

# Diaspora mobilisation in a conflict setting

Citation for published version (APA):

Ragab, N. J. (2020). *Diaspora mobilisation in a conflict setting: The emergence and trajectories of Syrian Diaspora Mobilisation in Germany*. [Doctoral Thesis, Maastricht University]. Boekenplan. <https://doi.org/10.26481/dis.20200424nr>

## Document status and date:

Published: 01/01/2020

## DOI:

[10.26481/dis.20200424nr](https://doi.org/10.26481/dis.20200424nr)

## Document Version:

Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

## Please check the document version of this publication:

- A submitted manuscript is the version of the article upon submission and before peer-review. There can be important differences between the submitted version and the official published version of record. People interested in the research are advised to contact the author for the final version of the publication, or visit the DOI to the publisher's website.
- The final author version and the galley proof are versions of the publication after peer review.
- The final published version features the final layout of the paper including the volume, issue and page numbers.

[Link to publication](#)

## General rights

Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the public portal for the purpose of private study or research.
- You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the public portal.

If the publication is distributed under the terms of Article 25fa of the Dutch Copyright Act, indicated by the "Taverne" license above, please follow below link for the End User Agreement:

[www.umlib.nl/taverne-license](http://www.umlib.nl/taverne-license)

## Take down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us at:

[repository@maastrichtuniversity.nl](mailto:repository@maastrichtuniversity.nl)

providing details and we will investigate your claim.

---

## Abstract

---

The study of the nexus between diasporas and conflict has received rising interest over the last decades, as diaspora groups are increasingly recognised as important agents in the international political arena. Recent research has moved away from an impact-oriented analysis towards the understanding of diaspora mobilisation as a process. Rather an independent variable, diaspora is treated as a dependent variable, allowing researchers to investigate how the process of diaspora mobilisation is influenced by the transnational political opportunity structure, i.e. factors in the destination, origin and transnational context. It is therefore necessary to understand the various configurations in place that shape the nexus between diaspora mobilisation and conflict.

Taking Syrian diaspora mobilisation in Germany as a qualitative case study, this dissertation sheds light on the underlying factors and their intersections that shape the trajectories of the complex process of diaspora mobilisation in conflict settings. The research makes use of inductively developed multi-level analysis to examine the interconnectivity and interaction of different factors at the micro and macro levels and to investigate how these shapes the trajectories of the diaspora mobilisation process (meso-level analysis). As a result, the primary research question guiding the study is: *How does the interplay of individual characteristics, group dynamics and the transnational political opportunity structure shape the trajectories of Syrian diaspora mobilisation in Germany?*

The central argument of this dissertation is that diaspora mobilisation in conflict settings should be understood as a dynamic process in which structures and diaspora agents co-construct each other. Acknowledging the agency of diaspora actors, the study explores how diaspora political entrepreneurs individually and collectively negotiate the transnational political opportunity structures present in the mobilisation process. While transnational repression historically prevented bottom-up diaspora mobilisation, the Syrian revolution gave birth to a vibrant civil society both at home and abroad that challenged the prevailing authoritarian system. As the conflict escalated, diaspora groups filled the void to support local NGOs inside Syria in the absence of formal institutions of humanitarian assistance. Even though conflict lines were reproduced in the diaspora space, diaspora political entrepreneurs engaged in acts of solidarity and promoted common spaces for empowerment to overcome divides. With increasing displacement to Germany, diaspora actors provided a safe place of community and belonging to those forcibly displaced by the conflict. Hence, diaspora actors showed considerable agency in shaping the transnational political reality, by transforming political spaces both in the contexts of origin and destination.