ISOMORPHISM, DEMAND AND IDEOLOGY IN PUBLIC POLICY.
FORUMS FOR IMMIGRANT INTEGRATION IN 15 REGIONS OF SPAIN.

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Isomorphism, demand and ideology in public policy.
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Abstract:

This paper defining the causes which underlie a public policy: Forum for immigrant participation. Little is known about the specific motivations which lead different governments' decisions to institute such policies. This process cannot only refer to the theoretical objectives, but must consider the context in which certain Governments are brought to implement such policies while others do not. Hear submits a comparative analysis of 15 regional Immigration Forums in Spain. The aim is to verify that their creation responds to three variables: institutional isomorphism, response to demand and ideology. The conclusion is that normative variables and demand alone cannot explain the implementation but must be considered in conjunction with ideological motivation and the political context.

Key words:

Immigrants, Public Policies, Participation, Integration, Regional Governments, Spain.

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1. INTRODUCTION

One of the core premises in the study of public policies is that their creation is determined not only by a demand for services, but also by the institutional environment, interest groups and ideology (Quadagno 2010). This paper aims to demonstrate that the implementation of public policies arises from the dynamic combination of these vectors through a comparative analysis of the implementation and institutionalization of such a mechanism of participation among the immigrant population in 15 Regions of Spain.

The fact that such participatory mechanisms are created by the Administration can be explained as the means to engage the users of public policies in their design and evaluation, or as a way of empowering citizens so as to enhance democracy. In theory, both reasons explain the purpose of creating such mechanisms of participation, but do not address the specific motivations which drive a Government to provide citizens with such alternatives. This issue is relevant not only because some Administrations use these mechanisms and others do not, but rather because it responds to a logic opposed to the accumulation of power, which is presupposed in the political arena. This is more evident in the case of mechanisms for immigrant participation, as the Government is charged with consulting not only its citizens but also members of society who do not have full access to citizens' rights. Thus, these mechanisms not merely provide a means by which to engage citizens in the administration and enhancement of democracy, but also seek to include a sector at risk of social exclusion and without access to other rights, such as the right to vote, which embodies the highest expression of political participation.

This study addresses these issues through a comparative analysis of the 15 Regional Forums for immigrant integration in Spain. The aim is to verify three inter-related hypotheses: the first is that the Forums are created in response to the logic of isomorphism by which, in an institutional context predisposed toward policies of integration, Administrations have replicated each other; the second posits that the more institutionalized mechanisms result from the match between the development of legislation and the level of demand for such mechanisms, given that the former are the result of an administrative response to a larger population with access to welfare services; and the third hypothesis postulates that the most institutionalized of all such mechanisms are usually implemented by left-wing governments, as they are more strongly associated with policies of participation and integration. Finally, this paper shows that: the three variables are closely intertwined; over time the relative importance of each variable may vary, thus in the future others, such as governments' strategic motivation, will need to be taken into consideration.

2. THE INTEGRATION POLICY DEBATE IN SPAIN.

Immigration policy deals with both border control issues and integration of foreign residents in the host country. Although both aspects are related, this paper focuses on the latter. Integration policies develop from two different approaches: the first is assimilation, which builds on the capacity of newly-arrived individuals and groups to adopt host society cultural patterns (Gordon 1964); second, integration advocates that the immigrant population should be actively

involved in society, local institutions and their habitat (Morén-Alegret 2008: 537-538), which requires forging public policies (Portes and Rumbaut 2006), particularly those which promote participation, insofar as they generate new networks and leadership, and provide spaces for dialogue (Fennema and Tillie 2001; Tillie 2004; Berger et al. 2004; Caselli 2010). Europe will witness a political faceoff between the two paradigms. The European Commission, Parliament and civil society are lobbying for the recognition of integration as legitimate in the European Union (Rosenow 2009), whilst local electorates and national policies tend to be more inclined towards defining the concept of assimilation as key descriptor of the valid paradigm. (Brubaker 2001; Scholten and Holzhacker 2009; Koopmans 2010). This two-sided debate takes place in Spain along the same lines as in Europe: the assimilation paradigm is associated with right-wing policies while the integrationist discourse is seen as left-wing. (Alonso and Claro do Fonseca 2009).

Spain's immigration policy was crafted "from abroad" (Colectivo IOÉ 2003) and developed over three phases, which coincided with the enactment of the country's three immigration Laws. In the first phase, from 1985 to 2000, and in spite of a substantial increase in immigration during the mid-90s, it remained a secondary issue on the public agenda (Agrela 2002). At that time the Law in force was the LOEX 7/1985 (Law on Rights and Freedoms of Foreigners in Spain) passed by the government under the Partido Socialista Obrero Español (Spanish Socialist Workers Party). This law responded to the need to first create a legal framework for what was at the time a fragmented legislation, and also to recognize that Spain was a country of transit for migration to the rest of Europe, which required a control structure. In this case the concept of integration was absent, although the need to deal with this increasingly important phenomenon continued to creep into the political agenda.

In the second phase, 2000-2009, immigration came to occupy a more prominent place in public opinion and had a greater impact on voting patterns (Raunio and Ollila 2001; Zapata-Barrero et al. 2002), although the role it played in voting shifts, coinciding with the advent of the ethnic vote, are open to discussion (Queralt 2008: 34; Morales et al. 2009). This phase began with the enactment of LOEX 4/2000 (Immigration Act), which resulted from a lengthy debate and was passed by the Partido Popular (Popular Party) minority Government and was the first to include the concept of integration in its generic heading. Nonetheless, six months later and under a majority PP Government, the law was modified by LOEX 8/2000, relegating integration to a secondary role in favour of more restrictive policies, geared to control immigration flows. This Law included a Section rescinding civil rights for undocumented immigrants, which was dismissed by the Constitutional Court (Lucas et al. 2008: 73). Several extraordinary regularization processes were offered during this protracted period. Policies based on control and residence have failed because Spanish legislation links residency to employment and permanence in a given area, and applies these criteria to a highly geographically-mobile collective forced into the hidden economy (Calavita 1996; Pajares 2007: 214-215).

The third phase had its start with basic law LOEX 2/2009 passed by a Socialist Government. One of the new elements in this Law is the explicit recognition of the right of foreign nationals of assembly, association, trade union membership, public demonstration, and strike. However, the way in which the right to vote is granted - through bilateral agreements with non-European countries - is only a partial advance towards full recognition of political rights. It is still too early to determine the results of the implementation of this Law, which came into force at a complex time, with heightened xenophobia (Cea 2009) and practical constraints resulting from the integrationist policies of the recent past (Richards 2009).

In spite of their differences the PP, left-wing parties, and civil society, have all adopted integration as the legitimate definition of a framework within which to pursue incorporation policies. The PP, in its programs and discourse (although border control systems and legal residence always prevail) undertakes to:

> "Achieving full integration of immigrants: We shall control Irregular immigration and we shall implement a new integration model for those who have chosen to live among us, on the basis of upholding our constitutional principles and values. If we wish immigration to provide an opportunity for all we must ensure that the incorporation of persons from other countries and cultures contributes to the well-being of Spanish society as a whole" (Objective nº 12 of the PP's 2008 electoral program).

On the basis of this *de minimis* consensus, the analysis based on the Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX) ranks Spain 10th out of 28 countries in terms of its integration policy, where the weakest points are access to naturalization, anti-discrimination policies, and political participation (MIPEX 2006: 165-166). Rights to participation, especially those associated with the right to vote, have been defined as the final step in the process of granting citizenship to immigrants (Lucas et al. 2008). As a result there is a paucity of published papers on immigrant participation, which tend to be local case-studies with a stress on the analysis of associationism, interaction with the government, enhancing civic awareness, and integration (González and Morales 2006; Morales and Jorba 2009). In line with this approach several recent studies address the issue of institutional mechanisms for immigrant participation, in particular those linked to local government (Guillot 2003; Aragón et al. 2009). In this vein, this paper addresses the possibility of examining an intermediate-level organization model - Regional Integration Forums. The rationale for this is that: first, authority concerning integration policies is increasingly devolved to regional governments, who manage welfare services and who have a greater responsibility over immigration matters after a series of reforms to the Statutes of Autonomy (Aragón et al. 2009: 61-63; Torrecilla and Camas 2009); secondly, this model helps to implement a systematic analysis of 15 of the 17 Autonomous Communities where there are such Forums for the integration of immigrants.

3. WHY ARE PARTICIPATORY MECHANISMS IMPLEMENTED?

The exponential increase witnessed globally in the number of local and regional participatory mechanisms (Dollery et al. 2008) is related to the importance awarded such instruments as part of the paradigms of Administrative reform. These are important within the New Public Management, given that for public officers these embody a strategy towards legitimacy through increasing information, diminishing resistance, and improving the provision of services (Warren 2009: 28). In terms of governance they are a defining part of the policy-making process, insofar as it is social stakeholders who define the goals and means of coordinating their actions so as to attain these aims (Aguilar 2006: 90). In Spain this has led to an increase in the number of mechanisms of local participation (Montesinos and Brusca 2009: 198-201), now being extended to the regions. In spite of these developments, political participation in most countries is not a requirement for governance: indeed, some countries do not apply this mechanism, or do so minimally. Hence the question: Why make use of participatory mechanisms? To this query there are four responses.

3.1 Adapting to the institutional environment

The analyses which best focus on the influence of the institutional environment center their attention on the Administration debate and its specific relevance within the evolution of institutional change. (Hendriks and Tops 1999). This concept harks back to neo-institutional theory and the importance of the dynamics of isomorphism, in which Administrations mimic each other in adopting policies of participation which result from the demands of existing legislation, prevailing trends in the discourse of social élites, and the dissemination of reforms undertaken in other contexts (Vetter 2009). This explains the proliferation of standard participatory formulae such as Agenda 21 (Font and Subirats 2001; Geissel 2009), advisory bodies (Font and Blanco 2002), or participatory budgeting (Ganzua and Álvarez 2003), which may be motivated by external agents who promote the adaptation of institutions to such formulae (Font and Galais 2009).

3.2 Adapting to structural conditions

Secondly, a number of supporters refer to the importance of demand within specific structural conditions, which both defines demand and outlines potential solutions. The positive correlation between implementation of participatory policies and local conditions may present in various ways: the first model holds that socio-cultural conditions define demand and determine the capacity to provide a cooperative response to meet such demand (Strussova and Petricova 2009); the second model argues that demographic, economic and social conditions driving these processes are linked to the actions of external agents (Font and Blanco 2005); the third posits that larger populations imply greater demand and more complex administrations, in which participation occupies its own institutional space (Navarro 2002); and fourth, the notion that the best incentive to attain success through participative policies in changing the environment is success in participation itself (Wampler 2008).

3.3 Ideological motivation

Third, various studies associate the creation of spaces for participation with party ideology. This has proven relevant in explaining Area Forums and local empowerment in Great Britain (Farrelly 2009; Andrews et al. 2008) or the implementation of participatory mechanisms in Southern Europe (Sintomer et al. 2008). These actions are always associated with left-wing parties, which rank participation highly in their respective electoral programs (Vergué 2007). However, this relationship should not be seen as a conflict between supporters and opponents of participation, but ought rather to be understood from the perspective of the relevance assigned to participatory policies within the hierarchy of preferences expressed by the parties themselves (Font and Blanco 2005) and the different approaches between parties in implementing certain mechanisms while ignoring others (Colino and Del Pino 2003). This ideological motivation is markedly subject to the influence of the personal histories of members of Executive bodies (Font and Blanco 2005).

3.4 Strategic motivation

Finally, participatory mechanisms may be seen as an extension of political power. First, they are the result of governments whose origins hark back to social movements, associations, and NGOs (Grille and Remy 2009). Second, their purpose is to establish alliances with those associations in tune with the Executive: these alliances would be enhanced in policy definition and legitimacy (Navarro 1999). Third, they may bring about positive electoral results if they concur with, and reinforce, the Government's overall policy (Font and Blanco 2005).

These responses suggest there are two distinct bases upon which the design of an analytical framework may be grounded. First, the issue of motivation, founded on the values the government represents or the interests it pursues; second, the source of these motivations, either (endogenous) those which may stem directly from the government itself or (exogenous) those which are the result of external institutional and structural conditions which foster, demand or compel their creation (see table 1).

Table 1
A response to the question: Why is there a need for participatory mechanism?

External		*Origin of motivations*	
		Internal	
Nature of motivation	Values	INSTITUTIONAL	IDEOLOGY
	Interest	STRUCTURAL	POWER

Source: Internal data

This paper looks at three of the four vectors mentioned above. First, the intention is to understand the Forums as mechanisms contained within a sort of isomorphism, so that harmonization with European and national settings justify the establishment of such institutions at Regional level. Second, to consider the specific importance of party ideology, as well as the degree of match between demand and policy response. In this paper we do not proffer an explanation as to the search for power through the networks of associations, as this would entail analyzing case studies. Nonetheless, this argument is taken into consideration in the discussion and will be included in our analysis concerning the role it may play in the future.

4. THE REGIONAL FORUM AS A RESPONSE TO THE INSTITUTIONAL SETTING.

The Forums are standing advisory bodies established by Regional Executive authorities. Their purpose is to advise the Administration in providing a single arena for debate on a broad array of issues addressed between the various levels of government and social partners, including associations of immigrants. The Forums operate under mandates which vary from one Region to another. When the mandate expires the Forums' representatives must be re-elected. These officers sit on the committees and in Plenary, the bodies which contribute to the evaluation, monitoring and design of the Regions' strategic integration plans.

These bodies were created in response to a process of institutional isomorphism, whose main feature is the replication of equal rules in different institutional areas either through coercion, mimetic or normative process (Powell and Dimaggio 1999; Meyer and Jepperson 2000). In the case in hand, the former have played no role, indeed regional Forums do not exist in Asturias or Cantabria, although the PSOE has organized social Forums and may announce their possible implementation (*Europa Press 19-2-2009*; *El Diario Montañés 23-6-2006*). Mimetism is the manner in which governments adapt to situations of uncertainty, following suit after other governments and implementing the rules they deem most appropriate. Finally, normative pressure refers to the fact that politics is becoming an increasingly professional field, thus the mechanisms are disseminated by, and among, experts. Mimetism and normative pressure explain why Forums have been created by governments of all political persuasions, as well as the scant variability in their regulation and structure in spite of regional differences.

The first Regional Forum established was the Advisory Committee on Immigration in Catalonia, whose nature and structure was very similar to the Forums mentioned in this paper as discussed in the Catalan Parliament (Official Gazette of the Catalan Parliament – Commission on Social Policy 18, 1997 and 19, 2000). However, a closer look at the constitutive Decree of similar institutions in other Communities shows that the reference to which these Decrees respond is the 1995 National Forum, so that the structure of the process of isomorphism is vertical in nature. The National Forum was created by a Socialist Government. In 2000 this body played a pivotal political role when it confronted the PP Government in reaction to changes introduced in the text of the Immigration Act. This forced the Government to reconsider two of its characteristic regulations, which eventually remained unmodified: first, the President should not be a member of the Government but rather a prominent public figure; and second, representatives of immigrants should be voted in from within the respective associations (Veredas 2003; Pérez Díaz et al. 2001: 125-131). These points highlight the basic differences between the National Forum and the second Regional Forum established in Andalusia in 1995 which, also under a Socialist government, set the trend for other regional Forums. What is most remarkable is that Madrid followed the National Forum in its choice of President and immigrant representatives, and that Catalonia has initiated a process to increase the number of immigrant representatives, while other communities like the Balearic Islands and Valencia will follow suit, and that the two most recently-created Forums have been incorporated into Departments of the Presidency as opposed to bodies responsible for social services, while Regions with longer-standing Forums already have Regional government Departments for immigration affairs. Although these regulatory differences are minimal, they can be explained by the political dynamics and by the level of demand in each Community.

> In spite of the descriptive force of isomorphism it develops against a backdrop of political conflict and widely differing demands among Regions, so that in itself it does not explain the many reasons proposed for establishing these bodies. Political conflict is reflected in the dynamics of Parliament and in legislation. The former illustrates that leftist parties lobbied for the creation of such bodies in all Communities governed by the PP except Murcia. Moreover, in terms of demand, it is surprising that one of the Communities (Extremadura) with the country's smallest immigrant populations in both percentage and absolute terms - governed by the PSOE - instituted the Forums in 1996, whilst another (Valencia) ruled by the PP, with the largest immigrant population waited until 2002 to do so. Hence the need to examine more closely the reasons which underlie the creation of this instrument

5. A COMPARATIVE INSTITUTIONAL ANALYSIS

A comparative institutional analysis has verified the substantial nature of the ideological explanation and the response to existing demand. This analysis examines and compares the behavior of two types of Forum set against five variables of organizational institutionalization. The types of Forums have been constructed on the basis of a combination of two descriptive variables. The first of these, the so-called Administrative type, is based on the premise that the implementation of a norm in a given space or time corresponds to the pressure of demand, and thus stems from the combination of the legal basis on which the Forum was created and from the relative and absolute numbers of immigrants in the Region. The second type, defined as ideological, is based on the premise that Government initiative can substitute ideological motivation by implementing a participatory mechanism. Therefore it takes into consideration whether the Government is left-wing or right-wing, but also includes the nature of the "owners" of the Parliamentary initiative responsible for creating such an institution.

These two types are set off against 5 indices addressing institutionalization, herein understood to be the level at which the rules and plans which govern those institutions enable them to formally develop over time, the significance of presence in the Executives' policies, and the extent to which they meet the objective of involving immigrants' associations. The process of institutionalization does not determine the ultimate performance of the applicable mechanism, as indicated by the fact that some successful participatory experiences have arisen from informal contexts (Font and Blanco 2002). Nonetheless, this provides a good approximation insofar as it not only implies the presence of legislation, but also defines the ways in which the latter is either auspicious or encumbers the recognition and regulation of the mechanism in question. In order to verify the degree of institutionalization, the various types of Forums were compared against the following indicators, expressed as a dichotomy:

1. Formal establishment: terms in office can no longer be renewed, nor may representatives be nominated and voted, since this information is not published in the Official Gazettes, as compared to situations where this can be done, or can be done partially.

2. Constitution; time elapsed between the formal announcement of the creation of the organization and its formal constitution, which is greater than or less than a year.

3. Renewal; time elapsed between the time when the representatives' term of office expires and is renewed in more/less than one year (among the more recently-created Forums the opinion is that this condition shall be met, although the occasion has as yet not arisen).

4. Planning; the Forum is not included in any immigration plan, or is only mentioned in the Prologue, as compared to its recognition and inclusion in the mainstream sector policy-setting schedule.

5. Objective; rather than a system by which representatives are chosen on merit, the suggestion is that immigrant representatives be chosen through an open ballot system.

This analysis responds to two complementary hypotheses:

Administrative type of Forums, whose leading feature is the fact that ensuing legislation adapts to the degree of demand, and which are more institutionalized than those created at a later stage or than those implemented in response to demand.

Ideological type of Forum, characterized by their creation by left-wing governments or *executives with initiative*, which are more institutionalized than those who are not seen as the option of choice by the Regional government(s) in question.

Information used to construct the two types, and to generate variables on institutionalization, is obtained from data concerning these organizations published by the Autonomous Communities in the respective Official Gazettes through to 2009, regional policy plans defining the role of these organizations within the general framework of policy-setting by Regional governments, and records pertaining to the Regional Parliamentary sessions prior to, or immediately following, implementation of these plans. Data have been analyzed using the "Qualitative-Comparative Analysis" (QCA) program, which is designed to compare small numbers of case studies and which serves two purposes: first, accommodate information; and second, estimate whether the relationship between

variables is significant when more than 70% of the case studies fall into the same differentiated behavioral pattern. (Ragin 2008). In this case, calculations were based upon the assumption that ideology and the balance between legislation and demand is the product of a function which includes the following indicators: formalization, constitution, renewal, planning and objective.

6. TYPES OF FORUM ACCORDING TO THE RESPONSE TO DEMAND AND IDEOLOGY

The advent of Forums evolves from: first, an adjustment of legislation to meet the increasing demand for public services from one part of the population; or second, an ideological preference held by left-wing parties or Government with political initiative on this matter. The administrative Forum is shaped by the former, and the ideological Forum by the latter.

6.1 Administrative type of Forum

The administrative Forum responds to the adjustment between legislation by which the organization is created and demand, measured as the size of the immigration population in each Community. This arrangement is a typical example of the reasoning in Parliament used in advocating the creation of the Forum.

> "…the need to create a Regional Forum to facilitate the implementation of the Law in our Community: I stress, the creation of a Regional Forum, as it is our Community where we need to provide children, boys and girls, with an education, because it is in our Community that we need to provide healthcare, and because in our Community they will work, and it shall be our responsibility to implement labors Laws" (*Mrs. Espí Navas, PSOE MP, Official Records, Session of the Valencia Regional Parliament*).

> "…We lag behind other Regions in terms of providing instruments such as a comprehensive Regional plan, as an established Forum in which to articulate participation in society. We have no such instruments." (*Mr. Moral Jiménez, PSOE MP, Official Records, Session of the Regional Parliament of Castilla-León 2004, 4: 1117*).

An examination of the Decrees passed to establish and reform the Forum spotlights the tendency to make mention of national legislation in addition to European recommendations as justification. Clearly this tendency depends on the level of accord between Regional parties and the National party proposing the bill: when the Region is governed by Nationalist parties no mention is made of national laws. However, generally speaking, there are four successive generations of legal frameworks which have enabled the creation of the Forums: the first is Royal Decree 490/1995, which gave rise to the national Forum; the second is Basic Laws 4/2000 and 8/2000; the third generation Forums make no mention of legal basis, while the most recent Decrees cite no national laws; and the fourth generation, instituted by Catalonia in 2008, which provides a complete restructuring and broadening of the organization now known as "Taula per la Immigració".

The level of demand was calibrated on the basis of two metrics: first, the number of immigrants resident in each Community compared to national figures for the period 1996-2007, (Cuadrado et al. 2007: 35-36); second, the percentage of immigrants registered as residents in each

Autonomous Community in 2009 (INE: National Institute for Statistics 2009). It can be seen from the two metrics that there are three types of Region from a demand perspective: high, where over 10% of the country's immigrants are concentrated and/or represent more that 15% of the Region's population; medium, concentrating 5% of national immigration, which account for less than 15% of the Region's population; and low demand, Communities with less than 3% of immigrants in the country, and where immigrants are less than 5% of the Community population.

Table 2
Administrative types of Forum

	High	Medium	Low
1st-4th Generation	Catalonia, Andalusia, Madrid, Murcia, Balearic Isles, Canary Isles	La Rioja	Extremadura
2nd Generation	Valencia	Aragón, Basque Country	
3rd Generation		Castilla la Mancha Castilla León Navarre	Galicia

Source: internal data

The combination of legal criteria and demand (table 2) results in two types of Forum: those which dovetail demand with the new legislation (Catalonia, Andalusia, Madrid, Murcia, Balearic Isles, Canary Isles, Aragón, Basque Country, Galicia); and second, those which have not taken this option, as the Forums were created either much later or ahead of demand (Valencia, La Rioja, Castilla la Mancha, Castilla y León, Navarre, Extremadura). It must be highlighted that it is hard to discern different patterns of legislation among the Forums given the similarities in their by-laws/rules – with the exception of Madrid and Catalonia following the abovementioned reform passed in 2008 – which facilitate a comparative analysis.

6.2 Ideological type of Forum

The ideological type of Forum is the result of an adjustment between party preference and Parliamentary initiative. Party preference was accepted in the early stages, setting a trend for left-wing parties to be more closely associated with policies based on participation and immigrant integration. Only two right-wing Nationalist parties are considered an exception: Convergencia i Unió - CiU (Catalan Nationalist Party), as it was the first to create a Forum, and the Partido Nacionalista Vasco – PNV (Basque Nationalist Party), because it was part of a coalition government with two left-wing parties in the Regional administration when it created its Forum. Party preference has combined with parliamentary initiative, as shown in the annals of Parliamentary sessions. This means either the Government announced and then created the organization, or on the contrary, before the Government takes action the opposition tables a non-legislative proposal to implement such a mechanism.

Table 3
Ideological types of Forum

	Preference	No preference

Initiative	Catalonia, Andalusia, Extremadura, Aragón, Basque Country, Galicia, Castilla la Mancha	Canary Isles, Murcia
No initiative	Balearic Isles	Madrid, La Rioja, Valencia, Castilla y León, Navarre

Source: internal data

The combination of preference and initiative results in three types of Forum (Table 3): coherent, in which the implementing government prefers this model and takes the initiative (Catalonia, Andalusia, Extremadura, Aragón, Basque Country, Galicia and Castilla la Mancha); not coherent, since they have been created in the absence of government preference or initiative (Madrid, La Rioja, Valencia, Castilla y León, and Navarre); and mixed, in which either a Government with no preference took the initiative to create the Forums (areas governed by the right-wing in the Canary Isles and Murcia), or the opposition party submitted a non-legislative proposal in the Regional Parliament before the Government (as was the case in the Balearic Isles). It should be pointed out that in spite of the fact that alternating party Administrations and coalition Governments have had an enormous impact of the development of such organizations, these two variables appear infrequently during the lifetime of the Forums, which again facilitated the comparative study.

Table 4
Indicators of Institutionalization of the Forums

	Adjustment	Ideology	Formal	Constitution	Renewal	Plan	Objective
Catalonia	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Galicia	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Andalusia	■	■	■	■	■	■	
Aragón	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Murcia	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Canary Isles	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Balearic Isles	■	■		■		■	■
B.Country	■	■					
Extremadura		■	■		■		
C-Mancha		■	■				■
Madrid	■		■				■
Navarre			■		■		
La Rioja			■			■	
Valencia			■			■	■
C-León			■		■		

Source: Compiled using own data from QCA analysis

7. CONTRASTING THE TYPES OF FORUM WITH INDICATORS OF INSTITUTIONALIZATION.

The QCA showed that joint administrative and ideological models - or at least those cases where there has been a parliamentary initiative – are significant, because in 100% of the cases where the two characteristics are present they behave differently from the rest, and 88% have a high rate of institutionalization that others do not share. This outcome illustrates the relationship between demand, ideology and Government initiative, meaning that Forums which incorporate demand with ideology, or initiative, have been better institutionalized than others (Table 4). This situation is common in those communities with a higher immigrant population, except for those governed by the PP - Madrid and Valencia. However, since we live in an ideological social construction, this does not prevent right-wing Executives from taking the initiative of implementing such a mechanism if we look back over the personal history of their politicians, the role of experts, or the existing political situation. Thus, in Murcia under a PP government, the Executive is explicit about the role of experts in the creation of the Forum, (Official Records of the Regional Parliamentary Session, *Murcia 10, 1999: 271 and 22, 2000: 842*), while in the Canary Isles the Forum was created by Coalición Canaria - CC (Canary Coalition) based on the proposals presented by Izquierda Unida – IU (United Left) and the Defensor del Común (regional ombudsmen) at a time of political crisis, after having temporarily broken the coalition with the PP (Official Records of the Regional Parliamentary Sessions, *Canarias 10, 1999 and 29, 2000: 14*)).

There are, however, two anomalies among the reconciled and ideologically coherent Forums: the Balearic Isles and the Basque country. In both instances they have experienced alternating parties in government which, for the Balearic Isles, has implied the shift from a coalition government lead by the PSOE to a PP Government and then back to a coalition, which led to paralysis and pushed the Forum even deeper into an informal arena. This did not prevent the Forum from becoming one of those which initiated a process to increment the number of immigrant representatives and enhance the degree of institutionalization, as compared to those lacking coherence and where there is no adjustment between statutes and demand. In the case of the Basque Country, the limited institutionalization of the organization contrasts with the degree of specificity to which it is treated in the integration plan. The fact that the Forum was created under a government in which IU (responsible for the welfare portfolio) was in the minority should be taken into account. Since the start of government in alternance in 2009 the Forum has been brought to a standstill by the ongoing process of reform under the current socialist government.

This analysis not only confirms the hypotheses submitted, but also connects them. However, the virtuous relationship between matching demand and ideological coherence or initiative is more visible where it is absent, that is to say, in those cases where there is no adjustment to meet demand and/or there is no coherence. The latter models do not behave in the same way, rather they all, to a degree, randomly fail to meet most of the conditions, in response to the prevailing situation. Among the coherent but socially dislocated the most outstanding example is Extremadura, which highlights the perverse effect of the initiatives when they lack practical meaning. The Forum was constituted legally very early but operationally very late, and when it was renewed in 2005 not all the positions as representatives were filled, as there were no organizations in the region which met conditions of the call for nominations (Official Daily (*Diario Oficial de) Extremadura 62, 2005: 7498-7500*), against a backdrop of incipient

associationism (*El Periódico de Extremadura March 26 2006*).

Badly-adjusted and incoherent Forums are generated as a result of strong lobbying from the opposition but where there is little demand, so that the lack of institutionalization stems from the fact that there is little need for the Forum to be operational. Nevertheless, the adjusted cases of Madrid and Valencia are perfect examples of a situation of intense political confrontation around the Forum in a context of high demand. In both instances, the two governments were late in creating the Forum, and have brought the respective Forums to a standstill for protracted periods, which in Madrid is explained by the stronger link between associations of immigrants, left-wing parties and the Unions (Ortega and Morales, 2006: 38-39). Since 2006, however, governments have in both cases revitalized the Forum mechanism, albeit at the expense of a serious confrontation with the opposition, sectors of civil society, and Unions, who denounce the manipulation of the immigrants' associations (*El País Valencia Jan 20th and May 31st 2006; El País Madrid February 16th 2006 and April 3rd 2009*). Are we witnessing a change in the model of integration as part of the conflict between right and left? Or, is this merely a tardy operational adjustment to the demand issuing from the Autonomous Communities governed by the PP? To what extent should we consider these variables highlight the political aspect of public policies?

CONCLUSION

The implementation of mechanisms to foster immigrant participation responds to political conflict surrounding immigration. As this sector of society attains a greater public presence and organizational capacity it shall play an increasingly important role in opening up channels through which it may participate. Should this idea materialize, the revival of the Forums of Madrid and Valencia could respond to the governments' need to win the support of the immigrants' associations in legitimizing their policies, in a context of high demand. Such participatory mechanisms were (re)created within a logic of power, and until the present have been associated with the strong link between the Forums and left-wing parties. This underscores the political aspect of this integration policy, inasmuch as the investigative work done by the Forums influences both the legitimacy of government policies as well as the latter's capacity to pursue a dialogue with civil society.

While this line of investigation remains open, what is has shown is that: first, the Forums on immigration are created on the basis of a combination of a series of variables; second, among these variables is the logic of isomorphism, which implies imitation and broadening its rules and structure given the regulatory environment and the discourse of élites and administrators; third, that this process is determined from the political parties' conflict and the size of demand, that is to say, political and management variables, although sometimes one is deemed more important than the other; fourth, that the Forum created as part of a practical regulatory, ideological adjustment, and by initiative of the Executive, are the most institutionalized, compared to those devoid of this combination of factors. Isomorphism as well as the administrations' response to demand, are important variables by which to explain the reason for these policies. Nonetheless, the ideological explanation becomes particularly relevant in observing those cases of poor institutionalization, be it due to initiative being taken at a time when the situation rendered it meaningless, or that its absence becomes manifest in situations of strong demand. This may vary over time, if governments implement this model although they may have no preference for it, and adopt strategic actions to revitalize the organizations, or if the conditions of demand in the regions change.

Public policies are in constant flux, so that the dimensions that explain their creation and institutionalization vary over time. The inception of a policy is influenced by a combination of a propitious institutional environment, objective demand and a proactive ideology. Nevertheless, the combination of these variables, and the role of others, such as the relationship between the Government, political parties and lobbies, are different from one case to another. This will determine the degree to which policies are institutionalized, as well as how they evolve. This in turn implies a number of changes, leading to a possible reinterpretation of the institutional environment, varying levels of demand, and shifts in ideological preferences. Thus, concepts, which give rise to the creation and institutionalization of an organization need to be constantly revised throughout its lifetime. In other words, public policies are part of complex political processes and are thus subject to constant variation.

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