

Transnational authoritarianism and second-generation diasporas: Between repression, co-optation and legitimization

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In a globalized world, authoritarian regimes seek collaborate with, co-opt, control and/or repress their extraterritorial populations – that is those subjects (or their descendants) who no longer reside within the borders of the state. Therefore, various forms of diaspora engagement have become a clear priority for different migrant sending states. We have seen how authoritarian regimes not only encourage their first-generation diaspora to, for example, contribute to development and image-building for the homeland, but also increasingly seek to engage the second-generation through measures like invitations to invest in, “return” to, or learn about their country of origin. While earlier research has tended to highlight the different positions held by regime-supporters and dissidents in the diaspora, there are other systematic and significant differences that need to be recognized. Their children are, for instance, are more likely to live their lives further away from the tentacles of the authoritarian state of their parents’ homeland but may nevertheless identify and seek to engage with it.

This panel deepens our understanding of the different positionalities and agency of first vis-à-vis second generations of diasporic populations and their relations to their authoritarian homeland regimes by bringing together profound theoretical as well as in-depth empirical contributions investigating, for example, the Eritrean and Turkish diasporas.

Track Classification: International Politics of Migration, Refugees and Diaspora Working Group