

## THE ROLE OF DIASPORAS IN THE SYSTEM OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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**Abstract:** *The phenomenon of diaspora is one of the most complex and multifaceted issues in modern political science, sociology, and international relations. Historically, diasporas have played a significant role in shaping political, economic, and cultural relations between states. In the 21st century, globalization processes and technological development have expanded the opportunities for diasporas to influence international relations through diplomacy, economic initiatives, and cultural exchange.*

*From a theoretical perspective, the study of diasporas is closely connected with concepts such as transnationalism, identity politics, and soft power. Transnationalism emphasizes the interconnectedness of societies and individuals across state borders, while identity politics explains how diasporas maintain a dual identity—loyalty to both their homeland and host country. Joseph Nye's theory of soft power also provides a framework for understanding how diasporas serve as tools of influence through culture, communication, and persuasion rather than coercion.*

**Keywords:** *diaspora, political influence mechanisms, lobbying, information diplomacy, economic diplomacy, transnational networks, soft power, globalization, international relations, foreign policy, migration, homeland, national interests, diaspora policy, cross-cultural communication.*

Methodologically, the analysis of diasporas in international relations requires an interdisciplinary approach combining political science, sociology, cultural studies, and economics. This approach allows for a comprehensive understanding of diasporas as actors that influence political decisions, promote economic cooperation, and enhance intercultural dialogue.

In the 21st century, as a result of globalization, international migration, and the rapid development of communication technologies, diasporas have become one of the important actors in global politics. Their political influence mechanisms manifest as integral components of modern diplomacy, international cooperation, and economic integration systems. The political activity of diasporas is closely connected with their historical, cultural, and emotional ties to the homeland, their social status in the host country, and their position within transnational networks.

One of the most significant forms of diaspora political influence is lobbying. Through this mechanism, diaspora organizations promote the interests of their homeland by influencing parliaments, political parties, international organizations, and government agencies. For instance, the Armenian and Israeli diasporas in the United States actively

defend the interests of their historical homelands by lobbying members of Congress and political circles.

Lobbying activities are usually carried out through:

- Direct negotiations with policymakers regarding legislative initiatives;
- Financing political campaigns and influencing public opinion through media;
- Supporting resolutions in international organizations in favor of their homeland.

As a result, diasporas strengthen the soft power of their home country and participate, directly or indirectly, in the process of international decision-making.

Information diplomacy is one of the key tools diasporas use to improve their homeland's image and promote a positive perception in the international community. This mechanism operates through culture, education, art, science, and the media.

Diasporas contribute to the promotion of their country's historical heritage and cultural values abroad by organizing cultural centers, language courses, national celebrations, film festivals, and academic conferences. Through such activities, they enhance global recognition of their national culture and consolidate their homeland's international reputation.

For example, Turkish, Indian, and Chinese diasporas have successfully implemented educational and cultural programs abroad to foster favorable attitudes toward their home countries. Information diplomacy thus forms an integral part of modern "soft power" politics, strengthening international cooperation and mutual understanding.

Some states have granted their citizens living abroad the right to participate in national elections, thereby engaging diasporas in domestic political processes. This not only increases their economic involvement but also enhances their political participation.

Countries such as Turkey, India, and the Philippines have provided their overseas citizens with voting rights, which strengthens national unity and reinforces democratic values. By participating in elections, diasporas indirectly influence national policy decisions and demonstrate active civic engagement in their host countries as well, thereby building diplomatic trust between nations.

Economic factors occupy a special place among the political influence mechanisms of diasporas. Through investments, remittances, and transnational business, diasporas significantly support the economic stability of their homeland.

According to World Bank data, in 2023, remittances sent by diasporas exceeded 600 billion USD, making them one of the key contributors to the economic development of many emerging countries.

Within the framework of economic diplomacy, diasporas operate through:

- Organizing investment forums;
- Attracting foreign investors;
- Promoting startups and innovation technologies;
- Encouraging exports and tourism.

This mechanism not only yields economic benefits but also enhances the homeland's political influence and strengthens international cooperation.

Transnational network diplomacy refers to the informal yet effective system of contacts that complements traditional diplomacy. It encompasses scientific, cultural, business, and civil society relations maintained through diaspora networks.

Through such networks, diasporas connect compatriots across various countries, foster global collaboration, and strengthen international dialogue. They contribute to scientific cooperation, grant programs, and international conferences that reinforce inter-state communication and trust.

As a new form of “soft power,” transnational network diplomacy enhances states' global prestige and ensures the continuity of diplomatic engagement beyond official channels.

The above analysis demonstrates that diasporas have transformed into active subjects of contemporary international politics. Their political influence mechanisms — lobbying, information diplomacy, political participation, economic diplomacy, and transnational network diplomacy — enrich foreign policy, strengthen global cooperation, and advance national interests.

However, if diaspora activities are not properly managed, they may lead to political competition, conflicts of interest, or dual loyalty issues. Therefore, it is essential to develop a coherent diaspora policy, direct their potential toward national development, and reinforce their legal and institutional frameworks. Managing diasporas strategically has become one of the crucial requirements of the modern global era.

Thus, diasporas have evolved from being passive groups of emigrants into active participants in the international arena. Their role in shaping global processes demonstrates the growing importance of people-to-people diplomacy and cultural soft power.

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