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A Foreign Policy Actor of Importance? The Role of the Somali Diaspora in Shaping Norwegian Policy towards Somalia

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In this article we explore the role of the Somali diaspora in Norwegian foreign policy towards Somalia through an in-depth case study. This empirical study sheds new light on the foreign policy impact of ethnic lobby groups by demonstrating three important points: 1) diaspora organizational strength can only be understood fully by taking a transnational approach, 2) diaspora lobbying attempts depend on interaction between diaspora and decision makers, and 3) in order to understand the potential success of diaspora lobbying, internal fragmentation as well as potential points of agreement need to be recognized. In order to incorporate these points, we suggest a theoretical model that bridges literature on the foreign policy impact of ethnic lobby groups and work on the transnational political ties of migrants. Our model adds the transnational ties and resources of diaspora and feedback loops between states and diaspora into ethnic lobby literature models on conditions for successful lobbying. This model will benefit future studies on the role of other diaspora groups in foreign policy formation towards their country of origin.

Introduction

When migrants leave their country of origin, they do not necessarily cut all ties. It is well-established that migrants maintain transnational connections that can, for example, take the shape of phone calls, remittances, long-distance voting, or investments. What do these connections mean for international relations? While there has been considerable interest in how particular types of transnational connections influence larger societal processes like development, migration, or integration, far less attention has been paid to the question of to what extent the transnational political ties and interests of migrants impact the relationship between states.[1] In this article we wish to explore this question by focusing on the concrete case of the Somali diaspora and their role in shaping Norwegian foreign policy.[2]

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[1] For exceptions within the classical international relations realm, see Shain and Barth 2003 and Adamson and Demetriou 2007. For exceptions within transnational social movements, see e.g., Hägel and Peretz 2005. Most exceptions focus on the state of origin.

[2] We have a broad understanding of foreign policy that "includes both statements and behaviors or actions" (Neack 2003, 26).

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This article provides an empirically rich case study that aims to make both empirical and theoretical contributions to two different strands of literature: the political science literature on the foreign policy impact of ethnic lobby groups,[3] which mainly focuses on the United States and established ethnic communities, and the interdisciplinary work on the transnational political ties of migrants, which builds most heavily on examples from Europe. It makes an important empirical contribution to the first literature by highlighting a type of case that has largely been overlooked: a small state's foreign policy outside of the United States and the political activism of a smaller, less established, refugee diaspora.[4] It contributes to the second literature by adding to an emerging research field on state-diaspora relations, where existing studies mostly focus on diaspora group's relations to their state of origin (e.g., Délano and Gamlen 2014) or on their role in development policy, which sometimes includes the state of settlement as a development actor (e.g., de Haas 2006; Sinatti and Horst 2015). The emphasis on refugees corresponds with previous studies showing that transnational political engagements are particularly pertinent among refugee diasporas, consisting of people who had to leave their country of origin because of violent conflict or a politically oppressive climate (Adamson 2002; Lyons 2007; Horst 2013).

We observe that the two strands of literature represent fundamentally different approaches. The ethnic lobby literature mostly applies a state-centric approach and understands migrant communities as "ethnic lobby groups" comparative to other types of lobby groups, whereas research on transnationalism largely has a bottom-up approach that explores how connections across borders—whether economic, social, or political—shape the lives of migrants and the wider societies they live in. We also observe that these two strands by and large do not refer to each other, and we argue that much is lost when debates about the same topic are held in parallel. In this article, we aim to bridge this gap.

The article presents an in-depth case study to help bridge these two literatures since it allows us to capture the complex processes involved in diaspora lobbying, while drawing on theoretical insights from both literatures. We draw extensively on qualitative data, encompassing interviews with Norwegian politicians and civil servants, advisers at Norwegian NGOs, as well as key political actors in the Norwegian-Somali community, such as senior employees at Norwegian and International NGOs, active members of Norwegian political parties, elected local politicians, academics in the Norwegian research milieu, founders and prominent members of diaspora organizations, and former and current Somali politicians.[5] All informants were asked for their perceptions of and experiences with the foreign policy impact of the Norwegian-Somali diaspora, and concrete examples were discussed extensively. Two of these examples are presented here: Norway's stance on the Ethiopian intervention in Somalia and its involvement in the multidonor trust fund. We also build on earlier research conducted on political transnationalism among the Norwegian-Somali diaspora since 2007, for which interviews were conducted with both Norwegian-Somalis and Norwegian civil society and civil servants. We thus make a *methodological* contribution to the ethnic lobby literature, which largely takes an overarching analytical focus building on secondary sources and written documents only.

The ensuing richness of detailed narratives enables us to make two important points. First, the *success criteria* of the ethnic lobby literature contain useful analytical tools that can benefit research on migrant transnationalism. Second, a

[3] This will be referred to as "ethnic lobby literature" in this paper.

[4] We define "diaspora" as "a group whose members experience dispersion from their home country but remain connected to it through various transnational activities, and whose home country remains an important part of their identity" (Brubaker 2005, 5–7).

[5] Thirty-four semi-structured interviews and nine in-depth conversations were held between February and April 2015 in Oslo, Nairobi, and Mogadishu.

transnational analytical lens better captures the transnational nature of the "ethnic lobby," showing the intricacy of "ethnic interest" and incorporating the multidimensional relationships between diaspora groups and states. Hence, our case study shows the benefit of supplementing analytical perspectives from both literatures.

While not attempting to prove causal relationships, our more modest aim is to identify the factors that enable Norwegian-Somalis to influence Norwegian foreign policy towards Somalia. The fact that we acknowledge diaspora groups as sources of foreign-policy making does not mean that we exclude the role of other factors. As Sasley and Jacoby (2007) argue, "[t]here are multiple factors and considerations that determine a state's foreign policy, including global developments, geo-strategic location, individual leaders and their cognitive frameworks, public opinion, and the interests and efforts of domestic political actors" (Sasley and Jacoby 2007, 185). In this article, we focus on one such factor: the role of the diaspora.

The article starts by providing an overview of the two strands of literature that form the paper's theoretical underpinnings. Then, the context of the case is discussed, highlighting Norwegian foreign policy and the position of the Somali diaspora in Norway. After an in-depth discussion of the two examples (Norway's stance on the Ethiopian intervention in Somalia and its involvement in the multidonor trust fund), we examine the conditions that facilitated Norwegian-Somalis' lobbying attempts. We then draw three important lessons from the empirical case: 1) diaspora organizational strength can only be understood fully by taking a transnational approach, 2) diaspora lobbying attempts depend on interaction between diaspora and decision makers, and 3) in order to understand the potential success of diaspora lobbying, internal fragmentation as well as potential points of agreement need to be recognized. We suggest a theoretical model that incorporates transnationalism and feedback loops into ethnic lobby literature models on conditions for success. This model will benefit future in-depth studies on the role of other diaspora groups in foreign policy formation toward their country of origin.

Theoretical Perspectives on Diaspora and Foreign Policy: Bridging the Gap

The political science literature on the foreign policy impact of ethnic groups in the United States applies a top-down perspective, mainly studying well-established ethnic groups, including Jewish, Cuban, and Armenian Americans, with a special focus on larger interest organizations. This literature mainly focuses on structural features specific to the US political system and generalizable attributes of the ethnic groups (e.g., Ahrari 1987; Uslaner 1998; Smith 2000; Paul and Paul 2009; McCormick 2012; Rubenzer 2015). The literature developed from two research strands that both mainly apply state centric approaches: research on interest group lobbying and studies on societal sources to foreign policy (Haney and Vanderbush 1999, 2–3). Ethnic interest groups are understood as "political organizations established along cultural, ethnic, religious, or racial lines" (Ambrosio 2002, 2) who seek to "influence U.S. foreign policy in support of their country of origin or ancestry" (Kirk 2008, 277). Ethnic groups are often referred to as "minority groups" and are regularly compared to other types of domestic interest groups, for example business lobbies or human rights groups (see e.g., Ambrosio 2002; Saideman 2002; Paul and Paul 2009). It is argued that what distinguishes an ethnic lobby is "the close personal identity that members of these ethnic groups feel toward the policy issues at hand" (McCormick 2012, 86), which enables them to mobilize the voting and manpower of their ethnic groups members (Paul and Paul 2009, 23). Thus, the literature tends to understand ethnic interests as functioning in opposition to the "natural order" of a nation state. Saideman (2002) argues: "a minority ethnic group may concentrate exclusively on its plight and the plight of its kin elsewhere, whereas the remainder of the society may have a variety of concerns at any one time" (2002, 98).

One of the main questions asked in this literature is which factors facilitate or hinder the lobbying success of ethnic groups.[6] One set of factors relate to the political context in the country of settlement. Amongst such factors external to ethnic lobby groups, four that are commonly referred to are: first, a *permeable political structure*, which provides access points for ethnic groups to get closer to the locus of decision making; second, *congruence between the ethnic groups' and the state's strategic interest*; third, *a weak or divided opposition*; and fourth, *a supportive or indifferent wider public*. Another set of factors relate to attributes of the groups themselves. In this category of internal factors, five that are widely used are: first, the group's *organizational strength*, including its professional lobbying capacity and human as well as financial resources; second, *partial assimilation*, that is, the group has to be integrated enough to be accepted, while still maintaining a strong ethnic identity that connects them to their country of origin; third, *the size of the group and their level of political activity*; fourth, *geographical concentration*, as this heightens the electoral implications of their voting behavior and makes it easier to coordinate their political activities; and fifth, *political unity and absence of strong in-group divisions*. On their own, none of these criteria are sufficient for lobbying success, but a combination of these factors can create what Rubenzer (2008, 183) calls a "path to influence."

Studies on transnationalism in migration research—frequently conducted by social anthropologists, sociologists, and geographers—have their roots in the so-called "transnational turn." Researchers introduced transnationalism as a theoretical framework in the early 1990s to allow them to better capture the nature of immigrants' political, social, and economic cross-bordered lives (Glick Schiller, Basch, and Blanc-Szanton 1992; Basch, Glick Schiller, and Blanc 1994).[7] The introduction of the transnational analytical space challenges conventional state-centric perspectives in migration research, which have been criticized for methodological nationalism (Wimmer and Glick Schiller 2002, 302). This criticism can be summed up by the argument that, because the nation-state is assumed to be the natural social and political form of the modern world, and this assumption determines dominant trends in social science thinking, what happens across the national space has not received sufficient attention. Studies in transnationalism have aimed at addressing this gap and have mainly done so from the perspective of the migrant and of migrant communities at large. These studies have a bottom-up and actor-oriented perspective (often applied on empirically thick case studies), where the point of departure is the complex life of migrant communities (rather than formal organizations). They largely focus on less well-established diaspora groups in Europe and the United States.

The criticism of methodological nationalism also applies to the level of ethnic and diaspora groups. Research has demonstrated that diaspora communities often contain widely opposing political views, and members differ in education level, class, age, gender, and the level of engagement in homeland politics (e.g., Tölölyan 1996, 9; Al-Ali, Black, and Koser 2001; Brubaker 2005, 12; Orjuela 2008; Turner and Kleist 2013; Orjuela 2016).

Bauböck and Faist (2010, 13–14) argue that the focus on complex and multisited networks at a grassroots level make transnationalism in migration research distinct from its predecessor "transnational relations," a term coined by international relations (IR) scholars in the early 1970s, where the emphasis is on the importance of large scale nonstate actors in world politics, such as multinational corporations, trade unions, and scientific networks (Keohane and Nye 1972). The transnational

[6] The following criteria are based on literature reviews by Rubenzer 2008 and Rubenzer and Redd 2010, who have identified the most commonly referred to criteria in the ethnic lobby literature. The criteria mainly originated from case studies by Trice 1978, Said 1981, Watanabe 1984, Ahrari 1987, Uslaner 1998, Mearsheimer and Walt 2007, among others.

[7] In this article, transnationalism is defined as a process that links the country of origin to the country of settlement through immigrants' multistranded activities (Basch, Glick Schiller, and Blanc 1994, 7).

perspective within IR has been applied in later years to advocacy networks and social movements, but the focus has mainly been on nonstate actors with universal aims, values, and practices, including environmental groups and human rights activists (Keck and Sikkink 1999; della Porta et al. 2006). In contrast, transnationalism in migration research relates to all kinds of beliefs and values, with a particular focus on multiple identities, and thereby incorporates two parallel and seemingly opposing forces: "universalization" and "particularization" (Bauböck and Faist 2010, 15). Surprisingly, studies within the IR literature of "transnational relations" seldom focus on diaspora groups. The key exceptions mainly analyze diaspora relations to the state of origin rather than the state of residence (e.g., Shain and Barth 2003; Hägel and Peretz 2005; Adamson and Demetriou 2007).

While most studies within transnationalism focus on the relationship between the diaspora and the state of origin, some studies also include other actors, such as the state of settlement (e.g., Østergaard-Nielsen 2003). This is especially evident in research on the migration and development-nexus, where diaspora communities are regarded as development actors that country of origin, country of settlement, and supranational institutions—as well as international organizations and NGOs—can mobilize and/or collaborate with in order to "tap into their resources," both in terms of their financial capital and their country-specific knowledge and networks (e.g., de Haas 2006; Horst et al. 2010; Turner 2013; Délano and Gamlen 2014; Sinatti and Horst 2015). The relationships between the diaspora community, the country of origin, and the country of settlement are seen to exist in a "triadic model" based on "a three-way interaction that produces a variety of feedback and interaction effects" (Adamson 2002, 158).

In conclusion, we observe that the two strands of literature represent fundamentally different approaches. The ethnic lobby literature applies a more state-centric approach and understands migrant communities as "ethnic lobby groups" comparative to other types of lobby groups, whereas transnationalism studies largely has a bottom-up approach that explores how connections across borders—whether economic, social, or political—shape the lives of migrants and the wider societies they live in. By analyzing the role of the Somali diaspora in shaping Norwegian foreign policy towards Somalia, we aim to show the value of an approach that integrates insights from both literatures.

The Context: Norwegian Foreign Policy toward Somalia

Norwegian foreign policy changed with the collapse of the Soviet Union, from a strict focus on narrow security issues—on the basis of being a NATO member state with borders to Russia—to a broadening of its understanding of national security, including a larger emphasis on idealistic issues such as poverty reduction and peace and reconciliation (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1989, 2009). As part of this process, the importance of large Norwegian NGOs, and especially "the big five,"[8] grew. The five largest Norwegian NGOs receive most of their funding from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and are among the main actors implementing Norwegian foreign policy. The "Norwegian model" is based on close cooperation and interdependence between state and civil society (Tvedt 2003). It furthermore entails dense and institutionalized elite networks in the foreign policy realm, as it is common among leaders in government, NGOs, and research environments to shift between top positions. The Norwegian model has been criticized for its undemocratic nature, with Tvedt arguing that the model lacks transparency and balance of power.

Norway's policy toward Somalia matches its larger foreign policy developments and objectives. In the 1980s Norway started providing bilateral aid to Somalia, and

[8] Those are the Norwegian Refugee Council, Norwegian People's Aid, Save the Children—Norway, Norwegian Church Aid, and the Norwegian Red Cross.

in the 1990s the amount of aid increased considerably to match the growing needs on the ground in Somalia since the start of the civil war in 1991.[9] In addition, as part of United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNISOM II) in the early 1990s, Norway sent about 140 military staff in administrative positions on a peacekeeping mission to Somalia (Aftenposten 1993; Norsk Telegrambyrå 1993). According to an MFA-informant, this decision was closely related to the increasing presence of Somali asylum seekers in Norway (Interview 21, March 2015).

Since 2000, Norway's focus on Somalia has increased and has developed from a purely humanitarian involvement to a more direct and political engagement. Norwegian aid—both emergency and development aid—increased, mainly channeled through multilateral organizations and Norwegian NGOs. When Norway became a nonpermanent member of the UN Security Council in 2001–2002, it took a leadership role to address the conflict in Somalia and the situation in the Horn of Africa more generally. This was the first time in six years that the civil war in Somalia had been on the agenda of the Security Council (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2003, 8). Mostly, Norway contributed financially to peace and reconciliation efforts, but Norwegian diplomats were also observers at the negotiations in Kenya 2002–2004, and Hilde Frafjord Johnson, the Norwegian minister of international development at the time, traveled to Nairobi to meet the negotiating parties.[10] In 2005, Norway initiated the establishment of the International Contact Group for Somalia (ICG), which Norway cochaired together with the United States. The ICG's main aim was to achieve greater coordination among international donors involved in Somalia (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2007).

The growing Norwegian engagement in Somalia fitted well with Norway's ambition to build up a profile as a humanitarian power with a particular competence in peace and reconciliation processes. Norway's foreign policy was framed altruistically while at the same time being firmly rooted in Norwegian interests (Stokke 2012). For instance, Norway's competence in peace and reconciliation processes was seen to give it a strong trademark that would benefit Norwegian exports (Dagens Næringsliv 2001). By building up knowledge and networks on the Horn of Africa, Norway managed to remain relevant among larger powers like the United States (Johansen interview, February 2015, Holmås interview, February 2015). In addition, as a seafaring nation Norway had a clear need to contribute to antipiracy operations outside Somalia's coast and preventive measures on the ground in Somalia. Another factor in Norway's continued engagement in more recent years has been its concern with the potential radicalization of Norwegian-Somali individuals. Furthermore, ongoing good relations were crucial to Norway as they paved the way for an agreement between Norway and Somalia about the return of rejected asylum seekers, signed and first implemented in 2016.

A Short-Lived Diaspora Policy

Since the 1970s, the Norwegian population has become increasingly diverse, and the last decade especially has seen a considerable increase in immigration to Norway. The yearly net immigration—immigration minus emigration—has increased from almost ten thousand in the 1990s to twenty-two thousand in the 2000s. Since 2010, the average number has been close to forty-one thousand (Official Norwegian Reports 2017). Late 2015, 850,000 out of 5.2 million residents of Norway had an immigrant background, a three-fold increase since 2000 (Official Norwegian Reports 2017). In line with this change in the composition of the population, the former minister of foreign affairs, Jonas Gahr Støre, launched the concept of "a new and larger 'we,'" which has been stressed as being of great importance in a new Norway,

[9] https://www.norad.no/om-bistand/norsk-bistand-i-tall/?tab=geo, retrieved 11 September 2015.

[10] Confirmed in an e-mail conversation with Hilde Frafjord Johnson, 21 October 2015.

where an increasing proportion of the population is of immigrant origin (Ezzati and Horst 2014).[11] Several government documents in 2008–2009 recognized the importance of including diaspora groups in development cooperation and foreign policy, including White Paper 13 (2008–2009)[12] and White Paper 15 (2008–2009).[13] The documents acknowledge that the resources of migrants have been utilized too little and that this needs to change both for the benefit of Norway and the individuals involved:

> Through migration, popular culture and new technologies, globalization is contributing to a multitude of individual and group identities. Internet and global media are channeling and reinforcing these impulses. Domestic policy and foreign policy melt together. Through this, globalization increases the room for maneuver in foreign policy; for example, through those resources that Norwegians with an immigrant background will add in terms of language, culture and competence (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2009, 88).

These white papers launched several measures to better facilitate and incorporate the important role that migrants can play in the development of their countries of origin, such as improved possibilities for remittance services and the initiation of pilot projects involving collaboration between Norwegian development actors and diaspora organizations. Most initiatives were focused on development and humanitarianism rather than foreign policy. Furthermore, as Bivand Erdal and Ezzati (2013) argue, even though Norway has started to acknowledge the potential of a more diverse demography, there are still very few examples where these perspectives have been put into practice. There are no institutionalized practices of incorporating diaspora groups in decision making or in implementation of Norwegian development or foreign policy, and from 2010 the topic disappeared from the agenda altogether (Ezzati and Horst 2014). Furthermore, there are very few individuals with migrant backgrounds who have penetrated the institutionalized elite networks in the foreign policy realm. Thus, Norway is not only missing out on intercultural competency, language skills, and local networks but also on much-needed alternative perspectives on foreign policy.

The Somali Diaspora in Norway

Somalis started coming to Norway as asylum seekers in the mid-1980s, with an increase after the collapse of the Somali state in 1991, and the numbers are slowly growing. Arrivals increased from five hundred annually in the 1990s to one to two thousand per year from 1999 onward, with some spikes in exceptional years. According to the latest figures on the number of Somalis in Norway, there are 28,300 Somali immigrants and 11,800 children of Somali immigrants.[14] They are concentrated in the urban areas of Norway and especially Oslo, where they are the third largest immigrant group (Horst et al. 2013). The Norwegian-Somali community has not been in Norway long: in 2016, 30 percent of Norwegian-Somalis had lived in Norway for five years or less, and only 15 percent had lived in Norway for fifteen years or more.[15]

Norwegian-Somalis are a politically active group in Norway (Horst et al. 2013). In statistics relating to voting patterns, Norwegian-Somalis score high compared to other migrant groups in Norway—especially if one takes into account that they are a very recent and young group. In the local elections in 2011, 46.5 percent of eligible

[11] The concept of "a new and larger we" was first introduced in a speech by the minister of foreign affairs, Jonas Gahr Støre, in 2006.

[12] White Paper 13: *Climate, Conflict and Capital: Norwegian Development Policy Adapting to Change.*

[13] White Paper 15: *Interests, Responsibilities and Possibilities: Main Contours of Norwegian Foreign Policy.*

[14] https://www.ssb.no/statistikkbanken, figures for 2016, retrieved 20 June 2016.

[15] https://www.ssb.no/innvbef, figures for 2016, retrieved 17 November 2016.

Norwegian-Somali male voters and 54.1 of female voters went to the ballots whereas the average of all immigrant groups is 42.7 percent.[16] Among candidates for city councils, Norwegian-Somalis are well-represented. While Norwegian-Somalis make up 2 percent of Oslo's residents, for example, they command 5 percent of the council seats (Horst et al. 2013, 138).[17] Norwegian-Somalis are very politically engaged, while their levels of Norwegian citizenship attainment are also high. As in Norway, Somali culture highly values a sense of civic participation and community.[18]

Besides political participation on a municipal and national level in Norway, there is also evidence of transnational political ties amongst Norwegian-Somalis (Horst 2008). In what follows, we will explore the intersection of national and transnational political engagement by examining the role of the Somali diaspora in shaping Norwegian foreign policy toward Somalia in two examples: the Ethiopian intervention and the multidonor trust fund.

Norway's Stance on the Ethiopian Intervention in Somalia

In 2006 and 2007, a number of events took place in Somalia that sparked a heightened degree of activism among members of the Somali diaspora. A movement consisting of local Sharia courts, called Islamic Court Union (Islamic Union), was on the rise in South-Central Somalia and took control over Mogadishu in 2006 (Menkhaus 2007, 368–69). The increasing expansion of the Islamic Union, consisting of both extremist and moderate Islamists, alarmed the internationally recognized Transitional Federal Government (the Transitional Government), as well as Ethiopia. The international community mainly regarded the Islamic Union as an extremist Islamist movement, while a considerable part of the Somali diaspora sympathized with the movement. The Islamic Union received local and transnational support for mobilizing on a religious rather than clan basis and for freeing Mogadishu from fighting warlords and thus increasing security in the city.

In July 2006, Ethiopian troops entered Somali territory, invited by the Transitional Federal Government and supported by the United States. Within six months, they had defeated the Islamic Union and enabled the relocation of the Transitional Government to Mogadishu. Norway had supported the peace process leading to the establishment of the Transitional Government in 2004, and thus, Norway's position was in line with the wider international community. However, during the course of the intervention, Norway shifted position and publicly criticized Ethiopia's military involvement in Somalia. We argue that there were several conditions in place that facilitated the Somali diaspora in Norway in their lobbying attempts, which contributed to the shift in policy.

The stances of the diaspora in Norway were divided between the major actors in Somalia. Those supporting the Islamic Union did not regard the Transitional Government as a legitimate state entity with the prerogative to invite foreign troops into Somalia. There were also many who supported the internationally recognized government, in particular diaspora members from Puntland who wanted a federal model and supported former Puntland president Abdullahi Yusuf, the then-president of the Transitional Government. Despite these political disagreements, the foreign military presence inside Somalia awoke a nationalist mindset that went above regional and clan loyalties. Ethiopia and Somalia have a history characterized by animosity and wars, and seeing Ethiopian tanks by the Indian Ocean was unacceptable for most. Furthermore, diaspora members were troubled by the negative effects of the conflict on relatives and friends in Somalia. The Somaliland

[16] SSB http://www.ssb.no/a/kortnavn/vundkinnv/tab-2012-03-01-01.html.

[17] In the City Council period 2011–2015.

[18] I. M. Lewis describes the many democratic features in Somali pastoral society in his monograph, *A Pastoral Democracy* (1961).

representative to Norway publicly criticized the Transitional Government's use of the Ethiopian military and requested that Somalia's problems be left for Somalis to solve themselves (Dagbladet 2006).

Protesting groups in the Norwegian-Somali community became even more agitated when they realized the particularly close relationship between diplomats at the Norwegian Embassy in Nairobi and President Abdullahi Yusuf. A diaspora informant explained: "We were so critical [. . .] 'They cannot support Abdullahi Yusuf with my tax money. He is not a democratically elected President'" (Interview 15, March 2015). The Norwegian policy toward Somalia was seen as a clear political stance in the midst of a violent conflict. This criticism was translated into intense activism, with demonstrations held outside the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the parliament in Oslo. As one Norwegian-Somali described the situation: "Here you have a decisive majority of the diaspora in Norway, fighting and screaming that you are supporting an enemy of Somalia" (Interview 1, April 2015). In addition, the political activism took shape transnationally as diaspora members coordinated their protests across national borders. For example, diaspora members from several western countries organized a conference in Stockholm in early 2007 where they developed a common statement that strongly criticized the international community's "silence and inaction with respect to the Ethiopian blatant breach of Article 2(4) of United Nation's Charter" (Hiiraan Online).

At the same time, Norway was developing an inclusive diaspora policy. Politicians were aware of the fact that Norwegian-Somalis represent a large and important voter group, whose voting power is further increased by the fact that they live concentrated in cities. An MFA informant made the following observation:

> When Norway focuses on Somalia, it is not the least because of the 36, 37, 38 000 Somalis, or Norwegian-Somalis, where most of them live in the central parts of Norway [. . .] They are also an important pressure group and that is actually the reason for why there are more questions in parliament about Somalia. They put these issues on the agenda (Interview 27, April 2015).

Norwegian-Somali votes were especially important for local elections, and in Oslo one of the City Council members had a background from Somalia (in the period 2003–2007).[19] Local and foreign policy issues were present at election meetings in Oslo, where local politicians would get questions on Norway's foreign policy toward Somalia. The secretary of state at the time, Raymond Johansen (Labor Party), asserted that "it is important to have a dialogue with the diaspora" since the "the Somali voters can determine who gets the power in Oslo" (Johansen Interview February 2015). The voting implications were especially important for the parties in government at the time, the Labor Party (*Arbeiderpartiet*), the Socialist Party (*Sosialistisk Venstreparti*), and the Center Party (*Senterpartiet*), since these were the most popular parties among Norwegian-Somalis. The local elections took place in September 2007, and party politicians needed to build good relationships with Norwegian-Somalis. The inclusive diaspora policy entailed funding of diaspora development projects and an MFA strategy to encourage the Somali diaspora to join forces in one organization, both to make MFA-diaspora collaboration easier and to stimulate peace between fighting groups in Somalia. In addition, Norwegian politicians benefited from cooperating with the diaspora since they had, as Johansen put it: "tremendous influence on the leaders in Somalia." He further explained that:

> I am invited for breakfast and get to meet the Minister of Energy and Minster of Foreign Affairs [. . .] Someone who lives in Grønland (a neighborhood in Oslo) in a two room apartment is a friend of the President [. . .] The diaspora and the political

[19] The number increased in later years. In 2007–2011, one member and one deputy member were Norwegian-Somalis. In 2011–2015, three members had a background from Somalia.

> leadership are very close. That is certainly my impression (Johansen Interview, February 2015).

Thus, the secretary of state was keen to have a good relationship with the diaspora. Indeed, when Ethiopian troops reached Mogadishu toward the end of December 2006, Johansen summoned fifteen leaders from the Somali diaspora to hear their views on the latest developments (Dagbladet 2006). A group within the Somali diaspora in Norway called G10 was particularly active in protesting and lobbying. At meetings with Johansen, G10 members would remind him that as an elected representative he was also representing them. One group member recalls his arguments to Johansen:

> When you sit here you are also my representative. We have Norwegian passports. You represent me. Remember that I have a duality in me: Somalia and Norway. When Norway is attacked I defend it, when Somalia is attacked I defend it [. . .] It is my tax money. You cannot do this (Interview 15, March 2015).

As active citizens of Norway, this group was holding Norwegian politicians accountable for Norway's policy toward Somalia. The group would also draw on their close contacts with leaders on the ground as a tool to put pressure on Norwegian politicians. The same group member continues to explain:

> The MFA could see that we were a power factor. We played an important role. We had direct contact with different factions inside and outside Somalia. We had direct phone contact. We said to Raymond and the others: "Who do you want to talk to? Do you want to talk to Sharif Sheikh (ICU Commander in Chief)? We will make it happen directly. But you have to stop negotiating [with Ethiopia]" (Interview 15, March 2015).

Considering Norway's ambition to play a role in peace and reconciliation processes, it is likely that Norwegian-Somalis' close contact with main actors on the ground was of interest to Norwegian politicians and diplomats. The few Norwegian-Somalis who had managed to get access to Norwegian foreign policy elite circles had an especially advantageous position to influence decision-making processes. Common entry points into these networks were senior positions in NGOs, political parties, or research institutions. For example, Johansen previously led the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), one of the "big five" NGOs, while the current Norwegian Special Envoy to Somalia has been the director of the international department there. Thus, Norwegian-Somalis who were senior staff members at NRC or other large NGOs had the possibility to influence elite positions on Norway's policy toward Somalia. In fact, some Norwegian-Somalis were offered positions at the Ministry, but due to the strict security clearance policy it has not been possible to employ people with a background from Somalia. Our study suggests that many of those with the best access originated from South-Central Somalia and were thus more likely to be particularly critical toward Ethiopian involvement in Somalia.[20]

Toward the end of 2006, Johansen chose to publically criticize the Ethiopian involvement in Somalia. In a press statement he declared that:

> [T]o stand deep inside Somalia with large forces cannot be considered a defensive war. Ethiopia has to withdraw [. . .] We are very concerned about both the political and humanitarian consequences. Our clear demand to Ethiopia is that they withdraw and enter into a dialogue with the Islamic Courts (Norsk Telegrambyrå 1993).

In addition, Johansen criticized Norway's close ally the United States for their air bombardments on Somali territory. Johansen explained this by referring to the legal aspects of the occupation, similar to the arguments the G10 and others in the

[20] In fact, highly positioned Norwegian-Somalis were predominantly male, had higher education, had lived in Norway for at least a decade and were likely to originate from central parts of Somalia.

Somali diaspora had used in discussions with him. The Transitional Government was not an elected government, so the question was whether they had the authority to invite Ethiopia. Furthermore, as Johansen argued, the MFA was worried that the Ethiopian involvement would worsen the Somali situation and prevent efforts toward peace and reconciliation.

Though Norway was still supporting the Transitional Government, Johansen's criticism toward Ethiopia was clear and was regarded as a sudden shift in position by several actors including the president himself. Ethiopia also reacted to Norway's criticism, which partly contributed to the diplomatic crisis between Ethiopia and Norway in 2007. The shift in policy brought to light an existing disagreement between diplomatic staff working at the embassy in Nairobi and politicians and civil servants in Oslo. One informant who worked at the embassy at the time said: "Raymond condemned [Ethiopia] publically, which he should not have done. He did it without actually getting any signals from us" (Interview 29, April 2015). Hence, the decision does not seem to have originated from Norway's diplomatic staff in Nairobi. Yet Johansen was popular among many Norwegian-Somalis for his clear stance, and several interpreted this as a case where they had successfully influenced Norway's foreign policy. One Somali informant said: "Watching TV, we saw Raymond Johansen forward our arguments. The arguments we were arguing all the way" (Interview 15, March 2015). Another Norwegian-Somali stated: "It is a clear example of the fact that, when the majority of Somalis are united, they are better able to influence policies" (Interview 1, April 2015).

It is reasonable to assume that politically engaged Norwegian-Somalis successfully facilitated and perhaps even altered Norwegian foreign policy on Ethiopia's military involvement in Somalia. The sudden shift from acceptance to condemnation took place despite the close collaboration between the Norwegian Embassy and the Transitional Government and despite the fact that the United States, Norway's most important ally, was supporting Ethiopia.

Norway's Involvement in State Building: The Multidonor Trust Fund

> We are also indebted to the kindness and generosity of countries like Turkey, Norway, the Arab League member states, and other countries. Your assistance over the past few years has spread hope and belief among our people (Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, President of Somalia 2013).

When the president of Somalia gave the opening speech at the London Conference on Somalia in 2013, he specifically thanked Norway for its support, together with Turkey and the Arab League countries. The fact that Norway was singled out reflects Norway's increasing bilateral and political involvement in Somalia, illustratively exemplified by the appointment of a Norwegian Special Envoy to Somalia in 2012. Norway's most remarkable contribution was the establishment of the temporary multidonor trust fund, called the Special Financing Facility. The trust fund was established in close collaboration with Somali authorities to allow donors to quickly respond to the financial needs of the government. The overall objective was to enable the government to provide services by paying regular salaries to its employees and financing development projects (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2013).[21] At the London conference in 2013, Norwegian Minster of International Development Heikki Holmås announced that Norway would provide 175 million Norwegian kroner for the trust fund with the hope that more countries would follow. However, no other donor chose to transfer money through the trust fund, reflecting a persistent lack of confidence in Somali institutions. Several diaspora informants pointed to the bold and groundbreaking nature of this move by Norway.

[21] Today, the fund has been taken over by the World Bank.

Why did Norway choose to initiate and support such a risky project, when no other country would? We argue that the political lobbying of the Somali diaspora is likely to have facilitated the decision-making process. The trust fund mirrored a view that was common among politically active Norwegian-Somalis, namely that Norway should engage in Somalia and it should do so bilaterally. While there are many disagreements among diaspora members, there was widespread agreement that Norway should develop a bilateral engagement, with the aim of implementing visible and concrete measures on the ground. Diaspora informants argued that a more direct Norwegian involvement instead of aid channeled through multilateral organizations would increase transparency and counter corruptive practices. There was a widespread frustration regarding Somalia's dependency on international aid, and initiatives that would help Somalia up on its feet were sought after. The urgent need for functioning public services was evident to diaspora members as they learned about everyday challenges in Somalia from relatives and friends.[22] In addition, several Norwegian-Somalis argued that a more visible involvement would create good publicity for Norway and create a basis for future relations between the countries.

At the same time, there were strong disagreements among Norwegian-Somalis, especially regarding the geographical focus of Norwegian involvement. Many diaspora members were particularly critical toward Norway's focus on Mogadishu. These concerns are not merely about geography and a fair distribution of resources but represent political divides. Norwegian-Somalis from Somaliland—who were the first to arrive as the conflict started in the North in the late 1980s—argue for recognition of Somaliland as an independent state and thus fundamentally disagree with Norway's support for a federal government.[23] In this context, a Norwegian focus on Mogadishu is understood to be a clear political stance that goes far beyond the mere location of aid.

Norway's focus on Somalia received an extra push when Norwegian-Somali Mohamed Osman Jawari was elected speaker of the Federal Parliament in 2012. The MFA responded with the following statement: "That the parliament is now led by a Somali with a long experience in Norway opens a door for good cooperation" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2012). Furthermore, the minister of international development at the time, who was in charge of the Somalia policy, was personally committed to Somalia and paid close attention to the Somali diaspora (Bistandsaktuelt 2013). He met politically active Norwegian-Somalis in his own party (the Socialist Party) and at meetings with diaspora milieus across the country, arranged by the MFA. He explained his commitment as follows:

> As an [elected] representative for a big population group, my view is that we have a special responsibility as a nation to engage in the positive development of that country because there are so many of our citizens who have family, friends, memories, [and] feelings attached to that country. So their focus, their satisfaction, their possibility for integration, [and] their possibility for having a good day is dependent on the development in another country. That is my point of departure as an elected representative (Holmås interview, February 2015).

As mentioned, Norwegian foreign policy is characterized by the close connections between top politicians, NGO leaders, and the research milieus. Noteworthy in this case is that the Norwegian Envoy to Somalia was one of the founders of the Nordic International Support Foundation (NIS Foundation), the organization that got the assignment to implement the trust fund and many other projects in Somalia. The foundation's advisory panel includes a Norwegian former minister of international

[22] This has also been documented in previous studies on diaspora groups and development (e.g., Erdal 2015).

[23] The Somaliland diaspora in Norway is relatively well-established with an appointed Somaliland representative to Norway. Two out of three Norwegian-Somalis elected to the Oslo city council (2011–2014), have a background from Somaliland.

development, and one of its current leaders has previously held top positions at the Norwegian Refugee Council. Norwegian-Somalis who have, or have had, prominent positions at NIS Foundation, the Refugee Council, or other established NGOs are well situated to influence foreign policy.[24]

Both at public events and in informal discussions with Norwegian politicians and diplomats in Oslo, Nairobi, and Mogadishu, Norwegian-Somalis forwarded their request for Norway to become more bilaterally involved in Somalia and to invest in concrete development projects on the ground. Diaspora members would also forward these messages through invited guests from Somalia and from the wider diaspora. In 2011, for example, Mogadishu Mayor Mohamud Ahmed Nur "Tarzan" attended a conference in Norway where he gave a forthright speech requesting donors to support him with more concrete measures to improve his city, such as garbage collection, water purification and sewage systems, street lights, and a center for the rehabilitation of al-Shabaab dropouts (Interview 15, March 2015; Interview 16, March 2015, Warah 2011).[25] The conference was organized by a group from the Somali diaspora in the Nordic countries and funded by the MFA. After the 2011 conference, Norway funded a project to set up solar-powered streetlights in Mogadishu and other places in Somalia, implemented by the Nordic Foundation. Together with other Nordic countries, Norway began to support a rehabilitation program in Mogadishu for radicalized youth: Serendi Youth Rehabilitation Center (Landinfo—Country of Origin Information Centre 2014).

The trust fund is a prime example of how Norway's involvement became more bilateral and direct. The trust fund was a topic of discussion among decision makers and certain diaspora members. Norwegian-Somali informants were supportive of the idea as it was "something that people can see and the government can claim credit for" (Interview 1, April 2015). The Norwegian government argued for the project in ways that were similar to how the Norwegian-Somali community argued for its relevance. Then–minister of international development Holmås explained his government's choice to initiate and support the trust fund:

> We can go in and give them something that they need the most. That is, to support the legitimacy of the new Government by securing them the possibility to make their own projects [. . .] Our rationale was "concrete results on the ground" and to build up a finance administration. A state that has no control over its money does not have control over anything (Holmås interview, February 2015).

A further rationale for the Norwegian venture was the impression that Somalia had reached a historical juncture in 2012. The transitional period that started in 2004 had finally ended and Hassan Sheikh, a university lecturer who had been engaged in the NGO sector, had been elected president. Holmås stated that:

> The authorities in Somalia are at a critical stage to ensure democratic development and stable governance in the future. The possibilities are the best in over 20 years, but the challenges are also considerable. It is urgent to bring about an arrangement so that public services can get started and people get to experience a positive development of the society (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2013).

This argument was especially important considering ongoing discussions within the MFA of whether Somalia was "ripe" for international assistance. In our interview with him, Holmås explained that the perception of Somalia standing at a turning point that justified a considerable aid impetus was confirmed by the Somali diaspora. Holmås furthermore recalled that many Norwegian-Somalis had been

[24] In February 2017, Norwegian-Somali Hassan Khaire, who had previously worked as the regional director for the Norwegian Refugee Council, was elected prime minister of Somalia.

[25] The conference was entitled the Second Conference on Peace, Dialogue and Combating Radicalization. Organized by the diaspora organization Nordic Union of Somali Peace and Development, with assistance from Nansen Center for Peace and Dialogue. The first conference was held in Stockholm.

supportive of the trust fund project although many had also warned him to be aware of the danger of corruption when handing over big sums of money to the government. Many diaspora members interviewed for this study argued that the trust fund was a step in the right direction, even though several had wished that similar projects could be instated in other parts of Somalia and in Somaliland.

Thus, Norwegian-Somalis played a role in facilitating the Norwegian decision to initiate the risky, costly, and time-consuming trust fund project. This decision was made in defiance of the general lack of trust that most other donors had toward Somali institutions as well as Somalia's reputation as a "hopeless case," also among some officials at the MFA.

Theoretical Lessons: Conditions Facilitating Transnational Ethnic Lobbying

What can we learn from the in-depth exploration of these two examples about the conditions that facilitated Norwegian-Somalis' lobbying attempts? How do our empirical insights enable us to create an integrated theoretical approach that draws on knowledge from the ethnic lobby literature and transnationalism studies? Our empirical study teaches us three important lessons, which we use to develop an integrated theoretical model.

First, it is important to apply a *transnational analytical lens* in order to fully appreciate the Somali diaspora's *organizational strength*, including its full palette of human and financial resources. The cases illustrate that the transnational nature of the Somali diaspora's political mobilization facilitated their lobbying attempts. Norwegian-Somalis often invite Somali politicians and academics to Norway from their networks in the diaspora and in Somalia, which Norwegian decision makers openly declared their appreciation of. Furthermore, protests against political developments in Somalia were often organized transnationally, involving Somalis from across Europe.

Second, *feedback loops and interaction effects* between diaspora groups and decision makers are central elements for understanding the diaspora's lobbying attempts. It is impossible to argue that the influence of the Somali diaspora on Norwegian foreign policy to Somalia was a result *either* of the Norwegian government's interests in drawing on Norwegian-Somalis *or* of the Somali diaspora's active lobbying. While Norwegian-Somalis actively lobbied central figures in the Norwegian government, politicians had their own agendas and often initiated meetings and funded conferences with diaspora representatives. In this way, Norway's inclusive diaspora policy increased Norwegian-Somalis' *organizational strength* and their *access to decision makers* (permeable political structure).

Yet Norwegian-Somali agendas do not simply *converge with* Norway's foreign policy interests *or not*; they alter such interests. The cases illustrate that Norwegian-Somalis engage in politics as Norwegian citizens, voters, and taxpayers, and that they use these facts to hold policy makers accountable. Furthermore, Norwegian-Somalis' dual identities position them to help identify mutually beneficial relationships between Somalia and Norway. For instance, when Osman Jawari became speaker of parliament in Somalia in 2012, this gave Norway an additional incentive to support state building initiatives in Mogadishu, including the multidonor trust fund. Jawari's influence then could simultaneously be read, for example, as the Somali government lobbying Norway or as a member of the Norwegian-Somali diaspora impacting Somali governance practices. This complexity of multisited identities and practices of Norwegian-Somalis illustrates just how problematic is the dual approach to ethnic identities that the *partial assimilation* criteria upholds. Immigrant identities are much more complex than these zero-sum interpretations suggest (see Erdal and Oeppen 2013, Horst forthcoming 2017).

Third, different groups and individuals within the diaspora have varying possibilities for influencing policy. The Somali diaspora is fragmented, and viewpoints are

forwarded in a rather uncoordinated manner by a diverse set of groups, organizations, and individuals (Horst 2013). For instance, the Somaliland diaspora, which is well organized and has had the longest residence in Norway, lobbied for recognition of Somaliland as an independent state. Yet Norwegian politicians continued to support the federal system, partly out of concern that recognition would give a green light to secessionist movements across Africa. So while groups within the Somali diaspora could push an ajar door open, they were not able to open a door that was locked.[26] In addition, *access to decision making processes* is unequally distributed between actors within the diaspora, and the few Norwegian-Somalis that are part of foreign policy elite circles in Norway forwarded viewpoints in particularly favorable settings.

While acknowledging the diversity within the diaspora, the fact that *some basic stances were supported across dividing lines* did help facilitate the lobbying success. In addition, these stances were backed up by *considerable political activism* in Norway and in other countries. The fact that the diaspora was *considered an important voter group* put further power behind their demands. Notably, both examples took place close to elections (local and national elections, respectively). These factors were further amplified by the fact that Norwegian-Somalis typically *live in larger urban cities* and are particularly concentrated in Oslo.

Thus, all factors mentioned above—whether *internal*, *external*, or *interrelated*—played a role in the Somali diaspora attempts to influence policy. Their attempts were further facilitated by the *lack of an organized opposition* outside of the diaspora, as well as by *a disinterested wider public*, which made it possible for Norwegian-Somalis to capture the agenda of these particular issues. We now incorporate these theoretical insights to develop an integrated framework on the role of diaspora groups in lobbying for their state of settlement to adjust its foreign policy toward the state of origin.

Our case study demonstrates the need to supplement the ethnic lobby criteria with a transnational analytical lens. We have furthermore shown the difficulty of applying the logic of the *partial assimilation* criterion on the transnational political identities and practices of immigrants, and we have thus removed the criterion from the model.

The success criteria discussed in the ethnic lobby literature are useful for understanding the diaspora's role in the state of settlement's foreign policy. They provide an analytical tool to transnationalism studies, which has just begun to develop theory on state-diaspora relations. At the same time, knowledge on success criteria from the ethnic lobby literature requires three adjustments that draw on insights on transnationalism. First, the transnational dimension is at the heart of understanding how Norwegian-Somalis organize their activities, including where they draw their resources from. Second, we must include *feedback loops* between the *external* and the *internal* criteria. Third, an inductive research approach based on in-depth case studies is needed to detangle lobbying attempts accurately, without assuming that ethnic interest and lobbying potential is homogeneous.

Concluding Remarks

The growing Norwegian engagement in Somalia fits well with Norway's overall peace and humanitarian engagement. But as we have shown in our study, there are many directions, as well as accelerations, that such a policy can take within Norway's broader focus. Our analysis has concentrated on the conditions that facilitate or hinder the Somali diaspora in their attempts to influence policy. The study demonstrates the advantages of bridging insights from the ethnic lobby literature and the literature on transnationalism. Based on these benefits we have proposed an

[26] To use a metaphor by Haney and Vanderbush (1999).

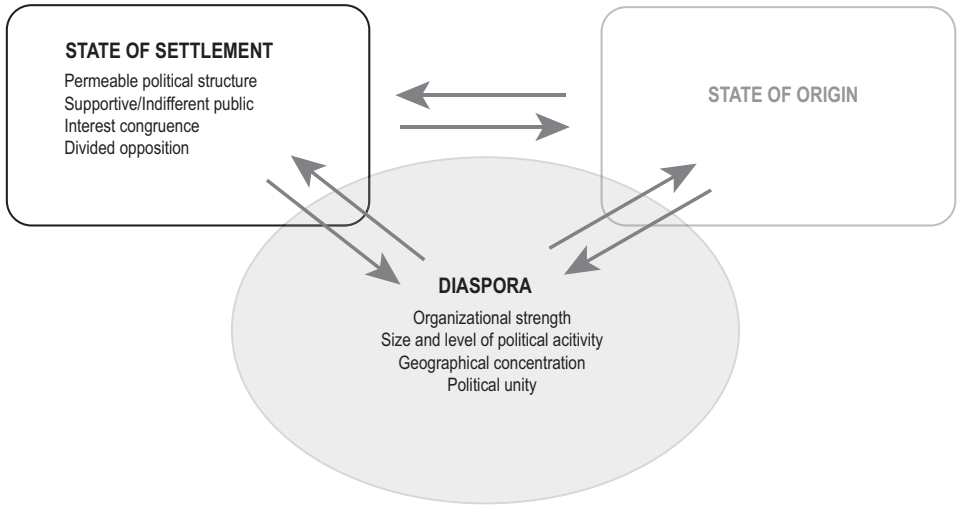

Figure 1. Framework of analysis: integrated approach.

integrated framework (Figure 1) that we argue better captures the complex processes of diaspora lobbying.

The case of the Somali diaspora in Norway has several unique characteristics. Norway is a small country where access to high-level decision makers is relatively easy. The Somali diaspora is a recent immigrant group in Norway with few institutionalized relationships between policy makers and ethnic lobbies. This contrasts with findings from the ethnic lobby literature, which has almost exclusively focused on established groups and organizations that have existed in America for many decades. This is a useful reminder that diaspora foreign policy influence always needs to be analyzed both within the context of the political system of the country of settlement and with taking into account the specific diaspora group.

Yet, we argue that the integrated model we develop here is relevant beyond the case of members of the Somali diaspora in Norway. The transnational character of diaspora political engagement, including internal heterogeneity and divisions, and the interactive relationship between state actors and diaspora groups, is well-established empirically in the literature on transnationalism and diaspora. Likewise, the "success criteria" that we built our model on have been developed from numerous comparative and single case studies. As we have shown, they are also relevant beyond the American setting that formed the context of much of this research.

Future research could test the integrated model in a range of different national policy contexts and across different diaspora groups. The field could furthermore benefit from exploring the role of the state of origin further in order to explore the triangular interaction effects and feedback loops between the diaspora, the state of settlement, and state of origin in even more depth. What we have aimed to contribute to such future explorations is the understanding that diaspora are lobby groups of a particular kind due to their unique position within this triangle. They can function as agenda setters and bridge builders across national interests, but their influence might also be minimized due to a host of internal conflicts and a lack of interest congruence with or access to key foreign policy actors in their countries of settlement. Their chances for lobbying success hinge on their relationships with key policy makers within the foreign policy realm as well as on the human and financial resources within their transnational networks.

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