAL OF THE IMPLEMENTATION LAW

Before Italian emigrants could cast the first votes from abroad, the Italian Parliament still had the responsibility of adopting an implementation law that, according to the revised Article 48 of the constitution, had to set the requirements and modalities for citizens residing abroad to exercise their right to vote. Two difficulties remained. First, certain political parties were concerned about the implications of different voting modalities for electoral results. Second, one state agency was equally concerned about the burden that enfranchising citizens abroad would represent for its personnel: the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Because emigrant associations considered that the most important barriers to external voting had been removed with the constitutional reforms, they were no longer mobilized in the last step of the legislative process to influence the drafting of the implementation law in their favor.

The Political and Administrative Implications of the Implementation Law

After the constitutional reforms, political parties and government agencies clearly understood that, in spite of the creation of a foreign constituency, technical and administrative decisions regarding the implementation of external voting could strongly affect their interests.

Parliament still had to determine the modality through which emigrants would cast their votes from abroad, and some political parties feared that voting by mail would not guarantee the secrecy of the vote. As explained by Dario Rivolta, *Forza Italia* MP, center-right parties—and *Forza Italia* in particular—feared that large Italian migrant associations and unions in European destination countries had the power to control the votes of their members (e.g., by inviting emigrants to meetings where they would be told whom to vote for) (Interview 1 March 2007). For these parties, the vote in person at consulates and embassies (already in use for EP elections) offered greater guarantees of transparency. However, due to the dispersion of the Italian diaspora in places sometimes far away from consulates and embassies, this proposal did not gather much support.

A second point of contention concerned the creation of a reliable electoral roll of citizens abroad. To create the electoral roll abroad, two options were considered. First, legislators could rely on the Register of Italian Citizens Abroad (AIRE) held by each Italian municipality. However, the Ministry of the Interior considered that, because of AIRE's voluntary character, it systematically undercounted the number of citizens living abroad (Interview with civil servant, 2 March 2007). Second, legislators could choose the registries held by Italian consulates abroad, which were considered less reliable than the AIRE but contained over 1 million more potential voters. In 2001, parliament eventually proposed to cross AIRE data with the consular registries in order to reduce the gap between the two databases. The subsecretary of state for the interior Massimo Brutti, however, opposed it on the ground that it was too complex to be implemented on time before the May 2001 elections.

In reaction to the ministry's concerns, parliament maintained its proposal to cross the two databases but agreed to postpone the approval of the implementation law until after the 2001 elections. In anticipation of emigrants' negative reaction to this decision, President Ciampi asked the parliament to commit itself to pass the implementation law within six months of the election of the new legislature.

Coalition Government and the Adoption of the Implementation Law

The 2001 legislative elections once again brought about important changes in Italian politics, with the large victory in the two chambers of the center-right coalition *Casa delle libertà* led by Silvio Berlusconi and composed of *Forza Italia*, *Alleanza Nazionale*, and *Lega Nord*. This large victory provided Italian politics with a certain degree of stability.¹⁵ Even though a consensus on the content of the implementation legislation had been reached under the previous center-left government, it remained uncertain whether the new center-right-dominated chambers would comply with President Ciampi's request to pass legislation within six months.

As a member of the new government coalition, *Alleanza Nazionale* played a major role in the eventual approval of the legislation. Mirko Tremaglia, a longtime supporter of external voting, was appointed minister for the Italians in the world. This position in the Council of Ministers was very appropriate to promote the adoption of the implementation law. Before he swore in as a minister, Tremaglia, however, submitted a law proposal in parliament based on the terms of the agreement reached during the previous legislature.

On 18 July 2001, Minister Tremaglia reiterated President Ciampi's demand to pass the law quickly. His party was in a good position to pressure coalition partners. Indeed, after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the *mani pulite* operation, the 1993 electoral reform had favored small parties

like *Alleanza Nazionale*. The reform indeed encouraged parties to form coalitions, which increased the tendency towards bipartisanship in Italian politics. Due to the uncertainty of electoral results, the center-left and center-right coalitions, however, continued to ally with small parties. While these parties were faithful during electoral campaigns, they felt free to break the alliance once in power. Small parties like *Alleanza Nazionale* thus had the power to make deals with their coalition partners in exchange for their continued support of the governing majority.

From his position as minister, Tremaglia made the issue of external voting a key point of the government's program. Doing so, he put pressure on Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi and his coalition partners. Berlusconi later conceded that he had little choice but to accept to pass the implementation law: "If we had not done so, the government would have fallen, and [in a coalition] I very often agreed to do things with which I was not agreeing" (*La Stampa* 2006).

Less than seven months after the start of the new legislative term, the senate approved Law 459 on 27 December 2001, with 185 votes in favor, one against, and 10 abstentions.¹⁶ With this law, external voting had officially been implemented. Despite the fact that the constitutional reforms had been passed under a center-left government, Tremaglia tried to capitalize on the legislation's adoption by claiming that it was he who had really enfranchised Italians abroad (Inform No. 208 2005). These declarations confirmed that, from now on, relations with the diaspora would also be guided by political parties' desire to win the emigrant vote.

MAIN FEATURES OF THE EXTERNAL VOTING SYSTEM IN ITALY

Law 459 regulates the exercise of the right to vote of Italian citizens abroad. It provides that emigrants who meet the same qualification criteria as domestic voters have the right to participate by mail in elections of both chambers of parliament and in referenda (Art. 1). According to Article 12 of the law, voter registration of Italians abroad is automatic. This means that emigrants do not need to request a ballot. All the emigrants listed in the AIRE automatically receive at home an electoral package containing the ballot, an electoral certificate, a list of candidates, and instructions on how to cast the ballot. The modality to cast the vote is the vote by mail, except for the emigrants residing in countries where Italian authorities have been unable to sign an agreement with the local authorities.¹⁷ Italians abroad also maintain the ability to vote in Italy if they are there on Election Day (Art. 4).¹⁸ Votes cast by mail are delivered to the central office for the Foreign Constituency in Rome, where they are verified and counted.

With regard to the electoral roll, the decision of the Italian Parliament to cross the AIRE with consular registries has consequently excluded citizens temporarily abroad from the scope of the external voting law. Indeed,

emigrants can only register with the AIRE if they intend to reside outside of Italy for at least one year. This exclusion reveals the ambiguous motivations of legislators. As underscored earlier, emigrant leaders had developed a discourse on emigrants being an economic resource for Italy. Following this logic, the right to vote for citizens temporarily residing abroad should be a priority considering that these emigrants are more likely to have strong connections with Italy than long-term emigrants. Also, the temporary nature of their emigration likely renders their experience abroad more directly beneficial to the Italian economy upon return. However, the electoral participation of citizens temporarily abroad posed three problems. First, the participation of temporary emigrants is hardly compatible with the creation of the foreign constituency. It was difficult to justify that emigrants should vote for MPs and senators living abroad if they were going to return to the national territory within the same legislative term. Second, registering highly mobile citizens is logistically difficult, and doing so could create the potential for double voting. Third and most importantly, political parties are less able to control the votes of citizens temporarily abroad in comparison to long-term emigrants and their descendants. Indeed, for the most part, they cannot be reached through the dense Italian associative networks abroad. Altogether, the disregard for the political rights of citizens temporarily abroad confirmed that legislators' priority with the external voting reform was to strengthen linkages with long-term emigrants and their descendants.

Another important feature of the implementation law is that it determines the distribution of the MP and senator seats attributed to citizens abroad. The law creates four geographical sectors (*repartizioni*) within the foreign constituency: 1) Europe (including Turkey and the Russian Federation); 2) South America; 3) Northern and Central America; and 4) Africa, Asia, Oceania, and Antarctica. The distribution of the 18 seats for emigrant senators and MPs is made according to the following rule: each geographical sector is entitled to one senator and one MP, and the remaining seats are distributed proportionally according to the size of the population abroad (Art. 6). In other words, the legislators' idea was that the reserved seats should reflect the dispersion of Italian migration. This mechanism therefore ensures that the largest receiving areas (Europe and South America) do not occupy all the seats. However, by introducing a system of proportional representation with the possibility of expressing votes of preference (Art. 11), legislators also favored candidates residing in countries where large numbers of voters are concentrated.¹⁹

Lastly, the legislation outlines the criteria to be a candidate in the foreign constituency (Art. 8). The candidates must be Italian citizens residing abroad; Italian citizens residing in Italy are not allowed to be candidates in the foreign constituency. This provision has been subject to criticism on the grounds of violating the constitutional principle of equality between citizens. In order to protect candidates and voters from potential backlash in

their countries of residence, Article 19 also demands that diplomatic offices formally ask foreign governments to take measures to ensure that no Italian emigrant is subject to discrimination in his/her country of residence due to participation in the election.

With Law 459, Italy adopted one of the most liberal external voting processes worldwide, as it combines lax qualification criteria, automatic registration to vote from abroad, and significant emigrant representation through emigrant MPs and senators in parliament. As we shall discuss thoroughly in Chapter 5, the implementation of this law indeed placed Italy among the countries with the largest number of citizens voting from abroad, yet has, at the same time, led to serious controversies with regard to the impact of external voting on the electoral process.

CONCLUSION: WHY DID ITALY ENFRANCHISE ITS CITIZENS ABROAD?

Throughout this chapter, I demonstrated that Italy's interest in its population abroad is not a recent phenomenon. Reciprocally, emigrants' involvement in home-country politics goes back to the 19th century. During various consultations between emigrants and Italian authorities in the early 20th century, emigrants repeatedly expressed interest in taking part in home-country elections from abroad. The question of emigrant representation in parliament or in other representative bodies appeared at the same time. None of the debates, however, led to major legislative reforms.

The external voting debate experienced an important development with Mussolini's attempt to instrumentalize emigrants. The fascist era led political parties to believe—during the decades that followed—that an external voting policy would electorally benefit right-wing parties. The fact that the political heirs of Mussolini (the neofascists of MSI, later called *Alleanza Nazionale*) were the most fervent supporters of external voting aroused center-left parties' fears about the potential electoral consequences of external voting (particularly in the south of Italy). It was mostly these concerns about external voting's potential impact on electoral results, combined with logistical concerns and fears that host-country authorities could be hostile to Italians voting from abroad, that blocked the adoption of external voting legislation in the two decades following the end of World War II.

The relations between Italian authorities and citizens abroad took a new turn in the early 1970s. This period, which marked the end of mass emigration, allowed Italian authorities to envisage relations with citizens abroad differently; authorities no longer sought to solely control emigration flows and their consequences, but rather began to envisage the development of new policies to maintain ties with the population abroad and their descendants. During the same period, increased regionalization of the state transferred prerogatives to regions in the field of emigration. These transformations

meant, on the rhetorical level, that a new discourse emerged among certain political elites according to which, beyond remittances, emigrants were cast as economic assets to their home country. Linking the presence of citizens abroad to the importance of opening markets abroad for Italian businesses, a new discourse arose on Italians abroad as economic assets, who could even serve as “ambassadors” of products bearing the sign “Made in Italy.” For these elites, the adoption of diasporic policies such as external voting would be beneficial to the Italian economy because they would stimulate emigrant loyalty towards the homeland.

On the policy level, the post-emigration era saw important changes in terms of emigrants’ capacity to have a say in home-country political affairs through the institutionalization of consultation mechanisms. The *COMITES* and the *CGIE* provided emigrants with official forums to discuss emigration issues with homeland authorities. The *CGIE* in particular allowed supporters of external voting to enter into dialogue with representatives of political parties who had traditionally opposed external voting. Another important policy change was the creation of the *AIRE* in 1988, which contributed to reducing political speculation on the potential size of the emigrant voting population by providing more reliable estimates of the Italian population abroad.

Despite these improvements and the renewed willingness of Italian authorities to maintain ties with citizens abroad, the issue of external voting still faced opposition in parliament because the stakes appeared far too high for the political parties concerned with the potentially negative impact of external voters on their electoral performance. By the early 1990s, supporters of external voting therefore understood that the only way for emigrants to take part in home-country elections would be through a system that would prevent them from profoundly affecting the outcome of electoral processes. To this end, a group of emigrant associations invited political parties to commit themselves in 1995 to allowing external voting through a modality that would limit emigrants’ impact to a limited number of parliamentary seats. With the creation of a foreign constituency, supporters of external voting thought that the fears of left-wing parties would be put to rest. Managing to have political parties commit themselves to a reform they had failed to pass for decades, these emigrant associations acted as real deal brokers. Their influence was visible in the constitutional reforms adopted in 1999, which primarily relied on the creation of a foreign constituency as the central feature of the external voting regime.

While the 1999 reforms introduced the concept of external voting into the Italian constitution, the effective exercise of voting rights from abroad still depended on the adoption of an implementation law to define the modalities through which these rights could be used. This stage appeared as merely a formality to emigrants, but in reality these technical decisions to be made by legislators had strong political and administrative implications. Disagreements on these issues, and the Ministry of the Interior’s

concern that there would not be enough time to draft reliable emigrant voters registries, eventually led the parliament to postpone the adoption of the implementation law to the next legislature.

This delay prevented emigrants from taking part in the 2001 elections, and there was still no certainty that the next legislature would commit itself to passing this reform. However, the newly elected center-right coalition—of which *Alleanza Nazionale* was a member—passed the legislation only seven months after taking power. The electoral reforms, which were passed during a process of profound reconfiguration of domestic politics after the *mani pulite*, had put this party in a position of being able to force its coalition partners to pass the implementation law. In this sense, after the economic transformation of Italy modified the relations between Italy and its diaspora, and after emigrants helped to broker a deal on the general principles of external voting and the foreign constituency, it was only with the evolution of domestic politics that external voting was eventually implemented.

5 Responding to the Call

The Implementation of External Voting and Voter Turnout Abroad

External voting is a logistical challenge for any electoral authority. Many of the electoral operations that are taken for granted on the national territory take much more effort when they take place abroad. Registering citizens dispersed in different parts of the world; setting up polling stations and organizing postal voting in good collaboration with foreign authorities; and guaranteeing the free and fair character of the electoral process in countries where they have no jurisdiction are just a few of the challenges that electoral authorities have to face. But how do emigrants respond to their newly gained right to take part in home-country elections? In this chapter I intend to answer this question by discussing the reasons why or why not emigrants participate in home country elections.

Despite the scarcity of comparative research on external voting, it is generally assumed that electoral participation among emigrants is very low (Calderón Chelius 2003). Perceived low participation obviously generates debates on the legitimacy of voting from abroad, because it is often a costly policy and, most importantly, because it is interpreted as a lack of emigrant interest in home-country politics. Yet, the latter statement is not supported with any empirical evidence. Further, the notion of voter turnout suffers from conceptual ambiguity when it comes to citizens abroad. In the first part of this chapter, I therefore aim to clarify this concept. Looking at the first instances of external voting in Mexico and Italy, I shed light on the impact of administrative rules on emigrants' decisions to take part or not in home-country elections. In the process, I demonstrate that voter turnout is not an appropriate indicator of emigrant interest in home-country politics. Based on empirical evidence and a review of the existing literature on voter turnout, I then suggest a series of variables that affect emigrants' decisions to vote.

THE CHALLENGES OF MEASURING EMIGRANT VOTER TURNOUT

Because of the limited comparative literature available, little is known about the mobilization of emigrants for home-country elections. Emigrant voters

usually represent a small share of the total voting population, and participation among external voters is almost always lower than among domestic voters (IDEA and IFE 2007: 31). Despite variations between one country and another, external voting is often associated with low turnout. Measuring participation of emigrants in home-country elections is, however, not an easy task. From a technical viewpoint, we can distinguish between the rates of registration from abroad and turnout from abroad. Both indicators need to be clearly defined beforehand. The rate of registration abroad is a ratio between the number of emigrants registered as voters abroad and the number of emigrants that are eligible to register as voters from abroad. Accordingly, it does not take into consideration the number of emigrants who actually make use of their right to vote from abroad. Voter turnout abroad focuses on this very population but several ways of measuring it coexist. Naturally, the choice of a specific method in measuring turnout is often guided by the availability of data. Yet, choosing one approach instead of another has clear implications on the conclusions that can be drawn; an election can be considered a “success” or a “failure” in terms of participation depending on the indicator used.

One way of assessing turnout abroad consists in defining it as a ratio between the number of citizens who cast a ballot from abroad and the total emigrant population of voting age. This method of measuring turnout may be preferable, as it shows what proportion of the emigrant population is actually able and/or willing to register and cast a vote in home-country elections from abroad. However, estimating the exact number of citizens currently abroad is a difficult task for states. First, many states do not oblige citizens to make a formal declaration when they are leaving the country (or cannot enforce this rule). Second, consular registries rely on the voluntary registration of emigrants. In cases when emigrants do not trust homeland authorities, or when they see no clear interest in registering with consular authorities, these registries may prove far from comprehensive. Third, different home-country agencies may have their own registries of citizens abroad, and the task of merging these databases to create electoral registers may be complex. This was the case in Italy, as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of the Interior historically kept different records on the numbers of citizens residing abroad.

Another means of calculating emigrant voter turnout is to compare the number of emigrants who cast a ballot from abroad with the number of citizens who are registered as voters from abroad. This definition of voter turnout—which is often the only statistic provided by electoral authorities—offers greater statistical accuracy but has two important flaws. First, in countries where voting is mandatory even for citizens living abroad (e.g., Belgium and Brazil), this definition of voter turnout does little to measure emigrant mobilization in home-country elections. Second and most importantly, countries that have restrictive registration criteria for citizens abroad will usually experience higher levels of voter turnout under this definition

than those where registration abroad takes little effort. Indeed, when registration is burdensome and time-consuming, the few emigrants who manage to overcome bureaucratic barriers are indeed more likely to make the extra effort to vote. In this situation, voters abroad, however, represent a very small portion of the total emigrant population of voting age (see the case of Mexico below). On the contrary, other countries have laxer registration procedures, or sometimes automatically register citizens abroad. Following this second definition of voter turnout, these countries have much lower participation rates because their electoral rolls are much larger (e.g., Italy).

The two ways of measuring voter turnout above have different strengths and weaknesses. For actors concerned with the outcome of the external voting process, it may therefore be tempting to choose one mode over the other, depending on their stance toward external voting. As we shall see with the case of Mexico, electoral authorities concerned with their incapacity to register large shares of the emigrant population abroad may have found it useful to use a strict definition of emigrant voter turnout showing high participation among the few registered voters. Emigrant associations lobbying for external voting, on the contrary, have argued that the electoral law needs to be reformed by showing what share of the emigrant population has actually managed to cast votes from abroad. Yet, presenting low turnout figures may have also served the interests of domestic actors opposing external voting and wanting to show that emigrants lack interest in home-country politics.

In the first part of this chapter, I intend to demonstrate through the cases of Mexico and Italy that data on emigrant voter turnout are of limited use in determining whether or not emigrants are interested in home-country politics. In this process, I also single out the variables that influence voter turnout abroad. Throughout the chapter, I will refer to voter registration and voter turnout abroad. Despite the fact that I will cite figures of electoral participation among registered voters abroad, my main focus will, however, be on the registration and actual participation of the emigrant population.

MEXICO: CONTROVERSIES ON THE IMPACT OF REGISTRATION PROCEDURES ON VOTER TURNOUT

In Chapter 3, I argued that the Mexican legislative reform that allowed external voting was made possible through consensus between all major political parties. The central feature of this interparty agreement was the guaranteed limited impact that citizens abroad could have on electoral results. Few Mexican politicians were indeed willing to take the risk of adding several million voters abroad to the electoral roll. This was particularly true since nobody exactly knew which parties the emigrants would support. To this end, the legislative reform of 28 June 2005 presented four main features aimed at preventing emigrants from decisively influencing

electoral results. First, an extraterritorial constituency, long demanded by the left-wing opposition party PRD, would not be created at this stage and voting rights were thus limited to presidential elections. Second, only the emigrants who possessed a voter identity card would be eligible to vote, and the IFE would not make those cards obtainable abroad. Third, campaigning and raising funds abroad were forbidden for Mexican political parties. Fourth, registered voters would only be able to cast their votes by registered mail.

During the period of administrative preparation preceding the 2006 election, several experts warned that the rate of participation abroad was likely to be limited. In a technical opinion addressed to parliament in 2005, the Federal Electoral Institute (IFE) estimated that 4 million out of the roughly 12 million Mexicans in the United States held a voter identity card (IFE 2005). Using variables such as the educational attainment of emigrants, Marcelli and Cornelius (2005) developed a more realistic estimation for potential participation, of between 125,000 to 360,000 emigrants. For some migrants themselves, particularly within the lobby called Coalition for the Political Rights of Mexicans Abroad (CDPME), it was also clear that not all of the 4 million emigrants holding a voter identity card would register to vote. The lobby nonetheless expected that the associations' and the IFE's joint efforts in promoting registration would result in over 10 percent of them actually participating (Ross Piñeda 2005). In fact, all of these estimations far exceeded the real registration level.

The IFE received 57,677 external voter application forms by the post, and 40,876 of these requests actually fit the criteria for being added to the electoral register abroad. Ultimately, 79.8 percent of these registered voters (32,632) cast their votes in the 2006 presidential election. Whether we compare the number of voters abroad to the estimate of the total Mexican emigrant population of voting age, or to the total emigrant population holding a voter ID card, turnout appears lower than 1 percent. Overall turnout among the general Mexican population for the 2006 presidential election was greater than 58 percent. Figures of registration and participation abroad have naturally generated strong controversies between emigrants and the Mexican authorities. Emigrants' biggest reproach has been that the legislation inappropriately reflects the realities faced by Mexico's emigrants and that the IFE has implemented the legislation in such a way that makes it even harder for emigrants to register.

The 2005 legislative reform's most severe restriction is the obligation for emigrants to register by completing a form and returning it to the IFE in Mexico with a copy of their voter identity card. Because these cards were not delivered abroad, only emigrants already holding such cards or those who were willing to travel back to Mexico to obtain one would be able to register as voters. For the others—the undocumented migrants unable to travel back and forth, those who had misplaced their voter identity cards (or who had thrown them away when crossing the border), and those who left Mexico

before such a card was issued—obtaining this indispensable voting card would be difficult, costly, and time-consuming, if not entirely impossible.

Furthermore, the electoral law obliged emigrants to download a registration form from the Internet, print it out, fill it in, and send it back to Mexico by registered mail. Several migrant associations have also noted that the cost of postage (usually US\$8) and the time and energy required (going to a post office during work hours and speaking to a post office official in English) were strong disincentives for many marginalized migrants. Moreover, this procedure is said to have discouraged less-educated emigrants to register, as it required them to have Internet access and sufficient literacy to use a computer and complete an administrative form (Smith 2008; Lafleur and Calderón Chelius 2011).

With regard to the actual implementation of the law, the IFE was put in a difficult position by Mexican legislators. The law required that voter registration forms be returned to the IFE between 1 October 2005 and 15 January 2006. Considering that the law had only been approved at the end of June 2005, the IFE only had three months to prepare for its implementation (e.g., creating the registration form) and set up an information campaign for citizens abroad.

Some migrant associations soon realized that registration was surely going to be limited, and they accused the IFE of deliberately implementing the law in a restrictive fashion in order to make it difficult for emigrants to register to vote. Their criticism focused on two main issues. First, the registration procedure outlined by the IFE was very complex. It discouraged many emigrants from trying to register, and led many others to do so improperly. Out of the 54,866 forms received by the IFE on time, only 40,876 were eventually approved. Around 25 percent of potential emigrant voters were rejected for technical reasons, such as filling out the form incorrectly, or by sending the form by regular mail instead of registered mail. Second, migrant associations criticized the IFE for insufficiently informing citizens abroad of their new right during the registration campaign. Disappointment and frustration were commonly shared feelings among emigrant leaders in the United States. A former councilman of the Institute for Mexicans Abroad (IME) summed up the frustration of many emigrant leaders, “[IFE officials were] mere bureaucrats that received a lot of money to come over and do nothing in the United States . . . They did not do what they had to do. They did not do the publicity they had to do like they do in Mexico” (Interview 19 June 2007).

On the IFE’s side, civil servants felt the agency had thoroughly fulfilled its legal obligations, and believed that it even worked proactively to secure maximum emigrant voter registration within the legal and financial limits ascribed to it. An IFE civil servant working for the Coordination for the Vote of Mexicans Residing Abroad (COVE) described the agency’s work to register migrants:

More or less when the electoral process began abroad and we started to see that the [registration] figures on the first days were terribly low . . . all the red lights started to flash at the Institute, and one of the first strategies that we deployed was to ask for the help of some [migrant] associations. Then, the only thing we had to be careful about was that no associations related to political parties got involved. (Interview 20 June 2007)

The IFE stated that its institutional priorities were to safeguard the reliability and the validity of the electoral process, encourage citizens to vote, and ensure that their rights and obligations were respected. But, as rightly underscored by Smith (2008), the IFE was required to fulfill certain obligations abroad that were contradictory to its stated mission. Indeed, with the prohibition of political parties to campaign and raise funds abroad, the IFE also had to circulate informative materials about each major political party among registered voters. Considering that the IFE's goal is to guarantee the fair and transparent character of elections, this mission could be interpreted as breaking the necessary distance between electoral authorities and electoral campaigns. Overall, the IFE nonetheless expressed its satisfaction with regard to its role in the electoral process abroad; nobody contested the validity of electoral operations abroad and a very large percentage of the (few) emigrants who registered cast ballots.

Even though the IFE had the legal responsibility to supervise electoral operations abroad and inform emigrants of their right to vote, we can also legitimately wonder about the responsibility of emigrant associations in terms of the very low voter registration figures. In other words, did emigrant associations encourage their members to register? As we have seen in Chapter 3, various Mexican associations lobbied home-country authorities for decades for the right to vote from abroad. Yet, it seems that once legislation had passed, associations relied on the IFE to inform citizens abroad about the registration process.

The IFE had neither the financial resources nor the connections with the emigrant community to successfully reach citizens abroad. For this reason, the fact that different associations in the United States handed out forms to their members and helped them register was an interesting complement to the IFE's campaign. Most associations, however, did not engage in such activities (Lafleur and Calderón Chelius 2011). This situation frustrated lobbyists who fought for external voting, such as the Michoacán-based political advisor I interviewed. He confessed to have gotten into arguments with migrant association leaders from traditional sending states like Zacatecas or Michoacán after the election, because he believed that if they had indeed represented the hundreds of thousands of emigrants as they say they did, they should have at least worked to assist 1 percent of their members in registering to vote (Interview 26 July 2007).

This observation leads me to make two comments. First, as underlined by my interviewee, clubs and federations of migrant associations, including those who actively lobbied for external voting, most likely did not manage to secure the participation of their own members who possessed a voter identity card. This questions their ability to mobilize migrants for home-country political issues. Second, traditional Mexican emigrant associations in the United States may not necessarily have the same focus on home-country issues as transnational hometown associations (HTAs). HTAs, as underscored by Portes, Escobar, and Radford (2007), are run by a minority of older, better-established, and more educated emigrants. However, while HTAs may be well-suited for development projects in partnership with local authorities in the home country, it remains doubtful that their small structures are appropriate for the electoral mobilization of emigrants in destination countries.

Another consequence of low registration figures is that pundits in Mexico interpreted the limited participation abroad as a sign of emigrants' lack of interest. In other words, some postulated that emigrants did not register as voters abroad because they chose not to. Different surveys have been trying to measure emigrant interest in home-country elections. A first quantitative contribution to the debate is that of the Pew Hispanic Center, which surveyed almost 1,000 Mexicans residing in the United States just after the end of the registration period (Suro and Escobar 2006). The most striking element of the survey is certainly the lack of knowledge Mexicans abroad had of the electoral process in their home country. Only 45 percent of the respondents knew that the presidential election was taking place in 2006; however, 78 percent knew that Mexicans abroad would be invited to vote at the next election. Yet, this latter figure cannot be interpreted as a result of the IFE's promotional effort, for only 36 percent of the interviewees knew that the deadline to register had already passed. Reasons for not registering were the lack of necessary documents (67%), the lack of information about the procedure (55%), and the difficulty of the procedure (46%). Only 2 percent of respondents declared that they had no interest in Mexican politics because their life was now in the United States.

The question of Mexican migrants' interest in home-country politics was also measured in a survey led by McCann and colleagues, which looked at 1,000 emigrants in three US cities between February and June of 2006. Results showed that between 8 and 12 percent of the Mexican adult population in the United States followed a great deal of the 2006 presidential campaign, while between 10 and 19 percent only somewhat followed it. Also, between 15 and 20 percent of the respondents claimed to talk about Mexican politics with friends and family at least a few times a week. Despite the fact that the level of interest observed among nonmigrant Mexicans is significantly higher, these scholars nonetheless concluded that Mexicans abroad have greater civic potential than the number of expatriates who cast a ballot would suggest (2006).

Two further elements confirm the findings of existing literature on voter turnout: First, this survey shows that interest in Mexican politics varies significantly according to levels of education. Second, emigrants who retained clear party identifications in Mexico were also most likely to have a larger interest in the campaign. This last point is complemented by Waldinger and Lim's (2009) analysis of the Latino National Survey conducted in 2006 among 2,600 Mexican migrants in the United States. The survey confirmed that there is a "habit effect" in political participation. In other words, emigrants who were engaged in Mexican politics prior to migration are more likely than others to be interested in Mexican politics and external voting after migration.

Looking at the results of these different surveys, it appears that a much larger number of emigrants have a true interest in Mexican politics than the 33,000 who cast a ballot abroad in 2006. Aside from the lack of voter identity cards, the difficulty of registration, and the lack of information, apathy among certain emigrants cannot be discarded as a cause for low registration. This point is supported by a 1998 survey conducted by Mexican scholars, which showed that 75 percent of Mexican migrants were willing to spend a maximum of one hour to vote (Espinoza Valle 2004). These data imply that easier registration procedures are likely to lead to higher registration rates. What these data also show is that Mexican emigrants are willing to devote far less time to political participation in their home country than to other administrative procedures that have more direct impact on their daily lives. Indeed, as underlined by Waldinger (2008), millions of Mexicans in the United States have applied for consular identification cards since new security rules have made it increasingly difficult for undocumented migrants to carry out basic administrative tasks in the United States (e.g., opening a bank account) without proper documentation. In this case, as opposed to registering to vote from abroad, the costs and long lines to obtain the card have not deterred emigrants from applying. Unsurprisingly, participating in home-country elections is less of a priority to citizens abroad than other administrative procedures with Mexican authorities that facilitate daily life in the country of residence.

I argued earlier that political parties' fear of external voting's impact justified the adoption of strict administrative rules with regard to external voting. This fear was based on uncertainty concerning the potential numbers of voters abroad, as well as emigrants' electoral preferences. In the latter case, I have shown that the PRI historically feared to be highly unpopular among citizens abroad. The PRD, on the contrary, because of its strong connections with Mexicans abroad (particularly in California), was convinced that it would perform very well among emigrant voters. The PAN was divided between President Fox's view that there was a huge potential for center-right voters among emigrants and other members of the party who feared that citizens abroad had a more left-wing profile. Looking at Table 5.1, three conclusions can be drawn regarding external voting

Table 5.1 Electoral Results and Political Preferences of Emigrant Voters in 2006 and 2012

| <i>Party</i> | <i>Electoral results among emigrant voters (2006)</i> | <i>Electoral preferences of emigrants as observed by McCann et al. (2006)</i> | <i>Overall results of the 2006 presidential election</i> | <i>Electoral results among emigrant voters (2012)</i> | <i>Overall results of the 2012 presidential election</i> |
|--------------|---|---|--|---|--|
| PAN | 58.29% | 37% | 35.89% | 42.17% | 25.4% |
| PRD | 34.00% | 34% | 35.31% | 39.00% | 31.64% |
| PRI | 4.17% | 21% | 22.26% | 15.62% | 38.15% |

Source: McCann, Cornelius, and Leal 2006; COVE 2006; IFE 2012.

legislation's influence on electoral results and the future of external voting in Mexican politics.

First, the PRI's fear that emigrants would not support them if they were enfranchised is largely founded. This party indeed collected only a small 4.17 percent of votes abroad, when it reached over 20 percent among domestic voters. From a strategic viewpoint, the PRI's opposition to external voting in general, or to an administrative regime that would facilitate participation from abroad, is thus perfectly understandable. Second, the external voting law introduced a selection bias in favor of center-right voters abroad. Accordingly, the 33,111 voters who participated in the external voting process cannot be considered representative of the political opinion of the Mexican population abroad as a whole.¹ A survey conducted by McCann, Cornelius, and Leal (2006) during the electoral campaign confirmed this assertion. Interviews with over 1,000 Mexicans (both voters and nonvoters) in Dallas, San Diego, and Indiana demonstrated that Mexican parties obtained approximately similar levels of support in the domestic and external spheres. Third, Mexican legislators' strategy to control the impact of external voters worked; the vote of citizens abroad was not considered at any point during the 2006 presidential election as potentially decisive. After a serious dispute between the PAN and the PRD on the validity of the electoral results, Felipe Calderon Hinojosa (PAN) was ultimately sworn in as Mexico's new president. His victory, however, only relied on a small margin of about 250,000 votes in a country of 71 million voters. If Mexico had adopted a laxer external voting regime (e.g., like the Italian system I discuss below), the perceived impact of voters abroad on the overall results might have been different. However, the limited registration of voters abroad in the 2006 election transformed the topic of external voting from a highly controversial issue in Mexican politics in the 1990s and 2000s into a nonissue. In this sense, the irrelevance of voters abroad has ensured the survival of external voting for future elections.

Despite emigrant associations' calls to reform the external voting regime after the 2006 election, no fundamental legislative reform was implemented to help improve voter turnout for the 2012 presidential election. Within the existing legal framework, however, the IFE implemented some adjustments that aimed to facilitate the registration of citizens living abroad. First, in contrast to Mexicans living in the national territory, who were only allowed to take part in the 2012 election if they had the newest type of voter identity card, emigrants who possessed older voter identity cards were still allowed to register as voters from abroad. Second, to facilitate access to voter identity cards for citizens who do not have one, the IFE reduced the waiting period to seven days for emigrants traveling back to Mexico. Third, the IFE dropped its requirement that emigrants applying for a ballot send their application by costly registered mail (this requirement automatically excluded numerous emigrants who tried to register by regular mail in 2006). Instead, emigrants could send their application using a postage-paid envelope or by regular mail. Fourth, during the registration period, the IFE posted personnel in 30 US cities in order to inform citizens about the electoral process and help them register. All the other features of the previous external voting process were maintained and, most importantly, it remained impossible for citizens abroad to request voter identity cards outside of Mexico. In addition, the Mexican Congress reduced the budget for organizing the presidential election abroad by two-thirds, as compared to 2006. Because the changes made to the external voting system were marginal and it remained impossible to obtain voter identity cards abroad, registration figures increased only slightly for Mexico's second experience in external voting. Overall, 62,294 citizens requested a ballot from abroad during the registration period (only about 10% more than in 2006). These changes in the registration procedure nonetheless allowed for the significant reduction of the number of rejected or invalid applications. Of these, 59,115 voters abroad were eventually added to the electoral roll (+ 44% in comparison to 2006) and 40,737 of them eventually cast a vote by mail on time for the 1 July 2012 presidential election (+ 25%). Looking at the electoral results, citizens abroad once again tended to vote differently from domestic voters. In 2012, domestic voters strongly favored the PRI candidate (38,1%) over candidates of the PRD (31,6%) and the PAN (25,4%). Emigrant voters, on the contrary, continued to reject the PRI (15,6%) but in a less dramatic way than in 2006. In addition, emigrants continued to primarily support the PAN candidate (42,1%) despite a strong decrease in votes and expressed an increasing level of support for the PRD (39%)².

Lessons from Mexico's Experience

Based on the discussion above, Mexico's first experience in external voting teaches us four important lessons. First, administrative rules in the registration of voters abroad have an impact on voter turnout. Complex or

bureaucratic processes discourage voters abroad or even exclude certain sectors of the emigrant population (i.e., citizens who do not hold a voter identity card). Indeed, registration rules may create a selection bias in the emigrant voting population when they require certain economic or educational resources to be able to register, such as paying a high postage fee or being able to access and complete a registration document. In the most extreme cases, like Mexico, a complex registration process may render elections abroad as a purely symbolic practice, by which home-country authorities formally recognize emigrants as members of the political community but simultaneously wish to prevent them from having a real say in the election. Second, the Mexican case demonstrates that turnout abroad is not a reliable indicator of emigrant interest in home-country politics because different factors (such as administrative rules, lack of information, lack of proper documentation, etc.) may hamper the participation of citizens abroad. Third, this case also shows that, despite their general interest to vote in home-country elections, emigrants may treat this as a low priority and accordingly make little effort to register. This point is clear when we compare low voter registration figures to the larger number of applications for Mexican consular identity cards, which have the ability to facilitate undocumented immigrants' daily tasks in the United States. Fourth, it is evident from this case that we must reconsider emigrant associations' capacity to mobilize citizens abroad on home-country political issues. Emigrant associations, which lobbied in favor of external voting, did so in the name of their members and often in the name of the "millions of Mexicans citizens abroad." However, emigrant associations failed to successfully mobilize their own members to register as voters abroad once external voting legislation passed. For this reason, we should not infer that membership in emigrant associations is evidence of a wish to participate in home-country politics.

ITALY: THE TRADE-OFF BETWEEN MASSIVE PARTICIPATION AND RELIABILITY OF ELECTORAL PROCESSES ABROAD

Since the 1999 reform of the constitution and the adoption of the 2001 external voting law, Italian citizens residing abroad have had the right to participate by mail in the elections of both chambers of parliament, as well as in referenda. In comparison to Mexico, Italian external voting legislation features two important differences. First, the registration of Italian citizens abroad is automatic: emigrants need not request a ballot, as they automatically receive an electoral package at their overseas residence containing one. Second, the Italian legislation has created geographical sectors within the so-called foreign constituency (Europe; South America; Northern and Central America; and Africa, Asia, Oceania, and

Antarctica). In each of these sectors, candidates—who must themselves be Italians living abroad—compete for reserved seats in parliament. In the foreign constituency, citizens residing abroad elect 12 members of parliament (MPs) and six senators.

Similar to Mexico, the major challenge facing the Italian authorities in the implementation of external voting has been the identification of potential voters abroad. Because of a historically large emigration and a generous nationality law based on the principle of *jus sanguinis*, the number of Italian citizens abroad who can potentially participate in home-country elections is in the millions. In contrast with Mexico, Italy had to get ready for the participation of a larger share of its population abroad, since registration was automatic. But setting up the electoral roll abroad nonetheless represented a challenge for the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The first Italian experience of external voting was on 15 June 2003 for a referendum on labor and land settlement issues. For an Italian citizen abroad to be automatically added to the voter registry, his or her name had to be listed both in the Registry of Citizens Living Abroad (AIRE), held in each municipality and managed by the Ministry of the Interior, and in the consular registries, managed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Indeed, both registries had their limitations, and it was thought that the electoral roll would be more reliable if only those citizens listed in the two databases were registered as voters abroad.³ However, there was over a million more citizens registered in the consular registries (3,990,000) than in the AIRE (2,891,416). After crossing the two databases, 2,206,875 electoral packages were sent out to voters abroad for the 2003 referendum. Ten percent of these packages were never actually delivered. Despite the fact that the question of the referendum hardly affected the emigrants' daily lives, the turnout abroad was roughly similar to that observed on the national territory: 21.8 percent abroad compared to 25.7 percent in Italy. By the time of a 2005 referendum on the possibility to lift limitations on the research of human embryos, there was still a difference of 600,000 names between the two databases, and participation was once again barely higher among domestic voters.⁴

In view of the 2006 legislative elections, Italian authorities made efforts to further reduce the gap between databases. Contrary to emigrant participation in referenda, participation in legislative elections was a priority for some political parties such as Alleanza Nazionale (AN). This party, which had traditionally pushed for external voting, was convinced that it would perform well among emigrants. It is therefore not surprising that Mirko Tremaglia—member of AN and minister for Italians abroad—used all of his political leverage to further reduce the difference between the databases. To this end, authorities launched a massive mailing campaign asking Italians abroad listed in just one of the two databases to confirm or correct the information already in possession of the authorities. One specific category

of citizens abroad, however, remained ineligible to vote: citizens temporarily abroad. Indeed, because only citizens who intend to stay abroad for at least 12 months can register with the AIRE, citizens temporarily abroad could not be added to the electoral roll.⁵

Because the Italian external voting system guaranteed 18 seats for MPs and senators in the foreign constituency, political parties and candidates were strongly encouraged to conduct electoral campaigns abroad. This has meant that authorities' efforts to encourage registered voters abroad to vote were complemented by political parties' campaigns. For instance, the center-left coalition led by Romano Prodi (Unione) organized primaries in 20 countries abroad, and looked for the support of sister parties in various host countries. Altogether, this coalition paid more attention to external voters than the center-right coalition led by Silvio Berlusconi (Casa delle Libertà). Silvio Berlusconi was confident that the new electoral system in place on the national territory—which introduced a system of proportional representation and a majority premium for the winner—would ensure the victory of his coalition among domestic voters. For this reason, the coalition did not make much effort to try to win the 18 seats abroad. Two elements support this view. First, the two center-right parties that formed a coalition on the national territory presented separate electoral lists abroad.⁶ Second, the center-right parties gave very little support to their candidates campaigning abroad.

Looking at participation figures abroad, one can only be impressed with the number of emigrants that took part in the first legislative elections in which they could vote from abroad. Of the 2,707,832 emigrants who received an electoral package at home (comprising a ballot for the chamber and the senate elections, and a return envelope), over 1 million (38.93%) actually made use of their right and returned their ballot by mail. Turnout abroad, however, remained significantly lower than among domestic voters (81.4%). Further, voter communities abroad were not equally participative. Italian residents in South America—especially in Argentina—mobilized more than any other Italian population abroad. Italians in Europe, however, represented the largest population of voters in absolute terms.

The fact that the largest number of Italian voters abroad were based in Argentina and that over 50 percent of the registered voters in this country participated might appear surprising. Italian emigration to Argentina occurred during the migration wave of 1876–1917—referred to as the *Grande Emigrazione*—during which over 3 million Italians moved to South America. Later, around a million Italians made a similar trip between 1946 and 1965 (Rosoli 1978). In addition, following the economic crisis that hit Argentina in the early 2000s, many descendants of Italian citizens in Argentina applied for Italian citizenship through its generous *jus sanguinis* law. As demonstrated by Tintori (2011), about 75 percent of the 855,901 foreigners who received Italian citizenship abroad between 1998 and 2008 were actually living in Argentina, Brazil, or Uruguay. For Tintori, it is

unclear whether these new Italians in South America have made use of their external voting rights. Instead, he makes the point that the existence of powerful ethnic Italian leaders in Argentina has been the reason for the high rate of participation in this country (Tintori 2012). Leaders of ethnic associations in Argentina who have made their careers thanks to their clientele system have indeed made great efforts to convince Italians abroad to vote. In Belgium, where a strong Italian associative network also exists, I observed that local ethnic Italian leaders undertook similar efforts to raise awareness among emigrant communities. In 2006, center-left Belgian politicians also clearly expressed their support for Prodi's coalition in various messages addressed to the communities. The former president of the Belgian Socialist party and current Belgian Prime Minister Elio Di Rupo, himself the son of Italian emigrants, sent a letter to Italians residing in Belgium to encourage them to vote for Romano Prodi. While the impact of such practice on voter turnout abroad is hard to measure, it can, however, be concluded that, overall, the Italian system by which 18 parliamentarians are elected proved to be a formidable asset in the promotion of political participation from abroad. Not only did it lead to having hundreds of emigrant candidates campaigning abroad; it also encouraged the cooperation of Italian political parties with emigrant associations and local parties in host countries (see Chapters 6 and 7 for more discussion on electoral campaigns abroad).

Besides the political implications of electoral results abroad that are discussed in Chapters 6 and 7, the Italian case presents a peculiarity, as the first experience of external voting in legislative elections was followed by a second

Table 5.2 Most Participative Italian Emigrant Groups, by Host Country (House of Representatives, 2006)

| <i>Country</i> | <i>Number of voters</i> | <i>Percentage of voters among registered emigrants (%)</i> |
|----------------|-------------------------|--|
| 1. Argentina | 180,900 | 50.59 |
| 2. Switzerland | 179,846 | 48.16 |
| 3. Germany | 143,526 | 33.29 |
| 4. France | 84,535 | 30.33 |
| 5. Brazil | 67,834 | 40.67 |
| 6. Belgium | 56,198 | 30.20 |
| 7. USA | 51,091 | 30.71 |
| 8. UK | 41,231 | 30.58 |
| 9. Canada | 40,306 | 40.46 |
| 10. Australia | 34,808 | 36.82 |

Source: Ministero dell'Interno 2006.

experience two years later. Indeed, after losing the support of Christian-Democratic coalition partners of the UDEUR party, the center-left government led by Romano Prodi was forced out of power by a vote of no confidence in parliament on 23 January 2008. With just a few months to organize an election at home and outside the territory, electoral authorities had no time to change their registration strategy abroad. Accordingly, 2,924,178 ballots were sent abroad for the April 2008 election and 39.46 percent of the registered voters returned their ballots by mail. The fact that the turnout figures are so similar between the 2006 and 2008 elections allows me to conclude that Italy's massive participation of citizens abroad is no accident. There wasn't any "first-time" effect, by which emigrants would have voted out of curiosity in 2006 but would have stopped voting in 2008.

By the look of the turnout figures, the Italian external voting legislation has produced exceptional results in comparison to other countries. Nonetheless, this legislation has proved extremely controversial for two main reasons. First, contrary to legislators' intentions, citizens abroad have had an extraordinary impact on electoral results, as the Italian senator elected in Argentina proved decisive in the creation and survival of Romano Prodi's parliamentary majority in the 2006–2008 legislature (the impact of Italian emigrant parliamentarians is thoroughly discussed in Chapter 7). Second, Italy's external voting system, which put emphasis on enfranchising as many citizens abroad as possible, has led to serious accusations of electoral fraud abroad.

More than a year after the 2006 election, the issue of external voting reappeared in the Italian media. The national newspaper *La Repubblica* broadcasted a video showing Italian citizens in Australia marking multiple ballot papers and preparing to return them to the electoral authorities (*La Repubblica* 9 July 2007). A controversy later arose on whether fraudulent copies of ballots had been ordered by some candidates, or if candidates had collected real ballots among voters abroad? (*La Repubblica* 11 July 2007). Nonetheless, because Italy's Administrative Court had already expressed serious concerns for the validity of the electoral process abroad, the center-left government promised to modify the legislation to render fraud abroad more difficult (*La Repubblica* 12 July 2007). Yet, the unexpected fall of Prodi's government prevented legislators from implementing reforms to the external voting regime on time before the 2008 legislative election. This election led to serious accusations of fraud once again. Senator Caselli, a senator elected abroad in Argentina, was under investigation for falsifying thousands of ballots, and his election was only able to be validated by the senate three years later (*La Voce d'Italia*, 30 September 2011). A much more serious case, however, occupied the front page of Italian news in 2010. Senator Di Girolamo was elected on the center-right list of Silvio Berlusconi in the European district of the foreign constituency. In 2010, this man found himself in a controversy for having laundered money for the 'Ndrangheta criminal organization of Calabria, who facilitated his

election. He eventually lost his senate seat and was sentenced to five years in prison. Not only was he not residing abroad at the time of his election (he obtained a fraudulent certificate of residence in Belgium); he was also elected with ballots collected by this criminal organization from Italian emigrants in Germany (*La Repubblica* 23 February 2010).

These different episodes of fraud abroad have rendered the topic of external voting extremely controversial in Italy. Historical opponents to external voting, like the former center-left senator I interviewed in Turin, Gian Giacomo Migone, were extremely dissatisfied with the impact of fraud abroad on the reliability of the Italian electoral process in general:

[T]he Electoral Affairs department was almost the only department within the Italian Public Administration that worked perfectly. I think it was because we lost the right to vote for twenty years during the fascist regime and accordingly we invested a lot intellectually, culturally, and politically in making elections work. I used to tell people at OSCE meetings that they should come to Italy to see how we organize elections. All of this is gone now because of the vote from abroad. (Interview, 5 March 2007)

Following this wave of criticism, several calls were made to reform the external voting legislation, suppress that right, or diminish the number of emigrants elected abroad.

In conclusion, despite legislators' historical concern for the impact of external voters, Italy adopted a liberal external voting policy because it thought that the foreign constituency would diminish the electoral weight of voters abroad. With a concern of enfranchising the largest possible share of its population abroad, the legislators permitted automatic registration, whereby electoral authorities sent millions of ballots abroad and permitted large-scale participation among emigrants. At the same time, because of a lack of supervision by the electoral authority in the foreign constituency, this legislation also created a window of opportunity for fraud by individual candidates or criminal organizations seeking to gain influence in the Italian Parliament through electing emigrant MPs and senators. The Italian and Mexican examples demonstrate the dilemmas faced by countries that consider enfranchising citizens abroad. On the one hand, strict legislation protects the integrity of the electoral process but may prevent shares of the emigrant population from exercising their right to vote from abroad. On the other hand, liberal legislation increases the number of emigrant voters (and therefore the legitimacy of the election among citizens abroad) but may simultaneously increase the risk of fraud. However, as I showed earlier, turnout in elections abroad is not solely dictated by administrative rules. Just like the turnout among domestic voters, a series of institutional, political, and sociodemographic factors are also at play when it comes to deciding whether or not to vote in home-country elections.

Table 5.3 Participation in the 2006 and 2008 Elections Abroad (House of Representatives)

| <i>Electoral district</i> | <i>Number of registered voters abroad (2006)</i> | <i>Turnout in 2006 (ballots sent back by voters in %)</i> | <i>Number of registered voters abroad (2008)</i> | <i>Turnout in 2008 (ballots sent back by voters in %)</i> |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|--|---|
| Asia, Africa, Oceania, & Antarctica | 152,068 | 39.85 | 155,486 | 37.89 |
| Northern and Central America | 282,249 | 34.70 | 296,661 | 34.34 |
| South America | 693,522 | 47.01 | 838,373 | 49.47 |
| Europe | 1,579,543 | 36.04 | 1,633,658 | 35.41 |
| TOTAL | 2,707,382 | 38.93 | 2,924,178 | 39.46 |

Source: Ministero dell'Interno 2006; Ministero dell'Interno 2008.

WHY DO(N'T) EMIGRANTS VOTE IN HOME-COUNTRY ELECTIONS?

In the already limited existing literature on external voting, the reasons why or why not emigrants decide to participate in home-country elections is a topic that has received even less scholarly attention. In the cases of Mexico and Italy, I demonstrated that the emigrant interest in voting is not the only element to take into consideration, and that electoral legislation may also play an important role in voter turnout abroad. But are these variables the only ones to take into consideration? Looking at another case, Bolivia, I observe that this country adopted similar legislation to Mexico's external voting law yet registered thrice as many voters in less time (see Chapter 6). Why are Bolivian migrants in Madrid willing to wait outdoors for hours in order to register to vote, while other emigrants are unwilling to make such efforts to take part in home-country elections?

In the last part of this chapter, I identify several sets of variables that determine emigrant participation in home-country elections. To do so, I rely on political science literature on domestic voter turnout and, most particularly, on the work of Geys (2006), who developed a meta-analysis of this literature. In his work, he identified a series of decisive variables that have recurrently influenced voter turnout in the numerous studies he reviewed. In addition, I use literature on emigrant participation in host-country elections to identify other variables that are specific to the condition of being a citizen abroad. These different bodies of literature are applied to empirical evidence and then sorted into three types of variables

adapted to the specific issue of emigrant voter turnout in home-country elections. These variables, I argue, are the ones that should be looked at when analyzing turnout abroad.

Political Variables

In a work that compiles the variables that are most frequently identified as decisive in explaining turnout among domestic voters, Geys (2006) identifies a series of political variables. Within this category, he underscores two recurrently decisive variables in existing research. First, *electoral spending* systematically has a positive effect on voter turnout because it decreases the costs for voters to be informed about the electoral process. Second, the *closeness of an election* (the expected difference in votes between different parties engaged in the election) also stimulates voter turnout because citizens feel that their individual votes have greater weight when the elections are highly disputed.

In the case of external voting, I suggest to consider these two variables—though in an adapted form—as well as a third one. Instead of looking at electoral spending abroad, I propose to look at the actual *presence of political parties abroad*, whether it involves advertising in local media, sending representatives or candidates abroad to campaign among emigrants, or directly getting in touch with emigrants via regular mail or e-mail. In the case of Mexico, we have seen that the prohibition of party fund-raising and campaigning abroad has led to a peculiar situation; political parties were actually less present abroad during the 2006 election than before the external voting legislation was passed. In Italy, on the contrary, candidates hoping to win a seat of MP or senator in the foreign constituency have campaigned among citizens abroad. In the case of emigrant representatives elected in Europe, for instance, they confirmed during interviews that they all went on tours across European cities that have large Italian communities. During those tours, they met with voters at the invitation of migrant associations or sister political parties. Naturally, these activities helped to raise awareness among emigrants about their political rights. Examining the level of political parties' involvement abroad during electoral campaigns seems accordingly a relevant variable to understand emigrant turnout abroad.

Second, I suggest looking at the *perceived importance of the upcoming election for citizens abroad* rather than looking exclusively at the closeness of an upcoming election. Indeed, an election that may altogether appear of secondary importance to domestic voters may have a symbolic importance to citizens abroad. During the 2003 referendum on labor and land settlement issues, similar levels of participation were registered between domestic and emigrant voters. These issues, however, hardly concerned the emigrant population. In this case, the fact that citizens abroad were able to vote for the first time has to be underlined. However, it could also be argued that

this so-called “first-time effect” could have also negatively affected turnout because both emigrants and electoral authorities lacked experience in electoral processes from abroad.

Third, the *political culture of the country of origin* is another element worthy of attention. As we shall see in the next chapter, countries like Bolivia that has a tradition of compulsory voting may see part of its population abroad register due to fear of possible sanctions. Here, however, literature on the participation of immigrants in host-country politics can be of use. Ramakrishnan and Espenshade (2001) have pointed out that migrants from repressive political regimes are less politically involved than others in host countries. Similarly, Fennema and Tillie (1999) have argued that trust in host-country institutions was a decisive factor in the decision to participate in politics. Accordingly, in the case of external voting, it could also be interesting to look at the level of trust in home-country institutions to understand levels of voter turnout. The case of Mexico confirms the interest of this variable, considering that many emigrants left the country at a time when elections were largely considered to be simply tools for legitimating the PRI regime. Apathy among Mexican voters abroad could thus also be related to a persisting lack of trust in home-country institutions.

Institutional Variables

Institutional variables comprise the decisions and practices of home-country authorities that affect emigrant voter turnout. In the previous section, I discussed the influence of *the registration process* on voter turnout. As demonstrated by Geys (2006), research on domestic voter turnout had already shown that registration processes increase the cost and the efforts necessary to register as voters. With regard to the registration of voters abroad, three elements must be paid attention to. First, when voter registration is automatic, such as in Italy, being listed on the electoral roll requires no effort on the part of emigrants. When registration is voluntary, registration rules can have serious consequences. Indeed, the case of Mexico demonstrated that the exclusion of the consular network from electoral operations prevented the Federal Electoral Institute from using consular registries to directly get in touch with citizens abroad. Second, requirements that emigrants must fulfill to qualify as voters abroad, such as Mexico’s obligation to hold a voter identity card, may constitute serious obstacles to registration. Third, information campaigns led by electoral authorities may increase awareness of citizens abroad, even though these efforts are bound to be costly and of limited reach when citizens are spread out in many parts of the world.

Another institutional variable is the *type of election* in which emigrants are allowed to participate. Reif and Schmit (1980) have shown that, for domestic voters, some elections are considered of secondary importance and citizens, accordingly, tend to participate less in them. The case of Italy

showed a large discrepancy between emigrant turnout in referenda on issues that hardly concerned them and turnout in legislative elections in which they could elect their own representatives. This demonstrates that not all home-country elections have the same importance to emigrants.

The last institutional variable I propose to look at is the *voting modality*, according to which citizens abroad may cast their vote. As I argued in Chapter 1, citizens residing abroad usually vote in person in polling stations abroad (set up in consulates or elsewhere) or by mail. Because it saves emigrants the effort of going to polling stations and possibly waiting to cast a vote, postal voting may appear to be an incentive to participate. Research on domestic voter turnout has, however, demonstrated that voting by mail is likely to increase voter turnout among the categories of voters that are already predisposed to vote, such as citizens with higher socioeconomic status (Karpand and Banducci 2000). It would therefore be interesting to look at the effect postal voting could have on the participation of citizens abroad when—as in the case of Bolivia—polling stations abroad are sometimes scarcely dispersed in emigrants' host countries.

Socioeconomic and Demographic Variables

In literature on migration and political participation in host countries, socioeconomic and demographic variables have traditionally received major attention. As underscored by Bevelander and Pendakur (2009), different approaches nonetheless developed in North America and Europe. In North America, *classical demographic factors such as age, occupation, and education* have been frequently looked at to explain emigrant participation in host-country elections (Tuckel and Maisel 1994; DeSipio 1996). In the case of Mexico, I have also demonstrated the relevance of these demographic variables on participation in home-country elections; the registration process introduced biases in favor of emigrants of higher socioeconomic status. Other demographic variables that are used in understanding emigrant mobilization in host countries (i.e., ethnic origin and time spent abroad) cannot be discarded when it comes to analyzing participation in home-country politics.

In Europe, we can observe the influence of the work of Fennema and Tillie (1999) on social capital and migrant sociopolitical integration in the country of residence. These scholars found that emigrant involvement in ethnic associations increases their level of confidence in host-country institutions and therefore increases their level of engagement in that country. Several authors confirmed their conclusions in subsequent research (Togebay 2004; Berger, Galonska, and Koopmans 2004; Jacobs, Phalet, and Swyngedouw 2004). Extrapolating these conclusions to external voting, one could hypothesize that emigrant involvement in ethnic associations (which are also often supportive of emigrant economic, social, and political involvement in the home country) could have a similar effect on participation in home-country elections from abroad.

In a survey conducted with Bolivian voters in Argentina, Brazil, Spain, and the United States during the 2009 presidential election (see the next chapter for details on the survey), I found that external voters had very weak levels of civic engagement in their countries of residence (measured with indicators such as the involvement in associations and participation in petitions, demonstrations, strikes, and electoral campaigns). However, the same survey showed that over 17 percent of Bolivian external voters had heard about the right to vote from abroad thanks to other Bolivian emigrants living in the same country (in the United States alone, that figure reached almost 30%). In the case of Italy, I found that many Italian associations and unions in host countries facilitated the contact between candidates campaigning abroad and Italian emigrants. Altogether, both cases support the idea that, beyond membership in ethnic associations, *local dynamics in the emigrant community* can influence voter turnout.

Before concluding this chapter, I also deem it important to discuss the influence of transnational linkages on voter turnout abroad. At the beginning of this book, I postulated that voting from abroad was a particular form of transnational political participation. From this perspective, it could be assumed that citizens who have the strongest connections with the home country are the most likely to take part in home-country elections. In the case of Bolivia, the abovementioned survey revealed a very weak level of transnational involvement among voters from abroad; no more than a third of the Bolivian external voters participated in activities organized by emigrant associations aiming to have a direct social, economic, or political impact on Bolivia. Similarly, just about 15 percent of these voters participated in other political activities related to Bolivia. The only transnational activity that was widely shared among voters is remittance sending to Bolivia, which two-thirds of them had done at least once in the 12 months preceding the election. Similarly, the case of Italy shows that the most participatory community abroad is Argentina, where a boom in citizenship requests has occurred in recent years. These data raise doubts on the actual links that bind certain voters with a “home country,” where they have most likely never lived and where they do not necessarily speak the language.

While this specific situation raises normative concerns that I do not intend to discuss here, it also leads me to reconsider the idea that external voting is a reflection of the ties that unite citizens abroad with the home country. I argued earlier that, on a symbolic level, external voting is often a recognition by a state of emigrants’ continued involvement in the home country. As demonstrated in this discussion, a multiplicity of variables influence emigrants’ decisions to vote from abroad, yet emigrants do not necessarily perceive external voting as one more avenue in which to get involved in the home country. In this regard, semidirected interviews conducted with Bolivian voters in New York revealed that external voting may also be a practice of symbolic importance to emigrants. Iván, a Bolivian voter who

has lived in the United States for 10 years, recalled, “[W]ith the capacity to vote from abroad, one can feel Bolivian again. It felt very nice. Wow, I’m actually voting for the President of Bolivia!” (Interview 3 August 2010). Olivia, another interviewee who used to work as a civil servant in Bolivia, also questioned her own identity as she was voting. She remarked:

The feeling was to be in Bolivia. We were in a small voting booth totally improvised and made out of cardboard. This was also reflecting the poverty of my country. It made me sad to be here in the United States, voting, and belonging to a country that is so poor that we have to vote in booth made of cardboard. But the emotion that we had upon voting was incredible. It seemed to me that something great and beautiful was happening. (Interview 27 July 2010)

Similarly to states implementing external voting for symbolic purposes, citizens abroad may choose to vote for symbolic purposes. Voting from abroad may therefore also constitute a way for emigrants to sporadically express their national identity independently of any desire to actually weigh in on home-country politics. Altogether, the decision of emigrants to take part in home-country elections accordingly relies on a complex set of variables that have to do as much with individual characteristics of the emigrants as community dynamics, institutional arrangements, and political party interests.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have focused on the implementation of external voting legislation. Using the cases of Italy and Mexico, I demonstrated that external voting legislation can produce extremely different results in terms of electoral participation from abroad. I, however, also demonstrated that voter turnout is not a satisfactory indicator of emigrant interest in home-country politics. Voter turnout is an ambiguous concept that can be defined in different ways. Actors involved in electoral processes abroad may decide to use one definition or the other to justify their support or opposition to emigrant enfranchisement.

Subsequently, I identified institutional, political, and sociodemographic variables that can affect emigrant participation in home-country elections. Comparing the registration process of Italian and Mexican emigrants, I shed light on the weight of administrative and institutional barriers on the exercise of voting rights from abroad. In particular, we saw how the opposite approaches of these two countries in terms of rules for voter registration significantly altered the number of voters who were actually enfranchised. Yet, this discussion also showed how lax registration on voter registration can create the possibility for electoral fraud.

A focus on administrative and institutional barriers to the exercise of external voting rights would neglect the role that other variables also play in emigrants' decision to participate. Indeed, opinion polls conducted with Mexican citizens abroad confirmed that emigrants were willing to make little effort to participate in home-country elections. In contrast with other burdensome administrative processes (such as applying for a consular identity card), emigrants do not perceive the vote in home-country elections as having a direct impact on their daily life. Besides, voter turnout abroad is partly dictated by certain sociodemographic characteristics. This means, for example, that just like nonemigrant voters, voters abroad with little educational background are less likely to be politically mobilized.

A specificity of voter turnout abroad is that it is potentially less affected by political variables, such as the influence of electoral campaigns, because political parties do not necessarily have the right or the resources to campaign among emigrant voters dispersed in different parts of the world. Nonetheless, in countries like Italy that reserve specific seats for emigrant MPs and senators, the incentive to campaign abroad is much bigger. Such a system may lead to conducting dynamic electoral campaigns in destination countries that push citizens to make use of their external voting rights. Lastly, with the discussion of Bolivia's 2009 presidential election, this chapter demonstrated that voting from abroad may also be dictated by emotions and the sense of identity it provides to voters; emigrants may participate because it allows them to still feel that they belong to the country where they no longer reside.

6 Affinities across Borders

Emigrant Voters and the Formation of Political Opinions Abroad

How do emigrants decide which political parties or candidates to vote for when they vote from abroad? Over the past decades, an abundance of political science literature has tried to determine how voting behaviors are shaped, but no work has been conducted on the behavior of external voters in particular. We can, however, posit that residence abroad is likely to somewhat affect voting behavior.

As I demonstrated in Chapters 3 and 4, political parties often experience difficulties identifying the political opinion of citizens abroad. The absence of reliable data on this population and the lack of connection between parties and citizens abroad therefore often favor the development of stereotypes regarding the political preferences of emigrants. These stereotypes may be grounded on actual facts, which can, however, be stretched or overemphasized. For example, the emigration of millions of Mexicans during the PRI regime—independently of the motivations of these citizens to leave the country—was interpreted across Mexican political parties as a sign of opposition to the regime. As we saw previously, these constructed images had clear consequences on the outcome of the external voting debate in Mexico, for they shaped political parties' positions on the issue of external voting.

In this chapter, I propose to examine the home-country political preferences of emigrants to determine how they are shaped abroad. More precisely, I intend to answer the following questions: How do the political preferences shaped before departure influence the voting behaviors of citizens after they move abroad? What role does connection with the home country play in the shaping of political opinions abroad? How do the media and information technologies modify emigrants' perspectives on home-country politics? To answer these different questions, I did not simply try to adapt existing literature on voting behavior to the situation of citizens abroad. Instead, I favored an empirical approach, by using two case studies to determine how residence abroad affects political opinions.

The first case is Bolivia, for which I use the results of a survey conducted with 324 emigrant voters in four different countries (see Appendix A for a note on methodology). This data highlights the complexity of voting patterns abroad. On the one hand, certain traditional demographic and

socioeconomic characteristics acquired before departure from the home country shape voting behavior. On the other hand, the survey also sheds light on different variables related to emigrants' experiences abroad, such as time spent abroad or satisfaction with the migration decision. The second case study is Italy, with which I leave aside the individual dimension of emigrant voting behavior. Instead, I look at the role of political elites and emigrant elites in the formation of political opinions abroad. This chapter concludes with a third section on the roles of the media and information technologies in the formation of political opinions.

THE INFLUENCE OF PRE- AND POSTDEPARTURE VARIABLES ON VOTING BEHAVIOR: THE CASE OF BOLIVIA

The starting point of this chapter is the hypothesis that the formation of political opinions abroad is a dynamic process shaped both by individual characteristics (determined before and after migration) and by interactions between emigrants and other actors in the home and host societies. I tested this hypothesis in a survey conducted during the 2009 Bolivian presidential election among emigrant voters residing in Argentina, Brazil, Spain, and the United States.

A Brief Overview of Bolivia's Debate on External Voting and Its Outcome

The issue of external voting in Bolivia shares several similarities with Mexico. Indeed, Bolivian authorities had long neglected migration issues and expressed more concern for regulating inflows towards Bolivia than designing policies towards its population abroad. However, in 1991 an electoral reform introduced the concept of external voting into Bolivian law. An implementation law that was necessary to make external voting a reality was, however, not passed. This move raised questions as to legislators' real motivations to enfranchise citizens abroad at that time. The situation changed in the 2000s, as issues regarding access to natural resources divided the Bolivian government and Evo Morales's political organization, *Movimiento al Socialismo* (MAS). In a reaction to the conflict that was developing in the home country, support for Morales emerged among Bolivian emigrants in Argentina. In this context of growing diasporic politicization, the demand for external voting rights became more and more acute. In 2005, a Bolivian court ruled in favor of emigrant voting rights, stating that the principle of external voting, as recognized by the 1991 electoral reform, should be properly implemented.

With the coming to power of Morales in 2006, Bolivian discourses and policies on migration changed radically (Hinojosa Gordonava, Domenech, and Lafleur 2012). On the discursive level, Bolivians abroad moved from

being “forgotten citizens” to central actors in the process of state transformation that MAS wished to implement. Similarly, Morales engaged in a dispute with the European Union, by openly criticizing a European Union directive regarding the return of undocumented immigrants. On the policy level, Morales’s government integrated the issue of emigration into its National Development Plan and reformed the consular services. Most importantly, however, Morales promised to make external voting a reality. This promise was consistent with his discourse on the involvement of emigrants in the political community, and it also constituted a response to the continuing pressure of emigrants.

On 21 May 2008, congress adopted a law proposal on external voting, which it sent to the senate, where it was subsequently blocked by the right-wing opposition (PODEMOS). The latter strongly feared the impact of emigrant enfranchisement. The impact of the large Bolivian population in Argentina was particularly dreaded. There, migrant associations had proven to be very supportive of Evo Morales over the years.

Despite official recognition of the right to vote from abroad in the new constitution adopted by a 2009 referendum, the senate was still blocking the adoption of the implementation law. At that stage, knowing that pressure would eventually lead the opposition to compromise, Evo Morales began a hunger strike to force the adoption of the new transitory electoral law (of which external voting was not the only important feature). Rapidly, emigrant associations throughout Europe and Latin America followed the strike in front of embassies and consulates. This strategy eventually led to the adoption of Law 4021 on 14 April 2009. The new electoral law created a new biometric electoral register, and it allowed for emigrants to vote in polling stations abroad in presidential elections under very strict conditions.

Three elements of this law concerning external voting must be underlined. First, only Bolivians residing in the four largest receiving countries—Argentina, Brazil, Spain, and the United States—are allowed to register as external voters. Second, the law states that emigrant voters cannot represent more than 6 percent of the total electoral register (a figure determined on the basis of the last election’s registry). In addition, in order to limit the influence of Bolivians in Argentina, none of the four abovementioned countries may concentrate more than half of the total emigrant voting population. Accordingly, there was a limit to the number of emigrant voters that could register in each of these countries. Third, the National Electoral Court of Bolivia (CNE) was in charge of the registration process abroad, and it had 30 days to register a maximum of 211,093 emigrant voters within the four destination countries. Similar to Mexico, consular authorities were prohibited from getting involved in the registration process and electoral operations.

In addition to these restrictions, Bolivia’s National Electoral Court had limited means to register voters abroad. It is therefore not surprising that the legal limit of registered voters abroad was not reached.

Indeed, only 169,096 voters residing abroad were added to the biometric electoral roll. Comparing this figure to the estimated total number of Bolivians abroad of around 1.7 to 2 million (according to consular authorities), this figure seems rather limited.¹ However, in comparison to Mexico, which had equally restrictive registration procedures and a longer registration period, the Bolivian performance appears somewhat more successful.

The Political Opinions of Bolivian Voters Abroad

The previous section demonstrated that, similar to Italy and Mexico, the expected impact of voters abroad on electoral results strongly determined the content of the Bolivian external voting legislation. However, were the enthusiasm of the MAS and the reluctance of PODEMOS to pass legislation justified? Or, on the contrary, did voters abroad surprise political parties with unexpected voting behavior? The table below shows the electoral results among external voters in the 2009 presidential election.

Table 6.1 strongly suggests that the MAS was the prime beneficiary of emigrant enfranchisement. With over 75 percent of votes abroad cast in its favor, emigrants proved to be more supportive of the MAS than domestic voters. This figure, however, hides the disparities between three different electoral realities abroad. Indeed, Bolivians in Argentina and Brazil expressed almost unanimous support for the MAS, while Bolivians in the United States strongly supported a coalition of right-wing opposition parties. Bolivians in Spain, on the contrary, were nearly equally split between the two biggest electoral lists. How can we explain these differences? Do these different countries of residence attract different profiles of emigrants? Or, alternatively, do host countries help to shape emigrants' view on home-country politics?

Table 6.1 2009 Bolivian Presidential Election Results (%)²

| | <i>Argentina</i> | <i>Brazil</i> | <i>Spain</i> | <i>USA</i> | <i>All external voters</i> | <i>All domestic voters</i> |
|--|------------------|---------------|--------------|------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Plan Progreso para Bolivia–Convergencia Nacional (PPB-CN) | 3.1% | 2.7% | 43% | 61% | 22.1% | 26.6% |
| Movimiento al Socialismo-Instrumento Político por la Soberanía de los Pueblos (MAS-IPSP) | 92.1% | 94.9% | 48.2% | 31% | 75.7% | 63.9% |

Source: Corte Nacional Electoral de Bolivia 2009.

To help answer these questions, I conducted a survey among 324 Bolivian voters abroad outside of polling stations in Buenos Aires, São Paulo, New York, and Madrid.² The survey was designed to collect basic demographic and socioeconomic data on the voters, as well as more specific questions on their transnational activities and political participation in their host and home countries. Of them, 176 respondents also agreed to disclose the names of the party or candidate for which they voted. After statistical analysis, I found a correlation between eight variables and political party/candidate affiliation (see Table 6.2). In order to expand the number of possible determinants in voting behavior, I also looked at correlations between variables and approval of the work conducted by Evo Morales's government since he took power in 2006. More respondents (N = 286) felt comfortable giving a response to the latter, rather than revealing the name of the party or candidate for which they voted. Considering the high level of polarization in Bolivian politics, I inferred that approval of Evo Morales's work implied that these voters would actually vote for him and that, on the contrary, disapproval implied a vote in favor of the opposition (these data are confirmed in the last row of Table 6.2). Doing so, I found a correlation with three new variables, in addition to the ones identified in Table 6.2. Looking at these 11 variables, I argue that the voting behavior of Bolivians abroad is influenced by a set of pre- and postmigration variables.

Table 6.2 Variables Influencing Emigrants' Vote in Favor of/against Evo Morales

| | <i>Which candidate did you vote for in today's election?</i> |
|--|--|
| Education level | Cor. 0.315** Sig. 0.000 |
| Satisfaction with the decision to emigrate | Cor.-0.237** Sig. 0.002 |
| Department of origin in Bolivia (regional origin) | Cor. 0.233** Sig. 0.002 |
| Language spoken in the household (Native—Aymara) | Cor.-0.237** Sig. 0.002 |
| Language spoken in the household (Native—Quechua) | Cor.-0.206** Sig. 0.006 |
| Experience of discrimination in the host country | Cor. 0.285** Sig. 0.000 |
| Language spoken in the household (English) | Cor. 0.413** Sig. 0.000 |
| Approval of the work of Evo Morales's government | Cor. 0.813** Sig. 0.000 |

**Pearson Correlation Coefficient. Significant correlation on 0.01 level (bilateral).

Table 6.3 Variables Influencing Emigrants' Approval of Evo Morales's Government

| | <i>Since Evo Morales came to power, has Bolivia taken a right or wrong path?</i> |
|---|--|
| Gender | Cor. 0.192** Sig. 0.001 |
| Year of birth | Cor.-0.287** Sig. 0.000 |
| Year of first arrival in the country of residence | Cor.-0.160** Sig. 0.007 |

**Pearson Correlation Coefficient. Significant correlation on 0.01 level (bilateral).

Premigration Variables

Under the premigration variables, I group a series of variables that are supposed to be set before the emigrants' departure to the country of residence, which can no longer vary after emigration. Among these, I first identify two basic demographic variables that are often found in voting-behavior studies. The first one is *gender*, as we found that men present a much higher rate of approval of Evo Morales's work (78.9%) than women (61.3%). The second one is *age*, for older emigrant voters tend to be less positive about this government than younger ones. It is, however, elsewhere that the most interesting variables are to be found.

Looking at the correlation between emigrants' *department of origin in Bolivia* (their region of origin) and their voting behavior and approval of the government, it appears that the home country's regional divisions are reproduced abroad. There is indeed a sharp geographical contrast in Bolivian politics—between the eastern provinces (Santa Cruz, Beni, and Pando), which strongly oppose Morales's government, and the rest of the country, which strongly supports it. Respondents in the survey very much verified the importance of regional origins in voting behavior. Over 78 percent of respondents from Morales's strongholds of La Paz and Cochabamba declared satisfaction with his government. On the contrary, more than 60 percent of respondents originating from Santa Cruz expressed unhappiness with Morales's government. In this department, 56.6 percent of the domestic voters also supported the main right-wing opposition. These data underline the fact that political socialization, which happens before emigration, remains influential on the voting behavior of citizens abroad. The political background shared by migrants and nonmigrants from Santa Cruz is one explanation for the fact that they similarly rejected Evo Morales. Nonetheless, as we shall see below, contacts with political and emigrant elites and relatives may also play a part in the reproduction of homeland political divisions within emigrant communities. Accordingly, postmigration contacts with elites and media from this particular region of Bolivia may also

explain the comparable voting behavior of migrants and nonmigrants from Santa Cruz.

A last important set of variables in the Bolivian case is the *ethnic origin of emigrants*. Emigrants who declared speaking Aymara or Quechua at home can indeed be considered as belonging to one of Bolivia's many indigenous peoples. Aymara- and Quechua-speaking citizens abroad show over 90 percent of approval of Morales's government, which, similar to the regional origin, is a close reproduction of the situation in the homeland. Evo Morales was indeed elected on a platform that emphasized the rights of indigenous peoples in Bolivia. Indigenous groups constitute his electoral basis, and the formal recognition of their rights was a central element in the constitutional reform promoted by Morales in 2009. Considering these elements, it can be argued that the role of ethnicity on voting behavior does not disappear with residence abroad.

Postmigration Variables

In addition to premigration variables, the survey also found correlations between a set of individual characteristics, which can be referred to as "postmigration variables" because they are largely shaped by emigrants' experiences in their countries of residence. The first variable is *education level*, which could arguably be considered as both a pre- and postmigration variable. Considering that a share of Bolivian emigrants moved for educational purposes, or moved for other reasons but simultaneously furthered their studies abroad, education can primarily be considered as a postmigration variable.³ The survey shows that only 39 percent of Bolivian emigrant voters who have a university degree voted in favor of Evo Morales. In other words, Bolivian emigrants with the highest educational levels are also the least likely to support him. Once again, considering that Morales is most successful among the most disadvantaged sectors of the Bolivian population, the behavior of citizens abroad is consistent with the electoral preferences of nonemigrant Bolivian voters.

Four additional variables exist that seem to strongly relate to the process of migrant integration into the host country. First, the survey showed a correlation between electoral preferences and *satisfaction with the decision to leave the home country*. Emigrants who were least satisfied with this decision were most likely to be supportive of Evo Morales. Second, *time spent in the country of residence* is another element of the emigration experience that can influence voting behavior. Indeed, the Bolivians who had been living outside of Bolivia for the longest time were the most likely to vote for the right-wing opposition party. Third, *experience of discrimination in the home country* showed similar correlation. Emigrants who declared they faced discrimination in the destination country because of their origins in the last 12 months were also most likely to be supportive of Evo Morales. Fourth, in the case of Bolivians residing in the United States, *the household*

use of the host-country language appeared to be influential; emigrants who spoke English at home were more likely to support the main right-wing opposition candidate.⁴ These four indicators seemed to support the idea that emigrants who experience the most difficulties abroad are more likely to support Evo Morales. However, it remains unclear whether these emigrants are supportive of Morales because, as emigrants experiencing difficulties, they are attracted by his criticism of receiving countries' treatment of Bolivians living abroad, or because, as marginalized Bolivian citizens, they support Morales's left-wing discourse on social justice.

Looking at these four variables, can we conclude that emigrants who are the least integrated are the most likely to be supportive of Evo Morales's left-wing platform? Considering the ambiguity of the concept of "integration" in the study of migration, it seems dubious to consider satisfaction with the emigration experience, absence of discrimination, length of stay abroad, and the household use of the host country's language as reliable indicators in determining whether an emigrant is integrated or not. However, the crossing of these different variables with political opinions strongly suggests that voting behavior is influenced by the experience of living abroad. While the discussion around premigration variables underlined the importance of classic demographic factors and political socialization in the home country, I thus argue that opinions about home-country politics are also shaped by the migration experience.

ELITES AND THE FORMATION OF POLITICAL OPINIONS ABROAD

In the previous section, I presented the formation of political opinions of citizens abroad as an individual process by which electoral behavior is guided by emigrants' personal experiences before and after migration. This vision, however, neglects the fact that other actors have interests in influencing the electoral behavior of citizens abroad. Looking at the case of Italy, I propose to shed light on the role of elites in shaping emigrants' political opinions. In particular, I suggest focusing on the strategies of political elites (i.e., the activities that political parties develop in the emigrants' country of residence to win support) and the involvement of emigrant elites in electoral campaigns (i.e., activities conducted by leaders of emigrant associations in support of candidates or political parties in home-country elections).

Political Parties and Citizens Abroad

The most obvious actors that have an interest in influencing the electoral behavior of citizens abroad are political parties themselves. Because of the potential electoral gains, it is expected that home-country political parties develop campaigns abroad in order to get as many emigrant votes as possible. However, in many cases, electoral campaigns abroad are very limited

or even nonexistent. Several factors may explain the reluctance of political parties to campaign among external voters.

First, political parties lack data on voters abroad. As I have noted throughout this book, the vision parties have of citizens abroad is often limited and reliant upon clichés. This lack of information complicates the task of drafting a political platform that would appeal to these voters. This is especially true if we take into consideration the fact that, just like domestic voters, this population is not uniform. For example, citizens abroad of a high socioeconomic status may not be as interested as other emigrants in political party campaigns for the improvement of assistance programs in destination countries. The task of reaching out to citizens abroad is further complicated by parties' weak presence abroad. Even the Italian political parties, which have representatives in host countries, lack the necessary resources to conduct large-scale political campaigns abroad.

This point relates to a second consideration, which is that conducting political campaigns among citizens who are scattered across several countries or continents is a time-consuming and costly effort. Considering the uncertainty associated with voter turnout abroad, political parties may be reluctant to launch large-scale electoral campaigns abroad to reach an electorate that usually has a low turnout (see Chapter 5). Some political parties may thus consider their resources to be more efficiently spent on domestic voters. Third, political parties may refrain from campaigning abroad because external voting legislation prevents them from doing so (e.g., Mexico) or because of host-country restrictions against foreign campaigns being conducted on the territory (see the case of Canada in Chapter 7).

Italy has a peculiar external voting law that allows citizens abroad to elect 12 MPs and 6 senators in a foreign constituency divided in four electoral districts (Europe; South America; North and Central America; and Asia, Africa, Oceania, and Antarctica). While legislators devised this system with the idea of limiting the impact of external voters on electoral results, it has had another important consequence: Candidates for these 18 seats compete against each other, and are thus encouraged to campaign in destination countries. In this section, I discuss the electoral campaigns led by the two main coalitions in Italian politics. I particularly focus on the 2006 legislative elections, as the center-right coalition led by Silvio Berlusconi and the center-left coalition led by Romano Prodi developed diametrically different strategies abroad, which led to different levels of electoral performance.

Mobilizing Ethnic and Political Networks Abroad: The Unione Campaign

Even though I previously showed that the Italian right-wing party *Alleanza Nazionale* had been a historical supporter of external voting, the center-left coalition (*Unione*) was the first to reach out to citizens abroad for the 2006 election. On 16 October 2005, the *Unione* invited emigrants in 20 countries

to take part in a primary election that led to the selection of Romano Prodi as its official candidate. Because this was an internal election for a political coalition, it was not required to follow the conditions of Italy's external voting law. It was thus organized privately by party representatives and Italian associations. Despite limited participation abroad of only 20,655 valid votes, the primary gave the *Unione* the opportunity to mobilize its supporters abroad early in the campaign and helped publicize its platform among emigrants. In addition to the primary held abroad, the *Unione* also held meetings with emigrants in 60 cities across the world before the start of the electoral campaign. These meetings allowed emigrants to become familiarized with the party's platform at an early stage.

Once a consensus was found on the program, the *Unione* also had to appoint emigrant candidates in the four electoral districts abroad. These candidates would be the face of the coalition abroad. In drafting the lists, *Unione* leaders were accordingly concerned about choosing candidates who would be most appealing to emigrants. However, as underscored during an interview with Norberto Lombardi, the coordinator of the coalition's campaign abroad, the selection of candidates also had to take many other elements into consideration:

We had many demands to satisfy. For instance, all the political parties that were part of the *Unione* coalition wanted to be represented [and] there were eight or nine political forces in total. . . . Second, [we had to] cover the territory, especially where there was the largest concentration of voters. . . . Third, [we had to] care about the qualitative content of the list. This meant not only including members of *patronati* and *sindacati*.⁵ . . . We surely had to put people who were in daily contact with the voters but also people who had some weight within the community . . . also professionals . . . and not only old people but also young ones and a few women. (Interview 7 March 2007)

Despite these constraints, all the political parties that formed the center-left coalition agreed to present a common list in the four districts abroad. This decision, which aimed to avoid the dispersion of center-left votes, was particularly appropriate considering that in some electoral districts, the election only concerned one seat. After the candidates were appointed, the political parties that formed the *Unione* coalition offered them little help. While some candidates received limited financial support, most candidates used their own resources to finance their campaigns in electoral districts that covered several countries.

The last peculiarity of the *Unione* campaign abroad is that it sought to connect with two kinds of organizations abroad that had close connections with Italian emigrants. First, Italian trade unions abroad and emigrant associations that had been present for decades in the main countries of destination were actively involved in the *Unione* campaign, and some even

publicly called emigrants to support the center-left coalition. In the European district, the Christian Workers' association ACLI and the migrant association Federazione delle Colonie Libere Italiane had their respective presidents as candidates on the Unione ballot. As a matter of fact, most of the candidates elected abroad had a strong history of involvement in emigrant associations, labor unions, or patronati. Most of them also had experience in formally representing the interests of Italian emigrants through previous positions within the Consular Committees of Italians Abroad (COMITES) or the General Council of Italians Abroad (CGIE).

Naturally, the election of these individuals was facilitated by the notoriety of their organizations as assistance providers to Italian workers abroad, or by their roles as "spokespeople" in emigrant communities. During interviews conducted with MPs and senators elected abroad, Antonio Razzi, MP from Switzerland elected on the Italia dei Valori list, expressed how he thought his associative involvement had paid off in terms of votes. For years before being elected, he had organized sightseeing tours through Europe for Italian pensioners with an Abruzzian emigrant association. He elaborates:

[W]hen they [the pensioners] saw my name on a list, they did not care about the color of the party. I belonged to Italia dei Valori. However, it is likely that people with no affinities to this party also voted for me because they had a good time with me. . . . They remembered that I pleased them and spent time with them. (Interview 9 July 2009)

Most of the emigrant candidates from the center-right electoral lists also had a history of involvement in associations abroad. However, as Guglielmo Picchi, Forza Italia MP elected abroad, points out, the involvement of these organizations in the election was also perceived as a form of corporatism, by which Italians abroad rewarded emigrant elites who defended their interests or granted them favors (Interview 14 February 2007). It is likely that the center-right coalition resented the role of associations more than other parties because of electoral results in South America (see Table 6.4). There, the center-right thought it would perform well because of Italian emigrants' supposed right-wing preferences. Instead, the coalition took no seat but an independent list under the name of Associazioni Italiane in Sud America (literally, Italian Associations in South America) took two. The rationale of the co-founders of this list—Luigi Pallaro (a successful businessman based in Argentina who won a seat in the senate) and Ricardo Merlo (an emigrant based in Argentina who won a seat in the house)—was that Italian citizens in South America are unfamiliar with Italian political parties but easily relate to associations. According to them, Italian identity in South America is grounded on associations and emigrants pay less attention to ideological differences. This would explain how they beat both the center-left and center-right coalitions in this district (Interviews 7 March 2007; Interview 14 July 2009).

The second way by which the *Unione* sought to connect with organizations abroad was to work with sister political parties in host countries. For example, in two large receiving countries, Argentina and Belgium, local left-wing parties publicly encouraged emigrants to support Prodi's coalition. This support was expressed in electoral meetings, letters addressed to emigrants, and interviews in the press. Because of host-country parties' access to the local media outlets, their activities received greater press coverage than any other campaign activity led by the emigrant candidates themselves (see Chapter 7 for more information about the influence of host-country political parties on electoral campaigns abroad).

Betting on the Domestic Vote: Casa delle Libertà's Campaign

In contrast to the *Unione's* strategy, the center-right coalition *La Casa delle Libertà*, led by Silvio Berlusconi, very much neglected voters abroad. Its leaders were indeed convinced that the 2005 reform of the electoral system would grant the coalition enough parliamentary seats thanks to domestic voters without having to worry about foreign constituency seats. With this reform, Italy moved from a majoritarian system to a proportional system, with thresholds and a majority premium for the winner. At no point had the coalition envisaged that this new electoral system could produce a tie in the senate, nor that the fate of the parliamentary majority could depend on the support of a single senator elected abroad.

The center-right coalition's biggest mistake, however, was to let its two main political parties (*Forza Italia* and *Alleanza Nazionale*) present separate lists in electoral districts abroad. As Dario Rivolta, coordinator of *Forza Italia's* campaign abroad, explained, *Alleanza Nazionale* had been convinced that it would get a majority of the seats abroad because the struggle to be enfranchised from abroad had been historically associated with the name of MP Mirko Tremaglia. For this reason, *Alleanza Nazionale* was reluctant to form a single electoral list with other center-right parties and decided to set up its own list under the name of *Per Italia nel Mondo con Tremaglia* (Interview 1 March 2007). In the two electoral districts abroad where emigrant candidates competed for a single seat, the division of center-right votes into two separate lists divided their support and ensured the victory of the center-left candidates.⁶

Following this decision, *Forza Italia* also set up its own lists abroad with citizens that would represent both the older and newer Italian emigration. As opposed to the center-left, this party lacked connections with organizations abroad and accordingly put less emigrant leaders on the ballot. After selecting its candidates, *Forza Italia* limited its campaigning activities abroad to two international meetings (in Lugano and Athens). For the leaders of this party, emigrant candidates on the *Forza Italia* list had to compete against one another. Accordingly, they left the responsibility of campaigning abroad to individual candidates without any financial help from the party.

Table 6.4 Electoral Results Abroad—2006 Italian Legislative Elections

| <i>Africa, Asia, Oceania, and Antarctica (AAOA)</i> | | | | |
|---|-------------------|---------------|-------------------|--------------|
| <i>House</i> | | <i>Senate</i> | | |
| <i>List</i> | <i>% of votes</i> | <i>seats</i> | <i>% of votes</i> | <i>seats</i> |
| Unione | 47.52 | 1 | 45.47 | 1 |
| Forza Italia | 39.06 | 0 | 36.24 | 0 |
| Per Italia nel mondo— Tremaglia | 10.41 | 0 | 9.55 | 0 |
| <i>North and Central America</i> | | | | |
| <i>House</i> | | <i>Senate</i> | | |
| <i>List</i> | <i>% of votes</i> | <i>seats</i> | <i>% of votes</i> | <i>seats</i> |
| Unione | 38.72 | 1 | 38.03 | 1 |
| Forza Italia | 30.68 | 1 | 30.33 | 0 |
| Per Italia nel mondo— Tremaglia | 12.45 | 0 | 13.77 | 0 |
| Udc | 10.85 | 0 | 11.17 | 0 |
| <i>South America</i> | | | | |
| <i>House</i> | | <i>Senate</i> | | |
| <i>List</i> | <i>% of votes</i> | <i>seats</i> | <i>% of votes</i> | <i>seats</i> |
| Ass. Italiane in Sud America | 33.12 | 1 | 31.51 | 1 |
| Unione | 27.66 | 1 | 30.10 | 1 |
| Per Italia nel mondo— Tremaglia | 11.68 | 1 | 11.07 | 0 |
| Udc | 10.86 | 0 | 9.41 | 0 |
| Forza Italia | 8.44 | 0 | 8.87 | 0 |
| <i>Europe</i> | | | | |
| <i>House</i> | | <i>Senate</i> | | |
| <i>List</i> | <i>% of votes</i> | <i>seats</i> | <i>% of votes</i> | <i>seats</i> |
| Unione | 52.73 | 3 | 52.97 | 1 |
| Forza Italia | 24.42 | 2 | 24.44 | 1 |
| Di Pietro Italia dei Valori | 5.20 | 1 | 5.47 | 0 |
| Udc | 4.60 | 0 | 4.60 | 0 |
| Per Italia nel mondo— Tremaglia | 3.85 | 0 | 3.82 | 0 |
| Legia Nord | 2.34 | 0 | 2.48 | 0 |

Source: Ministero del Interno (2006).

As Table 6.4 demonstrates, the dispersion of center-right votes abroad cost it two seats in the Africa, Asia, Oceania, and Antarctica district (one in the senate and the other one in the house) and one senate seat in the North and Central America district. If the center-right had collected enough support among domestic voters as it thought it would, the avoidable loss of seats abroad would have been harmless to Berlusconi's coalition. However, as the coalition found itself in a virtual tie with the center-left in the senate, the loss of seats abroad suddenly became more troublesome. Later on, the fact that an independent emigrant senator from Argentina decided to switch sides and support the center-left coalition confirmed that the center-right strategy abroad had been politically costly (see Chapter 7).

From the case of Italy, I draw two important lessons with regard to the influence of political and emigrant elites on the electoral behavior of citizens abroad. First, despite the constraints and limitations associated with reaching out to emigrants, campaigning abroad can make a difference. Comparing the presence of the center-left coalition abroad to that of center-right political parties, the coordinated campaign led by the former allowed it to communicate its platform to many more voters. Second, and most importantly, the Italian case demonstrates the importance of cooperation between political parties and other actors in host countries. Because of their weak presence abroad, political parties that team up with domestic political parties or emigrant organizations during electoral campaigns reap certain benefits. For example, local parties and emigrant associations that have closer contacts with the emigrant community can share their expertise or facilitate access to the local media. For this reason, I conclude that campaigns abroad that make use of local resources in host countries increase their chances of influencing the electoral behavior of emigrants.

POLITICAL OPINIONS ABROAD AND THE CIRCULATION OF INFORMATION

The previous section underscored the role of elites as mediators in the formation of political opinions abroad. This view, however, neglected the fact that today, thanks to the development of information and communication technologies, emigrants are for the most part able to access information on home-country politics in a similar fashion to domestic voters. Indeed, satellite signals and Internet connections grant emigrants access to the homeland's TV programs, radio shows, and newspapers. Simultaneously, the widespread use of mobile phones and the reduced cost of long-distance communications allow for direct and frequent contact with relatives in the home country.

The development of technology has had two consequences in terms of emigrant access to political information on home-country politics. First, information circulates at a much higher speed than ever before. Compared

to Italian emigrants, who were involved in their homeland's unification struggle during the 19th century, contemporary emigrants have access to the vast majority of home-country news outlets at the same pace as non-emigrants. The increased speed of communication allows emigrants to be more reactive to events occurring in the home country. Second, the role of traditional media as political mediators is declining with the development of simple and affordable means of conveying and exchanging political opinions. Indeed, while traditional media offered political elites a privileged position to express their views, new media grants all citizens the technical capacity to reach large audiences in different parts of the world. In this respect, the Arab Spring of 2011 demonstrated that homeland political actors, who were largely deprived of political parties' institutional support and who were excluded from traditional media outlets, were capable of reaching worldwide audiences, particularly within the diaspora, through the use of social networks such as Twitter and Facebook.

If it appears that new technologies can alter emigrants' capacity to access political information on the home country, it remains unclear how this affects the votes that they cast from abroad. In the survey on Bolivian voters abroad, which I presented earlier in this chapter, I also dedicated attention to finding out the means used by emigrants to access information on home-country politics before the 2009 presidential election.⁷ The survey demonstrated that 64.8 percent of emigrant voters relied on traditional media such as TV, radio, and newspapers before the election. Compared with the Internet, which only 24.1 percent of voters abroad declared to having used, traditional media seem to remain as the main source of information on home-country politics. However, 45.1 percent of voters who pursued postsecondary education mentioned using the Internet during the campaign. This indicates a strong correlation between education and the use of the new technologies of information and communication.

Thanks to qualitative fieldwork conducted with Bolivian emigrant voters, the study also provided hints on the relevance of these new practices. In addition to somewhat passively reading political information on Web sites, voters also mentioned using the Internet to engage in political discussions with other voters living in Bolivia or abroad (Lafleur 2012). In this regard, electronic forums and social networks give emigrants the opportunity to engage in debates on home-country politics with voters who would not necessarily have the opportunity to exchange views otherwise. Nonetheless, it must be noted that contacts with home-country voters also happen outside of the Internet. Phone conversations with relatives in the home country seem to be important moments in which opinions on home-country politics are formed: 20.7 percent of the voters we surveyed conceded that relatives in Bolivia tried to convince them to support a particular candidate in the upcoming election. Alternatively, 13 percent of the emigrants tried to influence the votes of their relatives in Bolivia. Previous literature on immigrant transnationalism has argued that technological developments

allow emigrants to keep closer contacts with the home country (Vertovec 2004; Walton-Roberts 2004). In this chapter, I deepened this argument by demonstrating that technologies also facilitate emigrants' ability to access information and exchange views on home-country elections from abroad.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I used two case studies to identify variables influencing the voting behavior of citizens abroad. While this limited exercise did not intend to comprehensively list all possible variables, it nonetheless demonstrated that the process of political opinion formation abroad is a set of complex interactions that involves the individual emigrant as well as a multitude of other actors in the host and home society. To conclude this chapter, I propose to classify these variables into three categories.

First, there are social and demographic variables, which for the most part are set before emigrants' departure from the home country. Similar to studies of the political behavior of nonemigrant voters, I found a correlation between certain social and demographic characteristics that are independent from migration (e.g., gender, ethnicity, and regional origin) and emigrants' preferences for certain candidates in home-country elections. Second, I identified a series of variables that relate to emigrants' experiences in their countries of residence (experience of discrimination, the acquisition of the language of the host country, satisfaction with the decision to migrate). These variables invite us to reconsider the idea that voting from abroad is a process that solely involves emigrants and the home country. Instead, we need to consider that life abroad affects citizens' perspectives on home-country politics. Third, the transnational dimensions of an emigrant's life can further affect his/her voting behavior in home-country elections. Indeed, contacts with political parties and migrant organizations involved in the election, as well as direct exposure to the opinions of other voters or actors in the home country, may all affect the emigrants' voting behavior. In this respect, the development of information and communication technologies affects the process of political opinion formation in two ways: 1) by giving emigrants immediate and direct access to home-country media outlets and 2) by allowing emigrants to share their political opinions and engage in debates with other voters in the host and home societies.

Altogether, this chapter has demonstrated that, just like domestic voters, the voting behavior of emigrants is not determined once and for all. Political opinions prior to departure may strongly shape the voting behavior of citizens abroad, but emigrants' experiences in the host country, along with the strengthening of their transnational connections with other actors in the home country, invite us to envisage the formation of political opinions abroad as a dynamic process.

7 “Do You Hear Me Now?”

External Voting, Reserved Seats, and Emigrant Power in the Home and Host Societies

At the beginning of the book, I argued that emigrant elites (i.e., representatives of emigrant lobbies and associations) in different parts of the world demand the right to vote in home-country elections from abroad because they want to have a say in the polity of which they still consider themselves members. The primary rationale informing this demand is that home-country authorities and political parties do not pay attention to citizens abroad as long as they do not vote (even though we saw with the cases of Italy and Mexico that some parties had strong connections with emigrants long before external voting legislation). With their enfranchisement, some emigrants hoped that, as political parties competed for emigrant votes, they would propose policies addressing the needs of citizens abroad. Depending on the state and the profile of its citizens abroad, their expectations towards the home state can vary significantly. Demands range, for instance, from setting up culture or language programs abroad that help emigrants and their descendants maintain a feeling of connection with the home country, to more costly requests, such as tax cuts or the extension of social benefits to citizens abroad. So what happens when citizens abroad are actually enfranchised? Do authorities and political parties in the home country pay more attention to emigrants? Are new diasporic policies adopted to address the needs of citizens abroad?

The first part of this chapter aims to discuss how enfranchisement affects emigrants' power in home-country politics. As I previously argued, the impact of votes cast abroad on overall electoral results is highly dependent on the character of the external voting legislation itself. However, this element constitutes no barrier to developing a general discussion on external voting and emigrant power in the home country. Indeed, using the case of Italy, I intend to underline the key issues and opportunities created by the rise of emigrants as an electoral force within home-country politics. Italy's system of “reserved seats,” by which 18 parliamentarians elected abroad represent emigrants in the home country, is one of the most liberal forms of emigrant enfranchisement and many states consider copying such a mechanism of representation. For this reason, I use this example to underscore the strengths and weaknesses of emigrant enfranchisement as a tool for empowerment in the home country.

In the second part of this chapter, I turn to the impact of external voting on emigrants' countries of residence. Despite the lack of binding international norms on external voting, every year, dozens of states invite their citizens abroad to take part in home-country elections without facing any kind of interference from receiving-country authorities. Recently, however, states like Canada and Australia have expressed concerns about the development of foreign electoral campaigns on their territory. Canada, in particular, engaged in a dispute with Italy and Tunisia over their external voting processes, as it feared that Canadian-Italian or Canadian-Tunisian dual nationals could be elected in Italian or Tunisian parliaments. In this section of the chapter, I therefore discuss the possible resurgence of Westphalian fears about dual allegiances as a consequence of the development of passive electoral rights (i.e., the right of emigrants to stand as candidates in home-country elections). I subsequently turn to another concern of host countries, which is that external voting rights could harm immigrant integration. This issue regarding the impact of cross-border involvement on sociopolitical integration in host societies has already been touched upon in literature on immigrant transnationalism. Yet, using survey data on the attitudes of Bolivian external voters on host-country politics, I intend to demonstrate that political participation in one space does not happen at the expense of participation in another space. On the contrary, in the last section of this chapter, I examine the opportunities created by external voting policies for political parties in the emigrants' countries of residence. Looking at homeland political parties' linkages with parties in destination countries, I underscore how external voting might serve the latter's interests.

VOTES CAST ABROAD AND EMIGRANT POWER IN THE HOME COUNTRY

As shown in the cases of large sending states, such as Italy and Mexico, political parties do not necessarily have an interest in citizens abroad *per se*. However, as organizations seeking to occupy political power, they naturally have an interest in gaining their votes. Accordingly, we could consider external voting policies as incentives for political parties to develop platforms and policies addressing the needs of this particular electorate. This argument, however, overlooks two essential elements.

First, voters abroad are not necessarily interest-driven. Even though it seems rational for citizens abroad to mobilize and vote in order to raise awareness among political elites in the home country, emigrant participation in home-country elections is often limited. As seen in Chapter 5, voter turnout abroad is affected by a series of variables. Besides, even within the emigrant voting population, voters do not necessarily expect that political parties will act in their favor in response to their vote. Many different reasons push emigrants to exercise their franchise abroad. Interviews

conducted with Bolivian voters demonstrated that voting provides emigrants with a sense of identity. Going to the polling station abroad and casting a ballot in home-country elections provide a unique opportunity to feel that one still belongs to the polity. Other Bolivian voters also feel obliged to vote because of (unfounded) fears of losing their citizenship or fears of being sanctioned upon return. Overall, when participation abroad is limited or when voters demonstrate that they are not concerned by the benefits political parties have to offer them, external voting is unlikely to raise political parties' awareness on emigration issues.

This point relates to the second element neglected by an interest-driven analysis of external voting: Even if political parties foresee potential electoral gains in reaching out to the population abroad, they might concentrate their resources towards campaigning among certain sectors of the domestic population in order to limit electoral spending. This is particularly true in countries where the external voting legislation sets limits and/or barriers to the exercise of franchise abroad. In those cases, political parties have little incentive to devote resources in trying to reach citizens abroad because the legislation somehow guarantees that participation abroad is going to have little impact on overall electoral results. In Bolivia, where legislators had ensured that citizens abroad would not represent more than 6 percent of the entire electorate, political parties campaigned very little abroad. In the survey I conducted among Bolivian voters in four different countries of residence, emigrants confirmed this impression: 56.5 percent of them declared that Bolivian political parties had little or no consideration for citizens abroad in their electoral platform.

Based on this preliminary discussion, should we conclude that external voting is not an effective way of empowering emigrants in the home country? Looking at the development of diasporic policies in Italy after the 2006 and 2008 legislative elections, I wish to draw a more complex picture by 1) examining how electoral systems can put emigrants in marginal or privileged positions within home-country politics and 2) assessing the role of parliamentarians elected abroad in defending emigrants' interests in the home country. In the process, I also examine how external voting can create new tensions with domestic actors.

Decisive Votes versus Marginal Votes: The Relevance of Electoral Systems

One of the main conclusions drawn in the first part of this book was that political parties try to anticipate the impact of external voters when they consider extending franchise to citizens abroad. However, independently of the number of votes cast abroad, emigrants are sometimes depicted as a decisive electorate in the outcome of an election. As discussed in Chapter 2, I agree with Bauböck (2007) in saying that there is no reason to consider that citizens abroad are more responsible for a party's victory than other

sectors of the domestic population (e.g., women or teachers). However, certain provisions of the electoral system may increase the perception in the home country that voters abroad are decisive in the election. This is the case, for instance, when votes cast abroad are counted last.¹

Italy is one of the most relevant cases when discussing the importance of electoral systems on the capacity of emigrants to be heard in the home country. Comparing the 2006 and 2008 legislative elections, emigrant voters had dramatically different capacities of influence on domestic politics in these two instances. As demonstrated in Chapter 6, the strategy of Romano Prodi's center-left coalition and the division of center-right lists during the 2006 electoral campaign abroad allowed the former to win a majority of the parliamentary seats attributed within the foreign constituency. A year after the election, the center-left government found itself in a situation of losing its small parliamentary majority in the senate due to internal divisions. In this context, Senator Luigi Pallaro, elected in the South American district of the foreign constituency, decided to use his leverage in favor of his emigrant electorate.

Luigi Pallaro was elected in 2006 on an independent list with strong ties to Italian emigrant associations. As Romano Prodi was about to lose his majority in the senate in February 2007, Pallaro—who was close to Silvio Berlusconi's center-right party (Forza Italia) before his election—decided, however, to offer his support to the center-left. In exchange, he negotiated with the government the adoption of an amendment to the 2007 budget (the so-called “Pallaro amendment”) by which 14 million euros would be allocated to assistance programs for citizens abroad every year between 2007 and 2009 (Tintori 2011). Pallaro justified his decision by saying he wasn't concerned with ideological divisions, but with a desire to achieve concrete results for his electorate during his mandate. He elaborated during our interview, “I do not feel the responsibility to overthrow governments. I want to work with the government that is in place, the one who won the election, the one with whom I will deal with because we cannot wait four more years for the government to change and start dialogue [with citizens abroad]” (Interview 7 March 2007). Considering Italian legislators' focus to limit the impact of voters abroad with the 2001 legislation, this situation naturally generated controversy in Italy (see below).

A year after this episode, new rifts within the governing coalition forced Romano Prodi to resign and call for early elections. With the comfortable victory of Silvio Berlusconi's center-right coalition, the capacity of parliamentarians elected abroad to influence political decisions decreased dramatically. Their budget amendments and proposals to improve emigrants' access to Italian social services abroad were systematically rejected (Zinccone 2009). The government also restructured its diplomatic offices abroad for budgetary reasons, which led to the closure of some of its consulates abroad. In my interviews with parliamentarians elected abroad during the summer of 2009, this latter decision seemed widely viewed as a major

defeat, considering the central role of consulates in the procurement of services to their electorate.

The case of Italy demonstrates that the enfranchisement of citizens abroad and their representation in parliament are no guarantee to see their interests taken into account by home-country authorities. Specific conditions that are created by the electoral system may, however, grant significant leverage to citizens abroad. Such conditions—like an electoral system that creates a tie in the Italian Parliament—encourage domestic politicians to take a stance on issues of interest to the emigrants.

Assessing the Role of Parliamentarians Elected Abroad

The fact that Italian parliamentarians elected abroad are less able to efficiently defend their electorate’s interests when their seats are not indispensable to the ruling coalition raises questions on this mechanism of representation. While only a dozen countries have such provision, supporters of external voting worldwide often see it as the most desirable form of emigrant representation in home-country politics. This viewpoint, however, raises three important questions that need to be addressed.

First, are parliamentarians elected abroad capable of representing the interests of citizens abroad, when they are often far from being a homogenous population? The depiction of emigrant parliamentarians as the voice of citizens abroad in the home country is not neutral. It gives the impression that citizens abroad have similar profiles and similar expectations with regard to the home country. The experience of Italian parliamentarians elected abroad showcases a potential dilemma: How can they simultaneously represent the descendants of labor migrants, who have no experience of living in Italy, and the new high-skilled emigrants who leave the country today? In contrast to Colombia or Portugal, where the number of reserved seats in parliament is very limited, Italy’s 18 parliamentarians can somehow reflect this diversity. As a matter of fact, the election of young highly skilled candidates, such as Guglielmo Picchi and Arnold Cassola, confirms that—while they are a strong asset—connections with emigrant associations and involvement in Italian unions abroad are not indispensable to winning a seat abroad. The election of a larger number of parliamentarians abroad thus increases their capacity to represent the diversity of the emigrant population abroad.

The Italian system, however, offers no guarantee that these 18 representatives will work together. During my fieldwork, all of the MPs and senators elected abroad whom I interviewed broadly identified the same priorities for action in favor of citizens abroad (e.g., language and culture programs abroad, consular services, and issues related to acquiring nationality). However, two issues prevent them from acting together in these different policy areas. First, parliamentarians are divided along party lines and, in competitive democracies, party loyalty obliges them to work primarily with

colleagues from their own parliamentary group. MP Giuseppe Angeli from the South America district sums up this tension that all interviewees hinted at during my fieldwork:

I would have liked to work together [with the other parliamentarians elected abroad]. . . . Political colors should not matter to us. The only thing that should matter is defending the rights of Italians abroad. It has not happened because obviously everyone is working for his own party. (Interview 23 February 2007)

Second, cooperation is rendered difficult by the fact that parliamentarians elected in the same districts of the foreign constituency compete with one another for their seats. They accordingly need to be able to demonstrate their worth in comparison to their colleagues.

These difficulties prompt the following question: Are reserved seats in parliament more efficient in representing emigrants' interests than other instruments, such as emigrant consultative councils? In Chapter 1, I argued that the development of external citizenship worldwide was visible in the creation of institutions that aimed to facilitate dialogue between emigrants and home-country authorities. The Consultative Council of the Institute for Mexicans Abroad (CCIME) and the Council for the Moroccan Population Abroad (CCME) are two illustrations of this development. In Mexico, the CCIME, which is organized in different working groups on issues such as health or education, can be considered as an efficient tool to raise awareness on emigration issues in Mexico. In comparison to parliamentarians elected abroad, it has two advantages. First, its representatives are more inclined to cooperate because they are not elected on the basis of political party affiliations. Second, these representatives report directly to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Accordingly, their recommendations are immediately communicated to the civil servants in charge of Mexico's diasporic policies. Whenever the policy modifications requested by CCIME councilors do not require the adoption of new legislation, they can be implemented reasonably fast. In Italy, such mechanism of consultation was in place long before the implementation of external voting, through the General Council of Italians Abroad (CGIE). However, emigrant leaders argued that its lack of binding power rendered its recommendations useless. Today, this body has not disappeared, but political parties are struggling to give it a new role in the changing institutional context. As MP Antonio Razzi noted, some parliamentarians elected abroad have even called for abolishing the CGIE altogether (Interview 9 July 2009).

While the risk of competition between parliamentarians elected abroad and emigrant representatives in consultative councils is real, I argue that both forms of representation can complement each other. Consultative councils have the flexibility and sufficient membership to meet with a wide array of actors in the home country, such as agencies, regions, and unions.

Through their recommendations, these councils can invite these actors to change their practices to the benefit of citizens abroad. However, when it comes to the formulation of policies towards citizens abroad, parliamentarians elected abroad are in a much better position to issue legislative proposals and build consensus within parliament. The expertise of consultative council members and their connections with citizens abroad can, however, feed the parliamentary debate. This is particularly true considering that parliamentarians elected abroad invariably distance themselves from their constituency when they are called to occupy their seat in parliament.

A third question that arises with the creation of foreign constituencies is whether the representation of emigrant interests in parliament positively or negatively affects the interests of the nonemigrant population. In Chapter 2, I discussed how some people consider external voting illegitimate because citizens abroad are not affected by the decisions of the representatives they contribute to elect. While I already underscored the limits of such an assumption, I wish to underline that the foreign constituencies may have an ambiguous impact on nonemigrant voters' interests.

MPs and senators elected abroad have an ambiguous role: They are elected by citizens residing abroad to voice their concerns in the home country, but their mission as parliamentarians requires that they represent the nation as a whole. In Chapter 4, I mentioned that some emigrant parliamentarians insisted on saying that, even though they were elected abroad, they were working for all Italians. Their parliamentary activities have subsequently confirmed their statements. However, other emigrant MPs and senators—like Senator Pallaro during the 2007 parliamentary crisis—consider themselves more as lobbyists working for citizens abroad. Indeed, many people raised their eyebrows in Italy after the adoption of a 14-million-euro amendment to the 2007 budget in exchange for Pallaro's support of Romano Prodi's government. In this specific case, it could be argued that the particular interests of citizens elected abroad were defended at the expense of the general Italian population's interests.

With the creation of foreign constituencies, parliaments indeed welcome new members who can bring along their experiences abroad or knowledge of the political cultures of other states. Several Italians parliamentarians elected abroad promised upon swearing in that they would bring “fresh wind” to Italian representative institutions characterized by high levels of instability since the 1990s. The promise was kept in a few cases. For example, Laura Garavini, an emigrant MP residing in Germany, used her experience in a not-for-profit organization fighting racketeering by the Mafia among Italians abroad to successfully push for increased cooperation on organized crime between Italy and European partners (Interview 21 July 2009). These efforts are naturally regarded in a much more positive light by parliamentarians elected on the national territory and by the nonemigrant population. On the other hand, the creation of the foreign constituency also created opportunities for electoral fraud abroad and, notoriously, led

to the election of a senator supported by a Calabrian criminal organization (see Chapter 5). In these circumstances, the foreign constituency serves to reinforce existing domestic threats to democracy.

VOTES CAST ABROAD AND EMIGRANT POWER IN THE HOST COUNTRY

The Westphalian organization of international relations has historically led states to look at emigrants' linkages with their home country with suspicion. The treatment inflicted by US authorities upon the so-called "enemy aliens" of Japanese, German, and Italian origin during World War II is one example of the consequences of such suspicion (Fox 1990; Lothrop 2001; Scherini 2001). More recently, sending states that desire to maintain ties with their citizens abroad through developing different kinds of diasporic policies have faced hostile reactions from several receiving countries in Europe and North America. Within this context, some host-country authorities still envisage emigrants' long-standing ties across borders with skepticism. In the second section of the chapter, I therefore intend to discuss the impact of external voting on the emigrant voters' receiving societies.

Today, the development of transnational political practices—not limited to external voting—has roused fear in some receiving states. Indeed, while states are increasingly interested in maintaining ties with their own citizens residing abroad, they still are suspicious of similar practices when they involve foreigners established on their territory who continue to engage with their home country. In other words, states' perspectives on transnational linkages vary, depending on whether a state sees itself as a sending or a receiving country.

In recent years, scholars have identified three ways in which transnational political participation can possibly hurt the interests of receiving societies. First, some states have shown apprehension towards the possible importation of foreign conflicts as a side effect of emigrants' transnational involvement. For instance, the conflict between Turkey and its Kurdish minority has been extended into the streets of several European cities over the past decade (Østergaard-Nielsen 2003; Argun 2003). This had led Germany's Chancellor Gerhard Schröder to declare that his country would not tolerate such an importation (Ögelman, Money, and Martin 2002). Second, the transnational political involvement of immigrants may also complicate receiving states' foreign policies. Existing literature on "ethnic lobbying" has indeed demonstrated that immigrants often try to influence their host states' foreign policies towards their home states (Shain 1999; Haney and Vanderbush 1999; Smith 2000). Third, transnational involvement has been identified as a refuge for emigrants against discrimination in host societies, but also as a possible obstacle to immigrant integration (Glick Schiller and Fouron 1999; Roberts, Frank, and Lozano-Ascencio 1999; Schmidtke

2001). These views contend that migrant participation in one space happens at the expense of participation in the other space. More recent scholarship, however, has shown that participation in home-country politics is not a response to host-country marginalization, and that it can actually stimulate participation in the receiving society (Østergaard-Nielsen 2001; Portes, Escobar, and Radford 2007). In the second part of this chapter I look at how external voting affects these different debates by examining 1) Canada’s resistance to foreign constituencies, 2) the role of Italian parliamentarians elected abroad in foreign policy, and 3) the capacity of Bolivian voters to participate simultaneously in home- and host-country politics.

Resistance to External Voting in Host Countries: The Case of Canada

Most receiving countries in the world don’t have problems with the organization of foreign elections on their territory. Every year, hundreds of thousands of emigrants worldwide participate in home-country elections from abroad without facing any particular local resistance. Though it is possible for authorities to prohibit foreign political campaigns on their territory, prohibiting electoral operations is far more complex. Indeed, when the modality through which emigrants participate is postal voting, preventing emigrants from receiving and returning their ballots is hardly conceivable. When the vote is cast in person at embassies and consulates, polling stations abroad are protected from the interference of local authorities by the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, which guarantees the inviolability of diplomatic missions.

In spite of the apparent global tolerance towards external voting, Canada has been singled out as the one state that has expressed strong reservations about other countries’ external voting legislation. More precisely, Canada is concerned about emigrants’ passive electoral rights and the inclusion of Canada in foreign constituencies. Indeed, Canada refuses that its territory be considered as part of another state’s constituency, and that candidates residing on its territory represent Canada in a foreign parliament. It may appear surprising at first glance that criticisms on external voting arose in a country that officially considers itself a multicultural society, and where ethnic groups are encouraged to share their culture and values with other citizens (Wayland 1997). However, in two instances Canadian authorities precipitated diplomatic tensions with foreign governments over the organization of their national elections on Canadian soil.

In 2008, the Canadian government expressed concerns over Italian external voting legislation because it allowed Italian citizens in Canada to represent other Italians from Canada in parliament. Because the Italian legislation obliges diplomatic authorities to sign an agreement with local authorities before the election, the risk was real that Italians in Canada would be prevented from voting. Only a few weeks before the elections,

Canada eventually granted Italy a “one-time only authorization” to hold elections in Canada, provided that electoral campaigning was limited to letters, e-mail, Web sites, and meetings at the consulates. The issue reappeared three years later when the Tunisian Electoral Authority, created after the 2011 revolution, announced its intention to invite Tunisians abroad to take part in the election of the constituent assembly. The fact that the Tunisian authorities included Canada in a foreign constituency that covered some European countries and the Western Hemisphere angered Canada. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a statement saying that it encourages foreign states to allow citizens residing in Canada to vote in their country of origin’s elections, but refuses requests by foreign states to include Canada in their extraterritorial constituencies. It also repeated its opposition to the presence of foreign political parties and electoral campaigns.²

Canada’s position led to a major outcry within the Tunisian community, Canadian opposition parties, and Quebec’s regional parliament (the region where most Tunisians in Canada reside). All of them denounced the government’s inconsistency, which supported the transition of Arab regimes towards democracy yet obstructed Tunisia’s electoral process (Radio Canada 21 September 2011). A few days before the election, the Canadian government reaffirmed its opposition to Tunisia’s electoral system, but said that it would respect the inviolability of its embassies and consulates (where the electoral operations ultimately took place). This situation also forced representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to clarify the government’s position during a public hearing in parliament:

No one should represent Canada as a constituency in a foreign elected assembly. Having a foreign country unilaterally include Canada as part of its own voting districts could lead to the election of candidates who would be perceived as representing fellow Canadian citizens in a foreign elected assembly. It may also lead, in some cases, to importing foreign political disputes to Canada. Foreign electoral campaigns in Canada have the potential to focus on domestic Canadian political issues or bilateral disputes, and to undermine social cohesion, inclusiveness and identity.³

Canada’s opposition to foreign constituencies and passive electoral rights is an example of the concern that receiving societies have of the three potentially harmful consequences that we mentioned previously. One such concern is that emigrant candidates in home-country elections who campaign in destination countries undoubtedly contribute to importing foreign political conflicts within emigrant communities. Public-order measures, such as Canada’s prohibition of foreign political party offices and electoral campaigns, are designed to address these fears. The other two concerns are the intrusion of emigrant parliamentarians in a host country’s foreign policy

and the negative effect of external voting on immigrant integration. Both issues deserve to be discussed more deeply.

Parliamentarians Elected Abroad and Foreign Policy

With the election of parliamentarians in foreign constituencies, traditional fears by receiving states on the influence of ethnic groups and migrant communities on their foreign policy took a new turn. As shown with the case of Italy, these parliamentarians are expected to represent the nation as a whole but often see themselves (and are perceived by others) as representatives of citizens living abroad. For Canada, the issue with the foreign constituency is that many of these parliamentarians and their Italian voters in Canada are dual nationals. One interpretation of this situation (which is prevalent within the Canadian government) is that Canadian citizens are therefore sitting in a foreign parliament to speak in the name of their constituents who are also Canadian citizens. There is therefore a risk that foreign constituencies could undermine Canada’s capacity to speak with one voice in terms of its relations with foreign governments.

At the opposite viewpoint, Giani Bucchino, an Italian MP residing in Canada, criticizes Canada’s refusals to see the potential advantage of having one of its citizens sitting in a foreign parliament: “I’m Canadian, I have a Canadian passport and I sit in the Italian Parliament. The norm should be that I should have contact with [Canadian] authorities. Also, because I could in some way pay particular attention to Canada that is also my country” (Interview 15 July 2009). At the same time, this MP is aware that Canada’s opposition to Italy’s foreign constituency could prevent his future reelection if Italians in Canada are no longer able to vote from abroad. For this reason, he is limiting contact with Canadian authorities in his work as a representative.

Other parliamentarians elected abroad, on the contrary, experience less difficulty in playing the role as a “go-between” for the home and host societies. MP Fabio Porta from Brazil, for example, made it clear to center-left Brazilian politicians during his campaign that if he were to be elected, he would carry a vision of Italy’s relations with South America in line with their expectations (Interview 23 July 2009). Another concrete example is MP Antonio Razzi, from Switzerland, who serves as head of the Italy-Switzerland Inter-parliamentary Committee—where parliamentarians of both countries discuss ways to deepen their cooperation on issues such as transportation or taxation. And as briefly mentioned before, MP Laura Garavini, elected in Germany, advised German parliamentarians on anti-Mafia legislation. These latter examples tend to demonstrate that, rather than obstructing host-country foreign policy, these parliamentarians are eager to help create bridges between sending and receiving societies.

From a classic Westphalian approach of state sovereignty, practices by which parliamentarians of one state try to foster relations with other

states, of which they also hold citizenship sometimes, could be perceived as disloyal. This vision would, however, neglect the fact that contemporary international relations are no longer exclusively dictated by sovereign governments, and that new actors with multiple state affiliations are increasingly gaining influence on state behavior (e.g., NGOs and multinational companies). Further, parliamentarians who have multiple national loyalties have limited capacities of influence. Indeed, they only represent a small minority within the parliaments that allow such a form of representation. Another interpretation—which fits better with the way contemporary international relations work—is that these parliamentarians are an asset rather than a threat. These individuals generally speak several languages and have experience living in several countries. These qualities are valuable in a context of increased interconnectedness of state interests. Even though emigrant parliamentarians primarily remain the defenders of emigrant interests in the home country, the fact that they have one foot in the host society and the other one in the home society places them in a privileged position to foster dialogue between foreign states and the homeland.

External Voting and Political Participation in Host-Country Politics

Leaving aside the issue of emigrant parliamentarians, a last source of concern for host-country authorities is the impact of external voting on migrant integration. In other words, are sending states hurting the integration process in the receiving societies by enfranchising citizens abroad? The debate on transnational practices and integration goes back a long way. In their pioneering works on transnationalism, Basch, Glick Schiller, and Szanton Blanc (1994), as well as Roberts, Frank, and Lozano-Ascencio (1999), already postulated that discrimination in receiving societies was a cause for transnational involvement. More recent work, however, has tended to demonstrate that it is not the most marginalized emigrants who are the most likely to take part in transnational activities (Guarnizo, Portes, and Haller 2003; Portes, Escobar, and Radford 2007).

Beyond the debate on the causes of transnational involvement, authors like Smith (2000) or Huntington (2004) have argued that retaining linkages with the home society can hurt the assimilation process. Others, like Shain (1999) and Østergaard-Nielsen (2003), consider instead that transnational political involvement makes emigrants aware of their ability to mobilize. This skill can later be used in the context of host-country politics.

The relationship between external voting and political participation in the receiving country is an issue that has not been investigated thus far. In the survey I conducted with Bolivian emigrant voters in Argentina, Brazil, Spain, and the United States during the presidential election of 2009, I tried to measure the level of interest of these external voters in host-country politics. Two major conclusions can be drawn from the survey. First, a substantial number of external voters have the right to participate in both

home- and host-country elections, and they are interested in exercising franchise in both spaces. Bolivian voters abroad include a large share of dual citizens: 35 percent in Argentina, 42 percent in Brazil, 7 percent in Spain,⁴ and 23 percent in the United States. These dual citizens also have voting privileges in their countries of residence, and do not hesitate to use them. For instance, 19 percent of the Bolivian emigrant voters in the United States had also voted in the US presidential election the year before.

Formal participation in host-country politics is, however, not limited to dual citizens. In an increasing number of European and Latin American states, franchise in local elections is also extended to foreign citizens residing on the national territory. In Spain, for example, Bolivian residents are allowed to register as voters for local elections. Despite this, of the 140,000 Bolivians living in Spain, only 5,042 were actually registered to vote in the 2011 Spanish local elections. In the survey I coordinated on Bolivian external voters during the 2009 presidential election, however, we asked external voters if they were interested in exercising the right to vote in the upcoming 2011 Spanish local elections. Of them, 92 percent of the Bolivian emigrant voters said yes.⁵ These data demonstrate that, for emigrants, voting is not a zero-sum game; participating in one space does not prevent participation in another. On the contrary, participation in home-country politics may actually coincide with higher levels of host-country political engagement.

Most interestingly, and this is the second conclusion I draw from the Bolivian case study, not only do emigrants have an interest in taking part in host-country politics, they also feel relatively well informed about it: 19 percent of Bolivian voters residing abroad considered themselves more informed about the politics of their host country than about Bolivian politics and 47 percent considered themselves equally informed about the two. Only 34 percent believed they knew more about Bolivian politics than host-country politics. In the case of Bolivia, voters who make an effort to register as voters from abroad are citizens who are generally interested in politics, whether it involves their host or home societies. This element further supports the idea that receiving states' fears of external voting preventing emigrants from taking part in host-country politics are unfounded. Emigrants voting from abroad are, rather, likely to make informed contributions to domestic debates within receiving societies.

EXTERNAL VOTING AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION BETWEEN POLITICAL PARTIES

This chapter began with the hypothesis that external voting empowers emigrants in their home societies because competition between political parties forces them to pay more attention to emigrant voters. I, however, argued that political parties in the home country are sometimes reluctant to engage with voters abroad because of the cost and the organizational challenges

in campaigning abroad. To get around this difficulty, political parties of the sending country sometimes rely on the help of sister parties in receiving countries. Accordingly, can external voting create new forms of cross-border cooperation between political parties?

Looking at the cooperation of Italian political parties with domestic parties in destination countries across the world, a preliminary observation indicates that cooperation naturally happens between political parties that share similar ideologies. In this sense, external voting is not intrinsically creating a new form of dialogue. Indeed, parties across the globe have historically communicated with each other through international forums and, more recently, through formal structures on the regional level, such as European political parties. The novelty with the development of external voting is that it gives parties an incentive for cooperation because they can both benefit from the support of the same voters but in different elections. Indeed, considering that a share of external voters also vote in host-country elections, political parties in destination countries see foreign electoral campaigns as an opportunity to establish contacts with a share of their own electorate. In other words, those same emigrants considered as external voters by home-country political parties are also considered as potential “ethnic voters” (or voters of foreign origin) by political parties in the host country.

In the case of Italian elections abroad, political parties across the world have seen potential gains in helping Italian parties campaigning abroad. In South America, where the largest population of dual nationals is to be found, an Italian MP living in Brazil, Fabio Porta, sums up this idea:

[T]he majority of my voters in Argentina and Brazil are voters for Argentine and Brazilian politicians. For this reason, the [Argentine or Brazilian] politicians who helped me were also thinking about their own political base. . . . Getting involved in Italian politics is thus a way to be close to an electorate that characterizes itself strongly by its ethnic or national identity. (Interview 7 July 2009)

Despite the particular numerical importance of the Italian communities in South America, the attitude of cooperation that local political parties have towards home-country parties can also be observed in other parts of the world. Transnational cooperation between political parties takes essentially three forms. First, political parties in the host and home societies can sporadically exchange support during electoral campaigns. This meant, for example, that representatives of the German Social Democratic Party (SPD) participated in campaign events organized by the Italian Democratic Party (PD) in Germany before the Italian legislative elections. In turn, representatives of the PD took an active part in the SPD campaign during local elections in Berlin in an effort to deliver the Italian vote. In this case, Italian citizens living in Germany were indeed allowed—as EU citizens—to take

part in local elections in their country of residence. Second, transnational cooperation between political parties can also be stimulated by the presence of emigrants within party structures in the host country. In the lead-up to the 2008 legislative elections in Italy, an Italian citizen was temporarily sitting on the Belgian Socialist Party's (PS) governing body as a representative of the interests of immigrants living in Belgium. As Maurizio Chiocchetti, secretary of PD Mondo, the international arm of the PD, explains, this representative was able to take advantage of his position and worked to coordinate the PS's actions in favor of PD during the Italian electoral campaign (Interview 8 July 2009). Third, transnational cooperation between political parties also happens when the same individuals stand as candidates in elections of two countries. Coming back to the example of Germany, several Italian emigrants who stood as candidates to become Italian MPs elected abroad subsequently stood as candidates in local elections in their countries of residence. Another example is that of Basilio Giordano, who occupied elected positions in Canadian local politics and sought to be elected as a national parliamentarian of that country one year before being elected as an Italian senator elected abroad (Interview 23 July 2009). In theory, this third form of cooperation could lead citizens to simultaneously hold elected positions in their country of residence and in their home country.

This discussion on transnational cooperation between political parties confirms that external voting is not inherently a controversial practice from the viewpoint of host-country authorities. When political parties in those countries see potential electoral gains of their own in supporting host-country sister parties trying to reach voters abroad, issues of sovereignty and security may become secondary. This conciliatory position of political parties in destination countries is, however, dependent on two elements. First, the size of the migrant community (including the second generation) needs to be large enough in order for them to be a relevant group within host-country politics. Second, this community must be enfranchised in at least some host-country elections. When these two conditions are met, political parties from different states have obvious advantages in working together to reach out to migrants.

CONCLUSION

I started this chapter arguing that the claim that emigrant enfranchisement is a form of empowerment in the home society, often made by supporters of external voting, is not necessarily founded. When voters abroad do not mobilize or when the external voting legislation strongly limits the impact of voters abroad on overall results, political parties may find it too expensive and logistically complex to campaign abroad. The right to vote from abroad therefore offers no guarantee that emigration issues will find a larger echo in domestic politics. However, certain provisions in the electoral system,

such as the counting of votes cast abroad after the counting of votes cast on the national territory, may artificially increase the perceived influence of votes cast abroad. Similarly, the decisive role of emigrant parliamentarians in the survival of parliamentary majorities (as in Italy in 2007) grants emigrants significant leverage in the home country.

With regard to parliamentarians elected abroad in particular, their capacity to efficiently represent the interests of emigrants is limited by the fact they are usually not numerous and belong to different political parties. Their role in parliament is also ambiguous. On the one hand, their election by a specific sector of the population may encourage them to promote the adoption of policies that are mainly in the interest of that sector, and not necessarily compatible with the interest of domestic voters. On the other hand, their experience abroad and their knowledge of other countries' political cultures is an asset for their home countries' parliaments. Their peculiar profiles therefore bring to the table different perspectives on home-country political issues, but are also assets in developing closer relations between the homeland and the parliamentarians' countries of residence.

For host-country authorities, external voting can still be perceived as undesirable because of its supposed impact on security, foreign policy, and migrant integration. Yet, data on the participation of Bolivian voters demonstrate that a large share of the external voting population is also interested in taking part in host-country politics (and does so to a certain extent). This population also feels informed about the host country's politics. For this reason, emigrants do not experience a trade-off between political participation in their country of residence and their country of origin.

Lastly, analysis of party cooperation in host- and home-country electoral campaigns demonstrates that home states' fears disappear in certain circumstances. For domestic parties in destination countries, the external voting policies of other states are opportunities to reach out to citizens who might also take part in future host-country elections (whether they are dual nationals or not). In this case, concerns over external voting are actually replaced with transnational cooperation between host- and home-country political parties.

Conclusion

Research on transnationalism over the past two decades has demonstrated that emigrants are playing an increasingly large role in their home countries' politics. While cross-border political ties are not new, they are denser and stronger today than ever before. Progress in long-distance transportation and in information and communications technologies have facilitated transnational political involvement. With the growing transnational political involvement of emigrants, sending states have neither remained passive nor powerless. In different parts of the world, states have adjusted their discourses on citizens living abroad and have adopted policies to engage with emigrant populations, whom they often used to consider second-class citizens. These diasporic policies have included programs encouraging emigrants to invest or send remittances to the home country, the creation of representative bodies to consult communities abroad, and the adoption of dual-nationality legislation.

This book focused on the development of one such policy in particular: external voting. External voting policies have existed in some states since the early 20th century. Originally, these policies were designed to allow citizens who were serving the national interest of the home country from abroad (e.g., military members and diplomats) to vote. Exercising franchise from abroad was thus historically limited to certain citizens belonging to specific professional categories. After World War II, but especially in the 1990s and 2000s, numerous states adopted external voting legislation. Today, it can be argued that a large majority of states have such a policy.

In addition to the increase in the number of states that have adopted such policies, we can also observe that contemporary legislation on external voting is qualitatively different from early policies. Professional categories are for the most part no longer causes for exclusion to the exercise of franchise from abroad, and external voting policies now generally target all citizens abroad, independent of the nature of their linkages with the home country. In this sense, residence abroad is not a cause for exclusion from the political community anymore. On the contrary, the global trend in adopting external voting policies indicates that states now consider emigrants as continuing members of the polity, independent of their willingness to return. This does

not mean, however, that criteria for exclusion entirely disappeared from contemporary legislation on external voting. For example, certain states do not grant franchise to citizens living outside of the main emigrant destination countries (e.g., Bolivia), or to citizens exceeding a certain number of years of residence abroad (e.g., the United Kingdom). In other cases, such as Mexico, franchise is officially accessible to all citizens living abroad but registration requirements *de facto* exclude certain sectors of the emigrant population (i.e., undocumented emigrants).

Despite the fact that a majority of states worldwide have adopted external voting policies today, this practice remains highly controversial. Indeed, in the absence of binding norms of external voting in international law, there is no universally recognized right for emigrants to take part in home-country elections from abroad. As political theory scholars have underlined, debates around external voting are centered around its legitimacy, its possible impact on overall electoral results, the administrative complications it can create for electoral authorities, and the difficulty of controlling electoral operations abroad. Considering the controversial character of external voting and the lack of international norms obliging states to implement such legislation, this book first sought to understand why an increasing number of states are taking this path.

WHY DO STATES ENFRANCHISE CITIZENS ABROAD?

Absence of research on this policy, which potentially concerns millions of emigrants every year, stands for the lack of knowledge on the development of external voting to this date. The first part of this book has thus tried to isolate the different variables that explain states' decisions to enfranchise citizens abroad. It has then examined the role of these variables in the external voting debates of two large sending states that enfranchised citizens abroad at the turn of the 21st century: Mexico and Italy.

The first variable that I have identified in this study concerns sending states' economic dependence on emigration. Looking at increases in the quantity of remittances received, I thus hypothesized that states could be tempted to enfranchise citizens abroad in order to stimulate loyalty towards the home state. The expected benefit from such a move would be a sustainment of remittances over time. This argument seems convincing in cases like Mexico, where remittances represent a good share of the country's GDP. In other countries, such as Italy, where remittances do not represent an important source of revenue, this argument seems less pertinent.

To improve the explanatory capacity of this variable, I thus suggested to broaden it by envisaging emigrants as potential economic and political assets for sending states in their strategies to adjust to the global economy. In other words, emigrants have more to offer to their home countries than simply remittances. On the economic level, I showed with the case of Italy

that citizens abroad may positively affect the country's export performance. Not only are emigrants prime consumers of goods and services from the home country, emigrant entrepreneurs also help Italian companies find new markets abroad. On the political level, having large communities abroad may also represent an asset for sending countries. The example of Mexico, which tried to instrumentalize Mexican-American citizens in its bid to convince the US Congress to let it join the North American Free Trade Agreement, was very telling in this respect.

Altogether, because sending states wish to protect remittance flows or, more generally, because they see emigrants as assets in the global economy, they seek to develop policies to strengthen their ties with citizens abroad and render their home country loyalty sustainable over time. The development of various diasporic policies, such as external voting, is seen as a means to achieve this. Numerous supporters of external voting in Mexico and Italy have made use of this argument to justify external voting's implementation. In this sense, this variable has an explanatory value because it shows how supporters of external voting may present the adoption of this policy as being in the interest of the economic well-being of the home country.

Considering emigrants as assets to the home country presents a limitation, however, as it implies that emigrants assume rather indirect roles in the debates on their enfranchisement. On the contrary, emigrant associations and lobbies have often directly engaged in discussions over their enfranchisement with home-country actors (e.g., elected officials, representatives of political parties, civil servants, etc.). The influence of emigrant associations and lobbies on home-country actors involved in the external voting debates is twofold. First, emigrant pressure on domestic political actors increases the salience of external voting in the legislative agenda. The cases of Mexico and Italy showed that external voting was not a legislative priority for most political parties. For this reason, representatives of emigrant lobbies and associations who entered into direct contact with home-country political parties forced them to take a stance on this issue. The central element of this strategy—shared by Italian and Mexican emigrant associations—was a recognition that political parties disliked being pointed out as obstacles to the adoption of external voting policies. Parties indeed feared that citizens would retaliate if they were eventually enfranchised without their support. In the case of Mexico, I also demonstrated that political parties feared to appear as opponents of external voting because they thought emigrants had a strong influence on the votes of their relatives living in Mexico. In other words, nonmigrant Mexican voters would sanction political parties opposing the enfranchisement of their relatives living abroad.

Second, emigrant lobbies and associations have proven capable of shaping the outcome of the external voting debate by acting as mediators between domestic actors that had opposing views on the topic. The cases of Mexico and Italy demonstrated that political parties had different views on external voting, depending on the expected impact of voters abroad on

the parties' electoral performances. To overcome these differences, emigrant representatives acted as deal brokers in facilitating the creation of an interparty consensus on external voting. In Italy, in particular, emigrants promoted such a consensus by convincing political parties to create a foreign constituency that would prevent emigrants from participating in the election of parliamentarians in the country's domestic constituencies. The interparty pact that had been initiated by a collective of emigrant associations contributed to reducing the opposition of Italian center-left parties to external voting.

In analyzing the role of emigrant associations and lobbies, one must note, however, that emigrant elites are not unanimously supportive of external voting. This reflects the diversity of opinions among emigrants, who are not unanimously in favor of exercising franchise in their home countries. Nonetheless, emigrant representatives involved in the external voting debate speak in the name of the entire community, independently of their real capacity to represent the diversity of interests abroad. Among Mexicans abroad, emigrant associations disagreed on the necessity to request external voting rights, as some preferred to focus on the policies that the United States could implement in favor of Mexicans in that country. Even between the associations that were supportive of external voting, strong disagreements existed on the features that such a policy should have (i.e., type of election in which emigrants should participate, voting modality, etc.). The diversity of emigrant views also explains why not all associations mobilized during registration procedures and electoral campaigns abroad once emigrants were granted external voting rights. Overall, I argue that emigrant associations and lobbies have contributed to the adoption of external voting legislation by forcing political parties to take a stance on the issue and by facilitating interparty agreement. In addition, I also note that the external voting debate has given emigrant leaders the opportunity to reaffirm their leadership, both within the emigrant community and in the home country. Accordingly, discourse on emigrant communities as uniform in terms of the desire to exercise franchise in the home country should always be approached with great care.

In addition to the strategic role of emigrants in the global economy and the weight of emigrant lobbies, I have found that it is the evolution of the domestic politics variable that has given the biggest impulse to the adoption of external voting legislation. Previous scholarly work had hinted at the weight of democratic transition processes on sending states' decisions to enfranchise citizens abroad. With the case of Mexico, I was able to show that the process of democratic transition in the 1980s benefited the external voting debate in three ways: 1) it empowered new actors with strong interests in emigration issues (i.e., regional representatives and the PRD); 2) it put an end to widespread practices of electoral fraud, which long discouraged emigrants to demand external voting rights; and 3) it pushed Mexican authorities to reconsider their ties with the United States

(through NAFTA), which in turn stimulated their desire to engage with the diaspora there. While the democratic transition variable appears to have great explanatory value in Mexico and other young democracies, I argue that a greater explanatory capacity can be obtained by looking more generally at the role played by institutional transformations in the home country. These transformations, whether they happen in new or old democracies, create windows of opportunity for supporters of external voting to include this policy in the reforms happening under the larger transformation of the state. In Italy, two institutional transformations after World War II profoundly shaped the functioning of the state and greatly affected the external voting debate. First, Italy's membership in the European Union led it to implement an external voting mechanism for European Parliamentary elections, which demonstrated the feasibility of external voting more generally to traditionally skeptical political parties. Second, the disappearance of the largest postwar political parties and the development of a new electoral system in the 1990s led to a replacement of many domestic actors involved in the external voting debate. It also empowered small parties within the Italian coalition government. The longtime supporting party of external voting—*Alleanza Nazionale*—benefited from this situation and convinced its center-right coalition partners to adopt such a policy.

In stressing the role of domestic politics in external voting debates, I have also shown why the sending state cannot be understood as a single actor in terms of its relations with citizens abroad. On the contrary, the state must be disaggregated into different units, which each defend particular interests. Two types of domestic actors have particularly high stakes in the external voting debate. First, political parties are primarily concerned about the impact of the electorate abroad on their electoral performances. This fear is reinforced by the fact that, in contrast to the domestic electorate, parties are often little informed about the sociopolitical profiles of citizens abroad. In Italy, center-left political parties had traditionally been distrustful towards external voting because they feared its impact on southern Italian constituencies with large populations abroad, and also because certain emigrant communities supported the Fascist regime before World War II. In Mexico, it was the PRI—the party that occupied power for most of the 20th century—that feared that emigrants would use their voting rights to sanction the party that had not created the necessary socioeconomic conditions to prevent them from leaving. Second, government administrations (primarily consular and electoral authorities) are concerned about the impact of emigrant enfranchisement on their capacity to carry out their legal duties. Indeed, the influx of new voters involves the cooperation of different sending-country agencies in order to register citizens abroad and supervise the electoral process. Agencies who fear that new missions abroad could be an excessive burden may thus try to influence the outcome of the external voting debate. In Mexico, an expert committee appointed by the Federal Electoral Institute initially supported external voting because it considered

that it was consistent with the agency's mission statement of extending the political rights of Mexicans wherever they were. However, as the institute realized it would potentially have to register millions of citizens abroad, the agency adopted a much more cautious approach on external voting and recommended that various safeguards be implemented if emigrants were to be enfranchised. In Italy, despite the agreement between political parties to enfranchise citizens abroad for the 2001 parliamentary elections, two ministries convinced legislators to postpone the adoption of the external voting law. The Ministries of Foreign Affairs and the Interior warned that they needed more time to coordinate their efforts in order to set up a reliable electoral roll abroad.

With the cases of Italy and Mexico, I have demonstrated that domestic political actors—political parties and administrations in particular—can determine the timing of adoption and the content of the external voting legislation. The positions of these two types of actors are guided by the desire to control the impact of external voting and ensure that their interests are not negatively affected by emigrant voters. Creating some predictability with respect to the impact of voters residing abroad—through the creation of a foreign constituency in Italy and the adoption of strict registration requirements in Mexico—thus appears to be a decisive feature in the successful outcomes of external voting debates.

HOW DO EMIGRANTS RESPOND TO THEIR ENFRANCHISEMENT?

In determining why states enfranchise citizens abroad, I have argued that the content of external voting legislation must be looked at carefully. Registration procedures, voting modalities, and other administrative rules condition the support or opposition of actors involved in this debate. Most importantly, however, these rules influence emigrants' capacity to make use of their newly gained right.

In the second part of the book, I have looked at the implementation of external voting legislation and emigrants' responses to their newly gained enfranchisement. I precisely examined emigrants' responses to two questions: 1) why do(n't) emigrants take part in home-country elections? and 2) how do they decide to support one candidate or party instead of another? To answer these questions, I analyzed the implementation of Bolivia's external voting legislation in the 2009 presidential election in addition to the two abovementioned case studies.

Before isolating the variables that influence emigrant participation in home-country elections, I showed that the understanding of this transnational practice is complicated by a lack of conceptual clarity on voter participation abroad. I argued that the rate of voter registration and voter turnout can be defined in different ways, and that actors involved in the

external voting process may choose to use one definition or the other to support their assessment of the electoral process abroad as a success or a failure. Because of the frequent lack of reliable data on populations abroad, determining the potential number of citizens who could register as voters from abroad is an arduous task. The most reliable indicator is therefore voter turnout, defined as the number of citizens who cast a vote from abroad in comparison to the number of emigrants who are actually registered as voters from abroad. Yet, this indicator neglects the fact that strict or bureaucratic registration requirements may strongly reduce the number of emigrants who register. This is the case of Mexico, where high voter turnout hides the reality that only 32,000 citizens voted from abroad in comparison to an adult population abroad of several millions. For this reason, I recommend combining the use of different indicators to analyze participation abroad whenever possible.

To determine why or why not emigrants participate in home-country elections from abroad, I began by looking at the general political science literature on voter turnout and at literature on immigrant voter turnout in host-country elections. I subsequently identified three kinds of variables that influence emigrants' decisions to register and vote from abroad: 1) political, 2) institutional, and 3) socioeconomic and demographic.

In terms of political variables, the presence of political parties abroad is important. Using different case studies, I demonstrated that the presence of political parties is often unequal. Campaigning abroad may be unappealing to political parties because of its high cost, the logistical difficulties attached to campaigning in foreign states, and uncertainties concerning emigrants' mobilization. With the case of Bolivia, we saw that limits on the number of registered voters abroad, set in the electoral law, strongly limited emigrants' impact on electoral results. These provisions therefore discouraged political parties from spending time and money to court voters abroad. Parties could therefore concentrate their resources on domestic voters who are more easily reachable, and on whom political parties have more information. However, when political parties do campaign abroad, their presence helps to circulate information about the upcoming elections in emigrant communities, and may therefore affect voter turnout. Another political variable is the perceived importance of the upcoming elections, which—as with domestic voters—postulates that emigrant voter turnout is higher when voters consider the stakes to be higher (e.g., when opinion polls anticipate very uncertain electoral results). A last political variable that I noted in the case of citizens living abroad is the political culture of the home country, which—according to previous scholarship—is said to have influenced immigrant participation in host-country elections. Mexico's external voting debate showed that the desire to take part in home-country elections is related to the emigrants' experiences with politics before they left Mexico. Emigrants long considered that home-country enfranchisement was purposeless when the electoral processes were not transparent.

Many emigrants thus left Mexico with low interest in electoral participation and therefore, in contrast to other emigrant communities who often participated in electoral processes in the home country before emigrating, there is not yet a voting habit among this population.

The second type of variable I identified is institutional, which concerns the different legislative and administrative rules and requirements that affect voter turnout abroad. Strict registration requirements that do not take into consideration the reality of the emigrant population that is enfranchised produce few results in terms of participation from abroad. By refusing to deliver voter-identity cards abroad, which are indispensable in order to register as an emigrant voter, Mexican authorities made the choice to potentially exclude millions of voters abroad. As we have seen, current registration requirements indeed strongly affect registration rates among undocumented emigrants and of emigrants with lower educational backgrounds. The type of election in which emigrants may vote also affects registration and turnout abroad. In the case of Italy, I showed that voters abroad mobilized in far greater numbers for legislative elections, in which they elected their own parliamentarians, than in referenda on technical issues that hardly affect their lives as emigrants. The case of Italy also showed that the voting modality by which emigrants can cast votes from abroad cannot be neglected. Indeed, participation by mail for Italian parliamentary elections from abroad proves to be far more practical for emigrants than voting in polling stations abroad for European parliamentary elections.

The third type of variable is socioeconomic and demographic. This type of variable stresses the importance of individual characteristics and community dynamics in participation decisions. With the case of Bolivia, I indeed demonstrated that, for some emigrants, voting from abroad goes beyond the mere expectation that their interests will be taken into account in home-country authorities' decisions. Indeed, there is a symbolic dimension to external voting, by which emigrants are able to feel that—despite their residence abroad—they still belong to the polity of which they hold nationality. Still, similarly to domestic voters, decisions to register and vote when one lives abroad are strongly influenced by characteristics such as age, occupation, and education. Further, research on social capital had previously shown that immigrants' involvement in ethnic associations increases their level of confidence in host-country institutions, which in turn positively affects their level of participation in that country's elections. In the case of elections abroad, where home-country electoral authorities and political parties have, by definition, more limited means to promote participation, community dynamics may complement the efforts of these actors. Migrant associations, ethnic media, and also interactions between emigrants and the home country (e.g., contact with their families) can all raise awareness about upcoming electoral processes.

Altogether, my analysis of voter turnout in Mexico, Bolivia, and Italy has demonstrated that emigrant voting decisions rely on a complex set of variables that have as much to do with emigrants' individual characteristics as community dynamics, institutional arrangements, and political party interests.

In Chapter 6, I focused on emigrants who register and vote in home-country elections to understand how they decide to support a specific candidate or political party. In studying this, I relied on a survey I conducted with Bolivian emigrant voters residing in four different destination countries. This survey allowed me to identify premigration and postmigration variables that affected the voting behaviors of Bolivian emigrants and their descendants in home-country elections. Premigration variables included gender, ethnicity, and regional origin. Among the postmigration variables, I found education level, time spent abroad, satisfaction with the migration decision, and use of the host-country language in the household to be relevant. In turn, this led me to hypothesize that emigrants who experience the greatest difficulties in socioeconomically integrating in the host country were most supportive of the left-wing party MAS, led by President Evo Morales, at the time of the 2009 presidential election.

Extending the analysis of voter behavior to other countries, I suggested looking at two additional elements to understand how political opinions are shaped abroad. One is the role of electoral campaigns conducted by political parties abroad. Despite political parties' limited presence abroad, as well as the high cost and difficulties of reaching out to voters abroad, the case of Italy demonstrated that political parties which develop specific campaigns for citizens abroad in coordination with partners in receiving countries (i.e., migrant organizations and host-country political parties) maximize their chances of getting in touch with these voters. The second element is the role of the media and new information and communications technologies. Ethnic media in destination countries give emigrants access to information on home-country politics. Further, with the development of satellite television and the Internet, emigrants are now able to access most news sources from the home country in a comparable way to domestic voters. In addition, interviews with Bolivian voters abroad revealed that emigrant voters also engage in political debates with other emigrants, their relatives in the home country, and with other domestic voters through social networks or on the phone. In this sense, I can only confirm that there is something inherently different about the transnational political practices of emigrants in the early 20th century and today: Emigrants now have a capacity to engage in richer and more sustained political interactions with the home country.

Naturally, the variables identified in the case of a limited number of countries do not pretend to be exhaustive. Nor would they necessarily be of equal relevance in understanding the electoral choices of emigrants of other nationalities. However, this discussion demonstrates that, similarly

to domestic voters, political preferences of emigrants may change with time. Political socialization that happened before migration can strongly determine one's vote from abroad, but emigrants' experiences in their host countries and the evolution of their transnational connections with other actors in their home countries cannot be discarded as irrelevant either. In this sense, the formation of political opinions abroad must be considered as a dynamic process.

HOW DOES EXTERNAL VOTING AFFECT THE RELATIONS BETWEEN DIASPORAS AND THE HOST AND HOME SOCIETIES?

Looking at why home countries enfranchise citizens abroad, I have argued that a variety of actors have diverging interests on the topic of external voting. In concluding the book, I have thus looked at how external voting affects the interests of these actors in the host and home societies.

Emigrants who lobby for external voting are generally convinced that enfranchisement will increase the salience of emigration issues in the home-country political arena. The rationale is that—with external voting—political parties will compete to win as many emigrant votes as possible and, for this reason, they will develop platforms and policies in favor of this population. Following this idea, citizens abroad have a clear interest in mobilizing for home-country elections because of potential future benefits. As demonstrated in the discussion on voter turnout, however, participation in home-country elections is a complex decision that is not entirely interest-driven. I have also shown that external voting does not necessarily empower emigrants in the home country. Low levels of registration among emigrants and the cost and complexity of reaching out to citizens abroad may indeed lead political parties to ignore an electorate that they consider as having a marginal influence on overall electoral results.

Emigrants may nonetheless gain significant leverage in the home-country political arena under favorable conditions within the electoral system. In cases of particularly competitive elections, for example, the fact that votes cast abroad are counted last may create the illusion that votes abroad are decisive. Most importantly, voting from abroad may empower citizens abroad when they are able to elect their own parliamentarians in foreign constituencies. The Italian system showed how passive electoral rights have given emigrants a voice in the home country's parliament. Compared to emigrant consultative bodies that can only give nonbinding recommendations to home-country authorities, these parliamentarians elected abroad directly participate in the design of diasporic policies. This capacity of influence can, however, be affected by the fact that there is only a limited number of parliamentarians in large assemblies, as well as by the fact they do not necessarily work together in the interests of emigrants when they belong to different parties. In addition, these parliamentarians,

when they lobby to defend a specific sector of the population, may be tempted to pit emigrants' interests against the general interest. The practice of Senator Pallaro, the Italian senator from Argentina who negotiated his support for Romano Prodi's government coalition in exchange for budgetary adjustments in favor of social programs for citizens abroad, clearly illustrates how this kind of behavior delegitimizes external voting for many in the home country.

While dozens of countries hold elections abroad every year without facing opposition from receiving-state authorities, external voting can be an equally controversial topic in host countries. I identified three recurring fears, which reveal host countries' distrust towards immigrant involvement in home-country politics. I subsequently showed how a multicultural state like Canada internalized these fears, which resulted in only a limited tolerance of the practice. First, there is the fear that external voting leads to the importation of foreign conflicts in receiving societies. Certain countries indeed prohibit campaigning by foreign political parties on their territories for fears of stimulating hostility or violence between certain emigrant communities. Conflicts between Turks and Kurds in Germany demonstrated that domestic conflicts can be imported, even when emigrants are not enfranchised. Second, voting from abroad—like other transnational practices—is frequently presented as preventing the sociopolitical integration of emigrants in the receiving society. In my study on Bolivian voters abroad, I found, on the contrary, that external voters tend to be citizens who are generally interested in politics, whether it involved the home or the host country. The interest in host-country politics expressed by these voters therefore led me to conclude that political participation in one space does not happen at the expense of participation in another. Third, there also exists a fear that external voting complicates the foreign policies of receiving states. Canada expressed particular concerns about this, and threatened to prevent Italian and Tunisian authorities from using their external voting rights in Canada if these countries preserved the passive electoral rights of citizens abroad. In other words, Canada refuses that its territory be included in other countries' foreign constituencies, because dual citizens could end up being elected. This could lead Canadian citizens to sit in a foreign parliament and speak in the name of their constituents, who may also be dual nationals holding Canadian citizenship. In this sense, Canada's fear is very similar to traditional Westphalian fears about the loyalty of dual citizens. This position, however, appears exceptional today on the international level.

To conclude this book, I, however, wish to reiterate that, despite the controversies surrounding external voting in sending and receiving societies, this practice also represents an opportunity for actors in both countries to cooperate. As a matter of fact, I have shown with the case of Italy that political parties in sending and receiving countries have developed partnerships in order to reach voters who—in a growing number of cases—have

voting rights in both countries. Cooperation between political parties to obtain the electoral support of the same individuals—who are considered external voters for one party and immigrant voters for the other—questions traditional boundaries between domestic and international politics. Indeed, with the development of external voting, one country's national election may also turn into an electoral opportunity for political parties in the receiving society. Similarly, emigrant parliamentarians have demonstrated that they are capable of facilitating legislative cooperation between their host and home countries because of their privileged contacts with both states. Accordingly, I plead that the stigma attached to external voting in much of the existing normative literature on the topic be reconsidered. I argue instead that the involvement of many different actors in the practice of external voting creates opportunities for improved dialogue between diasporas, home societies, and receiving societies.

Appendix A

Methodology

In 2005, the Spanish Autonomous Community of Galicia made front-page news, as a recount over the course of several days of 100,000 ballots cast abroad eventually kicked the long-standing Partido Popular out of power by an 8,000-vote difference. In 2007, Italy's prime minister, Romano Prodi, saved his coalition government from a vote of no confidence after an Italian senator residing in Argentina and elected in the foreign constituency offered his support in exchange for increased funding for social programs that favored Italian emigrants. In Romania in 2009, some observers attributed the victory of presidential candidate Traian Basescu to the diaspora after he won the overall election with a slight margin of 71,000 votes, but took almost 80 percent of the votes cast abroad.

External voting is a topic that regularly attracts media attention whenever it appears to play an important role in an election's outcome. Unsurprisingly, the media focuses on the most controversial events surrounding the practice of external voting, which conceals the fact that every year dozens of countries hold elections abroad without making front-page news. Determined to discover more about a policy that a majority of states in the world have adopted yet has attracted very little scholarly attention so far, I have decided to address three important questions related to external voting: 1) why do an increasing number of states adopt external voting policies? 2) how do emigrants respond to their enfranchisement in home-country elections? and 3) how does external voting affect the relations between emigrants, host societies, and home societies?

Findings in this book are based on several rounds of fieldwork in Europe, Latin America, and North America between 2004 and 2011. I made the decision of working on the enfranchisement of Latin American and European diasporas because, despite the global interest of sending states to engage with citizens abroad, it is within these areas that states have been most active in the field of external voting over the past two decades. As a matter of fact, policies adopted in these two areas now inspire other states in different parts of the world. I chose to work primarily on two major case studies—Italy and Mexico—and one minor case, Bolivia. In addition, punctual references to the policies and external

voting experiences of other countries are made to illustrate certain arguments throughout the book.

For these three cases, the data collection primarily focused on the following two types of actors: a) actors involved in debates in the home country before the adoption of external voting legislation, and b) actors in the home and host societies involved in the implementation of the policy. The first category consisted mainly of elected officials on the national and sub-national levels, representatives of political parties, civil servants working for administrations involved in the external voting debate, members of emigrant consultative bodies, representatives of ethnic lobbies, emigrant associations, and trade unions pushing for the right to vote from abroad. The second category included the same type of actors, but not necessarily the same people. In Italy, many of the emigrants who fought for external voting later competed for a reserved seat as an emigrant MP or a senator. In other cases, those who lobbied in favor or against external voting did not necessarily get involved in electoral processes abroad. My interviewees were thus: political parties representatives who campaigned abroad (when permitted), emigrant political candidates, civil servants who implemented external voting policies, and emigrant association leaders who got involved in elections abroad. In this second category, I also added host-country actors such as representatives of local political parties, elected officials, civil servants, and, most importantly, emigrant voters themselves.

Four types of sources were used in my research on external voting policies. First, I made use of the existing literature on state-diaspora relations and immigrant transnationalism to set up a theoretical framework upon which to build my analysis. Because external voting has attracted little attention thus far, only a limited amount of scientific literature on the topic is available and is mostly from a normative viewpoint. This book has a strong historical dimension as it tries, in the first chapters, to understand the conditions that lead sending states to enfranchise citizens abroad. For this purpose, specialized literature on the migration history of these countries was also of great help, even though it approached the specific issue of external voting only marginally.

A second source that I used throughout this research is the press. I consulted the archives of national and local newspapers in sending countries and selected receiving countries from where emigrants have been active in the debate on external voting. Looking at articles published during parliamentary debates on external voting, electoral campaigns, and in the period following the first participation of emigrants in home-country elections, I was able to identify the positions of different actors on the issue. I also looked at the so-called "emigrant press," which includes newspapers catered toward specific ethnic groups and magazines produced by migrant organizations.

With the same goal in mind, I reviewed official documents and archives of different organizations. These documents included parliamentary minutes, legislative documents, international treaties, government decisions,

and administrative circulars. They also comprised the review of archives of migrant organizations and political parties, which proved useful in determining the role of these actors during the debates on external voting but also during electoral campaigns abroad.

Most of the findings in this book, however, rely on data collected directly with actors in the field. Between 2007 and 2011, I indeed conducted 63 interviews with the abovementioned types of actors involved in external voting debates and in the implementation of this policy. To identify relevant actors in legislative debates and in electoral process abroad, I relied primarily on parliamentary minutes and the press. Contacts with these visible actors on the issue of external voting subsequently allowed me to identify other actors through the so-called “snowball effect.” Considering that parts of my interviews with emigrant leaders and emigrant voters could lead some actors to disclose information about their (or other people’s) legal status in the country of residence, these interviews were conducted under conditions of anonymity. Similar guarantees were given to civil servants who did not want to be identified by name in their assessment of external voting policies. In contrast, elected officials and representatives of political parties, as public figures responding from their official positions, agreed to be cited in this work.

In the case of Italy, interviews were conducted in two field trips between February and March 2007 and in July 2009. Interviews were, for the most part, conducted in Italian but several MPs and senators accepted to be interviewed in the language of their country of residence, which was either English, French, or Spanish. In the case of Mexico, interviews were conducted between May and August 2009. All interviews were conducted in Spanish. The translation of all citations in this book into English is my sole responsibility.

In the case of Bolivia, my fieldwork was limited to an analysis of the implementation of the external voting law from an administrative and political viewpoint, with the aim of understanding the emigrants’ responses to these policies. Fieldwork thus sought to determine external voters’ motivations to participate in elections, their profiles, their political orientation in the home country, and their involvement in host-country politics. To collect this information, I designed a survey that I and colleagues carried out with Bolivian voters on Election Day (6 December 2009) in Argentina, Brazil, Spain, and the United States. A total of 324 valid surveys were subsequently treated to shed light on the behavior of voters residing abroad. To give more content to the conclusions that can be drawn from this survey, a limited number of interviews (7) were also conducted with Bolivian voters in the United States.

In addition to formal interviews, I participated in meetings with migrant associations and forums where the issue of external voting was debated. Between 2007 and 2011, I also repeatedly observed electoral processes of different countries held in polling stations abroad. In 2007, I observed the

Belgian legislative elections in Mexico City. During my stay as a Fulbright scholar at the City University of New York in 2009–2010, I also observed the Bolivian and Colombian elections in New York City. Lastly, I was an accredited international observer in the 2011 Tunisian elections for the constituent assembly and observed electoral operations in different polling stations throughout Belgium.

Appendix B

Interview Details

Representatives of political parties, migrant associations and lobbies, state agencies, trade unions, and consultative bodies with whom interviews were conducted

MEXICO

Political parties

Partido Acción Nacional

Interview with Pablo Alejo Lopez Nuñez, Federal MP (2003–2006), 17 August 2007, Ensenada.

Interview with Dolores Gonzalez Sanchez, Federal MP (2006–2009), 3 July 2007, Mexico City.

Interview with Francisco José Paoli Bolio, Sub-secretary to Political Development (2002–2005), 4 July 2007, Mexico City.

Interview with Cecilia Romero Castillo, Director of the *Instituto Nacional de Migración* (2006–2010) and former PAN senator (2000–2006), 8 August 2007.

Partido Revolucionario Institucional

Interview with Genaro Borrego Estrada, Governor of Zacatecas (1986–1992) and former senator (2000–2006), 24 July 2007, Mexico City.

Interview with Silvia Hernández, federal senator (2000–2006), 28 August 2007, Mexico City.

Partido de la Revolución Democrática

Interview with Juan José García Ochoa, federal MP (2003–2006), 6 August 2007, Mexico City.

Interview with Jesús Martínez Saldaña, emigrant MP in the state legislature of Michoacán (2005–2007), 18 June 2007, Mexico City.

Interview with emigrant member of the PRD based in California, 26 June 2007 and 5 July 2007, phone interview.

- Interview with Emilio Zebadúa, former councillor at the *Instituto Federal Electoral* (1996–2000) and PRD MP (2003–2006), 21 June 2007, Mexico City.
Interview with PRD parliamentary assistant (1), 13 June 2007, Mexico City.
Interview with PRD parliamentary assistant (2), 25 June 2007, Mexico City.

Migrant Associations and Lobbies

Coalición por los Derechos Políticos de los Mexicanos en el Extranjero- CDPME

- Interview with representative residing in the state of Michoacán, 26 July 2007, Morelia.
Interview with representative based in California (USA), 13 June 2007, Mexico City.
Interview with representative based in Mexico City, 29 June 2007, Mexico City.
Interview with representative based in Illinois (USA), 26 June 2007, phone interview.

Other Organizations

- Interview with representative of the *Concilio Hispano* (based in Illinois) and CDPME Activist, 3 July 2007, phone interview.
Interview with representative of the nongovernmental organization *Grupo Sin Fronteras*, 7 August 2007, Mexico City.
Interview with representative of the emigrant organization *Frente Binacional Michoacano*, 4 July 2007, phone interview.

Civil Servants and Official Emigrant Representatives

Instituto Federal Electoral

- Interview with civil servant attached to the External Voting Department of the *Instituto Federal Electoral*, 20 June 2007 and 27 June 2007, Mexico City.
Interview with former civil servant in charge of the implementation of the external voting law, 30 July 2007, Morelia.
Interview with Rodrigo Morales, councillor to the *Instituto Federal Electoral* (IFE) general council and former member of the IFE's expert commission on external voting, 5 July 1998, Mexico City.

Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior

- Interview with Carlos González Gutiérrez, executive director, 7 June 2007, Mexico City.
Interview with Julio César Aragón, emigrant councillor to Consultative Council of the *Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior* (2003–2005), 19 June 2007, phone interview.

Other Agencies

- Interview with civil servant in charge of emigration issues in the state of Hidalgo, 31 July 2007, Pachuca.

Interview with Claudio Méndez Fernández, director, *Instituto Michoacano de los Migrantes en el Extranjero*, 27 July 2007, Morelia.

ITALY

Political Parties¹

Partito Democratico

Interview with Franco Danieli, vice-minister for Italians abroad (2006–2008), 6 March 2007, Rome.

Interview with Norberto Lombardi, deputy coordinator of the campaign abroad for *Democratici di Sinistra* in 2006, 7 March 2007, Rome.

Interview with Gian Giacomo Migone, former senator (1996–2001), 5 March 2007, Turin.

Interview with Edoardo Pollastri, emigrant senator residing in Brazil (2006–2008), 1 March 2007, Rome.

Interview with Nino Randazzo, emigrant senator residing in Australia (2006 current), 13 February 2007, Rome.

Interview with Giani Bucchino, emigrant MP residing in Canada (2006–current), 15 July 2009, Rome.

Interview with Maurizio Chiocchetti, head of *PD Mondo*, 8 July 2009, Rome.

Interview with Marco Fedi, emigrant MP residing in Australia (2006–current), 9 July 2009, Rome.

Interview with Laura Garavini, emigrant MP residing in Germany (2008–current), 21 July 2009, Rome.

Interview with Fabio Porta, emigrant MP residing in Brazil (2008–current), 7 July 2009, Rome.

Popolo della Libertà

Interview with Salvatore Ferrigno, emigrant MP residing in the USA (2006–2008), 1 March 2007, Rome.

Interview with Guglielmo Picchi, emigrant MP residing in the United Kingdom (2006–current), 14 February 2007, Rome.

Interview with Dario Rivolta, MP and coordinator of the *Forza Italia* campaign abroad in 2006, 1 March 2007, Rome.

Interview with Basilio Giordano, emigrant senator residing in Canada, 23 July 2009, Rome.

Alleanza Nazionale

Interview with Giuseppe Angeli, Emigrant MP residing in Argentina (2006–current), 23 February 2007, Rome.

Interview with Alfredo Mantica, vice-minister for Italians abroad (2008–current), 22 July 2009, Rome.

Interview with Marco Zacchera, MP and coordinator of *Alleanza Nazionale*'s campaign abroad in 2009, 21 July 2009, phone interview.

Other parties

Interview with Luigi Pallaro, emigrant senator elected on an independent list (2006–2008) and residing in Argentina, 7 March 2007, Rome.

Interview with Arnold Cassola, emigrant MP belonging to the *Federazione dei Verdi* (2006–2008) and residing in Belgium and Malta, 27 February 2007, Rome.

Interview with Mirella Giai, emigrant senator elected on an independent list (2008–current) and residing in Brazil, 14 July 2009, Rome.

Interview with Ricardo Merlo, emigrant MP elected on an independent list (2006–current) and residing in Argentina, 14 July 2009, Rome.

Interview with Antonio Razzi, emigrant MP elected on the *Italia dei Valori* list (2006–current) and residing in Switzerland, 7 July 2009, Rome.

Migrant Associations, Lobbies, and Official Representative Bodies

Interview with Claudio Micheloni, president of the *Federazione delle Colonie Libere Italiane in Svizzera* and *Partito Democratico* emigrant senator residing in Switzerland (2006–current), 27 February 2007.

Interview with a former president of the *Consulta Regionale dell'Emigrazione* in the region of Emilia Romagna, 8 March 2007, Rome.

Interview with Franco Narducci, former president of the *Consiglio Generale degli Italiani all'Estero*, president of *Associazioni Cristiane dei Lavoratori Italiani* (ACLI) and *Partito Democratico* emigrant MP residing in Switzerland (2006–current), 19 February 2007, Rome.

Interview with Andrea Amaro, vice-president of the *Consiglio Generale degli Italiani all'Estero*, 6 July 2009, Rome.

Civil Servants

Interview with civil servant at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Directorate General for Italians abroad, 26 February 2007, Rome.

Interview with civil servant at the Interior Ministry, 20 February 2007, Rome.

Interview with civil servant at the Interior Ministry's Elections Department, 2 March 2007, Rome.

Interview with Giovanna Zincone, university professor and adviser to the president of the republic, 9 March 2007, Rome.

BOLIVIA²

Interview with Cecilia, female Bolivian voter, 21 July 2010, New York City.

Interview with Olivia, female Bolivian voter, 27 July 2010, New York City.

Interview with Manuel, male Bolivian nonvoter, 30 July 2010, New York City.

Interview with Ivan, male Bolivian voter, 3 August 2010, New York City.

Interview with Juan, male Bolivian voter, 27 July 2010, New York City.

Interview with Josefina, female Bolivian nonvoter, 23 August 2010, New York City.

Interview with Eduardo Medrano, representative of the *Corte Nacional Electoral*, 17 July 2010, New York City.

Notes

NOTES TO THE INTRODUCTION

1. In her work, Østergaard-Nielsen further differentiates homeland politics from immigrant politics and translocal politics. Immigrant politics covers “the political activities that migrants or refugees undertake to better their situation in the receiving country.” It can be transnational when “the country of origin becomes involved in helping its nationals abroad to improve their legal and socio-economic status.” Translocal politics consists in “initiatives from abroad to better the situation in the local community where one originates.” This could mean, for example, financing infrastructure projects with remittances (Østergaard-Nielsen 2003: 21).

NOTES TO CHAPTER 1

1. In this volume, I refer to “emigrant parliamentarians” when referring to those parliamentarians elected by citizens abroad in extraterritorial constituencies. In the Mexican states of Zacatecas and Michoacán, however, local legislation refers to “emigrant parliamentarians” to describe former emigrants who are invited by local parties to sit in the regional parliament. In these specific cases, emigrant parliamentarians are not elected by citizens living abroad.
2. External voting is also the practice that most formally recognizes emigrants’ membership in a regional polity, in cases where citizens abroad are allowed to take part in regional elections (e.g., the state of Michoacán and the Federal District in Mexico).
3. Italy now allows emigrants to take part in legislative elections and some referenda from abroad but regions still reimburse the travel expenses of emigrants coming back to vote in regional elections.
4. It could be argued, however, that these votes weren’t cast from outside the national territory since the federal authorities never recognized the secession.
5. There are, however, cases—such as the Canadian referendum of 1916 or the US presidential election of 2000—where the political participation of soldiers from abroad led to accusations of fraud and manipulation.
6. The application of the principle of mandatory voting from abroad is a controversial topic in Belgium. The parliament and the constitutional court indeed hold different views on this issue.
7. New Zealand presents an exception to this rule. There, foreigners who have been long-term residents are invited to participate in this country’s elections under certain conditions even after they leave.

8. In the case of the United States, there exist a lot of different forms of primary elections that are governed either by legislative provisions or internal party rules.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 2

1. Sources for the estimates of refugee and international migrant populations: UN Population Division. "Trends in International Migrant Stock: The 2008 Revision" (2009), http://www.un.org/esa/population/migration/UN_Mig-Stock_2008.pdf (accessed 27 June 2010); UNHCR, "2009 Global Trends: Refugees, Asylum-Seekers, Returnees, Internally Displaced and Stateless Persons" (2010), <http://www.unhcr.org/4c11f0be9.html> (accessed 3 November 2011).
2. Human Rights Committee, General Comment 25 (57), general comments under Article 40, Paragraph 4, of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, adopted by the committee at its 1,510th meeting, U.N. Doc. CCPR/C/21/Rev.1/Add.7 (1996).
3. European Commission for Democracy through Law, Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters, adopted by the Venice Commission on its 51st and 52nd Session, (Venice, 5–6 July and 18–19 October 2002).
4. UN General Assembly, International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families, 18 December 1990, A/RES/45/158.
5. Recommendation CM/Rec(2007)10 of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on codevelopment and migrants working for development in their countries of origin (adopted by the Committee of Ministers on July 12, 2007, at the 1,002nd meeting of the ministers' deputies).
6. *X v. United Kingdom*, App. No. 7730/76.
7. *Sitaropoulos and Giakoumopoulos v. Greece* [GC], no. 42202/07, March 15, 2012.
8. *Spain v. United Kingdom*, Case C-145/04 [2006] ECR I-7917.
9. The election of emigrant representatives in a foreign constituency often has the consequence of creating discrepancies between the number of votes necessary to gain a seat in electoral districts abroad compared to those for domestic districts.
10. Receiving states may also be reluctant when external voters are considered a kin minority in the home country. On this particular question, see Bauböck (2007).

NOTES TO CHAPTER 3

1. Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas was well known among the emigrant community. His father had been president between 1934 and 1940 and was known for his agrarian reform and the nationalization of natural resources. Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas had also been politically involved in the state of Michoacán, a state from where a large share of Mexican migrants residing in California originate.
2. Examples of Zacatecan transnational politics include the role of migrant associations in California in mobilizing voters at home from abroad for the PRD gubernatorial elections (see Goldring 1998). Another famous example is the election of Andres Bermudez (known as the "Tomato King" due to his success in the tomato business in the United States) in the municipality of

- Jerez. This migrant openly campaigned as a binational candidate active in two spaces (not as a return migrant) (see Bakker and Smith 2003).
3. Dual nationals in Mexico are barred access from government offices. However, unlike foreigners, they are allowed to purchase land in Mexico, which reveals legislators' desire to stimulate Mexican American investments in Mexico (Becerra Ramírez 2000).
 4. At the beginning of his mandate, Fox established the Presidential Office for Mexicans Abroad (OPME), whose main focus was to promote Mexican businesses, invest in areas of high emigration, and manage remittances. The director of this network was tasked with managing relations with the diaspora, which signaled a shift in the character of Mexico's relationship with its citizens abroad, as the consular network was no longer the sole contact for Mexicans abroad. However, as the OPME lacked both human and material resources to be effective, it was decided in 2002 to integrate the PCME and the OPME into one single entity called the Institute of Mexicans Abroad (IME).
 5. After the CDPME abandoned its push for the creation of a foreign constituency, members of the PRD in California believed that the CDPME's focus on dialogue with Mexican authorities would lead them to be manipulated (Interview with PRD California leader, 26 June 2007).
 6. Secretaría de Gobernación (2004) Acuerdo político para la regulación del voto de los Mexicanos en el extranjero, 6 April 2004.
 7. Iniciativa para Regular el Voto de los Mexicanos en el Extranjero presentada por el Presidente Vicente Fox, 15 June 2004.
 8. Iniciativa que reforma y adiciona diversas disposiciones del Código Federal de Instituciones y Procedimientos Electorales, en materia de voto de mexicanos en el extranjero. Gaceta Parlamentaria, número 1621-I, 9 November 2004.
 9. The Mexican consular network in the United States proved capable of delivering two million consular ID cards abroad between 2002 and 2003 (Waldinger 2008). Despite Mexico's historical distrust towards the involvement of the executive power in the organization of elections, the involvement of consular authorities (and their resources and networks among Mexican communities abroad) could have greatly helped the IFE reach voters abroad.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 4

1. Between the 1941 attack of Pearl Harbor and October 1942, the FBI arrested 231 Italian Americans considered "enemy aliens" because of their ties with Italian institutions and organizations in the United States (e.g., consulates, media, associations, etc.). Any member of the Italian American community could be considered an "enemy alien," and could suffer at varying degrees from the US policies that permitted household searches, curfews, and movement restrictions (see Fox 1990; Lothrop 2001; Luconi 2004; Tintori 2004).
2. D.P.R. 30 Marzo 1957, n. 361 *Approvazione del testo unico delle leggi recanti norme per l'elezione della Camera dei Deputati*.
3. Legge 7 febbraio 1979, n. 40, *Modifiche alle norme sull'elettorato attivo concernenti la iscrizione e la reinscrizione nelle liste elettorali dei cittadini italiani residenti all'estero*.
4. The issue of emigrant remittances did not disappear from Italian politics in the postmigratory context. During the 1980s, Mirko Tremaglia, long-time neofascist supporter of external voting, still justified the franchise of

- emigrants by noting that they sent about 4 billion lira (2 million euros or 2.6 million USD) to the homeland every year.
5. Legge 29 ottobre 1988, n. 470, *Anagrafe e censimento degli italiani all'estero*.
 6. Legge 5 febbraio 1992, n. 91, *Nuove norme sulla cittadinanza*.
 7. In 1984, 224,000 Italian emigrants took part in EP elections in consulates abroad. A year before, only 116,000 citizens residing abroad traveled back to Italy to vote in parliamentary elections in person.
 8. Under the electoral system in place between 1947 and 1993, DC and PSI agreed to keep the PCI (the main opposition party) outside of government because of its anticapitalist stance. Elections accordingly served mainly to stabilize the balance of power between these two governing parties.
 9. Atti Parlamentari, XIII Legislatura, Camera dei Deputati, *Disegno di legge*, n. 105.
 10. These associations are Acli, Aitef, Anfe, Cser, Ctim, Filef, Fondazione Migrantes, Istituto Santi, Mcl and Unaie.
 11. Atti Parlamentari, XIII Legislatura, Camera dei Deputati, *Discussioni*, III Commissione Affari Esteri, Resoconto stenografico della seduta del 23 settembre 1998.
 12. For the final vote in the Senate, 205 senators voted in favor of the reform, 17 against and 13 abstained.
 13. Legge costituzionale 17 gennaio 2000, n. 1, Modifica all'articolo 48 della Costituzione concernente l'istituzione della circoscrizione Estero per l'esercizio del diritto di voto dei cittadini italiani residenti all'estero.
 14. These MPs anticipated the situation that happened with the 2006 Prodi government when one senator elected in Argentina negotiated support to the government in exchange for assistance policies for citizens abroad (see Chapter 5).
 15. Only two different cabinets were formed during the 2001–2006 legislature. They were led in both cases by the same president of the council (Silvio Berlusconi) and the same parliamentary majority.
 16. Legge 27 dicembre 2001, n. 459, *Norme per l'esercizio del diritto di voto dei cittadini italiani residenti all'estero*.
 17. If the consular office is unable to sign an agreement with the host country that guarantees the equality, freedom, and secrecy of the vote—or if the Italian citizen finds him/herself in a country temporarily unable to provide those guarantees—the citizen has the right to return to Italy to vote and 75 percent of his/her travel costs will be refunded.
 18. To vote on the national territory on Election Day, emigrants must inform consular authorities of their desire to do so before the end of the year preceding the date of the election.
 19. This assertion is based on the unverified assumption that Italian emigrants would prefer to vote for a candidate residing in the same host country as their own.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 5

1. There is another element that supports the conclusion that the vote of citizens abroad is not representative of the entire Mexican population abroad: Mexican emigrants living in a country of residence other than the United States represent only 2 percent of the entire emigrant population. However, they represented 15 percent of the emigrant voters in the 2006 election.
2. These data are the information published on the IFE's 2012 election website (<http://prep2012.ife.org.mx/prep/NACIONAL/PresidenteNacionalVPC>).

- html) and the IFE's official external voting Web site www.votoextranjero.mx on 30 July 2012.
3. The AIRE is a database held by the municipality and managed by the Ministry of the Interior. It, however, likely undercounts the population residing abroad because there is little incentive for emigrants to declare that they are leaving. Consular registries, on the contrary, comprise a larger number of citizens because registration in consulates gives them access to certain rights and services. Consular authorities, however, experience difficulties in updating the database when citizens move to another country, go back to Italy, or die.
 4. The 2003 and 2005 referenda were declared invalid because of a lack of participation.
 5. As an exception, members of the military and police stationed abroad, civil servants temporarily abroad, and university professors and researchers working abroad with a six-month contract minimum may vote from abroad.
 6. Because it had been a longtime supporter of external voting, Alleanza Nazionale's deep conviction was that Italians abroad would favor them over any other right-wing movement.
 7. There is a difference between collecting real ballots among voters abroad and voting multiple times with copies of ballot papers. In the latter case, votes are likely to be declared invalid if they are not accompanied with an original voter's certificate, which each voter is supposed to return by mail along with the ballot. Both practices are, however, equally illegal.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 6

1. In public discourses in Bolivia, the emigrant population is often estimated to range from 1.7 to 2 million citizens, of which more than half are believed to be living in Argentina alone. These latter data are, however, contradicted by the 2011 Argentine census, which counted only 345,272 Bolivian citizens in Argentina.
2. The project "Voto del Emigrante Boliviano" was financed by the National Fund for Scientific Research in Belgium (FRS-FNRS).
3. In the case of Bolivian emigrant voters living in the United States, 17.3 percent declared having immigrated to this country for educational purposes.
4. In the case of Argentina and Spain, the language variable could not be verified because Bolivia and these countries share Spanish as an official language.
5. "Sindicati" are trade unions and "patronati" are representative organizations for workers and pensioners which facilitate the access of citizens residing abroad to basic social services.
6. Single-seat districts are the Africa, Asia, Oceania, and Antarctica district (where one seat is available for the house and one is available for the senate) and the North and Central America district (where one seat is available for the senate).
7. The emigrants we surveyed were allowed to give several responses to the question "Which means did you use to find information about the 2009 presidential election?"

NOTES TO CHAPTER 7

1. The 2005 election in the Spanish region of Galicia offers a good example of this kind of scenario. The *Partido Popular*, which had been winning the

- election at the end of the domestic vote count, eventually lost after counting the votes cast abroad.
2. See Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada. "Foreign Elections in Canada and Foreign Electoral Constituencies. Circular Note No. Xdc-1264 of September 8, 2011" (2011), http://www.international.gc.ca/protocol-protocole/circular_1264_circulaire.aspx?lang=eng&view=d (accessed 21 February 2012).
 3. Foreign Affairs and International Development Committee. "Hearing of Roxanne Dubé, Director General, Geographic Strategy and Services Bureau, Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade on October 6, 2011" (2011), <http://www.parl.gc.ca/HousePublications/Publication.aspx?DocId=5164225&Language=E&Mode=1&Parl=41&Ses=1> (accessed 21 February 2012).
 4. The lower level of dual nationals among Bolivian voters in Spain is due to the fact that Bolivian migration to this country is a more recent phenomenon.
 5. There was public criticism regarding the local authorities' lack of effort to reach out to immigrants to make them aware of their right to vote in local elections. Further research is, however, needed to fully understand the causes of low registration among Bolivians and other migrant communities in this particular election.

NOTES TO APPENDIX B

1. Many Italian parties have changed names and reconfigured over the past decades but interviewees are listed under the current name of their party.
2. With the exception of the representative of the electoral court, all names of interviewees were changed.

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Index

- 2012 Mexican presidential election, 102–103
2006 Mexican presidential election, 43, 67–72, 96–104
2000 Mexican presidential election, 61–63
1988 Mexican presidential election, 54–55
2006 Italian legislative elections, 22, 105–110, 125–130
2008 Italian legislative elections, 22, 29, 108–110, 141, 147
2009 Bolivian presidential election, 120, 144–145, 157
- A**
Alleanza Nazionale (AN), 82–85, 88–89, 91, 93, 105, 125
Andean Parliamentary elections, 29
Argentina, 12, 19, 25, 106–108, 114, 118–120, 127–130, 144–146, 159
Asamblea Mexicana por el Sufragio Efectivo (AMSE), 54
Associazioni Cristiani dei Lavoratori Italiani (ACLI), 84
Australia, 108, 134
- B**
Basel Pact, 84–85
Bauböck, Rainer, 7, 14, 40–42, 45, 135)
Barry, Kim, 14
Belgium, 95, 107–109, 128, 147
Berlusconi, Silvio, see also *Casa delle libertà*, 82, 88–89, 106, 108, 128–130, 136
Bolivia, 20, 24, 27, 41, 44, 110, 112–116, 118–124, 131, 134–135, 141, 144–145, 148, 155–156
Bourne, Randolphe, 2
- Bracero labor agreements, 52
Brazil, 12, 15, 19, 24, 27, 95, 106–107, 114, 118–120, 143, 144–146
- C**
Canada, 18, 26, 43, 55, 134, 141–143, 159
Calderón Chelius, Leticia (24, 46, 55–56, 61, 81, 94, 98–99)
Cárdenas, Cuauhtémoc, 54, 55, 144
Cardenismo, 54
Casa delle libertà coalition, Italy, 88, 106, 128–130
Chicano movement, 52–54
Coalición de Mexicanos en el Exterior—Nuestro Voto en el 2000 (CMENV), 57, 64
Coalición por los Derechos Políticos de los Mexicanos en el Extranjero (CDPME), 57, 64–66, 71, 97
Codevelopment practices, 36
Committees of Italians Residing Abroad (COMITES), 79–80, 92, 127
Common Assembly of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), 37
Conferencia Nacional de Gobernadores (CONAGO), 59
Congress of Italians Abroad, 76
Conseil de la Communauté Marocaine à l'Étranger (CCME), 138
Consultas, 81
Consulta Nazionale dell'emigrazione (CNE), 85
Consultative bodies, 15–16, 40, 42, 63, 81, 138, 158
Consultative councils, see “consultative bodies”

- Consultative Council of the Institute of Mexicans Abroad (CCIME), 15, 63–64, 68, 138
- Cooperation between political parties across borders, see “sister political parties”
- Coordination for the Vote of Mexicans Residing Abroad (COVE), 98
- Corriente Democratica*, 54
- Credenciales de elector*, see voter identity cards
- D**
- Decisive vote, 23–24, 34, 41, 53, 71, 73, 86, 96, 102, 108, 135–137
- Democrazia Cristiana* (DC), 77, 82
- Derechos politicos sin fronteras*, 65
- Diaspora engagement, 7–8
- Diaspora politics, see also Østergaard-Nielsen, 6
- di Rupo, Elio, 107
- Democratici di Sinistra* (DS), see *Partito Democratico della Sinistra* (PDS)
- Dual citizenship, see dual nationality
- Dual nationality, 8, 14, 36, 45, 48, 61, 80, 134, 143, 146, 148–149, 159, 171
- E**
- Electoral fraud 1, 44, 54, 77, 108–109, 115, 139–140, 151, 169
- Electoral reform of 1977, Mexico, 51–52
- Electoral reform of 1982, Mexico, 52
- Emigrant candidates, see also emigrant parliamentarians and passive electoral rights, 30, 84, 107, 126–128, 134, 141–144
- Emigrant lobbying, 6, 9, 46–47, 64–66
- Emigrant parliamentarians, 16, 24, 28, 30, 47, 66, 86, 91, 109, 116, 126–128, 137–140, 141–144, 146, 162, 169
- Emigrant politics, see also Østergaard-Nielsen, 6
- Estrada doctrine, 50
- European Court of Human Rights (ECHR), 36–37
- European parliamentary elections, 28, 81, 172
- European Union, 28, 34, 37, 81, 119, 153
- External citizenship, see also Barry and Bauböck, 13–16, 48, 138
- External voting
- Definition, 31
- Early experiences, 17
- List of countries who adopted it in the 1990s and 2000s, 25
- List of countries with external voting provisions, 19
- Mandatory voting from abroad, 24
- Modalities
- In-person voting, see also polling stations, 21
- Postal voting, 21–22
- Proxy voting, 22
- Telecommunications voting, 24
- Counting ballots, 22–23
- Time limits on residency abroad, 26
- Extraterritorial constituency, see foreign constituency
- F**
- Fascism in Italy, 4–5, 10, 75–77, 91, 109, 153
- Office for the Fascists Abroad, 75
- Neofacism, 78, 91
- Federazione delle Colonie Libere Italiane* (FECLI), 82, 84
- Federal Electoral Institute, Mexico (IFE), 20, 56–73, 97–103, 112, 153
- Experts’ commission on external voting, 57, 61, 153
- Foreign constituency, 11, 30, 42
- Forza Italia*, 79, 84, 87–89, 127–129, 136
- Fox, Vicente, 13, 62, 66–73, 171
- G**
- Garavini, Laura, 139, 143
- General Council of Italians Residing Abroad (also referred to as the General Council of Italians Abroad) (CGIE), 15, 79–85, 92, 127, 138
- Germany, 107, 109, 139–140, 143, 146–147, 159
- Greece, 19, 37–38, 170
- H**
- Homeland politics (see also Østergaard-Nielsen), 6, 169
- Hometown Associations (HTAs), 53, 60, 100

- Instituto Federal Electoral (IFE), see
Federal Electoral Institute
International Institute for Democracy
and Electoral Assistance
(IDEA), 16, 18, 19
Institute of Mexicans Abroad (IME),
63, 171
For its consultative council see
"Consultative Council of the
Institute of Mexicans Abroad
(CCIME)"

I

- Institutional and Electoral Proceedings
Federal Code, Mexico
(COFIPE), 57
Inter-American Commission on
Human Rights, 55
International Convention on the
Protection of the Rights of All
Migrant Workers and Members
of Their Families, 35–36
International Covenant on Civil and
Political Rights, 33

J

- Jus sanguinis*, 80, 105–106

L

- League of United Latin American Citizens
(LULAC), 53
Lega Nord, see also *Casa delle libertà*
coalition, 82, 88, 129
Local elections, 34, 35, 38, 59, 145,
147, 174
Local Voting Rights for Non-Nationals,
35, 38, 145, 147, 174

M

- Maastricht Treaty of 1991, 38
Mani Pulite, 82, 88, 93
Martiniello, Marco, 5, 40, 46, 81
Mexican revolution, 51–52
Michoacán, 28, 59, 99,
Ministry for Italians Abroad, 15
Movimento Sociale Italiano (MSI),
Movimiento al Socialismo (MAS),
118–120, 157
Morales, Evo, see also *Movimiento al*
Socialismo (MAS), 118–124,
157
Morocco, 15, 19, 138
Mussolini, Benito (see Fascism in Italy)

N

- National Emigration Conference, 1988
(Italy), 83
National Secretariat for Migrants in
Ecuador, 15
Nationality Laws, 36
Italy, 80, 105
Mexico, 61
North American Free Trade Agreement
(NAFTA), 55–56, 60, 153
Nuevo Federalismo, see also regional-
ization, 58–60

O

- Oficina Presidencial Para Mexicanos
en el Exterior (OPME), see also
Institute for Mexicans Abroad
(IFE), 171
Østergaard-Nielsen, Eva, 3, 5, 6–7, 44,
140, 141, 144, 169

P

- Paisano Program, 60
Pallaro, Luigi, 127, 136, 139, 159
Parti Socialiste (PS), 107, 147
Partido Acción Nacional (PAN),
56–57, 62, 67–70, 101–103
Partido Comunista Italiano (PCI), see
also *Rifondazione Comunista*,
77–78, 82
Partido de la Revolución Democrática
(PRD), 56–59, 62–72
Partido della Rifondazione Comunista
(RC), 82
Partido Democratico (PD), 29, 147, 168
PD Mondo, 147
Partido Democratico della Sinistra
(PDS), see also *Democratici di*
Sinistra, 81–82
Partido Nacional Antireeleccionista
(PNA), see also Vasconcelos, 51
Partido Revolucionario Institucional
(PRI), 52–62, 67–71, 101–103,
112, 117, 153
Partido Socialista Italiano (PSI), 82
Passive electoral rights, see also emi-
grant candidates and emigrant
parliamentarians, 16, 29–30,
84, 134, 141–142, 158–159
Per Italia nel Mondo con
Tremaglia, 128–129
Poder Democrático Social
(PODEMOS), 119–120

Polling stations, 21–23, 94, 113, 141
 Bolivian elections, 44, 113, 119, 121
 European parliamentary elections,
 69–70, 156
 Mexican elections, 62
 Portes, Alejandro, 3–5, 100, 141, 144
 Post-conflict elections, 21, 34, 44
 Prodi, Romano, see also *Unione* coalition,
 86, 106–108, 125–129,
 136, 139, 159, 161
 Program for Mexican Communities
 Abroad (PCME), 60

R

Referenda, 27–28, 31, 89, 104–105,
 113, 156, 169
 Refugees, see also post-conflict elec-
 tions, 21, 34–35
 United Nations Convention Relating
 to the Status of Refugees, 34
 Regionalization, 58–60, 91
 Registry of Italian Citizens Residing
 Abroad (AIRE), 80, 88–92,
 105–106, 173
 Remittances, 43, 61, 72, 75, 77–79
Repartizioni (geographic sectors of
 Italian foreign constituency), 90
 Reserved seats, see emigrant
 parliamentarians
Rifondazione Comunista, see *Partito*
Comunista Italiano

S

Salinas de Gortari, Carlos, 54–55
 Sayad, Abdelmalek, 2
 Senegal, 19, 25, 27
 Sister political parties, 106, 111, 128,
 146–147

Socialist Party (PS), Belgium, 107, 147
 Social Democratic Party (SPD), Ger-
 many, 146
 Spain, 19, 22–23, 27, 38, 42, 114,
 118–120, 144–145
 2005 Galician regional election, 23,
 42, 161, 173
 Smith, Robert C., 7–8, 48, 75, 98–99
 Symbolic elections, 54, 62

T

Tunisia, 16, 19, 25, 30, 134, 142, 159
 Tremaglia, Mirko, see also *Per Italia*
nel Mondo con Tremaglia,
 83–84, 88–89, 105, 128–129
 Turnout (see Voter turnout)

U

Undocumented migrants, 36, 97–98
Unione coalition, 106–108, 125–129
 Universal Declaration of Human
 Rights (UNDHR), 33
 United States, 2–6, 18–22, 27, 29,
 43, 50–56, 58, 60–65, 70–71,
 75–76, 97–101, 104, 114–115,
 118–120 144–145, 152

V

Vasconcelos, José, 51
 Voter identity cards, 26, 56, 62, 71–73,
 97–104, 112, 156
 Voter registration abroad, 19–21, 27,
 31, 34, 43–44, 94–116
 Voter turnout, 94–116
 Measurement problems, 94–95

Z

Zacatecas, 53, 59, 60, 64, 99