From Economic to Social Remittances: An International Overview

Papers presented at the Conference “Following the Flows: Transnational Approaches to Intangible Transfers” held at Princeton University, Sept. 19 & 20, 2014 (organized by Thomas Lacroix, Mélanie Terasse and Ilka Vari-Lavoisier with the support of Isabelle Sylvestre). The organizers thank: Alicia Adsera, Paul DiMaggio, Patricia Fernandez-Kelly, Flore Gubert, Devesh Kapur, Peggy Levitt, Douglas Massey, Sandrine Mesplé-Somps, Marta Tienda, Viviana Zelizer, and all the presenters, for their participation.

Sponsors: DIAL (grant ANR-2011-BSH1 012-03), the Institut de Recherche pour le Développement, the Center for Migration and Development and the Office of Population Research (Princeton University), the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (grant R24 HD047879) and the Centre Maurice Halbwachs (Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales/École Normale Supérieure).

Selected papers have also been published by the Transnational Studies Initiative, at the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs Seminar, Harvard University. Editors: Peggy Levitt, Professor of Sociology (Wellesley College), Research Fellow at The Weatherhead Center for International Affairs (Harvard University), co-director of The Transnational Studies Initiative plevitt@wellesley.edu; Thomas Lacroix, CNRS Research Fellow (University of Poitiers), Associate Researcher (Oxford University); thomas.lacroix@univ-poitiers.fr; Ilka Vari-Lavoisier, PhD candidate (Ecole Normale Supérieure), Research Collaborator (Princeton University); ilkav@princeton.edu.
From Economic to Social remittances: an International Overview

VIVIANA A. ZELIZER
Remittance Circuits

CATIA BATISTA
The Role of Migrant Networks on Political Participation

THOMAS LACROIX
The Communicative Dimension of Migrant Remittances and its Political Implications

THIBAUT JAULIN
The Geography of External Voting: The 2011 Tunisian Election Abroad

JEAN-MICHEL LAFLEUR & OLIVIER LIZIN
Transnational Health Insurance Schemes: A New Avenue for Congolese Immigrants in Belgium to Care for Their Relatives’ Health from Abroad?

IDRISSA DIABATE & SANDRINE MESPLÉ-SOMPS
Female Genital Mutilation and Migration in Mali: Do Migrants Transfer Social Norms?

GWENDOLYN SASSE
Determinants of Migrant Voters’ Homeland Political Engagement

SUPRIYA SINGH
Beyond the dichotomy: Money and the transnational family in India and Australia

ILKA VARI-LAVOISIER
The Circulation of Monies and Ideas between Paris, Dakar, and New York: The Impact of Remittances on Corruption

ERIK R. VICKSTROM
Legal status, territorial confinement, and transnational activities of Senegalese migrants in France, Italy, and Spain

The authors bear sole responsibility for this paper. Copyright by the author(s).
The Geography of External Voting
The 2011 Tunisian Election Abroad

Thibaut Jaulin*
CERI/Sciences Po

Word count: 7069

* Corresponding author: thibaut.jaulin@sciencespo.fr
On October 26th, 2014, the Tunisians abroad will vote “at distance” for the second time since Ben Ali’s fall. The first time was exactly three years ago when almost one third of the Tunisian voting age population abroad, estimated to 750,000, of which half in France, casted a ballot in 450 polling stations disseminated in five overseas constituencies\(^2\) to elect 18 representatives out of 217 in the Constituent Assembly.

The 2011 Tunisian election abroad represents a very stimulating case study because it represents an example of massive participation at distance, while external elections are often characterized by a low voter turnout. Furthermore, original and detailed results collected and compiled by the author\(^3\) show that the electoral behavior of the Tunisians abroad differs greatly from one location to another. For example, the score of the Islamist party En-Nahda is quite low in France and North America, but high in Italy, Germany and the Arab countries. Similarly, at the local level, the main secular parties have better scores in the inner city and the western suburbs of Paris, than in the northern suburbs, where En-Nahda’s score is particularly high.

This paper intends to understand why and how expatriates vote at distance and, by doing so, to contribute to the discussion on political remittances and their impact at home and abroad. The paper adopts a geographical and multi-leveled approach to external voting. The aim is twofold: to explore mapping external voting as a research

---

\(^2\) France 1 (consulates of Paris, Pantin, and Strasbourg), France 2 (consulates of Lyon, Grenoble, Nice, Marseille, and Toulouse), Italy, Germany, North America and other EU countries, and Arab countries and rest of the world.

\(^3\) The results of the election are available on the website of the independent body in charge of the organization of the election (in French ISIE) (www.isie.tn). However, it does not include detailed results at the local level for the constituencies abroad (in contrast with other constituencies in Tunisia).
tool to study transnational political behaviors, and to identify geographic patterns of the voting behavior of the Tunisians abroad.

The paper presents original maps of the 2011 Tunisian election abroad. It suggest that patterns of electoral behavior abroad have much to do with migration patterns and local dynamics within the migrants’ community and, to a lesser extent, with the host countries’ social and political regime. In other words, migration policies and networks (who migrates where?) and social spaces of migration (with whom the migrants’ are connected at home and abroad?) appear to be key to understand the formation of political opinions abroad.

The first part of the paper consists in a brief review of the literature on external voting and suggests that recent studies focusing on electoral behavior abroad break with dichotomous views on external voting and political remittances. The second part introduces the background and context of the adoption and implementation of external voting in Tunisia in 2011. It insists on the legacy of Ben Ali’s regime and on the contribution of voting rules and mechanisms to foster participation. Finally, the last part consists in a geographic and multilevel analysis of the voter turnout and the voting behavior among the Tunisians abroad in 2011 at the world level in comparison with Tunisia, at the country level, and at the local level in the Ile-de-France (Paris and suburbs) and in the Arab Golf and the Middle East.

**Toward an electoral sociology and electoral geography of external voting**

External voting is a worldwide trend: since 1991, the number of countries that has formally granted voting rights to non-resident citizens has quadrupled, soaring from
31 to an estimated 130 (Lieber, 2010). External voting has received increasing scholarly attention in recent years as researchers interested in transnational migration have shown that, besides money, migrants are able to remit norms, values and practices (Levitt, 1998).

The literature on external voting first includes normative political theory that discusses whether it is legitimate for non-resident citizens to vote from abroad. Some authors insist on organisational and political concerns, such as the cost of such elections, the risks of fraud, and the threat to sovereignty when the diaspora outnumbers the domestic population (e.g. Nohlen & Grotz, 2000; Rubio-Marín, 2006). According to Rainer Bauböck, external voting calls into question the republican conception of citizenship, according to which voting rights require both membership of the political community and permanent residency in the country (Bauböck, 2007). Bauböck, who develops the concept of stakeholder citizenship, suggests to grant voting rights to some categories of migrants only (e.g. refugees, temporary migrants), but to rule out generations born abroad who have no stake in the country of origin.

The literature on external voting further includes comparative studies that however show that there is not a single model of external voting legislation that would fit all countries. Comparative studies mostly deal with the reasons to enfranchise the citizens abroad and/or the voting procedures to vote from abroad. Lafleur (2013) identifies three main reasons why States extend the franchise to non-resident citizens: economic dependency on migration (remittances and integration in the global economy), domestic politics (competition between domestic actors and processes of institutional reforms: democratization, electoral reforms, regionalization), and
emigrant lobbying (depending on the influence and representativeness of migrants’ associations).

Moreover, voting procedures include the rules and the mechanisms to register the voters abroad (criteria\(^4\) and deadlines, required documents, place to register, etc.), to cast ballots abroad (in person or postal/proxy voting), and to count the votes from abroad (overseas/domestic constituencies). Comparative studies suggest that the voter turnout depends mainly on registration processes, voting systems (in person, proxy, postal), and forms of representation (presidential and/or legislative elections, overseas versus domestic constituencies). In others words, electors abroad renounce to vote if the “costs” are too high, like any elector at home (Braconnier & Dormagen, 2007). Such finding breaks with the idea according to which the voter turnout in external election is low because of the electors’ lack of interest in homeland politics.

Finally, the literature on external voting also includes few and very recent studies on the electoral behavior abroad. Such studies apply electoral sociology methods to external voting, such as multi-sited surveys among migrants scattered in different locations worldwide. Surveys conducted among Latin American and African migrants have shown that electoral behaviors abroad depends both on pre-migration variable (socio-demographic criteria, region of origin, etc.) and post-migration variables (legal status in the host country, length of time abroad, employment, integration, discrimination, etc.) (Escobar & al., 2014; Lafleur & al., 2014; Dedieu & al, 2013). Such approach suggests to look at the formation of political opinions abroad as a dynamic process and to break with dichotomous views according to

\(^4\) Depending on the length of stay abroad, the country of residence, the size of the emigrant population, the legal status in the host country, etc.
which external voting contributes to democratization in the countries of origin (e.g. Docquier & al., 1998) or, in contrast, undermines democratic participation (Itzigsohn & al., 2008; Tintori, 2009). The geographic and multilevel approach adopted by this paper complements such recent studies and introduces mapping external voting as an innovative research tool for the study of political transnationalism and political remittances (Jaulin, 2014).

**The participation of the Tunisians abroad in the 2011 election: background and context**

*The Tunisians abroad and Ben Ali’ legacy*

The extension of the franchise to the Tunisian abroad is a legacy of the regime of Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali. Tunisia first experienced external voting in 1989, after Ben Ali seized power in 1987. Such experience was part of a new policy aiming to foster the relations with the Tunisians abroad, after two decades of migration policy aiming only at exporting the labor abroad.

After the Tunisian independence (1956), Habib Bourguiba’s regime first opposed labor migration, which was perceived as a loss in human capital. However, a growing number of Tunisian laborers sought employment abroad, mostly in France. In the mid-1960s, the number of Tunisians in France was estimated to 50 000. Facing growing unemployment in Tunisia, a new policy was initiated to organize and to develop labor migration. The Office for Vocational Training and Employment (OFPE in French) was created in 1967 to define labor demands abroad, to control the
migrants, and to prepare their return. It soon collaborated with the French office of migration (ONI in French). In 1973, the number of Tunisian migrants in France was officially 150,000 (a figure probably underestimated), of which three-fourth had come through the OFPE (Simon, 1979).

As a consequence of the energy crisis, developed countries closed the doors to labor migration and patterns of migration from Tunisia progressively changed (similarly to other North African labor sending countries). Return migration policies failed and most migrants settled in their host country and their family progressively joined them. In parallel, Arab oil producing countries, in particular Libya, attracted large numbers of Tunisian migrants. However, such flows were contingent to the host country’s discretionary policies. Finally, Tunisia faced an upsurge of out-migration since the 1990s due to growing unemployment, in particular among university graduates. Although France remained the first destination for Tunisian migrants, growing numbers migrated to Southern Europe and North American. At the end of the 2000s, the number of Tunisians abroad was estimated to one million of which half in France, 150,000 in Italy, and 150,000 in the Arab Gulf (CARIM, 2010).

As a response to such changes, state agencies in charge of migration issues were reorganized on several occasions during the 1980s and 1990s. A major shift occurred after Ben Ali came to power in 1987. A new policy was initiated to foster economic, social and cultural relations with the Tunisians abroad. The official term Tunisian

---

5 The Tunisian Agency for Technical Cooperation (ATCP) was created in 1972 and progressively specialized in labor migration to Arab oil producing countries. Moreover, the OFPE was restructured on several occasions and eventually became in 1993 the National Agency for Employment and Independent Laborers (ANETI).
Laborers Abroad (TTE in French) was changed for Tunisian Living Abroad (TRE in French) and the Office of the Tunisians Abroad (OTE in French) was created in 1988. Among various policy initiatives, social attachés in charge of the Tunisians abroad were recruited in each consulate (Brand, 2006).

The Tunisians abroad were also granted the right to vote from abroad for presidential elections. In 1989, in a context of political liberalization, 75,000 participated in the presidential election, out of a total population abroad estimated to 400,000. In the following elections, participation progressively turned into a sign of allegiance to the regime due the generalization of election fraud. Indeed, Ben Ali’s regime, as Bourguiba’s before him, monitored very closely movements of political opponents among the migrants’, in particular the Islamic political opposition and social and human rights movements. To do so, the regime relied on the very large consular network and state-sponsored migrants’ association, so called Amicales des travailleurs tunisiens, commonly seen as branches of Ben Ali’s single-party, the Constitutionnal Democratic Rally (RCD in French) (Brand, 2010).

Ben Ali’s legacy in regard with external voting thus appears paradoxical: on the one hand, consulates and state-sponsored organizations controlled severely any form of political opposition abroad; on the other hand, Ben Ali initiated major policy reforms that contributed to foster the relations with the Tunisians abroad. In regard with external voting, it is noteworthy, for example, that the number and location of the polling stations abroad in 2011 (about 450 worldwide) is actually almost the same than during Ben Ali’s regime.

*External voting after the Uprising: an unquestioned claim*
After Ben Ali’s fall, almost all political organizations and movements supported the participation of the Tunisians abroad in the election for the Constituent Assembly. In addition, voting rules and mechanisms adopted by the Higher Instance for the Realization of the Objectives of the Revolution and the Higher Independent Instance for the Election (in French ISIE) contributed to foster the participation of the Tunisians abroad.

From March to May 2011, Tunisian associations abroad launched the Tunisian Migration Gathering (Assises de l’immigration tunisienne in French) and drafted a Register of grievances (Cahier de doléances), to be presented to the transition government. Among numerous demands dealing mostly with migrants’ rights, the Register included the right to vote from abroad in both presidential and legislative elections, fair representation of the Tunisians abroad within the parliament, and the right to be elected, including for dual citizens. The Register was not yet finalized when the Higher Instance for the Realization of the Objectives of the Revolution, which was in charge of organizing the transition “from the revolution to the election”, adopted a new electoral law, which included the right to vote from abroad (Lieckefett, 2012).

Simultaneously, the Higher Instance created the ISIE and elected a college of 16 members to direct it. Among the latter, Kamal Jendoubi, who represented the Tunisians abroad, was elected as president. The ISIE contributed to design the electoral system that allocated 18 seats to the Tunisians abroad, out of 217 in the Constituent Assembly. Tunisia thus became one of the few countries worldwide with

---

6 http://www.reseau-ipam.org/IMG/pdf/Cahier_de_Doleances_MPV3_Mabrouki_Tunis.pdf
specific parliamentary representatives for its citizens abroad and the only one - to my knowledge - offering an equal level of representation among the residents and the expatriates (1 seat for 40 000 electors).

Furthermore, the voting procedures adopted by ISIE aimed to foster the participation in the election, which was viewed as the main indicator of the citizens’ confidence in the process of democratic transition. The ISIE’s efforts encompassed both the Tunisians at home and abroad, but the ISIE faced numerous challenges during the process of registration on the electoral rolls, in particular abroad. Because of the inaccuracy of existing rolls, the electoral law required all citizens to register. In the constituencies abroad, the law stipulated that the consulates were in charge of the registration process and that the electors needed to register in person. This obviously represented a sever constraint for those living far away from a consulate. In addition, the consulates often lacked human and technical resources. The campaign of registration launched by the ISIE in July 2011, at home and abroad, resulted in the enrollment of approximately one third only of the voting age population. As a consequence, the ISIE decided to register “automatically” those who had not done “voluntarily”. Simultaneously, in some constituencies abroad, as France 1, the local team of the ISIE accepted late registration by phone, Internet and text messages, and mobilized large teams of volunteers to compile the electoral rolls. In other constituencies, as Italy, where the Italian community is not as organized as in France, the registration process was left to the consulates.

In such context, the ISIE eventually decided that even those who would not found their name on the electoral rolls (both at home and abroad) would have the right to vote, providing that they present their ID or passport on the day of the election. Such
decision, which aimed at avoiding problems in polling stations, contributed to foster the voter turnout, especially among the Tunisians abroad, as shown in the following.

**The geography of external voting**

*The voter turnout*

One of the consequence of the ISIE’s decisions, in regard with the registration process, is that three types of electoral rolls can be found in the records of the election: the first includes those who registered “voluntarily”; the second includes those who did not registered, but whose name was register “automatically”; and the third includes those whose name was not found on either lists (”voluntary” or “automatic”), but voted anyhow and were registered on a “complementary” record. This obviously makes very difficult the estimation of the voter turnout.

According to declarations of the ISIE on the day of the election, the voter turnout was exceptionally high, between 70% and 90% of those who registered “voluntarily”. However, figures based on the voting age population showed that only half of the electors went to the poll and, in the constituencies abroad, only one third. Such result abroad can however be considered as a success in regard with external voting standards. For example, in the last French legislative election in 2012, the voter turnout in the constituencies abroad was approximately 20-25% of the voters.

---

7 See [http://mobile.agoravox.fr/actualites/international/article/desinformation-la-veritable-103350](http://mobile.agoravox.fr/actualites/international/article/desinformation-la-veritable-103350) and estimations by the ISIE base on the voting age population (databases of the Ministry of Interior and of the National Statistic Institute) ( [www.isie.tn](http://www.isie.tn)).
registered in the consulates\(^8\) (which should mean even less if such estimation was based on the voting age population).

Moreover, the voter turnout varied significantly from one constituency to another: from 39\% to 64\% in Tunisia (Verdeil, 2012) and from 21.3\% to 40.3\% abroad (table 1). Research studies on the voter turnout in Tunisia show that abstention was lower in larger coastal cities and regions of the south-west of Tunisia, and higher in the center of country, the north-west, and the extreme south. In other words, people living in areas that faced under-development and greater socio-economic problems felt less concerned by the election (Gana & \textit{al.}, 2012). Similar patterns can be found in the constituencies abroad, which include two groups of countries: Germany, Italy, and France 2 where the turnout is below 25\%, and France 1, North America and other EU countries, and Arab countries and the rest of the world where the turnout is above 35\%.

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|l|c|c|}
\hline
\textbf{Voting age pop.} & \textbf{Voter turnout (%)} \\
\hline
Tunisia & 7 993 924 & 51.2 \\
\hline
Abroad & 721 596 & 29.2 \\
\hline
\textbf{of which} & & \\
\hline
France 1 & 194 968 & 35.1 \\
\hline
France 2 & 239 408 & 23.5 \\
\hline
Italy & 102 663 & 23.4 \\
\hline
Germany & 63 429 & 21.3 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{The voter turnout in 2011}
\end{table}

\(^8\) See \url{http://www.elections-legislatives.fr/circonscriptions/099.asp?acirconscription}
<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USA/Canada/other EU</td>
<td>72 162</td>
<td>39,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arab countries/others</td>
<td>48 966</td>
<td>40,3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

source: ISIE, compiled by author

Such results suggest that the turnout is higher in countries that favor high skilled migration, such as Canada and the United States, or migration of semi-skilled professionals, such as the Arab Gulf. In contrast, it is lower in Italy, which has massively attracted low skilled migrants working for low paid jobs since the 1990s. Similarly, the gap between France 1 and France 2 can be explained by different migration patterns in the country’s regions. For example, educational and technological hubs attract students and skilled migrants, while intensive farming and real estate development attract low skilled migrants.

In contrast with the migrants’ socioeconomic profile, the political regime of the host country does not seem to be a relevant variable to explain the voter turnout abroad. To put it schematically, living in a democratic country does not seem to foster democratic participation at distance and, vice-versa, living in an authoritarian regime does not impede such participation. However, more research is needed to assess the relation between the turnout and the integration regime, that is to say the migrants’ legal status and rights in the host country (access to nationality and to economic, social, political and cultural rights).

Furthermore, the estimation of the voter turnout at the local level abroad is often impossible or, as best, difficult. Data are lacking in various constituencies and electoral records include numerous inaccuracies in others. In the constituency of
France 1, according to the database compiled by the local team of the ISIE, the number of ballots in each polling station often differs with the number of voters registered on the electoral rolls. This is due to mistakes in the registration of the voters whose name was not found on the roll on the day of the election. Such inaccuracies do not impact of the result of the election, as the number of ballots is consistent with the number of voters, but makes very difficult the estimation of the voter turnout in each polling station of France 1.

However, some observations can be made on the basis of the results of 22 polling stations, out of 68 in France 1, which show consistent records. First, the voter turnout varies very significantly from one polling station to another (from 18.9% in Auxerre to 57.7% in Nantes) and there is no geographic patterns, with exception to the polling stations attached to the Tunisian consulate of Strasbourg (East of France) where the turnout is higher (42.7% on average). Second, the percentage of those who registered “voluntarily” is low (one-fourth on average) and varies from one polling station to another. Such variations are often consistent with the voter turnout (only 12.7% in Auxerre, but 51.7% in the polling stations attached to the consulate of Strasbourg).

Third, the percentage of voters on the complementary record (whose name was not on the electoral rolls or who voted in a different pooling station) is quite high on average (38%), but very low (and even equal to zero) in some polling stations, which indicates that the campaign of registration reached all potential voters in these areas.

Significant variations of the voter turnout from one polling station to another suggest that local dynamics within the migrants’ community, in particular family and community networks, are key to foster (or impede) the decision to vote. Moreover, the case of the polling stations attached to the consulate of Strasbourg highlights the
importance of producing accurate electoral rolls to foster participation and to guarantee an accurate estimation of the turnout\(^9\). It also raises questions regarding a potential underestimation of the voter turnout abroad due to outdated electoral rolls including persons who have moved to another place, have returned to Tunisia, or are dead. The above observations also partly confirms that limited enrollment to register is usually followed by limited mobilization to vote, as observed by Eric Verdeil (2012) who looks at the relation between registration and participation in Tunisia. However, the high percentage of voters on the complementary record also indicates that the mobilization to vote was much larger than to register.

_The electoral behavior at the global level: a transnational political space_

The following analysis of the electoral behavior abroad focuses on six parties that ranked first in the 2011 election: En-Nahda (Renaissance in Arabic), the Congress for the Republic (CPR in French), Ettakatol (abbreviation of Democratic Forum for Labour and Liberty in Arabic), the Democratic Modernist Pole (PDM in French); the Progressive Democratic Party (PDP in French), and Al-Aridha (abbreviation of Popular Petition for Freedom, Justice, and Development in Arabic).

To categorize these parties according to criteria such as left/right, conservative/progressive, secular/religious, populist/elitist, centrist/extremist, appears difficult for at least two reasons: these categories are mostly exogenous to the

\(^9\) According to Azzem Ben Aissa, treasurer of IRIE France 1 in 2011, interviewed on 26 October 2012 in Paris, the consulate of Strasbourg was able to produce accurate electoral records, in constrast with other consulate, thanks to the small size of the Tunisian community in this region (estimated to 6000 persons).
Tunisian political sphere and the Tunisian political landscape is characterized since 2011 by incessant transformations (fusion, creation, and destruction of parties; switches from one party to another, etc.). However, to put schematically, the CPR, the PDM, the PDP, and Ettakatol can be described as secular ranging from centre right to left; En-Nahda as a moderate Islamist, and Al-Aridha as populist with an Islamist background.

The first level of analysis compares the results of the election at home and abroad (table 2). It highlights the symmetry of the voting behavior in Tunisia and abroad. En-Nahda, which ranked first in the election, secured almost the same percentage of the votes in Tunisia and abroad. Al-Aridha, which surprisingly ranked sixth in the election, also secured the same percentage of the vote in Tunisia and abroad. The main secular parties (Ettakatol, PDP, PDM, CPR), which scored less than forecasted, with exception to the CPR that unexpectedly ranked second after En-Nahda, have in contrast higher scores abroad than in Tunisia. Finally, table 2 shows that the score of the small parties (“others”) is much lower abroad than in Tunisia.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Abroad</th>
<th>Tunisia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ballots</td>
<td>Seats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>En-Nahda</td>
<td>36,6%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPR</td>
<td>6,1%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ettakatol</td>
<td>12,1%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDP</td>
<td>10,5%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|       | PDM | 7,0% | 0 | 3,8% | 16
|-------|-----|------|---|------|----
| Al-Aridha | 6,7% | 1 | 2,6% | 4 |
| Others | 21,0% | 0 | 34,3% | 32 |
| TOTAL | 207 701 | 18 | 3 846 204 | 199 |

source: ISIE, compiled by author

Such results indicate, first of all, that the Tunisian electorate is equally divided at home and abroad, which suggest that social and political issues that divide Tunisia (secularism versus Islamism, conservative versus progressive, Arab identity versus Tunisian identity, regional divides, etc.) also divide the Tunisians abroad. Furthermore, the relative success of the main secular parties abroad appears as a consequence of a more limited dispersion of the vote abroad (votes for small parties), rather than a clear preference of the Tunisians abroad for these parties. Such dispersion characterizes the voting behavior abroad, which can be explained by the absence of the small parties in the Tunisian media, especially satellite TV, and the lack of financial and human resources to campaign abroad.

*The electoral behavior at the country level: spaces of the Tunisian migration*

The second level of analysis, by country, relies on the results of the election in the constituencies of France 1, France 2, Italy and Germany, and desegregated results by country or by regions (for countries with small contingents of voters) for the
constituencies of North America and other EU countries, and Arab countries and the rest of the world.

A geographic representation of the electoral behavior in overseas constituencies raises methodical issues due to the unequal size of the constituencies abroad and to the voters’ unequal dispersion in the world. The following maps are thus centered on the EU, which hosts the largest number of Tunisian migrants, while the rest of the world appears in the upper-left corner. Moreover, circles of different sizes represent the number of voters in each country, in order to have a clear view of the size of the Tunisian community in each country. Finally, three different scales of colors represent the results of En-Nahda (red), the CPR and Ettakatol (blue), and the PDP, the PDM, and Al-Aridha (green), in order to highlight differences between countries, rather than parties.

The first map presents the results of En-Nahda (map 1). It first highlights the success of the Islamist party, which obtains at the lowest 24.5% of the votes in Eastern Europe. Furthermore, three groups of countries can identified depending on EN-Nahda’s score: above 40% of the votes as in the Gulf (52%), in Italy (49%), and Germany (42.9%); between 30% and 40% as in France (33.7% in France 1 and 30.9% in France 2) and North America (32.7%); and below 30%, which actually includes few countries with limited numbers of voters (Maghreb, Middle East, Eastern Europe).

Furthermore, maps of the results of the CPR and Ettakatol (maps 2 and 3) present numerous similarities, although the CPR has usually better results. Four groups of countries can be identified. The first two groups corresponds to countries where the CPR and Ettakatol have their best scores, as North America and few small countries,
and their lowest scores, as Italy and France 2. The third group includes countries where the score of the CPR and Ettakatol is close to their average abroad; such as France 1 and Scandinavia. The last group includes countries where the score of the CPR and/or Ettakatol is significantly above the average: Germany for both, the Gulf for the CPR, Belgium and the UK for Ettakatol (where it manages to obtain a higher score than the CPR).
Map 1: Votes for En-Nahda at the country level

Map 2: Votes for the CPR at the country level

Map 3: Votes for Ettakatol at the country level
Finally, maps of the results of the PDM, the PDP, and Al-Aridha highlight the differences between these parties. The PDP obtains quite good score in several small European countries, but remains close to its average in France and North America, and faces counter results in Italy and the Gulf. The PDP also faces counter results in these countries and in France 2, but manages to have a very good score in North America. Finally, the results of Al-Aridha are extremely contrasted with low scores in most countries, with exception to Italy, France 2, and, in a lesser extent, Germany.

Map 4: Votes for the PDP at the country level
Map 5: Votes for the PDM at the country level
These maps suggest, first of all, that the social and political regime of the country of residence is insufficient, as a variable, to understand the formation of political opinions abroad. Indeed, the voting behavior among the Tunisians abroad differs greatly among western countries as well as among Arab countries (Gulf versus Middle East and Maghreb). Such observation invalidates dichotomous views according to which the “progressive” and “democratic” nature of political remittances depends on the migrants’ socialization in western democratic and secular countries, as opposed to southern authoritarian and religious regimes.

Furthermore, regarding the relation between En-Nahda and the four main secular parties, these maps suggest distinguishing two different situations: countries where En-Nahda and the secular parties follow opposite trends (e.g. North America and Italy) and countries were they follow the same trend (Germany and France 2). This observation highlights the importance of the voter turnout and the dispersal of the votes (for small parties) as key variables.
Finally, the lack of detailed and reliable statistical data on the Tunisian migrants renders hazardous, if not impossible, any correlation between the election results and key demographic and socioeconomic variables, as Alia Gana does for Tunisia (2012). However, as mentioned above for the voter turnout, it is noteworthy that secular parties have better scores in countries where the share of qualified migrants is higher (North America), in contrast with countries that attract low skilled migrants (Italy).

The electoral behavior abroad at the local level: territorial inequalities

The third level of analysis presents two series of maps for the region of the Ile-de-France (Paris and suburbs) and for the Arab Gulf and the Middle East. It consists in the results of the polling stations aggregated at the level of the eight departments (French administrative division) of the Ile-de-France, and at the level of the twenty-three major cities of the Arab Gulf and the Middle East. Furthermore, maps at the local level include, as previously, circles to represent the number of voters and two scales of colors for En-Nahda (red) and for the five other parties (green).

In 2011, the Ile-de-France attracted 80% of the votes of the constituency of France 1. Polling stations were disseminated in different places, either in buildings belonging to Tunisia or in city halls. Polling stations situated in Paris and the Seine-Saint-Denis

\[\text{ Polling stations were available at the consulate, the embassy, and the Tunisian cultural center in Paris, and the city halls of the 11th and 12th arrondissements of Paris; at the consulate of Pantin and the Tunisian cultural center of Aubervilliers in Seine-Saint-Denis; and in city halls for the other départements (Asnières for the Hauts-de-Seine; Créteil for the Val-de-Marne; Sarcelles and Argenteuil for the Val-d’Oise; Melun, Meaux and Lognes for the Seine-et-Marne; Corbeil, Les Ulis, Epinay, and Massy for the Essonne; and Trappes for the Yvelines).} \]
have attracted most of the votes, which can be explained by the fact that anyone could vote in any polling station providing that he/she had a valid Tunisian ID or passport. Therefore, it is likely that in some polling stations, especially in Paris, part of the voters did not resided in the same area. Besides such limitation, maps of the results of the six main parties in the Ile-de-France show interesting geographic patterns.

The map of the votes for En-Nahda (map 7) highlights its domination, but also a clear East/West opposition. En-Nahda has its best score in Seine-Saint-Denis (44,2%) and its lowest in Paris (24,2%) and the Haut-de-Seine (30,6%). In addition, En-Nahda’s results are also characterized by a North/South dichotomy, which does not appear in the map. En-Nahda’s score is to 40% in the Val d’Oise (39,5%) and close to 35% in the Essonne (36,1%).

Map 7: Votes for En-Nahda in the Ile-de-France

Such East/West and North/South divides can also be found in the maps of results of the CPR and Ettakatol (maps 8 and 9), which present an inverted symmetry.
Furthermore, the vote for the PDP, the PDM, and Al-Aridha (maps 10 to 12) confirms the East/West opposition, but also introduces as another geographic pattern an opposition between the center and the periphery. Indeed, the PDP and the PDM follow the same trend than the CPR and Ettakatol in Paris and the Hauts-de-Seine, on
the one hand, and in the Seine-Saint-Denis, on the other hand, but differ in the other départements. In the latter, the East/West opposition is not relevant anymore and is partly replaced by an opposition between the center and the periphery, which characterizes the vote for Al-Aridha.
Map 10: Votes for the PDP in the Ile-de-France

Map 11: Votes for the PDM in the Ile-de-France

Map 12: Votes for Al-Aridha in the Ile-de-France
Although the geographic patterns of the vote in the Ile-de-France reproduces quite strikingly the socioeconomic inequalities of this region, its interpretation should not be limited to an opposition between an Islamist voting behavior in Seine-Saint-Denis and a progressive behavior in Paris and the Hauts-de-Seine. Such results rather suggest to conduct more research, both quantitative and qualitative, to understand the local dynamics of the voting behavior abroad, in particular the role of community associations as substitutes of the political parties and the (unofficial) support offered by political movements and associations of the country of residence on the basis of common values and political agenda.

Finally, maps of the voting behavior at the local level in the Arab Gulf and the Middle East shows, first of all, a very strong domination of En-Nahda, which obtains up to 78.5% of the votes in Salalah (Oman) and more than 60% in 7 others cities in Oman and Saudi Arabi. However, the results of En-Nahda in the Gulf and in the Middle are not homogeneous. First, there is a strong opposition between middle-eastern cities and
Gulf cities, as already observed at the country level. In addition, En-Nahda tends to have relatively lower scores in cities that host large Tunisian migrants communities (such as Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Koweit, Doha, Jeddah), with some exceptions however (Doha, Riyadh, Muscat).

Furthermore, maps of the results of the four main secular parties often show opposite symmetries, as in the Ile-de-France. However, the results of the secular parties in the Gulf are quite contrasted. The CPR has relatively high scores in most cities and few counter-results, which is not the case of Ettakatol, although it has quite good scores in most cities that host large Tunisian migrant communities (with exception to Riyadh and Muscat). Finally, the PDP, the PDM, and Al-Ariadh all show low scores in all Gulf cities (with the exception of PDM in Dubaï).
Map 13: Votes for En-Nahda in the Arab Gulf and the Middle East

Maps 14: Votes for the CPR in the Arab Gulf and the Middle East
Map 15: Votes for Ettakatol in the Arab Gulf and the Middle East

Map 16: Votes for the PDP in the Arab Gulf and the Middle East
Map 17: Votes for the PDM in the Arab Gulf and the Middle East

Map 18: Votes for Al-Aridha in the Arab Gulf and the Middle East
The results of the six main Tunisian parties in the Gulf and the Middle East further complexify the understanding of the voting behavior at the local level. Although the social and political regime of the host country appears as a meaningful variable to explain the results of En-Nahda in the Gulf cities, it remains irrelevant for middle-eastern cities. Furthermore, significant differences among cities of the Gulf recall that the migrants’ demographic and socioeconomic background, and internal dynamics within the migrants’ community are also at play.

Conclusion

This paper first highlights the relevance electoral geography and multilevel analysis for the study of external voting behavior. Maps of the Tunisian voting behavior abroad at the global level, the country level, and local level show that transnational political participation is not de-territorialized. In contrast, the voting behavior abroad, while reproducing the main cleavages of the country of origin, also depends on social, economic and political dynamics that are deeply connected with territories (countries, cities). The geography of the vote at distance thus appears as a gate to analyze unequal opportunities among the migrants to move and settle abroad and their asymmetrical insertion in migration networks, and thus to contribute to draw spaces of migration.
Bibliography


CARIM, 2010, Profil migratoire Tunisie, RSCAS/EUI.


