

Brasileiros no Mundo: a global approach to governing populations abroad?

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Only since the mid-1990s has Brazil joined the worldwide trend of diaspora engagement policies and started to implement specific programmes to address the needs and claims of its citizens residing abroad.¹ Among other things, such programmes usually seek to capitalize on expatriates' economic, cultural and political resources; to engage them in development projects in the home country; to cultivate bonds of nationhood and a sense of belonging; and to create links by which their voice and demands can be incorporated in the policy-making process. To what extent has Brazil led and/or followed regional and global trends in this area? How effective has it been in implementing those programmes and achieving their goals? What lessons about global expectations and capacities can we draw by looking at specific destinations for Brazilians abroad, such as London?

This article addresses these questions and thereby engages with the main research issues identified in this special edited section of the current issue of *International Affairs*. It enhances our knowledge of one of the least researched dimensions of foreign policy, namely that concerning relations between the state and its citizens residing abroad. Using mostly qualitative methods,² it shows that the Brazilian state has indeed reached out to its citizens abroad in the past two decades, going well beyond the traditional consular tasks of protection and assistance. In contrast to other Latin American countries, it has done so following a low-visibility, technical approach led by consular offices, including very cautious attempts to organize the diaspora and permit only gradual and limited input of emigrants into migration policy-making. In tracing that process, this article contributes to our understanding of relatively new goals and practices within foreign policy. Brazil linked these outreach efforts to the building up of a global

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¹ Brazil's total population in 2015 was 207.8 million (see <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/brazil>). (Unless otherwise stated at point of citation, all URLs cited in this article were accessible on 19 Feb. 2017.) At the last census in 2010 it was estimated that 1–2% of the country's population (then 195 million) lived abroad.

² Most of the evidence used here is qualitative, gathered through analysis of texts and elite interviews for a broader project. Texts included official state documents, pieces of legislation, websites, national and regional declarations and agreements, decision-makers' speeches, international organizations' and think-tanks' reports and surveys, media articles, academic publications and press releases. Twenty-seven semi-structured interviews and personal communications were conducted with top state officials, diplomats, heads of NGOs, independent researchers, and specialists in migration and foreign policy in Brazil and London between 2014 and 2016. The second section and comparisons build upon field research work conducted in five Latin American countries for a broader project.

role in international affairs and joined other Latin American countries in the construction of a normative and discursive consensus based on human rights and development considerations and, to some extent, on opposition to restrictive migration policies in receiving countries of the North. These efforts required a significant reform of the consular service and increasing collaboration between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (popularly known as Itamaraty) and other ministries—in the process also giving rise to certain tensions within these relationships. In this respect, the analysis engages with the political processes taking place inside the state bureaucratic apparatus (that is, intrastate politics) and unpacks new dynamics in the way decisions are adopted, specific programmes are formulated and foreign policy is implemented. The analysis reaches beyond Itamaraty to encompass all other relevant actors: not only key bureaucratic entities, but also civil society groups, who are increasingly involved in policy discussions and consultations. An account of how this policy dimension has been implemented, while inevitably incomplete, offers some insights into whether Brazil is actually attaining its global ambitions.

In sum, this article sets out to make the following contributions. First, it expands and refines our understanding of the politics of emigration and its impact on foreign policy management, with special emphasis on the implications in terms of adapting policy instruments to a new notion of citizenship beyond borders and adopting innovative techniques to manage populations abroad. In this respect, it is both original and relevant, as it fills a gap in the existing literature on Brazil's foreign policy. Second, it makes the case for situating diaspora issues within foreign policy analysis. Such a call is relatively unusual within migration studies and therefore signals the potential of this piece to inspire collaboration across disciplinary boundaries. Third, it investigates the actual implementation of diaspora engagement policies in one major destination for Brazilian emigrants: London, where they have recently become the largest Latin American community. Brazilians in London have faced serious obstacles to improving their resources for organization and mobilization, and their voice and representation in the policy-making process contrast with that of Brazilian emigrant communities in other destinations. Given that there is no assessment of the results of diaspora engagement policies for any Latin American country, this research constitutes a unique contribution of practical relevance. From an analytical point of view, such empirical information contributes to the growing literature about the impact of democratization and social activism on the agenda and dynamics of foreign policy.

The findings suggest some discrepancies and tensions in officials' views and between policy design and actual results, thus illustrating a gap between foreign policy goals and implementation capacity at both the global and the local level. In other words, this article not only provides a novel analytical framework by situating diaspora policies within foreign policy and offering fresh insights on the link between migration and foreign policy-making, but also speaks directly to the practice of foreign policy-making. In so doing, it provides information about the uncertainties and uneven impact of policy implementation, and casts

doubts on Brazil's overall capacity to carry out a global strategy in this realm. It echoes an ongoing debate in academic and political circles about the foreign policy-making process itself and the impact of recent bureaucratic reforms on foreign affairs practices which are assumed to be in a state of flux and generate ambivalent reactions. At the same time, it highlights the increasing links between state actors and society, both within and across borders.

Following this introduction, the first section reviews the literature on the topic and sets out how this study contributes to moving the conversation forward. The second section presents background information about what has been done in this policy realm, the types of measures and programmes adopted, the timing of and motivations behind these initiatives, and some of the political and policy implications. The third section focuses on the specifics of policy implementation and examples of how this works in a selected migrant destination, namely London. The article closes with concluding remarks on the main contributions made and lessons drawn.

Situating diaspora engagement policies within foreign policy

The study of the relationship between states of origin and diasporas has expanded massively in the last decade, largely encouraged by interdisciplinary work on the transnational nature of actors, processes and mobilities of all sorts. International migration obviously lends itself to an examination of transnational practices, and more so now than in the past as communications and transport have made it easier and more affordable for people to develop and maintain ties in places of both origin and residency. Migrants' dual (or multiple) engagements—including those of a political nature—illustrate this point and have encouraged outreach efforts by countries of origin in all regions of the world lately.

Building upon early work in this area,³ scholars have produced numerous empirical studies on outreach policies by sending states and have elaborated on several explanatory factors. While this body of work has not yet coalesced into a formal theory,⁴ the various studies have advanced some propositions and comparisons. The lead in these investigations has been taken largely by political geographers, sociologists and anthropologists, accordingly focusing more on bottom-up or migrant-led practices than on top-down, state-led processes. This means that,

³ Among others, Barbara Schmitter Heisler, 'Sending countries and the politics of emigration and destination', *International Migration Review* 19: 3, 1985, pp. 469–84; Robert C. Smith, 'Diasporic memberships in historical perspective: comparative insights from the Mexican, Italian and Polish cases', *International Migration Review* 37: 3, Fall, pp. 724–59; Peggy Levitt and Rafael de la Dehesa, 'Transnational migration and the redefinition of the state: variations and explanations', *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 26: 4, 2003, pp. 587–611; Eva Østergaard-Nielsen, ed., *International migration and sending countries: perceptions, policies, and transnational relations* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003).

⁴ See e.g. Delphine Ancien, Mark Boyle and Rob Kitchin, 'Exploring diaspora strategies: an international comparison', workshop report, National University of Maynooth, Ireland, June 2009; Alan Gamlen, 'The emigration state and the modern geopolitical imagination', *Political Geography* 27: 8, 2008, pp. 840–56; Doreen R. Agunias and Kathleen Newland, *Developing a road map for engaging diasporas in development: a handbook for policymakers and practitioners in home and host countries* (Geneva and Washington DC: International Organization for Migration and Migration Policy Institute, 2012).

with very few exceptions, diaspora policies are not framed within foreign or public policy analyses and policy lessons are missing.

Moreover, much of the worldwide trend towards so-called diaspora engagement policies is premised on the benefits to be captured from overseas citizens. Sending countries in all regions have adopted measures to foster nationhood links, channel remittances, build political support, diffuse national culture, and profit from overseas networks and lobbying capacity. The phenomenon is not new, but has intensified in the last two decades under a celebratory discourse that emphasizes migrant contributions to national development. In earlier studies, factors such as the international constraints acting on developing countries due to their position in the international system, the influence of international norms, state capacities, the size of the emigrant community and the role of political parties have been suggested as explanatory factors. States' involvement has been generally understood as a response to migrants' demands and their increasing capacity to organize and lobby, and more likely to come about in cases of massive migration with significant potential political impact (for example, Mexicans in the United States). Some studies emphasize the economic motivation behind states' involvement (for example, capturing remittances) and its impact in terms of inclusion/exclusion of expatriates, their level of organization, and the transnationalization of social, gender and regional inequalities.⁵ Other studies have focused on regularities in transnational political practices linking sending and receiving states. For instance, similar patterns across three immigrant communities were found in the United States, wherein transnational political practices have acquired a highly institutionalized form and are fostered by three main actors: the sending state apparatus, political parties in the country of origin, and migrant organizations in the host country.⁶ More recent studies condense these factors into analytical frameworks and encourage more comparisons and generalizations.⁷

On the basis of these general assumptions it is not evident why Brazil would embrace this trend, as its emigrant community is relatively small and fragmented, it has not been the main source of linkage initiatives, nor has it constituted a key constituency or source of remittances. Although diplomatic ties and foreign relations with receiving countries may be affected by migration flows, population movements in the past were not linked to foreign policy priorities, probably because they did not have any pronounced impact on Brazil's role and projection in the international system. Few explanations have been offered for Brazil's engagement with these issues in the past two decades. Little is known about the motivations, timing and implications of emigration policy in Brazil, as the case of this country has not received much attention in the diaspora-related litera-

⁵ Luis E. Guarnizo, 'The rise of transnational social formations: Mexican and Dominican state responses to transnational migration', *Political Power and Social Theory*, vol. 12, 1998, pp. 45–94.

⁶ José Itzigsohn, 'Immigration and the boundaries of citizenship: the institutions of immigrants' political transnationalism', *International Migration Review* 34: 4, Winter 2000, pp. 1126–54.

⁷ Alexandra Délano and Alan Gamlen, 'Comparing and theorizing state-diaspora relations', *Political Geography*, vol. 41, 2014, pp. 43–53; Francesco Ragazzi, 'A comparative analysis of diaspora policies', *Political Geography*, vol. 41, 2014, pp. 74–89.

ture.⁸ The broader migration-related literature focuses mostly on social aspects of human mobility, internal migration, the impact of displacements on development, and the migration flows between Japan and Brazil. The questions under consideration here have been addressed neither by the burgeoning corpus of studies on rising powers nor by articles on international politics. Only in a few works have challenges from demographics at a global scale been acknowledged, and then only regarding questions of political economy.⁹

More importantly, as the existing literature in general does not situate emigration policies within foreign policy, it tends to be oblivious of the key processes that form state initiatives, which are usually located in the institutional structure of the foreign affairs ministries and related to a broader set of foreign relations and goals. This disregard is partly the result of an overemphasis on migrants' agency and a scholarly focus on cases of large diasporas, and also partly due to the neglect within the field of International Relations of transnational flows involving people, a tendency to reduce those flows to the politics of immigration in receiving countries, and a disciplinary emphasis on high politics, state sovereignty and the territorial basis of states.¹⁰ In fact, as Bauböck contends, transnational phenomena are transcending and modifying politics as usual, and international migration is redefining the notions of polity and membership, thus challenging core tenets of the fields of International Relations and foreign policy analysis.¹¹

This article takes that challenge seriously. It builds upon a few cross-disciplinary studies that emphasize the links between global and local processes and the politics surrounding diaspora formation, identity and political mobilization, thus inviting us to move beyond the traditional notion of nations and states as co-terminous entities.¹² It argues that situating emigration policies within foreign policy not only captures the interplay of domestic, regional and global

⁸ The existing works in English either preceded the institutionalization of the new policy (e.g. Levitt and de la Dehesa, 'Transnational migration and the redefinition of the state') or focused overwhelmingly on the emigrant community in the US from sociological and anthropological perspectives (e.g. Ana Cristina Braga Martes, *New immigrants, new land: a study of Brazilians in Massachusetts* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2011); Alan Marcus, '(Re)creating places and spaces in two countries: Brazilian transnational migration processes', *Journal of Cultural Geography* 26: 2, 2009, pp. 173–98; Maxine Margolis, *Goodbye, Brazil: émigrés from the land of soccer and samba* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2013). Scholarly interest has been growing among the local academic community in the past two decades, but is today centred more on immigration than emigration. Thus, diaspora issues are not currently as salient in Brazil as in other Latin American countries, and scholarly works do not explore these issues in terms of foreign policy, state-led transnational policies or governance mechanisms.

⁹ Among others, Maria Regina Soares de Lima and Mônica Hirst, 'Brazil as an intermediate state and regional power: action, choice and responsibilities', *International Affairs* 82: 1, 2006, pp. 21–40; Jean-Pierre Lehmann, 'Developing economies and the demographic and democratic imperatives of globalization', *International Affairs* 77: 1, Jan. 2001, pp. 69–82.

¹⁰ John Agnew, 'The territorial trap: the geographical assumptions of International Relations theory', *Review of International Political Economy* 1: 1, Spring 1994, pp. 53–80; Rey Koslowski, ed., *International migration and the globalization of domestic politics* (London and New York: Routledge, 2005).

¹¹ Rainer Bauböck, 'Towards a political theory of migrant transnationalism', *International Migration Review* 37: 2, Fall 2003, pp. 700–23.

¹² These studies include Terrence Lyons and Peter Mandaville, 'Think locally, act globally: toward a transnational comparative politics', *International Political Sociology* 4: 2, 2010, pp. 124–41; Fiona Adamson and Maria Demetriou, 'Remapping the boundaries of "state" and "national identity": incorporating diasporas into IR theorizing', *European Journal of International Relations* 13: 4, 2007, pp. 489–526; Yossi Shain and Aharon Barth, 'Diasporas and International Relations theory', *International Organization* 57: 3, 2003, pp. 449–79.

factors in the management of populations and human mobility across borders, but also permits an in-depth investigation of intrastate and state–society factors that shape foreign policy-making, as well as aspects of Itamaraty’s institutional culture that seem to be undergoing change. These are facets of Brazil’s foreign policy to which academic attention has been given only recently and partially, addressing some dimensions of the foreign policy agenda but not migration.¹³ The evidence presented in the following sections expands our knowledge of ‘non-traditional’ social actors and their potential impact on the formulation of foreign policy. It also illustrates why and how institutional reforms implemented under the administration of Luiz Inácio (Lula) da Silva have encouraged an updating of bureaucracies involved in foreign affairs, thus contributing to the ongoing debate on the extent to which the historical features and practices of Itamaraty (such as elitism, insulation from external influences, corporatism and internal cohesion) are being transformed.

Furthermore, this study examines domestic and transnational actors (such as emigrant groups and their organizations) that have for the most part been neglected by work to date, which has tended to focus on business groups, labour unions and political parties. While this article emphasizes the centrality of state efforts to reach out to migrants, it incorporates the domestic-level variables that explain why and how the state makes such efforts, and conceptualizes the outcome in terms of a state–society relationship even if part of that society resides outside the state’s borders. In other words, it pays due attention to various domestic sources of foreign policy (including but not restricted to interest-group dynamics) and examines policy implementation in a specific locality (in this case, London) to take account of the responses of those on whom the policy is targeted. In this respect, it considers a wider range of domestic variables than is usually considered within pluralist approaches to foreign policy-making and proposes an analytical refinement that is sensitive to the specific characteristics of foreign policy-making in relatively less developed and less stable democracies of the South. This in itself constitutes a contribution to enhancing existing approaches,¹⁴ and moves the debate further by addressing both the making and the implementation of policy. It is, indeed, at the stage of implementation that we can observe whether Brazil’s global aspirations and goals meet with effective capacity to attain expected results. This approach allows for empirically grounded lessons to be drawn, as will become clear over the course of the following sections.

¹³ See e.g. Leticia Pinheiro and Carlos R. S. Milani, *Política externa Brasileira: as práticas da política e a política das práticas* (Rio de Janeiro: Fundação Getúlio Vargas, 2012); Carlos Aurélio Pimenta de Faria, Dawisson Belém Lopes and Guilherme Casarões, ‘Itamaraty on the move: institutional and political change in Brazilian foreign service under Lula da Silva’s presidency (2003–2010)’, *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 32: 4, 2013, pp. 468–82; Dawisson Belém Lopes, *Política externa e democracia no Brasil: ensaio de interpretação histórica* (São Paulo: Editora Unesp, 2013).

¹⁴ See e.g. Octavio Amorim Neto and Andrés Malamud, ‘What determines foreign policy in Latin America? Systemic versus domestic factors in Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico, 1946–2008’, *Latin American Politics and Society* 57: 4, Winter 2015, pp. 1–27.

State efforts to reach out to citizens abroad

In contrast to other Latin American countries, the Brazilian state has followed a low-visibility, technical approach to diaspora engagement, led by consular offices. This included, under the administration of F. H. Cardoso (1995–2003), placing the improvement of protection and assistance to emigrants within foreign policy priorities, as reflected in the official discourse of the President and senior officials. It was during this period that for the first time the government acknowledged that population outflows represented a stable trend that was likely to continue and to have significant economic and social implications. Policy innovation was premised on the need to shift from reception of demands to outreach, to spread information about consular services and migrant rights, and to engage in an increasingly professional, modern and democratic form of assistance.¹⁵

In 1995 the General Directorate of Consular and Judicial Affairs and Assistance to Brazilians Abroad was created under the aegis of the General Secretariat of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, thus giving the topic political salience. Within the Division of Consular Assistance (which was part of this new unit), a Nucleus of Assistance to Brazilians was created the same year to facilitate and expedite urgent consultations. Simultaneously, visits to the main communities abroad to establish direct links were carried out, as well as specific actions to assist prisoners and others in need of legal assistance. The consular network was expanded and Councils of Citizens (of which there were 29 by 1997) were formed by citizens abroad to act as a channel of communication between the government and emigrants and to contribute to specific actions in the areas of health, counselling, event organization, etc. The network of honorary consulates was also expanded to give further support in the various tasks of assistance, and teams of officials were sent to those destinations with the largest number of expatriates to work as itinerant consulates.

Further institutional developments took place in the following decade. In 2004, the General Under-Secretariat of Cooperation and Brazilian Communities Abroad was created to replace the existing unit, and in December 2006 the General Under-Secretariat of Brazilian Communities Abroad (SGEB in its Portuguese acronym) was established. This new office includes two departments, one for ‘foreigners’ (overseeing all matters related to immigration, including visas for foreigners, etc.) and the other for ‘Brazilian communities abroad’. The number of consular offices abroad was increased, and the network of honorary consulates which supports itinerant missions and other assistance activities was expanded.¹⁶ Other specific developments followed to address particular problems in some destinations, such as agreements with receiving countries with large numbers of migrants in irregular status, special legal assistance on criminal and family matters, and support

¹⁵ Sebastião do Rego Barros, ‘O Itamaraty e os brasileiros no exterior’, *Revista Política Externa* 5: 3, Dec.–Feb. 1996–7, pp. 106–14 at p. 108.

¹⁶ See *inter alia* George Torquato Firmeza, *Brasileiros no exterior* (Brasília: Fundação Alexandre de Gusmão, Ministério das Relações Exteriores, 2007), pp. 210–15.

for returnees from Japan with which there have been intense two-way migration flows since the early twentieth century.¹⁷

The institutional developments mentioned above went well beyond the mere expansion of consular services, including their modernization as well. For example, in 2004 a project to expedite and simplify routine procedures was launched, including significant technological upgrading. The government also made use of technological means to increase communication with expatriates. In 2006 a new website was created (the so-called Consular Portal) to diffuse news, information and services, and to gather questions and comments. The same year, a pilot project aiming at providing migrants with a *matricula consular* (a form of identification that would facilitate bank transactions and other activities) was launched.¹⁸ This was complemented by general support to emigrant communities in the realms of culture, health, education, social security, working conditions and defence of human rights. These outreach efforts fall within what the Ministry of Foreign Affairs calls ‘second-generation consular services’, that is, those that target the entire emigrant community, have a distinctive political and/or diplomatic character and often involve negotiations with other nation-states, in contrast to the traditional consular activities that typically assist individuals or institutions with documentation or specific support.

Second-generation consular services developed mainly between 2007 and 2012 and contributed to the further institutionalization of the new emigration policy. Indeed, in 2007 a major plan (Plan Director) to reform the consular service was elaborated. The Integrated Consular System was established the following year, including the web Consular Portal noted above and the adoption of new technologies for consular procedures such as issuing passports, visas, birth/marriage certificates, notary acts and other such official documentation. This replacement of traditional paper-based practices with electronic documentation represented a major cultural and organizational change as well as a general technological upgrade. In November 2009 a Consular Ombudsman Office was created to process suggestions, enquiries and claims, functioning in effect as a mechanism of quality control for the consular services and clearly illustrating the opening of channels for civil society input and, eventually, public accountability of the state administration. It suggests a need to explore further the potential contribution to attenuating or ending Itamaraty’s traditional insulation from outside influence.

In 2010 two other measures reinforced governmental efforts to improve linkages with emigrants: the inauguration of an international TV channel at the Empresa Brasileira de Comunicação, from where three special programmes addressing some of the diaspora’s concerns have been broadcast; and a Portal of Brazilian Communities Abroad to improve communication with emigrants.

By Decree 7214 of 15 June 2010, the then President da Silva gave the new policy more impetus, establishing the basic outlines of an approach to communities of

¹⁷ Firmeza, *Brasileiros no exterior*, p. 225.

¹⁸ SGEB, *Diplomacia Consular 2007–2012* (Brasília: Fundação Alexandre de Gusmão, Ministério das Relações Exteriores, 2012), pp. 115–24.

Brazilians abroad, granting the Ministry of Foreign Affairs the role of coordinator of such policy, creating the Council of Representatives of Brazilians Abroad, and further institutionalizing the consultation meetings as the conferences called *Brasileiros no Mundo* (Brazilians in the world).¹⁹ The label actually conveys a global approach to a dispersed population. In the words of the former Director of the Consular Department of Brazilians Abroad (in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs), this reflects a characteristic of the emigrant community: 'As Brazil has become a global player and a global trader, a Brazilian appears as a "global migrant" if we consider that there is a significant number of Brazilians in all regions of the world today.'²⁰

Within the official view, these developments were all consistent with broader positive changes at this time that were placing the country in a more appropriate position at the international level and in respect of its global ambitions; better socio-economic conditions created incentives to travel and generate migration flows well beyond those driven by economic necessity. Therefore, in the words of former Foreign Minister Antonio de Aguiar Patriota:

It is not just questions of economic survival but new opportunities that take co-nationals to live in other countries where they already have a stable and meaningful presence, thus requiring permanent attention from the government to protect and support citizens, preserve citizenship, and maintain links with Brazil.²¹

Alongside other forms of participation explained below, these institutional developments are tied to a democratic process that promises to pay due attention to citizens' demands and represents a 'new form of governmental interlocution with Brazilian civil society abroad'.²² It is plausible to argue, then, that decisions within Itamaraty are less divorced from wider concerns than past practice would lead one to expect. Nevertheless, the long-term implications in terms of democratization and openness of the foreign affairs policy-making process remain uncertain.

In respect of enfranchisement of expatriates, Brazil follows general trends in the region: Brazilians abroad have the right to vote for the president and vice-president, provided that they have previously registered with the consulate closest to their place of residency. However, this provision has neither emerged as part of recent policy innovation nor become a contested issue. It has been included in electoral regulations since 1965 (Chapter VII of Law 4737 of 15 July 1965).²³ Under dictatorship, clearly it was not implemented; thus, the exercise of the right became effective for the first time after the return to democracy in 1989.

Expanding political rights beyond national elections is not a policy priority. Some bills have been laid before Congress seeking to broaden the scope of voting

¹⁹ See https://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/_ato2007-2010/2010/decreto/d7214.htm.

²⁰ Eduardo Gradilone, 'Uma política governamental para as comunidades Brasileiras no exterior', in *I Conferência sobre as Comunidades Brasileiras no Exterior. Brasileiros no Mundo*, Rio de Janeiro, 17–18 July 2008 (Brasília: Fundação Alexandre de Gusmão, Ministério das Relações Exteriores, 2009), pp. 47–80 at p. 49.

²¹ SGEB, *Diplomacia Consular 2007–2012*, p. 3.

²² SGEB, *Diplomacia Consular 2007–2012*, p. 6.

²³ See http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/leis/L4737.htm.

rights beyond the presidency and to amend the national constitution regarding representation.²⁴ At present, Brazilians abroad do not enjoy any formal representation in parliament. Senator Cristovam Buarque submitted a proposal in 2005 to create a special, extraterritorial jurisdiction (PEC 05/05). The Joint Parliamentary Commission for the Investigation of Emigration supported the project, but recommended that any decision be preceded by a broad debate within both Congress and society at large. From the perspective of Itamaraty officials, this has not been an urgent or indeed a desirable goal. Consistent with their cautious and gradual approach to incorporating migrants' input into policy-making since the mid-1990s, they do not plan any major innovation in this respect. Although they argue that the guiding principle today is the empowerment of migrants, they do not see political representation as a means to this end, arguing that granting parliamentary seats would run 'counter to our bottom-up strategy' and that it would be better for migrant leaders 'to stay focused on their projects at the grassroots level, learning; otherwise, an appointment (and what comes with it, such as a good salary, trips, and power) may change them'.²⁵ These comments may suggest that top-down approaches, relatively impermeable to societal input, are still the norm among senior officials, though they do not constitute a sufficient basis for generalization. In sum, in practice the government's efforts are focused more on consultation, information diffusion and services than on migrant political engagement or empowerment. This has implications for the pace and nature of change in bureaucratic cultures and for the state's capacity to achieve its policy goals, as we shall see in the next section.

Finally, there are several characteristics of the policy-making process that constrain the effectiveness of policy implementation. First, the initiatives and institutional changes noted above were a pragmatic response by Itamaraty to issues defined as falling within its 'natural' competencies, but they have also involved other public bodies such as the Ministries of Justice and of Labour and Employment.²⁶ The resulting tripartite structure is relatively unusual in Latin America and, according to off-the-record testimonies, is plagued by tensions which reflect intrastate politics (e.g. different understandings of the migration issue, bureaucratic competition for the lead role, lack of coordination capacity,

²⁴ Carlos Eduardo de Ribas Guedes, 'A eleição de representantes do Brasil no exterior para o Congresso Nacional', in *I Conferência sobre as Comunidades Brasileiras no Exterior*, pp. 105–46.

²⁵ Interview with Maria Luiza Ribeiro Lopes da Silva, Brasileiros no Exterior Office, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Brasília, 27 May 2014.

²⁶ The Ministry of Justice, which typically oversees questions of residency, transit and mobility, has lately focused on refugees and encouraged the adoption of a comprehensive, integrated approach to all migration issues based on human rights considerations, taking the lead in organizing the First Conference on Migration (known as COMIGRAR) in 2014. The event aimed at raising the visibility of migration issues and was presented as a point of departure in policy-making as it would 'naturalize the issue in the public policy agenda at all levels of government, as well as migrants' presence, and . . . disseminate in society the relevance of migration for the present and future of the country'. See Secretaria Nacional de Justiça, *Texto Base, COMIGRAR, 1ª Conferência Nacional sobre Migrações e Refúgio*, May 2014, São Paulo (Brasília: Ministério da Justiça, 2014), p. 4. For its part, the Ministry of Labour and Employment hosts the National Council of Immigration, which gathers representatives from all parties involved (the state, private companies as employers, and workers) to guide, coordinate and oversee immigration issues. In practice, it resolves normative lacunas and specific situations and, as it provides a multilateral arena for dialogue, it exercises significant influence on policy-making.

etc.). Second, whether or not the executive has taken a proactive role has made a difference at different stages of policy-making.²⁷ Third, the growing scope of migration problems (which go well beyond emigration to include immigration, refugees, human trafficking, etc.) is now requiring a comprehensive approach and increasing coordination among bureaucratic units. Fourth, Congress is becoming heavily involved in these matters—more heavily than in other Latin American countries—acting sometimes as a stimulus and at other times as a brake on policy innovation.²⁸ In sum, the management of Brazilian populations abroad today falls within several public policy realms; foreign policy-making addresses it, but no longer exclusively. Hence, increasing openness is evident regarding both intra-governmental relations and state–society relations. Itamaraty is increasingly being challenged to collaborate with other state agencies and civil society. This may open up space for new voices, new diagnoses, new proposals, and possibly some more controversies regarding who defines what in this dimension of foreign policy-making. The next section shows that such broadening in the number of actors and agendas presents both opportunities and risks, and that the responses, in practice, may vary considerably.

The promise and the limits of a global strategy

Moving beyond the adoption of decisions and assessing the actual implementation of diaspora engagement policies on the ground presents a challenge. There is no comprehensive and reliable information on the basis of which to assess the impact of state outreach efforts across the main destinations. Some consular offices keep records of feedback and communications with emigrants, but no systematic evaluation has been carried out. For instance, further to the intention to strengthen linkages noted above, the use of itinerant consulates and new technologies has enabled the implementation of a number of linkage initiatives. The SGEB has collaborated with local governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the media in host societies to carry out information campaigns about services that might help those returning to Brazil in their resettlement. The SGEB has also

²⁷ Former President Cardoso requested a report on emigration when he was Minister of Foreign Affairs, later encouraged changes in consular services, and initiated a rhetorical shift to entice emigrants to return to or become engaged with the home country. See Paul Green, 'Family and nation: Brazilian national ideology as contested transnational practice in Japan', *Global Networks* 8: 4, 2008, pp. 418–35. Former President da Silva was the voice of the new approach and was instrumental in moving emigration up the foreign policy agenda, strengthening ties with migrant communities and deepening institutional change. See Beatriz Padilla, 'Engagement policies and practices: expanding the citizenship of the Brazilian diaspora', *International Migration* 49: 3, 2011, pp. 10–29. In contrast, former President Rouseff did not become personally involved with these issues and hardly referred to them; during her period in office, these questions were left for the most part in the hands of specialized units within Itamaraty.

²⁸ The work of the Joint Parliamentary Commission for the Investigation of Emigration in 2005–06 made significant progress in gathering information about emigration trends, raising awareness of their implications and designing a policy response. It also contributed to building momentum for the creation of a special secretariat. Individual legislators and parliamentary commissions have occasionally promoted emigrants' rights, visited communities abroad and collaborated with migrant associations. Notwithstanding this activity, migration has had a low profile in political competition and debate; the lack of parliamentary consensus and delays in updating migration legislation in general, and in granting emigrants political representation in Congress in particular, have been major obstacles to policy innovation.

encouraged regular consultation online within the existing network of consulates to improve implementation of all changes in the main sites of destination. Consulates make use of social media, running a special page on Facebook. The use of social media for these purposes has been considered an indicator of a shift from isolation towards increasing openness in Itamaraty's institutional culture.²⁹ The compilation of guidelines for citizens abroad (known as the *Manual de Servicio Consular y Juridico*), published on 2 August 2010, is also available online, together with practical legal advice and a leaflet about consular and other services.³⁰ Initiatives vary depending on the locality of origin; for instance, in respect of remittances and investments, state action is still incipient, mainly led by local authorities from the states or municipalities where massive outflows originated (such as Governador Valadares, in the state of Minas Gerais) to capture and/or channel those resources.³¹

Overall, in comparison to other cases of state activism regarding emigrants, Brazil illustrates a very cautious and gradual attempt to help the diaspora organize and mobilize, and to permit some gradual access of emigrants to migration policy-making. Hitherto, the state has made 'surgical' interventions, identifying and tackling particular problems as they arise. It has a selective approach to concrete problems in each destination country, adapting programmes to what each group of emigrants seems to demand or is able to mobilize for. From an analytical point of view, this casts doubt on the extent to which Itamaraty is moving away from insulation and encapsulation. The formation of the controversial Councils of Citizenship (originally called Councils of Citizens) illustrates this point and exposes not only the scope and possibilities but also the limits and tensions of the current state–diaspora relationship.

The councils were created as informal forums for discussion with an emphasis on dialogue. They failed to become an effective form of representation of the emigrant community or to become autonomous from the consulates. In 2011 they were renamed Councils of Citizenship, and their members are now elected. They still work on specific issues depending on their location (in 2012 there were 60 of them in various destination countries across the world). They provide the arena for state–diaspora dialogue, although it is the state (via Itamaraty) that convokes, organizes and supports the meetings, and the state that may (or may not) ultimately transform proposals into policies. State initiatives seem to have been particularly effective when they converge with peaks of social activism, as has happened in some destinations where emigrants have organized forums that have generated important documents summarizing their concerns and expectations. Such was the case of the *cartas* (letters) issued after the meetings in Lisbon in 2001, Boston in 2005, Brussels in 2007 and Barcelona in 2009.³² In particular, the Casa de Brasil de Lisboa (a migrant association in Lisbon created in 1992) played a crucial role in articulating migrant

²⁹ Andrés Rivarola Puntignano, 'Going global: an organizational study of Brazilian foreign policy', *Revista Brasileira de Política Internacional* 51:1, 2008, pp. 28–52.

³⁰ SGEB, *Diplomacia Consular 2007–2012*.

³¹ Padilla, 'Engagement policies and practices', p. 21.

³² See details in Rosita Milesi and Orlando Fantazini, 'Cidadãs e cidadãos Brasileiros no exterior—o documento de Lisboa, a carta de Boston e documentos de Bruxelas', in *I Conferência sobre as Comunidades Brasileiras no Exterior*, pp. 317–32.

demands with policy-makers' initiatives; it built on its leaders' contacts within the PT (Workers' Party) to gain visibility in and access to policy circles in both Portugal and Brazil, thus helping to broaden emigrants' transnational activism.³³ However, in general, social organization in most destinations is fragmented and volatile inasmuch as migrant participation in associations is low and intermittent, mostly relying on the activism of a few leaders. This, in combination with frequent replacement of officials at consulates and embassies, inhibits the formation of stable and solid relationships with state institutions.

London offers an interesting window on the vicissitudes of policy implementation and allows us to situate a global strategy in a local context. Brazilians are the largest Latin American immigrant community in the UK and part of the increasingly salient overseas presence in London since the economic crisis in southern Europe has redirected migration flows towards the north.³⁴ They have a distinct profile: unlike other immigrant communities, their integration into British society is not shaped by the legacies of colonial ties; their gender, socio-economic and educational background is diverse, thus placing them in contact with a wide range of social groups and job and other opportunities; their employment rate is relatively high (higher than for other foreign-born residents in London), even if migration often involves downward occupational mobility. Their contributions to the UK economy and society, as well as their unmet needs, are rapidly becoming evident.³⁵ Therefore, the relations of the emigrant community with both the home and host states are of political and policy relevance today.

In the sending state, there has been an explicit acknowledgement at Itamaraty of the links between the diplomatic and consular agendas, as well as of the potential tensions or damage that migration questions might cause in bilateral relations. Yet, in practice, implementation of policy is in the hands of the consulate, whereas the embassy may or may not be involved with the affairs of the community (mostly depending on individual initiatives from officers or ambassadors). This suggests that there are individual as well as institutional variables at play, shaping the degree and intensity of public official commitment to innovation in this realm.

³³ Bela Feldman-Bianco, 'Camino de ciudadanía: emigración, movilizaciones sociales y políticas del Estado brasileiro', in Bela Feldman-Bianco, Liliana Rivera Sánchez, Carolina Stefoni and Marta Inés Villa Martínez, eds, *La construcción social del sujeto migrante en América Latina: prácticas, representaciones y categorías* (Quito: FLACSO, CLACSO and Universidad Alberto Hurtado, 2011), pp. 237–82.

³⁴ Although obtaining accurate and reliable data is still a problem, some generous estimates suggest that there were between 150,000 and 300,000 Brazilians in the UK at the beginning of the present decade. See Yara Evans, Tânia Tonhati, Gustavo Tentoni Dias, Maria das Graças Brightwell, Olivia Sheringham, Ana Souza, and Cleverson Souza, *For a better life: Brazilians in London, 2010* (London: GEB, Grupo de Estudos sobre Brasileiros no Reino Unido, Brazilian Migration to the UK Research Group, 2011). The UK Office for National Statistics reports 50,570 Brazilian-born inhabitants in England and Wales in 2011, a considerable increase from 14,555 in 2001. See Brian Linneker and Cathy McIlwaine, *Estimating the Latin American population of London from official sources* (Queen Mary, University of London, 2011), <http://www.geog.qmul.ac.uk/docs/research/latinamerican/48640.pdf>. The latter figures are closer to other reports: the Latin American community in London amounted to 113,500 in 2008 (three times as many as in 2001); around 50,000 had Brazil as country of birth. See *No longer invisible: the Latin American community in London* (Queen Mary, University of London, n.d.), <http://www.geog.qmul.ac.uk/docs/research/latinamerican/48637.pdf>, pp. 28, 17. Discrepancies are partly explained by the fact that a sizeable number of immigrants are in irregular status and others entered the country with European passports and therefore are recorded in the statistics under other nationalities.

³⁵ See *No longer invisible*.

The interventions of embassy and consulate differ in terms of the segment of the emigrant community they tend to address: the embassy is often in contact with university students, and has been active in fostering agreements between Brazilian and British universities and other aspects of cooperation in higher education, whereas the consulate engages with a diverse range of groups (see below). By all accounts, coordination between the two in London used to work well in the past but is not so strong at present. While the current ambassador showed genuine interest in this dimension of the bilateral relationship, the consul declined to be interviewed for this study.³⁶ This is a good illustration of the point that cohesion and centralization within Itamaraty cannot be taken for granted. Reactions and adaptation to changes and new agendas may well vary within diplomatic cadres and across ranks and groups depending on length of service. In practice, policy implementation is decentralized.

In addition, London stands out as the only major destination that currently does not have a council representing citizens abroad. It was dissolved around three years ago. Off-the-record testimonies indicate that internal disagreements prevented its functioning; apparently, members did not share common views and values, and personal interests undermined the chances of agreement. Some informants also claim that there was no leadership to solve collective action problems. The consulate is waiting for a request from the community to reconvene the council. It is assumed that it will take some time for the emigrant community to acquire the requisite organizational capacity; for its part, the community also seems to have adopted a 'wait and see' stance.³⁷ Both parties to the relationship argue that the replacement of officials every five years necessitates a new start each time, and this is a hindrance to a sustainable relationship. Rather than attempting to judge whose narrative is more accurate, it is worth noting that higher societal input in policy-making is largely shaped by individual and group variables that may or may not foster partnership, depending on how particular actors read their choices and decide on their engagements. A few examples illustrate this point.

For the consulate, the emphasis is today on communication with the community (including soliciting feedback) to capture demands, improve relations and 'go deeper' (i.e., have a more intense relationship with Brazilians in London). The consulate is also focused on improving the quality of services and assistance, for instance by reducing waiting time, incorporating technology, improving access (e.g. a new passport can now be obtained by post), and gathering feedback. Relations with the community tend to become more formalized with the passage of time; in contrast to past administrations, since 2014 there has been the intention to create a special area of work devoted to these matters within the consulate. The assessment of officials there is that the emigrant community is highly fragmented, decentralized and non-politicized, and therefore not ready for the establishment of a strong partnership.³⁸

³⁶ Interview with Eduardo do Santos, Brazilian Ambassador to the UK, London, 5 May 2016; personal communication with Maria De Lujan Caputo Winkler, Consul General of Brazil in London, 8 June 2016.

³⁷ Personal communication with Yara Evans, London, 13 Nov. 2015.

³⁸ Interview with Marcio Guimaraes, Secretary Vice-Consul, Head of the Press and Communication Office,

Examples of engagement with the emigrant community through specific projects are mainly in the area of education, in which disagreements seem to be less frequent. The consulate has worked with local schools in the provision of Portuguese-language courses for second-generation immigrants; it has also worked on offering training for the ENCCEJA (Exame Nacional para Certificação de Competências de Jovens e Adultos) examination in London in 2015.³⁹ Other services, such as consular assistance, currently face the challenge of increasing demand from and dispersion of the Brazilian community. Thus, itinerant consulates have been used to address the needs of Brazilians outside London (especially in Manchester, Belfast and Scotland). In addition, given the current salience of the immigration issue in the United Kingdom, regular contacts and collaboration between the UK Home Office and the consulate are part of the bureaucratic routines used to solve individual migrant problems. In contrast to other cases, there is no concrete evidence of collaboration between the consulate and the local social organizations that are usually involved in helping migrants, such as religious institutions and NGOs, although the consulate is in touch with migrant associations and related media outlets. Brazil also departs from general trends in that its consulate has not worked on programmes to provide organizational support (such as leadership training or workshops to acquire or expand organizational capacity). Nor has it focused on going beyond social organization to enact the rights on which transnational citizenship might be sustained through the encouragement of migrant engagement with home politics. For instance, increasing voting turnout on election days is not considered a priority because, in the view of consulate officials, turnout is low owing to the complex logistics and costs involved; opening new polling stations would be costly and cannot be justified given the low numbers.⁴⁰ This is compounded by the fact that political parties do not reach out much, with the exception of the PT which has an office in London. Other forms of franchise reform or citizenship expansion have raised only limited support to date. Expanding voting beyond presidential elections is a goal for the main association in London, because it would guarantee some influence through legislators; campaigning for special representation in Congress is not.

The main migrant association in London, Casa do Brasil, has been the chief interlocutor for public authorities. Since 2009, supported mainly through membership fees, it has provided general assistance and services to members. Its president argues that politics is not the main motivation for associational life in this case; sports and music are the main motivation for Brazilians to get together, while politics (e.g. voting) is not a priority for economic migrants who struggle to make ends meet. He has participated in the general meetings (the *Brasileiros no Mundo* conferences mentioned above) and credits these gatherings with providing an opportunity to discuss emigrants' needs, learn about experiences in various destinations, and create a record of such dialogue. He resents, though, the lack of anything more than a tepid attempt to consult on the part of the Brazilian govern-

London, 26 Feb. 2016.

³⁹ This is an exam offered annually, to validate the skills of students who did not have the opportunity to finish secondary school; successful students are awarded a certificate that helps them in the job market.

⁴⁰ Interview with Guimaraes.

ment. Migrants, in fact, do not have any decision-making power.⁴¹ For this reason, Brazilians abroad envision extending voting rights to the election of legislators in order to make them accountable and actually have a voice. At present, there is little collaboration between the Casa and Brazilian officials in London. Again, this may be an indicator that, in some destinations, there are significant limits to the input of migrant groups into the policy-making process.

Conclusions

The answers to the main research questions posed at the beginning of this article lie in the interplay of domestic and foreign policies. Brazil has followed regional and global trends in the matter of governing its overseas population, only recently joining the countries that have engaged with diaspora groups. In the Latin American context, it appears to have been endorsing regional trends but not initiating them. In some respects (for example, the formulation and institutionalization of a new policy on emigration), it has been one of the most consistently active; in other dimensions (for example, updating migration-related legislation, empowering migrants, addressing migration issues comprehensively), it has advanced very slowly and with little innovation. Both the drivers of and the sources of obstacles to this activity are to be found in the personal involvement (or lack of it) of key officials, and in intrastate politics reaching well beyond the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. On the latter point, this study provides empirical evidence of a dual process. On the one hand, it confirms increasing consultation between Itamaraty and other bureaucratic entities involved in the management of migration, as well as migrant-related associations and NGOs. On the other hand, we observe the persistence of a top-down and mainly assistance-orientated approach to relations with emigrants, mostly framed within a consular tradition of protecting and assisting citizens, and entailing little engagement with substantive expansion of citizenship beyond the national borders, particularly in its political dimension.

In terms of effective implementation, Brazil exposes the limits of a global emigration strategy grounded in foreign policy. The dispersal of migrant populations across long distances and the particularities of each consular office interact to permit only partial achievement of policy goals, usually determined by the type of relationship the consulate is able to develop with the local emigrant community in each place. This makes generalizations difficult and of little value. Examination of how the process works in London highlights the selectivity of efforts and audiences (for example, in the concentration of projects in the area of education, addressing primarily the needs of certain segments of the emigrant community), a currently low level of coordination between the consulate and the embassy, and a dearth of collaboration with NGOs, churches or other institutions usually involved in assisting migrants. Cooperation with the host country is shaped by the agenda of the UK government, currently focused on controlling immigration and promoting the return of migrants to the home country. The political participation and empower-

⁴¹ Interview with Carlos Mellinger, President, Casa do Brasil em Londres, London, 26 Feb. 2016.

ment of migrants are on the agenda but not as a top priority. The fact that migrant associational life is fragmented and volatile also shapes the outcomes, hindering further engagement between Brazilian state offices and migrants and inhibiting the construction of a solid state–society partnership. No doubt a comparison across destinations would shed light on the individual and social variables that shape outcomes and the possibilities for improving the relationship.

From the analytical perspective, this study joins an emerging literature in the fields of international relations and foreign policy that aims to give further attention to the role of diasporas and offers novel insights to the discussion of how, and how much, nation-states can govern dispersed populations and human mobility across borders. It highlights the motivations and vicissitudes of those efforts in one of the less explored cases. This work also suggests a need to broaden the study of foreign policy-making in the area of population and migration management at both ends of the process: that is, to encompass both the domestic sources of policy formation which, in combination with intrastate dynamics, shape the selection and nature of state actions, and also the implementation dynamics in specific localities where the interplay of global strategies and local practices can be observed.

The findings of this study show how foreign policy innovation must be increasingly negotiated both inside state structures that include but are not limited to foreign affairs bureaucracies, and with social actors working within and beyond the home territories of states. From a policy-oriented point of view, then, the main lessons refer to the need for better coordination among state offices involved in migration policy and for wider consensus on the goals and means to be pursued in all dimensions of migration policy, not just emigration. On this point, the present article joins other contributions to this special section of the journal in calling attention to dissent within Brazil's foreign policy elites and among its social actors at both domestic and transnational levels. The exploration of implementation at local level, in particular, allows us to ground transnational actors and processes in particular contexts, and to incorporate the perspective of those on whom policy is targeted. Here the evidence indicates a possible missed opportunity, at least in some destination sites such as London. Thus, policy-making would benefit from exploring further the many instances of collaboration that the movement of people entails, not only with the host state via traditional diplomatic relations but also with private actors involved in migrant integration processes. Moreover, establishing solid partnerships between public and private actors would be of benefit for the wider societies at both ends of the migration process. Even if the evidence does not provide sufficient basis for generalizations to be drawn, it provides some insights into the real match (or gap) between the global expectations and capacities of a country that still aspires to overcome its domestic and international 'graduation dilemmas'.⁴²

⁴² For more on Brazil's 'graduation dilemma', see Carlos R. S. Milani, Leticia Pinheiro and Maria Regina Soares de Lima, 'Brazil's foreign policy and the "graduation dilemma"', *International Affairs* 93: 3, May 2017, pp. 585–605 above, and other articles on Brazil's foreign policy in this issue of *International Affairs*.

