

# Diaspora and democratisation: Diversity of impact in Eastern Partnership countries

Arusyak Aleksanyan,\* Varduhi Bejanyan,\*\*  
Carolina Dodon,\*\*\* Katsiaryna Maksimenko\*\*\*\* and Agabeg Simonian\*\*\*\*\*

**Abstract:** Around the world diasporas are important role players, and they make a significant contribution towards democracy-building processes in their homelands. The advantages of cooperation with diasporas in the sphere of democratisation are substantial. Diasporas display behavioural diversity and invest both financial and non-financial resources and values to enhance democratic governance and policy-making processes, to ensure social welfare and economic growth, to protect human rights and to establish civil society and the rule of law in their homelands. This article explores the influence of diasporas on democratisation in Eastern Partnership (EaP) countries from a comparative perspective. Diasporas originating from the six EaP countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine) differ in scope, factors of influence on the democracy-building processes, and impact opportunities on government policies in both their homelands and countries of residence. At the same time, there are many similarities between these countries. Until 1991 these countries had limited ties with diasporas as they were Republics of the Soviet Union. All these countries experienced territorial conflicts, except for Belarus. Having different levels of democracy, they are involved in the EaP initiative aimed at sharing democratic values. From this point of view, it is of great interest to explore the diversity of the diasporas' impact on the democracy-building processes in the mentioned countries. The article provides an understanding and comparative analysis of the variety in diasporas' engagement in democratisation of homelands in EaP countries. Based on the findings, the authors argue that the diasporas of these countries have different impact levels on democracy. Moreover, they conclude that the democracy level in turn influences the countries' diaspora policies.

**Key words:** diaspora; Eastern Partnership countries; democracy; comparative analysis; diaspora policy

\* Doctor of Politics, Lecturer and Expert at the Centre for European Studies of Yerevan State University; a.aleksanyan@ces.am. This article is based on a paper prepared for and presented at the Global Classroom, a project of the Global Campus of Human Rights, Yerevan, Armenia, in April 2018.

\*\* MA in Human Rights and Democratisation (YSU); bejanyan.varduhi@gmail.com

\*\*\* MA in Human Rights and Democratisation (YSU); ca.dodon@gmail.com

\*\*\*\* MA in Human Rights and Democratisation (YSU); ekaterina.maksimenko@gmail.com

\*\*\*\*\* MA in Human Rights and Democratisation (YSU); agabeg.simonian93@gmail.com

## 1 Introduction

The term 'diaspora' has been raised increasingly in academic circles. The continuous movement of people from their countries of origin to host countries due to economic, social, political and other reasons leads to significant changes and creates impacts in the country. This movement has national, regional and global dimensions. In this context, the collapse of the Soviet Union triggered new migration and mobility streams leading to a new dispersal of people both in the post-Soviet region and across the world. Six post-Soviet countries, namely, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, have been selected to be researched. These countries are members of the Eastern Partnership (EaP) (EU 2016), which is a joint initiative of the European Union (EU) aimed at building a common area of shared democratic values, such as the rule of law, good governance, the protection of human rights, market-economy principles, and closer cooperation. In this regard, it is of great interest to explore the diasporas' influence on the democratisation of the mentioned countries.

Numerous studies (Carment & Nikolko 2017; Ziemer & Sean 2013; Tololyan 2000; Ciment 2001) have been devoted to diaspora issues in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. Nevertheless, the influence of diasporas on democracy in the countries under research, particularly in its comparative aspect, remains underexplored. This research is an attempt to fill this gap.

In the article we explore the framework explaining diaspora policies and the fields diasporas mostly influence to understand their role in the democratisation processes in the countries studied. The research questions are the following:

- Which frameworks explain diasporas' policies in the homelands?
- What are the factors/fields of diasporas' influence on the democratisation in the states under study?

Three analytical frameworks have been selected to understand the diasporas' involvement in homeland politics in the context of democratisation in research cases. These are the structural-instrumental framework, the ethnic and the political-economy or governmentality framework (Ragazzi 2014). Each of these frameworks is used as a basis for identifying the factors that explain the character and form of diaspora-homeland relations.

In academic literature, studies on diaspora issues are based more frequently on qualitative research than on quantitative methods. We use a combined approach that includes *quantitative* as well as *qualitative* methods of research: qualitative content analysis; case studies; expert interviews; a regression analysis; a comparative analysis; scaling methods; and weighting schemes. Twelve experts were selected for expert interviews. During these interviews the experts not only discussed the issues of diaspora in respect of each country in the study, but were also asked to estimate and give weights to the fields we elaborated for a better understanding of the diaspora-homeland relations and ways in which they influence democratisation. For this purpose, the following 10 fields have been highlighted: democratic governance; human rights; the rule of law; civil society; policy making; financial remittances; integration into the world economy and culture; conflict; and national interest. Through a

regression analysis, the influence of these fields on the democracy is revealed in respect of each case under study.

## 2 Theoretical framework: Diaspora policy and democratisation

Numerous studies have been devoted to the phenomenon of the diaspora. However, there still is no exact general definition of the concept of 'diaspora' and it is construed by scholars in different ways. The reason for this is that diaspora is a subject of study in various sciences and disciplines, such as political science, history, anthropology, cultural studies, resulting in various approaches to understand this complex and diverse phenomenon.

Although the conceptual discussion of the term 'diaspora' is beyond the scope of this article, we proceed from the definition of Sheffer who defines diasporas as 'ethnic minority groups of migrant origins residing and acting in host countries but maintaining strong sentimental and material links with their countries of origin – their homelands' (Sheffer 1986: 3; 2003:9).

The academic literature about the linkage between diaspora and democratisation is less developed. However, there are studies (Shain 1999; Kapur 2010; Koinova 2009; Dahre 2007) that find that diasporas influence democracy-building processes in their homelands. Diasporas in fact influence democratisation. For example, diasporas can transfer funds, links and experience to civil society organisations, and thereby have an effect on political processes. They may cooperate with civic organisations promoting democratic values. Some representatives of diasporas oppose human rights violations in their homelands, in many cases because they themselves once experienced injustice. They may also be engaged in election campaigns and in monitoring processes, or actively participate in demonstrations and join opposition activities (Shain 1994-1995: 823-830; 1999; 2007; Biswas 2007; Lyons 2007; Koinova 2009).

The diasporas' impact on democratisation processes is not limited to the above-mentioned activities. Indeed, the spheres of diasporas' influence on democratisation are varied. This influence is also realised through financial remittances, including personal remittances and foreign direct investments. Diasporas may also affect democratic governance and policy making by means of close ties and cooperation with the government. Other examples include the promotion of the rule of law through the improvement of legislation and strengthening the justice system.

In the framework of this article, it is beneficial to understand and explain state policy in the context of democratisation. In this connection, three main explanatory frameworks, which were systematised and provided by Ragazzi (2014), serve as a theoretical basis to understand and explain diaspora policy and diaspora-homeland relations: the structural-instrumental, the ethnic, and the political-economic or governmentality frameworks.

The structural-institutional framework, which is based on utilitarian assumptions, explains the state-diaspora relationships in the context of economic interests. This approach holds that such state behaviour is more common in poor countries that are interested mainly in economic outcomes. In this regard, financial remittances are an important foothold,

and more so where the population abroad is considerable in numeric terms.

The second framework relates to an ethnic or ethno-national approach, which differs from the theories of cosmopolitanism and transnational nationalism. It argues that state behaviour is a consequence of globalisation and transnational processes. The behaviour of states in these cases is aimed at the regulation of issues and the unification of the nation's representatives abroad. It includes religious, cultural, language and citizenship policies.

Finally, there is the third political-economy framework, based on Foucault's (2004) governmentality conception, which departs from the insight that diaspora policies are not static and can be changed depending on the social, political, and economic situations in the nation states (Ragazzi 2014: 74, 82; Kovács: 93, 94). Three types of governmentality regarding state policy are possible: disciplinary, liberal and neo-liberal. Protectionism, wealth creation, cultural and other policies aimed at population growth and the promotion of those returning from abroad are common for disciplinary governmentality. By contrast, the liberal governmentality does not control the market (including the labour market) and the flow of goods and capital. Emigration is an acceptable way of solving some political and economic problems and threats of overpopulation. Neoliberalism considers the restructuring of politics and self-improvement not only in the economic sphere, but also in political institutions. Ragazzi (2014: 74, 87) argues that the political-economy or governmentality framework is the main driving force for diaspora policies and best explains diaspora policies, while the structural-instrumental and ethnic frameworks provide only a partial explanation.

In an attempt to look into frameworks of diaspora policy in the context of democratisation and taking into account the experience of diasporas' influence on the democratisation presented in literature, we summed up and elaborated 10 fields to evaluate diasporas' behavioural diversity in the states under study, as set out in part 1 above.

### 3 Armenian diaspora: At a crossroads of the new and old

The Armenian diaspora is unique and one of the oldest. Sheffer (2003: 75-77) states that it belongs to the classic type since its existence dates back to even before the formation of the nation state. The historical roots of the Armenian diaspora reach back to Mongolian times, in the thirteenth century, when as a result of Mongolian conquests many Armenians fled to neighbouring Eastern European regions and the Middle East (Tololyan 2000: 116). However, the decisive historical moment as far as the Armenian diaspora is concerned remains the events of 1915, the period of the collapse of the Ottoman empire with almost 1,5 million Armenians exposed to expulsion (Panossian 1998: 84).

Another prominent wave of Armenian migration is closely related to the civil war in Lebanon,<sup>1</sup> and the Iranian revolution.<sup>2</sup> With regard to the

1 The Lebanese Civil War lasting from 1975 to 1990 with 120 000 fatalities.

2 Iranian Revolution of 1978–1979, also referred to as the Islamic Revolution.

Soviet period, travel restrictions established by the Soviet Union suppressed the ability of Armenians to emigrate. Lastly, a final wave of emigration followed the demise of Communism. For Armenia, this wave embraced the 'brain-drain' generation, as well as economic migrants, and refugees from conflict zones such as people from Nagorno-Karabakh (BBC 2016).

During the current era, the proliferation of corruption, unfavourable economic conditions, social inequity, unfairness, and the lack of democratic values in the country resulted in gross migration (with an estimated net migration rate of -5,7 migrant(s)/1 000 population (2017)).<sup>3</sup>

As seen from the above, the reasons that prompt migration differ, but the outcome is simple, namely, diaspora.

Simply labelling diaspora communities as negligent nationalists is unfair. Diaspora really aids Armenia's pursuit of democracy. Inspired by the goal of strengthening the bonds between Armenia and its diaspora, the Ministry of Diaspora launched its activities in the Republic of Armenia. The activities of the Ministry of Diaspora are based on the mission to create one unified platform of information, which would bring together economic, political, educational, cultural and many other spheres.

The Armenian diaspora assists the development of the country's economy with vast amounts of financial remittances. Remittances, indeed, play an enormous role in the Armenian economy. Remittances have over the last five years been substantial, at 16 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP). Strikingly, Armenia is considered to be among the top 15 recipients of remittances in the world (Banaian & Bryan 2007).

Keeping in mind how crucial the role of civil society is in a country's democratisation process, it is worth mentioning that leading Armenian diaspora organisations forge links with civil society organisations, transfer finances and other resources through civil society, hence promoting democratic governance in Armenia.

The Armenian diaspora is inextricably bound to the conflict of Nagorno-Karabakh (BBC 2016). Taking into account the fact that during conflicts diasporas are involved in non-procedural aspects of democracy, the conflict of Nagorno-Karabakh played a crucial role in terms of limiting the involvement of the Armenian diaspora in democratisation. Hence, the Armenian diaspora was not motivated to pursue the deepening of democracy, and its involvement in the democratic procedures<sup>4</sup> was negligible. For instance, in order to fight electoral fraud in Armenia<sup>4</sup> and Nagorno-Karabakh, the diaspora sent monitors to ensure free and fair elections. Taken together, the Armenian diaspora was engaged in the democratic processes of the country to demonstrate their devotion to the democratic values that, in fact, is of utmost importance to the international community. Throughout this process they never abandoned intrinsic nationalist goals (Koinova 2009: 58).

3 Data source: IndexMundi, available at [https://www.indexmundi.com/armenia/net\\_migration\\_rate.html](https://www.indexmundi.com/armenia/net_migration_rate.html) (last visited 1 April 2018).

4 In April 2017, rock musician Serj Tankian and several other prominent diaspora Armenian artists monitored Armenia's parliamentary elections to help ensure that they meet democratic standards, to end widespread corruption and respect laws.

Diaspora is indeed one of the major resources to the Republic of Armenia. As far as the influence of diaspora on national interests is concerned, the Armenian diaspora, with the help of traditional lobbying and other methods, attempts to advance statehood issues concerning Nagorno-Karabakh. A good example is when the diaspora lobbies to ensure that the United States remains an honest broker in the negotiations despite having strategic interests in oil-rich Azerbaijan. Moreover, one of the leading diaspora organisations, the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF), for more than 50 years has been a vocal advocate for Turkey's recognition of the Armenian genocide (Koinova 2009: 50).

Interestingly, the resignation of the former Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrossian was to some extent linked to the diasporas' judgment that he had mishandled the Nagorno-Karabakh issue and wanted to establish a more cooperative foreign policy towards Turkey (Libaridian 1999). As Shain argues, 'the diaspora enthusiastically supported a new government comprised of a number of veterans from the war in Nagorno-Karabakh, including Robert Kocharian' (Shain 2002).

When speaking about leading diaspora organisations, it is important to mention the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU), the Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA) and the Armenian Assembly of America (AAA) (Kopalyan 2018). These organisations aim to disseminate democratic values, to promote human rights, and to preserve what culturally and historically is labelled as Armenian and 'for the prosperity of Armenia'.

The fact that diaspora organisations played a significant role in implementing democratic values and exposing human rights violations is clearly demonstrated in their actions around and open criticism of the 1996 presidential elections. The Armenian Revolutionary Federation and its affiliated diaspora organisations made the government accountable for the mass irregularities in the country. However, there was unanimous silence and negligence on the part of the leading Armenian diaspora organisations in the 2008 post-election upheavals (Human Rights Watch 2009); the 2009 Armenian-Turkish Protocols (Phillips & Lemmon 2012); the 2015 Electric Yerevan Protests; and the 2016 Sari Tagh Protests (Avedissian 2015).

Interviews with experts and surveys revealed that the Armenian diaspora plays an important role in democracy-building processes. However, this influence is never absolute and considerable changes are dependent on government-diaspora relationships. Experts also emphasise the fact that the democratic motives of the Armenian diaspora sometimes are very nationalistic, which directly stands in the way of democratisation. They stated that the most influential areas and factors of diaspora influence on the democracy-building processes in Armenia are financial remittances, conflict, culture, civil society and to some extent democratic governance (Babalyan, personal communication, 1 April 2018; Martirosyan, personal communication, 5 April 2018). Moreover, the political-economic framework is revealed as the main driving force of diaspora policies. Hence, the cooperation between the Armenian government and the Armenian diaspora communities may be characterised in symbolic, diplomatic and economic terms.

Taken together, the Armenian diaspora has not yet fully advanced liberal aspects of democracy. Instead, it has been primarily focused on nationalist aspects of democracy, while not excluding attempts at democratic turnover.

#### 4 Azerbaijani diaspora and its lost potential

Plans regarding the Azerbaijani diaspora developed since 1993 when Heydar Aliyev came to power with a strong will to use the ethnic Azerbaijanis living in 'the west' and in post-Soviet countries as a political resource (Rumyantsev 2017). In 1995, in one of his speeches in the capital of Switzerland, Heydar Aliyev mentioned the example of Ireland's potato famine, which led to a strong Irish diaspora all over the world. He even called them 'a great source of joy for [the] nation ... such a small country ... has a big lobby overseas' (Lib.aliyevheritage.org 2018).

Nowadays, approximately 300 communities and organisations can be found all over the world (Azerbaijan.az 2018). Such a large number of organisations was probably established to overbalance the Armenian diaspora's lobbying power, and since the 2000s Azerbaijani authorities have invested a significant amount of money (Rumyantsev 2017). In 2008, the government of Azerbaijan established a special committee 'on Work with Diaspora of Azerbaijan Republic' in the Cabinet of Azerbaijan to promote the creation of new organisations and maintain contact with the formed ones (Diaspora.gov.az, 2018). Before that, there was another committee named 'on the affairs with Azerbaijanis living in foreign countries'. However, questions may be posed as to the effectiveness of these establishments.

Indeed, some successes may be identified around notable diaspora organisations. Among these is the significant role played by the US Azeris Network (Usazeris.org 2018), which held a campaign to raise awareness on the past of Azerbaijan, including anti-Armenian policies. The actions produced results, as several US Congressmen have made official remarks in the Congressional Record commemorating Khojaly's events, and 31 March was recognised as Azerbaijani Remembrance Day by Nevada Governor Jim Gibbons (Powley 2009). Another example is the fact that this organisation submitted a petition to the US White House in 2013 to acknowledge the events of Khojaly as a 'war crime' (Hirose 2016). According to the rules of the White House petition programme, the representatives engaged to answer any petition which has collected more 100 000 signatures (Petitions.whitehouse.gov 2018). This petition proved highly popular as it was signed by 120 000 people. Even though the White House's reply was not as expected, a level of awareness and mobilisation was achieved. To ensure the success of lobbying in 2015, Azerbaijani associations in New York organised a protest in front of the United Nations (UN) building, addressed to the Permanent Mission of Armenia to the UN.

Apart from the lobbying role, the Azerbaijani diaspora has a vital role in the democratisation of their homeland. As Murad Ismayilov, a research fellow at the Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy, explains, diasporas are anxious about their image in their country of residence, making them more predisposed to motivate the democratic governments of their host

country and organisations such as the OSCE and EU to follow a ‘more critical approach to the issue of Azerbaijan’s democratisation’. In addition to this anxiety, members of the diaspora who consider returning to Azerbaijan are interested in returning to a democratic, prosperous and developed country (Ismayilov 2008).

The above examples clearly illustrate the motivations and activities of Azerbaijani diasporas, but how genuine are these actions and to what extent do the political elites of Azerbaijan control the diasporas? In the first place, as the organisations founded abroad are financed by the Azerbaijani state, this financial support may be interpreted as the government’s power to dictate to some extent to those organisations. The researcher Sergey Rumyantsev writes in his article ‘Long live the Azerbaijani diaspora!’ that Baku uses the diaspora to tell the world ‘the truth’ about this country and especially about the ‘great successes’ of the Aliyev regime. He argues that state propaganda convinced diasporas to act solely in the interests of Azerbaijan, as in the example of the French elections, when Azerbaijanis were told to vote against Le Pen, due to her ‘incorrect’ positions on Karabakh (Rumyantsev 2017). The same author argues that the Azerbaijani diaspora cannot be classified as ‘classical’ as in the case of the Greek or Jewish, due to various reasons, such as that it did not emerge from historic agony (Rumyantsev 2017), or because it cannot be assigned to any type of diaspora identified by Cohen (2008), namely, labour, trade or imperial.

If the collaboration between diasporas and Azerbaijan continues in this way, a huge potential will most probably be lost. The government also has to pay attention to the needs and expectations of those abroad, rather than establishing as many organisations as possible and imposing orders on them. In this scenario, cohesion is not foreseen.

To sum up the results of interviews with experts, one may state that the Azerbaijani diaspora is not an independent unit. Receiving funding from the government of Azerbaijan, the representatives of the diaspora support the interests and values dictated from above, which differ from the wishes and will of the people of Azerbaijan. Accordingly, representatives of such a diaspora somehow cannot influence the processes taking place in the country. It is possible to make a division between representatives of the Congress of Azerbaijanis, supported by the government and a non-politicised diaspora, existing at its own expense. The diaspora could influence the population of Azerbaijan, the attitude towards values and the state, but the population as such has no opportunity to influence the government and the policy pursued. However, experts noted that over the past few years the attitude of Azerbaijanis to the situation has changed. More comments began to appear on the internet about what is happening in the country. People started to speak out more openly. This may be considered the beginning of some, albeit small, positive change in society (Makhmudzade, personal communication, 20 March 2018; Murselzade, personal communication, 30 March 2018).

## 5 Belarusian diaspora: Problem with self-perception

Due to globalisation and benefits of democratic regimes, many people from post-Soviet countries moved to the Western part of the continent in search



of a the better share (Yeliseyeu 2014; MTA CSFK Geographical Institute 2017). While keeping strong contacts with relatives in their country of origin, diaspora representatives become a so-called bridge between the countries. Thus, one should respect the international importance of diaspora as a potential mediator of democratisation.

Estimates are that between 2 and 2,5 million people of Belarusian descent reside outside Belarus (*BelarusDigest* 2016). Before independence, a section of the Belarusian population freely moved to different parts of the Soviet Union. After the collapse of the USSR, they remained in their places of residence and automatically became diasporas. Some part of it is represented by native Belarusians living in neighbouring countries. Another aspect of the diaspora emerged due to economic and political migration.

The competencies in Belarusian diaspora policy are shared between three state agencies: the Ministry of Foreign Affairs,<sup>5</sup> the Ministry of Culture,<sup>6</sup> and the Office of the Commissioner for Religions and Nationalities.<sup>7</sup> Structural units are assigned with the implementation of the Offices' task to 'assist Belarusians and descendants of Belarusians living abroad in satisfying their national and cultural needs and developing their connection with the Republic of Belarus'. The President of the Republic of Belarus defines general state policy about the government and diasporas' common activities. The government is responsible for the realisation of the state diaspora policy.

State cooperation with diaspora organisations is rather incoherent and intermittent. However, the diaspora law entitled the law 'On Belarusians living abroad' (2014) assigns the coordination task to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.<sup>8</sup>

Diaspora members (Belarusians living abroad) are defined as 'ethnic Belarusians, persons born in Belarus, and persons identifying themselves as Belarusians who are permanently living outside the Republic of Belarus'. In practical terms, the following categories of persons belong to Belarusians living abroad, according to the law: Belarusian citizens permanently living abroad; foreign citizens and stateless persons permanently living abroad who were themselves born or used to live (or have ancestors in an ascending line who were born or used to live) in the territory of the present-day Republic of Belarus and foreign citizens and stateless persons permanently living outside Belarus who identify themselves as Belarusians from the point of ethnic belonging either to the Belarusian people, language, culture, or historical ties, or by their knowledge and preservation of Belarusian traditions and customs.

The cooperation with the Belarusian diaspora is limited largely to national and cultural issues: the provision of Belarusian literature; organising lectures by Belarusian scientists and cultural events abroad; and

5 See the official site of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus, available at <http://mfa.gov.by/multilateral/diaspora/> (last visited 1 April 2018).

6 See the official site of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Belarus, available at <http://www.kultura.by/en/> (last visited 1 April 2018).

7 See the official site of the Office of the Commissioner for Religions and Nationalities of the Republic of Belarus, available at <http://belarus21.by/> (last visited 1 April 2018).

8 The Law 'On Belarusians living abroad', available at <http://mfa.gov.by/upload/Law.pdf> (last visited 3 April 2018).

so forth. Economic outcomes of state emigration policies in Belarus are limited due to an economic environment that hinders private investment and limits political contacts with Western countries, where the Belarusian diaspora is most influential (Taras 2017).

Belarusian state agencies pursue policies on cultural ties; support education in the national language abroad; allow diaspora congresses in Belarus; and provide media services and assistance to the activities of national associations abroad (Taras 2017). However, state assistance is often given to diaspora organisations on the basis of the convergence of their political and ideological views with the official ones. The programmes directed at cooperation with the diaspora are usually adopted without diaspora organisations' recommendations and have limited effectiveness. The first state programme 'Belarusians in the world' was adopted in 1993, with ensuing programmes. Belarusian diaspora associations are still in the early stages of development and do not have many members. In 1993 the First World Congress of Belarusian diaspora took place. It was the first and only time the Belarusian government took part in funding the event. However, since President Lukashenko's rise to power in 1994, governmental policies towards the diaspora took a negative turn. 'Consequent world congresses of the Belarusian diaspora did not receive any meaningful financial state support' (*BelarusDigest* 2016). Furthermore, the Association *Bačkauščyna* (Fatherland),<sup>9</sup> the main organiser of the congresses, became the subject of public criticism expressed by the high-ranking Belarusian officials.

In the early 2000s the Belarusian authorities attempted to set up a fully-controlled diaspora association in parallel with *Bačkauščyna* and to gather a parallel congress of Belarusian diaspora. These intentions were not realised.

It is important to mention that the Belarusian authorities, if interested in the diaspora question, tend to support those with pro-elite views. In turn, part of the Belarusian diaspora considers Lukashenko as an illegal president and treat him as a threat to the Belarusian language and culture.

Belarusian autocephalous Orthodox and Greek Catholic (Uniate) churches play an important role in supporting the Belarusian identity abroad. There are up to 20 Belarusian autocephalous Orthodox Church

9 The World Association of Belarusians, *Bačkauščyna*, is an influential international organisation of which the objectives include the development of permanent cultural, economic, spiritual and organisational contacts between the Belarusian diaspora and Belarus; the provision of assistance to Belarusians who reside abroad; and the encouragement of scientific research in the field of Belarusian studies and in different aspects of the Belarusian diaspora. Under the auspices and organisational effort of *Bačkauščyna*, seven world congresses of Belarusians have taken place since the beginning of the 1990s. Congresses traditionally gather a few hundred Belarusian diaspora representatives from several countries (including many EU countries such as Poland, the Czech Republic, Sweden, Germany, Belgium, Great Britain, and so forth) who adopt resolutions and action plans that take into account the situation in the country, the state of play of the diaspora, and activities linked to the diaspora. In addition to the world Congresses of Belarusians, 'Bačkauščyna' organises other cultural and educational events with diaspora associations. Belarusian MFA and the diaspora: A complicated relationship (Gubarevich 2016).

communities across foreign countries, including the United States, Canada and Australia.<sup>10</sup> Thus, the organisations of the Belarusian diaspora worked on the practical implementation of social and cultural projects; the restoration of historical and cultural heritage and its return (for example, the Holy Cross of St Euphrosyne of Polotsk); and humanitarian and medical assistance to Belarusian children.

Summing up the results of experts' interviews, one we can state that, in general, the Belarusian diaspora is viewed not as part of Belarus, but as a foreign policy factor. The diaspora means citizens of other states with whom the policy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on spreading national interests is being implemented.

Basically in all spheres of life, the Belarusian diaspora has little influence. This is due to the small number of representatives of the diaspora, the blurring of self-identification, when representatives of the diaspora of the Soviet period can define themselves also as Ukrainians or Russians, and the lack of a developed institutional apparatus and instruments of influence restrains the possibilities.

The creation of a certain image of the country (positive or negative) is among the opportunities of the diaspora. The diaspora is a potential resource for carrying out national interests. This does not happen due to the fact that there are no clearly-formulated concepts on this issue and the 'Law on Belarussians of Abroad' has more of a framework character without specific requirements.

Because of the low level of conflict in the country, it is difficult to estimate the impact of the diaspora on development or in avoiding conflicts. The most logical is the conduct of ethno-cultural activities with the simultaneous gradual formation of a positive attitude of the diaspora and a strong will to participate in Belarusian policy, and to support the progress of the country to deal with the demands of the modern world (Bukonkin, personal communication, 2 April 2018; Laikov, personal communication, 4 April 2018).

## 6 Georgian diaspora: Positive outcomes of emigration

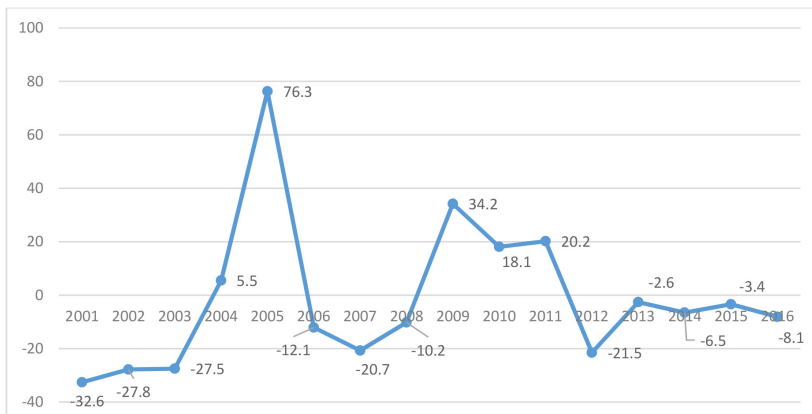
After the collapse of the Soviet Union, member states of the former Soviet Union started to develop independently. They framed their foreign and internal policies on their own. This process was not easy and smooth. Colour revolutions, struggles for self-determination and civil and international wars forced many people to move from one place to another. In some countries, it was expressed by emigration; in others, it was immigration. Unstable political and harsh socio-economic situations forced people to leave their home countries, with the result that people created diasporas in host countries. Georgia was one of those countries where emigration outweighed immigration. This explains why there are a vast number of diaspora communities all over the world, which has its influence on different processes of the homeland, Georgia.

10 See the official site of Belarusian Autocephalous Orthodox Church, BAOC, available at <http://www.belapc.org/> (last visited 2 April 2018).

According to MFA Georgia, Mikhael Janelidze, there are approximately 272 diaspora unions or organisations all over the world. In one of his interviews, Janelidze mentioned that more than 1 million Georgians left Georgia before 1990, and around 1 500 000 Georgians left the country in the post-Soviet period (Sputnik-Georgia 2017). In fact, as in many post-Soviet countries, numerous Georgians stay abroad illegally. That is why it is impossible to give an exact number of Georgian diasporas. However, according to the Institute for Development of Freedom of Information (IDFI), there are 1 607 744 Georgians abroad.<sup>11</sup>

Meanwhile, the results of the General Population Census of 2014 revealed that there are 3 713 804 people living in Georgia, and the population decline was 15 per cent compared to the previous census held in 2002.<sup>12</sup>

**Figure 1: Net Migration, Georgia (thousands)<sup>13</sup>**



There were several reasons for emigration: wars at the beginning of the 1990s, unemployment and socio-economic issues. It is important to emphasise that most emigrants that later became Georgian diasporas left the country because of the poor economic and social conditions. They were determined to find better living conditions and develop themselves

- 11 Data source: Institute for development of Freedom of Information, available at <https://idfi.ge/ge/georgian-diaspora-combines> (last visited 1 April 2018).
- 12 The data source is the official site of the National Statistics Office of Georgia, available at [http://www.geostat.ge/cms/site\\_images/\\_files/english/population/According%20to%20preliminary%20results%20of%20the%202014%20population%20census%20Final.pdf](http://www.geostat.ge/cms/site_images/_files/english/population/According%20to%20preliminary%20results%20of%20the%202014%20population%20census%20Final.pdf) (last visited 5 April 2018).
- 13 The data source is the official site of National Statistics Office of Georgia, available at [http://www.geostat.ge/index.php?action=page&p\\_id=173&lang=eng](http://www.geostat.ge/index.php?action=page&p_id=173&lang=eng) (last visited 10 April 2018). Analysing the data, we should mention the fact of occupied territories, during the last census Georgian agency of statistics had no access to Abkhazia and Southern Ossetia. Thus, regions with population of 200 000 were not included in the census. It is also important to mention the multi-nationality of the country. However, according to the data released by the national statistical agency, emigration was not done only by one nation.

economically. Some of these people were fortunate in that respect. They became large-scale businessmen. In addition, it should be mentioned that they were willing to invest money in their homeland, Georgia. In fact, many successful businessmen have for decades been investing in Georgia.

Cooperation between Georgia and its diaspora communities is mainly economic and political in nature. The continuing financial investments by Georgians in different spheres present a significant contribution to the economic development of the country. In addition, they ensure a competitive market, which positively affects the quality improvement of the market.

It should be mentioned that with the resolution of the Georgian government,<sup>14</sup> the position of Minister of Diaspora was disbanded and issues regarding the diaspora became part of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Sputnik-Georgia 2017). The government declared that this change did not come about because of the lesser importance of that institution, but for the purposes of mobilisation of resources.

In official documents and announcement of the Georgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs it is mentioned that the diaspora contributes to its homeland in socio-economic development through the financial aid from diaspora representatives to the people of Georgia, charity, and business encouragement. This assistance is highly appreciated. There are many projects aimed at the encouragement of this contribution. One such project is called 'United, powerful diaspora with close ties to the homeland' initiated by MFA (MFA Georgia 2015).

A significant portion of foreign investments in Georgia is contributed by ethnic Georgians. To understand the significance and sphere of diaspora investments, some foreign investments made by diaspora representatives during 2015-2016 are mentioned below. The data was released by the ex-Ministry of Diaspora (Charaia 2016).

For the functioning of the multitask complex Gino Paradise, founded by Georgian businessman Nodar Giorgadze, around €28 000 000 was invested. Another project established by Gino Paradise, the Gino Green City Resort, was funded in an amount of more than €100 000 000. An investment made by a Georgian diaspora representative is the American hospital, which is situated in the centre of the capital. The hospital was established by a Georgian doctor who works in America. Diaspora representatives from Poland erected the Hilton Tbilisi Hotel. Some other hotels were erected during 2015-2016 with the help of ethnic Georgian investors. There is also a wine production factory in Georgia called Danieli which is a Georgian investment from America. Other investments were made by Georgians from Holland, Spain and other countries.

The fact is that economic development is directly connected to the quality of life of the state. Moreover, it promotes the development of democracy. However, the contribution of the diaspora to the homeland is not only related to the economy. It is important to emphasise that during the past 15 years there was one revolution and one power shift in Georgia aimed at building democracy. All the leaders of the movements were representatives of the diaspora at some stage of their lives. Suffice it to

14 Parliament of Georgia, Resolution 512 (17 November 2016).

mention the case of Bidzina Ivanishvili who lived in Russia and owned large businesses there. He came to Georgia to, in his own words, improve the democratic and economic situation of the country. According to many international organisations (Freedom House 2016; NDI 2013) Ivanishvili managed to record a progress in democracy development.

Summarising the experts' interviews, we can underline that the government in the country became more democratic after the last change of power. As far as the formation of a more democratic government and democratisation process in general is concerned, the influence of diaspora was vital. Here the role of the diaspora is discussed mainly from a positive perspective. The experts in particular state that Georgian diaspora representatives all over the world have a huge impact on almost every field of democracy: democratic government; human rights; the rule of law; civil society; culture promotion; conflict solving; the promotion of national interests; and science and education. Here the importance of the host country was highlighted. The impact of the diaspora representatives on their homeland depends mainly on the level of democracy development in the host country. If the host country is highly developed, a person adopts and shares democratic traditions and mentality in the home country. The role of Georgian diasporas is irreplaceable in promoting Georgian culture abroad, which is also reflected in the sphere of tourism. Hundreds of Georgian diaspora organisations set a mission for themselves to promote Georgian culture abroad in order to save their dignity and identity. An issue no less important emphasised during the interviews with the experts was the important role of financial remittances. After all, the vast majority of Georgian emigrants are working migrants who aim to earn money to send to their homeland. Ethnic Georgians from all over the world provide financial support through huge investments in the homeland. There is no doubt that the Georgian diaspora is expanding rapidly. However, to make it more supportive to the homeland's democracy they should be united and should show more interest in the situation in Georgia (Rusetski, personal communication, 20 March 2018; Gaspariani, personal communication, 27 March 2018).

## **7 Moldovan diaspora – A competition between the west and the east**

Today, more than ever, it has become increasingly possible for people to be mobile, and due to globalisation these trends are not decreasing. The Republic of Moldova is not an exception, due to its economic and social crisis since independence in 1991, when numerous people decided to migrate. It is difficult to approximate the number of migrants due to the Transnistrian conflict; central authorities do not have control over the eastern border; and there is no effective and lasting record-keeping of migrants. In 2016 the Moldovan government suggested that 520 000 Moldovan citizens were abroad in over 30 countries (Gov.md 2016). The Moldovan government might shrink the real number of Moldovan citizens abroad because the German Economic Team Moldova in 2015 published a paper titled 'Permanent Emigration from Moldova: Estimate and Implications for Diaspora Policy', offering different numbers, namely, in 2012 426 900 and in 2015 733 200 (Luecke, Ganta and Radeke 2015). The

trend of leaving the country persists, and it is difficult to accept that in three years 213 200 Moldovans returned.

Even though Moldovan elites understand the challenges of migration, such as brain-drain and separation from family, it also underlines the importance of migration, such as financial remittances, business ties, valuable skills, experiences and networks. The diasporas also face difficulties such as integration in host countries, but also keeping links with their native countries. It is clear that the cooperation between the state and diasporas would smooth many obstacles and both sides can benefit from it. Because of this, the Diaspora-2025 national strategy was approved together with an action plan for 2016-2018 for its enforcement (BDR 2016). It is worth mentioning that Moldova has the Bureau for Diaspora Relations (BDR) established by a government decision in 2012 (BDR 2018a). Being a consolidated state institution, the office is to ensure a coherent and comprehensive policy framework for the consolidation of the Moldovan diaspora, in order to actively involve all the country's citizens in the economic, social and cultural development of the country of origin and destination (BDR 2018a). The same BDR developed the Diaspora Engagement Hub – a grant programme in six spheres: educational centres; innovative projects; local programme of voluntary returning; the professional return; regional thematic partnerships; and women empowerment. The programme was designed to highlight the human capital of the diaspora (BDR 2018b).

Keeping in mind that until 2009 Moldova was under the rule of the Communist Party, which was pro-Russian, there was not much cooperation with EU diaspora, and from 2009 pro-European elected parties (which managed to win elections mainly because of EU diaspora) added diaspora to their political speeches (Rusu 2012), but not fully in their agenda.

Out-of-country voting is gaining more and more importance: In 1994 only 1 948 people voted; in 2009 17 484 citizens voted and in the last presidential elections in 2016 138 720 voted (Berlinschii 2016). Political parties currently seek electoral and financial support from the diaspora. A vivid example is Maia Sandu's party Action and Solidarity (PAS), that also created the PAS diaspora, so that members from the diaspora can have a political affiliation. Diasporas were also the main sponsors of presidential campaigns in 2016 (Partidul Acțiune și Solidaritate 2018), where Maia Sandu was the strongest candidate opposing Igor Dodon, the president of the Socialistic Party of Moldova. Diasporas were very actively involved in those elections, promoting and advocating European values, but also creating initiatives such as 'Adopt a vote' of which the main goal was to offer the citizens of Moldova residing outside the country who wished to vote a place to stay overnight, if the voting station was not near them, and also food and some financial support. Another initiative called 'Adopt a troll' was aimed at curbing Russian propaganda and trolls (Indiegogo 2018). Through these actions, the willingness of the Moldova diaspora is shown to participate in the political processes and building democracy. In the interview, Vicol also underlined that the diaspora has an indirect influence on democratic governance in Moldova via its relatives (Vico, personal communication, 1 April 2018). Whenever some diaspora members return home for a holiday, they share their experiences in the

hosting countries, thereby revealing what is wrong or right regarding the democratic governance.

The diaspora plays a crucial role in Moldova, economically speaking, through remittances and investments, and politically and socially, through exercising their right to vote, through supporting political parties and founding non-governmental organisations (NGOs). In addition, a new trend is regarding diasporas as a lobbying and advocating resource in the host country. The Moldovan diaspora is monitoring the internal process of Moldova and can raise awareness in the international environment, especially when human rights are violated in the country of origin. An interesting example is the way in which diasporas from the United Kingdom, France and Spain pressured the Moldovan authorities to accept the anti-discrimination law imposed by the European Union (EU), justifying that the law is necessary for the visa liberalisation regime offered by the EU (Rusu 2012). The joint efforts of civil society from Moldova and activists from the diaspora to tackle some particular issues are the most efficient means of collaboration. The strength of civil society from Moldova is due largely to the diasporas' support and intellectual capacity.

It is understandable that diasporas become more and more active in their native countries, especially due to the new technology and communication, but also because politics itself has changed after the change of the Communist regime (Gigauri 2018). Individuals now have a clearer role in the political life, especially when the states call themselves democratic. In such instances, it is inevitable to give diasporas the opportunity to express themselves and be heard at all levels.

As a result of the experts' interviews and surveys, it was revealed that the government had failed to integrate diasporas' contribution in the policy-making process. One observed as follows:

The governmental institutions are eager to integrate diaspora's inputs only if these validate their policy. If diaspora's contributions are against their policies, then the political actors from Moldova are usually justifying the refusal by mentioning the lack of resources.

There appeared to be a unique opportunity for democratic governance through 'obtaining a parliamentary mandate for constituencies for the diaspora' which will be possible in the 2018 parliamentary elections. Another expert interviewee argued that the problem concerned the different values from the west to the east which the various diasporas have assimilated. Democratic values and the principles of good governance are perceived differently in Moscow and Brussels, leading to different visions of democracy and good governance. The same expert believes that diasporas, besides engaging in protests and speeches, have to be more creative in promoting the rule of law. Experts expressed the same concerns, that '[c]orrupted politicians are immune towards external pressure'.

It is worth mentioning that the interviewed experts pointed out the lack of clarity of 'national interest'. Because the Moldovan government did not precisely define its own national interests, no one can effectively contribute to their achievement. In addition, the diaspora cannot act as a single actor due to the divergence between the west and the east. Both experts indicated that the diaspora has the most positive impact in promoting culture, financial remittances and civil society. No negative



impact was identified, only the absence of any impact in fields such as human rights or conflict (Vicol, personal communication, 1 April 2018; Gramada, personal communication, 4 April 2018).

What Moldova lacks is a clear vision for the national interest that would fortify the diaspora, but not dissolve it. Otherwise, the competition between values and interests from the west to the east will lead to internal disputes. The Moldovan diaspora has recently become motivated and active, and it is important that its enthusiasm be accepted and maintained by the government and civil society, or the possibility of losing the interest of the diaspora in all fields exists, from democracy and human rights to financial remittances and investments.

## 8 Ukrainian diaspora: Fighter of the Ukrainian crisis

The Ukrainian diaspora is the community of ethnic Ukrainians who to some extent connect their origin and identity with Ukraine (Завьялов 2017). Starting from the late 1870s, the Ukrainians have already been migrating to the United States (Ciment 2001: 1238). It is believed that Ukrainians came from Galicia (the western parts of present-day Ukraine (Kuropas 1991).

A massive wave of migration of Ukrainians is inextricably bound to the end of World War II. According to Fink, 'the post-war anti-communist exiles numbered around 85 000 Ukrainians' (Fink 1993: 37). As far as the Soviet period is concerned, travel restrictions did not allow Ukrainians to emigrate.

Currently, between 8,2 million (according to the foreign countries' census) and 20 million (according to various estimates) people of Ukrainian origin are living abroad. The Ukrainian migration and diaspora formation process conditionally is divided into four waves (IOM Ukraine 2016).

The first wave of the Ukrainian emigration dates back to the late nineteenth to early twentieth century. Around 1,6 million Ukrainians (10 per cent of the population) from Western Ukraine left their homeland to move to eastern countries. The second wave of emigration emerged during World War I. Additional to the difficult economic situation were political reasons that apparently forced people to move to other countries. World War II and problems in its aftermath caused the third wave of emigration. The fourth wave of emigration, which was socio-economic in nature, took place at the end of the twentieth century. This time Ukrainians moved to the area where previously there were no Ukrainians, particularly to Southern Europe.

There currently are numerous NGOs composed of Ukrainian diaspora populations. These organisations are brought together by one authoritative international Ukrainian organisation named the Ukrainian World Congress (UWC). It includes more than 300 NGOs from over 30 countries (MFA Ukraine 2018).

Within the theoretical framework to explain diaspora-state cooperation in the case of Ukraine, it is most appropriate to use the ethnic and political-economic frameworks. With regard to the ethnic framework, the majority of diaspora organisations adopted the mission of defending the

qualities of Ukrainian national identity, assisting the development and dissemination of the Ukrainian cultural heritage.

As for the economic framework, substantial financial remittances are transferred to Ukraine by diasporas. During the conflict with Russia, Ukrainian diasporas from different countries and in particular from Estonia sent financial and material aid to soldiers (Euromaidan Press 2017). Moreover, due to the strong lobby of Ukrainians in Estonia, the Estonian government came up with an initiative to treat wounded Ukrainian soldiers.

Interestingly, Ukrainian public diplomacy is strongly centred on the topic of mass killing of Ukrainians by soviet authorities, in some countries called genocide. In promoting this topic, the biggest impact may be attributed to the Canadian diasporas.

Migration resulted in the dissemination of European values in Ukraine which, on the one hand, promotes the notion of cosmopolitanism and openness to global innovations, but, on the other, is also a direct threat to Ukrainian national identity. Migration, however, has positive sides. For example, labour migration in the case of Ukraine curtails tensions in the marketplace. Many Ukrainians find work opportunities abroad, and apparently, if there was no way to work abroad, unemployment would prevail in the country (Pozniak 2012). Numerous surveys reveal that the wages of migrant workers abroad in fact are three to four times higher than the average wage in Ukraine. Labour migrants earn money abroad, which naturally improves the quality of life of their families and, therefore, that of the Ukrainian population. Apparently, this curbs poverty and has an influence on economic development.

According to the International Organisation for Migration study on how migrants influence the development of the country, migrant remittances constituted nearly 50 per cent of the household budget in the case of long-term migrants. As for short-term migrants, it is 60 per cent (IOM Ukraine 2016).

As a result of an expert interview and surveys, it was revealed that the role of Ukrainian diaspora is influential in democracy-building processes. The experts outlined that diaspora is of considerable assistance to the economy of Ukraine. They also highlighted the importance of the influence of diaspora on the culture. According to the experts, diaspora representatives in the majority of cases maintain Ukrainian culture and their ethnic origin worldwide. However, diaspora does not have much influence on the formation of internal policy and the Russian-Ukrainian conflict. With regard to human rights, diasporas continually undertake some human rights reforms, but the outcomes are highly dependent on how the country implements them. On the whole, public and cultural diplomacy, lobbying Ukrainian national interest and financial remittances are the main means by which diasporas influence democratisation (Atamanenko, personal communication, 21 March 2018; Gerasymenko, personal communication, 4 April 2018).

## 9 Comparative analysis of diaspora and democratisation in EaP countries

This section is devoted to the comparative analysis of EaP countries in terms of diaspora policy, diaspora activity and diasporas' influence on democratisation. The diasporas originating from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine vary in scope of their activities: factors of influence on the democracy-building processes; impact opportunities on government policies; financial remittances; as well as by size and distribution. These countries also vary with respect to their diaspora policies and democracy level. The comparative analysis allows to define more explicitly the similarities, differences and peculiarities of the cases in the above-mentioned spheres.

Summing up the results of the experts' interviews, one may state that for Armenia, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine the field mostly influenced by the diaspora is financial remittances; for Azerbaijan it is civil society; and for Belarus it is culture (See Table 1). In the case of Azerbaijan, the influence magnitude is not high, composing 2,5 points on scale {-5}-{+5}, but it is the highest in comparison with other fields. Analysing the fields by weights, it becomes more evident that the diasporas of Azerbaijan and Belarus are the most passive among the countries under study. Meanwhile, the democracy levels of the last two are the lowest, allowing an inference that this inactivity is a result of state policy.

**Table 1: Mostly influenced fields by diasporas in democracy transformations<sup>15</sup>**

Fields ( {-5}- {+5} )	Armenia	Georgia	Moldova	Ukraine	Azerbaijan	Belarus
1. Financial remittances	4.5	4	4	3.5	1	0
2. Civil society	1.5	1	3	1.5	2.5	2
3. Culture	2.5	2.5	3.5	2.5	2	3.5
4. Democratic governance	1.5	1	1.5	1.5	0	-0.5
5. Human rights	1	1.5	0.5	1	0	0
6. Rule of law	0.5	1	1.5	2	0	-0.5
7. Policy making	0.5	1.5	1	1.5	0.5	0
8. Integration into the world economy	1	0	1	0	1	1
9. National interest	0.5	2	0	2.5	1	2.5
10. Conflict	2	0.5	-0.5	0	2	0

15 Fields are estimated by experts on a scale of '-5' to '5', where '-5' is extremely negative influence; '0' is an absence of any influence; 5 is extremely positive influence. Source: personal communications.

Now that we have identified the main fields where diasporas have the most influence in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, we will reveal diasporas' impact on democracy examining correlations between these fields and democracy. In order to measure diasporas' effect on democracy within the aim of the article and research questions, we used a regression analysis. For this purpose, we operationalised the highlighted fields into quantitative variables. Thus, our dependent variable is 'democracy' operationalised into the 'Index of Democracy Level'<sup>16</sup> (Aleksanyan 2017) for all cases. The independent variable for Armenia, Georgia, Ukraine and Moldova is financial remittances, operationalised into personal remittances (% of GDP).<sup>17</sup> For Azerbaijani, the independent variable is civil society, operationalised into civil society-nations in transit subindex,<sup>18</sup> and for Belarus, this is culture, operationalised into governments expenditure on culture or cultural events abroad.

**Table 2: Diasporas' influence on Democracy, regression analysis<sup>19</sup>**

Variable	Coefficient	R <sup>2</sup>	Sig	N
Armenia / Financial remittances		.677	.000	20
Constant	.329		.000	
Personal Remittances (%of GDP)	.009		.000	
Georgia / Financial remittances		.239	.034	20
Constant	.295		.002	
Personal Remittances (%of GDP)	.020		.034	
Moldova / Financial remittances		.571	.000	20
Constant	.417		.000	
Personal Remittances (%of GDP)	.006		.000	
Ukraine / Financial remittances		.621	.000	20
Constant	.427		.000	
Personal Remittances (%of GDP)	.023		.000	
Azerbaijan/Civil Society		.462	.003	16
Constant	.230		.000	
Civil Society (Nations in Transit subindex)	.032		.003	
Belarus / Culture				
Constant	--		--	
Government expenditures on culture				

16 Index of Democracy Level aggregates 5 subindexes: Political, Social, Economic, Educational and Health. The index has the 0-1 ranking scale where 0 point implies the lowest level of democracy and 1 point indicates the highest level of it.

17 Data source is the official site of the World Bank, available at <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/BX.TREFPWKR.DT.GD.ZS?locations=UA-AM-MD-GE-AZ-BY/> (last visited 1 April 2018).

18 Data source: Freedom House 'Nations in Transit 2017: Azerbaijan Country Profile' (2017), available at <https://freedomhouse.org/report/nations-transit/2017/azerbaijan> (last visited 1 April 2018).

19 Source: calculations by the authors.

As presented in Table 2, the Indexes of Democracy Level of Armenia, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine are strongly affected by financial remittances. It is worth mentioning that Moldova has the highest rate of remittances (21,7 per cent of GDP), while the same variable in respect of Armenia, Georgia and Ukraine is 13,1 per cent, 10,6 per cent and 6,6 per cent of GDP, respectively.<sup>20</sup> The regression analysis indicates that a 1 per cent increase in remittances is associated with 0,009, 0,2, 0,06 and 0,023 units increase in democracy index, respectively. Particularly, the  $R^2$  for financial remittances of Armenia is the highest, with a value of 0,677, which explains 68 per cent of the variation in democracy.

The regression results also show that civil society in Azerbaijan has a statistically significant impact on democracy. One unit increase in civil society index leads to the increase in the Index of Democracy Level of Azerbaijan by 0,032 units.

The research has not detected any statistically significant linear dependence of Index of Democracy Level on the Culture in the case of Belarus (government expenditures on culture).

According to the Nations in Transit 2018 report of Freedom House (2018),<sup>21</sup> Ukraine (4,64), Georgia (4,68) and Moldova (4,93) have comparatively better results in the democracy index. Azerbaijan (6,93) has the worst value of democracy, followed by Belarus (6,61). Armenia has an average level among the six states. In this context, summing up the main results of the research and looking through the theoretical framework, we conclude that the diaspora policies of Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova and Armenia have a political-economic framework of diaspora policies including disciplinary and liberal governmentality elements, while the diaspora policies of Azerbaijan and Belarus are mostly disciplinary.

## 10 Conclusion

This article explores the influence of diasporas on democratisation in EaP countries in a comparative perspective. Within this framework, analysing diaspora policies and diaspora activities in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, we raise the question whether the diasporas' influence on democracy is typical in these countries and whether they have similar diaspora policies. Based on the findings, we argue that diasporas of these countries have different impact levels on democracy. Moreover, we conclude that democracy levels, in turn, influence the diaspora policies.

A descriptive and explorative analysis of the article shows that financial remittances are the main means by which diasporas have influence in Armenia, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine; in the case of Azerbaijan this

20 Data source is the official site of the World Bank, available at [/https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/BX.TREFWKR.DT.GD.ZS?locations=UA-AM-MD-GE-AZ-BY/](https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/BX.TREFWKR.DT.GD.ZS?locations=UA-AM-MD-GE-AZ-BY) (last visited 1 April 2018).

21 'Nations in Transit' measured by Freedom House is estimated by 1 to 7 point scale where the states with 1 to 2,99 points have Consolidated Democracies, 3 to 3,99 points have Semi-Consolidated Democracies, 4 to 4,99 points -Transitional or Hybrid Regime, 5 to 5,99 points are Semi-Consolidated Authoritarian Regimes and 6 to 7 points are Consolidated Authoritarian Regimes. It estimates progress and fails in democratisation for 29 countries from Central Europe to Central Asia.

means is civil society, albeit with weak effect; and in Belarus it is culture. The regression analysis findings illustrate that the financial remittances variable is revealed as a significant predictor explaining the variation in levels of democracy. The civil society of Azerbaijan also has a statistically significant impact on democracy.

Another finding illustrates that the diasporas of Azerbaijan and Belarus are the most passive among the countries under study. Taking into account that the democracy levels of the two countries are also the lowest, we conclude that this passivity is a consequence of state policy, which limits and determines the diaspora activity agenda. Thus, in the case of Belarus and Azerbaijan, the diaspora policies are mostly disciplinary, while the political-economic diaspora policies of Armenia, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine include components that are more liberal.

## References

- Aleksanyan A (ed) (2017) *Trends of the index of democracy level in the dimension of human rights and democratization (Armenia, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine and Moldova)* Yerevan State University Press
- Avedissian K 'The power of electric Yerevan' *OpenDemocracy* (2015), available at <https://www.opendemocracy.net/karena-avedissian/electrified-yerevan> (last visited 20 March 2018)
- Azerbaijan.az. 'Azerbaijani diaspora' (2018), available at [http://azerbaijan.az/portal/Society/Diaspora/diaspora\\_e.html](http://azerbaijan.az/portal/Society/Diaspora/diaspora_e.html) (last visited 21 March 2018)
- Banaian K & Bryan R 'Remittances in Armenia: The impacts of remittances on the economy and measures to enhance their contribution to development' (2007) *Armenian Journal of Public Policy* 229
- BBC 'Nagorno-Karabakh profile' (2016), available at <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-18270325> (last visited 20 March 2018).
- BDR 'Diaspora – 2025' Bureau for Diaspora Relations (2016), available at [http://brd.gov.md/sites/default/files/sn\\_diaspora\\_2025\\_web.pdf](http://brd.gov.md/sites/default/files/sn_diaspora_2025_web.pdf) (last visited 17 April 2018)
- BDR 'Diaspora engagement hub' Bureau for Diaspora Relations (2018b), available at <http://brd.gov.md/ro/content/diaspora-engagement-hub-1> (last visited 17 April 2018).
- BDR 'Istorie, misiune, viziune, obiective' Bureau for Diaspora Relations (2018a), available at <http://www.brd.gov.md/ro/content/istorie-misiune-viziune-obiective> (last visited 17 April 2018)
- BelarusDigest* 'Belarusian MFA and the diaspora: a complicated relationship' (2016), available at <https://belarusdigest.com/story/belarusian-mfa-and-the-diaspora-a-complicated-relationship/> (last visited 31 March 2018)
- Belinschi C 'Alegerile prezidențiale 2016 – prezentă la vot fără precedent a diasporei Republicii Moldova' *Moldova in Progress* (2016), available at <https://moldovainprogres.com/alegerile-prezidentiale-2016-prezenta-la-vot-fara-precedent-a-diasporei-republicii-moldova/> (last visited 17 April 2018)

- Biswas B 'We are good citizens' (2007) Paper presentation at the Annual Convention of the International Studies Association, Chicago, IL
- Carment D & Nikolko M (eds) (2017) *Post-Soviet migration: Regional context and modern development* Oxford: Palgrave Macmillan
- Charaia V 'Evaluation of Georgia's foreign direct investment' (2016) TSU Analysis and Prognosis Centre, available at <http://cbw.ge/economy/georgias-foreign-direct-investment-evaluation/> (last visited 11 April 2018)
- Ciment J (2001) *Encyclopedia of American immigration* Armonk, New York: ME Sharpe
- Cohen R (2008) *Global diasporas* London: Routledge
- Diaspora.gov.az. 'Diasporla İş üzrə Dövlət Komitəsi' (2018), available at <http://diaspora.gov.az/index.php?option=content&id=87> (last visited 25 March 2018)
- EEAS 'Eastern Partnership' (2016), available at [https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/419/eastern-partnership\\_en](https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/419/eastern-partnership_en) (last visited 1 April 2018)
- Eszter Kovács 'Post-Socialist diaspora policies: Is there a Central-European diaspora policy path?' (2017) *Hungarian Journal of Minority Studies* 89
- Euromaidan Press 'How the Ukrainian diaspora in Estonia helps fend off Russia's hybrid war' (2017), available at <http://euromaidanpress.com/2017/10/05/volunteers-took-a-heavy-burden-from-the-state-how-ukraines-diaspora-in-estonia-helps-fight-russias-hybrid-war/> (last visited 3 April 2018)
- Fink S 'From "chicken Kiev" to Ukrainian recognition' MA thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, 1993
- Freedom House 'Nations in transit 2016?: Georgia' (2016), available at <https://freedomhouse.org/report/nations-transit/2016/georgia> (last visited 1 April 2018)
- Freedom House 'Nations in transit 2018?: Confronting illiberalism' (2018), available at [https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/FH\\_NationsInTransit\\_Web\\_PDF\\_FINAL\\_2018\\_03\\_16.pdf](https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/FH_NationsInTransit_Web_PDF_FINAL_2018_03_16.pdf) (last visited 1 April 2018)
- Gigauri G 'Diasporas as vehicles of development: Learning from international experience' Reports&Analyses 7/06, Warszawa (2018), available at [http://pdc.ceu.hu/archive/00004809/01/rap\\_i\\_an\\_0706a.pdf](http://pdc.ceu.hu/archive/00004809/01/rap_i_an_0706a.pdf) (last visited 17 April 2018)
- Gov.md. 'Moldovan cabinet approves Diaspora-2025 national strategy' Government of Republic of Moldova (2016), available at <http://www.gov.md/en/content/moldovan-cabinet-approves-diaspora-2025-national-strategy> (last visited 17 April 2018)
- Gubarevich I 'Belarusian MFA and the diaspora: A complicated relationship' UDF.BY (2016), available at <https://udf.by/english/featured-stories/145423-belarusian-mfa-and-the-diaspora-a-complicated-relationship.html> (last visited 31 March 2018)
- Hirose Y 'The complexity of nationalism in Azerbaijan' (2016) 4 *International Journal of Social Science Studies* 136
- Human Rights Watch 'Democracy on rocky ground: Armenia's disputed 2008 presidential election, post-election violence, and the one-sided pursuit of accountability' (2009), available at <https://www.hrw.org/report/2009/02/25/democracy-rocky-ground/armenias-disputed-2008-presidential-election-post-election> (last visited 20 March 2018)
- Indiegogo 'Adopt? un trol' (2018), available at <https://www.indiegogo.com/projects/adopta-un-trol#/> (last visited 17 April 2018)

- IOM Ukraine 'Migration in Ukraine: Facts and figures' (2016), available at [http://www.iom.org.ua/sites/default/files/ff\\_eng\\_10\\_10\\_press.pdf](http://www.iom.org.ua/sites/default/files/ff_eng_10_10_press.pdf) (last visited 1 April 2018)
- Ismayilov M 'Baku and the Azerbaijani diaspora: How much interaction and influence?' *Biweekly* (2008), available at [http://biweekly.ada.edu.az/vol\\_1\\_no\\_2/Baku\\_and\\_the\\_Azerbaijani\\_Diaspora\\_Ismayilov.htm](http://biweekly.ada.edu.az/vol_1_no_2/Baku_and_the_Azerbaijani_Diaspora_Ismayilov.htm) (last visited 17 March 2018)
- Kapur D (2010) *Diaspora, development, and democracy: The domestic impact of international migration from India* Princeton: Princeton University Press
- Kapur D 'Remittances: The new development mantra?' (2003) Paper prepared for the G-24 Technical Group Meetings, Geneva, Switzerland
- Karácsonyi D, Kocsis K & Bottlik Z (eds) 'Belarus in maps' Geographical Institute?, Research Centre for Astronomy and Earth Sciences, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest (2017), available at [http://www.mtafi.hu/inmaps/pdf/Belarus-in-Maps\\_17.pdf](http://www.mtafi.hu/inmaps/pdf/Belarus-in-Maps_17.pdf) (last visited 2 April 2018)
- Kasbarian S 'The myth and reality of "return" – Diaspora in the "homeland"' (2015) 18 *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies* 358
- Koinova M 'Diasporas and democratization in the post-Communist world' (2009) 42 *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 41
- Kopalyan N 'Bound by duty? The diaspora's normalization of Armenia's political system' ENV Report (2018), available at <https://www.envreport.com/politics/bound-by-duty-the-diaspora-s-normalization-of-armenia-s-political-system> (last visited 20 March 2018)
- Kuropas M (1991) *The Ukrainian-Americans* Toronto: University of Toronto Press
- Lib.aliyevheritage.org 'Welcome to Heydar Aliyevs Heritage Research Centre' (2018), available at <http://lib.aliyevheritage.org/ru/index.html> (last visited 21 March 2018)
- Libaridian G (1999) *The challenge of statehood* Watertown, MA: Blue Crane
- Luecke M, Ganta V and Radeke J 'Permanent emigration from Moldova: Estimate and implications for diaspora policy' German Economic Team Moldova (2015)
- Lyons T 'Diasporas and the salience of homeland conflict' (2007) Paper presentation at the Annual Convention of the International Studies Association, Chicago, IL
- MFA Georgia 'United, powerful diaspora with close ties to the homeland' (2015), available in Georgian at <http://mfa.gov.ge/diasporis-forumi.aspx> (last visited 11 April 2018)
- MFA Ukraine 'Ukrainians abroad' (2018), available at <http://mfa.gov.ua/en/about-ukraine/ukrainians-abroad> (last visited 3 April 2018)
- NDI 'NDI Poll: Georgian dream, Ivanishvili remain most popular; UNM continues to be seen as strongest opposition party' National Democratic Institute (2013), available at <https://www.ndi.org/node/23651> (last visited 21 March 2018)
- Panossian R (1998) *The Armenians: Conflicting identities and the politics of division* London: Nations Abroad Westview Press
- Partidul Actiune si Solidaritate 'Cheltuieli efectuate – Partidul Actiune si Solidaritate' (2018), available at <http://unpaspentru.md/cheltuieli-efectuate> (last visited 17 April 2018)
- Petitions.whitehouse.gov 'Petition the White House on the issues that matter to you' We the People: Your Voice in Our Government (2018), available at <https://petitions.whitehouse.gov/> (last visited 21 March 2018)



- Phillips D & Lemmon M 'Diplomatic history: The Turkey-Armenia protocols' Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (2012), available at <https://carneгиеendowment.org/2012/04/17/diplomatic-history-turkey-armenia-protocols-event-3630> (last visited 20 March 2018)
- Powley H 'Azerbaijan: Diaspora organization tries to counter Armenian-American influence in Washington' Eurasianet (2009), available at <https://eurasianet.org/s/azerbaijan-diaspora-organization-tries-to-counter-armenian-american-influence-in-washington> (last visited 21 March 2018)
- Pozniak O 'External labour migration in Ukraine as a factor in socio-demographic and economic development' (2012), available at <http://www.carim-east.eu/media/CARIM-East-2012-RR-14.pdf> (last visited 18 April 2018)
- Ragazzi F 'A comparative analysis of diaspora policies' (2014) 41 *Political Geography* 74
- Rumyantsev S 'Long live the Azerbaijani diaspora!' openDemocracy (2017), available at [www.opendemocracy.net/od-russia/sergey-rumyantsev/long-live-azerbaijani-diaspora](http://www.opendemocracy.net/od-russia/sergey-rumyantsev/long-live-azerbaijani-diaspora) (last visited 21 March 2018)
- Rusu R 'The impact of diaspora on political processes in Republic of Moldova' Administrarea Public? (2012), available at [https://ibn.idsi.md/sites/default/files/imag\\_file/14.The%20impact%20of%20Diaspora%20on%20political%20processes%20in%20RM.pdf](https://ibn.idsi.md/sites/default/files/imag_file/14.The%20impact%20of%20Diaspora%20on%20political%20processes%20in%20RM.pdf) (last visited 17 April 2018)
- Shain Y (1999) *Marketing the American creed abroad* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Shain Y (2007) *Kinship and diasporas in international affairs* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press
- Shain Y 'The role of diasporas in conflict perpetuation and resolution' (2002) 22 *SAIS Review* 115
- Shain Y 'Ethnic diasporas and US foreign policy' (1994-1995) 109 *Political Science Quarterly* 811
- Sheffer G (2003) *Diaspora politics: At home abroad* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Sheffer G 'A new field of study: Modern diasporas in international politics' in G Sheffer ed) *Modern diasporas in international politics* (1986) London: Croom Helm 1-15
- Sputnik-Georgia 'Georgian diaspora: State Minister of Foreign Affairs reaffirmed future plans' (2017), available in Georgian at <https://sputnik-georgia.com/georgia/20170925/237470686/diaspora.html> (last visited 11 April 2018)
- Taras D 'Diasporal policy of the Republic of Belarus regarding the Belarusian diaspora in Russia' (2017) 5 *Actual Problems of International Relations and Global Development: Collection of Scientific Papers* 119, available at [http://elib.bsu.by/bitstream/123456789/191045/1/taras\\_Actual\\_probl\\_IR\\_V5.pdf](http://elib.bsu.by/bitstream/123456789/191045/1/taras_Actual_probl_IR_V5.pdf) (last visited 31 March 2018)
- Tololyan K 'Elites and institutions in the Armenian transnation' (2000) 9 *Diaspora* 107
- Ulf Johansson D (ed) (2007) *The role of diasporas in peace, democracy and development in the Horn of Africa* Lund: Lund University
- Usazeris.org 'US Azeris Network (USAN): Uniting Azerbaijani-American voters – A non-profit, non-partisan, non-sectarian organization for grassroots advocacy for Azeri-Americans' (2018), available at <http://usazeris.org/> (last visited 21 March 2018)
- Yeliseyev A 'Emigration and diaspora policies in Belarus' INTERACT RR 2014/27, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, San Domenico di Fiesole (FI):

European University Institute (2014), available at <http://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/33140/INTERACT-RR-2014%20-%2027.pdf?sequence=1> (last visited 2 April 2018)

Ziemer U & Sean R (eds) (2013) *East European diasporas, migration and cosmopolitanism* London: Routledge

Завьялов А (2017) Социальная адаптация украинских иммигрантов  
Иркутск: Изд-во ИГУ