JOURNAL of Global Political Transformations

Vol. 2, No. 1, 2026

DOI: 10.67524/verus1/1.2026.2

Journal homepage: https://jgpt.veruspublishing.co.uk/

Received: 26.01.2026
Revised: 11.05.2026
Accepted: 19.06.2026

# Migration of political elites and its influence on political transformation in postcolonial countries

Baktygul Kozhomuratova*[1]

[1] Department of Kyrgyz History and Ethnology, Kyrgyz State University named after I. Arabaev, Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic

**Abstract.** The study aimed to establish the mechanisms and institutional conditions through which mobile ruling, opposition, technocratic and economic actors converted external resources into domestic political effects in postcolonial settings. The research combined structural-functional, typological, comparative, case-study and content-analysis methods. The empirical comparison covered Africa, Latin America and South Asia through South Africa, Ghana, Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, India and Sri Lanka. The analysis was diachronic: it traced formative exile, return and diaspora-governance trajectories from post-independence and authoritarian-transition periods to 2025, while contemporary migration, governance and democracy data were assessed mainly for 2020-2025. Elite migration was treated as a political process distinct from ordinary population movement. Although recorded international migration reached 304 million people in 2024 and one postcolonial recipient attracted more than 111 billion United States dollars in remittances in 2022, the political weight of mobile elites followed from authority, expertise and capital rather than from sheer numbers. Six mechanisms were established: exile, returnee technocratic transfer, diaspora lobbying, transnational party networking, economic elite mobility and the state institutionalisation of diaspora engagement. The comparison produced three regional pathways: liberation-exile and reconstruction in Africa, authoritarian exile and democratic restoration in Latin America, and diaspora diplomacy or conflict externalisation in South Asia. Across the cases, migration acquired transformative force only where external resources entered institutions open to domestic contestation. The findings may be useful for comparative analysts and policymakers assessing diaspora engagement, external voting and returnee appointments

**Keywords:** exile; returnees; diaspora engagement; external voting; accountability; remittances

## INTRODUCTION

The migration of political elites affects postcolonial transformation because it redistributes authority, expertise, finance, and legitimacy across national borders. In postcolonial states, where institutions often remain shaped by inherited administrative hierarchies and contested citizenship, elite mobility may change the balance between domestic actors and external networks. Former officials, opposition leaders, technocrats, party organisers, business elites, and diaspora representatives can influence political competition without being territorially present. Elite migration therefore matters as a mechanism through which political resources circulate and re-enter domestic institutions, which sets it apart from ordinary population movement. The issue belongs to comparative politics and institutional development, since it concerns the conditions under which transnational resources alter regimes, parties, state capacity, and representation.

The literature offered several concepts for this connection without treating elite migration as a separate transformation mechanism. The postcolonial migration state framework developed by K. Sadiq & G. Tsourapas (2021) had shown that citizenship and mobility regimes in the Global South reproduced colonial classifications after formal independence, which explained why elites abroad remained connected to domestic struggles over sovereignty, representation, and membership. A later contribution by the same authors had shifted attention from migration control to the transnational social contract between states and citizens abroad. They had established that rights, remittances, obligations, and symbolic belonging created a de-territorialised form of state-society relations in which migrant elites acted as brokers of resources and claims. The broader migration literature clarified why postcolonial elite mobility could not

**Suggested Citation:**
Kozhomuratova, B. (2026). Migration of political elites and its influence on political transformation in postcolonial countries. *Journal of Global Political Transformations*, 2(1), 17-28. doi: 10.67524/verus1/1.2026.2.

*Corresponding author (bkozhomuratova@gmail.com)

Copyright © The Author(s). This is an open access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License 4.0 (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

be reduced to integration into host societies. A. Favell (2022) had argued that conventional models of immigration, integration, and citizenship remained tied to liberal and Eurocentric assumptions about political membership, which supported a postcolonial reading of elite mobility as linked to unequal power, historical hierarchy, and contested belonging. K. Natter & H. Thiollet (2022) had concluded that migration politics both reflected and shaped political regimes, an account that explained why the same form of elite mobility could support reform in one institutional setting and reinforce closure in another. Case-based studies specified how these dynamics worked through concrete channels. In the Philippine case, S. Rother (2022) had shown that labour-export governance was shaped by civil society and multilevel contestation extending beyond state policy, which indicated that migration governance in postcolonial countries could become a field of representation, accountability, and institutional bargaining. M. Koinova *et al.* (2023) had demonstrated that migration crises and the COVID-19 pandemic intensified securitisation, politicisation, and international coordination, which made it possible to treat crisis as a trigger that activated diaspora networks and external political claims.

Diaspora governance studies revealed the ambivalent effects of state engagement with populations abroad. B. Baser & A.E. Öztürk (2020) had distinguished positive diaspora governance from negative forms connected with transnational authoritarianism, showing that one diaspora policy could promote public diplomacy and development while also enabling surveillance, loyalty extraction, and pressure on opposition groups. B. Baser & G. Bocu (2025) had examined selective diaspora mobilisation by Turkey and had demonstrated that state-led outreach privileged regime-loyal groups over the wider migrant community and deepened political division abroad. For Sri Lankan Tamils, C.R. Craven (2022) had shown that the sending state and the security practices of host and international arenas jointly constrained diaspora political action, which located diaspora influence inside complex security entanglements rather than a simple homeland-diaspora relationship. Studies of electoral and representative mechanisms addressed political participation from abroad. B. Nyblade *et al.* (2022) had found that transnational voting rights in violent democracies reflected attempts to maintain inclusion under conditions of insecurity, which suggested that external voting could affect party competition and legitimacy when emigrant citizens remained tied to domestic conflict. D. Karabegović (2025) had shown that diaspora politicians used diasporic identity strategically to shape transnational engagement, demonstrating how actors outside the homeland claimed authority to influence domestic reform. O.P. Oluwasanmi & O.M. Fagbadebo (2025) had linked diaspora voting to the relationship between legislative authority and political leadership in Nigeria, finding that institutional resistance, constitutional design, and electoral reform determined whether citizens abroad could be incorporated into national political life. The existing literature still insufficiently explained how the migration of political elites operated through specific mechanisms, regional pathways, and institutional conditions to reshape postcolonial transformation.

The aim of the study was to establish how mobile ruling, opposition, technocratic and economic actors convert resources accumulated abroad into domestic political effects in former colonial settings, and to identify the institutional conditions that determine whether such effects support reform or reinforce closure. To achieve this aim, three tasks were set: first, to identify the mechanisms through which mobile elites transmit authority, expertise, finance and advocacy into homeland politics; second, to compare the regional pathways through which these mechanisms operate in Africa, Latin America and South Asia; and third, to determine the institutional outcomes of elite migration and the conditions on which their direction depends.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was conducted within the conceptual frameworks of elite-circulation theory, diaspora-politics theory and the institutional analysis of migration governance. The classification of knowledge, entrepreneurial and political elites provided the field within which the mobility of leaders, officials, professionals and business actors was examined (Solimano & Avanzini, 2010), and the exit-and-voice distinction supplied the logic for treating departure and external political action as connected outcomes (Hirschman, 1970). The reading of diasporas as political actors, and as internally differentiated groups, framed the analysis of transnational mobilisation (Koinova, 2018; Adamson & Han, 2024). The conception of diaspora institutions as techniques of state power (Gamlen, 2014), together with the institutional account of skilled migration and norm transfer (Docquier & Rapoport, 2012), oriented the assessment of administrative and governance effects.

Sources were selected according to four criteria. First, peer-reviewed studies were included where they directly addressed elite circulation, diaspora politics, return migration, external voting, transnational repression, political remittances or postcolonial migration governance. Second, preference was given to publications from 2020-2026 for the contemporary debate, while earlier works were retained only where they performed a foundational theoretical or case-historical function, such as the exit-and-voice framework, diaspora-institution theory or studies of liberation and authoritarian exile. Third, official and intergovernmental sources were included only where they supplied contextual migration, remittance, governance or democracy indicators rather than substituting for scholarly analysis. Fourth, sources were excluded where they discussed migration in general without a clear connection to political elites, diaspora institutions, external political participation or postcolonial transformation.

The research proceeded in three stages. At the first stage, structural-functional and typological methods served to identify the channels through which mobile elites enter homeland politics and to order them by actor,

transmission route, conditional effect and institutional risk; the treatment of return, economic mobility and diaspora strategy was informed by studies of post-conflict knowledge transfer, diaspora-linked finance and diaspora politics as a field of state action (Hughes, 2011; Leblang, 2017). The typological reading also drew on the comparative analysis of diaspora policies (Ragazzi, 2014) and on the account of diaspora politics as a domain of growing political weight (Adamson, 2016). At the second stage, the comparative and case-study methods were applied to Africa, Latin America and South Asia. These regions were selected because they represent three analytically different postcolonial routes through which elite mobility entered domestic politics: liberation-era state formation and administrative reconstruction, authoritarian rupture followed by democratic restoration, and partition-era or identity-based diaspora formation. The individual cases were selected by purposive comparison. South Africa and Ghana represented, respectively, exile-based liberation politics and state-led diaspora governance; Chile, Argentina and Uruguay represented authoritarian exile and post-authoritarian rights-based return; India and Sri Lanka represented large-scale diaspora diplomacy and conflict-generated transnational mobilisation. Each case was coded by four identical criteria: dominant elite-migration pattern, principal transformation channel, institutional mode of re-entry and condition of institutional absorption. This secured functional comparability without requiring identical statistical indicators. The exile-politics framework structured the regional reading (Sznajder & Roniger, 2009). The African cases drew on documentary studies of liberation exile and diaspora governance (Ellis, 2013; Kandilige & Teye, 2023) and on national diaspora-engagement mapping (Diaspora for Development, 2020). The Latin American cases used research on Southern Cone exile and post-transition return (Perry, 2016; Doña-Reveco, 2020). The South Asian cases used studies of Tamil diaspora mobilisation and homeland-oriented identity politics (Guyot, 2021; Tripathi, 2024). A diachronic perspective traced mechanisms that originated before the current reporting period yet continued to shape institutional outcomes.

At the third stage, qualitative content analysis was used to classify the institutional effects of elite migration. The document corpus consisted of intergovernmental migration and remittance reports, official records of overseas populations, national diaspora-engagement materials and governance or democracy indicator frameworks, including the International Organization for Migration (2024), the World Bank (2024) and International IDEA (2024), the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2025), the Ministry of External Affairs of India (n.d.). The unit of analysis was not an individual migrant but a documented institutional channel through which external resources entered domestic politics: diaspora office, external voting rule, returnee appointment, advocacy network, remittance or investment mechanism, party-finance channel, or governance-indicator dimension. The coding categories were: form of elite mobility, channel of institutional re-entry, resource transmitted, openness to domestic contestation, accountability mechanism, and institutional risk. Institutional effects were interpreted as reform-supporting where the coded channel widened participation, transparency, representation or administrative capacity, and as closure-supporting where it strengthened loyalty extraction, opaque finance, factional capture, surveillance or exclusion. Migration-policy analysis of advanced economies supplied a comparative reference (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2024). Generalisation then consolidated the stage-specific findings into the analytical model set out in the results.

The study had three limitations. First, the available international datasets report general migrant stocks, remittance flows and governance indicators rather than elite-specific mobility, which prevented direct quantitative measurement of elite migration. Second, the selected cases were used for qualitative-comparative interpretation rather than for exhaustive regional coverage. Third, the diachronic design combined historical exile and return trajectories with contemporary policy and indicator data, so the findings identify institutional mechanisms and conditions rather than statistically testing causal effects.

## RESULTS

### Elite migration as a postcolonial transformation mechanism

The analysis established that the cross-border movement of political elites in postcolonial states operated as a distinct political process rather than as a demographic subset of international migration. Global stock data placed the total number of international migrants at 304 million in 2024 (United Nations Department..., 2025), yet the political weight of elite migration derived from the authority, organisational capacity and external access of the actors involved, not from their number. Within this study the term denoted the cross-border movement of individuals and groups that held or could mobilise political authority, administrative competence, party leadership, technocratic knowledge, diplomatic access or concentrated capital connected with a former colony or a postcolonial state. Defined in these terms, the category absorbed forced exile, professional emigration, return after education or office abroad, organised diaspora advocacy and the relocation of economic elites whose networks and policy preferences shaped domestic coalitions. The inclusion of economic actors followed from the structure of postcolonial transformation, in which reform coalitions combined state officials, party financiers, media proprietors and internationally connected professionals, so that the displacement of such actors redistributed political resources inside the country of origin rather than merely altering individual careers. The category accordingly spanned actors whose principal transferable resource was public authority and actors whose resource was capital or expertise, a breadth required by the coalitional form that postcolonial transformation repeatedly assumed.

The first result concerned the conditional character of this process. Comparative work on the international circulation of elites separated knowledge, entrepreneurial and political elites and treated their mobility as a channel for the transfer of skills, capital and access to external institutions (Solimano & Avanzini, 2010). The postcolonial setting modified that channel, because outward elite migration was structured by colonial education routes, metropolitan labour markets, repression, military rule, civil conflict and asymmetric access to global financial centres. Mobility therefore did not transmit human capital in a neutral manner; it reorganised the relationship between domestic institutions and the external arenas in which legitimacy, finance, expertise and diplomatic pressure could be accumulated. The contrast with generic elite circulation lay in this structuring, since the same colonial ties that produced emigration also furnished the metropolitan arenas, professional credentials and legal vocabularies through which returning or diaspora elites later claimed authority at home. The evidence did not support a reading in which mobility was automatically reformist or automatically destabilising; the classification of knowledge, entrepreneurial and political elites allowed leaders, officials, professionals and business actors to be examined within one political field, yet the postcolonial record showed that each category could strengthen reform or entrench closure according to the terms of re-entry, which placed the analytical weight on institutional conditions rather than on the attributes of the migrants themselves. The direction of any resulting change depended on the institutional route through which external resources re-entered the political system.

Six transmission mechanisms emerged from the evidence. Exile preserved organisational continuity where parties, unions and civic bodies were banned, relocating domestic competition into transnational space; the logic followed the exit-and-voice distinction, since departure reduced internal pressure while generating new forms of voice abroad once emigrants retained access to host-state institutions (Hirschman, 1970; Adamson & Han, 2024). Returnee technocratic transfer appeared when emigrated or foreign-educated elites re-entered ministries, central banks, courts and electoral bodies carrying legal templates, fiscal-management models and donor-compatible reform agendas; its effect narrowed to brokerage between donors and ruling coalition's where recruitment and accountability rules were absent (Hughes, 2011). Diaspora lobbying directed external pressure at foreign ministries, parliaments and international organisations and converted domestic claims into the registers of human rights, development or minority protection, a process reinforced in postcolonial cases by colonial-era language, education and citizenship links (Adamson, 2016; Adamson & Han, 2024).

Transnational party and movement networking sustained external branches, student committees and fundraising structures that outlasted individual exile; because diaspora actors did not form a unitary bloc, such networks could widen pluralist competition or transfer factional and ethnic polarisation back into domestic politics (Koinova, 2018). The mobility of economic elites transmitted capital, market access and organisational control rather than public authority, financing parties, media and investment under conditions that could either resource reform coalitions or enable capital flight, opaque financing and regulatory capture (Solimano & Avanzini, 2010; Leblang, 2017). State institutionalisation of diaspora engagement converted dispersed communities into objects of policy through ministries, councils, citizenship regimes and consultative bodies; comparative analysis treated such institutions as techniques of state power capable of extending rights or extracting loyalty, finance and legitimacy (Gamlen, 2014; Ragazzi, 2014). Skilled emigration from the state sector cut across these mechanisms, since the permanent departure of administrators, lawyers and economists reduced institutional continuity while connected emigrants could still transmit governance norms, leaving the quality of institutional linkage as the operative variable (Docquier & Rapoport, 2012). That double movement defined the mechanism, since the permanent loss of public-sector skill subtracted from continuity while the retained connection of emigrants to reform coalitions added channels for norm transfer and reputational pressure, so that the net result followed from the strength of the linkage rather than from the gross flow. The exit-and-voice duality assumed a specific postcolonial form, because departure that lowered immediate pressure on an incumbent simultaneously created externally based voice whose leverage depended on access to former metropoles and international organisations. The typology that organises these mechanisms by actor, transmission channel, conditional effect and institutional risk is set out in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Mechanisms of elite migration in postcolonial transformation

| Form of elite migration | Principal elite actors | Political transmission channel | Conditional transformative effect | Principal institutional risk |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Exile-based political survival | Banned party leaders, dissidents, lawyers, journalists | External advocacy and preservation of opposition organisation | Continuity of opposition under repression and preparation for transition | Externalisation of conflict and dependence on foreign sponsorship |
| Returnee technocratic transfer | Former exiles, foreign-educated officials, transitional leaders | Re-entry into ministries, courts, central banks and electoral bodies | Diffusion of legal templates and administrative standards | Brokerage between donors and ruling coalitions without accountability |
| Diaspora lobbying and advocacy | Diaspora organisations, professional and rights networks | Pressure on foreign ministries, parliaments and international bodies | Reframing of domestic claims as rights, development or protection | Selective representation tied to specific parties or communities |

**Table 1.** Continued

| Form of elite migration | Principal elite actors | Political transmission channel | Conditional transformative effect | Principal institutional risk |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Transnational party networking | External party branches, student and ideological networks | Fundraising, campaign support and external communication | Expansion of organisational resources and pluralist competition | Factionalisation and transfer of homeland polarisation abroad |
| Economic elite mobility | Investors, financiers, media proprietors, contractors | Capital flows, party financing and control of strategic sectors | Investment-based reform coalitions and diversified influence | Capital flight, opaque financing and regulatory capture |
| State institutionalisation of diaspora engagement | Ministries, councils, citizenship and investment offices | Citizenship regimes, external voting and consultative bodies | Knowledge transfer, investment and symbolic inclusion | Loyalty extraction and monitoring of opposition abroad |

**Source:** compiled by the author based on A. Hirschman (1970), A. Solimano and D. Avanzini (2010), C. Hughes (2011), F. Docquier & H. Rapoport (2012), F. Ragazzi (2014), A. Gamlen (2014), Y. Adamson (2016), D. Leblang (2017), M. Koinova (2018), F. Adamson & E. Han (2024)

The systematisation indicated that postcolonial transformation responded less to the fact of mobility than to the political route through which mobile resources were absorbed. Where parties, civil-service bodies, courts and electoral institutions could regulate and contest external resources, the same movement supported reform, policy learning and competition; where those institutions were closed, it reinforced elite bargains and external dependence. Exile and advocacy produced reformist effects when they stayed connected to domestic constituencies and formal procedures, while returnee and foreign-trained administration proved productive only when professional knowledge entered accountable institutions rather than patronage networks. Economic mobility generated the broadest dispersion of outcomes, because concentrated capital could underwrite reform or detach influential actors from domestic accountability. Each mechanism acquired its political meaning at the point of institutional re-entry. On this basis the section established elite migration as a conditional transformation mechanism that linked mobility, authority and institutional absorption, in which the conversion of external resources into domestic influence, and not the movement itself, determined whether transformation advanced or stalled.

**Regional pathways across three postcolonial areas**

Comparison across Africa, Latin America and South Asia showed that the six mechanisms operated through regionally distinct pathways shaped by colonial legacies, regime trajectories and the structure of diaspora-state relations. African elite migration attached to anti-colonial mobilisation, authoritarian exclusion and state reconstruction. Latin American exile bound up with the defence and rebuilding of constitutional democracy after military rupture. South Asian mobility rested on colonial education, partition, large-scale labour emigration and identity-based transnational politics. The regional evidence therefore positioned elite migration inside the political infrastructure through which postcolonial states negotiated legitimacy, opposition and external recognition, and not as a variable added to domestic politics after independence. The same six mechanisms recurred across the three areas, but their institutional meaning varied with colonial legacy, regime trajectory and the structure of relations between the state and its emigrants.

In the African cases, exile served as the principal instrument for preserving political organisation once domestic space was closed. The banning of the African National Congress (ANC) drove a prolonged external mission whose camps, security structures and foreign alliances connected the anti-apartheid struggle with diplomatic, military and ideological resources beyond South Africa (Ellis, 2013). That external arena produced leadership, discipline and international legitimacy ahead of the formal transition, yet it also generated a later reintegration problem, since cadres formed in clandestine and externally dependent structures had to be absorbed into a constitutional order resting on elections and parliamentary accountability. The lesson was not that exile produced democratisation, but that it preserved opposition capacity and international recognition whose democratic value depended on later translation into accountable domestic institutions, a translation that the constitutional settlement of the early 1990s rendered explicit. Ghana represented a contrasting administrative pathway in which the state converted diaspora relations into a governance field under a stable electoral system. Its national migration policy addressed brain drain, return and reintegration while framing the diaspora as a source of knowledge transfer and development finance (Diaspora for Development, 2020), and the Representation of the People Amendment Act of 2006 extended external voting in principle even as implementation lagged (Kandilige & Teye, 2023). The two African variants located transformation at different points: South Africa at a defined regime transition, Ghana in the incremental administration of emigrant expertise and capital. The administrative route nonetheless concentrated participation among better-connected emigrants and returnees, so that policy framed in the language of development did not automatically widen the social base of representation.

The Latin American pathway placed exile at the centre of the contest over democratic legitimacy. Across the region, banishment functioned as a structural technique of political exclusion used by varied governments rather

than as an exceptional measure (Sznajder & Roniger, 2009). After the 1973 coup in Chile, exile dispersed socialist, Christian-democratic and professional elites into European solidarity networks, including channels built with local political forces in the Netherlands (Perry, 2016), which reframed domestic repression as an international human-rights question and obliged returning actors to reconsider the relationship between democracy, party competition and rights protection. The post-transition period left memory and political belonging unsettled, so that the return or non-return of exiles continued to shape party reconstruction and the meaning of democratic restoration (Doña-Reveco, 2020). The Chilean sequence operated in two stages: during the dictatorship, exile sustained opposition and converted repression into an international human-rights question; after the transition, the differential return of exiles shaped memory politics and the reconstruction of party platforms. In Argentina and Uruguay, exile communities documented state violence and circulated human-rights claims that re-entered domestic politics after the regime openings, with educated exiles supplying the language and organisational access that converted displacement into international action. The Southern Cone thus transmitted transformation through human-rights internationalisation rather than through development policy or diaspora investment.

South Asian elite migration operated through continuous transnational circulation rather than a single moment of return. India combined foreign education, professional emigration to the United Kingdom, North America and the Gulf, diaspora philanthropy and state-led outreach into a dense external field; the World Migration Report 2024 recorded India as the leading recipient of remittances in 2022, with inflows above 111 billion United States dollars, and official registers list overseas Indians across a wide range of destinations (International Organization for Migration, 2024; Ministry of External Affairs of India, n.d.). Within that field, diaspora networks reproduced domestic ideological conflict, with nationalist actors cultivating emotional proximity to the homeland as a political resource (Tripathi, 2024), so that emigrant elites functioned at once as instruments of state diplomacy and as arenas of party contestation. The relationship between the state and its emigrants shifted over time from official suspicion of expatriate detachment toward an active strategy of outreach, investment attraction and symbolic inclusion, which positioned sections of the diaspora as intermediaries in the international representation of the country even as their influence varied across class, religion, generation and host-country status. The field combined several channels at once, since foreign education and professional emigration generated expertise and networks, diaspora philanthropy and political fundraising supplied resources, and state-led outreach extended symbolic mobilisation, so that influence ran through economic and cultural routes rather than through a single act of return. Sri Lanka presented a conflict-centred variant in which the Tamil diaspora became a durable transnational actor; its mobilisation against the government advanced advocacy, documentation and memory politics abroad while also opening avenues of political inclusion in host societies (Guyot, 2021). The mobilisation operated in two arenas at once, pressing homeland politics through advocacy, documentation and memory work while pursuing recognition inside host societies, which separated it from the state-mediated diaspora diplomacy of the Indian case and tied its effect to an unresolved relationship between homeland actors and autonomous diaspora organisations. The Indian case extended state diplomacy and economic influence, whereas the Sri Lankan case externalised an unresolved state-minority conflict into international human-rights arenas.

The cross-regional comparison indicated that the function of mobility, more than its volume, determined the pathway. Repression-driven migration, in South Africa, Chile, Argentina, Uruguay and Sri Lanka, sustained and internationalised opposition; education and state-led diaspora policy, in Ghana and India, channelled policy transfer, investment and symbolic inclusion; unresolved conflict and ideological polarisation, in Sri Lanka and segments of Indian diaspora politics, externalised domestic disputes. Return was not the only relevant outcome, since non-returning elites retained influence through advocacy networks, finance, expertise and host-country access. The persistence of that influence indicated that transformation could be shaped from outside the territorial state for extended periods, through control of advocacy networks, financial resources and the symbolic narratives of belonging, so that physical return marked only one of several points at which migration entered domestic politics. The volume of mobility did not predict its political weight, since a small but organised exile could exert more influence than a large but dispersed professional emigration, which located causal significance in organisation and institutional access rather than in numbers. The comparative structure of these pathways is summarised in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Regional pathways of elite migration in postcolonial transformation

| Region | Dominant elite-migration pattern | Principal transformation channel | Institutional mode of re-entry | Condition of institutional absorption |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Africa | Liberation exile, professional diaspora and state-led diaspora policy | Opposition survival, state reconstruction and development-oriented return | ANC external mission; Ghanaian diaspora-governance framework | Absorption of liberation legitimacy through elected and accountable office |
| Latin America | Authoritarian exile and post-authoritarian return | Human-rights internationalisation and party reconstruction | Post-1973 Chilean exile; Argentine and Uruguayan rights-advocacy networks | Re-entry through courts, parties and rights-protection institutions |

**Table 2.** Continued

| Region | Dominant elite-migration pattern | Principal transformation channel | Institutional mode of re-entry | Condition of institutional absorption |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| South Asia | Colonial education, large diasporas and identity mobilisation | Diaspora diplomacy, policy transfer and external advocacy | Indian diaspora outreach and remittance diplomacy; Sri Lankan Tamil transnational mobilisation | Linkage of diaspora mobilisation to inclusive representation |
| Cross-regional | Circulation of political, technocratic and economic elites | Conversion of external resources into domestic influence | Postcolonial states across the three areas | Absorption of external resources through accountable domestic institutions |

**Source:** compiled by the author based on Ministry of External Affairs of India (n.d.), M. Sznajder & L. Roniger (2009), S. Ellis (2013), M. Perry (2016), Diaspora for Development (2020), C. Doña-Reveco (2020), L. Guyot (2021), L. Kandilige & J. Teye (2023), International Organization for Migration (2024), S. Tripathi (2024)

The comparison located the difference in the institutional channel of re-entry rather than in regional culture. The African pathway tied external organisation to discrete transition points, so that its reformist yield depended on converting liberation legitimacy into accountable office. The Latin American pathway routed exile through courts, parties and human-rights institutions, which favoured pluralisation where those bodies absorbed returning actors. The South Asian pathway, anchored in large and economically weighty diasporas, produced mixed results that turned on whether mobilisation connected to inclusive representation or to unresolved identity conflict. Across the three areas, mobility became transformative only where external resources passed through procedures open to domestic contestation.

The content analysis confirmed that the institutional effect of elite migration depended on the type of channel through which external resources entered domestic politics. Five recurrent channels were identified across the corpus: formal diaspora institutions, external voting and citizenship rules, returnee recruitment into public institutions, transnational advocacy networks, and financial or investment flows. These channels did not produce a uniform political effect. Their reform-supporting effect appeared where rights, representation, transparent recruitment or financial disclosure connected external actors to domestic accountability. Their closure-supporting effect appeared where the same channels enabled loyalty extraction, selective representation, opaque party financing or surveillance of opposition groups abroad. The coded results are summarised in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Content-analysis categories and institutional effects of elite migration

| Content-analysis category | Documented institutional channel | Reform-supporting effect | Closure-supporting risk |
|---|---|---|---|
| Diaspora institutionalisation | Ministries, councils, investment and citizenship offices | Knowledge transfer, symbolic inclusion, investment coordination | Loyalty extraction, selective inclusion, monitoring of opposition |
| External voting and citizenship | Voting-from-abroad rules, dual citizenship, emigrant rights | Extension of political community and representation | Unequal influence of better-connected emigrants |
| Returnee technocratic transfer | Appointment to ministries, courts, central banks and electoral bodies | Administrative learning and institutional standard-setting | Donor brokerage, technocratic insulation and weak accountability |
| Transnational advocacy | Human-rights lobbying, host-state access, international documentation | Visibility of repression, minority protection and accountability pressure | Externalisation of conflict and selective representation |
| Financial and investment flows | Remittances, diaspora investment, party finance, media ownership | Resource diversification and support for reform coalitions | Opaque financing, regulatory capture and capital flight |

**Source:** compiled by the author based on the content analysis of Ministry of External Affairs of India (n.d.), International Organization for Migration (2024), World Bank (2024), International IDEA (2024), United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2025)

The institutional analysis showed that elite migration affected transformation through the absorption, contestation and regulation of transnational resources inside domestic institutions, and not through a single causal direction. The same movement strengthened or weakened political competition according to whether mobile elites entered open party systems, professional administration and accountable diaspora institutions, or closed patronage structures, externally dependent opposition networks and oligarchic coalitions. This made elite migration a conditional factor that altered the resources available to domestic actors without fixing the direction of political change, so that identical forms of mobility produced divergent institutional results across cases with different absorptive capacities.

On the side of opposition capacity, exiled and diaspora-based elites preserved organisational alternatives where domestic parties, media and civic bodies were repressed, using host-country access and international advocacy to keep political claims active (Adamson, 2016; Adamson & Han, 2024). The same dependence on foreign recognition and diaspora finance could, however, detach opposition from local constituencies, so that the outcome rested on whether external mobilisation reconnected to domestic

electoral and parliamentary procedures. Accountability moved in two opposing directions under this mechanism, since exiled elites and diaspora organisations exposed abuses, supplied external visibility to repression and drew international attention to electoral manipulation or minority exclusion, which widened the accountability field beyond constrained domestic courts, parliaments and media; the same externalisation turned selective where diaspora actors represented particular parties, communities or ideological projects, so that the expansion of voice did not translate evenly into the protection of rights for residents without transnational representation.

Administrative capacity moved in two directions. Returnee leaders and foreign-trained officials introduced legal models, fiscal rules and management standards, an effect that consolidated where merit-based recruitment and parliamentary scrutiny institutionalised expertise; the transfer of institutional norms remained conditional on the sending state's capacity to absorb skills and networks through functioning bodies (Docquier & Rapoport, 2012). Where such bodies were weak, returning elites narrowed into an intermediary stratum between international organisations and ruling coalitions, and policy diffusion produced technocratic insulation when reform was framed through donor benchmarks rather than public deliberation. The problem lay not in the external origin of expertise but in the availability of domestic procedures through which imported models could be debated, adapted and held to account. Formal diaspora offices reproduced the same ambiguity, facilitating knowledge transfer and investment while also serving loyalty extraction, symbolic nation-building or the monitoring of opposition abroad (Gamlen, 2014; Ragazzi, 2014).

Party competition responded to changes in leadership pools, external financing and ideological networks. Exiled leaders returned with international standing, diaspora branches supplied funds and campaign communication, and economic elites shaped competition through investment and media ownership; these resources widened contestation when they eroded incumbent monopolies and narrowed it when they entrenched dominant parties or personalised politics around externally connected figures. The direction of that effect tracked the prior concentration of political resources, widening competition where its broke incumbent control of finance and communication and narrowing it where diaspora resources accrued to parties that already dominated those channels. The extension of dual citizenship and emigrant rights served, in part, to mobilise financial and human resources from abroad (Leblang, 2017), yet weak transparency over political finance allowed the same channels to deepen opacity. The same instruments therefore widened the resource base of competition and, where disclosure rules were absent, displaced part of political financing beyond the reach of domestic regulators. Mobilisation also carried a polarising potential, since conflict-generated diasporas were neither uniformly peace-promoting nor uniformly conflict-amplifying, their effect depending on organisational context, host-country opportunity structures and relations with homeland actors (Koinova, 2018). In postcolonial states where citizenship, minority rights and historical memory remained contested, mobile elites preserved suppressed claims but could also harden positions, because actors abroad did not bear the direct costs of renewed confrontation at home. Digital coordination sharpened this outcome, since networks abroad could internationalise domestic events and frame political crises for foreign audiences faster than domestic institutions could process them, which made contested questions less negotiable when competing elites sought validation from external publics rather than from constitutional procedures at home.

A further outcome reorganised membership itself. Dual citizenship, external voting and diaspora engagement extended the political community beyond territorial residence and recognised the continuing ties of emigrants, while also creating unequal influence when wealthier and better-connected emigrants secured more attention than resident citizens (Gamlen, 2014; Leblang, 2017). For states constrained by limited domestic capacity or external debt dependence, diaspora networks compensated for weak administrative and diplomatic reach, which connected the redefinition of citizenship to questions of sovereignty. The question raised by this redefinition concerned whether external membership produced broader participation or a privileged category of transnational insiders whose influence was not matched by residence-based accountability. Diaspora institutions concentrated this tension, since the same offices that channelled investment and knowledge could also extract loyalty and finance or monitor opposition communities abroad, so that the extension of external membership advanced participation only where institutional design attached rights and representation rather than obligation alone (Ragazzi, 2014). Stability effects proved multidimensional in turn. Governance indicators distinguish voice and accountability, political stability, government effectiveness, regulatory quality, the rule of law and the control of corruption as separate dimensions rather than one aggregate (World Bank, 2024), and elite migration improved one dimension while depressing another: diaspora advocacy could strengthen voice and accountability yet raise political tension through polarisation, and returnee technocracy could raise government effectiveness yet reduce participation. The multidimensional reading displaced regime change as the sole measure of effect, since the same movement could register as improvement on one governance dimension and as deterioration on another within a single period. A democracy-assessment framework that separates representation, rights, the rule of law and participation registered the same divergence, since expanded external voice did not guarantee broadened participation (International IDEA, 2024).

The economic dimension reinforced the pattern. Remittances and diaspora finance reduced citizens' dependence on incumbents and could raise the likelihood of

transition in party-based regimes, while elite-controlled flows financed independent media and reform coalitions or, absent transparency rules over campaign finance and beneficial ownership, sustained clientelism and offshore accumulation. Migration analysis of advanced economies treats skills circulation as a policy resource (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2024), but for postcolonial states the value of external expertise turned on the capacity to retain, regulate and adapt it to domestic public needs rather than on the number of returnees. The effect on state capacity therefore registered not in the volume of return but in whether recruitment, accountability and policy continuity inside state institutions changed, since administrations that inherited constraints from colonial extraction, uneven territorial integration and externally dependent economies could see those constraints deepened by the departure of trained personnel and partly offset by the structured return of connected emigrants. Elite-controlled financial flows differed in this respect from household remittances, because their political concentration bore directly on party systems, regulatory decisions and state-business relations, so that the presence or absence of transparency over campaign finance, procurement and beneficial ownership determined whether such flows widened competition or entrenched the position of incumbents. The section therefore established that elite migration shaped transformation through a chain of institutional outcomes whose direction rested on four conditions: the connection of mobile elites to domestic constituencies; the capacity of state institutions to absorb expertise through transparent procedures; the regulation of political finance and diaspora engagement; and the linkage of external advocacy to inclusive representation rather than factional closure. Postcolonial elite migration operated, in sum, as a form of transnational political-resource circulation whose transformative effect was set by the capacity of domestic institutions to convert mobility into accountable public authority.

## DISCUSSION

The results of the article indicate that elite migration in postcolonial countries did not act as an independent cause of political transformation. Its effect depended on the institutional route through which external authority, finance, expertise and advocacy re-entered domestic politics. This interpretation corresponds with I. Schöfberger's (2025) analysis of African diaspora policies, where diaspora engagement extended beyond development rhetoric into a field of vertical and horizontal policy diffusion. The present article extends that position by showing that policy diffusion became politically transformative only where diaspora institutions were connected to domestic contestation and accountable decision-making rather than to symbolic inclusion alone. G.P. Zapata (2022), in the Colombian case, had also shown that diaspora engagement could be tied to transnational financialisation. That conclusion coincides with the article's finding that economic elite mobility carried the broadest range of outcomes, since finance could support reform coalitions or deepen opaque relations between capital, parties and the state.

The result concerning returnee technocratic transfer also aligns with studies on knowledge circulation, although the article gives this process a more conditional interpretation. A. Lam & H. Rui (2023) had treated highly skilled return migrants as agents of transnational learning, showing that returnees could transmit knowledge through organisational and institutional channels. The article supports this view but narrows it by arguing that expertise produced reform only when absorbed by recruitment rules, administrative continuity and public accountability. Z. Vathi *et al.* (2023) had placed return migration within shifting geopolitical relations that reached past personal reintegration. This corresponds with the article's regional findings, since return in Africa, Latin America and South Asia functioned through political settlement, rights institutions or diaspora diplomacy rather than through individual relocation alone. D.O. Oklikah's (2024) systematic review of extra-regional return migration to Africa had shown that return was shaped by micro, meso and macro-level factors. The article's contribution lies in specifying which political mechanisms connected those levels: exile survival, technocratic return, advocacy, party networking, economic mobility and diaspora institutionalisation.

The article's treatment of exile and diaspora advocacy partly coincides with recent work on transnational repression, but does not reduce exile politics to coercion. A. Dukalskis *et al.* (2024) had shown that authoritarian crackdowns could extend beyond borders through transnational repression. M. Michaelsen & J. Thumfart (2023) had added that digital tools allowed states to pressure political exiles while raising questions of host-state sovereignty. These findings support the article's conclusion that exile did not automatically protect opposition actors from homeland power. At the same time, the article differs from repression-centred studies by showing that exile also preserved party organisation, legal advocacy and international recognition where domestic arenas were closed. Y. Abramson (2024) had conceptualised diasporas as threats, victims and assets in securitised national projects. This threefold reading helps explain the article's finding that postcolonial states could treat emigrant elites as diplomatic resources, political risks or objects of surveillance within the same institutional field.

The generational and security dimensions of diaspora mobilisation further refine the article's regional discussion. A.F. Wackenhut & C. Orjuela (2023) had shown that authoritarian regimes attempted to engage young diasporas, which supports the article's claim that diaspora institutionalisation could extract loyalty rather than merely provide representation. M. Kandiah (2024), in the study of younger-generation Tamils in London, had challenged the automatic association between Tamil diaspora politics and terrorism. This agrees with the article's finding that the Sri Lankan pathway externalised conflict into human-rights and memory arenas, but the article places that mobilisation

within a wider comparison with Indian state-led diaspora diplomacy and African administrative engagement. The difference is analytical: M. Kandiah concentrated on one diaspora's political reconfiguration, whereas the present article compares how conflict-generated and state-mediated diaspora channels produced different institutional effects.

The article's findings on external voting and political membership are consistent with comparative research on emigrant enfranchisement, while adding a postcolonial institutional condition. E.I. Wellman (2021) had shown that domestic political calculations, beyond democratic norms, shaped emigrant inclusion in African elections. S.A. Umpierrez de Reguero *et al.* (2021) had similarly found that higher inclusion and contestation increased the probability of adopting and implementing external voting rights. These studies support the article's claim that external voting extended the political community beyond residence. However, the article does not treat external voting as inherently democratising. N. Fliess *et al.* (2025) had shown that autocracies may enfranchise citizens abroad, which confirms the article's conclusion that diaspora rights can mobilise loyalty and legitimacy as well as participation. J. Peltoniemi *et al.* (2023) had demonstrated that electoral participation among non-resident voters depended on mobilising ties, which supports the article's emphasis on organisation rather than migrant numbers. The same logic appears in I.Ö. Yener-Roderburg & E.Ö. Yetiş (2024), where Turkish diaspora organisations in Germany and the United Kingdom shaped party support abroad. That finding corresponds with the article's mechanism of transnational party networking, though the article broadens it to include postcolonial routes of exile, colonial education and identity-based mobilsation.

The economic dimension of the findings also corresponds with recent studies, but the article distinguishes household-level effects from elite-controlled finance. B. Maydom (2024) had shown that remittances in the Middle East and North Africa were connected to civic and political participation. C. Crisman-Cox & Y. Park (2024) had linked remittances with democracy and terrorism, indicating that financial flows can alter conflict and political order in opposing directions. I.B. Deinla *et al.* (2022) had found that overseas Filipino workers generated political remittances during the pandemic, which supports the article's claim that migration transmits political norms alongside financial resources. Yet the article separates these wider migrant effects from elite mobility, since investors, media owners, contractors and party financiers could shape party systems through concentrated capital. This distinction explains why economic elite migration produced a wider dispersion of outcomes than ordinary remittance reception.

Taken together, the comparison shows that the article's results coincide with recent scholarship on diaspora policy diffusion, external voting, return migration, political remittances, transnational repression and diaspora securitisation. The difference lies in the article's typological synthesis: the same studies usually examined one channel, while the article connected six mechanisms to three regional pathways and four institutional conditions. This means that elite migration should be interpreted as a circulation of political resources whose effects depended on domestic absorption. On this basis, the conclusions drawn together these correspondences and the article's connection of mechanisms, regional pathways and institutional conditions.

## CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of elite migration in postcolonial states established that the movement of political elites shaped political transformation as a conditional rather than an automatic factor, its effect set by the institutional route of re-entry into domestic politics. Elite migration operated through six transmission mechanisms: exile-based survival, returnee technocratic transfer, diaspora lobbying, transnational party networking, economic elite mobility and the state institutionalisation of diaspora engagement, with public-sector skilled emigration cutting across them. Each mechanism either widened pluralist competition or reinforced institutional closure, depending on whether external resources entered accountable institutions or patronage structures. Exile and advocacy proved reformist where they stayed tied to domestic constituencies, returnee administration where expertise entered accountable bodies, while economic mobility yielded the broadest range of outcomes.

The regional comparison showed that the same mechanisms followed distinct institutional routes across Africa, Latin America and South Asia. In the African cases, liberation exile and state reconstruction made the reformist yield depend on converting external legitimacy into accountable office. In the Latin American cases, authoritarian exile and human-rights internationalisation routed transformation through courts, parties and rights bodies, favouring pluralisation where those bodies absorbed returning actors. In the South Asian cases, colonial education, large diasporas and identity mobilisation produced mixed outcomes that turned on whether mobilisation connected to inclusive representation or to unresolved conflict. The function of mobility, rather than its volume, determined the pathway, and non-returning elites retained influence through advocacy, finance and expertise, so that return marked only one entry point into domestic politics.

At the institutional level, elite migration affected opposition capacity, administration, party competition, policy transfer, polarisation, citizenship and political stability in more than one direction, so that the same movement could strengthen one governance dimension while weakening another, depending on whether mobile elites stayed tied to domestic constituencies, whether expertise was absorbed through transparent procedures, whether political finance and diaspora engagement were regulated, and whether advocacy linked to inclusive representation. These results support a conception of elite migration as a cross-border circulation of political, administrative and economic resources whose effect is set by the capacity of domestic institutions to translate it into accountable public power, so that mobile elites cannot be treated as a uniform diaspora effect.

The reframing places elite migration within the institutional analysis of postcolonial political development and shows how former colonial ties shape relations between domestic and external political arenas. Further research could separate elite migrants from general migrants in case databases, trace diaspora finance entering party systems, and compare how postcolonial states regulate external voting, diaspora councils and returnee appointments over time.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

None.

## FUNDING

None.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None.

## REFERENCES

[1] Abramson, Y. (2024). Securitizing the nation beyond the state: Diasporas as threats, victims, and assets. *European Journal of International Relations*, 30(1), 78-103. doi: 10.1177/13540661221151036.
[2] Adamson, F.B. (2016). The growing importance of diaspora politics. *Current History*, 115(784), 291-297. doi: 10.1525/curh.2016.115.784.291.
[3] Adamson, F.B., & Han, E. (2024). Diasporic geopolitics, rising powers, and the future of international order. *Review of International Studies*, 50(3), 476-493. doi: 10.1017/S0260210524000123.
[4] Baser, B., & Bocu, G. (2025). Youth responses to state-manufactured diaspora mobilization: Turkey's diaspora governance and the politics of selective engagement. *Globalizations*, 22(1), 81-97. doi: 10.1080/14747731.2024.2306724.
[5] Baser, B., & Öztürk, A.E. (2020). Positive and negative diaspora governance in context: From public diplomacy to transnational authoritarianism. *Middle East Critique*, 29(3), 319-334. doi: 10.1080/19436149.2020.1770449.
[6] Craven, C.R. (2022). Constraining Tamil transnational political action: Security governance practices beyond the sending state. *Journal of Global Security Studies*, 7(4), article number ogac023. doi: 10.1093/jogss/ogac023.
[7] Crisman-Cox, C., & Park, Y. (2024). Remittances, terrorism, and democracy. *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, 41(5), 598-622. doi: 10.1177/07388942231207029.
[8] Deinla, I.B., Mendoza, G.A., Mendoza, R.U., & Yap, J.K. (2022). Emergent political remittances during the pandemic: Evidence from a survey of overseas Filipino workers. *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal*, 31(2), 141-161. doi: 10.1177/01171968221112119.
[9] Diaspora for Development. (2020). *Diaspora engagement mapping: Ghana*. Vienna: ICMPD.
[10] Docquier, F., & Rapoport, H. (2012). Globalization, brain drain, and development. *Journal of Economic Literature*, 50(3), 681-730. doi: 10.1257/jel.50.3.681.
[11] Doña-Reveco, C. (2020). Memories of exile and temporary return: Chilean exiles remember Chile. *Journal of Latin American Geography*, 19(3), 199-223. doi: 10.1353/tla.2020.0024.
[12] Dukalskis, A., Furstenberg, S., Hellmeier, S., & Scales, R. (2024). The long arm and the iron fist: Authoritarian crackdowns and transnational repression. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 68(6), 1051-1079. doi: 10.1177/00220027231188896.
[13] Ellis, S. (2013). *External mission: The ANC in exile, 1960-1990*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. doi: 10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199330614.001.0001.
[14] Favell, A. (2022). Immigration, integration and citizenship: Elements of a new political demography. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 48(1), 3-32. doi: 10.1080/1369183X.2022.2020955.
[15] Fliess, N., Kiani, A., & Østergaard-Nielsen, E. (2025). Why do autocracies enfranchise their citizens abroad? A large-N event history analysis, 1990-2010. *Democratization*, 32(3), 659-683. doi: 10.1080/13510347.2024.2383795.
[16] Gamlen, A. (2014). Diaspora institutions and diaspora governance. *International Migration Review*, 48(S1), S180-S217. doi: 10.1111/imre.12136.
[17] Guyot, L. (2021). "If you become a slave here, do you think they're going to fight there?" Tamil diaspora mobilizations and host-country politics. *South Asia Multidisciplinary Academic Journal*, 27. doi: 10.4000/samaj.7665.
[18] Hirschman, A.O. (1970). *Exit, voice, and loyalty: Responses to decline in firms, organizations, and states*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
[19] Hughes, C. (2011). The politics of knowledge: Ethnicity, capacity and return in post-conflict reconstruction policy. *Review of International Studies*, 37(4), 1493-1514. doi: 10.1017/S0260210511000210.
[20] International IDEA. (2024). *The global state of democracy 2024: Strengthening the legitimacy of elections in a time of radical uncertainty.* Retrieved from https://surl.li/nsoimf.
[21] International Organization for Migration. (2024). *World migration report 2024.* Retrieved from https://surl.li/dxmgku.
[22] Kandiah, M. (2024). Disrupting the "Tamil diaspora-terrorism" paradigm: The political mobilisation of younger generation Tamils in the London diaspora. *Critical Studies on Terrorism,* 17(2), 329-352. doi: 10.1080/17539153.2024.2328392.
[23] Kandilige, L., & Teye, J.K. (2023). *National and international migration policy in Ghana*. Retrieved from https://www.cmi.no/publications/8795-national-and-international-migration-policy-in-ghana.
[24] Karabegović, D. (2025). Fixing things from the outside? Diaspora politicians and transnational political engagement. *Globalizations*, 22(1), 114-131. doi: 10.1080/14747731.2024.2336647.
[25] Koinova, M. (2018). Diaspora mobilizations for conflict: Beyond amplification and reduction. In R. Cohen & C. Fischer (Eds.), *Routledge handbook of diaspora studies* (pp. 311-319). England: Routledge. doi: 10.4324/9781315209050-42.

[26] Koinova, M., Düvell, F., Kalantzi, F., de Jong, S., Kaunert, C., & Marchand, M.H. (2023). International politics of migration in times of "crisis" and beyond the COVID-19 pandemic. *Migration Studies*, 11(1), 242-257. doi: 10.1093/migration/mnac039.
[27] Lam, A., & Rui, H. (2023). Global human mobility and knowledge transfer: Highly skilled return migrants as agents of transnational learning. *Global Networks*, 23(2), 311-331. doi:10.1111/glob.12384.
[28] Leblang, D. (2017). Harnessing the diaspora: Dual citizenship, migrant return remittances. *Comparative Political Studies*, 50(1), 75-101. doi: 10.1177/0010414015606736.
[29] Maydom, B. (2024). Remittances and political participation in the Middle East and North Africa. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 50(17), 4336-4357. doi: 10.1080/1369183X.2024.2357833.
[30] Michaelsen, M., & Thumfart, J. (2023). Drawing a line: Digital transnational repression against political exiles and host state sovereignty. *European Journal of International Security*, 8(2), 151-171. doi: 10.1017/eis.2022.27.
[31] Ministry of External Affairs of India. (n.d.). *Population of overseas Indians*. Retrieved from https://www.mea.gov.in/population-of-overseas-indians.htm.
[32] Natter, K., & Thiollet, H. (2022). Theorising migration politics: Do political regimes matter? *Third World Quarterly*, 43(7), 1515-1530. doi: 10.1080/01436597.2022.2069093.
[33] Nyblade, B., Wellman, E.I., & Allen, N. (2022). Transnational voting rights and policies in violent democracies: A global comparison. *Comparative Migration Studies*, 10, article number 27. doi: 10.1186/s40878-022-00299-9.
[34] Oklikah, D.O. (2024). Extra-regional return migration to Africa: A systematic literature review. *Africa Spectrum,* 59(2), 305-327. doi: 10.1177/00020397241270131.
[35] Oluwasanmi, O.P., & Fagbadebo, O.M. (2025). Diaspora vote: Relationship and power of the legislature in political leadership in Nigeria. *African Identities*. doi: 10.1080/14725843.2025.2459836.
[36] Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2024). *International migration outlook 2024.* doi: 10.1787/50b0353e-en.
[37] Peltoniemi, J., Nemčok, M., & Wass, H. (2023). With pulling ties, electoral participation flies: Factors mobilising turnout among non-resident Finnish voters. *European Political Science*, 22(1), 83-100. doi: 10.1057/s41304-022-00404-7.
[38] Perry, M. (2016). "With a little help from my friends": The Dutch solidarity movement and the Chilean struggle for democracy. *European Review of Latin American and Caribbean Studies*, 101, 75-96. doi: 10.18352/erlacs.10114.
[39] Ragazzi, F. (2014). A comparative analysis of diaspora policies. *Political Geography*, 41, 74-89. doi: 10.1016/j.polgeo.2013.12.004.
[40] Rother, S. (2022). The "gold standard" for labour export? The role of civil society in shaping multi-level Philippine migration policies. *Third World Quarterly*, 43(7), 1607-1626. doi: 10.1080/01436597.2021.2015314.
[41] Sadiq, K., & Tsourapas, G. (2021). The postcolonial migration state. *European Journal of International Relations*, 27(3), 884-912. doi: 10.1177/13540661211000114.
[42] Schöfberger, I. (2025). Diaspora policies in Africa: Vertical and horizontal policy diffusion. *International Migration Review*. doi: 10.1177/01979183251329047.
[43] Solimano, A., & Avanzini, D. (2010). *The international circulation of elites: Knowledge, entrepreneurial and political (UNU-WIDER Working Paper No. 2010/113)*. Helsinki: United Nations University World Institute for Development Economics Research.
[44] Sznajder, M., & Roniger, L. (2009). *The politics of exile in Latin America*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. doi: 10.1017/CBO9780511581373.
[45] Tripathi, S. (2024). "Everything is fine in India": Crafting emotional proximity with the homeland in the Indian diaspora. *Politics, Religion & Ideology,* 25(4), 587-604. doi: 10.1080/21567689.2024.2419675.
[46] Umpierrez de Reguero, S.A., Yener-Roderburg, I.Ö., & Cartagena, V. (2021). Political regimes and external voting rights: A cross-national comparison. *Frontiers in Political Science*, 3, article number 636734. doi: 10.3389/fpos.2021.636734.
[47] United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2025). *International migrant stock 2024: Key facts and figures*. New York: United Nations.
[48] Vathi, Z., King, R., & Kalir, B. (2023). Editorial introduction: The shifting geopolitics of return migration and reintegration. *Journal of International Migration and Integration*, 24(2), 369-385. doi: 10.1007/s12134-022-00974-x.
[49] Wackenhut, A.F., & Orjuela, C. (2023). Engaging the next generation: Authoritarian regimes and their young diaspora. *European Political Science*, 22(1), 143-158. doi: 10.1057/s41304-022-00409-2.
[50] Wellman, E.I. (2021). Emigrant inclusion in home country elections: Theory and evidence from sub-Saharan Africa. *American Political Science Review*, 115(1), 82-96. doi: 10.1017/S0003055420000866.
[51] World Bank. (2024). *Worldwide governance indicators*. Washington, DC: World Bank.
[52] Yener-Roderburg, I.Ö., & Yetiş, E.Ö. (2024). Building party support abroad: Turkish diaspora organisations in Germany and the UK. *Politics and Governance*, 12, article number 7546. doi: 10.17645/pag.7546.
[53] Zapata, G.P. (2022). Diaspora engagement policies and transnational financialisation in Colombia. *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*, 54(4), 722-743. doi: 10.1177/0308518X211045396.