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## Chapter 20. Migrants' Political Participation beyond Electoral Arenas

Daniela Vintila<sup>1</sup> and Marco Martiniello<sup>2</sup>

### 1 Introduction

In recent years, the topic of migrants' participation at the national, sub-national, and transnational level has received increasing political and societal salience, especially across Western countries. This has been coupled with a growing academic interest on migrants' patterns of socio-political mobilisation, often derived from the acceleration and diversification of human mobility worldwide. So far, much of the scholarship has focused on migrants' participation in institutionalised political activities, especially in a context in which declining turnout and growing political scepticism have started to threaten representative democracies.

Nevertheless, by doing so, past studies have often neglected the wide repertoire of alternative “acts of citizenship” (Isin & Nielson 2008) through which migrants influence the political agenda in home or host countries by articulating their demands outside of the electoral arena.

As we will show, research on migrants' political participation still faces important limitations. Some derive from the limited empirical evidence that exists on patterns of engagement of different migrant groups across different countries. Others arise from the relatively scarce attention paid so far to key factors explaining migrants' preferences for specific modes or channels of participation over others.

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This chapter aims to provide a roadmap of the changing nature of migrants' participation beyond electoral politics. The chapter is structured as follows. The first section discusses the recent evolution of the multifaceted phenomenon of political participation and exemplifies differences over time and across countries in migrants' mobilisation. The second section draws attention on the risk of treating migrants as a homogenous group when examining their political participation. We argue that research on this topic should systematically pay attention not only to migrants' characteristics (national origin, first *versus* second-generation migrants, foreigners *versus* naturalised migrants), but also the type of polity they engage in (at the national, sub-national or supranational level). The third section discusses key determinants of cross-country and inter-group variations in migrants' participation. We conclude with an agenda for further research, based on current gaps in existing literature.

## **2 What type(s) of participation? Broadening the definition of migrants' political engagement**

Migrants' political engagement is a multidimensional phenomenon that has intensified and diversified over time as a combined effect of migrants' increasing demands for participation and changing states policies that opened new venues for minority mobilisation. In this section, we argue that migration research should pay more attention to the wide repertoire of actions through which migrants make their voice heard in the public arena of home and host countries.

When analysing migrants' political mobilisation, past studies have mostly focused on conventional forms of participation linked to the electoral arena (for larger N studies, see Bueker 2005; Bird *et al.* 2011; Morales & Giugni 2011; de Rooij 2012; Voicu & Comsa 2014; Vintila 2015; Ostling 2019, amongst others). This includes institutionalised political acts such as voting, standing as candidates in elections or joining political parties. However, restrictive

requirements for accessing electoral rights still prevent migrants from actively participating in this type of political activities.

Electoral abstention is not always a free choice, at least not for everyone (Marien *et al.* 2010).

When it comes to immigrants, most electoral modes of participation have been traditionally reserved for migrants holding the host country's nationality. For instance, when discussing the thesis of migrants' political quiescence, Martiniello (2006, 83) argued that, for a long time, immigrant workers in Europe were not even expected to become politically active, being rather asked to observe a "devoir de réserve". Although many states have extended voting rights to foreigners, this enfranchisement process usually covers only specific (sub-national or supranational) elections, without including elections for national parliaments. Moreover, foreigners still cannot stand as candidates in elections held in many countries (see the example of third-country nationals across the EU) and in some of them, they even face obstacles for joining political parties (DIVPOL Report<sup>3</sup>).

As for emigrants, an increasing number of sending countries allow external voting, while some also reserve parliamentary seats for the diaspora. Yet, emigrants are often allowed to vote only in national elections in the homeland, while being disenfranchised for sub-national elections. Additionally, lack of information or complicated voting modalities from abroad often impede external voters from exercising the active suffrage (Lafleur 2013; Ostling 2019); and in many cases, non-residents remain excluded from the passive suffrage (Vintila & Soare 2018).

This narrow understanding of political participation through the lenses of electoral engagement has often led to the conclusion that migrants are politically passive as few of them vote, join parties or stand as candidates (Morales & Giugni 2011; de Rooij 2012; Vintila 2015; Vintila &

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<sup>3</sup> DIVPOL project on "Diversity in political parties' programmes, organisation and representation", conducted between 2012 and 2014 across eight EU countries. Report available here: [https://www.upf.edu/documents/3329791/3455370/DIVPOL\\_EN\\_screen.pdf/b5106c57-bf20-426b-bb75-b5cf46a718e5](https://www.upf.edu/documents/3329791/3455370/DIVPOL_EN_screen.pdf/b5106c57-bf20-426b-bb75-b5cf46a718e5) (accessed 13/06/2020).

Morales 2018). Yet, electoral activity represents only one part of the broad repertoire of modes of political participation which also includes non-electoral, unconventional and extra-parliamentary participatory acts through which migrants give voice to societal concerns beyond routinized electoral activities (see examples in Figure 20.1<sup>4</sup>) The array of such activities has enriched over time, even in a context in which migrants' electoral participation remains relatively weak. Following Dalton's (2008) argument, this can reveal a recent shift in citizenship norms, from a pattern of duty-based citizenship to a more engaged citizenship.

INSERT FIGURE 20.1 NEAR HERE

There are many types of non-electoral political activities. Some (signing petitions or participation in demonstrations or associations) are seen as "classical" forms of engagement, whereas others (social media mobilisation) are still categorised as newer or "less traditional" based on the chronology criterion. Yet, scholars still find it difficult to establish a clear conceptual distinction between "old" and "new" participation modes. Some non-electoral activities initially labelled as unconventional have become increasingly widespread, as in the case of protests which now represent a rather "normalised" mode of expressing one's voice (Bilodeau 2008). However, as shown by Strijbis (2015) in a study of migrant protest mobilisation between 1975 and 2005 across seven European countries, whereas in some cases (Austria, France, the Netherlands, the UK), the levels of migrant protest mobilisation have remained relatively stable, in others (Germany, Switzerland), they have increased over time.

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<sup>4</sup> For illustrative purposes, Figure 20.1 shows only few examples of modes and channels of participation. Some participatory acts are rather difficult to categorise. For instance, migrants may sometimes become party members even in countries in which they are not enfranchised. Also, some non-electoral activities categorised as "more recent" are indeed new (social media mobilisation), whereas other (artistic mobilisation, hunger strikes, etc.) are not new, but have intensified during the last decades.

Quite frequently, non-electoral political actions derive directly from migrants' agency as an activism "from below" pursued via formal affiliation to organisations or through more informal/ad-hoc networks. Often arising from common experiences of injustice, they usually aim to acquire rights for migrants or fight instances of discrimination or exclusion (Chimienti 2011). Regardless of the specific mechanisms leading to mobilisation, by engaging in such actions (by choice or by necessity, proactively or reactively), migrants give salience to their demands in public deliberations in online or offline spaces.

Several elements distinguish non-electoral migrant participation from more traditional ways of influencing politics. Unlike voting that occurs in the shadow of anonymity, most non-electoral acts (protests, petitions, manifestations, etc.) are generally public (Bilodeau 2008). They give individuals more control over the focus and locus of their activities, by allowing them to decide when and how to participate without having to wait until the next election to become active (Dalton 2008). Very importantly, unlike electoral engagement, non-electoral participation does not generally depend on the recognition (from state authorities) of a "right to have rights" usually conditioned by migrants' legal status. Consequently, the pool of migrants that can participate in non-electoral activities is, *a priori*, much larger than the share of those entitled to vote or stand as candidates. For instance, undocumented migrants who lack electoral rights in host countries can still engage in non-electoral activities. There are plenty of examples in this regard, from *sans papiers* movements across Europe to the recent Black Vests movement- *Gilets Noirs*- fighting for undocumented migrants' rights in France<sup>5</sup> (see Chimienti 2011 for an analysis of undocumented migrants' participation in France, the UK and Denmark). When it comes to emigrants' non-electoral mobilisation, even members of the diaspora who do not hold the nationality of a country, but still show interest in the later, can participate from abroad.

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<sup>5</sup> See: <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/12/world/europe/undocumented-migrants-pantheon-paris.html> (accessed 13/06/2020).

Certain non-electoral activities specifically aim to influence politics, although they occur outside electoral processes (see the campaign The3million<sup>6</sup> for EU27 citizens in the UK after the Brexit referendum). Others (raising money for charities, helping neighbours, boycotting, etc.) may have broader objectives of finding solutions for community problems or helping certain groups (Zani & Barrett 2012). Yet, a clear-cut distinction between civic and political modes of participation is often blurred by the fact that the same activity (such as associational membership) may serve both political and civic aims, depending on the context of mobilisation. Additionally, whereas certain activities reflect a strong ethnic dimension by serving specific groups (participation in migrant organisations, *sans papiers* movements or protests against human rights violations in detention centres), others have broader purposes beyond ethnic or racial distinctions (trade unions movements).

Certain forms of engagement (especially associational membership, lobbying, demonstrations, protests, occupations of public spaces, etc.) can be high-cost activities that require a sustained effort and commitment from participants, while often being expected to have stronger impact (Marien *et al.* 2010; de Rooij 2012). Some are extreme forms of mobilisation often seen as a weapon of last resort, such as hunger strikes<sup>7</sup> or lip sewing practices that undocumented migrants or refugees increasingly use as forms of protests (Bargu 2017). In Belgium, the media documented how in 2008, 2015 and 2019, several undocumented migrants climbed on huge cranes in different construction sites in Brussels and threatened to jump if their situation was not regularized<sup>8</sup>. Perhaps the most extreme form of mobilisation in a migratory context happened when South-Moluccan immigrants hijacked a train in the Netherlands in 1977 to claim independence in the origin country, a former Dutch colony (Bartels 1986). Other forms

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<sup>6</sup> See: <https://www.the3million.org.uk/> (accessed 13/06/2020).

<sup>7</sup> See examples here: <https://theconversation.com/migrants-on-hunger-strike-follow-long-tradition-of-people-using-their-bodies-to-protest-against-cruelty-121947> (accessed 13/06/2020)

<sup>8</sup> See <https://www.rtl.be/info/regions/bruxelles/des-refugies-ont-grimpe-sur-des-grues-tout-ce-qu'ils-demandent-est-un-titre-de-sejour--771251.aspx>; [https://www.rtb.be/info/belgique/detail\\_trois-sans-papiers-perches-sur-une-grue-a-bruxelles?id=5235703](https://www.rtb.be/info/belgique/detail_trois-sans-papiers-perches-sur-une-grue-a-bruxelles?id=5235703) (accessed 13/06/2020)

of engagement (signing petitions, wearing a badge, etc.) are more latent or low-cost participation modes that require less individual effort.

The duration of collective action to achieve a certain goal is another element to be considered. Some activities (associational membership, repeated protests, etc.) are more demanding than those requiring only sporadic commitment (one-time contacts with politicians, occasional mobilisation triggered by specific events, etc.). In analysing how much time individuals devote to volunteering and social participation in Canada, Couton & Gaudet (2008) showed that although immigrants participate less compared to non-migrants, the time that both groups spend in social participation is, in average, about the same.

Regarding how mobilisation takes place, Figure 20.1 shows that parties, trade unions, religious organisations, consultative bodies or migrant associations have been classic institutionalised channels through which migrants make their voice heard in the public sphere. More recently, they have been complemented by new ways of influencing politics via online or social media mobilisation channels. Diaspora studies in particular show how new communication technologies facilitate mobilisation from abroad, by allowing emigrants to keep ties with the homeland, often as cyber-activism (Itzigsohn 2000; Oiarzabal & Reips 2012). Recent examples come from the Romanian diaspora that mobilised on social media for an anti-governmental rally<sup>9</sup> or the Lebanese diaspora's protests<sup>10</sup>.

Other channels remain offline, while being increasingly used in recent decades. An illustrative example comes from migrants' choice of cultural and artistic production as means of political expression. For instance, music often echoes migrants' political messages in lyrics, rhythm, sounds or performance. Hundreds of examples can be provided, including the French-Algerian

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<sup>9</sup> See: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/aug/22/romania-migrant-diaspora-protest-police-crackdown-corruption> (accessed 13/06/2020)

<sup>10</sup> See: <https://www.bbc.com/news/av/world-middle-east-50529822/lebanon-protest-expats-return-for-independence-day-demonstration> (accessed 13/06/2020)



*Rai*-inspired band *Carte de Séjour*, the Tex-Mex, Tejano or salsa music as affirmation of migrants' heritage in the US, live performances of Rap artists to communicate political messages, the use of migrant artistic talents to support electoral campaigns, etc. (Martiniello & Lafleur 2008; Martiniello 2015, 2019). The Fandango at the Wall project deserves a special mention. Every year, musicians meet at the border between Mexico and the US in San Diego-Tijuana. They play music together on both sides of the border as a way to protest against migration policy in the region (Seghal 2018).

Given their different features, some non-electoral activities are, unsurprisingly, more frequent than others. In a case study on Australia, Bean (2012) showed interesting patterns between Australian-born and overseas-born (from English and non-English speaking countries) who contact politicians, sign petitions or attend demonstrations and protests. Bilodeau (2008) also demonstrated that migrants in Canada are more likely to abstain from protest politics compared to non-migrants, with migrants' generally abstaining more from joining strikes or occupying public buildings than from signing petitions. From a cross-national perspective, although comparative data is scarce, the 2017 European Values Survey (EVS) offers an overview of participation in specific activities across European countries.

INSERT TABLE 20.1 NEAR HERE

Table 20.1 shows that certain participation modes such as signing petitions, attending demonstrations, doing voluntary work or belonging to religious or sports-related organizations are more frequent amongst migrants and non-migrants alike. By far, signing petitions is a more common practice in which over 40 per cent of migrant and non-migrant EVS respondents have been involved. Yet, the share of those joining unofficial strikes or belonging to parties or trade unions remains limited. Interestingly, if studies generally show that migrants participate less in

elections than non-migrants (Morales & Giugni 2011), this gap often changes for non-electoral activities. Foreign-born respondents are slightly more engaged than native-born across almost all activities analysed in Table 20.1, this gap being more visible when it comes to attending demonstrations and, to a lesser extent, belonging to humanitarian or cultural organizations. Yet, migrants still participate slightly less than non-migrants in parties and trade unions.

The use of specific channels for participation also varies widely between groups and countries. For instance, the MOVEACT<sup>11</sup> project comparing the political participation of mobile European Union (EU) citizens showed that British and German migrants participate more in associations than Poles or Romanians, although migrants' associational membership is stronger in France and Italy compared to Spain or Greece. The type of associations also matters. In line with the EVS results previously discussed, the MOVEACT project also showed that membership in political or economic organisations (parties, trade unions, professional organisations) is less common, but participation rates are higher in charities or cultural and sports-related associations.

### **3 Whose participation and where? Varying levels of engagement across groups and type(s) of polity**

The previous section called for a broadening of the definition of migrants' political participation to take into account non-electoral forms of engagement. This section draws attention on the risk of treating migrants as a homogenous group when analysing their participatory patterns. We argue that divergent parameters of activism across different groups

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<sup>11</sup> MOVEACT was a two years research project (2011-2013) focused on the patterns of political participation of British, German, Polish and Romanian citizens in France, Italy, Spain and Greece. Final report available here: <https://www.eliamep.gr/en/publications/> (accessed 13/06/2020).

highlight the necessity to move beyond the research of migrants as a “unitary block” and pay attention to how their characteristics lead to varying participation levels (Figure 20.2).

INSERT FIGURE 20.2 NEAR HERE

First, an important distinction needs to be made between immigrant participation (in the host country) and diaspora participation (in the homeland while abroad). Although the literature has traditionally focused on how immigrants interact with their destination countries, studies have also documented transnational socio-political linkages through which emigrants connect with origin countries (Itzigsohn 2000; Østergaard-Nielsen 2003; Lafleur 2013). Of course, immigrants are, at the same time, emigrants, but the need to separate these two dimensions of immigrant and diaspora participation remains necessary since they do not always reflect a “mirroring” behaviour. Even the same migrant group might show different engagement patterns in home and host country politics; and strong mobilisation in homeland might correlate with certain political apathy in destination countries. For instance, studies demonstrate that migrants show certain political disengagement in the host countries, given their unfamiliarity with the political system, lack of time to engage in collective actions, etc. (Martiniello 2006; Morales & Giugni 2011; Vintila 2015). In turn, diaspora studies highlight that emigrants increasingly engage in homeland politics using a diverse array of participation modes (Adamson 2019). The locus of mobilisation thus needs to be considered when drawing conclusions on how engaged migrants actually are.

Second, research on migrants’ participation should also adopt a multilevel understanding of their engagement by paying more attention to the specific level at which migrants participate. The form and intensity of mobilisation may vary between the national, sub-national and supranational level. For instance, in a longitudinal study of intra-EU migrants’ political

engagement across 10 countries, Vintila (2015) showed that mobile EU citizens engage more in local elections held in their host countries than in European Parliament elections. In general, studies on immigrant political participation tend to focus on specific host municipalities. Cities are often seen as a more accessible arena for migrant participation due to the reduced size of the polity and the fact that migrants may more easily become familiar with the political system of their municipalities of residence than the host country as a whole. Yet, significant differences in migrants' engagement across cities persist. For instance, respondents of the Immigrant Citizens Survey<sup>12</sup> self-reported higher participation rates in trade unions or political organisations in some cities (Brussels, Milan and, to a lesser extent, Paris) compared to others (Antwerp, Naples, Lyon); with the share of migrants belonging to immigrant organisations being higher in Berlin, Stuttgart, Barcelona, Madrid or Budapest than in Naples, Faro or Brussels. Koopmans (2004) also identified cross-local differences in migrant claims making across European cities. British and Dutch cities return higher levels of migrant participation in public debates compared to most German cities; and the share of migrant claims varies widely across German regions, being higher in Frankfurt, Berlin and Hesse and lower in Stuttgart and Munich. Conversely, when it comes to diaspora participation, most studies have examined how non-residents mobilise towards origin countries in general, with little comparative evidence on their engagement in specific home regions or municipalities.

Thirdly, research on migrant participation should not only be more sensitive to the locus of socio-political actions, but also try to extend the geographical scope of the analysis. There is still an important research gap on how migrants participate in specific countries, often derived from bias effects in existing scholarship for studying origin and destination states with sizeable migrant communities. Consequently, while we have a relatively good picture of immigrants'

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<sup>12</sup> Survey conducted in 2012 across 15 European cities in seven countries. Report available here: [http://immigrantsurvey.org/downloads/ICS\\_ENG\\_Full.pdf](http://immigrantsurvey.org/downloads/ICS_ENG_Full.pdf) (accessed 15/01/2020).

participation in Western Europe and North America, little is known on how they mobilise in Central and Eastern Europe, Latin America, or Asia. Similarly, diaspora studies have mostly focused on homeland mobilisation of large emigrant communities from Latin America, Eastern Europe and some Northern African or South Asian countries. However, the modes of participation of emigrants from Western Europe or North America towards their homeland remain unexplored.

Finally, one frequent peculiarity of comparative studies on migrants' participation is the tendency of treating migrants as a homogenous group (Couton & Gaudet 2008). The preference for aggregation into broad categories of "migrants" versus "non-migrants" is often methodologically driven by data limitations that rarely allow the breakdown by specific origins.

Yet, empirical evidence suggests that not all migrants return the same mobilisation patterns.

The national origin still matters in shaping engagement, with certain migrant groups assuming a more pro-active role in influencing politics than others, even within the same receiving context (Diehl & Blohm 2001; Østergaard-Nielsen 2003; Togeby 2004; Koopmans 2004; Bueker 2005; Morales & Giugni 2011; de Rooij 2012). For instance, Aleksynska (2011) demonstrated that migrants originating from developed countries return stronger civic engagement, with participation rates being higher amongst non-Muslims. Similarly, Vintila (2015) showed that immigrants originating from EU15 countries have higher levels of political participation in host countries compared to those coming from Central and Eastern Europe. Focusing on protest politics in Canada and Australia, Bilodeau (2008) documented that migrants coming from repressive regimes engage less in protests; whereas Voicu & Rusu (2012) showed greater participation in civic associations in Spain among migrants socialised in countries with strong civic involvement and lower participation among those originating from post-communist countries. Additionally, different political socialisation processes often lead to generational participation gaps between first, second, or even third generation migrants

from the same group (Ramakrishnan & Espenshade 2001; Pilati 2018). Likewise, the intensity of migrants' engagement and their choice for specific participation modes also vary depending on their legal status. Oftentimes, naturalised migrants show stronger mobilisation than foreigners; dual citizens can engage in both home and host country; whereas asylum seekers or undocumented migrants use specific participation channels simply because their status impedes them from voting or standing as candidates.

#### **4 What explains migrants' political participation?**

As mentioned, there is strong academic consensus that political alienation is not always a free choice and inequalities in participation still exist (Martiniello 2006; Marien *et al.* 2010). Faced with a labyrinthine evidence pointing towards variations in the frequency, intensity and modes of migrants' engagement at different levels, scholars have explored which factors may encourage or hinder such mobilisation. They have generally highlighted that inequalities in migrants' participation might be due not only to their characteristics, but also to the opportunities for collective action made available by home and host countries (Figure 20.3).

INSERT FIGURE 20.3 NEAR HERE

Much of the scholarship has suggested that participatory gaps between migrants and non-migrants or between different migrant groups are the result of socio-economic disadvantages (Ramakrishnan & Espenshade 2001; Bueker 2005; Hochschild & Mollenkoph 2009; Morales & Giugni 2011; de Rooij 2012; Bloemraad & Schönwälder 2013; Vintila 2015). Civic or political activism can be a costly action for everyone, but it can also be more costly for some individuals in particular. Looking at why participation occurs at a different speed for different

migrant groups, past studies have usually argued that a more privileged socio-economic status allowing migrants to access political information encourages their mobilisation (Zani & Barrett 2012; Pilati 2018). Those counting with better education and financial stability may be in a better position to engage politically. Yet, being in full time employment may reduce the time that individuals can dedicate to collective actions (Couton & Gaudet 2008). Engagement can also depend on age (with young to middle-aged migrants having more incentives to participate) or gender (with women generally engaging less than their male counterparts).

Migration-specific characteristics such as length of stay in the host country, language proficiency, participatory acculturation, or residential concentration can also shape migrants' participation. Language barriers can prevent migrants from engaging in political activities in the host country, whereas their length of stay affects their familiarity with the destination country's social and political dynamics (de Rooij 2012; Zani & Barrett 2012; Pilati 2018). Residential concentration in host countries, often correlated with extended social networks, can facilitate mobilisation, whereas limited civic engagement in the homeland prior to departure might be a trait that is maintained even after moving abroad (Voicu & Rusu 2012).

Migrants' general predispositions and attitudinal motivations can also affect their participation. This can include awareness and interest regarding political events, social or political trust, or migrants' perceptions of how effective their mobilisation can be (Togeby 2004; Zani & Barrett 2012; Pilati 2018). How one feels towards the home or host country, personal ties in either state, individual commitment with the community or how one sees his/her future in a country could also constrain mobilisation, although their effect has been less explored comparatively. Certain attitudinal characteristics are shaped or reinforced by migrants' social capital. Migrants counting with dense associational networks that often foster their interest in politics are more likely to participate (Fennema & Tillie 1999; Itzigsohn 2000; Togeby 2004; de Rooij 2012);

although more research is needed to better understand how participation in different types of associations triggers mobilisation.

Beyond migrants' characteristics, the broader socio-political context (often referred to as Political Opportunity Structure- POS) in which migrants' participation takes place can also create positive or negative stimuli for political engagement. For instance, much scholarly attention has been dedicated to how institutional factors (citizenship regimes, electoral rules, legal constraints regulating public action) directly affect migrants' mobilisation (Bousetta 2000; Diehl & Blohm 2001; Koopmans 2004; Martiniello 2006; Vintila 2015). Some studies examined how key actors (parties, associations, etc.) include migrants' claims into the political agenda, thus triggering minority mobilisation via their status of agents of recruitment (Fennema & Tillie 1999; Østergaard-Nielsen 2003; Bird *et al.* 2011). Yet, more research is needed to comparatively assess how different parties (with different ideological positions, old or new, mainstream or smaller parties) and migrant associations (with variations depending on their scope and resources) condition migrants' engagement. Finally, some scholars suggest that public opinion towards migrants can also affect their participation (Bloemraad & Schönwälder 2013; Pérez-Nievas *et al.* 2014; Vintila & Morales 2018). Yet, this argument needs to be further examined, as it is unclear if societal hostility triggers minority mobilisation as a form of protest or if it actually hinders migrants' engagement in host countries. Similarly, the potential link between diaspora participation in homeland politics and the attitudes of resident nationals in origin countries towards emigrants has hardly been explored.

## **5 Discussion: a call for further research**



This chapter has provided an overview of key perspectives for research on migrants' political participation beyond electoral arenas. Despite significant scholarly contributions in recent years, there are still some important gaps that could be summarised in four important lessons.

*Lesson 1: Migration literature needs to pay more attention to the increasing diversity of modes and channels of migrant political mobilisation*

As discussed, whereas significant progress has been made to understand migrants' engagement in electoral or classic non-electoral modes of participation, more research is needed on how migrants use new channels of mobilisation to put forward their demands. Transnational citizenry is rapidly changing and so does the way in which migrants engage in the public sphere via different "acts of citizenship". Comparative migration research needs to better scrutinize these changing participatory dynamics that could lead to a reconceptualization of our current analytical framework on how, when and why minority mobilisation takes place. New modes of transnational engagement (in digital spaces, extreme forms of mobilisation, participation through arts and culture, etc.) require particular attention to better understand the reasons behind recent shifts in citizenship practices.

*Lesson 2: Immigrants, emigrants and transnational engagement: the need for a new typology of active citizenry across borders*

So far, much of the scholarship has focused on either migrants' participation in host countries or their engagement in homeland politics. These two facets of immigrant and emigrant mobilisation are often treated as different, self-standing dimensions. Although they refer to different polities and may hence respond to different causal mechanisms, one cannot ignore the fact that they are still two sides of the same coin, as they refer to the same group. A comprehensive evaluation of transnational mobilisation thus requires more research on how the same migrant community engages in both sending and receiving countries simultaneously.

Such dual approach would allow for a more refined typology of active citizenry across borders to better distinguish between migrants strongly engaged in both home and host countries; socially and politically alienated mobile citizenry that rarely participates in any polity; and specific communities whose mobilisation remains oriented towards one polity only.

*Lesson 3: Generalising key findings on citizenship praxis: extending the levels of analysis and geographical scope*

Drawing on a nation-oriented analytical focus, much has been written on how migrants become politically active in (or towards) particular countries. Likewise, the literature provides rich examples of migrants' mobilisation in specific cities, with the local level being usually considered as an arena in which migrants can more easily express their demands. Yet, migrants' citizenship practices are not exclusively oriented towards states or cities, with the supranational and regional sub-national levels gaining increasing importance in migration policy-making. Despite of that, we know very little about migrants' engagement at the supranational level (with claims making towards supranational institutions such as the EU) or in specific regions within states; whereas the reasons driving such mobilisation "beyond the state" or "beyond the city" or its real outcomes on policies and migrants' lives remain unexplored.

Scholarship on migrants' mobilisation would hence greatly benefit from a multilevel analytical framework to better assess if migrants still engage in specific polities, what triggers preferences for particular political arenas, and which configuration of factors favours participation across all levels. This would allow scholars to solve the puzzle of the extent to which migrants' political engagement remains primarily locally, regionally or nationally embedded or, on the contrary, if citizenship practices have actually shifted towards transnational and multilevel parameters. Extending the geographical scope of research on migrants' participation should also be a priority. While sizeable migrant populations have received fairly decent scholarly

attention, there are still many world regions, countries or migrant groups that have not been sufficiently explored. For instance, host countries from the Global South are rarely considered in studies on immigrants' mobilisation, whereas diaspora literature hardly discusses how emigrants from the Global North engage politically with their homeland.

*Lesson 4: Personal, political, and societal determinants of migrants' participation: a call for a comprehensive explanatory framework*

Over the years, an impressive number of studies has enriched our understanding of the reasons behind migrants' political mobilisation, showing how such mobilisation can be influenced by migrants' characteristics (socio-economic resources, political attitudes, etc.) and contextual elements (institutional or political factors and actors). Yet, some pieces of this puzzle are still missing. Regarding migrants' characteristics, more attention should be paid to how the national origin or migrants' traits and status (first *versus* second generation migrants, foreigners *versus* naturalised migrants and dual citizens, documented *versus* undocumented, etc.) affect participation. The role of emotions, sense of attachment or self-identification should also be further explored as potential drivers of mobilisation. Regarding contextual factors, societal determinants of migrants' participation still require further research as no clear-cut answers have been provided on how instances of discrimination or societal support/hostility to migration affects minority mobilisation. The role of parties, trade unions or migrant associations as mobilising agents of collective action also requires further discussion. Finally, an important step forward needs to be made to comprehensively evaluate how the interaction between migrants' characteristics and the sending/receiving context accounts for participatory gaps between different migrant groups.

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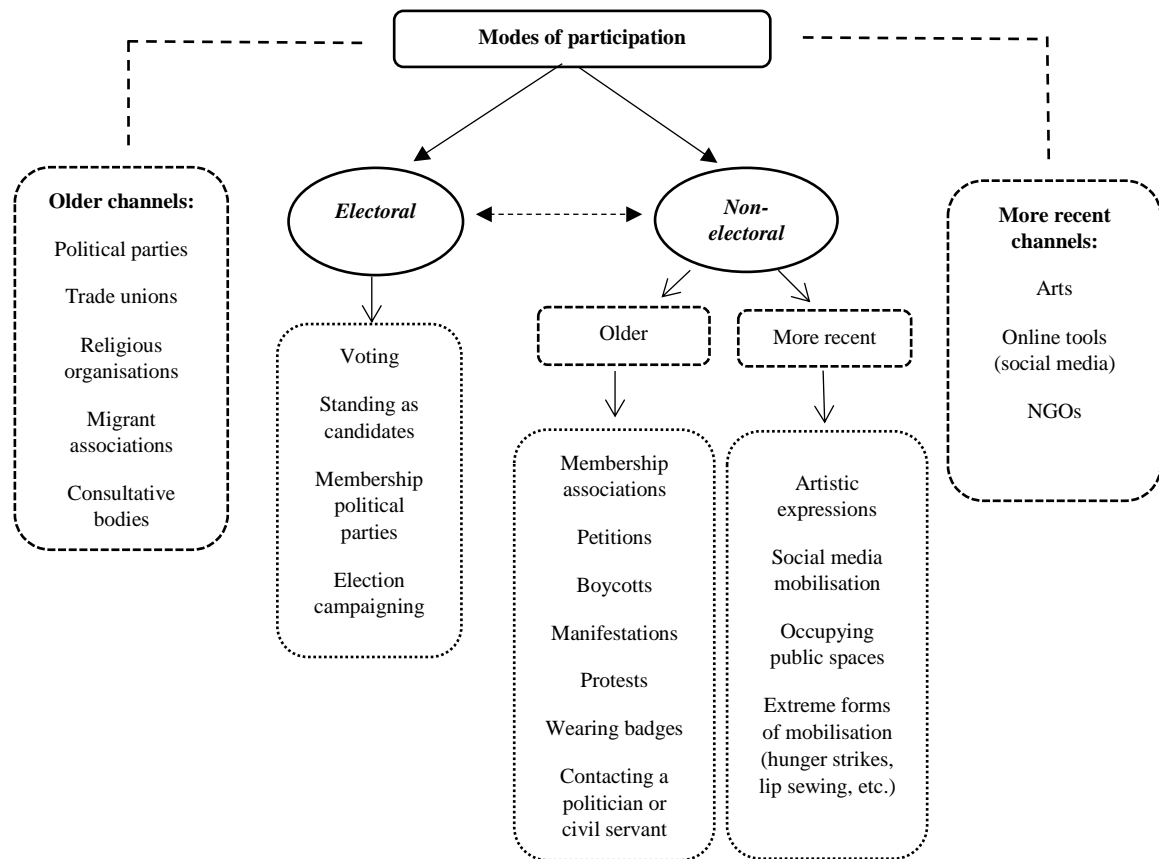
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**Fig. 20.1** A roadmap of the multifaceted phenomenon of migrants' political mobilisation. Some examples



Source: Own elaboration.

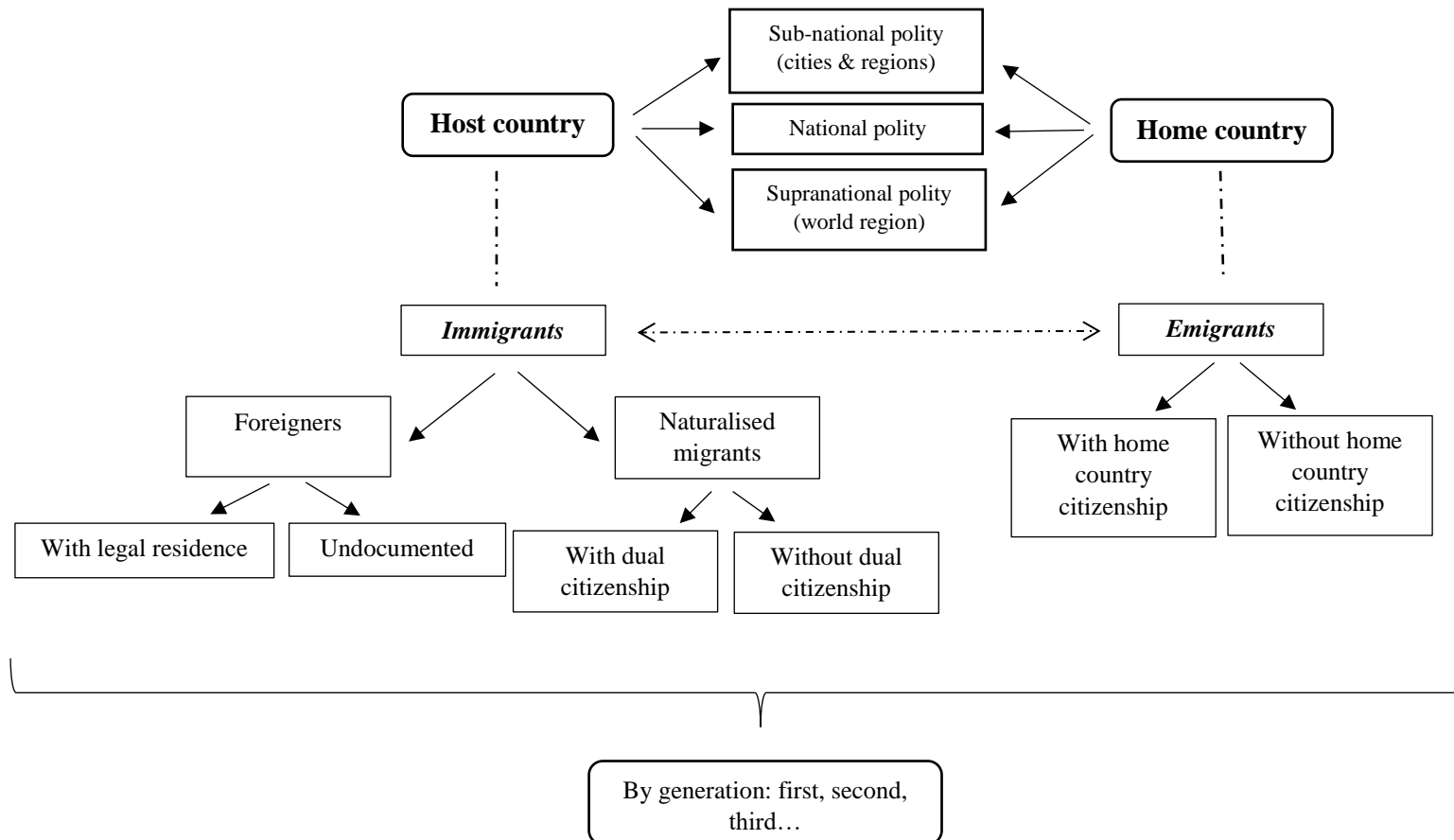
**Table 20.1** Civic and political engagement

	Native-born (%)	Foreign-born (%)
Signed petitions	42.8	45.1
Attended lawful demonstrations	20.2	24.7
Joined boycotts	11.3	13.9
Joined unofficial strikes	5.3	5.5
Voluntary work (last 6 months)	23.3	22.1
Currently belongs to voluntary organizations...		
Political parties or groups	5.3	4.2
Trade union	15.7	14.1
Religious or church associations	21.4	22.6
Professional associations	8.5	10.4
Sports or recreation	22.0	23.4
Consumer organization	3.1	3.8
Humanitarian or charitable organization	10.5	13.4
Self-aid group, mutual aid group	3.6	5.8
Conservation, the environment, ecology, animal rights	7.4	8.6
Education, arts, music, cultural activities	12.9	15.7
Other groups	7.4	8.6

Source: Own elaboration based on the data from the European Values Study 2017: Integrated Dataset (EVS 2017), available here: <https://zacat.gesis.org/>

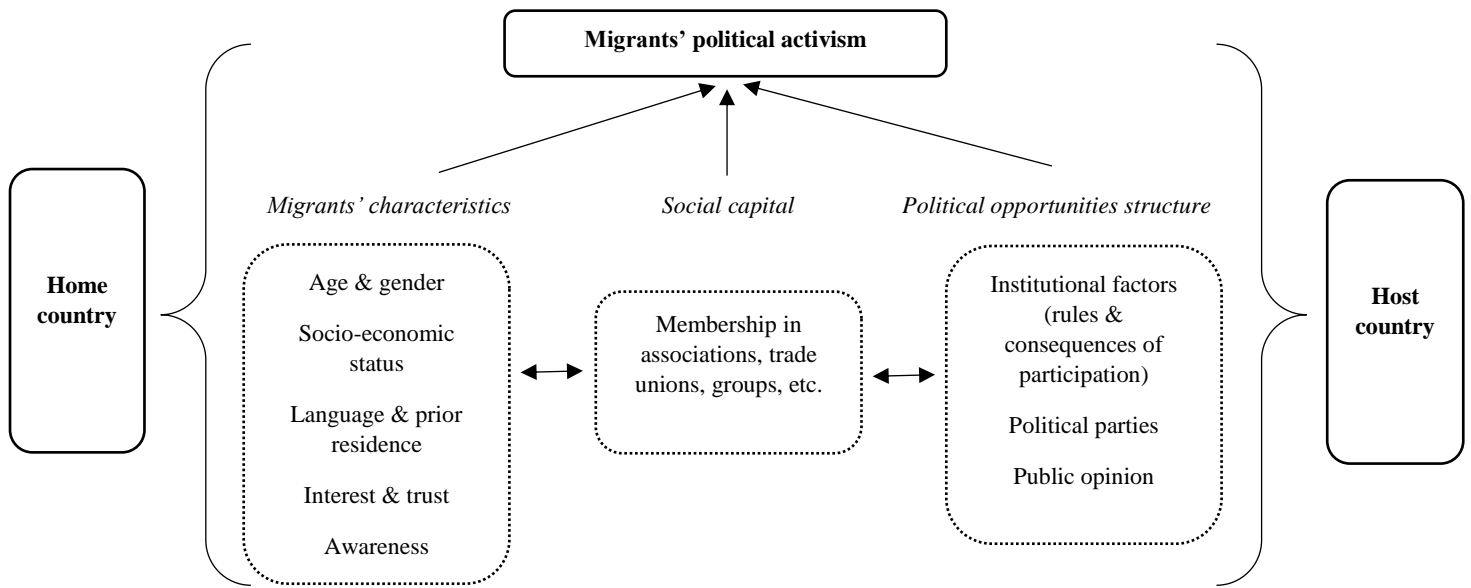


**Fig. 20.2** Migrants' participation in home and host countries: mapping different analytical categories



Source: Own elaboration.

**Fig. 20.3.** Explanatory framework for migrants' political engagement



Source: Own elaboration.