

6 Extending the incumbency presence abroad

The case of MPAIS in Ecuadorian elections

Sebastián Umpierrez de Reguero and Régis Dandoy

Different actors from diverse origin countries are increasingly involved in forging bonds with their emigrants in order to include them in the homeland arena. In most countries, emigrant outreach is addressed by the state as home-country governments may create institutions to strengthen or control the diaspora–state linkage (Østergaard-Nielsen 2016). However, parties and civil organizations can also reach out to nonresident citizens (Paarlberg 2019). From inside and outside the origin country, these organizations may benefit or hinder a nexus between nonresident citizens and their homeland politics (Brand 2006; Wellman 2015).

From a state perspective, several studies explore how origin countries create consultative institutions for emigrants and analyze the rationale behind this decision (Délano 2011; Gamlen 2014; Levitt and De La Dehesa 2003). Other contributions stem from emigrant enfranchisement, its variations and the political consequences on the domestic and transnational realms (Rhodes and Harutyunyan 2010; Lafleur 2013, 2015; Turcu and Urbatsch 2015; Collyer 2014a; Gamlen 2015). In this context, prior research not only addresses emigrant voter turnout but also party mobilization and strategic entry of political parties in a given overseas district (Belchior, Azevedo, Lisi, and Abrantes 2018; Østergaard-Nielsen and Ciornei 2019b; Paarlberg 2019). Scholars are also interested in the mechanisms of political representation that nonresident citizens of various origin countries in Africa, Latin America and Europe acquire for direct incorporation in the homeland decision making (Collyer 2014b; Palop-García 2017).

From the perspective of the political parties and civil organizations, it has been observed how these two actors might be decisive in regulating and applying emigrant enfranchisement (Brand 2006; Wellman 2015). The transnational presence of political parties is common around the globe (Østergaard-Nielsen 2003; Mandaville and Lyons 2012). In fact, political parties do not only mobilize as an inside-out process, nor they enter the transnational arena solely during electoral periods, but they also create permanent branches and organized emigrant cadres abroad in order to influence the homeland arena (Alaminos and Penalva 2017; Burgess 2018; Østergaard-Nielsen and Ciornei 2019b). Similarly, civil organizations inside and outside the origin country have managed to have an impact on the political agenda by exerting pressure for the enactment of emigrant enfranchisement (Araujo 2010).

These two directions for the analysis of emigrant outreach suggest a zero-sum game. In cases where the state has a leading role in reaching out to emigrants and their descendants, electoral volatility is high but nonresident voter turnout is low. On the contrary, where parties promote emigrant outreach, nonresident voter turnout is not anaemic but electoral volatility is short range (Burgess 2018). In this chapter, we seek to refine the internal validity of this argument by conducting an in-depth study of the Ecuadorian case.

Ecuador is one of the several examples worldwide of state-led transnationalism (Bocagni 2011b; Palop-García 2018). Yet, this country displays high nonresident voter turnout, even higher than in some districts within the country (Ramírez and Umpierrez de Reguero 2019). In the transnational realm, Ecuador has a broad but unbalanced partisan presence, due to the electoral success of a dominant party: *Movimiento Patria Altiva I Soberana* (Movement Proud and Sovereign Fatherland – MPAIS). Based on a multi-method strategy consisting of nine semi-structured interviews with key political actors, a quantitative analysis of election results and an analysis of official archives and party documents, this chapter aims at answering two questions. What are the prominent features of the Ecuadorian case in terms of emigrant outreach? And to what extent do domestic influence and incumbency explain the rise of MPAIS in the transnational realm as the hegemonic electoral force after 2006?

The two first sections present the electoral rules for external voting in Ecuador as well as the main features of the Ecuadorian diaspora. A third section briefly reviews the transnational role of Ecuadorian political parties and their electoral performance by analyzing the electoral weight of MPAIS compared to other political organizations. In a last section, the electoral performance of MPAIS is studied based on a supply–demand analysis in order to understand the electoral success abroad of this party after 2006.

Setting the rules of the game: external voting in Ecuador

A wide range of contributions has labelled Ecuador as an emblematic example of state-led transnationalism, particularly concerning external voting (Bocagni 2011b; Margheritis 2011; Bocagni and Ramírez 2013; Umpierrez de Reguero, Dandoy, and Palma 2017). Due to its unique configuration of electoral rules, this country is a perfect case in order to study the phenomenon of political party's strategic entry in an overseas district and the creation of parties from abroad.

Although Ecuadorian external voting emerged as a demand from a migrant civil organization (*Federación de Ecuatorianos en el Exterior*) in the mid-1990s, the legal provision of emigrant enfranchisement was promulgated for the first time in the 1998. In its article 27, the Ecuadorian Constitution recognized that registered nonresident Ecuadorians could vote in presidential elections. Two years later, this mandate was introduced in the 2000 Electoral Law (articles 4 and 99) and confirmed by the 2002 electoral reform. However, a public debate arose on how the electoral process would be actually carried out abroad and the Supreme Electoral Tribunal (TSE) – currently denominated as National Electoral Council (CNE) – did

not allow nonresident Ecuadorians to participate in the 2002 presidential elections. It is only eight years after the constitutional change that external voting (for the 2006 presidential elections) was applied for the first time in Ecuador. At the time, these elections took the form of a vote abroad for home district, meaning that overseas votes were externally casted via a personal voting method – mostly in consulates – but mechanically counted in the migrant’s previous home-country district (Ramírez 2018; Umpierrez de Reguero, Zanotti, Noboa, and Brito 2019).

After the victory of Correa in the 2006 presidential elections and the Constituent Assembly of Montecristi, the Constitution was once again modified in 2008 and moved to a system of voting abroad for direct representation: nonresident Ecuadorians now have the right to elect directly six emigrant representatives out the 130-member national parliament.¹ One year later, the CNE confirmed the creation of three overseas districts: two seats to be elected by Ecuadorians living in other countries in Latin America, the Caribbean and Africa, two seats in the United States and Canada and two seats in countries in Europe, Asia and Oceania (2009 Electoral Law,² articles 4 and 150). Elections in Ecuador are based on a proportional electoral system with open lists, and it allows *panachage*. Concretely, it means that voters abroad can give their vote for two candidates on two different lists. The two candidates that receive the largest number of votes in the district are elected. Ecuador is one out of 15 countries that granted their national migrants rights for direct representation in the national legislature (Collyer 2014b; Palop-García 2017, 2018; Umpierrez de Reguero et al. 2017).

Ecuadorians living abroad not only obtained the right to directly elect their representatives, but they also were granted the option to create their own political parties independently of the party competition at the national level. For the 2007 and 2009 elections, no less than ten political parties were registered from abroad and directly competed with the national political parties.³ These political parties registered from abroad disappeared after 2009. Since then only political parties registered in the origin country have electorally competed in the overseas districts. ‘One can observe [in the Canada and United States district] the same political parties . . . compete as in Ecuador. There is a political interest that has been growing over time’ (Interview 3). The fact that national political parties soon realized the electoral advantage and the interest of competing directly abroad partly explains the disappearance of political parties registered from abroad.

In terms of special representation of emigrants, Ecuador has been described as the only case of overrepresentation for its emigrant community or of an almost proportionality in relation to its national districts (Collyer 2014b; Palop-García 2018). The six seats for overseas districts represented 4.6% of the total amount of seats in the national parliament in 2007, 4.8% in 2009, and 4.4% from 2013 onwards. In 2019, the 396,125 Ecuadorians registered to vote from abroad represented only 3.0% of the total electorate but were granted 4.4% of the seats, confirming this overrepresentation.

Besides this direct representation in the national parliament in three overseas districts (i.e., the abroad seats), nonresident Ecuadorians can participate in five other types of elections: presidential; legislative, in a nationwide district (the

so-called ‘national seats’); supra-national (i.e., for the Andean Parliament); for the Citizen’s Council;⁴ and in referendums and popular consultations. These elections are often organized simultaneously, and turnout figures tend to be very similar across types of elections.

Even if voting is compulsory in Ecuador, external voting is facultative (Electoral Law 2009). On average, emigrant voter turnout rate is relatively high compared to countries such as Mozambique or Portugal, which also have a similar structure of incentives and constraints, i.e., overseas districts and special representation of emigrants (Collyer 2014b). In a Latin American perspective, emigrant voter turnout in Ecuador (from 20.8% to 61.0%, depending on the type of election) is higher than in Mexico or Chile and very similar to Bolivia and Peru (Bermúdez, Lafleur, and Escrivá 2017; Burgess 2018). The voter registration process from abroad is fairly easy,⁵ and this element might increase the likelihood to vote (Interview 1). Similar to Italy and Romania, nonresident citizens can present any home-country identification document at the consular offices in order to be registered (Østergaard-Nielsen and Ciornei 2019b; Interview 3). In addition, the consulate’s staff is mobilized in different locations in the destination countries in order to facilitate the registration of nonresident citizens prior to each election (Ramírez 2018). The combination of these electoral rules and consular practices increased the number of nonresident Ecuadorians inscribed to vote from abroad in an exponential manner (from 143,352 voters in 2006, to 378,251 in 2017).

The rise of the ‘Fifth Region’

Ecuador witnessed several waves of emigration. These migration flows have been largely triggered by economic reasons (Iglesias et al. 2015; Jara Alba 2017), helped by an environment characterized by political instability and corruption (Hurtado 2018).

Despite its important oil revenues and public investments in infrastructure, education and public health, Ecuador still was one of the most unequal countries in Latin America by the end of the 20th century (Ramírez and Ramírez 2005). The 1980s were characterized by a rampant poverty, large inflation and a significant external debt. The Ecuadorian state stopped intervening in the economy and economic policies shifted to free trade, moderate neoliberal measures and austerity in the public expenditures. From 1980 to 2000, social investment plummeted from 50% to 18%, while debt payments expanded from 18% to more than 50% (Jara-Alba and López-Guzmán 2015). These processes created larger internal and international migratory flows (Acosta, Lopez, and Villamar 2006).

In the mid-1990s, rising political instability, alongside a deficient administration and high levels of political corruption, unleashed the country’s largest economic crisis (also known as the *Feriado Bancario*). In 1998, the unsatisfied basic necessities among the Ecuadorian inhabitants rose to 53.3%, and the 10% richest inhabitants consumed 16.9 times more than the 10% poorest. As a result, Ecuadorians lost confidence in the state and increasingly requested US dollars, leading to the depreciation of the local currency (Jara-Alba and López-Guzmán 2015).

Private banks closed their doors during four days in March 1999 in order to avoid a leak of foreign currency and the insolvency of the banking system (Hurtado 2018). Numerous protests against the economic policy of the government were organized, and the country became paralysed. With the objective of reducing distrust, inflation and successive devaluations, the Ecuadorian government decided to adopt the dollar as the official currency. Consequently, the government lost its ability to run its own monetary policy, and these changes brought additional problems such as unemployment and a reduced public investment (Jara-Alba and López-Guzmán 2015).

The combination of these political and socioeconomic phenomena provoked the largest wave of emigration in the history of Ecuador (Herrera, Carillo, and Torres 2005; Ramírez and Ramírez 2005; Cortés and Sanmartín, 2010). Between 1999 and 2004, more than 1.5 million Ecuadorians left the country. Migrants moved to Spain, Italy and the United States and, to a lesser extent, to countries in the same region such as Argentina, Chile and Venezuela (Jara Alba 2017). More than three-quarters (77.7%) of the total Ecuadorian population that migrated in Spain did it during the 1998–2003 period, and a survey from 2014 revealed that 40.4% of those Ecuadorians indicated the economic crisis in Ecuador as the main motive for their emigration to Spain (Iglesias et al. 2015)

The 1999 banking crisis forced many Ecuadorians to leave as a means of emergency relief. That is, years of history [in Ecuador] where migration was not an option, it was an obligation. They left because they could not support their families.

(Interview 3)

This large presence of Ecuadorian emigrants in wealthier countries increased the remittances that nonresident citizens have sent over the years for their families' subsistence (and indirectly for the home-country development). Remittances gradually shifted the public opinion about emigrants: they were no longer viewed as traitors but as heroes (Bocagni 2011a; Ramírez 2018). This shift in perception may explain the interest of the Ecuadorian state in regulating migrant transnational political practices after 2002, and in offering them a way to channel their personal remittances within the country.

In 2006–2007, the newly elected president Rafael Correa improved the way in which emigrants were addressed (Cortés and San Martín 2010; Interview 8). Emigrants emerged as relevant actors in the homeland decision making, and, in one of his first speeches, Correa labelled the Ecuadorians living abroad as the 'Fifth Region,' referring to a geographic symbolic construct (Ramírez 2018).⁶ Since then many scholars have seen in the rise of Correa a favourable event for the state–diaspora nexus (Herrera 2011; Echeverría 2015). A National Secretary of Migrants (SENAMI) was created in 2007 in order to forge state–diaspora bonds and foster return policies, producing a 'top-down' approach to the Fifth Region (Ramírez and Umpierrez de Reguero 2019). As a result of this new institutional effort, several transnational political practices were implemented in Correa's decade: a more

active role from diplomatic offices, return programmes, legal defence of Ecuadorians living in Spain and bilateral agreements to transfer social security funds from the destination countries to Ecuador (Boccagni 2011a; Ramírez 2018).

Ecuadorian political parties abroad and their electoral performance

The Ecuadorian party system has been relatively fragmented since the return to democracy in 1979 (Mejía-Acosta 2002; Sánchez 2008). Fragmentation rates in the national parliament are high compared to other Latin American countries, and Ecuador often displays an effective number of parties that is larger than five. This is largely explained by the electoral rules – more specifically the easiness to register political organizations, the proportional representation and the choice to distribute votes anywhere on the ballot (Dandoy 2017; Mustillo and Polga-Hecimovich 2018) – as well as by historically low-medium levels of party institutionalization (Freidenberg and Pachano 2016).

Unlike what occurs within the country, emigrant voting behaviour produced a low effective number of parties (3.4 on average from the 2006–2017 period for all types of elections), relatively moderate fragmentation rates and a competitive electoral concentration index. Table 6.1 indicates some interesting variations across districts: the United States and Canada district produces a larger fragmentation compared to the other two overseas districts, while the Latin America, Caribbean and Africa district has a higher effective number of parties/presidential candidates, as well as a higher concentration index than other overseas districts. Contrary to presidential elections, legislative elections, whether in overseas or national districts, produce the largest fragmentation in these three districts.

In line with results displayed nationwide, the presidential candidates who obtained the largest vote shares in the overseas districts were Álvaro Noboa

Table 6.1 Voting behaviour by election type and overseas district (2006–2017)

<i>Electoral districts</i>	<i>ENP/ ENPC</i>	<i>Fragmentation</i>	<i>Concentration</i>
United States and Canada	3.5	0.68	67.5
Europe, Asia and Oceania	3.4	0.65	68.3
Latin America, the Caribbean and Africa	3.5	0.67	69.3
<i>Elections</i>			
Legislative (abroad seats)	3.6	0.69	66.4
Legislative (national seats)	3.9	0.71	63.1
Presidential	2.9	0.61	75.5

Source: CNE (2019).

Note: ENP: Effective Number of Parties (Laakso and Taagepera 1979). ENPC: Effective Number of Presidential Candidates: same as the ENP but based on presidential candidates. Fragmentation: Index of Fragmentation (Rae 1971). Concentration: Sum of the vote shares of the two largest political parties in a given district or polling station. The unit of observation is structured per electoral year, type of election and overseas district (N = 818). Supranational and Citizen's Council elections, referendum and popular consultations are excluded from this analysis.

(PRIAN) in 2006, Rafael Correa (MPAIS) in 2009 and 2013, and Lenin Moreno (MPAIS) in 2017, particularly in the Europe, Asia and Oceania district. On the contrary, the most popular candidates in the overseas districts have not always been the same as mainland Ecuador for the legislative elections (both national and abroad seats). This is partly due to the possibility of creating political movements from abroad (Umpierrez de Reguero et al. 2017, 2019).

Over the last decade, MPAIS has been the most voted party, followed by *Movimiento Creando Oportunidades* (CREO), *Partido Social Cristiano* (PSC) and *Partido Renovación Institucional Acción Nacional* (PRIAN) in the overseas districts. Across the period under analysis, 21 out of 24 emigrant seats were occupied by MPAIS candidates. Table 6.2 shows each emigrant representative per election, overseas district and political affiliation. There are seven (non)consecutive re-election. In the 2009 election, Fernando Flores stood as candidate for PRIAN and he was re-elected representing CREO in 2017. Despite the predominance of these political organizations, political parties created by Ecuadorian emigrants such as *Movimiento de Ecuatorianos Unidos en USA y Canadá* (MEUUYC) or *Movimiento Hermandad Ecuatoriana* (MHE) also have an impact on election results (see Ramírez and Umpierrez de Reguero 2019).

Table 6.2 Emigrant representatives in Ecuador (2007–2017)

Legislative elections	Overseas district	Name of Emigrant representative	Political filiation
2007	Canada and US	1 Guido Rivas	MPAIS
		2 Linda Machuca	MPAIS
	Europe, Asia and Oceania	3 Edison Narváez	MPAIS
		4 Mercedes Panta	MPAIS
	Latin America, the Caribbean and Africa	5 Eduardo Zambrano	MPAIS
		6 Gabriela Quezada	MPAIS
2009	Canada and US	1 Linda Machuca	MPAIS
		2 Francisco Waiking	MPAIS
	Europe, Asia and Oceania	3 Dora Aguirre	MPAIS
		4 Washington Cruz	MPAIS
	Latin America, the Caribbean and Africa	5 Eduardo Zambrano	MPAIS
		6 Fernando Flores	PRIAN
2013	Canada and US	1 Ximena Peña	MPAIS
		2 Alex Guamán	MPAIS
	Europe, Asia and Oceania	3 Dora Aguirre	MPAIS
		4 Esteban Melo	MPAIS
	Latin America, the Caribbean and Africa	5 Eduardo Zambrano	MPAIS
		6 Diana Peña	MPAIS
2017	Canada and US	1 Ximena Peña	MPAIS
		2 Byron Suquilanda	CREO
	Europe, Asia and Oceania	3 Esther Cuesta	MPAIS
		4 Esteban Melo	MPAIS
	Latin America, the Caribbean and Africa	5 Mauricio Zambrano	MPAIS
		6 Fernando Flores	CREO

Source: CNE (2019).

Understanding the electoral success of MPAIS abroad

In this section, we investigate the strategies implemented by MPAIS in order to emerge as the leading political organization of Ecuador. From a demand-side perspective, we rely on the window of opportunity caused by the crisis of political representation (Mainwaring 2006); whereas from the supply-side perspective, we mostly focus on the role of internal structure of MPAIS. We focus on the electoral performance of MPAIS, abroad and within the country, in order to observe if MPAIS extended its partisan influence towards the overseas districts or its success was supported from abroad since its foundation.

Demand-side analysis

Before the implementation of emigrant enfranchisement, traditional parties were in genuine decline, particularly in the 2006 presidential elections (Mainwaring 2006). This downfall coincided with a decade of political instability (from 1996 to 2006, no less than eight different presidents ruled Ecuador) and favoured the ascent of Rafael Correa to the presidency in 2007 (Machado Puertas 2007). Correa co-founded MPAIS in 2006 as a national political party with the support of indigenous social movements and labour unions (Collins 2014). He presented MPAIS as a viable alternative to the partyocracy (*partidocracia*), mainly represented by the traditional parties such as the *Izquierda Democrática* (ID), *Partido Roldosista Ecuatoriano* (PRE), PRIAN and PSC. The creation of MPAIS coincided with the application of the emigrant enfranchisement in the 2006 elections. In 2006, even if Correa won the run-off presidential elections at the national level, Noboa obtained the largest share of the votes abroad. In 2007, Ecuadorians within the country voted again in a larger proportion to MPAIS than nonresident citizens. Table 6.3 shows the average vote share for MPAIS for the three types of elections (presidential and legislative for the two types of seats) for the 2006–2017 period.

Table 6.3 Average vote share of MPAIS per geographical tiers and elections (2006–2007)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Election</i>	<i>Abroad</i>	<i>National</i>	<i>Difference</i>
2006	Presidential (first round)	20.7	26.8	– 6.1
2006	Presidential (second round)	46.1	56.8	– 10.7
2007	Legislative (provincial/abroad seats)	36.5	59.6	– 23.1
	Legislative (national seats)	44.0	64.6	– 20.6
2009	Presidential	62.9	51.9	+ 11.0
	Legislative (provincial/abroad seats)	46.9	39.7	+ 7.2
	Legislative (national seats)	48.2	43.0	+ 5.2
2013	Presidential	77.5	56.9	+ 20.6
	Legislative (provincial/abroad seats)	64.3	50.8	+ 13.5
	Legislative (national seats)	65.1	52.1	+ 13.0
2017	Presidential (first round)	41.6	39.3	+ 2.3
	Legislative (provincial/abroad seats)	44.4	37.4	+ 7.0
	Legislative (national seats)	41.7	39.0	+ 2.7
2017	Presidential (second round)	50.3	51.2	– 0.9

Source: CNE (2019).

By employing a political strategy denominated as ‘permanent campaign’ (Conaghan and De La Torre 2008), Correa and MPAIS rapidly conquered almost all electoral districts, inside and outside Ecuador. Between 2009 and the first round of the 2017 elections, MPAIS even obtained a larger vote share abroad than in Ecuador, particularly in the Europe, Asia and Oceania district. The party took advantage of the crisis of political representation and positioned itself as the most viable alternative in Ecuadorian politics. After organizing a constituent assembly that reformed the constitution, Correa won two consecutive presidential terms in 2009 and 2013, even without needing a run-off. For MPAIS, the referendum for the approval of the 2008 Constitution also meant an electoral success, both abroad and within the country. In one year, the political behaviour of overseas voters shifted from political organizations like PRIAN and *Red Ética y Democracia* (RED) to MPAIS, probably helped by the 2008 Constitution and the presidential speeches that promised to recognize larger social and political rights to emigrants (Ramírez 2018).

Gradually, Correa and his movement concentrated more power by winning elections and by promoting reforms. In 2011 and 2012, Correa vetoed several electoral rules such as the seat allocation method and proposed direct democracy tools in order to transform the former judicial system and the national mass media (Freidenberg 2012; Basabe-Serrano and Martínez 2014). In those reforms, Correa’s initiatives successfully passed. During his first two presidential terms (2007–2013), Correa’s Ecuador experienced an economic bonanza prompted by the increase of oil prices on the international market that were used to support the political programme of MPAIS among the nonresident citizens. Correa used the vigorous economy of Ecuador in this period in order to strengthen the state – diaspora nexus, among other by investing in transnational social programmes through public institutions such as the SENAMI (Bocagni 2011a; Ramírez 2018).

In 2012–2013, dropping oil prices on international markets and a growing foreign debt hindered a continued economic expansion (Gallagher, Irwin, and Koleski 2013) and impacted public investment (Jara-Alba and Umpierrez de Reguero 2014; Meléndez and Moncagatta 2017). The economy strongly decelerated in 2014–2015 (Vera and Llanos-Escobar 2016), and these economic conditions injured electoral support for MPAIS. In the 2014 local and regional elections, MPAIS lost 10.8% of its seats and several strategic local governments compared to 2009 (Dandoy 2014). But the decline in popularity seemed slower among the Ecuadorians living abroad and a survey done among Ecuadorians emigrants in Spain showed that more than 70% of them indicated a vote intention for MPAIS in 2014 (Iglesias et al. 2015).

In 2017, MPAIS nominated Lenin Moreno – the vice-president in the first two-terms of Correa – as a presidential candidate. Moreno won the presidential run-off against candidate Lasso (CREO) with no more than 2.5% points of difference in terms of vote shares at the national level and 0.6% abroad. This may suggest that it is not only MPAIS and its incumbency that captured votes outside of Ecuador but rather Correa’s personalistic leadership. In the second round, Lasso received larger vote shares in 13 out of 24 provinces and two out of three overseas districts. A large proportion of Ecuadorian voters living in Latin America, the United States

and Canada have shifted their preferences from MPAIS to CREO. Emigrants became critical to Correa and MPAIS after the corruption scandals emerging during Correa's presidential third term and the way that the government managed the aid that migrant civil associations and nonresident Ecuadorians collected to support the victims of the April 2016 earthquake (Interview 5). The exception is to be found in Ecuadorian voters living in Europe, particularly in Spain, that remained loyal to MPAIS. Ecuadorians residing in Spain represent a considerable electoral force, and a large share of them are those who emigrated because of the economic crisis at the end of the 1990s (Ramírez and Ramírez 2005). Consequently, they are unwilling to vote for candidates as Lasso⁷ because of his perceived implication in the crisis (Interview 3 and 4).

Supply-side analysis

The analysis of the supply-side of MPAIS regarding voters living abroad relies on a set of indicators and key documents. This section investigates briefly party manifestos and government documents before analyzing the internal institutional structure of the party, including party branches abroad and internal bodies as well as detailing the candidate selection process and the preparation of the electoral campaigns.

Since its creation in 2006, policy issues and electoral pledges concerning non-resident citizens have been significantly present in the party manifestos and the governmental programmes of MPAIS (Ramírez 2018). Yet, in the more recent electoral contests, these documents did not pay much more attention to overseas voters in comparison to other political parties. For instance, the 2017 manifesto of ID even allocated more attention to these voters than the manifesto of MPAIS (Umpierrez de Reguero et al. 2019). Despite this exception, nonresident Ecuadorians have been constantly at the centre of the different electoral and governmental strategies of MPAIS.

Since the beginning of the second term of Correa in 2009, MPAIS positioned itself as a political party with a nationwide presence, including in the overseas districts (Wolff 2018). Article 4 of MPAIS official statutes of 2014 confirms that the party 'acts in the whole national territory and in special districts abroad.' The structure of MPAIS is a decentralized institutional body composed of national organs, territorial organs and 'basis' (militants) organs (article 12 of MPAIS official statutes of 2014). At the national level, the main organs are the national convention, the national direction, the president, the executive secretary-general and a large number of national commissions and secretariats. These commissions help managing the movement at the national level and in the overseas districts (see later). The same bodies (convention, direction, permanent commissions, etc.) are duplicated at the territorial level: the provinces, cantons, districts and parishes.

Next to the three national secretariats (in charge of territorial organization, political communication and political action) and the seven permanent commissions (in charge of social organizations, international relations, political training, authorities of decentralized governments, coordination of the parliamentary party

group and government policies), MPAIS also created two specific national (internal) commissions: an ethic and discipline commission and an electoral commission (articles 25–34 of MPAIS official statutes of 2014). This latter commission oversees the electoral process, abroad and within the country. Among others, it is in charge of collecting information related to the Ecuadorian electorate, including in the overseas districts (Interview 6) and, together with the permanent commission of political training, is responsible for reviewing the training content for the militants and candidates including those in the three districts abroad.

MPAIS institutional bodies abroad are treated just as other territorial bodies of the party and are recognized by the MPAIS official statutes of 2014. According to article 73 of its statutes, MPAIS established a representative organ in each of the three overseas districts. Each of these organs is to have a director (or a representative) chosen by its members. She/he is to preside and moderate the meetings and official events in the overseas districts. The organizational structure of these overseas branches is determined by the party's national convention, based on the individual characteristics of each district. These party branches abroad have also a direct access to national party bodies as, for instance, the director or the delegate of MPAIS in each overseas district can represent his or her district in the party's national convention, which is the party's main national organ.

In addition to these organs aiming at facilitating the organization of the overseas district, MPAIS has also created party branches in the main destination countries such as in the United States or in Spain, not only to run the campaigns and attract voters but also to invite militants and activists to support the MPAIS government. MPAIS and its militants have created webpages and accounts on social networks such as *Alianza PAIS Reino Unido* (MPAIS UK) or *Revolución Ciudadana Madrid* (Citizens's Revolution Madrid). Those pages and accounts connect a large number of nonresident Ecuadorians and have served as a political communication's platform to emigrant representatives like Esther Cuesta (a current Assembly member for the Europe, Asia and Oceania district).

MPAIS also conducts traditional strategies of electoral campaigning abroad. They organize and design propaganda by different means in the main destination countries. For instance, a poster campaign in the corridors and platforms of the Madrid (where thousands of Ecuadorian live) metro attracted the attention of Spanish and international media. Public transport users and tourists witnessed posters of MPAIS leader Rafael Correa, who was standing for presidential re-election in Ecuador in 2013, appealing to Ecuadorian migrants to support his 'citizen revolution' from afar. According to Boccagni and Ramírez, 'next to huge images of Correa, the posters bore a photograph of the presidential party's leading congressional candidate, Dora Aguirre: a residential caregiver who, soon after winning a congressional seat, claimed she was returning to Ecuador in order to 'act as a link between migrants and the government' (2013: 722).

The directors of the representatives of overseas districts are directly in charge of integrating and managing militants in the party structures and in the campaign, in coordination with the party's national commissions (see earlier). This responsibility belongs to each administrative division (i.e., national, provincial, cantonal,

districtal, parochial and in the overseas districts) of the internal organization of MPAIS. As a direct consequence of the split of MPAIS between two factions in 2018 and 2019 (one led by Correa, the other one by Moreno) these party structures abroad were divided into two political forces. For instance, some party militants left the Spanish branch of MPAIS and decided to join Correa's new political movement (Interview 9).

The strategy of MPAIS regarding candidate selection abroad does not substantially differ from the one at the domestic level (Umpierrez de Reguero et al. 2019).⁸ In short, MPAIS consults its main electoral support and forces in the overseas districts and establishes an internal list of pre-candidates. These pre-candidates are then submitted to a series of tests and trainings before being formally elected as fully fledged MPAIS candidates by the MPAIS' representatives in the overseas districts (Interview 6 and 8).

Internally the party [MPAIS] has a regulation for its candidate selection, where it is explained how the process works to elect the pre-candidates in the special [overseas] districts. Some of the requirements for pre-candidates consist in presenting the reasons on why they are running, and that they do not have been judged by the party ethics committee.

(Interview 8)

Among the criteria used to evaluate these nonresident candidates, MPAIS gauges their profile, their potential of voters' support abroad and their likelihood to win elections. Incumbent candidates are also evaluated, based on their performance in office and the party investigates the probabilities of electoral success when dealing with a challenger candidate (Interview 7). The party also evaluates the consistency of the ideological stances of the candidates with the main ideological axioms of the party (Interview 6). Gender is finally an important criterion in the candidate selection abroad (Interview 3). According to the 2009 Electoral Law (article 3), party lists need to be composed by an equal number of men and women. This electoral rule has produced parity between male and female candidates among the emigrant representatives elected since 2007.

For preparing its electoral campaigns in the overseas districts, MPAIS conducted several workshops in order to know more about potential voters from cities with high density of Ecuadorian population such as in Barcelona, New York or Madrid (Interview 6). The rationale behind these preparations is that the electoral campaigns should respond to the demands of nonresident Ecuadorians (e.g., bilateral and multilateral agreements with destination countries to improve social security programmes or to legally protect emigrants from exogenous difficulties in the destination country, such as the Spanish mortgage crisis in 2008–2009).

Alongside Ecuadorians citizens and civil organizations from both inside and outside Ecuador, MPAIS militants have also been involved in the process of drafting the party manifesto that would ultimately become the backbone upon which electoral campaigns are structured. In line with the campaign's logistics, MPAIS

also conducted in-depth research on the voting intentions in the overseas districts, particularly prior to the presidential elections. Although this strategy requires vast efforts and resources due to the nature of the Ecuadorian emigration that is scattered over more than 50 destination countries, MPAIS ran non-probabilistic surveys and focus groups in order to evaluate voting intentions (Interview 6).

Yet, one has to remark that despite having set up party branches and active participation in social networking platforms in the main emigration countries over the last decade, MPAIS remains a political party that concentrates its decision-making process at the national level. Since its early days, the party has been transformed into a machine of political communication and an emblematic case study of 'permanent campaign' during Correa's presidencies (Conaghan and De la Torre 2008). As a result, MPAIS can be viewed as an illustrative example of a top-down approach to emigrant outreach.

Conclusion

This chapter consists of an in-depth study of MPAIS, which is the political organization that dominated the Ecuadorian party system between 2007 and 2017, both in the overseas districts and within the country. During more than a decade, the political party of presidents Rafael Correa and Lenin Moreno (Correa's successor in 2017) has occupied the most relevant legislative and executive positions at the supranational, national and subnational levels and transformed the state organization via ambitious referenda and popular consultations.

In this chapter, we demonstrated how and why MPAIS managed to obtain the largest vote share among the nonresident Ecuadorians in almost all the elections organized since 2007. Based on the analysis of election results, party documents and a set of elite interviews, this chapter stressed the importance of the Ecuadorian voters living abroad for the political and electoral strategy of MPAIS. For the burgeoning literature on political parties abroad, this chapter has offered three sets of discussion elements: (1) a theoretical refinement of the argument of emigrant outreach as a zero-sum relation between the state and political parties; (2) an empirical evidence of an uneven transnational arena in terms of party contestation; and (3) a suggestive but poorly generalizable inference on the connection between the transnational realm and incumbency.

On the demand-side, overseas votes were relevant for the electoral successes of MPAIS as they secured large victories in presidential elections and large majorities in the national legislative assembly (not to mention their weight on national referenda and popular consultations and in the elections of the Citizen's Council). Given that Ecuadorians living abroad constitute a large pool of (potential) voters, their voting preferences could swing electoral results. In 2009, for instance, the absolute majority gathered by MPAIS and its allies in the national parliament would have been much more difficult without the five (out of six) legislative seats elected by the emigrant vote. More recently, in the second round of the 2017 presidential elections, the number of registered voters from abroad (378,292 voters) surpassed the vote difference (228,629 votes) between the MPAIS presidential

candidate with his opponent, stressing the pressing importance of gaining the support of the Ecuadorian voters living abroad.

Regarding the supply-side, the appeal to Ecuadorians living abroad was part of a larger ideological strategy of MPAIS, as it fits perfectly with the framing of the institutional, economic and social changes that the party wanted to implement in the country. The ideology of MPAIS relied, among other factors, on a closer state–diaspora nexus and the involvement (in some cases, the return) of its non-resident citizens in order to contribute to a more positive image of the country abroad. For instance, the electoral manifestos of MPAIS stressed the importance of remittances and of the academic or technical skills acquired abroad. By extension, Rafael Correa was himself the perfect example of an Ecuadorian citizen trained abroad that came back to serve his or her country.

The combination of these two elements located on the supply- and demand-sides of the electoral process helps understand the position of MPAIS regarding Ecuadorians living abroad. In 2007, a few months after the installation of Correa as president, MPAIS soon realized the crucial importance of the Ecuadorian voters living abroad. The party decided to treat candidates and militants abroad like any other MPAIS members (for instance, by submitting pre-candidates to the same evaluation process as in Ecuador, or by involving militants abroad in the drafting of the party manifesto) and to adapt its internal structure by enlarging the mandate of its internal bodies to the nonresidents or by creating local party branches in the main destination countries such as Spain, the United States or Italy.

Acknowledgements

We are grateful for the comments and advises from the participants of the International Conference ‘Political Parties Abroad’ at the Université catholique de Louvain in 2018, in particular Tudi Kernalegenn, Emilie van Haute and Daniela Vintila. We also thank Mishelle Gellibert, Santiago González-Paredes, Carol Jara-Alba, Paula Nimbriotis, Javier Noboa, María Fernanda Nuñez, Leticia Orcés, Rafaela Paredes for their helpful assistance regarding the fieldwork. We also acknowledge the financial support from Universidad Casa Grande.

Notes

- 1 The number of seats to be elected in the national parliament varied over time: 130 in 2007, 124 in 2009 and 137 from 2013 onwards.
- 2 In Ecuador, the Electoral Law is better known as the ‘*Código de la Democracia*’ (Democracy Code).
- 3 Articles 310 to 312 of the 2009 Electoral Law distinguished between two types of political organizations: political parties and political movements. Given that this distinction is not relevant for this chapter, we will only use the concept of political party when referring to any political organization that competes in elections.
- 4 The Council of Citizen Participation and Social Control is an autonomous institution from the executive, legislative and judicial branches created by the 2008 Constitution. This institution oversees the appointment of non-directly elected authorities like the attorney general, the public defender or the auditor general.

- 5 Ecuador does not require that nonresident citizens live for a specific period in the destination country, nor that they previously obtained an electoral card in the origin country.
- 6 Ecuador is traditionally composed of four macro-territorial divisions: the Coastal area, the Highlands, the Amazonia and the Galapagos Islands (Bocagni and Ramírez 2013).
- 7 Lasso was one of the bankers that cosigned a regulation making the Ecuadorian state responsible for private bank debt, which in turn led to the economic crisis. In 1999, after the closing of banks in March, President Jamil Mahuad appointed Lasso as Minister of Economy and Energy.
- 8 When the candidature is based on a pre-electoral alliance with other parties (this is a phenomenon that often occurs in Ecuadorian politics), the candidates are selected in a similar way and mainly on the same criteria (i.e., based on the party's perception of their likelihood to win elections). Yet, this selection process is complex due to the interests at stake and (almost) all political parties in the alliance submit proposals individually in order to make a joint decision.

References

- Acosta P., López S., Villamar D. (2006), *La migración en el Ecuador, oportunidades y amenazas*. Quito: Centro de Estudios Internacionales.
- Alaminos Chica A., Penalva Verdú C. (2017), 'Los partidos transnacionales e migración: El caso de los partidos rumanos', *Barataria: Revista castellano-manchega de ciencias sociales*, 23, pp. 31–51.
- Araujo L. (2010), *Estado y voto migrante: una radiografía de la Región Andina*. Quito: FLACSO.
- Basabe-Serrano S., Martínez J. (2014), 'Ecuador: Cada vez menos democracia, cada vez más autoritarismo . . . con elecciones', *Revista de Ciencia Política*, 34(1), pp. 145–170.
- Belchior A. M., Azevedo J., Lisi M., Abrantes M. (2018), 'Contextual Reasons for Emigrants Electoral Participation in Home-Country Elections: The Portuguese Case', *Contemporary European Studies*, 26(2), pp. 197–214.
- Bermúdez A., Lafleur J. M., Escrivá A. (2017), 'Contribuyendo a la democracia en países de origen: El voto externo de los migrantes andinos', *América Latina Hoy*, 76, pp. 35–54.
- Bocagni P. (2011a), 'Migrants' Social Protection as a Transnational Process: Public Policies and Emigrant Initiative in the Case of Ecuador', *International Journal of Social Welfare*, 20(3), pp. 318–325.
- Bocagni P. (2011b), 'Reminiscences, Patriotism, Participation: Approaching External Voting in Ecuadorian Immigration to Italy', *International Migration*, 49(3), pp. 76–98.
- Bocagni P., Ramírez J. (2013), 'Building Democracy or Reproducing "Ecuadorianness"? A Transnational Exploration of Ecuadorian Migrants' External Voting', *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 45(4), pp. 721–750.
- Brand L. A. (2006), *Citizens Abroad: Emigration and the State in the Middle East and North Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Burgess K. (2018), 'States or Parties? Emigrant Outreach and Transnational Engagement', *International Political Science Review*, 39(3), pp. 369–383.
- Collins J. (2014), 'New Left Experiences in Bolivia and Ecuador and the Challenge to Theories of Populism', *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 46(1), pp. 59–86.
- Collyer M. (2014a), 'A Geography of Extra-territorial Citizenship: Explanations of External Voting', *Migration Studies*, 2(1), pp. 55–72.
- Collyer M. (2014b), 'Inside out? Directly Elected "Special Representation" of Emigrants in National Legislatures and the Role of Popular Sovereignty', *Political Geography*, 41, pp. 64–73.

- Conaghan C., De La Torre C. (2008), 'The Permanent Campaign of Rafael Correa: Making Ecuador's Plebiscitary Presidency', *International Journal of Press/Politics*, 13(3), pp. 267–284.
- Cortés A., Sanmartín S. (September 2010), 'Transnacionalismo político: Políticas migratorias de vinculación de los estados de origen y de las asociaciones de migrantes en España: Los casos ecuatoriano y colombiano', Paper presented at the *XIV Encuentro de Latinoamericanistas Españoles*, Santiago de Compostela, Spain.
- Dandoy R. (2014), 'El desempeño electoral de los partidos políticos provinciales en las elecciones seccionales 2014 en Ecuador', *Democracias*, 2, pp. 3–19.
- Dandoy R. (2017), 'Provincial Dynamics in the 2017 National Elections in Ecuador', *Democracias*, 5, pp. 3–24.
- Délano A. (2011), *Mexico and Its Diaspora in the United States: Policies of Emigration Since 1848*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Echeverría G. (2015), *Access to Electoral Rights Ecuador; EURO Citizenship Observatory*. Florence: European University Institute.
- Freidenberg F. (2012), 'Ecuador 2011: Revolución Ciudadana, estabilidad presidencial y personalismo político', *Revista de Ciencia Política*, 32(1), pp. 129–150.
- Freidenberg F., Pachano S. (2016), *El sistema político ecuatoriano*. Quito: FLACSO.
- Gallagher K. P., Irwin A., Koleski K. (2013), *¿Un mejor trato? Análisis comparativo de los prestamos chinos en América Latina*. México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México.
- Gamlen A. (2014), 'Diaspora Institutions and Diaspora Governance', *International Migration Review*, 48(1), pp. 180–217.
- Gamlen A. (2015), 'The Impacts of Extra-Territorial Voting: Swings, Interregnums and Feedback Effects in New Zealand Elections from 1914 to 2011', *Political Geography*, 44, pp. 1–8.
- Herrera G. (2011), 'La familia migrante en las políticas públicas en Ecuador: de símbolo de la tragedia a objeto de intervención'. In: Feldman-Bianco B., Rivera L., Stefoni C., Villa M. (eds.), *La construcción social del sujeto migrante en América Latina: prácticas, presentaciones y categorías*. Quito: FLACSO/CLACSO, pp. 181–202.
- Herrera G., Carrillo M. C., Torres A. (2005), *La migración ecuatoriana: transnacionalismo, redes e identidades*. Quito: FLACSO.
- Hurtado O. (2018), *Ecuador entre dos mundos*. Bogotá: Penguin Random House.
- Iglesias Martínez J., Moreno Marquez G., Fernandez Garcia M., Oleaga Paramo J. A., Vega de la Cuadra F. (2015), *La población de origen ecuatoriano en España*. Madrid: Ecuadorian Embassy in Spain.
- Jara Alba C. (2017), *Naturaleza económica e impacto macroeconómico de las remesas de los emigrantes: Caso Ecuador: Periodo 1994 a 2013*. Doctoral thesis, Universidad de Córdoba, Andalusia, Spain.
- Jara-Alba, C., Umpierrez de Reguero, S. (2014). 'Evolución del sector público ecuatoriano desde 1998 a 2013', *Enfoques: Ciencia Política y Administración Pública*, 12(21), pp. 131–148.
- Jara-Alba C., López-Guzmán T. (2015), 'México y Ecuador: un estudio comparativo de remesas e impacto macroeconómico', *UNEMI*, 8(15), pp. 18–31.
- Laakso M., Taagepera R. (1979), "'Effective" Number of Parties: A Measure With Application to West Europe', *Comparative Political Studies*, 12(1), pp. 3–27.
- Lafleur J.-M. (2013), *Transnational Politics and the State: The External Voting Rights of Diasporas*. London; New York, NY: Routledge.
- Lafleur J.-M. (2015), 'The Enfranchisement of Citizens Abroad: Variations and Explanations', *Democratization*, 22(5), pp. 840–860.

- Levitt P., De la Dehesa R. (2003), 'Transnational Migration and the Redefinition of the State: Variations and Explanations', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 26(4), pp. 587–611.
- Machado Puertas J. (2007), 'Ecuador . . . hasta que se fueron todos', *Revista de Ciencia Política*, 28(1), pp. 189–215.
- Mainwaring S. (2006), 'The Crisis of Democratic Representation in the Andes', *Journal of Democracy*, 17(3), pp. 13–27.
- Mandaville P., Lyons T. (eds.). (2012), *Politics from Afar: Transnational Diasporas and Networks*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.
- Margheritis A. (2011), "'Todos Somos Migrantes" (We Are All Migrants): The Paradoxes of Innovative State-led Transnationalism in Ecuador', *International Political Sociology*, 5(2), pp. 198–217.
- Mejía-Acosta A. (2002), *Gobernabilidad Democrática: Sistema Electoral, Partidos Políticos y Pugna de Poderes en Ecuador (1978–1998)*. Quito: Fundación Konrad Adenauer.
- Meléndez C., Moncagatta P. (2017), 'Ecuador: Una década de correísmo', *Revista de Ciencia Política*, 37(2), pp. 413–448.
- Mustillo T., Polga-Hecimovich J. (2018), 'Measures and Votes: Party Performance Under Free List Proportional Representation With Evidence from Ecuador', *Electoral Studies*, 56, pp. 124–135.
- Østergaard-Nielsen E. (2003), 'The Politics of Migrant Transnational Practices', *International Migration Review*, 37(3), pp. 760–786.
- Østergaard-Nielsen E. (2016), 'Sending Countries Policies'. In: Garcés-Masareñas B., Pennix R. (eds.), *Integration Processes and Policies in Europe*. Amsterdam: IMISCOE Research Series.
- Østergaard-Nielsen E., Ciornei I. (2019), 'Political Parties and the Transnational Mobilisation of the Emigrant Vote', *West European Politics*, 42(3), pp. 618–644.
- Paarlborg M. A. (2019), 'Competing for the Diaspora's Influence at Home: Party Structure and Transnational Campaign Activity in El Salvador', *Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 45(4), pp. 539–560.
- Palop-García P. (2017), 'Ausentes, pero representados: mecanismos institucionales de representación de emigrantes en América Latina y el Caribe', *América Latina Hoy*, 76, pp. 15–34.
- Palop-García P. (2018), 'Contained or Represented? The Varied Consequences of Reserved Seats for Emigrants in the Legislatures of Ecuador and Colombia', *Comparative Migration Studies*, 6(38), pp. 1–20.
- Rae D. (1971), *The Political Consequences of Electoral Laws*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Ramírez F., Ramírez J. (2005), *La estampida migratoria ecuatoriana: Crisis, redes transnacionales y repertorios de acción migratoria*. Buenos Aires: CLACSO.
- Ramírez J. (2018), 'Estado, migración y derechos políticos: El voto de los ecuatorianos desde el extranjero', *Foro Internacional*, 4(234), pp. 755–804.
- Ramírez J., Umpierrez de Reguero S. (2019), 'Estado, (e)migración y voto: análisis longitudinal de la experiencia ecuatoriana (2006–2019)', *ODISEA: Revista de Estudios Migratorios*, 6, pp. 31–64.
- Rhodes S., Harutyunyan A. (2010), 'Extending Citizenship to Emigrants: Democratic Contestation and a New Global Norm', *International Political Science Review*, 31(4), pp. 470–493.
- Sánchez F. (2008), *¿Democracia no lograda o democracia malograda?: un análisis del sistema político del Ecuador, 1979–2002*. Quito: FLACSO.

- Turcu A., Urbatsch R. (2015), 'Diffusion of Diaspora Enfranchisement Norms: A Multinational Study', *Comparative Political Studies*, 48(4), pp. 407–437.
- Umpierrez de Reguero S., Dandoy R., Palma T. (2017), 'Emigración y Representación Especial: Evidencia de los Ecuatorianos Residentes en el Exterior', *Revista Interdisciplinar da Mobilidade Humana*, 25(50), pp. 177–201.
- Umpierrez de Reguero S., Zanotti L., Noboa J., Brito Z. (2019), '¿Nuevos votos, viejos actores? El rol transnacional de las campañas electorales y los partidos políticos ecuatorianos'. In: Baquerizo G., Ríos I. (eds.), *La comunicación política en campañas políticas latinoamericanas*. Guayaquil: Universidad Casa Grande, pp. 73–106.
- Vera S., Llanos-Escobar S. (2016), 'Ecuador: La democracia después de nueve años de la "Revolución Ciudadana" de Rafael Correa', *Revista de Ciencia Política*, 36(1), pp. 145–175.
- Wellman E. I. (2015), 'Le vote de la diaspora en Afrique du Sud', *Afrique Contemporaine*, 4, pp. 35–50.
- Wolff J. (2018), 'Ecuador After Correa: The Struggle Over the Citizens' Revolution', *Revista de Ciencia Política*, 38(2), pp. 281–302.

Appendix

List of interviews

<i>Coding</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Position</i>
Interview 1	Female	Latin American, The Caribbean and African district	Diplomat (Ecuador)
Interview 2	Male	Latin American, The Caribbean and African district	Diplomat (Colombia)
Interview 3	Female	Canada and US district	Parliamentarian (Ecuador)
Interview 4	Female	Europe, Asia and Oceania district	Migrant Association's leader
Interview 5	Female	Canada and US district	Migrant Association's leader
Interview 6	Male	Europe, Asia and Oceania district	Parliamentarian (Ecuador)
Interview 7	Female	Quito, Ecuador	Parliamentarian (Ecuador)
Interview 8	Female	Europe, Asia and Oceania district	Parliamentarian (Ecuador)
Interview 9	Male	Europe, Asia and Oceania district	Emigrant activist