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Comparing the politics behind the immigrant integration laws of Catalonia and South Tyrol

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Abstract

How do minority regions in multi-national states respond to immigration? Do they use regional policy-making competencies to foster the inclusion of immigrants, or to tighten the boundaries of belonging exclusively around the minority? This paper answers these questions through a comparison of the immigrant integration laws of Catalonia (Spain) and South Tyrol (Italy). Qualitative content analysis of the laws shows that both regions place most emphasis on helping immigrants to become equal members of the society in the socio-economic dimension. Only the South Tyrolean law then adds also some restrictions. By contrast, South Tyrol is more flexible when it comes to cultural integration granting immigrants free choice of whether to integrate into the German or the Italian language, or both, while the Catalan law prioritises integration into Catalan culture. The paper links these differences to the dominant political dividing lines in regional party competition before the adoption of each law.

Keywords

Multinational states, regional integration policy, party competition, Catalonia, South Tyrol

Author's biographical note

Before joining the University of Bremen as a post-doctoral fellow, Christina Isabel Zuber spent a year as a Fritz Thyssen fellow at GRITIM-UPF (Department of Political and Social Sciences) in Barcelona, taught at the Universities of Zurich and Lucerne and worked for four years as a research and teaching fellow at the University of Cologne, where she also received her PhD in 2012. Her background is in comparative politics and her current main research projects focus on party competition in two-dimensional space and the immigrant integration policies of national minority regions. Her articles have appeared in *Comparative Political Studies*, *Party Politics*, *East European Politics* and *Nationalities Papers*.

Introduction¹

*We, who are different, what do we do with the difference of the others – respect it? Impose our own difference upon theirs? Make friends because we are all different?
(Former policy-maker, Catalonia)*

An immigrant who arrives in the Northern Italian province of South Tyrol encounters special conditions during *'the process of becoming an accepted part of society'*, the definition of integration proposed by Penninx and Garcés Mascareñas (forthcoming, original emphasis). Italian skills are necessary to fulfil the conditions for Italian citizenship and enjoy mobility throughout the entire Italian state. However, if she wants to have equal opportunities for being employed within the province, she will also have to acquire German (and depending on her chosen place of residence, maybe also Ladin) skills. Last but not least, to interact comfortably with locals on a daily basis, understanding and speaking South Tyrol dialect (in addition to standardised German) may result crucial. South Tyrol's reality is particularly complex. But Europe is full of examples of multinational democracies where not one, but several groups conceive of themselves as nations. Immigrants who arrive in these countries are not confronted with one, but with several (often competing) proposals for defining the boundaries of the political, social, and cultural community.

Though multinational and migration-based cultural diversity coexist in many contemporary democracies (such as Belgium, Canada, France, Italy, Spain, or the UK), the interaction between national minorities and immigrants used to receive limited attention in the literature (Kymlicka, 2001: 276, Zapata-Barrero, 2007: 2). Empirical research was separated along Kymlicka's (1998: 113-119) famous differentiation between *multinational* states (where cultural pluralism results from the incorporation of different nations with traditional homelands into a single state) on the one hand and *polyethnic* states (where cultural pluralism results from

¹ Parts of this working paper have been presented at the 11th IMISCOE Annual Conference 'Immigration, Social Cohesion and Social Innovation', IEUM Madrid, 27-29 August 2014, the ECPR General Conference 3 - 6 September 2014, University of Glasgow, and the Colloquium of the Bremen International Graduate School of the Social Sciences. I thank all those present on either of these occasions and in particular Tiziana Caponio, Anwen Elias, Artak Galyan and an anonymous referee for inspiring comments and very helpful suggestions. Needless to say that all remaining errors are my own. I am indebted to the Fritz Thyssen Foundation for sponsoring my research in Barcelona and Bolzano. I am deeply thankful to all members of GRITIM for their support during my time in Barcelona and beyond, and to the EURAC centre of minority rights for providing invaluable help during the two months I spent in Bolzano.

immigration) on the other hand. As a consequence, the concerns of national minorities and immigrants were treated in isolation from each other in the literature (Zapata-Barrero, 2007: 3). Having distinct theoretical concepts for the two types of diversity is important because they provide the basis for different claims. National minorities demand self-government, claiming that while borders have been drawn and redrawn, they have always inhabited the same territory. By contrast, immigrants do not settle in a homogeneous territory they consider to be their traditional homeland. This makes claims to self-determination on a territorial basis unlikely.

However, the conceptual distinctions should not prevent our awareness to the fact that the two types of diversity interact empirically: 'because more and more immigrants settle in the territories of minority nations, it is no longer possible for minority nationalism and immigration to be analysed in isolation from each other' (Jeram, 2012: 8, see also Arrighi de Casanova, 2012: 21). Indeed, the field of research at the intersection of minority nationalism and immigration has recently begun to grow at a remarkable pace. Authors have been focusing predominantly on analysing minority nationalist parties' positions and discourses on immigration and regional citizenship (see e.g. Carla, forthcoming, Franco-Guillén and Zapata-Barrero, 2014, Hepburn, 2009, 2011, Jeram, 2014, Jeram et al 2014). However, in multi-level states, competencies to govern immigrant integration are often devolved to the sub-state level (Joppke and Seidle, 2012, Hepburn and Zapata-Barrero, 2014). As a consequence, minority nationalists in regions like Flanders, Quebec, Catalonia, or South Tyrol do not only position themselves on immigration, but actively 'intend to guide and steer ... integration processes of immigrants' (Penninx and Garcés Mascareñas, forthcoming), i.e. they decide on integration policies (e.g. Adam and Jacobs, 2014, Medda-Windischer and Carlà, 2013)

This paper contributes towards this by analysing the immigrant integration laws of two minority regions, South Tyrol and Catalonia. The two cases were chosen for sharing many structural similarities, but differences in the rhetoric employed by minority nationalist parties in political competition. Whereas Catalan minority nationalist parties consensually define Catalonia as a land of welcome (Franco-Guillén and Zapata-Barrero, 2014), some minority nationalists in South Tyrol have sought to politicise the topic and display exclusionary stances. The analysis can therefore shed light on whether 'discursive gaps' (Czaika and Haas, 2011: 21) exist between what minority nationalists *say*, and what minority regions *decide*. Results show that both regional laws place most emphasis on helping immigrants to become equal members of the society in the socio-economic domain. Where differences exist, policies vary not only between regions but also between the socio-economic and the cultural dimension of integration

policy.² This defies the attempt to classify either region as more inclusive or exclusive *per se*. The South Tyrolean law conditions immigrants' access to socio-economic resources, but displays a more flexible approach to cultural integration, allowing immigrants free choice of whether they prefer to integrate into the state-wide or the minority language and culture. By contrast, the Catalan law grants equal access to socio-economic resources, but demands cultural integration into the Catalan culture and language. The paper relates these policy differences to regional party politics drawing on the debates about the respective law in each regional parliament. Catalan nationalists cooperate on immigration and use it as an additional issue to confront the Spanish state. They thereby link immigration to the centre-periphery dimension of party competition where the protection of the special identity of the minority region takes centre stage. By contrast, immigration is contested among both German and Italian-speaking parties in South Tyrol and is not linked to the centre-periphery, but rather to the economic left-right dimension of party competition. The paper is structured as follows. The next section introduces the two cases. Section three explains the coding scheme and presents insights from qualitative content analysis of the two laws. Section four analyses the politics behind the laws. Section five concludes the paper.

2. Case selection and introduction to the cases

The universe of cases consists of minority regions in multinational societies, i.e. 'societies where a dual belonging exists: that of the state's dominant state political community and that of the community expressed by the minority nation' (Zapata Barrero, 2009: 20). Since I am interested in studying how minority nationalists actually steer processes of immigrant integration, regions inhabited by national minorities that do not have competencies to decide on integration (e.g. Corsica), do not form part of the universe of cases. Out of the cases *with* decision-making competencies, Quebec is the only minority region that decides not only on reception and integration policies, but also on the selection of immigrants on the basis of self-set criteria (Banting, 2012). Another special case that would be hard to compare is presented by the Aland islands where citizenship is a devolved matter, while admission is managed by the Finnish central authorities (Granhölm 2009: 71). From the remaining cases, I selected the autonomous province of Bolzano/South Tyrol in Italy and the autonomous community of Catalonia in Spain.

²See section four of this paper for a detailed conceptualisation of integration policy along a socio-economic, a political and a cultural dimension.

The two regions have equivalent competencies to legislate on integration but differ in positions and the discourses on immigration of minority nationalist parties. We can thus analyse whether these differences manifest themselves also at the level of actual policies. Catalan parties' discourses have been characterised by a strong consensus that Catalonia is a 'land of welcome' (*terra d'acollida*) (Franco Guillén and Zapata Barrero 2014). By contrast, the model of regional identity dominant in South Tyrolean discourse 'cannot be described as post-ethnic or intercultural [...] but can rather be characterised by the acronym NIMBY (Not-In-My-Back-Yard)' (Medda-Windischer, 2011: 28). A factor that varies between the regions is the absolute share of foreigners. Though both regions are similar in having a higher relative share of immigrants compared to their state's average, 8.8 % of the South Tyrolean population are foreigners (Autonome Provinz Bozen Südtirol, ASTAT, figure from 2013), compared to 15.34 % in Catalonia (Generalitat de Catalunya, IDESCAT, figure from 2013). Whereas both regions already had experience with 'internal immigration' from the Southern regions of Italy and Spain respectively, external immigration only started to become an issue during the early 2000s, but then the number of foreigners rose quickly, and at a particularly remarkable pace in Catalonia. In 2000, the share of foreigners in Catalonia was 2.9%. It reached a peak of 15.95% in 2010, to then slightly decrease to 15.34% by 2013 (Generalitat de Catalunya, IDESCAT).

The distribution of competencies between the state and the minority region in the field of immigration and integration is almost identical. The Spanish immigration law of 2000 (Organic Law 4/2000) granted all autonomous communities competencies to intervene in the fields of social benefits and services, residence and employment (Generalitat, Citizenship and Immigration Plan 2009-2012: 48, see also Climent-Ferrando, 2013). The second step came with Royal decree 2393/2004 that treats autonomous communities and municipalities as partners in the management of immigrant integration (Generalitat, Citizenship and Immigration Plan 2009-2013, p. 48). In the third step, the new Catalan Statute of Autonomy of July 2006 (Generalitat, organic law 6/2006) explicitly assigns Catalonia exclusive powers with regard to the initial reception of immigrants (art. 138.1), and the development of policies on their social integration and the use of Catalan (143.1 and 166.1). Furthermore, Catalan authorities have the power to authorise work permits for foreigners who are to be employed/self-employed in Catalonia. The autonomous province of South Tyrol is similarly responsible for the social, cultural and economic integration of migrants and consequently regulates health, schooling, housing, participation in public life and anti-discrimination measures (Medda-Windischer, 2011: 23). In

the case of South Tyrol, these competencies had already been devolved with the autonomy statute of 1972.

3. Regional integration policies: conceptualization and coding

Following Czaika and de Haas (2011), it is important to conceptually differentiate between policy discourses, policies on paper, policy implementation and policy impact. This paper focuses on policies on paper in the form of integration laws drafted by the governments of minority regions. Analysing policies in addition to discourse allows us see to what extent the policy output of minority regions reflects the discourses of minority nationalist parties, be it inclusive or exclusive, or whether we find a 'discursive gap' (Czaika and Haas 2011: 21) between the two. That the two do not necessarily always go hand in hand is suggested by Kymlicka and Banting (2013) on the basis of analyses drawing on their Multicultural Policy Index which leads them to conclude that 'the retreat from multiculturalism in Europe is more complete at the level of discourse than policy' (2013: 579).³

Despite the manifold definitions and controversies about the concept of *integration*, there appears to be a consensus in the literature that integration has to be conceptualised as a *process* (see e.g. Ager and Strang, 2008: 177, Banting, 2012: 85, Boswell, 2003: 75, Seidle and Joppke, 2012: 9). Consequently, *integration policies* can be defined as policies that 'intend to guide and steer [...] integration processes of immigrants' (Penninx and Garcés Mascareñas, forthcoming).

Furthermore, several scholars agree that integration processes occur in *three* distinguishable *domains*, though the terms used to refer to these domains may differ slightly.⁴ Often there is no explicit analytical foundation for such a three-dimensional approach. An exception is the conceptualisation by Entzinger (2000). He does not just propose three domains (which he terms the political/legal, the cultural, and the social/economic), but he also explains *why* integration policies aim to steer integration processes in precisely these domains. In European nation-

³It has to be acknowledged, however, that at the level of analysing integration laws, we may still be confronted with a wide gap between what is stated in the law and its actual implementation. This aspect is beyond the scope of this working paper.

⁴Seidle and Joppke (2012: 9) talk about economic, social and civic/political integration, Penninx and Garcés Mascareñas (n.d.: 5 ff.) refer to legal/political, socio-economic and cultural/religious, and Boswell (2003: 75) talks about incorporation into the economy, the society and the political life. It should be noted, however, that the perhaps most prominent conceptualisation of integration policy frequently used in large-N research is not three, but two-dimensional: the scheme suggested by Koopmans and Statham (2000, see also Koopmans, Statham Giugni and Passy 2006). They work with an ethnic/civic dimension and a monist/pluralist dimension (the poles of the latter have also sometimes been called assimilationist/multiculturalist) of integration policy. For a critique of the two-dimensional approach and arguments in favour of three dimensions, see Manatschal (2011: 345-347). The empirical analysis presented in this paper underlines the importance of focusing also on the socio-economic dimension of integration policy, that lies at the core of both regional laws.

states, immigrants have to find their place within the triangle of the *state* (the civic/political dimension), the *nation* (the cultural dimension), and the *market* (the socio-economic dimension). Entzinger (2000) argues that when classifying integration policies in the context of European nation states, it can therefore be thoroughly misleading to focus on only one of these dimensions, because approaches might be different across dimensions. A similar point is made by Penninx and Garcés-Mascareñas (forthcoming) who argue that an immigrant may be perfectly integrated in one domain, but not in the other. Though they might be empirically interrelated, the dimensions are thus not logically dependent on one another, and should therefore not be conceptually reduced.

I therefore classified policies aimed at steering integration processes in each of Entzinger's (2000) three dimensions. For each dimension, I developed mutually exclusive subcategories (including residual categories) which allows me to classify and compare regions' approaches in each dimension on the basis of qualitative content analysis (hereafter *QCA*, following Schreier, 2012). A qualitative method was chosen for the analysis because my aim is to establish which of the regions has a more inclusive, and which has a more restrictive approach in each domain of integration policy. The inclusive or restrictive *intention* of passages of the law thus constitutes latent meaning that has to be interpreted. I choose *QCA* over other methods of qualitative analysis because the systematic procedure for coding all segments of the material into one and only one of a set of mutually exclusive subcategories establishes a sound basis for comparison across the two cases. The coding frame is presented in figure one. The subcategories were first designed deductively based on explications of each domain provided by Penninx and Garcés-Mascareñas (forthcoming). I then added further categories inductively on the basis of a first round of coding.⁵

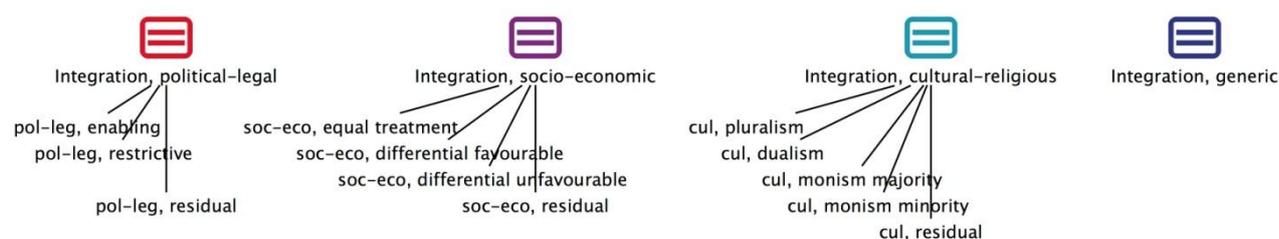
Penninx and Garcés-Mascareñas (forthcoming) mention a continuum underlying integration outcomes in each domain. This can be fruitfully used to classify integration laws according to which outcome on the continuum they intend to achieve. In the case of *political legal* integration, which refers to questions of residence, rights and status, the poles of the continuum are irregular immigrants, who lack rights at one end of the spectrum, and citizens as full members of the political community at the other end. Corresponding policies can thus intend to *enable* immigrants to achieve full political status, or aim at *restricting* immigrants' political rights and status.

⁵For a discussion of combining deductive and inductive generation of codes in qualitative research, see Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006).

In the case of *socio-economic* integration, integration policies can aim at granting immigrants *equal* access to housing, labour, education and health, or treat them in a *differential* way. Here, I added additional categories to account for the fact that differential treatment can be *unfavourable* (like making full access to social benefits conditional on a period of five years of residency within the region, as is the case in South Tyrol), or *favourable* to immigrants, allowing them to compensate disadvantageous starting conditions (such as special vocational training offers).

Finally, policies aiming to steer integration within the *cultural* domain can fall between the extreme poles of *monism*, requiring immigrants to assimilate into a mono-cultural/religious society and *pluralism*, fostering the diverse coexistence of cultures and religions on an equal basis (ibid., see also Koopmans and Statham, 2000). Here, an inductive modification was needed to account for the special contexts of minority regions where cultural monism is ambiguous, because it may mean that immigrants should assimilate into the minority culture (*monism, minority*), or the state-wide culture (*monism, majority*). In addition, a further category of *dualism* was introduced to account for policy provisions that require immigrants to integrate into the host society's culture, but conceive this host culture itself as dualistic, giving immigrants a choice of whether they prefer to integrate into the minority or the majority language and culture, or both, defining the identity of the minority region as bilingual in itself.

Figure 1. Coding frame for qualitative content analysis of regional integration laws.



Both regions have passed laws dealing with the integration of immigrants into the regional society that can be used to compare the regional approach to immigrant integration:

- The 2010 reception law in Catalunya (*LLEI 10/2010, del 7 de maig, d'acollida de les persones immigrades i de les retornades a Catalunya*. Diari Oficial de la Generalitat de Catalunya Núm. 5629, 14/05/2010).
- The 2011 integration law in South Tyrol (*LANDESGESETZ vom 28. Oktober 2011, Nr. 12, Integration ausländischer Bürgerinnen und Bürger*. Amtsblatt Nr. 45/I-II, 08/11/2011).

As becomes clear from the titles, the Catalan law is designed as a reception law and aims to deal predominantly with the initial period shortly after immigrant arrival.⁶ Subsequent analysis will therefore have to take Catalan acts in the respective individual areas of housing, education, labour market and health into account to which the welcome law refers the reader.⁷ Despite its more modest intention, the Catalan law does, however, in and of itself cover all three dimensions of integration policy explicitly, allowing for a comparison with the South Tyrolean law. For data analysis, I imported the PDF documents of the laws as published in the official regional bulletin into MAXQDA, a software designed to assist qualitative data analysis. I then reduced the data through analytical categorisation, applying theoretical concepts from the same coding frame through the cross-sectional code and retrieve method to both documents to enable comparison (Spencer, Ritchie and O'Connor, 2009: 203-206).⁸

Figure 2 displays the results by region. Only subcategories with at least one coded segment are displayed and the thicker the connecting line, the more segments in the respective document were coded under a subcategory. A first thing to note is that the categories belonging to the socio-economic dimension have been used most often in both cases, and those belonging to the political legal dimension the least (though the Catalan law mentions this dimension more often than the South Tyrol law). Both regions' integration laws are thus mostly concerned with steering processes of integration within the socio-economic domain, where immigrants' access to health care, housing, education and the labour market is regulated. Here, both laws foresee mostly special measures intended to help immigrants to reach a situation where they will be on equal footing with the native population, or directly intend to treat them as equal, for example when it comes to education: "Until the age up to which education is obligatory, immigrants and returnees access Catalonia's educational system under equal conditions" (Llei d'acollida, Article 8.1). The relative scarcity of provisions dealing with immigrants political/legal integration compared to the other two dimensions could be due to the fact that both regions do not have the competencies to decide on the status of the immigrants as citizens and their political rights. Where this dimension is talked about, both regions choose similarly to aim at informing immigrants better about their rights and their possibilities to become citizens of their respective states.

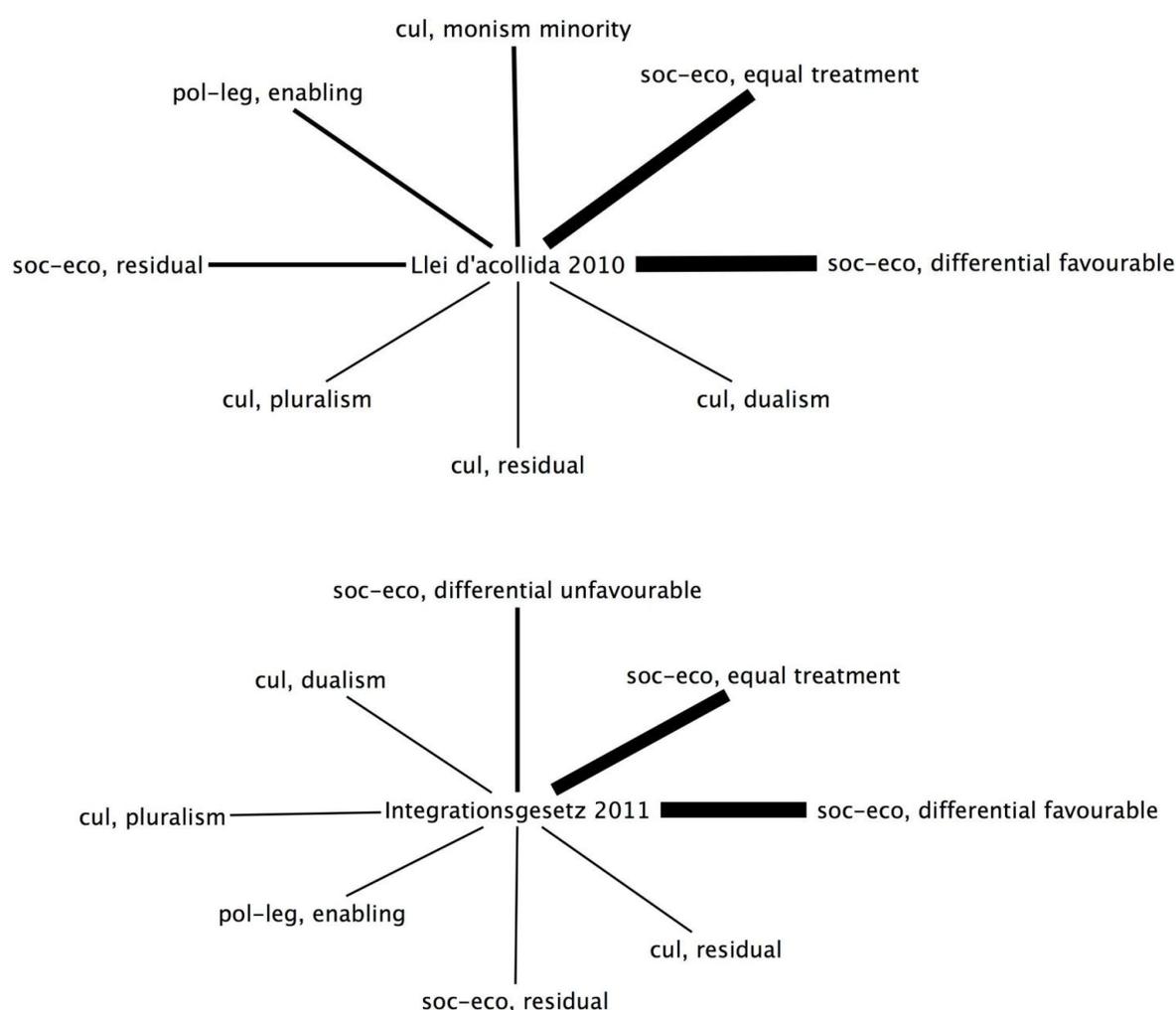
⁶The law itself defines reception as 'the first step of the process of integration of a person into the society during which he/she establishes him/herself with the purpose of staying permanently' (Llei d'acollida, Article 2a).

⁷The Catalan branch of the Spanish Popular Party strongly criticised the fact that the law was designed as a reception law, and unsuccessfully proposed an alternative integration law (Diari de sessions, 14 October 2009: 35).

⁸Only the Catalan law has a preamble which was excluded from the analysis to maintain comparability with the South Tyrol law.

In general, most categories from the coding frame were applied in both cases. There are, however, two important differences: Within the socio-economic dimension of integration policy, only the South Tyrolean law also includes provisions for a differential treatment that is unfavourable to the immigrant, such as conditioning access to several provincial social benefits to those who have resided at least five years in the province. The mirror image of this is a subcategory of cultural integration that was used only in the Catalan law: a monistic approach, expecting integration to be based on the minority culture and language. An example of a segment that received this code is: 'Catalan, as Catalonia's own language, is the common language for implementing reception and integration policies. It also is the language of training and information, a basic instrument for full integration in the country' (Llei d'acollida, article 9, paragraph 4).

Figure 2. Results of QCA of South Tyrolean and Catalan bills⁹



⁹Graphs were produced with the MAX Maps option in MAXQDA. The category of integration, generic that served to code all segments of the law that do not deal specifically with any of the dimensions was excluded from the visualisation to focus attention on the comparison of the substantive categories.

In sum, the content analysis shows that both regions place a very similar emphasis on the socio-economic dimension of integration and are primarily concerned with enabling immigrants to reach a situation of equality with the host population in this domain. At a more fine-grained level, we can see, however, that South Tyrol adopts a more differential approach in this dimension, including also some provisions for unfavourable treatment, whereas Catalonia shows a more coherent preference for equality in this dimension, since all favourable special treatments are justified with the aim of making immigrants equal in the longer run. The cultural dimension is more salient in the Catalan law, than in the South Tyrolean one, taking a higher number of segments that address this dimension as an indicator. Furthermore, unlike South Tyrol, Catalonia defines the regional culture into which immigrants are expected to integrate predominantly in minority-monist terms, i.e. into the Catalan language and culture. By contrast, South Tyrol strictly adheres to the equal status of the three provincial languages (Italian, German and Ladin) and does not seek to prioritise any of them in welcoming and integrating immigrants. Both regional laws show some support for more plural models of cultural integration making reference to accepting and promoting the cultures of immigrants. Finally, the political-legal dimension plays a minor role in both laws, which could be explained by the lack of legislative competencies in this dimension.

4. The politics behind the laws

I will now shed more light on the party political constellation during the process of debating and adopting the laws in the respective regional parliament to see to what extent the politics behind the laws can help us understand the similarities and differences. In both cases, the laws were proposed by the government. Both governments were at the time constituted by a coalition between minority nationalist parties on the one hand (the South Tyrolean People's Party, SVP, and the Republican Left of Catalonia, ERC, respectively) and either regional branches of state-wide parties (the South Tyrolean branch of the Italian Democratic Party, PD) or regional parties that form part of a formal alliance with state-wide parties on the other hand (the Socialists' Party of Catalonia, PSC, allied with the PSOE). In the Catalan case, the Catalan green party also participated in the government. A first difference to note is that in this similar governing constellation, the initiative for the Catalan integration law came from the ranks of the Catalan nationalist party (ERC), whereas in South Tyrol, the smaller coalition partner, the Italian PD, took the lead (see table 1 below). Minority nationalists in Catalonia were thus the active driving force behind the law, whereas they took a more passive stance in South Tyrol.

The Catalan law was debated in two plenary sessions of the Catalan parliament, on 14 October 2009 and on 28 April 2010.¹⁰ The debates were not very controversial since immigration as such was welcomed by all participants of the debate. None of the parties was worried about the impact of immigration on the region *per se*, but about how the language and culture into which immigrants are integrated and in which they are received should be defined, whether in Catalan, or in bilingual (Spanish and Catalan) terms. The former was the position of the governing coalition composed of the Republican Left of Catalonia (ERC), the Party of Socialists of Catalonia (PSC) and the Initiative for Catalonia Greens (ICV). It was also supported from the opposition by Catalan nationalist Convergence and Union (CiU), which defended the idea of a Catalonia defined by 'one language, one history and one set of common traditions' (Cleries i González, *Diari de Sessions* 28 April 2010: 18, author's translation). This position was not meant in an exclusive way towards immigrants, since these parties explicitly defined Catalonia in a welcoming way as a land open to newcomers throughout the debate. But it is a stance that precludes the possibility of defining the culture, language and heritage of the region simultaneously in Spanish and Catalan terms. The latter was precisely the position of the Citizens' party (C's), a party that was founded with the aim of protecting the linguistic rights of Catalonia's Spanish-speaking population (Interview with member of Catalan parliament from C's, 19 June 2014, Barcelona), and of the regional branch of the Spanish People's party, i.e. the People's party of Catalonia (PPC). MPs from both parties defended the bilingual identity of the region, arguing in favour of allowing immigrants to choose the language they prefer: 'Why not Spanish? Why do you not let the immigrants make their own choice?' (Domingo Domingo, *Diari de Sessions* 14 October 2014: 35, author's translation). PPC was additionally opposing the law on the grounds that it was not an actual integration law, but a reception law and that it established the agency of migrations, an institution the party considered unnecessary (*Diari de sessions* 14 October 2009: 35-36). C's and PPC thereby proposed a model of cultural integration that corresponds to the South Tyrolean solution that treats all official languages on equal terms. From the triangle of *nation*, *state* and the *market* in which immigrants find their place according to Entzinger (2000), the first of these domains was thus the polarised one when debating the law within the Catalan parliament. The behaviour of CiU which at the time of debating and voting on the law formed part of the opposition is particularly instructive. The opposition party fully cooperated in both the work of the parliamentary commission and the

¹⁰*Diari de sessions del parlament de Catalunya*, VIII legislatura, Serie P, número 95, 14 October 2009; Serie P, número 118, 28 April 2010. Available from http://www.parlament.cat/web/documentacio/publicacions/diari-ple?p_pagina=1andp_fw= [last visited: 11 November 2014].

final voting. In the debate, members of CiU and of the governing coalition expressly thanked each other for openness to dialogue and constructive cooperation (Diari de sessions 28 April 2010: 17 and 21 respectively). The law was accepted with 117 votes in favour and 17 votes against (ibid.: 25), i.e. a comfortable support base of 87%.

Table 1. Integration laws and their politics in Catalonia and South Tyrol

Re-gion	Official title of Law	Introduced by	Plenary debates	Dominant political division
CAT	LLEI 10/2010, del 7 de maig, d'acollida de les persones immigrades i de les retornades a Catalunya	Carme Capdevila i Palau, Minister of social action and citizenship, Republican Left of Catalonia (= Catalan minority nationalist party, in coalition with PsC, and ICV)	14 Oct 2009 28 Apr 2010	Centre-periphery, about the definition of the cultural community into which immigrants integrate
ST	LANDESGESETZ vom 28. Oktober 2011, Nr. 12, Integration ausländischer Bürgerinnen und Bürger	Roberto Bizzo, Minister of innovation, informatics, labour, associations, finance and household, Democratic Party (= Italian state-wide party, in coalition with SVP)	15 Sep 2011 16 Sep 2011 6 Oct 2011 21 Oct 2011	Economic, about whether and to what extent immigrants get access to socio-economic resources

The consensus between Catalan parties upon debating the welcome law is in line with a much longer standing consensual tradition of cooperation between Catalan nationalist parties with regard to immigration (Franco-Guillén and Zapata-Barrero, 2014). Cooperative behaviour dates back to as early as 1992 when the Girona report, an analysis of immigration and integration challenges and 50 concrete policy recommendations was proposed on 9 July 1992 by civil society actors from the province of Girona, which led the Catalan parliament to *unanimously* urge the regional government to develop measures to deal with immigrants' social integration (Pinyol, 2012: 29). Catalan nationalist parties made deliberate efforts to forge a consensus and prevent instrumentalising immigration in electoral competition. The consensus was formalised in the 'National Pact for Immigration' that was signed by all major Catalan parties, social and economic actors, immigrant associations and actors of the third sector on 19 December 2008 (Generalitat, 2009). Of the parties that held seats in the Catalan parliament at the time, only the Catalan branch of the state-wide Partido Popular did not sign the pact. The key reason why the PPC refused to sign the pact was again not a diverging stance on the issues of immigration and integration as such, but a diverging stance on the predominance of the Catalan language and culture in defining the symbolic community into which to integrate newcomers according to the Pact (Interview with member of PPC executive, 29 May 2014, Barcelona).

The key conflict in Catalonia when it comes to immigrant integration appears to be about defining the linguistic identity of the host community. Catalan actors came to an agreement that prioritised Catalan identity for the integration of newcomers, thereby adding the issue to a number of controversial issues in their conflict with the Spanish centre on the territorial dimension, but keeping it outside of intra-Catalan competition.¹¹ With conflict centring on the domain of integration that concerns 'the nation', the question of steering immigrant integration was linked to the centre-periphery dimension of party competition where minority nationalist parties in favour of self-determination on one side of the spectrum oppose parties representing the central state at the other end, and where competition is essentially about the distribution of competencies and national identity (Alonso 2012). These, rather than questions of immigrants' rights and duties, were the topics parties debated controversially. Within the Catalan nationalist arena of competition, immigration and integration were depoliticised, i.e. characterised by “relatively restrained political discourse and a high level of cooperation and compromise in decision making” (Peters, Doughtie and McCulloch, 1977, 336). Within the centre-periphery arena of competition, however, the cultural dimension of integration policy was politicised. This finding is in line with an expectation formulated by Jeram (2012: 61), namely that minority nationalists will link the immigration issue to the dimension where they tend to have the highest stakes, i.e. the centre/periphery or territorial dimension. Linking the issue to the territorial dimension implies that minority nationalists will not compete amongst each other on the new issue, but will use it as an additional topic on which to present an opposing stance towards political parties representing the interests of the central state: 'Minority nationalist elites have an interest in perpetuating the struggle for independence or increased autonomy because of the rational economic and emotive reasons and thus are constantly in search of new issues that can increase the salience of the nationalist conflict' (Jeram 2012: 61).

However, Jeram's expectation does not hold in the case of South Tyrol where the political context in which the integration law was adopted looked different. The integration law was debated four times in the South Tyrolean Parliament, namely on 15 and 16 September 2011 and on 6 and 21 October 2011.¹² The dividing lines and the controversial aspects differed markedly

¹¹It is interesting in this regard that the only existing vigorously anti-immigrant party in Catalonia (Plataforma per Catalunya, PxC, does not hold any seats in the regional parliament) had originally deliberately avoided to position itself on the territorial dimension (Arrighi de Casanova 2012: 267). Later on, however, the party voted against the right of the Catalan people to decide on their future through a vote on independence, thereby taking a pro-centre stance (Minuto digital, 6 August 2013)..

¹²Wortprotokolle der Landtagssitzungen Nr. 108, 15.9.2011; Nr. 109, 16.9.2011; Nr. 112, 6.10.2011; Nr. 114, 21.10.2011. Available from <http://www.landtag-bz.org/de/datenbanken-sammlungen/legislaturperiode-14.asp>, [last visited 11 November 2014].

from the constellation in Catalonia. In South Tyrol, the issue of immigrant integration was strongly polarised in *itself*, and not *in function* of a polarised centre-periphery conflict. This can be seen from the fact that the bill proposal brought forward by the governing coalition of SVP and PD came under attack from two sides. At one end of the spectrum, the Green party criticised the law for not being inclusive and enabling *enough*. Some of the points brought up by the Greens in both the Commission tasked with the law and the Plenary debates were that the law neither provided enough financial resources for integration, nor enough recognition for immigrants' languages, that it should provide more support for immigrant associations and more possibilities to let immigrants participate in public life, e.g. by allowing them to vote in referenda at the local level (Wortprotokoll 15 September 2011: 32).

At the other end of the spectrum, the most vocal immigration-sceptical challenge was launched by the governing SVP's most significant competitor in the German-speaking arena and largest opposition party, the Libertarians (dF). The dF criticised that the law was only addressing integration, but not the problem the party is most concerned with, the question of *immigration* to the region. The party would prefer to 'solve' immigration framed as 'a problem' by resorting to a clear logic of guest-workers, entitled to come only for a limited time, and without their families. According to dF, this would otherwise lead to a situation where 'one person comes into the country for work, and then many follow suit, who never paid a cent into the social security system, but will fully benefit from it' (Wortprotokoll 15 September 2011: 38, author's translation). This has been the core topic for dF from the beginning. The Libertarians (dF) were founded in 1992 and imported the discourse and positions of the extreme right characteristic of Jörg Haider's FPÖ in Austria into South Tyrolean party competition. Already the first electoral programme of the dF, written for the regional elections in November 1993, demanded 'immediate expulsion and prohibition from residence for foreign offenders' (Freiheitliches Wahlprogramm 1993, p. 9, author's translation), at a time when the province's net immigration rate had only just turned positive, as South Tyrol began to develop from a region of *emigration* into a region of *immigration* (Medda-Windischer and Girardi 2010: 13-14). Two smaller German speaking parties also held seats in the parliament at the time of debating the law, the South Tyrolean Freedom (Südtiroler Freiheit) and the Citizens' Union (*Bürgerunion*, BU). Representatives of both parties joined dF in alluding to the motive of competition for economic resources. The BU representative had consequently opted to demand seven, rather than five years of residency as a condition for accessing social benefits in South Tyrol (Wortprotokoll 15

September 2011: 21). The law was finally adopted with 21 votes in favour, 9 votes against and one blank vote, i.e. a support base of 68%.

Within the minority nationalist arena of party competition, the immigration issue was thus occupied by an anti-immigrant player (dF) that put the SVP under pressure, which stands in stark contrast to ongoing cooperation on immigration-related matters between Catalan parties. From an early stage onwards, immigration and integration had come to be perceived as issues that are directly linked to questions of the right- or wrongful distribution of wealth and benefits to immigrants, which was made fully explicit in the differential treatment preferred in some provisions of the integration law. On the account of an MP who had served in the provincial parliament since 1998, the issue of immigration first began to enter parliamentary debates in South Tyrol when the distribution scheme for housing benefits had to be reformed (Interview with South Tyrolean MP, 3 February 2014, Bolzano). This is an indication that linking the issues of immigrant integration to questions of redistribution is not only characteristic of the parliamentary debates on the integration law, but has a longer history within the province. Importantly, the dividing line on immigration thus cross-cuts the centre-periphery divide. The strongest pro-immigration party is the Green party, a multi-lingual party that refuses to declare itself as either a German or an Italian-speaking party. The German SVP tries to maintain a moderate stance. On the immigration-sceptical end of the spectrum we find both German (dF, BU, StF) and Italian-speaking parties (Lega Nord and Unitalia) who are united in portraying immigration as a threat to the social welfare of autochtones in the region. In South Tyrol, immigration is thus not an instrument of minority nation-building and also not an additional issue on which to oppose Italian parties on the centre-periphery dimension. Therefore, the question of defining the community into which immigrants are expected to integrate does not play an important role in the debates. Immigration appears to rather be aligned with parties' stances on the economic left right dimension that cross-cuts the Italian/German divide within South Tyrol and centres controversies around the question of if, and if so under which conditions newcomers can get access to the resources provided within South Tyrol's system of social security.

5. Conclusion

This paper has addressed the integration policy responses minority regions give to immigration. The analysis has shown that it is important to differentiate integration policies along three dimensions, rather than classify regions as taking an in- or exclusive approach to regional citizenship per se, as has sometimes been done in the literature (e.g. Kymlicka 2001, Hepburn

2011). Minority regions are neither hostile, nor friendly towards immigration *per se*. Rather, they give differentiated policy responses to new forms of societal heterogeneity. Despite strong differences in rhetoric, the two minority regions show striking similarities in using their integration laws predominantly as instruments to foster immigrants' integration within the socio-economic domain. More subtle differences were found in the fact that only South Tyrol conditions access to some resources within this dimension. At the same time, it adopts a more flexible stance on cultural integration, leaving it to the immigrants to choose whether they want to integrate into the Italian or the German language and culture. Catalonia's reception bill is the exact mirror image of this. The Catalan law coherently emphasises unconditional, equal access to all services provided by the Generalitat. At the same time, Catalonia opts predominantly for a monist model within the cultural dimension of integration policy, expecting immigrants to integrate into the Catalan language and culture. This emphasis is in line with an assimilationist turn also at the level of party discourses that has recently been described by Jeram (2014).

When looking at the politics behind the laws, important differences could be found in the way parties in both regions deal with the issues of immigration and integration, which makes the overall similarities in the actual policy approach even more surprising. Catalan nationalists subsume questions of immigration and integration into the territorial dimension of competition, linking it to the competential and identitarian questions constitutive of the centre-periphery conflict (Alonso, 2012). They cooperate with each other on the issues while confronting the Spanish state. Parties in South Tyrol link the issue to redistributive questions characteristic of the economic left/right dimension that cross-cuts the centre-periphery conflict in South Tyrol. Immigration is not linked to the self-determination project of the German minority as German parties compete with each other, rather than cooperating on the issues of immigration and integration. This has led to a dynamic foreseen by Hepburn (2011), whereby immigration becomes polarised within the minority region, and policies become more restrictive as a result, in the case analysed this happened within the socio-economic dimension.

What this paper leaves unanswered is the question why minority nationalist parties in Catalonia, but not in South Tyrol reach a consensus on immigration and link it to their conflict with the centre in the first place. The debates in parliament analysed here in more detail are only the very last link of a long causal chain preceding the adoption of the integration laws. A full explanation of minority regions' policy answers to immigration would therefore need to

turn to the causal determinants of the nature of electoral competition itself. Three such determinants should be analysed through detailed process tracing in the future¹³:

(1) The incentives and constraints of the institutional framework accommodating multinational diversity, in particular with regard to the educational system and linguistic policies. Whereas both regions are officially bi- or pluri-lingual (granting official status to Catalan and Spanish, and German, Italian and Ladin respectively) the premise of Catalan linguistic policy is the principle of “linguistic normalisation” which implies a prioritisation of the use of Catalan in public administration and school instruction. Unlike in South Tyrol, the principle of territorial autonomy *for* Catalonia is not coupled with a consociational regime *within* the region. The latter is precisely the solution in South Tyrol, where territorial autonomy *for* the province is coupled with consociational power-sharing between the elites of the three groups *within* the province. As a consequence, the educational system is pillarised and an Italian school system exists alongside a German and a Ladin one. Separation aims to protect these groups' differences, but also prevents the society from overcoming linguistic divisions (Whistaler 2008: 13-14). It seems likely that the different institutional regimes chosen to accommodate traditional, multinational diversity set different incentives to political elites when approaching the question of how to deal with new societal groups. They may explain the unquestioned agreement among Catalan elites to welcome and integrate immigrants into the Catalan language, since this response coheres with unifying, territorial Catalan model of linguistic normalisation.

(2) The different degree of separatist mobilisation and the strength of nation-building in both contexts. In the Catalan case, immigrant integration is steered against the backdrop of a strong independence movement with the goal of separation from the Spanish state. At the time of the adoption of the integration law, this goal was officially defended by ERC, the very same minority nationalist party that presented the law. In light of this, the welcoming, equality-based approach coupled with the clear message that the welcoming nation is defined by the Catalan language and culture can be seen as part of a more encompassing political strategy aimed at winning immigrants' support for the Catalan nation-building project. By contrast, the dominant German-speaking party that was governing at the time of the adoption of the integration law, SVP, does not aim for separation from Italy and can therefore be assumed to have fewer

¹³I am thankful to an anonymous referee for pointing out the importance of the first and second factor to me.

incentives to actively include immigrants into a nation-building project that would be defined by the German language and culture.¹⁴

(3) The experience with internal immigration and the construction of the minority identity. The earliest causal factor that would have to be included into a full, procedural explanation would be the fact that Catalonia has a history of integrating those who came from the South of Spain during the early and mid 20th century into the Catalan society, culture and language. A Catalan nationalist party can therefore not realistically adopt an anti-immigrant position because the population it refers to is itself to a considerable extent composed of immigrants. By contrast, in South Tyrol, the society is strongly segmented into an Italian-speaking, a German-speaking and a Ladin-speaking pillar and internal immigrants from the South of Italy were never integrated into the German-speaking community. Rather, immigration from Southern Italy has historically been perceived as a threat to the preservation of the German language and culture within the region. This would imply that not only the formal institutional framework and regional party politics, but also the more long-standing construction of what defines the minority nation structure minority regions' policy responses to immigration.

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¹⁴It should be noted, however, that the smaller German-speaking parties challenge the SVP on this matter and have positioned themselves either in favour of independence (dF) or of uniting with Austria (Südtiroler Freiheit)

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