

Workshop

Diaspora institutions and dual citizenship: trend, drivers and consequences

4 April 2022

Theatre - Badia Fiesolana, Via dei Roccettini 9 - San Domenico di Fiesole (Fiesole, Florence)

Scientific Organiser: **Maarten Vink** | European University Institute**Introduction**

Over the past decades, states around the world increasingly employ formal state offices dedicated to emigrants and their descendants, such as fully-fledged diaspora ministries or diaspora departments within ministries. Citizens residing abroad are also much more likely nowadays to have the right to vote in national elections in the homeland, often represented through special electoral constituencies representing emigrant voters. Moreover, recognizing that expatriate citizens can have genuine economic, political and social ties both with their country of residence, as well as their country of origin, dual citizenship acceptance has proliferated globally. In this half-day workshop, we discuss the legal and organizational dimensions of this global trend, focusing particularly -but not exclusively- on dual citizenship acceptance and external voting. What is the extent of the global trend in the rise of diaspora institutions? Are changes in rights on paper also reflected in changes in practice? What drives this trend politically, and what explains variation in timing of the introduction of diaspora institutions across countries? And, finally, what are the implications of, especially, dual citizenship acceptance? How is this reflected in, among others, immigrant naturalization rates and global migration flows?



Programme

13.00 - 13.15 Welcome

Maarten Vink | European University Institute

13.15 - 15.00 **Panel I. Understanding diaspora institutions**

Chair: **Jelena Dzankic** | European University Institute

Explaining the Rise of Diaspora Institutions: A Principal-Agent Perspective

David Leblang | Benjamin Helms, University of Virginia

There is large and growing literature articulating the economic benefits of diaspora institutions that accrue to migrant sending countries. These countries, the literature demonstrates, receive more foreign aid, portfolio investment, and remittances, when they provide expatriates with external voting and/or dual citizenship rights and/or when they create government agencies to serve diaspora populations. Why, then, do some countries forgo the creation of these institutions? We argue that existing “tapping” and “governing” approaches largely ignore the agency of those diaspora communities, and we develop a principal-agent model that explicitly identifies their power as external actors. This characterization of diasporas as agents and sending countries as principals allows us to derive specific testable hypotheses about the cross-national and cross-temporal evolution of diaspora institutions.

Discussant: **Alicia Adsera** | Princeton University and Fernand Braudel Fellow, EUI

Turning Rights into Ballots: Mexican External Voting from the US

Victoria Finn | European University Institute

While some countries lag in enacting or implementing voting rights for nationals living outside the territory, others grant them but lag in turning rights into ballots. What explains the stagnation between offering democratic voice on paper to realizing active external voting in practice? We draw from diaspora politics literature to analyze Mexico as a deviant case: we expect widespread external voting, given extensive state-diaspora institutionalization, continued legal and policy innovations, high financial investment, and the consistent application of federal-level external voting since 2006. Yet, 15 years on, around 2% of those with a voter ID card and less than 1% of the pool of over 10 million potential voters participated in the 2018 election. We argue that key institutional barriers limit meaningful participation from abroad, exacerbated by irregular legal status in the residence country, which deters external voting registration. Evidence comes from turnout data, electoral laws, and interviews within Mexico’s electoral management body to capture insiders’ views on the politics behind innovations. The analysis contributes to understanding the role of electoral institutions and governance across territories. Innovations to ease registration and voting can fail to increase external voting numbers, leaving a large group of nationals abroad on the sidelines of democracy.

Discussant: **Lorenzo Piccoli** | European University Institute

15.00 - 15.30 Coffee break

15.30 - 17.15 **Panel II. Trends, drivers and consequences of dual citizenship**

A global panel database of dyadic dual citizenship acceptance

Maarten Vink and **Luuk van der Baaren** | European University Institute and **David Reichel** | Independent researcher, Vienna, Austria

Ever more people around the world have legitimate citizenship claims vis-a-vis more than one country. We introduce the GLOBALCIT Dyadic Dual Citizenship Dataset, a dataset that addresses the need for longitudinal and continuously updated information on the legal constellations regulating access to dual citizenship. Going back to 1960, the data cover 1.8 million dyad-year observations measuring the legal rules for holding dual citizenship after a person of country A voluntarily acquires the citizenship of country B. We present two motivating applications of the data, highlighting patterns in the timing of dyadic dual citizenship acceptance, and illustrating how the data can be combined with indicators of naturalisation behaviour. This database enables researchers and policymakers to explore the global trends and empirical determinants and effects of dual citizenship acceptance.

Discussant: **Victoria Donnalaja** | European University Institute

Dual citizenship acceptance and bilateral migration flows: a dyadic approach

Mauro Lanati | University of Milano-Bicocca, **David Leblang** | University of Virginia and **Maarten Vink** | European University Institute

Dual citizenship acceptance has proliferated globally over the past half century and has been associated with increased immigrant naturalisation rates and remittances, among others. Previous studies have also linked dual citizenship to increased migration flows, arguing that the possibility to acquire destination country citizenship while maintaining the link with the origin country incentivizes migrants through the material benefits associated with the legal ties to multiple countries (Fitzgerald et al 2014; Alarian and Goodman 2017). While dual citizenship explicitly requires the interaction between specific aspects of citizenship laws of migrant origin and destination countries, existing studies only consider the dual citizenship acceptance of destination countries or do not fully account for the directed dyadic structure of the relevant policy context. Drawing on a novel dyadic dual citizenship acceptance dataset and the most extensive bilateral migration flow data currently available, in this paper we apply a structural gravity model to explore and re-assess the dual citizenship hypothesis of bilateral migration flows.

Discussant: **David Reichel** | Independent researcher, Vienna, Austria