Diversity and the minority nation: A case study of Catalonia’s “National Agreement on Immigration”

by

Alexander Gunn
B.A. (Hons), University of Winnipeg, 2008
M.A., University of Victoria, 2010

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Abstract

This dissertation explores the relationship between immigration, diversity and minority nationalism. Through a study of Catalonia and its relationship with the Spanish state, the dissertation assesses how immigration and the growing social diversity that accompanies it, can challenge, undermine, or reinforce the political claims and objectives of minority nationalists, in particular, their goal of promoting a distinct and self-determining national community. It focuses on an effort by Catalan political and civil society leaders to construct a “national consensus” on immigration, the 2008 National Agreement on Immigration, which provided a 20-year plan for adapting Catalan government services and Catalan society to the pressures and demands of its increasingly diverse population, while at the same time providing mechanisms for the integration of newcomers into the Catalan language and national community. The analysis centres on the text of the National Agreement on Immigration as well as recent Catalan immigration plans and policy documents, in addition to the broader debate surrounding the National Agreement among Catalonia’s major political parties. The dissertation reveals that the National Agreement on Immigration represented both a significant re-framing of Catalan national identity and an attempt to expand the power and autonomy of the Catalan government by the various signatories to the accord. It concludes that the National Agreement represented an important component of a pivotal era in Catalan politics, one that has the potential to radically redefine the region’s relationship with both Spain and Europe, and in which questions surrounding immigration and diversity are increasingly intersecting with broader debates surrounding economic instability and the prospect of Catalan independence.
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List of Abbreviations

CDC: Convergència Democràtica de Catalunya
CiU: Convergència i Unió
Cs: Ciutadans – Partit de la Ciutadania
ERC: Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya
EU: European Union
EUiA: Esquerra Unida i Alternativa
ICV: Iniciativa per Catalunya Verds
IU: Izquierda Unida
PP: Partido Popular
PPC: Partit Popular de Catalunya
PSOE: Partido Socialista Obrero Español
UDC: Unió Democràtica de Catalunya
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**Introduction**

Increased immigration poses particular challenges for countries throughout the Western world, both in terms of matters of governance and in relation to questions of national identity. While often falling under the purview of central governments, immigration and integration processes invariably have an impact on regional and local government policy responsibilities – such as education, language, public health, labour, economic development, housing, social services and welfare. Accordingly, immigration poses a particular challenge to federal or multi-level governance states, one that leads to complex interactions, negotiations, and occasionally conflicts between different levels of government. The influx of newcomers to Western societies in recent decades, many of whom speak different languages and possess different cultural backgrounds to that of their host societies, also poses significant identity-related challenges. Growing social diversity within these high immigration societies can challenge or “problematize” existing conceptions of national identity.

Immigration and social diversity pose a particular challenge for “minority nations” such as Quebec, Flanders and Catalonia, which for decades have struggled to secure greater self-government within Canada, Belgium and Spain, respectively, as well as to define and maintain a coherent sense of collective identity distinct from the national identities promoted by their larger states. Minority nationalist movements have increasingly focused their attention on immigration and integration policy, with both Quebec and Flanders successfully securing greater jurisdictional autonomy over these policy areas from their central governments in recent decades. In both cases, devolution coincided with broader constitutional or quasi-constitutional debates taking place within Canada and Belgium, debates precipitated in large part by the self-determination aspirations of the Québécois and Flemish national communities.
This association between immigration and broader nationalist struggles corresponds to the main hypothesis of my dissertation: *that the complexity of present-day minority nationalist self-determination struggles are increasingly encapsulated in their public discourses surrounding the subjects of immigration and integration, discourses that can prompt political struggles both in the minority nations themselves as well as in their relations with their respective multinational states.* These discourses operate in a relational dynamic with broader minority nationalist struggles, in that they invariably reflect existing attitudes, power dynamics, and political cleavages within minority nationalist struggles, but also have the potential to re-frame understandings of the minority nation and the place and status of the minority nation within its wider multinational polity, and therefore have the potential to re-shape the broader minority nationalist struggle itself. Specifically, discourses surrounding immigration and integration have the potential to challenge or re-shape understandings of the minority national community in a number of ways. On one level, debates within minority nations on how best to articulate a “national” immigration policy can raise significant identity-related questions surrounding the openness, traditions, and cultural/linguistic characteristics of the “nation”. They can also produce barriers regarding the minority nation’s acceptance of newcomers in terms of whom they deem to be “in” or “out” of the national community, as well as raise questions surrounding the rights and obligations of citizenship and residence (for both newcomers and the existing population) within minority nations. On another level, a minority nation seeking greater jurisdictional autonomy over immigration and integration policy can have ramifications in terms of its relations with its multinational state and with the international community. The struggles to secure this autonomy from its larger state can lead to pressure for broader constitutional (or quasi-constitutional) reform as other sub-state units attempt to emulate the immigration powers
secured by the minority nation. These struggles can also influence the international image of minority nations, as their openness and tolerance towards newcomers (or their lack-thereof) becomes more widely known; particularly as they compete with other advanced capitalist societies for skilled immigrant labour. These various debates and struggles over immigration and integration can all lead to new ways of conceptualizing the minority nation as well as its place and political status within both its multinational polity and the wider world, and more broadly reveal how the specific ways that a minority nation designs its immigration policy and attempts to manage its social diversity continually intersect with its wider efforts at articulating national self-determination claims.

My dissertation centres on a study of Catalonia, analyzing both the impact of immigration on the region’s political discourse, its powers of self-government and its political relationship with the Spanish state. Catalonia experienced an immigration influx in recent years, where between 1999 and 2009, over one million immigrants settled in the region (in addition to over 200,000 newcomers of Spanish nationality), raising the regional population from 6.2 million to 7.4 million residents (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2009, pp. 13-14). In response to these societal changes, Catalonia’s government and citizens attempted to construct a “national consensus” on the invariably divisive subjects of immigration and integration. Catalan nationalism and “nation-building” have long been characterized by consensus-styled politics in which major Catalan political, social and economic actors have frequently cooperated in pressing for greater regional autonomy over specific policy areas from the central government (see Conversi, 1997; Greer, 2007). Immigration therefore represents a recent attempt by the Catalans at building such a

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1 See for example the case of Canada, and the efforts by English-speaking provinces over the past twenty years at securing similar powers to that of Quebec over immigrant recruitment and settlement (Vineberg, 2011).
national consensus around a particular policy issue, one that was best encapsulated by a multi-partite accord entitled, *An Agreement to Live Together: National Agreement on Immigration*. Thirty-two prominent Catalan organizations and interest groups – including “institutional, political, economic and social agents” – signed this agreement in Barcelona on December 19, 2008, after months of public consultation, research and negotiations (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2008a, p. 5). The drafters characterized the agreement as representing the most recent stage in Catalonia’s decades-long effort at fostering a welcoming and supportive national community for newcomers:

The consensus involved in the National Agreement on Immigration represents a further step forward after the many great initiatives that have been performed through the local setting and associations, as well as the different Governments of the Generalitat, in order to encourage the management, reception and integration of immigration (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2008a, p. 7).

The signatories to the agreement included the Catalan President, the Catalan Minister of Social Action and Citizenship (signing on behalf of the Catalan government), representatives from major labour unions and business lobbies, local government associations, immigrant support agencies, ethnic minority associations, and various non-governmental organizations. Further, four of the six major political parties with representation in the Catalan parliament were also signatories to the Agreement. They included the then governing tripartite coalition of the Partit dels Socialistes de Catalunya (PSC), Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya (ERC), and Iniciativa per Catalunya Verds – Esquerra Unida i Alternativa (ICV-EUiA), as well as the main opposition party, Convergència i Unió (CiU). The other two major political parties with parliamentary representation, the Partit Popular de Catalunya (PPC) and the Ciutadans – Partit de la Ciutadania
(Cs), opted to remain outside of the Agreement and acted as vocal sources of criticism to Catalonia’s new “national consensus” on immigration.

**Studying the National Agreement and major research questions**

The scope of the 2008 National Agreement on Immigration was far-reaching, with the potential to expand the powers of the Catalan government, influence the Catalan economy and labour market, affect the relationship between citizens/residents and the Catalan state and public services, and perhaps most significantly, re-define what it means to be Catalan and to participate in the Catalan nation. In this regard, the Agreement had the potential to signal a new era in Catalan political life, in which public debate over questions of national identity and self-determination increasingly dominated both Catalan public discourse and Catalan relations with the rest of Spain. Further, the Catalan government celebrated the Agreement as an expression of consensus-based democratic politics, in which traditional and non-traditional stakeholders publically debated and agreed upon a strategy designed to guide both the Catalan state and society in immigration and integration matters for the next twenty years, as the government’s subsequent *Citizenship and Immigration Plan 2009-2012* explained:

> With the National Agreement on Immigration being viewed as a new consensus to ensure coexistence in Catalonia, the entire process for drawing it up was planned firstly as a process that recognises the knowledge and experience of the various social, political, economic and local actors, and secondly as a process of governance, participatory democracy and networking (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2009, p. 70).

> With these points in mind, my dissertation analyzes both the practical goals of building a “national consensus” on immigration in a minority national context, as well as the content of this particular national consensus and its broader consequences for both Catalan society and
Catalonia’s political relationship with the rest of Spain. Building on the dissertation’s main hypothesis that the complexity of present-day minority nationalist self-determination struggles are increasingly encapsulated in the public discourses surrounding immigration and integration – discourses that both reflect the dynamics of wider nationalist struggles for self-determination as well as have the potential to re-shape these struggles – I argue that the National Agreement on Immigration and the political debates surrounding it represented both a significant re-framing of Catalan national identity and an expression of Catalan nation building by the various signatories to the accord. I further contend that the National Agreement had significant implications in terms of its relationship with the broader academic literature on nationalism and immigration as well as in terms of its role in Catalonia’s political history. First, at a broader thematic level, I contend that Catalonia is emblematic of a wider phenomenon of growing minority national and regional involvement in immigration and integration matters in Western societies (as identified by Kymlicka, 2001a; Keating, 2009; Zapata-Barrero, 2009; Hepburn and Zapata-Barrero, 2014), and that the National Agreement on Immigration represents an opportunity for scholars to analyze Catalonia’s recent attempts to provide a comprehensive response to the phenomena of rising immigration levels and social diversity. Second, at the case level, the National Agreement represented an important stage in the development of Catalonia’s powers of self-government, specifically, its authority over immigration and integration matters. Third, at the political actor level, the National Agreement represented a point of political debate among Catalonia’s major political parties, with the broader effort to forge a “national consensus” being challenged by the opposition of two prominent Spanish unionist parties. These three levels broadly reflect the relational dynamic between nationalism and immigration that underlies this project, as well as act as the foundation for the three main research questions that guide my dissertation:
1) What is the relationship between the National Agreement on Immigration and existing assumptions within the academic literature surrounding minority nationalism and immigration? Does Catalonia’s experience reflect immigration trends identified in other minority national contexts (such as Quebec) or does it diverge from these trends?

2) What is the role of the National Agreement on Immigration in the historical evolution of the Catalan immigration/integration model, and does its framing of immigration and its overall vision of Catalonia represent a point of continuity or discontinuity with this model? Further, how has the National Agreement’s vision of Catalonia endured in relation to the changing political and economic conditions that the region has experienced since 2008?

3) How did prominent actors within Catalan political discourse frame the National Agreement on Immigration during the time of its negotiation and signing? Did the Agreement represent a significant point of politicization, and what was the Agreement’s relationship to broader political cleavages within the Catalan party system, in particular the territorial cleavage between Catalan nationalism and Spanish unionism?

Catalonia as an example of an immigrant-receiving minority nation

My project represents a case study of one particular minority national context, Catalonia, rather than a comparative study of multiple minority nations. I made the decision to conduct a case study of Catalonia for several reasons. First, focusing on a specific setting can offer important in-depth empirical analysis of a political phenomenon within a particular context, providing insights that a more generalized broad-based comparative study could potentially miss, as well as offers a means of testing existing social scientific theories within a real-world setting (see Eckstein, 1975; Collier, 1993; Henn, Weinstein & Foard, 2009, p. 65). Second, a narrower research focus represents a more practicable methodological strategy for a relatively new social scientific researcher to employ (Mair, 1996). Third, my decision to focus on Catalonia reflects my ontological perspective on identity/nationalist politics, namely, that the complexity and dynamics of identity-based debates are best studied from what Giovanni Sartori (1970) describes as a “low-level of abstraction”, in which the contextual particularities of a case are emphasized.
Accordingly, this study will allow me to examine a broader political phenomenon – a minority nation seeking greater political autonomy over immigration and integration matters – that is taking place within a particular historical-structural context – Catalonia’s ongoing struggle for national self-determination within both Spain and the European Union.

Further, my decision to focus on Catalonia rather than a broader comparative study of several minority nations is partly a reflection of some of the major commonalities and differences between Catalonia’s approach to immigration and those of other minority nations. On one level, Catalonia shares certain similarities with other minority nations that have gained greater jurisdictional authority over immigration policy in recent years, namely, Quebec and Flanders:

1) As in Quebec, there is a long-running nationalist discourse in Catalonia (dating back to the early 20th century) regarding migration and its relationship to national identity (Zapata-Barrero, 2007a, p. 192; Greer, 2007, pp. 96-97).

2) The Catalan government has actively drawn on Quebec’s immigration/integration policy framework in their past proposals for devolution of immigration responsibilities from Madrid, proposals that the Spanish government ultimately rejected (Davis, 2009a, pp. 432-434).

3) As in Quebec and Flanders, immigration rates in Catalonia increased significantly in recent years, and immigration increasingly became a focal point within Catalan public discourse, particularly among political parties, non-governmental actors and the Catalan media (Zapata-Barrero, 2007a, p. 182 & 184-185).

4) As in Quebec and Flanders, the subject of immigration in Catalonia ties directly to the issue of language policy, with nationalists equating integration into the Catalan nation with integration into the Catalan linguistic community (Keating, 2001a, pp. 167-168).

All of these similarities would lend credence towards my conducting a comparative study of these three particular cases. Nonetheless, there are important differences between the
multinational contexts of Catalonia-Spain, Quebec-Canada and Flanders-Belgium, which justify a more in-depth study of Catalonia’s particularities:

1) Compared to Canada’s lengthy history as an immigrant receiving country and Belgium’s legacy of 20th century guest-worker migration, large-scale immigration is a relatively recent phenomenon in Spain, a country characterized by high levels of emigration prior to the 1990s. Accordingly, there is a less developed immigration policy framework at the Spanish state level than is the case in Canada, Belgium or even in Catalonia itself. Consequently, Catalonia has often been at the “vanguard” of immigration policy debate and innovation within Spain (Davis, 2009a, p. 435), while the Spanish central government by contrast has frequently struggled to develop a strategy to address the influx of immigrants to Spain during the past two decades (Davis, 2009b, pp. 151-152).

2) While minority nations like Quebec have been quite successful at attracting migrants that demonstrate either the ability or the likelihood of speaking the minority national language (French), by comparison, a significant proportion of new immigrants to Catalonia are Spanish-speaking (often from Latin America) and therefore have greater potential of identifying with the Spanish national/linguistic community rather than the Catalan one (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2008a, p. 16).

3) Unlike in Canada where immigration is a matter of shared jurisdiction between the federal and provincial governments or in Belgium where the federalization process led to the devolution of various integration policy matters to the regional level, since the restoration of democracy in the late-1970s (and in spite of the devolution of certain policy responsibilities to the regions) Spain remains a relatively centralized political system. Immigration is therefore the responsibility of the central government, and Madrid has shown little willingness in permitting a greater role for the regions over the past thirty years (Davis, 2009a, pp. 432-434).

4) Lastly, both Catalonia and Spain have recently experienced a deep fiscal and economic crisis, with Madrid instituting a rigid austerity agenda in recent years as a way of placating the concerns of European and international creditors. These austerity measures were introduced by the governing Partido Popular, a conservative Spanish political party that has been (and remains) widely unpopular among many segments of the Catalan electorate. While such centre-periphery tensions between minority nationalists and the central state are common in both the Quebec-Canada and Flanders-Belgium contexts, the current divide between Catalan nationalism and Madrid, coupled with the tensions generated by the recent economic crisis in Europe,

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2 Catalonia’s complicated relationship with the Partido Popular is in part due to the PP’s past opposition to Catalan efforts at securing greater political autonomy from Spain, and in part due to the party’s aggressive promotion of a centralist vision of pan-Spanish nationalism as a way of counteracting Spain’s minority nationalist movements.
have fostered a unique and possibly destructive dynamic within the Catalonia-Spain relationship that deserves analysis in the years ahead.\(^3\)

For all these reasons, I contend that it is a particularly fruitful time to conduct an in-depth study of the Catalan experience, during what is a pivotal moment in Catalonia’s history and its relationship with the rest of Spain.

In undertaking this project, I have built on a growing body of research on the relationship between Catalan nationalism and immigration. Scholars have explored topics such as the nationalist reaction to the influx of Castilian\(^4\) speaking migrants from other parts of Spain to Catalonia during the mid-20\(^{th}\) century, the socio-economic divide that developed between the native-born Catalan population and the poorer migrant communities, and the efforts undertaken by the Catalan government to integrate Castilian-speaking newcomers into the Catalan language, society and economy since the restoration of self-government (see Conversi, 1997; Greer, 2007; Guibernau, 2004; Keating, 2001a). More recent literature includes analysis of Spain’s internal “diversities”, particularly the interactions between its traditional national identity-groups and the new identity-groups that have arrived through immigration (Zapata-Barrero, 2010), as well as analysis of Spain’s “practical philosophy” towards immigration, which has developed largely in response to “the questions and answers that the day-to-day governance of immigration generates” rather than in response to a “pre-conceived” notion of Spanish national identity, belonging and citizenship (Zapata-Barrero, 2012, p. 186). The dissertation also builds on recent

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\(^3\) I discuss the above points further in Chapters Two and Three.

\(^4\) “Castilian” (or castellano) is an alternative term for the Spanish language that is used in various parts of the Castilian/Spanish speaking world. The term both reflects the language’s origins in the Castile region of Spain, as well as distinguishes it from other languages spoken in Spain, such as Catalan, Basque and Galician. Generally, this dissertation refers to the majority language that is spoken in Spain as “Castilian” rather than “Spanish”.

scholarship surrounding Catalonia’s efforts at securing greater devolution of immigration responsibilities from Madrid during the early to mid-2000s (see Colino, 2009; Davis, 2009a), analyses of Catalan political parties and their influence over nationalist discourse surrounding immigration and integration (see Guibernau, 2004; Kleiner-Liebau, 2009; Hepburn, 2011), and studies of the various social challenges that have arisen in Catalonia as a result of the recent influx of immigrants to the region (see Fernàndez, 2008; Pardo-Prado & Molins, 2009).

This literature on Catalonia, however, focuses on policies, initiatives and political discourse that largely predate the drafting of the National Agreement on Immigration and accordingly fails to consider either this particular event or the events that have taken place within Catalonia and Spain in subsequent years. Important recent events include: the post-2008 economic crisis in Europe and the related fiscal crises facing both the Spanish and Catalan levels of government; the 2011 Spanish general election and the formation of a Partido Popular government in Madrid under Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy, followed by the implementation of Spain’s controversial fiscal austerity program; intergovernmental disputes between Spain and Catalonia over the region’s debt and the perception of a fiscal imbalance between Catalonia and the rest of Spain; and lastly, the growing demands by Catalan civil society for independence, demands that led to the 2014 consultation vote on independence and that shaped public debate in the 2015 Catalan parliamentary elections. In this respect, my dissertation will offer a different outlook from past scholarship by focusing specifically on how immigration and integration were interpreted and framed within the 2008 National Agreement on Immigration and in the political discourse and policy initiatives that has followed in the wake of its signing, a period of
pronounced political and economic change in which the stability of the Spanish system and the supposed moderation of Catalan nationalism were cast increasingly in doubt.

**Research approach**

To explore my research hypothesis and questions pertaining to the role of the National Agreement on Immigration (and the broader political debate surrounding the Agreement) in shaping and re-framing Catalan national identity, my dissertation draws on the discourse analysis research tradition, and the related “constructivist” notion that social practices such as political discourse play an important role in the construction and perpetuation of collective identities, including national identities (Kleiner-Liebau, 2009; Sutherland, 2005). Specifically, my dissertation draws on a subset of the discourse analysis tradition entitled “frame analysis”. Frame analysis centres on identifying the various and competing ways that actors “frame” or conceptualize specific issues within speech and text and is often used for the analysis of various types of political and social discourse, in particular, analysis of media discourse (Kuypers, 2009; Schmidtke, 2007). The “frames” that serve as the focal point of these studies represent conceptual devices that guide and shape human understanding of phenomena in the wider world. As William Gamson (1989) explains, “a frame is a central organizing idea for making sense of relevant events and suggesting what is at issue” (p. 157). Goffman (1974) similarly defines a “frame” or “framework” as a “schemata of interpretation” that humans employ “to locate, perceive, identify, and label a seemingly infinite number of concrete occurrences defined in its terms” (p. 21). Frames are important devices in shaping human understanding in that, according to Gamson (1989), they provide “meaning” to otherwise “neutral facts” or information, whereby, on their own “[f]acts have no intrinsic meaning”, and only “take on their meaning by being
embedded in a frame or story line that organizes them and gives them coherence, selecting certain ones to emphasize while ignoring others” (p. 157). Building on this perspective, Kuypers (2009) argues that frames exert considerable power over human attitudes, particularly their ability to mould our perception of complex phenomena through their emphasis on certain pieces of information (or interpretations of that information) over others:

Frames are so powerful because they induce us to filter our perceptions of the world in particular ways, essentially making some aspects of our multidimensional reality more noticeable than other aspects. They operate by making some information more salient than other information (p. 181).

Frames also frequently draw on earlier societal concepts and understandings in order to shape human understanding of contemporary events and at a political level allow for the dissemination of particular ideological/partisan interpretations of complex issues, as Kleiner-Liebau (2009) explains:

Frames are thus categories and schemata that are already present in the culture and the memories of social actors. Nevertheless, as frames are socially constructed knowledge they underlie the constant process of redefinition and reproduction through discourse. In discourse (media, public or political) social actors can use particular frames deliberately to define and construct social reality according to their interests (p. 42).

In this regard, my dissertation focuses on the framing of the subjects of “immigration”, “integration”, and “Catalan identity” within both Catalan government documents pertaining to the National Agreement on Immigration and within the wider partisan debate in Catalonia surrounding the National Agreement. As discussed in greater detail in the following section, my frame analysis centres on the texts of the National Agreement on Immigration, as well as on related Catalan government plans and reports such as the Citizenship and Immigration Plan
2009-2012, the 2012 Monitoring Commission report, and the *Citizenship and Migration Plan: Horizon 2016*. In order to analyze Catalan political party discourse surrounding the National Agreement, my frame analysis focuses on the parties’ official platforms for the two Catalan parliamentary elections (2006 and 2010) that took place in the years preceding and immediately after the signing of the National Agreement, as well as analyzes press statements and parliamentary statements pertaining to the National Agreement on Immigration that were made by spokespeople from the different parties during the National Agreement’s development, negotiation and post-signing phases (from 2007 to 2010).

Discourse/frame analysis therefore offers a number of beneficial methodological features that are pertinent to this project, in particular, how it emphasizes the importance of language, rhetorical devices and framing strategies in relation to complex (and frequently controversial) issues like nationalism and immigration. Building on the argument above, frames represent important conceptual devices for a political actor to employ, which allow the actor to guide or shape public perception of a complex phenomenon (in the case of this project, social and political attitudes towards the “nation” and the place of immigrants within it) in ways that both reflect the actor’s ideological/partisan understanding of the world as well as supports the actor’s broader political agenda (such as the preservation and perpetuation of a distinct Catalan national community within the context of a multinational Spanish state and an increasingly transnational and mobile global population).
Selection of material, NVivo coding, language and translation

Before proceeding, a brief description of the understanding of “political discourse” that is employed in this dissertation and a greater explanation of the methodological approach that was used in reconstructing this political discourse would be useful. The concept of “political discourse” surrounding the National Agreement on Immigration is understood in this dissertation as the combination of the official statements by the Catalan Generalitat regarding the National Agreement on Immigration, as well as public statements by the major Catalan political parties and their representatives during a particular period between 2006 and 2010.\(^5\) To reconstruct and analyze this political discourse a collection of empirical material pertaining to the National Agreement on Immigration was selected, specifically, the final text of the National Agreement on Immigration (analyzed in Chapter Four), subsequent Catalan Generalitat immigration plans and reports that cite the National Agreement and attempt to realize its provisions (analyzed in Chapter Five), as well as political party documents and parliamentary transcripts pertaining to the National Agreement and that reveal the partisan positions and debates surrounding the Agreement during its development, negotiation, signing and aftermath (analyzed in Chapter six).

The political party material included election manifestos, official documents and press statements from the six major parties with representation within the Catalan parliament during the 2006 to 2010 period when the National Agreement was proposed, developed, negotiated and signed – the Ciutadans, Convergència i Unió, Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya, Iniciativa per Catalunya-Verds - Esquerra Unida i Alternativa, Partit dels Socialistes de Catalunya, and Partit

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\(^5\) This understanding of political discourse and this approach to studying the framing of particular concepts within political discourse draws on the research of Désirée Kleiner-Liebau (2009) in her work, *Migration and the Construction of National Identity in Spain*, which involves a similar study of political party discourse regarding the subjects of immigration and national identity within Spanish and Catalan politics between 2000 and 2005.
Popular de Catalunya – as well as included transcripts from plenary sessions of the Catalan parliament, and transcripts from sessions of the Catalan parliamentary Committee on Welfare and Immigration (in Catalan, “Comissió de Benestar i Immigració”). Relevant documents were identified by searching for the phrase “pacte nacional per a la immigració” (as well as shorter variations of this phrase that were frequently employed in the broader political discourse such as “pacte nacional” and “el pacte”) on the official websites for the major parties⁶ as well as by searching for these terms through the Parliament of Catalonia’s online database.

To conduct the frame analysis of these documents, I employed QSR NVivo 10 software, a qualitative data analysis program that allows for systematic examination, coding, and organization of large and varied sources of textual material. The program was used to identify and code key words and phrases within the documents that related to the subject of the National Agreement on Immigration as well as to the themes of immigration, Catalan nationalism and self-government. Different codes and categories were developed inductively over time, and initially focused on terms such as “National Agreement” (in Catalan, “Pacte Nacional”), “immigration” (“immigració”), “migration” (“migració”), “immigrant” (“immigrant”, “persones migrades”), “nation” (“nació”), “diversity” (“diversitat”), “identity” (“identitat”), “culture” (“cultura”), “integration” (“integració”), “Catalonia” (“Catalunya”), “Spain” (“Espanya”), and “Europe” (“Europa”). As my research proceeded, however, new categories and terms were identified and included in my analysis, specifically, categories and terms that I discovered

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⁶ Unfortunately, some of the political party material that was analyzed for this study is no longer available online due to recent developments within Catalan politics that led to the significant redesign or even the complete erasure of certain official party websites. The most significant example of this elimination of material is the Convergència i Unió material which was erased along with the entire CiU website in the wake of the 2015 schism between its two constituent parties, the CDC and UDC.
represented important components of the discourse surrounding the National Agreement as well as surrounding immigration more broadly in Catalonia, terms such as “common public culture” (“cultura pública comuna”), “migratory fact” (“el fet migratori”), “management of migratory flows” (“gestió dels fluxos migratoris”), “Catalan language” (“llengua catalana”), “common language” (“llengua comuna”), xenophobia (“xenofòbia”) and “emigration” (“emigració”).

Lastly, on the subject of the language of the empirical material that I analyzed in this dissertation, the majority of documents issued by the Catalan government and parliament are provided in both the Catalan and Castilian languages (reflecting Catalonia’s status as an officially bilingual autonomous community), however, the Catalan government also provides English translations of a significant proportion of its official plans and policy documents, including English translations of the National Agreement on Immigration and of Catalonia’s official immigration plans. My analysis of the final text of the National Agreement on Immigration and of the Catalan Generalitat’s 2009 and 2014 official immigration plans therefore relied on both the Catalan-language and English-language versions of these documents, and the dissertation similarly uses the English translations that are employed by the Catalan government for many of the major concepts and terms that are discussed and analyzed in this project (including, terms like “common public culture”, “migratory fact”, “migratory flows”, “country of immigration”, etc.). Other documents explored in the fourth and fifth chapters, including the draft version of the National Agreement on Immigration and the 2012 Monitoring Commission report did not have English translations and therefore the dissertation relies entirely on the official Catalan language versions of these documents. In the case of the political party documents and parliamentary transcript material analyzed in Chapter Six, again the dissertation
generally focused on Catalan-language versions of these documents, though in certain cases, where Catalan versions were not available, Castilian-language documents were analyzed instead.⁷

**Structure of the dissertation**

My dissertation begins with an overview of the key concepts underlying the project, in addition to the project’s relationship to the wider academic literature on nationalism, immigration, and identity politics as well as to the literature on Spanish and Catalan politics. The first chapter provides a broader theoretical discussion surrounding minority nations and the identity-related challenges facing them due to both immigration and their complex relationships with their larger multinational states. Chapter Two provides a historical and contemporary overview of Catalan nationalism, specifically focusing on Catalonia’s political context as a minority nation within both a multinational democratic state, Spain, and a larger supra-national political/economic entity, the European Union. My concern in this chapter is with analyzing the evolution of Catalan nationalism since the late 19th century, the varied responses of the Spanish state – which have alternated from institutional/constitutional accommodation to outright rejection and repression – and the complicated role of the European Union within the Spanish-Catalan political relationship in recent decades.

Chapter Three analyzes Catalonia as a destination point for immigration. The chapter focuses on Catalonia’s past efforts at articulating its own distinct national immigration model,

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⁷ This situation only arose in the case of certain documents from the Ciutadans, where the party (perhaps as a political statement against Catalan nationalism and in favour of Spanish unionism and the rights of Castilian speakers in Catalonia) only provided Castilian versions of specific documents and party declarations.
and the challenges it faces as a self-governing minority nation within the Spanish state and the European Union. In the chapter, I contend that Catalonia’s presence within both Spain and the EU has helped encourage its political elites to conceptualize the Catalan nation as an open, immigrant-receiving society, whose future prosperity depends on its economic and political integration within Europe, but also to emphasize Catalonia’s national and linguistic distinctiveness and the importance of integrating newcomers into a common Catalan-speaking national community. The chapter also explores the specific development stages of the Catalan immigration and integration model in the years leading up to the National Agreement on Immigration. My analysis centres on the various interdepartmental immigration plans developed by the Catalan Generalitat in 1993, 2001 and 2005, as well as the expanded responsibilities that Catalonia secured in the immigration, settlement, and integration policy fields through its revised Statute of Autonomy in 2006. The first three chapters serve as the foundation for the dissertation’s exploration of the first research question regarding the relationship between minority nationalism and immigration, in addition to the question of how Catalan nationalists have responded to Catalonia’s demographic reality as a major immigrant-receiving society.

Chapter Four provides an overview of the development and the negotiations surrounding the National Agreement on Immigration during 2007 and 2008, as well as frame analysis of the final text of the Agreement signed in December 2008. The frame analysis centres on the Agreement’s characterization of key subjects such as immigration, immigrants, national identity and Catalonia’s political relationship with Spain, as well as discusses important points of continuity and discontinuity between the National Agreement and Catalonia’s established immigration/integration framework. The fifth chapter analyzes Catalonia’s efforts to build on
the vision of openness and inclusiveness articulated by the National Agreement since 2008, as well as the Generalitat’s efforts to adapt this vision in recent years in response to deteriorating economic conditions and an increasingly tense intergovernmental relationship between Spain and Catalonia. The chapter focuses on Catalonia’s 2009 and 2014 official immigration plans and a 2012 report assessing the status of the National Agreement on Immigration and the Catalan government’s success at fulfilling its provisions. Chapters Three through Five serve as the foundation for the dissertation’s exploration of the second research question regarding the historical evolution of the Catalan immigration/integration model, and the impact of the National Agreement on Immigration on this model.

Chapter Six analyzes the broader political debate and discourse surrounding the National Agreement in Catalonia, focusing specifically on the major political parties with representation in the Catalan parliament at the time of the Agreement’s negotiation and signing. The chapter includes a brief overview of Catalonia’s party system and the six major parties that have dominated Catalan politics in recent years, as well as the relationship of partisan politics to both Catalonia’s ongoing struggle for self-determination and the development of its distinct immigration/integration policy regime. It also includes frame analysis of the debates and public statements made by the major Catalan political parties regarding the National Agreement on Immigration, focusing specifically on their varied understandings of the accord and their justifications for supporting or opposing its vision of Catalonia as an open immigrant-receiving nation. Chapter Six provides the basis for the dissertation’s exploration of the third research question regarding the framing of the National Agreement on Immigration within Catalan political discourse, as well as the intersection between the National Agreement on Immigration
and existing cleavages within Catalan party politics. The final chapter provides my overall analysis of the National Agreement on Immigration, its impact on Catalan politics and the relationship between immigration and national identity in Catalan society, as well as an overview of the main findings to the dissertation’s three research questions.
Chapter One – Immigration and minority nationalism: Concepts and challenges

This dissertation builds on two bodies of academic literature, one focusing on nationalism and national identity, and the other on transnational migration and cultural diversity. Since the late-20th century, the two literatures have increasingly intersected, particularly as Western states with established conceptions of national identity and belonging have adapted to rising levels of immigration and the growing social and cultural diversity that has accompanied it. My dissertation, however, focuses on an emerging subset of this nationalism and immigration literature, specifically, the study of immigrant-receiving “minority nations”, and the challenges these minority nations experience at adapting their traditional struggles for national self-determination and recognition with the reality of their mobile and increasingly diverse national populations.

This chapter begins by defining and discussing some of the major concepts explored in my project, such as “nation”, “minority nation”, and “multinational democracy”. Through this discussion, the chapter also provides an overview of prominent academic literature and debate surrounding minority nationalism as it relates to the three major research questions/themes of the dissertation, namely: 1) the complex relationship between minority nationalism and immigration; 2) the efforts by minority nations like Catalonia to develop their own immigration/integration models; and 3) the issue of immigration acting as a point of politicization within minority national contexts. This overview of academic literature will provide an important point of comparison with the frame analysis of Catalonia’s National Agreement on Immigration in the later chapters of the dissertation, allowing me to assess whether the Catalan experience re-
affirms certain theoretical assumptions surrounding minority nationalism and immigration or whether it suggests that a reappraisal is necessary in order to analyze 21st century minority nationalist movements and their attitudes towards immigration and diversity. Finally, this chapter serves as an initial exploration of the dissertation’s main hypothesis regarding the subjects of immigration and integration serving as the encapsulations of broader minority nationalist struggles, both struggles over the terms of national identity and social integration within the minority nation itself, and struggles with the larger multinational state over the self-governing power of the minority nation in the immigration/integration policy realm.

**Nations, minority nations and multinational states**

Concepts such as the “nation”, “nationalism” and “nationalist movements”, and their relationship to wider political events and attitudes, all pose significant research challenges for social scientists. “Nationalism” and a person’s sense of “nationhood” or “national identity” are subjective concepts, interpreted in different ways and expressed in a multitude of fashions. Consequently, the “nation” and similar subjective, identity-based terms are sources of intense methodological and theoretical debate in academia regarding how best to approach them as research topics and analytical concepts.

Earlier scholarly literature on nationalism tended to emphasize a close relationship between the concepts of “the nation” and “the state”, creating conceptual challenges in terms of understanding states where a multitude of national identities are expressed such as Canada or Spain. Benedict Anderson (2006), for one, described “state sovereignty” as the “gage and emblem” of a nation’s freedom (p. 7), Ernest Gellner (1983) characterized the state as a
“necessary condition” for the existence of nationalism (p. 4), while John Breuilly (1982) emphasized “the key role played by the modern state in shaping nationalism” (p. x). Related to these statist conceptions of the nation, was the idea that nations represented coherent, culturally homogeneous, and unifying sources of collective identity, which transcended, diminished or even obliterated minority identities and social/economic divisions. For Anderson (2006), the nation is “always conceived as deep, horizontal comradeship” (p. 7), while for Gellner (1983) it represents a common unmediated space shared by individuals bound together by a homogeneous culture.

These conceptions of national identity as relatively state-oriented, uniform, and fixed became problematic in light of later scholarship. Rogers Brubaker (1996) notes how various theoretical bodies of literature – including, network theory, rational choice theory, constructivism, and postmodernism/post-structuralism – challenged established conceptions of the “nation” and other forms of “groupness” over the course of the 1980s and 1990s (p. 13). The overall consequence of these varied (and divergent) bodies of theoretical work is that established understandings of the “nation” became increasingly “problematized” (ibid.). Indeed, recent scholarly literature has often challenged the idea that the “nation” represents the primary source of identification in today’s interconnected, mobile, and globalized world. This scholarship re-conceptualizes the “nation” and “national identity” as dynamic or fluid concepts that are continuously contested and transformed by a multitude of competing and crosscutting identities and allegiances, both internal and external to the “nation” (see for example, Maclure 2003; Tully 2008). These new conceptions of national identity have in turn influenced recent analyses of
“multinational” societies such as Canada, Belgium and Spain, in which national identities are frequently complex, pluralized and contested.

Drawing on this recent literature, I conceptualize Catalonia as a “minority nation”\(^8\) existing within the larger Spanish state, in the same way that Quebec, Flanders and Scotland represent minority nations within Canada, Belgium and the United Kingdom, respectively.

Minority nations are a complex and contested concept that have gained increasing scholarly and political attention in recent decades. As James Tully (2001) describes these minority national communities:

The members of [minority] nations are, or aspire to be, recognized as self-governing peoples with the right of self-determination as this is understood in international law and democratic theory. While some members of such a nation may seek to exercise their right of self-determination ‘externally’ – by secession and the formation of another independent single-nation state – other members mobilize to exercise their right of self-determination ‘internally’ – by the reconfiguration of the existing constitutional association so its multinational character is recognized and accommodated (p. 2-3).

Minority nations derive their sense of shared national identity from various social and political characteristics that are common to their particular national group, but that are in some ways distinct from the population of the larger multinational state. These commonalities often

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\(^8\) Various alternative terms are used within academic scholarship to describe what are referred to as “minority nations”, including “national minorities”, “sub-state nations”, “stateless nations”, and “internal nations”. None of these terms provide a completely accurate description of every example of minority nationalism, and indeed, some are more useful than others at describing contemporary cases in the Western world – Keating (2001a), for example, provides a lengthy explanation for why the term “stateless nation” is inappropriate for describing minority nations that exercise significant degrees of self-government and autonomy such as Quebec and Flanders, and that in effect control their own quasi-state apparatuses. Nonetheless, for this dissertation, I have selected the term “minority nation” to describe the nationalist movements in cases like Catalonia, Quebec, Flanders and Scotland, as it reflects their minority status and political power relative to their wider states (even though the term is potentially an inaccurate description of certain cases like Flanders in that from a demographic perspective the Flemish population represents a majority of the Belgian population, though the term is accurate from a political/historical perspective in that the Flemish language and culture traditionally were marginalized within the Belgian state).
include a shared culture and language, an earlier history of political autonomy, concentration within a defined territory, and a collective desire to maintain the group’s distinctiveness and identity into the future (McRoberts, 2003; Requejo, 2005). Scholars in recent decades have remarked on the persistence and longevity of minority nations, namely, how they have defied expectations of their eventual assimilation into larger national communities. Kymlicka (2001b), for example, notes how for many decades “theorists of modernization and globalization” within academia predicted a gradual demise of minority national and other peripheral identities (and in certain cases the demise of state-based national identities as well), in which nationalist and group-based identities would be replaced in modern societies over time “either by a supra-national cosmopolitan identity, or by a post-national civic or constitutional identity” (p. 278). In spite of these expectations (or perhaps, in reaction to them), various minority nationalist identities have experienced resurgences in recent decades and have attempted to adapt to the realities of the modern globalized world, leading Kymlicka (2001b) to remark that many minority nationalist movements “are as strong now as ever before and show no sign of losing steam”, as well as to emphasize that minority nationalism has become increasingly common in recent decades and now represents “a truly global phenomenon, found in every corner of the globe” (ibid.).

Due to the presence of minority nations within their borders, I further conceptualize countries such as Spain, Canada, Belgium and the United Kingdom as “multinational democracies”, which “are contemporary societies composed not only of many cultures (multicultural) but also of two or more nations (multinational)” (Tully, 2001, p. 1). The presence of these minority nations ensure that identities in multinational democracies are relatively
complex, as “categories and identities overlap” and can coexist or compete with one another depending on the circumstances (Keating, 2001b, p. 45).

As with the term “minority nation”, the term “multinational democracy” is not a neutral descriptive concept but a contested one. Modern Western states have frequently proven resistant or even hostile to the claims of minority nations within their borders, due in part to the historic perception that the nation and the state are synonymous and inseparable from one another, existing as a fixed and indissoluble “political community” (Arel, 2001, p. 69). In this respect, the main identity-based and political claims that minority nationalists make are highly contested as they have the potential to undermine the stability of their larger polities, namely: 1) the claim that they represent a distinct national community within what they perceive to be a larger multinational state; and 2) the related political claims that flow from this assertion of nationhood and that were identified in the Tully quotation above, that as a “nation” they are entitled to the right of national self-determination either to be exercised internally through some degree of self-government within the wider multinational state or to be exercised externally through independence and the establishment of sovereign statehood over some portion of their traditional national territory. Both Canada and Spain have experienced protracted political and constitutional debates over the question of whether they are mono-national or multinational polities, with many Canadian and Spanish political actors (as well as significant numbers of English-speaking Canadians and Castilian-speaking Spaniards) rejecting the idea that Quebec, Catalonia, the Basque Country or Galicia represent distinct minority nations within the Canadian and Spanish states with a right to national self-determination, and instead arguing that Canada
and Spain represent indissoluble states and mononational (albeit culturally and linguistically diverse) political communities.

Before proceeding to the relationship between minority nationalism and immigration, a brief discussion of the “inclusiveness” of nationalism and national identities would be a helpful preface. A larger debate has surrounded nationalism for decades over whether it can be an inclusive and liberal concept or form of identification and whether it represents a “modern” phenomenon. For some theorists, scholars and political actors, nationalism is inherently restrictive, “tribalist”, “ethnic” and discriminatory and therefore antithetical to modern understandings of inclusive liberal democratic citizenship. For these critics of nationalism, the very idea of the “nation” is oppositional and restrictive in that it is premised on defining who is “in” and who is “out” of the national community. Within this perspective, nationalism of any kind, whether it is articulated by a sovereign state or by a minority community within a sovereign state, is exclusive and illiberal in that it is intolerant towards outside difference and bestows preferential treatment on members of the national group; as Carens (1995b) notes, for certain critics of nationalism, the idea of a “liberal” or inclusive form of nationalism “is not a puzzle but an oxymoron”, in that “[n]ationalism, they assume, is inherently illiberal and regressive” (p. 3). He further explains that this perspective that nationalism and liberalism are inconsistent with one-another is in part attributable to how there are multiple interpretations and “versions” of both liberalism and nationalism, some of which are “incompatible” with one-another, and even in cases where the versions of liberalism and nationalism are more aligned (for example, interpretations of liberalism that are more sensitive to societal context and are willing to recognize and accommodate group-based difference and interpretations of nationalism that are
accepting of individual rights and non-ascriptive understandings of the national community), there will still be “points of tension and perhaps conflict” between the two (Carens, 1995b, p. 4).

This debate about the inclusive/liberal character of nationalism is further complicated by the “civic/ethnic” dichotomy that has informed the study of nationalism for many decades. The civic-ethnic dichotomy is generally regarded to have originated with the work of Hans Kohn (1944), who drew a distinction between the “liberal” and “civic” nations and nationalisms of the Western world, and the “illiberal” and “ethnic” nations and nationalisms of Eastern Europe and the non-Western world. Within this dichotomous framework, countries like France were traditionally held up as the embodiment of the Western, liberal, civic, and inclusive type of nationalism (a nationalism that was “rational”, “modern” and grounded in the principles of the Enlightenment), while countries like Germany, Hungary or Russia represented examples of the Eastern, illiberal, ethnic and exclusive type of nationalism (nationalisms that were “romantic”, “ascriptive”, and “pre-modern” or “anti-modern” in character) (for a discussion of this dichotomy between “West” and “East” see Ignatieff, 1994, pp. 6-7).

Within recent nationalism scholarship, minority nations and minority nationalism have frequently been contrasted with the nationalisms articulated by sovereign states by employing the civic/ethnic and modern/anti-modern dichotomies. Within this contrast, as Barker (2010) explains, the nationalisms promoted by sovereign states (specifically, Western liberal democratic states) have often been framed as “civic”, as a “a modern phenomenon, associated with a process of state unification and progress”, while the nationalisms articulated by “national minorities” that

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9 Though as Blad and Couton (2009) note, Kohn’s civic-ethnic dichotomy was influenced by the idea of “‘civilisational’ differences” between the West and the East that had been “promoted (at least sociologically) in the early works of Marx and Weber” (p. 648).
“challenge or seek to differentiate themselves” from their larger states have often been framed as “ethnic” in that they are perceived to be “engaged in a form of ‘disintegrative’ nationalism that is inherently anti-modern and illiberal” as they invariably challenge the modern liberal citizenship regimes and national communities of their larger states (Barker, 2010, pp. 13-14). Scholars and political figures like Eric Hobsbawm (1992), Michael Ignatieff (1994), and Pierre Trudeau (1968) have all employed the civic-ethnic dichotomy in distinguishing the goals of Western state-based nationalisms and the minority nations that inhabit Western states. As Barker (2010) explains, for these figures, the “state nationalisms” of modern Western polities represents nationalist projects that “have become increasingly civic, voluntarist and territorial” over time, while the “sub-state nationalisms” that also inhabit these states are the embodiment of the “normatively less desirable ethnic nationalism” (p. 14). Kymlicka (2001b) also remarks on the civic-ethnic dichotomy that has informed a significant proportion of scholarship in recent decades, noting that certain scholars reduce minority nationalism to nothing more than an emotional and conservative reaction to a changing, modernizing and increasingly interconnected world: “the last gasp of pre-modern values, fighting a defensive rearguard action against the inevitable forces of globalization” (p. 275).

Recent scholars have challenged both the anti-modern and ethnic assumptions that have surrounded minority nationalism, either by emphasizing the civic and modern characteristics and political objectives of minority nations (see Bauböck, 2001; Barker, 2010; Carens, 1995a & 2001; Keating 2001; Kymlicka, 1995, 2001a & 2001b; Shafir, 1995; Zapata-Barrero, 2009) or by attempting to challenge the civic-ethnic and modern-anti-modern dichotomies that have underlined a substantial proportion of academic literature on nationalism (see Blad & Couton,
Kymlicka (2001b), for example, expressly rejects the idea that minority nationalism is a conservative and ethno-centric reaction to a changing world, arguing that “minority nationalism has survived and thrived because it has proved able to adapt itself to modernity, and to accommodate and satisfy modern needs and aspirations”, and that the concept of minority nationalism as we understand in the present day represents an attempt by minority nations to adapt to and embrace the realities of a modern world:

Indeed, minority nationalism has proved to be an effective vehicle by which national groups can modernize their societies, and participate more actively in the global economy and in the increasingly dense networks of international law and civil society (Kymlicka, 2001b, p. 275)

Barker (2010) echoes this point by noting the potential of nationalist movements, nationalist sentiments and understandings of the nation to evolve over time in response to changing social and political dynamics, arguing that formerly ethnic and ascriptive conceptions of the nation can gradually be replaced by civic and inclusive ones, and that this potential to evolve and adapt is as true for minority nations as it is for “state nationalisms” (p. 14). This question surrounding the civic or ethnic character of minority nations and national identities will be explored further in this chapter in relation to the subject of immigration and the question of whether minority nationalist projects are amenable to transnational migration and whether they can be inclusive of the social diversity that accompanies migration.

**Relationship between minority nationalism and immigration**

One of the major factors that have contributed to the diminishment or “problematization” of traditional understandings of the “nation” and other established forms of “groupness” in recent
decades is the phenomenon of international migration, in particular, the flow of millions of economic migrants, familial migrants, students and refugees from the Global South to the Global North. This present era of migration is regarded by certain theorists as a manifestation of “transnationalism” and specifically, “transnational migration” whereby through the connectivity and speed promoted by modern communications technology and economic globalization migrants are now able to establish and maintain strong transnational links between their new host societies and their countries of origin (Basch, Glick-Schiller & Blanc, 1994; Portes, Guarnizo & Landolt, 1999, p. 464; Vertovec, 1999, p. 447; Castles, Haas & Miller 2014, p. 41).

In addition to political concerns about the admission and settlement of immigrants within host societies in the Global North, a significant proportion of the political debate surrounding transnational migration has centred on the integration challenges regarding immigrants, with Banting and Soroka (2012) noting that “[t]he integration of immigrant minorities has surged to the top of the political agenda throughout many contemporary democracies” in which “[t]he potent mix of changing immigration flows, new forms of racial and religious diversity and the heightened politics of security has triggered intense debates about social integration and social cohesion” (p. 156). Transnational migration patterns and the impact of immigrant communities on established conceptions of national identity in Western societies have also served as a major focal point of scholarly analysis in recent decades. Many of these academic works have centred on the relationship between immigration and the citizenship models and national identities of sovereign states and the pressures that immigration and diversity can place on established
citizenship regimes and official narratives of national identity (see Brubaker, 1992; Soysal, 1994; Joppke, 2010). 10

The same transnational migration patterns have also led to large numbers of newcomers settling in regions of the Western world characterized by minority nationalism including Quebec, Catalonia, the Basque Country, Flanders and Scotland, raising significant political questions for these minority nationalist movements in terms of how to respond to the evolving character and growing diversity of their societies and inspiring a growing body of academic literature (see Banting & Soroka, 2012; Barker, 2010, Hepburn, 2009; Turgeon & Bilodeau, 2014; Zapata-Barrero, 2007b). Immigration and the diversity that can accompany it, in this respect, has the potential to challenge or problematize any form of national identity, whether that national identity is articulated by a sovereign state or by a minority national community seeking recognition and autonomy within its larger polity.

The pre-existing complexity surrounding national identity within multinational societies (in which national identities and loyalties are frequently politicized), also has the potential to create dynamics for political conflict and struggle over the terms of immigration, citizenship and integration that do not exist to the same degree in societies characterized by one dominant national group. As Banting and Soroka (2012) explain, unlike in mononational societies in

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10 The conclusions of these authors regarding the overall impact of immigration on established citizenship models differ greatly. Brubaker (1992) highlights the historically enduring relationship between understandings of nationhood and attitudes towards citizenship and the inclusion of immigrants in the contexts of France and Germany. Soysal’s (1994) study of guest worker migration in Europe in contrast contends “(a) new and more universal concept of citizenship has unfolded” in European societies, one that is “post-national” in outlook in that its “legitimating principles are based on universal personhood rather than national belonging” (p. 1). Finally, Joppke’s (2010) comparative study of national citizenship models in Europe, North America and Australia, argues that “rather than being static or being rendered obsolete”, Western national citizenship models continue to evolve and are “converging on a liberal model of inclusive citizenship with diminished rights implications and increasingly universalistic identities” (p. vii).
which “the [integration] process is defined by a relatively homogeneous host culture on one hand and diverse newcomers on the other”, integration in multinational societies involves a “historic host population that is itself divided in complex ways, fragmenting the ‘we’ that newcomers are expected to join” (p. 157). In this respect, the immigration and integration of newcomers can place distinct pressures on the central government and the majority national community as well as on regional governments that represent national minorities; it can even foster a competitive dynamic between the two levels of government as they compete to integrate newcomers into their respective national communities (Banting & Soroka, 2012, pp. 156-157).

This particular aspect of transnational migration patterns is significant, in part, because it represents the intersection of two prominent points of cultural diversity that commonly exist within Western societies, namely: diversity that arises from the presence of minority nations and diversity that arises from the presence of ethno-cultural/immigrant minority groups. Will Kymlicka (2001b) has analyzed both forms of diversity in detail, and notes that both minority nationalist and immigrant-based diversity are broadly similar in that their mere presence within a particular state can have the broader effect of undermining the idea (or official narrative) that the state itself is culturally homogeneous or mononational and instead recast it as “multicultural”/“polyethnic” or “multinational” (p. 276). In this respect, Kymlicka (2001b) argues that the political mobilization of immigrants and minority nationalists represent “part of a larger movement towards liberal culturalism” within contemporary societies that is challenging established understandings of citizenship and identity and forcing official acknowledgment of the multinational and polyethnic diversity that exists (p. 278).

While members of minority nations and of ethno-cultural/immigrant groups may share these broad similarities and commitments, Kymlicka (2001b) also cautions that there are
important differences in the types of “liberal culturalist” challenges that the two forms of diversity place on the modern state (p. 276). Specifically, he notes that minority nationalist and ethno-cultural/immigrant-based diversity arise from different circumstances and articulate different long-term goals in terms of their overall demands for social recognition and political accommodation within the larger states that they inhabit. Firstly, in terms of the origins and circumstances that give rise to these two forms of diversity, the presence of minority national diversity is historically rooted and generally arises from a particular state incorporating “previously self-governing, territorially concentrated cultures” into its territory, whereas ethnocultural/immigrant based diversity generally arises voluntarily over time through the “individual and familial immigration” of distinct ethno-cultural groups from various countries into a particular state (Kymlicka, 1995, p. 10).

Secondly, regarding broader social/political goals, as minority nations are often historically-rooted communities (whose existence may pre-date that of the larger multinational state they presently occupy), their political objectives generally centre on preserving their national distinctiveness relative to the larger states that they inhabit, in that, as Kymlicka (1995) explains, minority nations “typically wish to maintain themselves as distinct societies alongside the majority culture, and demand various forms of autonomy or self-government to ensure their survival as distinct societies” (p. 10). By contrast, the goals of ethno-cultural/immigrant minority groups typically centre on joining the majority society rather than remaining apart from it, in that, as Kymlicka (1995) argues “[t]hey typically wish to integrate into the larger society,

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11 This incorporation can take place coercively through conquest (and perhaps colonization), collaboratively through political negotiation and union, or through a combination of the two (Kymlicka, 1995, p. 11). The present political statuses of Quebec and Catalonia within the Canadian and Spanish states, for example, are both attributable to a complex history of coercive and collaborative incorporation dating back to the 1759 British conquest of New France for the former and the 1492 dynastic union of the kingdoms of Castile and Aragon for the latter.
and to be accepted as full members of it” and that “[w]hile they often seek greater recognition of their ethnic identity, their aim is not to become a separate and self-governing nation alongside the larger society, but to modify the institutions and laws of the mainstream society to make them more accommodating of cultural differences” (pp. 10-11).

While minority nationalists and immigrants have the potential to place different pressures on the modern state as they interact in distinct ways with its political structures and social norms and dynamics, it is important to note that the interactions that take place between minority nationalism and ethno-cultural/immigrant minority groups are also complex, and their broader social and political goals have frequently been perceived as antithetical to one-another. In particular, many scholars have noted the potential of transnational migration – and the growing social diversity that can accompany this migration – to undermine the political and social efforts of minority nationalists to preserve their national distinctiveness within a larger multinational state (Banting & Soroka, 2012, pp. 156-157; Kymlicka, 2001b, p. 278; Turgeon & Bilodeau, 2014, p. 317; Zapata-Barrero, 2007b, p. 4). Kymlicka (2001a), for example, notes that “[t]he relation between national minorities and immigrants has historically been fraught with tension” as “[l]arge-scale immigration has typically been seen as a threat to national minorities” (p. 67). This sense of threat is attributable to various factors, in particular, the divergent long-term social and political goals of minority nationalists and recent immigrants that were discussed above, and how these divergent goals can have a negative impact on the political objectives of minority nationalists. Kymlicka (2001a) notes how immigrants in multinational societies historically have tended to integrate into the majority language and culture of their adopted country as a means of securing social and economic mobility rather than integrate into the language and culture of
national minority communities as there are fewer economic and social benefits to doing so. Similarly, new immigrants frequently have difficulties in terms of identifying with the (often historically rooted) struggles of minority nationalists for self-determination and cultural/linguistic survival within their larger multinational states (ibid.).

This in turn has led to questions about whether minority nationalist goals can be reconciled with the reality of transnational migration, and whether minority nationalists can effectively incorporate newcomers into their national communities and encourage immigrants to support minority nationalist political objectives such as self-determination or the preservation of a minority national language. Much of the broader theoretical literature surrounding these questions has been concerned with the “civic” versus “ethnic” attitudes of minority nationalists towards immigrants, in which the common association that has existed in the academic literature between minority nationalism and ethnic nationalism has led to similar assumptions that minority nationalists are generally intolerant or hostile to immigrant newcomers and cultural diversity, as well as assumptions that the “majority nationalism”12 articulated by their larger states is civic, inclusive and generally welcoming of immigration and diversity. The social and political goals of minority nationalists are what have led many scholars and political commentators to presume that minority nationalism is ethnic and exclusivist in outlook, in particular, the importance that many minority nationalists place on the preservation and continuation of their distinct languages and cultures. As Barker (2010) explains, the emphasis that minority nationalists place on both “challenging the nation-state” and by extension the nation-state’s broader project of promoting a common civic sense of nationhood, coupled with their emphasis on securing “linguistic or

12 For a greater discussion of the concept of “majority nationalism”, see André Lecours and Geneviève Nootens’ chapter, “Understanding Majority Nationalism” from the 2011 text Contemporary Majority Nationalism.
cultural recognition” for their particular group, has led to claims that minority nationalists are also “challeng[ing] civic principles and promot[ing] an ascriptive conception of national membership”, and that this in turn leads to negative attitudes on the part of minority nationalists towards immigrants and cultural/linguistic diversity more broadly (Barker, 2010, p. 14). These assumptions both overstate the potential of state-based nationalisms to be either civic or inclusive towards immigrants as well as fail to recognize recent efforts by specific minority nationalist movements to articulate inclusive and civic understandings of nationhood that are welcoming and accepting of newcomers. Kymlicka (2001a), for example, cautions that while immigration may pose a “challenge to the self-conceptions and political aspirations of those groups which see themselves as distinct and self-governing nations within a larger state”, this does not necessarily lead to exclusivist attitudes on the part of minority nationalists, adding that “[m]any minority nationalisms welcome immigrants, and allow them to maintain and express their ethnic identity, while simultaneously encouraging their integration into the minority nation” and are therefore “as ‘civic’ or ‘post-ethnic’ as majority nationalisms” (pp. 62-64).

Indeed, recent literature has highlighted how various minority nationalist movements have attempted to re-define popular understandings of their nations as being inclusive and open to newcomers, while at the same time stressing key societal features that all members of the nation are expected to share in – generally, a commitment to the minority national language and/or to liberal democratic and pluralist values. Multiple scholars have emphasized the “liberal”, “civic” “inclusive” and/or “territorially bounded” understandings of nationhood that have been articulated by minority nations like Quebec, Catalonia and Scotland in recent years, and have argued that they are welcoming towards immigrants that settle within their societies
and traditional territories and are accepting of various forms of social and cultural diversity (Carens, 1995a & 2001; Keating, 2001a; Kymlicka, 1995, 2001a & 2001b; Shafir, 1995). This acceptance of newcomers can arise from both a broader desire to promote an inclusive minority national society as well as a practical desire to maximize the benefits of immigration. Kymlicka (2001a), for example, argues that Québécois, Scottish and Catalan nationalists have all embraced “liberal-inclusive conceptions of nationhood” in recent decades, both in response to their changing societies, but also in response to the growing demographic and economic dependence of these minority nations on immigration in terms of addressing declining birthrates, aging workforces, and labour shortages within their respective societies (pp. 71-72).

Lastly, this body of literature demonstrates the need for careful examination and appreciation of each minority national context in order to effectively understand how a particular minority nation addresses immigration. As Kymlicka (2001b) notes, rather than presume that a minority nation may be civic or ethnic, inclusive or exclusive in outlook towards immigrants, instead “[w]e need to look at each case of minority nationalism on its own terms, and examine the nature of its self-understandings and aspirations” (p. 289). This in turn demonstrates the close relationship between the willingness of a minority nation to articulate an inclusive understanding of nationhood and identity towards immigrants and the powers of self-government and autonomy that the minority nation exercises within its wider multinational state, a relationship explored in greater detail in the following section.
Growing role of minority nations and regions in immigration matters

In spite of the apparent tensions between the goals of minority nationalists and recent immigrants, as noted above, certain minority nationalist movements in the Western world in recent decades have attempted to reconcile their own nation-building projects with a greater openness towards immigration and cultural diversity. Keating and McGarry (2001) note how at the political level, many minority nationalist movements have attempted to secure greater authority over “policy instruments in the fields of culture, economics, and immigration”, in order to control and shape the demographic changes taking place within their societies (p. 7). These efforts by minority nationalists form part of a wider decentralizing trend regarding the management of migration issues in various Western societies in recent years.13 As a part of this trend, sub-state or regional governments have assumed increasingly prominent roles in immigration matters, in part, due to the tendency of migration and integration issues to “overlap” with regional policy responsibilities in the areas of economic development, labour market management and social service delivery (Hepburn & Zapata-Barrero, 2014, p. 4).

Attempts by minority nationalists to secure greater autonomy over immigration and integration matters are significant not only because they reflect efforts by minority nationalist political leaders and policy-makers to “preserve” or “protect” the minority nation in response to the broader effects of transnational migration, but also because the way that minority nationalists go about securing greater self-government and the types of immigration/integration policies and programs that they develop can reveal a lot about the minority nation itself. As Carens (1995a)

13 These decentralizing measures form part of what Michael Keating (2009) refers to as the territorial “re-scaling” of political power and policy responsibilities across multiple levels of government that has taken place in various Western countries.
notes, how a national community handles immigration and the growing number of immigrants within its society in turn can reflect the values and self-perception of that national society:

(A) society’s response to immigration can be a key to grasping its self-understanding. The degree of openness to immigrants, the criteria of selection and exclusion, the kinds of adaptation, and the degree of conformity to the dominant population expected of new arrivals and their descendants - all these factors indicate something about who belongs, what is valued, and what membership and citizenship mean (p. 20).

In this respect, as Carens (1995a) notes, analyzing a minority national case like Quebec and its specific “policies toward immigrants” can in turn reveal a significant amount about the wider minority nationalist project, in that these immigration policies “may reveal important features of its vision of itself as a political community” (pp. 20-21).

There is therefore a close relationship between a minority nation’s power of self-government in the immigration field and its understanding of itself as a national community in relation to immigration. Indeed, certain scholars emphasize that minority nations may require a degree of autonomy over particular aspects of the immigration/integration process for them to feel comfortable articulating inclusive conceptions of nationhood, as the autonomy they possess will dictate the degree of control they can exert over the integration outcomes of newcomers in their societies. Specifically, Kymlicka (2001b) notes that minority nations may require a degree of control over both “the volume of immigration” and “the terms of integration” for the immigrants that permanently settle in their societies (p. 285). The first point relates to control that a minority nation can exercise over “the numbers of immigrants” being admitted into their traditional territory so that they “are not so great as to overwhelm the ability of the society to integrate them”, whereas the second point is designed to counter-act the tendency of newcomers
to integrate into the majority society by recognizing that “special policies may be needed to encourage or pressure immigrants to integrate into the minority’s culture” (ibid., p. 286).

Building on this idea of a close relationship between minority nationalism, self-government, and political control over the immigration process – and drawing on the work of Will Kymlicka, Joseph Carens, and Rainer Bauböck – Ricard Zapata-Barrero (2007b) contends that minority nationalism is profoundly affected by the social and demographic effects of transnational migration, which in turn leads to efforts by minority nationalists to secure greater “control” over immigration flows into their territory and over the integration outcomes for newcomers within their society. He cautions, however, that the effort to shape and mould immigration and integration outcomes can have the broader effect of re-making or “re-conceptualizing” the minority nation’s sense of community and national identity to make it more amenable to immigration and diversity:

From this point of view, the envisaged conceptual framework is founded on the premise that immigration-based transformations also affect minority nations. In this case the dimension of immigration policy has to be understood as a political construction of national identity. To this end, an immigration policy is conceived as a policy of re-conceptualising and rebuilding the community (ibid., p. 20).

Based on this framework, minority nations operate in a relational dynamic to both transnational migration and to their complex political/social/constitutional status within their larger multinational states. Specifically, transnational migration changes the social character of the minority nation, prompting a political and policy-based response by the minority nation designed to control and shape the immigration/integration process, which in turn alters the minority nation itself as the immigration/integration policy “constructs”, “re-conceptualizes”, or “re-builds” the
minority nation in response to the pressures of transnational migration and growing social diversity. In this respect, for Zapata-Barrero (2007b), immigration policy needs to be understood as an important expression of minority national identity and an attempt at perpetuating a national community into the future:

Thus, we are dealing with a matter whose primary source of argumentation is the policies of self-government, that is to say, those policies whose main base of legitimisation is the management of the minority cultural community itself. In this sense, all immigration policies manage immigrants’ belonging to a political community (p. 20).

**Immigration as a point of politicization in minority national contexts**

It is inaccurate, however, to assume that a particular minority national community’s reaction and policy-based response to immigration and social diversity would be uniform or free of political contestation and debate. Indeed, an additional consequence of the decentralization of immigration and integration matters in multiple Western societies in recent years, are the political debates that decentralization can generate at the sub-state level, debates in which political parties play prominent roles. Eve Hepburn (2014) notes that as immigration has been “re-scaled” downwards in various Western societies in recent decades, whereby “the integration of immigrants is increasingly managed at the sub-state regional level”, it has developed into “an important issue in the agendas of sub-state territorial actors” (p. 41). The devolution of immigration/integration matters has therefore coincided with its politicization among sub-state political parties, including both regionalist/nationalist parties and sub-state branches of state-level parties (ibid.). As a part of this politicization, parties are compelled to develop and promote immigration/integration policy responses for their sub-state regions, as well as hone their policy responses to the political, economic, social and/or cultural realities of their particular
regions, which in turn can lead to policy proposals that differ considerably from the immigration/integration frameworks in place at the state level (ibid.). Fiona Barker (2010) similarly highlights the relationship that can exist between the particular party in power and the orientation of immigration/integration policy in a minority nation, arguing “[w]hich political party holds office is another potentially important factor in explaining policy outcomes, due both to a party’s ideology on issues of national identity and to the way that electoral competition may result in politicization of issues of immigration, diversity and identity” (p. 17).

Recent scholarship suggests that while immigration represents both a polarizing issue for political parties, it is also an issue that complicates or even “transforms” traditional party cleavages, including the traditional left-right “economic cleavage” that characterizes most party systems, and the “territorial cleavage” that exists in the party systems of multinational states between regionalists/sovereignists on one hand and unionists/federalists on the other (Spehar, Hinnfors & Bucken-Knapp, 2012; Kriesi, Grande, Lachat, Dolezal, Bornschier, & Frey, 2006; Odmalm, 2012). Regarding the left-right economic cleavage, immigration cuts across and distorts traditional left-right distinctions between political parties, with recent literature demonstrating that both mainstream rightist and leftist parties have become increasingly concerned with immigration matters in recent years (Mudde, 2007; Odmalm, 2012), and that the rise of populist far-right parties have prompted different mainstream parties of various ideological persuasions to politicize immigration and advocate for stricter immigration policies (Van Spanje, 2010; Alonso & da Fonseca, 2012). Hepburn (2014) similarly concludes that “immigration has become a key concern across the party system in Western states, not only...
influencing the rise of far-right parties, but also affecting the policy agendas of mainstream left and right parties” (p. 47).

The subject of immigration also complicates the territorial cleavages that generally typify sub-state political units that are characterized by regionalism or minority nationalism. Hepburn (2014) explains that territorial cleavages tend to centre on “three issues of territorial concern”: 1) “the politics of territory” regarding the subjects of “political autonomy, self-determination, and representation within state structures”; 2) “the culture of territory” regarding “language, identity, and culture”; and, 3) “the economics of territory” regarding regional “economic development” (pp. 42-43). Each concern leads to distinct “continuums” that different sub-state parties can be arranged along: an “independence – unitarism continuum” for the “politics of territory”, a “unilingualism – bilingualism continuum” for the “culture of territory” (specifically, in sub-state units where the status of a minority language is a focal point of debate), and lastly, an “economic dependence – autonomy continuum” for the “economics of territory” (ibid.). Hepburn (2014) argues that the “three dimensions of ‘territorial interests’ interact with issues of immigration and demographic change in distinct ways at the sub-state level that diverge from state-level norms” (p. 43). Consequently, sub-state/regional parties may regard immigrants as a benefit or an impediment to broader “territorial interests”, such as the pursuit of regional autonomy, the preservation of a minority national language, identity, or culture, or the pursuit of regional economic development. The broader literature therefore reveals that the subjects of immigration and integration add a further level of complexity to party systems in sub-state units characterized by regionalism or minority nationalism such as Catalonia’s party system, cutting across existing left/right and territorial cleavages (a point that will be explored later in Chapter Six).
Conclusion

This literature review reveals that transnational migration and the growing social and cultural diversity that invariably accompanies it can create significant challenges for established communities such as “nations” that are attempting to preserve an enduring collective sense of “groupness” (to borrow Brubaker’s term). Nations that are also sovereign states (“nation-states”) or that dominate the governance of a larger multinational state (“majority nations”), nonetheless, possess a degree of political power to shape or modify the impact of immigration and cultural diversity in their societies. By exercising state authority to control the flow of newcomers across their borders, these nations are able to freely permit or restrict the influx of immigrants into their societies, and are also able to establish the terms of settlement, residence, and political, economic and social integration for immigrants once they have arrived.

Minority nations by comparison, find themselves doubly challenged by the effects of transnational migration. Firstly, as Kymlicka noted, their status as national minorities within a larger polity often means that their ongoing survival as distinct (linguistic, cultural, social, religious, etc.) communities is already precarious, and the sudden arrival of significant numbers of diverse newcomers into their societies can intensify their sense of vulnerability. Secondly, their status as national minorities also generally entails that they are able to exercise limited control (beyond certain regional self-government powers) over the flow of newcomers into their territory, as well as limited influence over the terms of citizenship, integration and belonging for the new arrivals living within their societies. In this respect, transnational migration can complicate and reinforce divisions between minority nations and their wider multinational states, exacerbating a minority nation’s sense of marginalization within its larger polity, and/or
prompting new struggles between a minority nation and a multinational polity over the subject of political authority in the immigration/integration policy realm.

Certain minority nations have attempted to overcome the effects of transnational migration by both articulating what Kymlicka refers to as a “liberal-inclusive conception of nationhood” that is designed to integrate newcomers into the minority national community, as well as by securing greater authority for themselves in the immigration, settlement and integration policy realms from their larger multinational polities. Catalonia represents an important example of this attempt to reconcile the struggle for minority national self-determination with the demographic reality of an increasingly diverse national population. The following two chapters explore each of these intersecting phenomena in turn, with Chapter Two providing a historical overview of Catalonia’s pursuit of greater political autonomy and national recognition within the Spanish state, and Chapter Three exploring the Catalan regional government’s attempt to develop a distinct Catalan immigration/integration model in response to rising levels of immigration and social diversity in recent decades.

The literature also reveals the close relationship between minority nationalism, immigration, and self-government, reinforcing the dissertation’s broader hypothesis that the subjects of immigration and integration increasingly serve as encapsulations of broader minority nationalist struggles, both struggles over the terms of national identity and social integration within the minority nation itself, and struggles with the larger multinational state over the self-governing power of the minority nation. Specifically, the writings of Kymlicka, Carens, Barker and Zapata-Barrero effectively highlight the importance of studying each minority nationalist case in context in order to understand the complex dynamics at play regarding immigration and
to not simply assume *a priori* that a minority nationalist movement will be either inclusive or exclusive towards immigration and diversity. Instead, this literature demonstrates the importance of understanding the mutually reinforcing relationship between minority nationalism, regional self-government and immigration/integration policy, whereby transnational migration serves as an impetus for minority nations to secure greater autonomy over the immigration process in order to address the demographic changes and growing social diversity within their societies, but that these efforts to expand the self-government powers of the minority nation over the immigration process has the wider effect of changing both official and popular understandings of the minority nation itself.

The academic literature on politicization and partisan debate surrounding immigration within minority national contexts, particularly the work of scholars like Hepburn and Barker, reveal an additional layer of complexity to this minority nationalism-self-government-immigration dynamic, demonstrating that a minority nationalist response to immigration will not be immediately coherent and uniform, but instead will be prone to political debate and influenced by existing power dynamics and broader political cleavages within the minority nation itself, including the left-right economic cleavage and the territorial cleavage between regionalists/nationalists and unionists/federalists. The dissertation’s analysis of the National Agreement on Immigration in Chapters Four through Six will serve as a point of comparison with certain prominent assumptions and theories surrounding minority nationalism and immigration that this chapter has explored, in order to assess whether these existing theories are relevant in the Catalan case, or whether Catalonia’s experience suggests that a re-appraisal of some of the theoretical assumptions surrounding minority nationalism is in order.
Chapter Two – Catalonia’s national self-determination struggle within Spain and Europe

This chapter provides an historical and contemporary overview of Catalan nationalism, and the struggle for self-government within the context of the Spanish state and the European Union. The chapter begins with analysis of Spain as a multinational state and the influence of Catalan nationalism on the evolution of the Spanish state during the 20th and early 21st centuries. Of particular concern is the period following Spain’s transition to democracy in the mid- to late-1970s, when state repression of minority national identities gave way to varying forms of institutional and constitutional accommodation.

The chapter analyzes how Spain’s present system of regional self-government spurred the demands and ambitions of Catalan nationalists and prompted repeated intergovernmental struggles between the Spanish central government and the Catalan Generalitat. It also explores how the pressures facing Spain as a multinational state have increased through its membership in the European Union. EU membership has created various opportunities for Catalan nationalists in terms of securing greater recognition and status within Europe, as well as imposed significant restraints on their ambitions, restraints that have intensified with the rising demands for independence in Catalan politics.

14 The Generalitat is the name of the Catalan institutional system of self-government and includes the Catalan Government (also called the Executive Council), the President of the Generalitat, the Catalan Parliament and other regional institutions (Parlament de Catalunya, 2012, p. 21).
The Spanish multinational context and history of Catalan nationalism

Questions surrounding the multinational or plurinational character of the Spanish state have long posed a challenge to the country’s political leaders. The presence within Spain of three prominent minority nations and linguistic communities (the Catalans, Basques and Galicians), in addition to other smaller linguistic communities and regional identity-groups, has made any attempt by the central government at promoting a broad and inclusive vision of Spanish national identity – one that transcends regional and minority national differences – challenging if not problematic. Indeed, these minority national/cultural communities persist despite centuries of intermittent efforts on the part of the Spanish state to centralize power and re-shape Spanish society as a unitary nation-state centred on the Castilian language.

Scholars have provided various theories to explain the persistence of these minority cultures/nations within Spain, despite past efforts at cultural homogenization. Explanations include: the weakness of Spanish state-building and nation-building during the 18th and 19th centuries (Linz, 1973), the regionalized character of the Spanish economy during industrialization and the role of regional economic elites in fostering and re-inventing peripheral political cultures and identities (Keating, 2001a), the importance of cultural forms of resistance during periods of authoritarian rule (Conversi, 1997), and internal divisions within Spanish politics (Linz & Stepan, 1978). A common theme, however, within most of these theories is a cyclical view of modern Spanish history, in which Spain alternated between periods of political centralization (and occasionally authoritarianism) on one hand and periods of political freedom, internal disorder and decentralization on the other. These periods of internal disorder were significant for disrupting the Spanish state’s efforts at subsuming its internal minority cultures,
providing space for regional political, economic, and social actors to preserve, re-invent and modernize their minority cultural/national identities (Keating, 2001a; Linz, 1973).

In the case of the Catalans, the waning of central state control during the 19th century coupled with Catalonia’s rapid industrialization during this period led to the development of the modern conception of Catalan identity and nationalism. By the beginning of the 20th century, this emergent minority nationalist movement began to challenge Spanish/Castilian cultural and political dominance by promoting both the rebirth of the Catalan language and culture, as well as the restoration of Catalonia’s political autonomy (Guibernau, 2000, p. 56-57). The idea of Catalan nationhood and the growing clamour for self-government, posed a significant challenge to the central government’s authority and its conception of a single “Spanish nation” (Keating and Wilson, 2009, p. 537). Despite a brief period of openness towards Catalan nationalism during the Second Spanish Republic, when Catalonia re-gained self-government with the passage of their own “statute of autonomy”, Madrid was generally hostile to competing conceptions of nationalism. This hostility reached its apex during the authoritarian regime of Francisco Franco from the 1930s to 1970s. Francoist nationalism arose in reaction to the political reforms of the Second Republic and “was based on a conservative, centralist and Castilian-centred ideology” (Guibernau, 2003, p. 122). Following their victory over the Republican forces in the Spanish Civil War, the Francoists repealed the Catalan statute of autonomy and “condemned all forms of cultural or political diversity” as threats to Spanish unity (Guibernau, 2000, p. 58).

Catalonia and the other minority nations came under intense pressure during the Franco years. Madrid prohibited the public use of the Catalan language, cultural practices, and symbols of national identity. Economic factors only exacerbated these official impediments to the
Catalan language as Catalonia’s growing industrial sector encouraged migration to the region from poorer, agrarian parts of Spain, in particular Andalusia and Murcia, which in turn raised the proportion of Castilian-speakers within the region between the 1960s and 1970s (Balcells, 1996, p. 152). These pressures on the Catalan language, however, had the effect of intensifying nationalist sentiment within sections of Catalan civil society so that by the time of Franco’s death in the 1970s, Catalan nationalism continued to be a well-organized and popular (though largely underground) political movement (Gagnon, 2010, p. 17). If anything, the institutionalized repression of the Francoists of the non-Castilian languages and cultures in Spain only led to “the intensification of the question of the national minorities”, as both the Catalans and Basques were determined to redefine their relationship with the post-Franco Spanish government (Guibernau, 2003, p. 124). With the restoration of democracy in the mid- to late-1970s, Spain’s political actors recognized that they needed to confront the minority national question directly if their new constitutional order was to endure and if the territorial integrity of Spain was to be maintained.

**The 1978 Constitution: Spain’s ambiguous multinationalism**

Spain’s transition to democracy during the mid to late-1970s represented the first significant political response to various developments that had gradually altered Spanish society since the Civil War and which the Francoist state proved increasingly unable to address. Democratization was therefore an attempt to respond to the reformist demands of a more urban, industrial, secular, educated and middle class Spanish society than had existed at the time of the Civil War, as well as a means of integrating Spain economically and politically with the rest of Europe (Guibernau, 2000, p. 59). The transition also provided the first opportunity for the
Catalans and other minority nationalists to achieve greater autonomy and cultural/linguistic protection within the Spanish state since the time of the Second Republic. Balcells (1996) notes that during the transition, as during the political upheaval of the 1930s, Catalonia once again assumed centre-stage within Spanish politics:

All Spanish political forces, both those who supported a gradual transition to democracy and those in favour of an outright break with the past, had to define their position on the ‘Catalan problem’. Catalonia, where society had taken a clear stance to the Franco regime and where the opposition had been united within a single organization with great powers of mobilization, could not simply be ignored (p. 169).

While the political goals of the Catalans were diverse, certain broad themes came to characterize the official Catalan position during this time: moderation and a desire for political autonomy. Conversi (1997) describes the transition era as a pivotal moment for both Catalan and Basque nationalism, in which the actions of nationalists from both movements set the pattern for future relations with the post-Franco Spanish state (p. 142). He notes that during this period, Catalan nationalists adopted a gradualist strategy regarding democratic reform and self-determination, as well as moderated their political goals (which included abandoning their calls for abolition of the monarchy and for the prosecution of leading figures of the Francoist regime), in contrast to Basque nationalism which “maintained a more intransigent line” towards the Spanish state (ibid.). This gradualist strategy allowed the Catalans to play an important role during the transition and in negotiations with the first post-Franco Spanish government under Adolfo Suarez (ibid.).

Greer (2007) contends that Catalan regional organizations shaped the particular form and outcomes of Catalonia’s demands for political autonomy during the Spanish transition era, as
well as fostered a broad-based Catalan consensus (and party system) in favour of regional autonomy as a moderate compromise position between Spanish centralism and Catalan independence (pp. 93-94). These regional organizations emerged during the transition as the most powerful entities in Catalonia and served as support structures for the emergent Catalan political parties, supporting those parties that favoured Catalan autonomy within Spain and isolating those that favoured either centralism or secession – in effect, these Catalan organizations “lopped both ends off the political spectrum” (ibid., p. 94).

The transition culminated in the negotiation and passage of Spain’s 1978 Constitution. During the transition, the majority of Spanish political actors recognized that some measure of minority nationalist input was necessary to gain their support for any new constitutional order. Several scholars have described the 1978 constitutional agreement as a consensus-driven or “pacted” document, and argued that the drafters designed the Constitution to promote “national reconciliation” and to alleviate the various ideological and national divisions left over from the Spanish Civil War and the Franco regime (Guibernau, 2000, p. 60; Greer, 2007). The Constitution would achieve this by transforming Spain into a democratic, devolved unitary (or quasi-federal) state, with a degree of recognition for its minority nations, including Catalonia. This recognition was vague, however, both in terms of Catalonia’s status within Spain and in terms of the powers that the region exercises.

Regarding Catalonia’s “national” status within Spain, Section 2 states that “[t]he Constitution is based on the indissoluble unity of the Spanish Nation, the common and

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15 Whether Spain is a full-fledged “federation” along the lines of Canada, Germany and Belgium, or simply a “devolved unitary state” akin to Italy or the United Kingdom is a source of debate within academia.
indivisible homeland of all Spaniards”, but also that “[the Constitution] recognizes and guarantees the right to self-government of the nationalities and regions of which it is composed and the solidarity among them all” (Kingdom of Spain, 1978). The meaning of the terms “nationalities” and “regions” are undefined and ambiguous, as are their relationships to the larger “Spanish nation”; similarly, the Constitution does not identify which groups constitute “nationalities” within Spain. Because of this ambiguous language, Ferran Requejo (2010) argues that the 1978 constitutional agreement failed to recognize the country’s multinational character, as only Spain as a whole is considered a nation, while the minority nations, Catalonia, the Basque Country and Galicia came to be regarded as “historic nationalities” (p. 156). Many Catalans therefore contend that Spain does not officially recognize their distinct national status, and that the older vision of a uniform Spanish nation-state has persisted into the present democratic era.

Similarly, the 1978 Constitution provides different degrees of recognition and status to the various indigenous languages of Spain. Section 3.1 recognizes Castilian as “the official Spanish language of the State” and stresses that “[a]ll Spaniards have the duty to know it and the right to use it” (Kingdom of Spain, 1978). In comparison, for Catalan, Basque, Galician and other minority languages, Section 3.2 states that “[t]he other Spanish languages shall also be official in the respective Self-governing Communities in accordance with their Statutes” (ibid.). These provisions regarding the statewide status of Castilian versus the region-bound status of

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16 What Balcells (1996) refers to as “a timid acceptance of the plurinational nature of Spain” (p. 172), and which Guibernau (2000) argues “reflects an abiding tension between national unity and the pressure to recognise the existence of historic nations such as Catalonia, Galicia and the Basque Country” (p. 61).

17 Spain now also recognizes several Castilian speaking autonomous communities as “historic nationalities,” which has further diminished the term’s ability to denote minority national distinctiveness.
Catalan have profoundly shaped Catalan nationalist efforts at promoting the Catalan language as the main language of educational instruction and public life in Catalonia, as will be discussed later in Chapter Three.

The process of political devolution that accompanied the new constitutional order further reflected this ambiguity regarding the competing multinational and mononational visions of Spain. Spain’s political leaders opted to reform the country into a devolved unitary state with certain federal characteristics. They reorganized Spain into seventeen “autonomous communities” within a system of regional government, known as the “State of Autonomies”. The rationale for re-organizing Spain along these devolved unitary or quasi-federal lines was partly to reflect cultural/national differences within the country and partly to reflect territorial ones. Spain’s leaders drew the boundaries of certain autonomous communities to incorporate specific minority cultural/linguistic population groups, most prominently Catalonia, the Basque Country, and Galicia. The other autonomous communities, however, are predominantly Castilian speaking and hence possess a largely territorial foundation, reflecting regional divisions within what can be broadly referred to as “Castilian speaking Spain”. While some of these Castilian speaking autonomous communities have a history of political autonomy and cultural particularity (such as Asturias, Aragon, Andalucía and the Canary Islands), others are contemporary creations with no historical foundation as distinct regional entities (such as Madrid and La Rioja).

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18 Specifically, Section 137 of the Constitution states that the Spain “is organized territorially into municipalities, provinces and the Self-governing Communities”, in which “[a]ll these bodies shall enjoy self-government for the management of their respective interests” (Kingdom of Spain, 1978).
The adoption of this particular model of devolution, in contrast to a full-fledged federation, had significant ramifications for Catalan and other minority nationalists. Greer (2007) describes Spain’s approach to devolution as “a minimally invasive implantation of a new level of government” that simply “superimposed regions on provinces and handed them some central state powers and administration”, whereby “[t]he result was that the regional administrations were created and awarded powers, but the territorial infrastructure of the central state remained intact” (p. 110). For Greer (2007), this decision limited the options of the Catalan and other regional governments in terms of exercising their new powers of self-government, in that “there could be no frontal attack on the state structure, Spain-wide civil service corps would remain intact, and autonomous communities would not be able to shape their territorial organization as they pleased”, and consequently “conflicts over the powers of autonomous communities would be channeled into debates over competencies” (ibid.). Conversi (1997) further contends that by extending political devolution beyond Spain’s minority cultural regions to its territorial regions ultimately had the effect of “‘relativising’ the potential impact of Basque and Catalan autonomy” (p. 144). Balcells (1996) largely echoes this point regarding the negative impact of extending regional self-government to the Castilian speaking parts of Spain:

The State of Autonomous Communities caused Catalans to fear that, by granting self-government to regions where the demand for such status was not sufficiently deeply rooted, the central government was seeking to cut down the scope of Catalan self-governing powers, though the formula also had to advantage of not making Catalan and Basque self-government into isolated exceptions (pp. 172-173).

The concerns expressed by Catalans reflect a larger tension within the Spanish constitutional order and the State of Autonomies. Specifically, political devolution has served as
a means for the Catalans and other minority nations to pursue national self-determination and asymmetrical status within the Spanish state, but devolution has also served as a means for Spanish political actors to downplay minority national distinctiveness in Spain by ensuring that the other fourteen “territorial” autonomous communities receive symmetrical powers and status. The ambiguity of the new Spanish constitutional order, in turn, encouraged two polarized visions of Spain, on one side, a Spanish nationalist vision advocating a centralized system in which power continues to be concentrated in Madrid, and on the other, a minority nationalist vision of a decentralized Spanish state in which Catalonia and the other historic nationalities would possess asymmetrical status and powers relative to the other autonomous communities of Spain. The new constitutional framework was therefore ambiguous regarding what it provided to Catalonia in terms of national recognition or autonomy, emphasizing political devolution at certain points but reinforcing the unity of the Spanish state at others. For a time, various actors regarded this ambiguity as a positive feature of the Spanish political order, one that allowed centralists and de-centralists, Spanish unionists and minority nationalists, to interpret and defend the constitution in ways that suited their distinct political goals and viewpoints. This plural and conflicting understanding of the constitution did not endure, however, particularly as regional actors

19 “Unionism” and “unionist” are somewhat problematic terms to describe the PPC and Ciutadans and their respective positions on the integrity of the Spanish state and nation, but are nonetheless terms that have recently appeared in both Spanish and Catalan political discourse to describe these parties, perhaps as a way of invoking the “unionist/nationalist” dichotomy that characterizes British politics (particularly in Scotland and Northern Island). Alternative terms to describe these parties could be “Spanish nationalist” or “centralist”, though these terms have their own limitations. This terminological ambiguity reflects a broader challenge of employing general categories for parties and movements in different minority nationalist contexts, for example, deciding what term to describe nationalist parties that advocate independence (should they be called “sovereignists”, “secessionists”, “independentists”, “separatists”?) or what terms to describe nationalist parties that support a maximization of political autonomy (should they be called “autonomists”, “regionalists”, “de-centralists” or even “federalists”?).
attempted to provide practical substance to the new autonomous community powers and realized their limitations.

**Catalan self-government within the State of Autonomies**

In creating this new regional level of government, the Spanish state devolved power from the centre to the regions through “Statutes of Autonomy”. Under this system, each autonomous community negotiated a statute with Madrid outlining their new regional government institutions and the powers and policy responsibilities that these institutions exercise. Interestingly, this process of regional devolution had the effect of institutionalizing and strengthening Spain’s multinational characteristics. Magone (2009), for one, contends that the State of Autonomies pluralized or fractured Spanish political culture into 17 distinct regional political cultures characterized by varying degrees of loyalty to the Spanish state as well as loyalty to their newer regional governments (p. 51). The most pronounced levels of regional loyalty are in the minority national autonomous communities of Catalonia and the Basque Country, where restored self-governments like the Catalan Generalitat have used their jurisdictional authority to foster a distinct political space where the Catalan language and culture can thrive and endure (ibid.).

The State of Autonomies also led to an asymmetrical process of political devolution in which the speed and scope of decentralization varied considerably among autonomous

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20 Section 147 (1) of the Spanish Constitution states that “Statutes of Autonomy shall be the basic institutional rule of each Self-governing Community and the State shall recognize and protect them as an integral part of its legal system” (Kingdom of Spain, 1978).
communities as each negotiated and designed their statutes to suit their particular needs.\textsuperscript{21} The three historic nationalities, Catalonia, the Basque Country and Galicia, experienced a “fast-tracked” devolution process compared to the predominantly Castilian-speaking autonomous communities in Spain. These Castilian-speaking autonomous communities underwent a slower devolution process, but Madrid nonetheless expected them eventually to achieve an equal level of self-government to the historic nationalities. In this regard, while the initial State of Autonomies system was asymmetrical, over the course of the 1980s and 1990s the Spanish central government attempted to create a system of “symmetric decentralisation” among all seventeen autonomous communities to avoid privileging any one particular region, an approach commonly referred to as \textit{café para todos} (“coffee for everyone”) (Guibernau, 2000, p. 61).

\textbf{Catalan nationalist demands and the Spanish reaction}

The political leaders of Catalonia and the other historic nationalities resented the symmetrical characteristics of the Spanish constitutional model that emerged over time, and have increasingly pushed for asymmetrical status within the Spanish state relative to the Castilian speaking regions (Guibernau, 2006a, pp. 63-64). They argue that as a distinct nation, Catalonia requires certain powers and status that invariably differ from the requirements of the Castilian speaking autonomous communities of Spain. Despite certain policy and fiscal concessions granted to the Catalans and Basques during the 1990s, the central government under both the

\textsuperscript{21} In theory, the jurisdictional powers that the autonomous community governments exercise are revocable at any time by Madrid (which is why Spain is not considered a true federation by some, and the Spanish constitution does not use the terms “federal” or “federation”), nonetheless it would be politically difficult for a Spanish government to attempt to revoke power and responsibilities from an autonomous community government.
leadership of the Partido Socialista Obrero Español (PSOE) (in English, “Spanish Socialist and Workers Party”) and the Partido Popular (PP) (in English, “Popular Party” or “People’s Party”) generally would not permit any significant differentiation between the historic nationalities and the rest of Spain. In addition, concerns about Basque and Catalan secession fuelled resistance within both parties towards negotiating greater autonomy with either region out of concern that it would endanger the long-term unity of the Spanish state.

An even greater obstacle for minority nationalist aspirations, though, was Spain’s resistance to engaging in constitutional reform. Many Spanish political actors treat the 1978 Constitution with great esteem, regarding it as a carefully crafted agreement that allowed Spain to break free of dictatorship and political violence and develop into a successful modern democracy (Martínez-Herrera and Miley, 2010, p. 7). The central government’s reluctance to amending the Spanish Constitution is partly attributable for the recent heightening of nationalist sentiments in both Catalonia and the Basque Country. By the beginning of the 21st century, the central government and Spain’s minority nations had reached an impasse over the future direction of the country and its national character, with Madrid stressing symmetrical devolution and maintaining the constitutional status quo, and the majority of the Catalan political parties calling for asymmetrical status and constitutional reform. Catalonia’s reform efforts culminated in the passage of a revised Statute of Autonomy in 2006 where the Partit dels Socialistes de Catalunya (PSC)-led tripartite coalition government with the backing of the Convergència i Unió (CiU) opposition agreed on a new statute designed to “increase the symbolic and political

22 Both the PSOE and the PP contain elements that advocate a mononational vision of Spain and oppose recognition or special status for the Catalans, Basques and Galicians.
recognition of Catalonia as a distinct national reality within the Spanish state” (Requejo, 2010, p. 159).

The final version of the reformed statute agreed upon by the Catalan parliament proposed a substantial increase in Catalonia’s jurisdictional powers, contained numerous references to Catalonia’s national character, and explicitly recognized Catalonia as a “nation” (Keating and Wilson, 2009, p. 549). While the PSOE government of José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero was generally supportive of the revised statute, they demanded significant amendments before agreeing to pass it (forcing the Catalans to moderate both the language surrounding nationhood and to compromise on some of the powers they were seeking). The Catalan statute also prompted a backlash from the political right in Spain led by the PP, which condemned the reform as divisive and secessionist, eventually leading to a constitutional court challenge and ruling that further limited the scope and meaning of the 2006 statute. These developments set the stage for the present era of Catalonia-Spain relations that began with the 2008 economic crisis (a stage that later chapters explore in detail).

**European integration: Opportunities and challenges for Catalan nationalism**

Catalonia’s complex history within the Spanish state is not the only structural dynamic that has shaped contemporary Catalan nationalism and the development of the present system of Catalan self-government. The European Union integration process has also created a complex set of opportunities and challenges for minority nations such as Catalonia. On one level, membership in the EU invariably challenges the traditional sovereignty of states like Spain in that governance and policy delivery move beyond the realm of the “nation-state” and become
increasingly “multi-level”. As Keating (2000) explains, the EU “diffuses sovereignty by creating a new layer of political authority”, as well as “encourages the growth of multiple identities among both citizens and political leaders, a principle which can also be extended downwards” (p. 30). In this respect, the European Union encourages a re-conceptualization of sovereignty, governance, politics and identity along multi-level lines, all of which provide opportunities for minority nations to pursue their own political objectives. For Keating (2000) then, “Europe provides two things for national minorities”, namely “a series of opportunities to influence policy, using the multiple channels of influence available”, and more significantly “it creates a new symbolic realm, a discursive space in which minority nationality claims can be advanced without necessarily entering into terminal conflict with the host state”, both of which allow minority nations to redefine their relationships with their larger states (pp. 30-31).

Questions remain, however, regarding just how much European integration has challenged the traditional sovereignty of member states, and whether the EU demonstrates a bias towards its member states to the detriment of lower-level political entities such as regions and minority nations. This concern reflects Catalonia’s ambiguous status as a “region” within the European Union. As a regional government, Catalonia possesses limited formalized representation within European institutions compared to member state governments. Similarly, the Catalan language only possesses the status of a “regional language” within the Union and therefore does not enjoy official recognition and accommodation within EU institutions (unlike the official languages of member states).

In terms of EU representation, the Catalan government is a member of the Committee of the Regions, a Brussels-based EU body that provides regional and local government
representation and input within the EU policy-making and legislative processes. While the influence of the Committee of the Regions is restricted compared to other European institutions, each successive EU treaty has gradually expanded the scope of its authority to the point where the European Parliament and the Council of the EU are now required to consult the Committee on a range of policy areas. This emphasis on regional consultation is a reflection of the EU’s principle of subsidiarity, which holds that “decisions in the EU must be taken as close as possible to the citizen” and that “the EU level must not take any action which could be carried out more efficiently by the national, regional or local authorities” (Coalition of the Regions, n.d.).

In spite of the intention of providing regional input, however, many contend that the European Union demonstrates a bias towards its member states, as reflected by the official status of member state governments within institutions like the Council of the EU and the European Council. Similarly, critics contend that EU bureaucrats and member state politicians have exercised a disproportionate influence over the evolution of the EU and its institutions (particularly in EU treaty negotiations) relative to lower levels of government and the European public. Guibernau (2006b), for one, notes the general exclusion of regional actors from the negotiations surrounding the failed European Constitution during the early 2000s, and the under-representation of regional perspectives within EU institutions compared to member state governments (pp. 220-221).

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23 The Treaty of the Lisbon guarantees that the Committee of the Regions is consulted regarding any EU legislation pertaining to the fields of: “economic and social cohesion; trans-European networks; health; education and culture; employment; social policy; the environment; vocational training; transport; civil protection; climate change; energy” (Coalition of the Regions, n.d.).
Since Spain’s accession to the European Community in 1986, the Catalans have attempted to reverse their peripheral status as a region within Europe. They have openly supported treaty reforms designed to increase regional representation in EU institutions and have allied themselves with other economically powerful European regions in pushing for greater recognition and input within Brussels (Keating, 2000; Guibernau, 2006b). The Catalans also attempted to address the issue of Generalitat-EU relations in their 2006 Statute of Autonomy, in which Article 192 states: “The Generalitat may establish a delegation to better defend its interests before the institutions of the European Union” (Parlament de Catalunya, 2012, p. 129). Following the Statute’s passage, the Generalitat established the Delegation of the Government of Catalonia to the EU to provide a forum for direct Catalan government and civil society representation within Brussels. Its stated mission is “[t]o represent, champion and promote the general interests of Catalonia, while providing support to Catalan Government’s Departments, companies and civil society vis-à-vis the EU institutions and bodies” (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2013b). In this respect, the Delegation facilitates communication between Catalonia and the EU as well as ensures that the Catalan government remain responsive to any new EU legislation or initiative that affects their region (ibid.). Despite these efforts to improve Catalonia’s presence and influence within the EU, the Catalan Generalitat continues to be a secondary actor within European decision-making processes. The Spanish government, by comparison, continues to exercise disproportionate influence within EU institutions relative to its autonomous community.

24 The Delegation includes an exhibition hall, the Espai Catalunya Europa, “which is conceived to promote Catalonia in the EU and showcase the country’s institutional, political cultural and social reality” (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2013b).
counterparts, and in the past has resisted the idea of allowing greater input or participation from Spanish regional governments within the EU (Guibernau, 2006b).

In spite of their limited influence, the Catalan population and Catalan nationalist parties have traditionally been pro-European, a trait they share with other EU minority nations such as Scotland. Nagel (2004) notes how “[t]o be European (and more European than the Spaniards) has always been one of the distinctive marks of Catalanism”, and that “[m]ost Catalans still pride themselves on possessing a high grade of Europeanness, even ahead of the Spaniards” (p. 61). He adds that Catalans traditionally have been among the most vocal supporters of Spain’s integration within both the EU and the Eurozone (ibid., pp. 61-62). Keating (2000) similarly notes the positive attitudes of Catalans towards Europe during the late-20th century, their increasing identification with a European identity, as well as their general sense that Europe represented “a neutral political space” compared to Spain, one that was “less hostile to their aspirations” (p. 34). Europe therefore holds a prominent and positive place within Catalan nationalist discourse, with Catalan political actors continuously pushing for greater participation and integration in EU decision-making institutions and processes (Nagel, 2004, p. 65). A broad-based partisan consensus existed in Catalonia for much of its recent history regarding this constructive and engaged role in Europe, both among the moderate nationalist CiU, the non-nationalist PSC, and the pro-independence Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya (ERC).

The dynamic between Catalonia, Spain and the EU therefore is paradoxical: it challenges Spanish sovereignty yet privileges the Spanish government’s input (and that of other member states) over the input of regional actors like the Catalans; it offers new political opportunities for Catalan and minority nationalist self-determination, but nonetheless limits those opportunities
within relatively prescribed boundaries. As Guibernau (2006b) notes, the relatively peripheral role for Catalonia and its language/culture within the EU:

[reflects a stark contrast between the expectations and demands of the Catalan people, who are traditionally strongly pro-European, and the statist nature of the EU, which disregards most demands for cultural, linguistic and political recognition advanced by nations without states such as Catalonia (pp. 219-220).

For the first twenty years following Spain’s accession to the European Community/Union, Catalan nationalists generally tolerated this paradoxical or ambivalent relationship. As Nagel (2004) notes, under the CiU during the 1980s and 1990s, Catalonia was generally acquiescent towards its status as a “region” within the Union, “accepting the game, trying to improve its rules, but not to change the game” (p. 65). Rising intergovernmental tensions between the Catalan and Spanish governments over the course of the 2000s, and their escalation following the 2008 economic downturn and the Eurozone debt crisis, however shifted the Catalonia-Spain-EU dynamic into a new and uncertain reality. The rising prospect of Catalan independence from Spain would place Catalonia in an uncertain position regarding its future within the EU. The Spanish government contends that if a constituent unit secedes from an EU member state, the terms of the EU treaties no longer apply to the seceding unit, which would then have to apply for official membership along the same lines as other EU applicant states. Both the CiU-led Catalan government and the ERC have explicitly rejected this claim, arguing that the EU would not force Catalonia out should they secede from Spain, in part, drawing on similar arguments made by the SNP-led government in Scotland during the 2014 referendum campaign on secession from the United Kingdom. The Generalitat (2013a) describes the threat of Catalonia’s expulsion from the Union as a scare tactic on the part of the
Spanish government, designed to deter Catalans from voting for independence. Further, the Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya (2013) states that there are no formal rules regarding secession from an EU member state, and contend that it would be in the economic and political interests of both the EU and Spain to keep Catalonia in the European Union.

**Conclusion**

In analyzing the historical relationship between Catalonia and Spain and its impact on present-day politics and intergovernmental relations, certain key themes are evident that are important for the dissertation’s broader analysis of Catalan nationalism and self-government and their relationship to Catalonia’s status as an immigrant-receiving society. Firstly, Spain’s response to the minority nationalist demands of regions like Catalonia and the Basque Country since the 19th century has alternated between cycles of democratic de-centralizing accommodation and authoritarian centralizing repression. Both cycles, in turn, have fostered Catalonia’s desire for greater self-government and national recognition. The accommodation phases have provided Catalonia the opportunity to exercise a degree of autonomy at the regional level, to develop the institutional capacity of self-government, as well as to exert political influence at the Spanish state level and in recent decades at the European level. In contrast, the repression phases have spurred Catalan nationalist sentiment as well as political resistance to Spanish efforts at marginalizing Catalonia’s distinct culture and language within public life. Catalan nationalism has therefore developed in a complex political environment in which the Spanish state has alternated between acting as an open structure for minority nationalists to pursue their political demands and modernization goals, and a closed structure that has attempted
to expel minority nationalist voices and attitudes in favour of a mono-national, Castilian-speaking society (efforts that inadvertently spurred minority nationalist mobilization and radicalized their political demands).

Beginning in the 1970s and 1980s, Catalonia and Spain entered a new (and ongoing) institutional/constitutional accommodative phase in their political relationship, in which Spain has once again restored regional self-government (the Catalan Generalitat), which in turn has allowed Catalonia to promote the Catalan culture and language within public life. As the next chapter explores in detail, it is within the present accommodative phase that the Catalan Generalitat has developed the region’s distinct immigration/integration model and engaged in significant public debate over the future evolution of the Catalan “nation” in response to immigration, in part, through initiatives like the 2008 National Agreement on Immigration. A new and important element to this present accommodative phase is Spain’s membership in the European Union, which has added greater intergovernmental complexity to the already complicated relationship between Spain and the restored Catalan Generalitat. As demonstrated by the sections above, the present Spanish and European political orders have provided an ambiguous/paradoxical framework for Catalan self-government to operate and for Catalan nationalism to secure greater autonomy and recognition. On one hand, this system of multi-level governance offers a degree of national distinctiveness for the region, as well as opportunities for Catalonia to exercise self-government in a range of important policy areas. On the other hand, Catalonia’s status as an autonomous community and “historical nationality” within Spain and a “region” within the European Union entails various practical limitations on the degree of
autonomy that Catalonia can exercise and the extent of its political influence at the Spanish and European levels.

Spain’s constitutional ambiguity regarding the status and powers of Catalonia and other “historical nationalities” has acted as a further source of debate between the Catalan Generalitat and the Spanish state. This chapter demonstrates how these struggles have been framed by competing visions of the Spanish state, namely the multinational vision held by Catalan nationalists and the region’s political leaders (for whom Catalonia represents a distinct nation within Spain that is entitled to asymmetrical status and powers relative to other autonomous communities), and the mono-national vision of the Spanish state held by a majority of Spanish political actors and many Castilian-speaking regional governments (for whom Catalonia represents a bilingual region of Spain entitled to symmetrical political powers and status relative to the other Spanish autonomous communities). The multinational vision of the Spanish constitutional order has acted as an impetus for Catalonia’s “gradualist” strategy of securing greater autonomy within the Spanish state, which in turn has prompted repeated intergovernmental struggles between Barcelona and Madrid as Catalan demands have met increased Spanish resistance over time. Indeed, the frustration in Catalan civil society and the growing intergovernmental discord between Catalonia and Spain in recent years is largely a by-product of the region realizing the limitations of its present status and powers of autonomy within the Spanish constitutional order and the present strength of the mono-national interpretation of the constitutional order within Spanish politics. The Catalan government’s varied success at addressing these limitations through measures like the 2006 Statute of Autonomy have only heightened public discord and secessionist sentiment as well as deepened
the divide between Catalonia and the rest of Spain. Chapters Three and Six further explore how these competing mono-national and multinational visions of the Spanish state (and of Catalonia’s status within the Spanish state), have influenced the development of the Catalan immigration/integration model and informed the political discourse surrounding the National Agreement on Immigration.

The Spanish state, therefore, is presently at a crossroads where the competing visions of the country as a multinational or mono-national state are proving increasingly irreconcilable and where recent Catalan proposals for independence perhaps offer a way of resolving the issue. Within the increasingly antagonistic Catalonia-Spain relationship, the EU remains a point of ambiguity and confusion. Since Spain’s accession in 1986, Europe has represented a complex ideal for Catalans, seemingly offering greater freedom and opportunity for national self-determination, yet in practice, providing little in the way of direct input or influence at the European level.

Spain’s multinational tensions have now reached a point that potentially threatens the future relationship between Catalonia and the EU, whereby the possibility of Catalan secession from Spain may also entail their expulsion from the Union. Independence however may be the best way for Catalan nationalists ultimately to gain the type of representation and input they have long sought within the EU: the type of representation normally accorded to member states and which regional governments are unable to exercise. In this scenario, the Catalans may have to wait several years to regain the benefits of European integration as they undergo the conventional EU membership accession process, but arguably in the end the Catalans would be in a stronger position at the European level as an EU member-state than they are presently as a
regional government. The following chapter builds on and focuses this analysis of the ongoing minority nationalist tension between Catalonia and Spain (and by extension the EU) by exploring its relationship to immigration and integration matters, specifically, Catalonia’s efforts at developing its own distinct immigration/integration model as an autonomous community within Spain and as a region within the European Union.
Chapter Three – Immigration, nationalism and self-government in Catalonia

As noted in Chapter One, rising levels of immigration in recent decades have raised significant identity-related questions in Western societies and challenged existing conceptions of national identity. Immigration poses particular challenges for “minority nations” like Catalonia, which, as the previous chapter explored, for decades has struggled to promote its distinct language and national identity within the context of the Spanish state. Spain’s membership in the European Union creates further immigration challenges for Catalonia, due to the EU’s commitment to labour mobility and the free movement of European citizens among its member states.

Since the late-20th century, Catalonia’s political leaders have fostered what they characterize as a civic conception of national identity, one that is open to immigration and cultural diversity but that expects newcomers to integrate into the common Catalan-speaking national community. This chapter begins with a discussion of how immigration in the Catalan context over time has become a multi-level phenomenon in which the Spanish state, the Catalan regional government (the Generalitat de Catalunya), local municipalities, and the European Union have been able to influence and shape the flow of immigrants into Catalonia as well as the settlement/integration policies and services available to immigrants. The chapter then discusses Catalonia’s history as an immigrant-receiving region within Spain, as well as traces the evolution of the Catalan immigration/integration model. This historical overview explores how Catalonia’s ongoing struggle for national self-determination within the Spanish state, as well as
the wider process of European integration, have existed in a relational dynamic with the
development of the Catalan immigration/integration model, whereby, the development of the
Catalan model has been both a motivating factor and a side effect of the Catalan Generalitat’s
efforts at securing greater self-government from the Spanish state.

Immigration in Catalonia: A multi-level system

Immigration in the Catalan context is a complex multi-level phenomenon: a reflection of
Catalonia’s status as a self-governing constituent unit within the Spanish state, as well as Spain’s
status as a member state of the European Union. This multi-level complexity is not unique to
Catalonia, but instead reflects what Hepburn and Zapata-Barrero (2014) describe as a broader
“re-scaling” of immigration/integration issues both above and below the level of the nation-state
that has taken place in multiple Western societies (p. 5). In the Catalan context, officially, the
primary actor in the immigration field is the Government of Spain. Section 149(2) of the 1978
Spanish Constitution grants Spain’s central government “exclusive competence” over matters of
“[n]ationality, immigration, emigration, status of aliens, and right of asylum” (Kingdom of
Spain, 1978). The Spanish government uses this authority to legislate on a range of issues
pertaining to the admission and naturalization of immigrants – including foreign nationals,
citizens of other EU member states, refugees and asylum seekers (Zapata-Barrero, 2012, p. 221).
In spite of this position of authority and leadership, the approach of the Spanish government
towards immigration and citizenship over the past thirty years has been largely reactive, in which
Spanish immigration policy has principally been limited to “the control of (immigration) flows
and the reduction of illegal immigrants” (Moreno & Colino, 2010, p. 312). Several scholars
have remarked on the incoherence, ambiguity or pragmatism of Spanish immigration/integration policy during this time period, and attribute it to a variety of factors including: Spain’s history as a country of *emigration* rather than immigration prior to the 1990s; the tensions that debate surrounding immigration and identity inevitably raise in the Spanish context in relation to older unsettled questions regarding the multinational character of the country; and lastly, the growing polarization between Spain’s two main political parties in recent years over the subjects of immigration, citizenship and national identity (Davis, 2009b; Kleiner-Liebau, 2009; Zapata-Barrero 2007a & 2012).

Despite the constitutional primacy of the Spanish government in the realm of immigration, the municipal and regional levels of governments over time have assumed important roles in the settlement and integration of immigrants to Spain. Spanish immigration legislation mandates that municipalities serve as the “first point of contact” for newcomers to Spain, due to their “proximity to the public” and their role in providing state benefits and programs, including education and health services (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2014b, p. 8). In order for foreign residents to access these services, the law requires that they officially record their “habitual residence” with their municipality’s population register (ibid.).

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25 Spain’s accession to the European Community in 1986 and the economic growth the country experienced between this time and the 2008 economic crisis attracted significant numbers of immigrants to Spain from other EU member states and from the Global South, rapidly transforming Spain into an immigrant-receiving country.

26 An analysis of the municipal level’s role in the immigration field would be an interesting expansion on this project, due to the prominent role of municipalities in the day-to-day delivery of services to newcomers and consequently their important role in the Catalan integration process, coupled with their demographic and linguistic variety (in which certain municipalities are predominantly Catalan-speaking and culturally homogenous, and others are generally Castilian-speaking, bilingual, or multi-lingual and culturally diverse), and how municipalities represent dynamic and distinct political environments in which far-left and far-right parties have achieved electoral success (such as the victory of the left-wing “Barcelona en Comú” coalition in Barcelona’s 2015 municipal election or the influence of the xenophobic and far-right “Platforma per Catalunya” in certain Catalan municipalities).
The role of the regional level of government is more complicated and reflects the complexity of Spain’s post-transition constitutional order. As discussed in Chapter Two, the 1978 Constitution re-organized the previously unitary Spanish state into a devolved unitary state or quasi-federation composed of seventeen autonomous communities. To create this new regional level of government, the Spanish state devolved political power to each of the autonomous communities through “Statutes of Autonomy”, which outline an autonomous community’s political institutions as well as the powers and policy responsibilities that those institutions exercise. While Catalonia’s 1979 Statute of Autonomy was largely silent on the subjects of immigration and integration (an issue that its revised 2006 Statute addressed, as discussed below), it nonetheless granted the restored Catalan government (called the Generalitat de Catalunya) authority over various social policies and services that immigrants regularly access and depend upon in their day-to-day lives. From a practical standpoint then, by virtue of their jurisdictional responsibilities, the Catalan Generalitat and the other autonomous community governments within Spain became regularly involved in the everyday settlement and integration experiences of immigrants living within their respective regions.

Finally, at the supranational level, the European Union increasingly has influenced immigration/integration matters in the Catalan context since Spain acceded to the European Community in 1986. The EU treaties affirm the right of “free movement” to all EU citizens among the Union’s member states, through the promotion of a common European “area of freedom, security and justice without internal borders” (Europa, n.d.). The concept of free movement has been instituted gradually since the 1985 Schengen Agreement in which certain member states agreed to abolish internal border controls “in lieu of a single external border” and in which “common rules and procedures are applied with regard to visas for short stays, asylum
requests and border controls” (ibid.). Spain became subject to these provisions when it joined the “Schengen Area” in 1991. The Catalan Generalitat accordingly refers to the European Union as a “primary player” regarding immigration and integration policy in the Catalan context (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2009, p. 44). The Generalitat also notes that in recent years both member state and regional governments have gradually been “displaced” by the EU in a range of policy areas and issues pertaining to immigration, including border controls and visas, asylum, protections for the rights of foreigners, and control over illegal migration and human trafficking (ibid., pp. 44-45).

In summary, immigration and integration in the Catalan context involve four different levels of government, creating a degree of complexity that can severely constrain policy development. Nonetheless, Madrid’s reticence or inability to articulate a consistent vision of Spanish immigration and citizenship policy in recent decades, has created an opening for the Catalan Generalitat and other autonomous community governments in Spain to attempt to overcome this intergovernmental complexity and articulate their own “regionally distinct conceptualizations of citizenship and inclusion” (Davis, 2009b, p. 137; see also Zapata-Barrero, 2007a & 2009). The following sections provide an overview of the Generalitat’s efforts to

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27 The 1997 Treaty of Amsterdam later incorporated the provisions of the Schengen Agreement into the European Union legal framework.

28 All European Union legislation and regulations regarding “foreign persons residing in the territory of Member States” are entrenched in Spanish Law and have full legal force in Catalonia (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2014a, p. 12).

29 The Catalan Generalitat recognizes the intergovernmental complexity surrounding immigration and integration matters, explaining that in the Catalan context, “[t]he legal system for foreigners is determined by various political and administrative levels with powers that in one way or another impact on immigration and the rights and duties of immigrants” (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2009, p. 43).
develop a distinct Catalan immigration/integration model, and the challenges they have faced due to intergovernmental pressures from the Spanish and European levels.

**Catalonia’s history as an immigrant-receiving region of Spain**

Migration has profoundly shaped the social and political characteristics of Catalonia and Catalan nationalism for the past century. Ricard Zapata-Barrero (2007a) describes Catalonia as “a nation created by immigration” (p. 181), while Désirée Kleiner-Liebau (2009) notes how contemporary Catalan political discourse continuously emphasizes the region’s “history of immigrant reception and integration” as well as the “positive contributions” of immigrants to the development of a distinct and autonomous Catalan society (p. 181). This immigration tradition is largely attributable to Catalonia’s history as a major industrial centre, which for decades attracted significant numbers of migrants to the region from poorer agrarian parts of Spain.

The period of increased migration during the mid-20th century coincided with the Franco dictatorship, which declared Catalan nationalism a threat to the unity of the Spanish state and prohibited the public use of the Catalan language as well as Catalan cultural practices and symbols of national identity. The concern among many Catalans during this time was that the influx of Castilian-speakers from the rest of Spain coupled with the cultural repression of the Franco regime would either undermine Catalonia’s national/linguistic distinctiveness, or create a social divide between the wealthier native Catalans and the poorer recent “immigrant” population (Greer, 2007, p. 97). Debates regarding how to address this growing migrant population dominated Catalan political discourse for much of the mid-20th century (Balcells, 1996, pp. 152-155).
By the time of Spain’s transition to democracy and the restoration of Catalan self-government during the mid- to late-1970s, the survival and promotion of the Catalan language were at the forefront of the region’s political concerns, including the goal of linguistically integrating the region’s significant Castilian-speaking minority. Accordingly, the restored Catalan government began to develop a distinct Catalan model of immigrant integration. This model has grown and developed over the past thirty years in tandem with the evolving nature of the Catalonia-Spain-EU relationship. Three distinct phases are evident in the course of this historical evolution: Phase One (1980s to the early-1990s) in which the Generalitat’s primary focus was the integration of Castilian-speaking immigrants from the rest of Spain, and where the European Union played a minor role; Phase Two (early-1990s to late-2000s) in which the Generalitat’s primary focus was the integration of immigrants from outside of Spain, and where the European Union facilitated the influx of growing numbers of immigrants to Catalonia; and finally, Phase Three (late-2000s to the present) in which the Catalan Generalitat has had to address an economic and fiscal crisis, decreased immigration levels, rising societal tensions, and increased emigration levels from Catalonia to wealthier parts of the EU (this third phase is discussed in Chapter Five, which explores the political context in the aftermath of the National Agreement on Immigration).

1980s to the early-1990s: “Internal immigration” from the rest of Spain

Following the restoration of self-government, the Catalan Generalitat attempted to reconcile the region’s nationalist and autonomist political goals with the demographic diversity of Catalan society through the promotion of what many scholars characterize as a “liberal-
inclusive”, “civic” and “pluralist” interpretation of Catalan nationalism and national identity in which the Catalan language serves as the primary social bond among citizens (Conversi 1997; Keating 2001a; Kymlicka 2001a). As Kleiner-Liebau (2009) explains, the “Catalan nation” came to be understood “as a civic nation with a strong cultural bias” whereby “membership is defined in political discourse not by means of ethnic origin, but by means of civic elements and language knowledge” (p. 218). The Catalan President at the time, Jordi Pujol, famously summarized this inclusive vision of national identity by defining a “Catalan” as “anyone who lives and works in Catalonia, and wants to be Catalan”, as well as demonstrates a commitment to the Catalan language (quoted in Davis, 2009b, p. 144).

Catalonia’s “Language Normalization Laws”, first passed in 1983 and strengthened in 1997 and 2006, served as the centrepiece of this integrationist agenda. Their purpose was to reverse the predominance of the Castilian language in public life and expand the use of Catalan. The concept of linguistic normalization initially was designed “to make Catalan co-equal” with Castilian, “moving it from the status of a language spoken at home to being a language in which one could communicate at any level” (Greer, 2007, p. 176). The Normalization Laws were wide-ranging in scope and included: guaranteeing the right of citizens to use Catalan in their interactions with public authorities; ensuring that the regional public sector operated equally in

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30 Several other scholars have remarked on the inclusive character of Catalan nationalism. Keating (2001a) notes the relative openness of the Catalan nation, in that “[t]he principal entry requirement to the Catalan community is learning the language and nearly all elements of the nationalist movement emphasise the need to assimilate newcomers rather than maintaining an ethnic differentiation” (p. 198). Daniele Conversi (1997) has highlighted the influence and active role of immigrants in the development of Catalan nationalism, a fact he attributes to the Catalans’ “inclusive vision of national identity, which is non-ascriptive and not based on putative descent” (p. 218). Alain-G Gagnon (2010) similarly notes how “[b]eing Catalan [...] means playing an active role in the societal choices of the national community in relation to a shared history, a plural identity and an increasingly shared language”, arguing that the Catalan language is “at the heart of the political undertaking and leads to a tolerant and inclusive approach to nationalism” (p. 30).
Catalan and Castilian; mandating Catalan as one of the main languages of educational instruction and immersion for students; and setting quota requirements for Catalan-language media content.

An additional goal of Catalonia’s linguistic normalization strategy was to integrate the region’s Castilian-speaking migrant population into the wider Catalan-speaking society, particularly through educating and socializing the children of migrants in the Catalan language. As Keating (2001a) explains, the policy of “linguistic normalization was intended to make Catalan the normal language of communication in Catalonia but not to enhance ethnic differences and status distinctions between Catalans and non-Catalans”, and therefore “reflected a conscious decision in political circles in Catalonia to emphasize a civic and territorial rather than an ethnic nationalism” (pp. 166-167). In this respect, Catalan nationalist objectives regarding immigration and linguistic normalization were similar to the linguistic integration goals of modern Québécois nationalism, in that as Keating (2001a) notes, “the Catalan project aims to use language to secure and enhance national identity and to integrate immigrants […] while maintaining (Catalonia’s) social cohesion and cultural distinctiveness” (p. 166). Over time, Catalonia’s linguistic normalization policy proved relatively successful, with scholars noting its success at both “Catalanizing” public services and official discourse in the region (Greer, 2007; Roller, 2002), as well as its success at promoting the usage and the perceived value of the Catalan language among the general public (Newman, Trenchs-Parera, & Ng, 2008).

Efforts in recent years to strengthen Catalonia’s language laws to make Catalan the “predominant” language in the region, however, have proven controversial among certain political actors and organizations within both Catalonia and the rest of Spain, particularly opponents of Catalan nationalism, who contend that the Generalitat is marginalizing the rights of Castilian-speakers in Catalonia in the interest of promoting Catalan (Greer, 2007, p. 131).
This phase covering the emergence and initial development of the Catalan immigration/integration model coincided with Spain’s accession to the European Community in 1986 and its subsequent integration into what would become the European Union. At the time, the EC/EU had limited influence on immigration patterns and politics in the region as the flow of immigrants to Catalonia and Spain from the rest of the EU remained relatively low, and as the Catalan Generalitat focused on integrating Castilian-speaking migrants from the rest of Spain. Nonetheless, a general pro-European consensus began to emerge at this time among both the Catalan population and the region’s major political parties, which was supportive of Spain’s integration into Europe and envisioned a greater role for Catalonia and other regional actors in the European decision-making process (Nagel, 2004, pp. 61-62).

1990s to late-2000s: “External immigration” from the EU and Global South

Spain’s transition to an immigrant-receiving country during the 1990s and 2000s raised new challenges for the Catalan Generalitat and Catalan nationalism. Over the course of the 1990s and 2000s, the proportion of new immigrants to the region from the rest of Spain dropped significantly relative to the proportion of new immigrants from outside of Spain (see Figure 1). Various factors spurred this new wave of “external immigration”, including, Catalonia’s economic growth during the 1990s and 2000s in which it emerged as one of the wealthiest regions in the EU, as well as labour shortages in rapidly growing sectors of the Catalan economy (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2009, p. 13).
Figure 1: Population of foreign nationality residents in Catalonia (1991-2005)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population of foreign nationality residents in Catalonia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>55,309</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>72,220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>76,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>83,278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>104,145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>114,264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>124,539</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>148,803</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>183,736</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>214,996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>280,167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>328,461</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>383,874</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>462,042</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>470,991</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Generalitat de Catalunya, 2001, p. 35; Generalitat de Catalunya, 2005, p. 15)

To respond to these changes in immigration patterns, the Catalan Generalitat adapted the various programs and policies developed to integrate the older Castilian-speaking migrant population towards the goal of integrating the region’s new immigrant population from abroad (Davis, 2009b, p. 151). In 1992, the Generalitat established the Commission for Monitoring and Coordinating Actions on Immigration, a body that in turn produced Catalonia’s First Interdepartmental Plan for Immigration 1993-2000. According to Zapata-Barrero (2009), the 1993-2000 Plan “constituted the initial phase in the creation of an interdepartmental network” for the management of immigration issues in Catalonia, “basing its implementation on the belief that immigration is a cross-cutting issue that affects all government departments” (pp. 129-130). The Plan proposed improving government coordination in the provision of services and resources for
immigrants, fostering public awareness and understanding regarding the changes taking place in Catalan society due to immigration and the challenges facing the region’s immigrant population, as well as encouraging immigrant participation in the broader project of “Catalan nation building” (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2014b, p. 16).

By the turn of the millennium, immigrants from outside of Spain accounted for the majority of Catalonia’s population growth (Zapata-Barrero, 2007a, p. 184). The rising levels of immigration to the region and the growing social diversity that it engendered, prompted the Catalan Generalitat to attempt to assume greater authority over the fields of immigration and integration to control the flow of newcomers into the region (ibid., pp. 184-185). These efforts led to the creation of the Catalan Secretariat for Immigration and the drafting of the Second Interdepartmental Plan for Immigration (2001-2004). The 2001-2004 Plan introduced the idea of a “via catalana d’integració” (in English, “Catalan way of integration”), which was described as an integration “model that ensures the best balance between respect for diversity and the sense of belonging to a single community” (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2001, p. 7). Specifically, the “via catalana d’integració” attempted to balance Catalonia’s commitment to “respecting” and “valuing” the cultural diversity of newcomers and recognizing the contributions of immigrants to Catalan society, while also emphasizing the need for newcomers to respect the “language and culture of Catalonia” as well as the principles of “democratic coexistence” (ibid.).

The subsequent Citizenship and Immigration Plan 2005-2008 articulated a similar vision of immigrant integration, with the main goals of fostering “social cohesion” within Catalonia, promoting knowledge and use of the Catalan language, and preventing discrimination towards newcomers and minorities (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2014b, p. 17). Significantly, it articulated
a new concept of “resident citizenship” designed to apply to “all Catalan men and women, regardless of nationality or legal situation” and centring on the “equal rights and responsibilities” shared by all of Catalonia’s inhabitants (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2005, p. 158). A broader commitment to the Catalan language framed the 2005-2008 Plan’s vision of integration and social equality, in which, “[a]ll policies on equality and accommodating the resident population of Catalonia” fell under the ambit of “linguistic policies” (ibid., p. 160). Specifically, the Plan emphasized the potential of the Catalan language at fostering social cohesion, arguing, “[w]hen immigrants use the Catalan language as a vehicle for communication, it can greatly increase their level of integration” (ibid.). The Plan similarly stressed that one of the “basic objectives” of the Catalan Generalitat is “[t]o ensure that the Catalan language is used as a vehicle for social, economic, political and cultural communication” among the entire population of Catalonia (ibid.).

While these official plans were significant in articulating and developing the values and goals of the Catalan immigration/integration model and its associated vision of Catalan identity and national belonging, the Catalan Generalitat was less successful during this time in securing greater jurisdictional authority over immigration matters from the Spanish state. In an effort to emulate Quebec’s jurisdictional autonomy in the immigration realm, the Generalitat proposed turning immigration into an area of “shared competency” between the Spanish and Catalan governments, as well as attempted to create overseas immigration offices designed to facilitate the flow of skilled labour into Catalonia (Davis, 2009a, pp. 433-434). The Spanish government ultimately blocked these initiatives, as they regarded the Generalitat’s actions as an unwarranted intrusion into a policy area in which they exercised exclusive constitutional authority (ibid.).
These disagreements between the Catalan Generalitat and the Spanish government over immigration matters were symptomatic of broader tensions between Catalonia and Madrid over the evolution of the Spanish state. As discussed in Chapter Two, by the beginning of the 21st century, the two sides had reached an impasse over the future constitutional direction of the country and its national character, with the central government stressing the constitutional status quo of symmetrical devolution among the autonomous communities and a mono-national vision of the Spanish state, and the Catalans calling for far-reaching constitutional reform based on a multinational vision of the Spanish state in which Catalonia would possess asymmetrical status. Catalonia’s reform efforts ultimately culminated in the passage of a revised Statute of Autonomy for the region in 2006 designed to “increase the symbolic and political recognition of Catalonia as a distinct national reality within the Spanish state” (Requejo, 2010, p. 159). Significantly, the negotiations surrounding the 2006 Statute also represented a renewed attempt by Catalonia to assume greater authority over immigration and integration matters.

The final version of the 2006 Statute explicitly recognizes the internal diversity of Catalan society and its history as an immigrant-receiving region. The Preamble to the 2006 Statute begins by emphasizing how “Catalonia has been shaped over the course of time through the contribution of the energy of many generations, traditions and cultures, which found in Catalonia a land of welcome” (Parlament de Catalunya, 2012, p. 19). The Statute also includes an entire section (Section 138) devoted to the authority of the Catalan Generalitat in immigration and integration matters, making it the first Statute of Autonomy in Spanish history to address the authority of an autonomous community government in the immigration field (Davis, 2009b, p. 147). Specifically, Section 138 grants the Generalitat exclusive authority in the reception and integration of immigrants to Catalonia, as well as executive authority in the provision of work
permits to foreign workers in the region (Parlament de Catalunya, 2012, p. 94). While Section 138 abides by the language of the 1978 Constitution and does not explicitly challenge the exclusive authority of the Spanish government in the realm of immigration, it was nonetheless significant in terms of outlining what had previously been an ambiguous role for the Catalan Generalitat regarding the integration of newcomers within their society.

This second phase, in which the Catalan immigration/integration model continued to develop in response to the region’s rising immigration levels and growing social diversity, also coincided with the European Union assuming an increasingly prominent role in Catalan public life both in relation to immigration and to the region’s nationalist self-determination aspirations. Beginning in the 1990s, immigration from other EU member states began to constitute a significant proportion of the new wave of external immigration to Catalonia (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2009, p. 17). The countries of origin for these EU immigrants varied significantly, with many coming from Western European member states such as France, Germany, Italy and the UK, but with significant growth in recent years from the new Eastern European member states (ibid., p. 18). Indeed, the eastward expansion of the EU during the mid-2000s was followed by significant increases in the number of EU immigrants settling in Catalonia, with the Generalitat reporting a noticeable increase after Romania and Bulgaria’s accession to the Union in 2007 (ibid., p. 37).³¹

³¹ Note that immigration from Latin American countries (in particular, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Argentina and Bolivia) in total consistently outnumbered EU immigration over the past decade. This is significant in that even though the number of Castilian-speaking migrants from the rest of Spain settling in Catalonia has dropped substantially in recent years, the number of Castilian-speakers from Latin America settling in Catalonia has consistently grown creating the same potential challenges for Catalan authorities in terms of the preservation and promotion of the Catalan language in public life relative to Castilian (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2009).
Conclusion

Since the restoration of self-government in the late-1970s, Catalonia has gradually developed its own distinct immigration/integration model informed by an open and inclusive vision of the Catalan nation. Specifically, the model has articulated a vision of the Catalan nation that emphasizes its immigration history, as well as respects and values Catalonia’s cultural diversity and the contributions of immigrants to Catalan society, but also emphasizes commonalities that are intended to bind all Catalans together regardless of background, namely, common citizenship, rights and civic responsibilities, as well as a collective commitment to the Catalan language. Indeed, the Catalan language serves as the centrepiece to the entire integration model, acting as the common linguistic ground upon which the diverse components of Catalonia’s population can meet and communicate with one-another in their day-to-day lives. The Generalitat has constructed this vision of a culturally diverse nation bound together by common citizenship, rights, civic responsibilities, and language over time through a variety of legislative mechanisms and government initiatives, such as the Normalization Laws and the 1993, 2001 and 2005 immigration plans, as well as grounded the model in key concepts like the “Catalan Way of Integration” and “resident citizenship”.

The model has experienced various pressures over time as it has responded to the challenges of integrating Catalonia’s Castilian-speaking migrant population during the 1980s, as well as the region’s increasingly diverse foreign-born immigrant population during the 1990s and 2000s. It has also garnered significant criticism and political opposition from those that regard the model as illiberal, discriminatory and divisive in its promotion of the Catalan language over the rights of Castilian-speakers. In spite of changing conditions and criticism, however, the main
goal of the Catalan Generalitat of fostering an inclusive and welcoming Catalan society grounded in common citizenship, rights, responsibilities and language has persisted over time.

The Catalan immigration/integration model also owes its existence in part to the dynamics of the Spanish system of multi-level governance. Specifically, immigration and integration matters in the Catalan context are located at a complex intersection between four different levels of government, each possessing varying degrees of influence and articulating distinct and occasionally conflicting political agendas and policy interests. As shown in this chapter, intergovernmental pressure from these other levels have continually shaped and influenced the Generalitat’s efforts at promoting an inclusive vision of Catalan minority nationalism. The European level, in particular, has been an increasingly influential factor in the immigration dynamics at play in Catalan society. Beyond the European Union’s active involvement in various policy areas that have direct bearing on immigration and integration matters in the Spanish and Catalan contexts – including asylum policy, border controls, visas, and control of irregular migration – the EU’s emphasis on free movement and mobility among its member states has also fostered a degree of openness and fluidity to Catalan life, in which EU citizens are able to enter and exit the region with limited restriction. This open atmosphere has in part shaped the evolution of the Catalan immigration/integration model, at least since the 1990s. The Catalan Generalitat has had to adapt its integration programs and services to rising immigration levels (of which other EU countries were major contributors) and an increasingly diverse population over the course the 1990s and 2000s.

The Catalan immigration/integration model, however, is not simply a passive by-product of this wider system of multi-level governance. Indeed, the Catalan Generalitat has repeatedly
attempted to expand its powers and responsibilities in the immigration/integration field relative to the other levels of government (in particular the central government), and immigration matters have represented a key component of the wider Catalan struggle for political autonomy, in particular, the efforts to negotiate a new Statute of Autonomy in the mid-2000s. In this respect, the Catalan model has existed in a complicated dynamic with the wider system of multi-level governance, in which the Catalan model has been shaped by the existing division of powers, but where efforts to develop and expand this model have also explicitly challenged the division of powers and brought the stability of the multi-level governance system into question.

The following chapter continues the dissertation’s analysis of the evolution of the Catalan immigration and integration model by focusing on the development, negotiation and signing of the National Agreement on Immigration in 2008. Chapter Four will also compare the content and framing strategies of the National Agreement with the understandings of Catalan nationhood, national identity, cultural diversity, immigration and immigrants that were articulated in the earlier Catalan immigration policies and official plans discussed in this chapter.
Chapter Four – Frame analysis of the National Agreement on Immigration

A lengthy process of research, expert consultation and public participation on the realities and challenges regarding immigration and integration in Catalonia preceded the signing of the Agreement to Live Together: National Agreement on Immigration in December 2008. Various parties developed the agreement through the following stages between 2007 and 2008:

1) Diagnosis Phase (June to October 2007)
2) Consultation Phase (October 2007 to February 2008)
3) Publication of Document de Bases del Pacte Nacional per a la Immigració (April 2008)
4) Participatory Phase (April 2008 to June 2008)
5) Final Negotiation Phase (July 2008 to December 2008)
6) Signing ceremony for National Agreement on Immigration (December 2008)

This chapter provides an overview of the different stages in the development of the National Agreement, before providing a summary of the final version of the Agreement signed in December 2008. The chapter also provides frame analysis of the final version of the Agreement, focusing on its major themes as well as its framing of key concepts such as “immigration”, “immigrants”, “identity”, “integration”, as well as Catalonia’s powers of self-government in the immigration field and its relationship to the Spanish state and other levels of government.
Diagnosis and Consultation Phases

The “Diagnosis Phase” for the National Agreement on Immigration lasted from June to October 2007 and provided an assessment of the immigration/integration reality in Catalonia. The phase culminated in a series of sessions between September and October 2007 with participation by “over eighty professionals from different authorities and organisations” from across Catalonia (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2008a, p. 88). These sessions provided recommendations regarding necessary “interventions” for the National Agreement on Immigration to undertake in the immigration field (ibid.). In the end, the Diagnosis Phase provided an “outline for the discussion topics” that were the focus of the subsequent “Consultation Phase” that took place between October 2007 and February 2008 (ibid.). This Consultation Phase drew on the work of “forty key professionals” divided into four working groups that focused on major issues pertaining to immigration and public policy in Catalonia, namely: 1) migration flow management; 2) access to the labour market; 3) adaptation of public services to a diverse society; and, 4) the promotion of a common public culture. The participants from the four major working groups included a broad cross-section of Catalan academics, researchers, statisticians, as well as representatives of local and regional government. The participants in this phase later accumulated their findings in the An Agreement to Live Together: Foundation Document of the National Agreement on Immigration, released in April 2008.

The first two working groups focused on “possible responses to the needs of managing migratory flows in an adequate manner to the demands of the labour market”, and articulated

32 The National Agreement on Immigration states that these 80 participants represented the different geographic regions of Catalonia, with representatives from “Girona, Barcelona, Central Catalonia, Tarragona, the Ebre lands, the Ponent area, the Pyrenees and Vall d’Aran” (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2008a, p. 88).
strategies for guaranteeing the regularity of migratory flows to Catalonia, ensuring the rights of the immigrants, and coordinating the influx of immigrants in relation to Catalonia’s economic needs (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2008b, p. 69-70). The findings of these two groups became “Line 1” of the *Foundation Document*, entitled “Management of migratory flows and access to the labour market”. The third working group focused on public concerns that had arisen in recent years in response to rising immigration levels, specifically concerns surrounding “competition for public resources” and the related need “to adapt [Catalan] public services to the new demands of a diverse society” (ibid.). Their findings formed the basis for Line 2 of the *Foundation Document*, entitled “Adapting public services to a diverse society”. Finally, the fourth working group focused on “strategies to provide elements of cohesion to a diverse society ensuring integration in a common public culture”, and conceptualized integration in the Catalan context as “a two-directional, dynamic and continuous process between the different people residing in a territory: those that recently have arrived, those that settled previously and those born in it” (ibid.). The working group described their central concept of a “common public culture” as:

> [A] shared space for communication, living together, acknowledgement and participation by our varied society, so that the national project remains the reference point to which the whole population living and working in Catalonia should commit itself (ibid.).

The fourth working group’s findings became Line 3 of the *Foundation Document*, entitled “Integration in a common public culture”.
The Foundation Document of the National Agreement on Immigration (official title in Catalan, Un Pacte per viure junts i juntes: Document de bases del Pacte Nacional per a la Immigració) was published by the Secretary for Immigration and Catalonia’s Department of Social Action and Citizenship in April 2008. The text of the Foundation Document is generally identical to the text of the final version of the National Agreement on Immigration signed in December 2008, though with certain key differences (addressed later in the chapter).

The Foundation Document begins with an introductory section that provides an outline of the immigration situation in Catalonia and its relationship to the policy concerns and goals of the National Agreement, as well as an overview of the broader immigration policy framework in Catalonia and the major principles guiding the National Agreement. The following three sections provide an overview of the three major policy “lines” that were identified and explored during the National Agreement’s diagnosis and consultation phases: 1) management of migratory flows and access to the job market (official title in Catalan, “Gestió dels fluxos migratoris i accés al mercat de treball”), 2) adapting public services to a diverse society (official title in Catalan, “Adaptació dels serveis públics a una societat diversa”), and 3) integration in a common public culture (official title in Catalan, “Integració en una cultura pública comuna”) (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2008b, p. 3). Each line identifies societal and policy challenges for the Catalan Generalitat to address including “prevailing policies which need to be reinforced” as well as “new measures that need to be brought in” (ibid.).

The text closes with an overview of the “legal framework” surrounding immigration in the Catalan context, specifically as it pertains to the regional, Spanish and European levels of
government. Following this framework are three appendices that provide an overview of the development process of the *Foundation Document*, a summary of the major participants involved in the development process, and an overview of the major documents and pieces of legislation referenced in the text.

**Participatory Phase**

The National Agreement’s public “participatory” phase took place between April and June 2008 after the publication of the *Foundation Document*. It included forty-eight “work sessions” convened in the different regions of Catalonia, which included: “the Girona area, Barcelona city, Barcelona metropolitan area, Central Catalonia, the Tarragona lands, the Ebre lands, the Ponent area, the Pyrenees and Vall d’Aran” (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2008a, p. 89). Public submissions were also collected through an official National Agreement website ([www.gencat.cat/dasc/pni](http://www.gencat.cat/dasc/pni))33, and through two major conferences on the relationship between gender and the National Agreement as well as on the coordination of “migratory flow management” between Catalonia and immigrant “countries of origin” (ibid.). In the end, the participatory phase attracted 1,515 participants from across Catalonia as well as 2,371 public contributions regarding the content of the *Foundation Document* (ibid.). Public interest regarding the three main lines of the *Foundation Document* varied. Line One, “Management of migratory flows and labour market”, generated the most public attention with 877 proposals,

33 This official website for the National Agreement on Immigration was discontinued by the Generalitat after the Agreement’s signing in late 2008.
followed by Line 2, “Adaptation of public services to a diverse society” with 746 proposals, and
lastly, Line 3, “Integration in a common public culture” attracted 656 proposals (ibid., p. 90).\textsuperscript{34}

\textbf{Final Negotiation Phase}

The Negotiation Phase for the National Agreement on Immigration began in July 2008. Contributions by the eventual signatories to the Agreement proceeded in two stages, with representatives of business associations, labour unions, municipal governments and civil society organizations providing input on the Agreement in the first stage and representatives of Catalan political parties providing input in the second stage (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2009, p. 73). The Negotiation Phase ended on December 19, 2008, with a signing ceremony in which “32 institutional, political, economic and social agents” participated, including representatives of the Catalan Government, four major Catalan political parties (CiU, ERC, PSC, ICV-EUiA), business, trade unions, as well as immigrant organizations and advocacy groups (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2008a, p. 5 & 8-13).

\textbf{An Agreement to Live Together: National Agreement on Immigration}

The Final Version of An Agreement to Live Together: National Agreement on Immigration mirrored the format of the earlier Foundation Document. Its introductory section provides an overview of the immigration reality in Catalonia, the migratory policies in place in

\textsuperscript{34} The text of the National Agreement on Immigration also provides data on the geographic breakdown of participation and a breakdown of proposals based on the three major lines and the specific challenges identified in the Agreement (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2008a, pp. 90-91).
the region, and a summary of the National Agreement on Immigration’s major principles. The Final Version’s second section similarly addresses the three major “lines” of the National Agreement on Immigration and the eleven major challenges associated with the lines that the Consultation Phase and the Foundation Document had previously identified. Line 1 on “Management of migratory flows and access to the job market”, listed three related challenges for Catalonia to address:

1) “The necessary mobilisation of domestic human resources to ensure quality and competitiveness of the production base”

2) “To manage external flows aligning legislation with reality”

3) “Responsible management of migratory flows that is coordinated with the development of countries of origin”

Line 2 on “Adapting public services to a diverse society” cited three related challenges:

1) “Creating a universal reception service”

2) “Sizing public services and guaranteeing access for all persons”

3) “Strengthening inter-institutional transversality and coordination”

Finally, Line 3 on “Integration in a common public culture” cited five related challenges:

1) “Encouraging participation in public life”

2) “Making Catalan the common public language”

3) “Living together in a plurality of beliefs”
4) “Guaranteeing equal opportunities between men and women and including the gender perspective”

5) “Strengthening policies aimed at children, young people, elderly persons and families”

The third section of the Final Version also provides an overview of the proposed budget for the National Agreement on Immigration. Lastly, the Final Version’s four appendices address: 1) timeline proposals “[o]n access to nationality” for immigrants; 2) the broader “[l]egal framework” for immigration and immigrants in Catalonia; 3) a timeline of the development process for the National Agreement on Immigration; and 4) a proposal for “[m]onitoring the National Agreement on Immigration” into the future (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2008a, p. 3).

The text of the Final Version of the National Agreement is largely unchanged from that of the Foundation Document, with a few exceptions. In certain places, the Final Version altered the text of the Foundation Document in order to emphasize specific themes or to reflect broader political and economic changes that had taken place in Catalonia between April and December 2008. In particular, the Final Document included additional references to fostering societal “consensus” within Catalonia, as well as additional commitments to “guaranteeing equal rights and respect of duties for the whole of society”, to combating “racism and xenophobia” within Catalan society, and to ensuring that the recognition and celebration of cultural diversity in Catalonia did not also lead to “separate institutional expressions” of that diversity (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2008a, p. 26, 31 & 63). In terms of reflecting broader changes in Catalonia, the Final Version of the National Agreement makes a reference to the “economic recession and growth in unemployment” that was not originally present in the Foundation Document and appears to allude to the global economic crisis that had developed since April 2008 (ibid., p. 18).
Framing the National Agreement on Immigration and its goals

At multiple points, the final version of the text lists the goals of the National Agreement on Immigration and frames its overall vision for Catalonia. In the Agreement’s prologue, the Catalan Minister for Social Action and Citizenship, Carme Capdevila i Palau, argues that the accord represents a comprehensive analysis of Catalonia’s immigration reality, stating “[t]he National Agreement on Immigration wishes to help explain to us all of the changes undergone [by immigration], listen to society’s requests about such and provide a response” (ibid., p. 5).

Capdevila continues by explaining what the present immigration situation entails for Catalonia and the policy actions the region must take to foster a cohesive social environment for all Catalan residents:

The Agreement thus affirms that immigration is here to stay and that we need to make it cohesive. This implies a resizing of public policies. Further, it also means that those of us that recognise our differences but wish to live together, do so by positively evaluating diversity while, at the same time, defining a space of cohesion and common public culture (ibid.).

The subsequent introductory section, entitled the “Signature Document”, similarly stresses that the National Agreement is an attempt at responding in a broad and proactive way to the demographic changes experienced by Catalonia in recent decades due to rising immigration levels:

The Agreement includes a shared analysis on the big transformations experienced, puts forward a shared vision and agrees to a set of challenges that must be met. It also identifies the actions that must be performed so that those of us of different origins and who want to live together can do so within a framework of social cohesion and opportunities for everyone (ibid., p. 7).
The text also frames the National Agreement as a reflection of an extensive process of expert and public consultation regarding the major concerns and challenges arising from immigration. It explains that the National Agreement “wishes to respond directly to the demands raised by our society regarding the demographic change undergone and its consequences” (ibid., p. 7). To this end, the text contends that the three major lines to the National Agreement represent both a reflection of and an official response to “the needs expressed by the whole of society” regarding immigration to Catalonia, namely: 1) “the need to give order to migratory flows”; 2) “the need to avoid the perception of competition over public resources”; and 3) “the need to provide elements of cohesion to a society that will remain more diverse” (ibid., p. 26). At several points, the text also emphasizes that the National Agreement represents a continuation of Catalonia’s existing immigration/integration framework rather than a deviation from it. The Signature Document section, for example, contends:

The consensus involved in the National Agreement on Immigration represents a further step forward after the many great initiatives that have been performed through the local setting and associations, as well as the different Governments of the Generalitat, in order to encourage the management, reception and integration of immigration (ibid., p. 7).

In terms of the accord’s broader legitimacy, the text frequently frames the National Agreement on Immigration as the product of broad-based public participation and an object of widespread public support. The “Signature Document” section, for example, explains that the signing of the National Agreement came about “[a]fter an extensive process of social dialogue and negotiation”, and emphasizes the large number of governmental, political, and civil society groups that participated in the Agreement’s development (ibid.).
Finally, the text of the National Agreement also lists a series of twelve “action principles” (in Catalan: “principis d’actuació”) intended to “govern the lines, challenges, aims and actions that make up the Agreement” (ibid., p. 31). These twelve principles are:

1) Guaranteeing that human rights are respected and extended.
2) Guaranteeing equal rights and respect of duties for the whole of society.
3) Citizenship based on pluralism, equality and civic-mindedness as the norm for co-existence.
4) Promotion of autonomy and equal opportunities in order to foster real equality, eliminating any arbitrary conditions or circumstances.
5) The right to access services, understood as meaning access for each right-holder to all resources, facilities, projects and programmes.
6) Normalisation avoiding parallel structures that might cause the segregation of the holders of the right to access services. Attention must be provided within the already existing framework of resources, facilities, projects and programmes. Specific responses are temporary and react to needs that also are such.
7) Services must allow different or specific approaches due to the heterogeneity of the rights holders in terms of age, origin, gender, skills or training levels.
8) Incorporating the gender perspective throughout the process and as an analysis and planning tool.
9) Incorporating the fight against racism and xenophobia in all of the actions by the agents signing the National Agreement on Immigration.
10) The measures put forward must be adapted to Catalonia’s territorial variety.
11) Guarantee of application: the provision of resources for the programmes laid out in the National Agreement on Immigration is part of the institutional commitment to develop the programmes and is an unavoidable requirement in order to achieve stated goals.
12) Monitoring and evaluation: a monitoring committee shall be created for the National Agreement on Immigration, consisting of all of the signatory agents and members of the Citizenship and Immigration Committee (ibid.).
The National Agreement’s action principles are noteworthy for the vision they articulate of Catalan society and the terms under which the diverse elements of Catalan society should live together. The third principle is of particular importance, with its vision of a common Catalan citizenship, but a citizenship in which “pluralism, equality and civic-mindedness” serve as the underlying “norm of co-existence” (ibid.). The principle’s dual emphasis on Catalan citizenship’s plural but also civic-egalitarian character is a recurring feature within the National Agreement. The text continually frames Catalonia as a diverse or plural society, while also emphasizing that this internal diversity is secondary to the commonalities that bind all Catalans together regardless of background. Indeed, the common rights and responsibilities of all Catalans are emphasized at multiple points in the action principles, including the first, second and fifth principles with their commitments to “[g]uaranteeing that human rights are respected and extended”, “[g]uaranteeing equal rights and respect of duties for the whole of society”, as well as the shared “right to access services” (ibid.).

The Agreement matches this emphasis on shared rights and responsibilities with a commitment to the legal, political and social equality of all Catalans, as reflected in the fourth principle regarding the “promotion of autonomy and equal opportunities in order to foster real equality” as well as the goal of “eliminating any arbitrary conditions or circumstances” in Catalan society (ibid.). Further, the commitment to a shared right to access public services reflects an emphasis on the part of the Agreement’s drafters to prevent the development of separate public institutions and programs that are specific to Catalonia’s immigrant population. The text further addresses this concern in the sixth principle with its commitment to the “[n]ormalisation” of public services and “avoiding parallel structures that might cause the
segregation of the holders of the right to access services”, coupled with the emphasis that policy responses for the immigrant population “must be provided within the already existing framework of resources, facilities, projects and programmes” and ensuring that any “specific responses” that are developed, “are temporary and react to needs that also are such” (ibid.).

In spite of this emphasis on common citizenship, rights and services, the text does recognize that the diversity within Catalan society poses significant challenges for the region, particularly in terms of the structural inequalities arising from this diversity. This is evident in the seventh, eighth and tenth principles, which recognize that Catalan “[s]ervices must allow different or specific approaches due to the heterogeneity of the rights holders in terms of age, origin, gender, skills or training levels”, as well as acknowledge the importance of “[i]ncorporating the gender perspective throughout the process and as an analysis and planning tool”, and recognize that “[t]he measures put forward must be adapted to Catalonia’s territorial variety” (ibid.). Similarly, there is a recognition of the ongoing danger of discriminatory and anti-immigrant sentiments developing within Catalonia in response to immigration, as reflected in the ninth principle and its commitment to “[i]ncorporating the fight against racism and xenophobia in all of the actions by the agents signing the National Agreement on Immigration” (ibid.).

The final two action principles are significant in terms of ensuring that the National Agreement represents a real and enduring material and policy commitment in terms of funding, programming, and future monitoring by the Catalan Generalitat. This includes a commitment in the eleventh principle to “guarantee of application” whereby “the provision of resources for the programmes laid out in the National Agreement on Immigration is part of the institutional
commitment to develop the programmes and is an unavoidable requirement in order to achieve stated goals”. It also includes a commitment in the twelfth principle to “[m]onitoring and evaluation”, whereby “a monitoring committee shall be created for the National Agreement on Immigration, consisting of all of the signatory agents and members of the Citizenship and Immigration Committee” (ibid., p. 31).

**Framing of “immigration”**

The National Agreement frequently frames immigration as a significant issue and a subject of public concern that requires an effective and broad-based response by Catalonia and the Catalan people, as Capdevila’s prologue summarized, “[t]he Agreement thus affirms that immigration is here to stay and that we need to make it cohesive” (ibid., p. 5). Section 16, similarly states that “[i]mmigration, in short, is a structural fact in Catalonia that has been more intense in recent years” and cautions that based on statistical projections “probably will continue to be a reality in the coming years” (ibid., p. 23). Similarly, Section 20 emphasizes the significance of the immigration influx that Catalonia had experienced up to 2008, and argues that the sweeping recommendations contained within the National Agreement reflect the broad scope of the immigration challenges facing the region:

[Int]s character as structural change, economic needs, the distance between reality and legality and public perceptions, as well as a shortage of ideal integration tools, provide sufficient elements to determine the need for a big national agreement on immigration. An agreement that can attain short, medium and long term consensuses needed to enable Catalonia to be able to administer the migratory issue, maintain social cohesion and improve the wellbeing of all of the Catalan population (ibid., p. 26).
The National Agreement also emphasizes the impact of high immigration levels on Catalan public opinion in recent years, in which certain segments of the public have expressed concern about the changes that the recent wave of immigration has introduced to the region. Section 6 notes that “[i]mmigration is one of our society’s main factors of change, as it modifies that which is most central to us: the people making up a society”, adding that in recent surveys “immigration is one of the three main issues that people most focus their attention on” (ibid., p. 17). The National Agreement nonetheless contrasts these public concerns with Catalonia’s increased economic dependence on immigration in recent years, particularly on immigrant labour. Section 8 notes:

Many sectors of production, faced with a lack of economically active persons, have opted to hire people directly in their countries of origin or take on people who, while being born abroad, already reside in Catalonia. This is an element that has acted as the main force attracting labour. It must be borne in mind that even in periods of economic recession and growth in unemployment there will be sectors that continue to require labour and when this is not available or qualified enough in the Spanish job market, they will choose to hire abroad (ibid., p. 18)

Line One similarly highlights a significant disconnect between on one hand the number of Catalans who regard immigration as one of the region’s “biggest problems” (in Catalan, “problemes principals”), and on the other hand, the important economic and social benefits that immigrants bring to Catalonia (ibid., p. 36). The section notes how despite public concerns regarding immigration, Catalonia would face significant economic and fiscal challenges if it had not experienced high levels of immigration in recent years, adding “many production sectors of the Catalan economy would find it hard to survive without the presence of foreign workers” as well as highlighting that “Catalonia is the autonomous community in the Spanish state with most foreign workers contributing to the social-security system” (ibid.).
Factors motivating immigration to Catalonia

In explaining the sources of immigration to Catalonia in recent years, the text frequently highlights the political and socio-economic differences between Catalonia and the countries of origin for many of the recent immigrants to the region. Section 9 of the National Agreement notes that “[i]t is necessary to take into account a series of different causes in order to explain migratory flows”, but adds “[s]tanding out from these are the inequalities between the Global North and South, the lack of job vacancies in the countries of origin, lack of freedoms, the limited social protection in many countries and the wider globalisation process” (ibid., p. 19). Section 10 similarly explains that differences in living standards between immigrant countries of origin and living standards in the EU act as “one of the elements that cause migratory flows” (ibid.). Line One of the National Agreement also emphasizes the significant and persistent material motivations that are driving immigration to Catalonia:

At the same time, migratory flows from developing to prosperous countries are not a momentary or circumstantial event. Rather, they respond to the permanent needs of human beings suffering poverty, exploitation, submission and lack of dignity. Until there is a deep change in the socio-economic conditions of our world, we must think about migration in general as a (sic) intrinsic phenomenon linked to the most disadvantaged peoples and societies (ibid., p. 37).

In spite of this emphasis on the socio-economic and living standard differences between the Global North and Global South, the National Agreement ultimately concludes that the reasons behind the migratory flows to Catalonia are complex and multi-faceted:

All of the explanatory factors for migration are necessary, but none of them are sufficient on their own. In order to understand the migratory phenomenon of the late 20th and early 21st centuries, the determinant factor is the combination between economic growth characterised by low productivity and labour-intensive growth, a continued fall in the

Positive and negative side effects of immigration

The National Agreement also explores the diverse side effects of immigration on Catalonia. It highlights the various positive side effects of immigration including its potential to ameliorate other demographic developments in Catalan society such as an aging domestic workforce (ibid., pp. 34-36), and argues that the diversity that immigration has introduced into Catalan society has provided “a new opportunity to define collectively our future national project” (ibid., p. 32). It also identifies various challenges or negative side effects associated with immigration to the region, including the integration challenges posed by the significant influx of immigrants to Catalonia in recent years. Section 67 notes the challenges raised by the “speed”, “strength” and “geographical concentration” of migration in recent years, which together “presents a notable challenge to the capacity to manage migration” in Catalonia (ibid., p. 37). The text cautions, however, that in spite of these growing tensions, “the National Agreement on Immigration believes that Catalonia has shown a great capacity to integrate in the past, and that the present will not be an exception” (ibid.).

Another significant challenge identified is the high proportion of “irregular situation” migrants (in Catalan, “població en situació administrativa irregular”), which the text frequently frames as one of the population groups that are most vulnerable to marginalization in Catalan society. Consequently, each of the three major lines to the Agreement identifies irregular immigrants as a priority issue for the region. Line One, on managing migratory flows, explains
in Section 71 that preventing irregular migration is a major component of the Agreement’s broader goal of protecting the rights of all recent migrants to Catalonia:

In order to guarantee respect for human rights, migratory flows must be characterised by regularity and a break with the situation in recent years in which arrivals in administratively irregular situations have occurred more often than wished for. As a result of the dynamics of exclusion and the lack of rights this produces, integration policies are incompatible with maintaining large arrivals of people in an administratively irregular situation. Thus integration and regular immigration are two sides of the same coin (ibid., p. 38).

Line Two explores the issue further in terms of the relationship between “people in irregular administrative situations” and the adaptation of Catalan public services. Section 109 notes how an irregular status “creates inhumane situations for those directly affected” due to “the restrictions to rights involved and the difficulties in developing a normalised life project” (ibid., p. 51). It further cautions that the influx of people in an irregular situation creates challenges for Catalan society in that “it demonstrates the limits of the institutional system at resolving situations and, at the same time, creates worrying dynamics that endanger maintaining the principles of the social state and rule of law” (ibid.). Finally, Line Three explores the challenges that people living in an irregular situation creates in terms of fostering a common public culture, and the limited capacity of Catalan institutions in effectively integrating this population. Section 148 explains that “the Catalan authorities – whether our parliament or government – do not have all of the instruments needed to deal with situations”, emphasizing that “out of all these deficits we must highlight those caused by the conditions of legal inequality in which the most recent foreign population find themselves in” (ibid., p. 63).
Framing of “identity”, “cultural diversity”, and “common public culture”

The National Agreement frames Catalonia as a country characterized and shaped by immigration in which, as noted above, internal diversity is significant but where there is a collective desire to live together as Catalans. Section 1 of the Agreement accordingly states:

Catalonia can be defined as a diverse society built largely through the settlement of persons from elsewhere.\(^{35}\) This process, produced in a global context and which has intensified in recent years, creates different needs, as well (sic) being a new opportunity to define the country that we will be in the future (ibid., p. 15).

The text also emphasizes that immigration is not new to Catalonia, and that the region has a long history as a destination point for newcomers. It explains that throughout the twentieth century, “[t]he Catalan demographic model has been characterised by demographic growth based mainly on immigration” (ibid., p. 21). Since the mid-twentieth century, immigration rates have offset other demographic changes in the region such as the decline in birth rates so that “the settlement of people of different origins became the basis for the increased number of Catalonia’s inhabitants, particularly in the city of Barcelona and its surrounding municipalities” (ibid.).

While the text frames immigration as a long-established phenomenon, it draws a distinction between the types of immigrants and the levels of immigration experienced in the past from what the region has experienced in recent years. Section 2, for example, notes the unprecedented level of foreign migrants that have arrived in the past decade, where “in the last eight years the number of people of foreign nationality that have settled in Catalonia has increased by approximately 900,000” (ibid., p. 15).

\(^{35}\) In Catalan, “Catalunya es defineix com una societat diversa construïda, en bona part, a partir de l’assentament de persones vingudes d’arreu.” (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2008a, p. 15).
The Agreement also emphasizes the diversity of the new arrivals to the region, noting that “there are people residing in Catalonia from 176 states”, while cautioning that an imbalance exists regarding countries of origin, whereby, 40 per cent of the recent immigrant population comes from five specific countries: Morocco, Romania, Ecuador, Bolivia and Colombia (ibid.). Line 3 similarly frames Catalonia as a deeply diverse society and that this deep diversity has a long history, noting that “[a]t present, Catalonia houses many forms of social and cultural diversity”, and that “[r]ecent migratory processes only have enriched the plurality of lifestyles that has always existed in the country” (ibid., p. 63). It also emphasizes the shared duty of Catalan institutions and Catalan society to manage this diversity properly:

Even so, it is the joint responsibility of the authorities, of all persons – including the most recent arrivals – and of all social, economic and political actors to ensure that this plurality fits with the never-ending process of democratising society; and that diversity can find its place in the Catalans’ proud tradition of opening up to others (ibid.).

While the Agreement makes numerous references to Catalonia as a distinct political community and society, specific references to Catalonia as a “nation” or to Catalan “nationhood” within the Agreement are present but also rare. On one level, the title of the document itself, *An Agreement to Live Together: National Agreement on Immigration*, explicitly recognizes the existence of a distinct Catalan “nation” and suggests that the agreement is a reflection of the popular will or consensus of this nation. Within the text of the document, however, references to the Catalan nation are infrequent. Those references that do exist, however, attempt to link Catalonia’s demographic reality as a diverse immigrant-receiving society, with the goal of

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36 An interesting statistic, considering the latter three countries are Latin American countries where Castilian/Spanish is the official language and therefore represent significant new sources of Castilian-speaking migrants into Catalonia in recent years.
fostering a common and cohesive Catalan nation. Section 48 for example discusses how migration and the diversity that accompanies it “is a structural fact”, as well as “a new opportunity to define collectively our future national project” (ibid., p. 32). Similarly, the Agreement’s discussion of the common public culture at one point also refers to the Catalan nation. Section 145 explains that “[t]he common public culture is thus a space of shared communication, living together, recognition and participation by our diverse and differentiated society”, which “has as its aim that the Catalan nation remains the reference point for the whole population living and working within it” (ibid., p. 63). The relative absence of explicit references to the Catalan nation does not mean that nationalist language is not present in the document, but instead it is employed more implicitly in that terms such as “common public language”, “common public culture”, and “country of immigration” in various ways evoke the national and linguistic particularity of Catalonia and its people relative to the rest of Spain, but articulate this particularity in a fashion that is more ambiguous and therefore broadly acceptable both to Catalan nationalist parties like the CiU and ERC and to non-nationalist parties like the PSC and the ICV-EUiA. Similarly, for certain opponents of the National Agreement, particularly, Spanish unionist parties like the Ciutadans, these terms had clear Catalan nationalist overtones and objectives and ultimately served as a justification for their general opposition to the Agreement (a point that will be discussed further in Chapter 6).

**Framing of “integration”**

Building on the subject of Catalonia’s increasing levels of diversity, the National Agreement focused extensively on the region’s integration strategy for newcomers. The
Agreement is positive in its overall assessment of the Catalan integration framework, but also identifies various challenges to the framework that have arisen in response to heightened immigration levels. Legal and political integration concerns are raised in Section 17, which notes “[t]he first challenge posed by the magnitude of migration is including the new persons in full citizenship, their participation in all of the fields of the recipient society and obtaining equality in rights and duties” (ibid., p. 23). The text goes on to explain that significant barriers exist regarding the legal equality and political integration of newcomers to Catalonia, whereby “[f]or the first time in our democracy a very significant percentage of our country’s residents do not have full citizens’ rights, such as the right to political participation” adding that “[t]his is particularly important if we take into account the proportion, among the population of foreign nationality, of persons that have been residing legally in our country but are up against difficulties – both legal and administrative – in attaining Spanish nationality” (ibid.). Line One also discusses how growing immigration rates create significant human rights challenges for Catalonia’s new immigrant population. It stresses that “the National Agreement on Immigration is based on guaranteeing respect for human rights” and that accordingly “public immigration policies must strengthen protection mechanisms for those seeking or having already attained asylum or refugee status” in Catalonia (ibid., p. 38).

Social and economic integration concerns are similarly raised in Line One of the Agreement, which cautions in Section 68 that:

[I]n order to guarantee social cohesion one of the aims of immigration policies must be to value migratory flows not just in their own terms, but in relation with their impact on the type of society we wish for and the desired model of economic growth. Therefore, integration and flow management policies are inseparable elements from migratory policies – meaning that it is not possible to develop one without the other (ibid., p. 37).
Economic migration must therefore align with Catalonia’s economic needs, as emphasized in the following section:

This challenge to the capacity to manage migration poses the need, as a priority aim of immigration policies, for new economically-motivated migration to be directly tailored to the needs of the country and its production base, and that these needs be evaluated from a (sic) integrated perspective. In other words, we must take into account people’s full working life – including flows of pioneer migrants’ relatives (ibid., pp. 37-38).

The text further recognizes that “linking the bulk of the immigration process to the needs of the job market forces us to define new policies that fit the demands of the production base with the country’s real or potential capacity for job supply” (ibid., p. 38).

This section introduces the National Agreement’s concept of the “common public culture” (in Catalan, “una cultura pública comuna”), which the text argues should serve as the framework for managing Catalonia’s diversity. This point is emphasized in Line 3, Section 144, which states “[t]his process of incorporating diversity in an open society like ours must be carried out while guaranteeing the existence of a common public culture as the country’s reality and project” (ibid., p. 63). The National Agreement defines the common public culture in Section 145 as:

[A] space of shared communication, living together, recognition and participation by our diverse and differentiated society. This has as its aim that the Catalan nation remains the reference point for the whole population living and working within it (ibid.).

The text describes the main attributes of this Catalan common public culture as “the democratic values to which we aspire due to historical and political tradition” coupled with “respect for human rights”, as well as recognition of “equality and pluralism as basic organisational
principles of Catalan society” (ibid.). Section 152 explains the relationship between equality, pluralism and the common public culture more fully, stating:

The construction of a renewed common public culture that welcomes society’s diversity involves, firstly, advancing towards an open structure of opportunities that offers equal conditions to all people. The National Agreement on Immigration proposes using equality in a wider sense than the strictly legal; i.e. treating it as a community of diverse sensibilities aiming at a shared future; and providing the necessary instruments to allow the chance to participate freely in this common public culture project (ibid., p. 64).

By providing this framework of a common public culture grounded in equality, as well as shared democratic and human rights, the Agreement also places limits on the degree of diversity that is to be permitted in Catalan life, by stressing that expressions of diversity must abide by the principles of the common public culture in order to be accepted. This point is emphasized in Section 146, in which the text argues “that any form of diversity that respects the values of democratic mutual living should be recognised”, but at the same time stresses that diversity cannot serve a foundation for institutional or societal divisions in Catalonia, and that “[p]luralism and diversity” should not “lead to separate institutional expressions or a society divided due to its differences in which unequal relations are formed between forms of diversity” (ibid., p. 63).

The text similarly recognizes some of the challenges facing Catalonia in constructing the proposed common public culture, including structural and socio-economic inequalities, and the limited powers of the Catalan regional government in reducing these inequalities. Section 147 addresses some of the social inequalities that have accompanied Catalonia’s increasingly diverse and mobile population, and how these inequalities have the potential to undermine the egalitarian vision of Catalonia proposed in the text:
The National Agreement on Immigration states that current economic and social power structures often make the construction of this common public culture more difficult. Neither all the praiseworthy and enormous efforts of the social-service, education and public-health systems, or civil society and local organisation ensure all citizens with real equality of opportunities; nor have we advanced sufficiently in terms of guaranteeing recognition of the gender perspective or equal opportunities between the men and women that have Catalonia as their country (ibid.).

Accordingly, in order to foster a common public culture, the Agreement argues that inequalities between Catalans need to be lessened, with Section 149 stating “[i]n order to ensure that all people contribute to and adopt as their own a common public culture of shared living and cohesion, we need to provide them with the same level of equality of opportunity” (ibid.). Of primary importance is the need to combat social discrimination, whereby Catalans “must categorically reject stereotypes and prejudices that restrict cohesion and stability, and the social and institutional racism that affects social cohesion and leads to exclusion” (ibid.). Section 150 further develops this point by stressing “[w]e must fight stereotypes”, which the text clarifies as both stereotypes “that overemphasise differences” as well as stereotypes “that adopt paternalistic postures or trivialise differences using clichés” (ibid.). Accordingly, respecting Catalonia’s internal pluralism and combating the structural inequalities that accompany this internal pluralism must be priorities, and therefore a balance must be struck whereby “[c]reating a common public culture must be guided by the principle of recognising diversity and the principle of social redistribution” (ibid., p. 64). Section 151 further concludes:

In order to promote the common public culture, the main objective is two-fold: on the one hand to guarantee an opportunities structure for all expressions of diversity and, on the other, provide instruments and tools to socialise the whole of civil society and together obtain the accommodation of diversity – understood to be a multidimensional social and institutional process (ibid.).
Language occupies a prominent place within the National Agreement’s conception of the “common public culture”, specifically, the Catalan language and its role in immigrant integration in Catalonia. Line 3 describes the multitude of languages present in Catalonia arising in part from immigration, noting in Section 160 that “[a]s in other fields, the settlement of people of different origin has meant changes to Catalonia’s linguistic panorama which at present can be characterised as multilingual”, and in which “around 250 languages are spoken” (ibid., p. 69). In response to this linguistic diversity, the Agreement calls for a unifying linguistic medium to bind the Catalan population together, arguing that “it is essential for us to use a language that acts as the vehicle for communication between all members of the common public culture” and therefore “we must boost the cohesion dimension offered by the public use of Catalonia’s own language: Catalan (and Occitanian in the Vall d’Aran)” (ibid.).

The idea of Catalan as Catalonia’s common public language (in Catalan, “la llengua pública comuna”) for what is otherwise a multilingual population is emblematic of the larger narrative of the National Agreement, with its emphasis on common values, institutions, and public culture, serving as the overarching governing framework for the broader social diversity that exists in the region. Similarly, the Agreement’s framing of Catalan as “Catalonia’s own language” (in Catalan, “la llengua pròpia”) for every part of Catalonia except the Vall d’Aran, raises important questions regarding the other language with official status as well as widespread usage and popular appeal in Catalonia: the Castilian language. Indeed, Castilian occupies a complicated place within the National Agreement’s vision of integration and a common public culture. Initially in the text, both the Catalan and Castilian languages are accorded equal status within the integration process, with Section 18 stating that “[t]he level of knowledge of Catalan
and Spanish are also indicators of migrants’ degree of personal autonomy and capacity to participate in the receiver society” (ibid., p. 24). Section 19, similarly begins by providing a bilingual vision of Catalan integration, stating that “[i]t is desirable for the newly arrived persons to gain linguistic abilities both in Catalan and Castilian (Spanish) throughout the process of integration into Catalan society” (ibid.). The text however, immediately qualifies this bilingual vision of the integration process by arguing that for various reasons Catalan should act as the “common language” of Catalan society as well as the main language of integration for newcomers, with the remainder of Section 19 stating:

[T]he markedly unfavourable starting point of the Catalan language, as well as the role of common language and unique contribution to global diversity that it provides, requires a special effort to be made to promote the knowledge and social use of Catalan (ibid.).

Section 161 in Line 3 further explores the complicated position of Catalan relative to Castilian within Catalonia’s society and the implications it creates for the immigrant integration experience. It explains that “Catalonia has, as is well-known, two languages with official status: Catalan and Castilian (Spanish)” in which “[t]he latter, as well as being an official language in Catalonia, is also official in the whole of the Spanish state” (ibid., p. 69). The text then contends that in spite of the official equal status of the two languages, due to “a variety of historical, political and socio-linguistic circumstances”, Castilian occupies a favoured position over Catalan within society, with an important consequence being that “many Catalans opt to use Castilian when relating to immigrant persons” and that “[t]his situation means that a parallel and exclusive linguistic network is created that prevents immigrants from participating within the linguistic settings of Catalonia’s own language” (ibid.).
Accordingly, the text creates an obligation for new immigrants to adopt the Catalan language, with Section 162 stating “[i]n order for our language to be consolidated as the language of public and shared use it is essential that different social actors make efforts to adapt to the new reality” (ibid.). It similarly emphasizes the actions that the Catalan government must take to make Catalan the common public language and promote the linguistic integration of newcomers, whereby “[t]he authorities, on their part, must provide the necessary resources for immigrant persons to be able to exercise their right to access training in Catalan and, also, promote its public usage” (ibid.). The text also frames the ability to operate in the Catalan language as essential for immigrant success in Catalonia, both socially and economically, explaining that “[k]nowledge of Catalan creates the possibility of communication because it generates trust, expresses a will to belong and shows the will to accept, contributing to social cohesion”, whereas “a lack of linguistic competence hinders a person’s autonomy and thus cannot guarantee inclusion” (ibid.). The National Agreement, however, does not call for linguistic uniformity and instead emphasizes that representatives from all levels of government in Catalonia should “respect the right to choose languages, including for immigrant persons” (ibid.). It even makes provisions for Castilian language training for immigrants after they acquire sufficient Catalan language skills, stating, “[w]e believe that resources should be provided for those migrant persons that request and require to learn Castilian when they have already acquired the basic linguistic abilities in the Catalan language” (ibid.). The text therefore attempts to articulate a balanced picture of language, integration and social cohesion, one that respects Catalonia’s linguistic diversity, but also where Catalan serves as the common linguistic medium and the public linguistic “image” of Catalonia within the rest of the world, as stated in Section 164:
The multilingual reality of Catalonia is a cultural heritage that should not be underestimated. A common public culture also should encourage a positive assessment of linguistic diversity. With this aim, knowledge of the languages spoken in Catalonia must be promoted in accordance to gaining the recognition that we wish from Catalan within the global language panorama (ibid.).

Ultimately, the National Agreement articulates several policy measures and initiatives to promote the common public culture within Catalan society based on the above priorities. These include measures designed to promote a positive image of immigrants within the Catalan society and media and to combat negative stereotypes, to promote Catalan language training for recent immigrants, to foster respect for religious pluralism, as well as measures to strengthen gender equality within Catalan society (ibid., pp. 65-74).

**Framing of the different levels of government (Catalonia, Spain and Europe)**

The National Agreement also conceptualizes immigration as a multi-level phenomenon in which the Catalan Generalitat shares responsibilities with other levels of government, while at the same time emphasizing that Catalonia should assume a more active role in the immigration field, particularly relative to the Spanish government. Section 7 of the Agreement notes that “in the realm of public perceptions, the Spanish state is attributed mainly with the responsibility of managing immigration”, but adds that “it is desire of the National Agreement on Immigration that Catalonia be accountable for all of its corresponding responsibilities, and that it takes a stand on all of the migration areas related to the country” (ibid., p. 18). The Agreement grounds this expansive commitment for Catalan activity in the immigration field in the language of Catalonia’s 2006 Statute of Autonomy, explaining:
[T]he Statute of Autonomy of Catalonia reaﬃrms Catalonia’s powers in relation to reception and integration of migration; and provides new powers regarding the awarding of initial work permits, work inspections and recognition of non-university qualiﬁcations, while determining Catalonia’s involvement in policy decision-making for the Spanish state that has special signiﬁcance for our country (ibid., p. 7).

The text of the National Agreement similarly addresses the complexity of immigration politics and its potential to overlap with other policy issues, noting that “migratory policies are not exclusively about borders”, but “also include ﬂow management policies, acceptance policies, integration policies and equal-opportunities policies” (ibid., p. 27). Similarly, the “heterogeneity” of migratory policies contributes to its multi-level character, whereby “diﬀerent social, economic and political actors” are invariably involved in immigration matters (ibid.). In particular, the text highlights the role of local actors in the immigration ﬁeld, including local governments as well as civil society organizations. The text draws on the subsidiarity principle to justify the importance of local actors in immigration matters, noting in Section 28 that “it is [local authorities] that know about the day-to-day management of policies on living together, as well as the associations and economic and social agents that have policies on managing diversity and attend to immigrant persons” (ibid.). The text therefore frames these local actors as “pioneers and a reference point in our common agenda” regarding immigration and integration matters in Catalonia. It concludes that Catalonia’s multi-faceted and multi-level approach to managing immigration issues is a model that should be preserved and developed into the future, with Section 29 arguing:

In this way, civil society, the economic and social agents and diﬀerent authorities that act in the territory have contributed to placing migratory policies in the public agenda, allowing a strengthening of both social cohesion and the attention given to migrant persons (ibid.).
Line Two of the text also addresses the diverse number of actors in the immigration field in Catalonia in relation to the subject of adapting public services to reflect the needs of an increasingly diverse society. Section 108 notes that “[t]he multiplicity of institutional and particularly social actors is an expression of the pluralism that characterises Catalan society” (ibid., p. 51). It further cautions that any adjustments to public services to address changing demographic conditions in Catalonia must be sensitive to the diverse and complex array of actors involved, noting that “[a]ny counterbalancing to this context requires clearly defining and delimiting responsibilities, incorporating inter-institutional or multi-level cooperation and also boosting local networks integrating the different agents that intervene in a single territory” (ibid.).

**Vision and plans for the future**

The need to plan for Catalonia’s future also appears prominently over the course of the National Agreement. Capdevila’s Prologue emphasizes that immigration is an inescapable reality that Catalonia must embrace and prepare for:

Our work does not finish with this Agreement document and, by learning from the past experience, this form of governance will become necessary to correctly oversee the migratory phenomenon – an issue that will determine how our future will be. It was a necessity to develop common thought and practice on planning with regards to immigration that would offer us a new social agreement. The National Agreement on Immigration basically tells us that despite our different origins we want to live together in today’s Catalonia. It is as simple as that; and as complex as that (ibid., p. 5).

The text also includes several commitments on the parts of the signatories to fulfilling the terms of the National Agreement in the future, with the Signature Document section stating:
The Government, parliamentary groups, institutions, signatory economic and social groups and the Citizenship and Immigration Committee commit ourselves to implementing the actions envisaged in the National Agreement on Immigration and monitoring such through a commission created with this goal (ibid., p. 7).

The drafters of the National Agreement also included a budgetary plan to indicate how the government would fund the various provisions of the Agreement during the 2009 to 2012 period (ibid., p. 79). The attached budget for 3.88 billion Euros was “based on the expected expenses of the Catalan government departments that shall participate in the agreement”, and the funding was allocated according the three major lines of the National Agreement (ibid.).

**Conclusion**

The vision articulated in the National Agreement on Immigration is broad and multifaceted with implications for both the newcomer population, the evolution of Catalan society and Catalonia’s powers of self-government within the Spanish state. The text represents a combination of influences and themes articulated in past Catalan immigration plans and language policy, as well as an attempt to respond to changing immigration and demographic trends in the region that were largely unprecedented in the history of Catalonia. In this respect, the National Agreement frames itself as both a continuation of Catalonia’s existing immigration and integration model, but also a necessary amplification and improvement to that model in response to intensified immigration levels in recent years. Similarly, the Final Version of the Agreement frames itself and its specific priority areas (the “three lines” of “managing migratory flows”,

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37 The breakdown of the budget according to the three lines: Line 1 – 2.66 billion Euros; Line 2 – 1.1 billion Euros; Line 3 – 120 million Euros (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2008a, p. 80).
“adapting public services”, and fostering a “common public culture”) as the products of careful and deliberative consultation on the part of the Generalitat with both policy experts in the immigration/integration field and the broader Catalan public. By emphasizing this extensive public consultation, along with the large number of political, governmental, and non-governmental actors that signed the final accord, the Agreement framed itself as the product of a broad-based political and social consensus, and contended that its findings, recommendations, and overall vision for Catalonia had the support of a majority of Catalans.

The vision that the final text of the National Agreement articulates of Catalan society follows largely in the footsteps of past Catalan immigration, integration and language policy. On one level, the National Agreement maintains the liberal inclusive nationalist vision of Catalonia that the region has articulated in the immigration/integration field since the 1980s. As in past Catalan policy and legislation, the National Agreement frames Catalonia as a diverse society, but ultimately regards this diversity as secondary to the common ties of citizenship, legal/political rights, civic responsibilities, and language that supposedly bind the different elements of Catalan society together. Specifically, the National Agreement argues that Catalonia’s internal diversity must be recognized and respected, but also emphasizes that this diversity must operate within the prescribed boundaries of the regional “common public culture”.

The idea of a “common public culture” is ultimately one of the most significant new concepts that the National Agreement contributed to the older Catalan integration model, though it is an innovation that builds on earlier concepts like the “Catalan way of integration” and “resident citizenship” with its emphasis on the common rights, responsibilities and linguistic obligations that all Catalans possess regardless of background and place of origin. It is also
significant for the limits it places on what is acceptable within Catalan society, with its emphasis on common institutions and practices and its warnings that only forms of diversity that “respects the values of democratic mutual living should be recognised” in Catalan life. Indeed, the Agreement’s concern that all residents of Catalonia possess equal access to common public services and its concern with preventing the development of permanent specialized programs for sub-sections of the population, demonstrates the text’s commitment to a largely uniform or undifferentiated understanding of Catalan citizenship and identity.

Language is another prominent example of diversity operating within certain prescribed boundaries, in that the National Agreement celebrates the diverse linguistic background of the Catalan population, but nonetheless emphasizes the need of all newcomers to integrate into the region’s “own language”, the Catalan language. The Agreement’s emphasis on linguistic integration into the Catalan language over the Castilian language similarly continues the tradition established through the Normalization Laws in which the Generalitat has actively promoted the use of Catalan within public life in order to reverse past historical discrimination against the Catalan language by the Spanish state. Its framing of Catalan and Castilian as equal languages under Spanish constitutional law, but its understanding of Catalan as the “common language” of Catalonia, builds on past efforts by the Generalitat to strengthen the region’s language laws and the official position of Catalan relative to Castilian in public life. It also builds on past integration policy efforts that have centred on the linguistic integration of newcomers into the Catalan language and that emphasized the perpetuation of a common Catalan-speaking linguistic medium as a means of ensuring social unity and cohesion within Catalonia.
The concept of “immigration” and its role in Catalan life, unsurprisingly, receives special attention in the text of the National Agreement. The phenomenon of “immigration” serves as the underlying justification for the National Agreement’s existence and for its extensive policy recommendations, and the text frames immigration as both an object of public concern and a generator of significant societal change in Catalonia. The idea of Catalonia as a “country of immigration” appears repeatedly over the course of the text, along with an emphasis of Catalonia’s long history as an immigrant-receiving society and its significant experience in integrating newcomers. As noted above, however, the Agreement distinguishes between the type of immigration the region received in the past and what it has received in the 21st century, in which the levels of immigration and the diversity of immigrants exceeded anything Catalonia experienced beforehand. The text is therefore ambivalent on the ultimate impact of this new wave of immigration on Catalonia. It alternates between framing immigration as an opportunity and a benefit to the region in terms of addressing demographic shortfalls and responding to gaps in the labour market, as well as framing it as a challenge for Catalonia due to the sheer scope of immigration levels to the region in recent years, and therefore a significant test for Catalonia’s public services and its overall integration capacity (though not necessarily a challenge that Catalonia is unable to manage). An additional negative side-effect highlighted in the accord were the growing levels of irregular migrants arriving in the region, a population group that the final text noted exacerbated all three of the major immigration challenges facing Catalonia (managing migratory flows, adapting public services, and integrating newcomers into a common public culture).
The Agreement also frames immigration to Catalonia as complex phenomenon being driven by a diverse range of factors (familial, humanitarian, material), but where economic motivations are the most common. Indeed, the Agreement notes that the Catalan economy up to the time of the 2008 downturn was extremely dependent on immigrant labour, particularly in the construction sector. The origins of recent immigrants to the region are equally diverse, with large numbers arriving from Africa, Latin America and Eastern Europe in the years leading up to the 2008 accord.

The Agreement’s conception of the role of the Catalan Generalitat in the immigration realm is politically “autonomist” in outlook. The text of the Agreement frames immigration and integration as policy areas characterized by multi-level complexity due to the different levels of government and the different actors involved in the Catalan context. Nonetheless, while the Agreement emphasizes the role of the different levels of government in the immigration field, including the Spanish and European levels, its primary concern and focal point is the Catalan Generalitat and maximizing its role in this field relative to the other levels of government. Accordingly, the Agreement emphasizes that the Catalan Generalitat needs to develop its powers further in this policy field in accordance with the provisions of the 2006 Catalan Statute of Autonomy, and take the lead governmental role in a range of immigration policy related issues that are of particular “interest” to Catalonia.

Finally, the National Agreement framed itself as the foundation and guide for Catalonia’s actions in the immigration and integration fields for the near future. The underlying assumption of this framing strategy was that the conditions that the Agreement had reported would persist into the future and the recommendations and vision it had articulated in response to these
conditions would similarly be relevant in the years to come. The following chapter explores how recent economic and demographic developments disproved these optimistic assumptions, as the National Agreement on Immigration struggled to adapt to a weakened global economy and new international migration patterns.
Chapter Five – Fulfilling the National Agreement and adapting it to a changed environment

The National Agreement on Immigration’s brief references to the uncertainty facing the region and the wider global economy at the time of its signing in late 2008 foreshadowed some of the wider political, economic and social changes that would take place in Catalonia, Spain and across Europe. In the years following the 2008 signing, new developments began to arise that were largely unforeseen by the National Agreement’s drafters. Catalonia and the rest of Spain began to experience a pronounced economic downturn, rising unemployment, growing levels of public debt (accompanied by austerity measures), the development of new xenophobic political movements, as well as rising levels of emigration. Further complicating the implementation of the Agreement was the increasingly tense relationship between Catalonia and the rest of Spain, in which pro-independence sentiment in the region rose sharply. It was within this fluid and uncertain environment that the Catalan Generalitat attempted to realize the provisions of the National Agreement on Immigration, as well as attempted to adapt its vision of an inclusive Catalan society in response to changing conditions. Three major government plans and reports articulated the Catalan Generalitat’s efforts to fulfill the National Agreement during this period:

1) Citizenship and Immigration Plan, 2009-2012

2) 2012 Monitoring Commission Review
This chapter provides an overview of these three documents and their relationship to the National Agreement on Immigration. As in Chapter Four, the chapter provides NVivo-based frame analysis of the three documents focusing on their major themes, their framing of key concepts such as “immigration”, “identity”, “integration”, and Catalonia’s powers of self-government in the immigration field, as well as their conceptualization of the changing economic, social and political conditions in Catalonia since 2008. The software was again used to identify and code key words and phrases that serve as the focal point of this analysis relating to the intersection between immigration, Catalan nationalism and self-government including “immigration”, “migration”, “immigrant”, “migrant”, “nation”, “diversity”, “identity”, “culture”, “integration”, “Catalonia”, “Spain” and “Europe”.

Citizenship and Immigration Plan 2009-2012

The Citizenship and Immigration Plan: 2009-2012 was the fourth official immigration plan developed by the Catalan Generalitat and replaced the 2005 Plan. The 2009 version was the second official immigration plan developed under the political leadership of the tripartite coalition government and the first developed since the passage of Catalonia’s new Statute of Autonomy in 2006 and the signing of the National Agreement on Immigration in 2008. The Government of Catalonia approved the Citizenship and Immigration Plan: 2009-2012 on December 16, 2009.

38 In Catalan the official title of these documents are: 1) Pla de ciutadania i immigració 2009-2012; 2) Comissió de seguiment: Document de consens and 3) Pla de ciutadania i de les migracions: Horitzó 2016.
The text of the *Citizenship and Immigration Plan 2009-2012* presented itself as the guiding framework for the Catalan government’s activity in the immigration and integration field, one that, as the Catalan Secretary for Immigration, Oriol Amorós i March explained in the Plan’s introduction, “brings together the various programmes and actions to be carried out by all government departments” (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2009, p. 9). The 2009 Plan repeatedly framed itself as a continuation of Catalonia’s recent history of active involvement in the immigration field, which like the region’s previous immigration plans, “involves all Generalitat departments and follows the strategic courses of action established by its predecessors” (ibid., p. 10). Carme Capdevila’s introductory statement similarly described the Plan as a continuation of Catalonia’s lengthy tradition of broad-based cooperation in the immigration field, in which multiple governmental and non-governmental actors have worked together to foster a cohesive society, explaining that Catalonia’s immigration “reality has been managed by various levels of government, by organisations and associations and by all those people who, knowing we are different, want to live together” (ibid., p. 7).

The text, however, repeatedly emphasized that in spite of the 2009 Plan’s goal to continue the immigration practices and principles of previous Catalan accords and agreements in the immigration field, the region’s immigration reality is not static and therefore a degree of evolution and reform is necessary. Amorós i March’s introductory section noted the need for “adapting” Catalonia’s immigration framework to suit “new circumstances and contemporary reality” that differed from the legislative, economic and social conditions that had shaped the region’s earlier immigration plans, and explained that the *Citizenship and Immigration Plan 2009-2012* had been:
[D]evised within the new framework of powers created by the Statute of Autonomy, the accumulated experience of all players, the enormous heterogeneity of immigration in terms of origin, legal and administrative status, family and employment situation, place of residence, etc., and finally by changes in the labour market and the economy. It is for all these reasons that the Plan stresses the need for flexibility and adaptation to these new factors (ibid., p. 10).

Capdevila also emphasized in her introduction to the 2009 Plan how Catalonia has entered a “time of change” in which the region is “going through an economic crisis, the end of which is hard to foresee at present”, and added that “[o]nly the passage of time will tell us whether we are now seeing the closing stages of a new period of immigration into our country” (ibid., p. 7). Like her cabinet counterpart, Amorós i March, Capdevila emphasized that these changing conditions “will have a major impact on the development and implementation of the various programmes in this new plan” and will require adjustment and adaptation on the part of the Catalan government (ibid.). She cautioned however, that Catalonia must maintain the traditional goals of its immigration and integration model in spite of the changing conditions, and emphasized, “that the primary objective is, and will remain, ensuring that people from diverse origins can live together in Catalonia” (ibid.). Subsequent government plans would later repeat these two priorities expressed by Amorós i March and by Capdevila regarding the need to adjust to changing conditions but also the need to maintain continuity in terms of preserving the aims and guiding principles of Catalonia’s immigration/integration framework.

**2012 Monitoring Commission Review**

As discussed in the previous chapter, both the twelfth “action principle” and Appendix Four of the National Agreement on Immigration allowed for the creation of a Monitoring
Commission\textsuperscript{39} to oversee the government’s overall administration of the Agreement and the fulfillment of its various provisions in the years that followed (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2008a, p. 92). The Monitoring Commission would consist of various actors and organizations that were involved in the development, negotiations and eventual signing of the National Agreement (ibid.).

The final text of the National Agreement granted the Monitoring Commission several responsibilities, including: 1) “ensure observance of the National Agreement on Immigration measures”; 2) “do the appropriate monitoring and budgetary proposals”; and, 3) “review the content of the National Agreement on Immigration” (ibid.). The Agreement also called for the creation of “a permanent work group” that would meet on an annual basis (or more frequently if the situation demanded), whose “function will be to evaluate the measures envisaged in the National Agreement on Immigration and produce an annual report on executing the Agreement” (ibid.). The annual reports on the National Agreement ultimately did not materialize; however, the Monitoring Commission did eventually release a report on the status of the National Agreement and its overall implementation on March 21, 2012. The purpose of the report was to reappraise and “revitalize” the Agreement in light of various developments that had taken place since its initial signing in 2008.

The Monitoring Commission’s report argued that the Generalitat had made substantial progress on fulfilling various provisions and goals of the National Agreement, and stated that “since 2008 the Directorate General of Immigration has implemented a series of measures, and

\textsuperscript{39} Officially called the “Comissió de Seguiment del Pacte Nacional per a la Immigració” (in English, “Monitoring Commission for the National Agreement on Immigration”).
produced documents monitoring the degree of implementation of planned actions” (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2012, p. 3). Echoing the theme of evolving conditions identified in the Citizenship and Immigration Plan 2009-2012, however, the report also contended, “Catalan society has experienced a series of major changes – some shared with Spain and other European countries – that had an impact on the agreed basic lines of the [National Agreement on Immigration]”.

These changes included the post-2008 economic downturn, rising levels of unemployment, decreasing levels of immigration and rising levels of emigration, decreasing levels of social and economic integration for recent immigrants (especially immigrant youth), rising levels of xenophobia, and broader legislative changes in the immigration realm (ibid., pp. 1-3). Based on these developments, the report made a series of recommendations regarding the National Agreement and the overall management of immigration/integration matters in Catalonia. These recommendations included:

1. To ratify the commitment between the political and social forces who approved [the National Agreement on Immigration], demonstrating its full force and will continue working under its provisions

2. To reiterate the commitment to work for the cohesion of Catalan society, for equal treatment of all the citizens of Catalonia, in line with the policy of rights and responsibilities, from the democratic principles and values, the promotion of personal autonomy and equality of opportunity

3. To manage social and political consensus in response to the effects of the diversity within Catalan society

4. To develop public messages that are the same for all citizens, whatever their place of origin (ibid., p. 3)

The report also articulated a series of legislative and policy actions for the Catalan government and the various signatories to the National Agreement to undertake to ensure its continued fulfillment during the 2011 to 2014 period (ibid.). These actions included fulfilling
the provisions of the *Citizenship and Immigration Plan 2009-2012* and developing a new immigration plan for the 2013-2016 period; strengthening social and linguistic integration policies for newcomers; developing responses to recent Spanish government legislative changes in the immigration field as well as increasing efforts to secure greater funding for settlement and integration services from the central government; increasing efforts to combat racism and xenophobia; ensuring equal access to public services for all Catalans regardless of background; and, providing greater attention and resources to children and youth of immigrant background (ibid., pp. 3-5).

**Citizenship and Migration Plan: Horizon 2016**

The *Citizenship and Migration Plan: Horizon 2016* represented the fifth and latest official immigration plan developed by the Catalan Generalitat, which replaced the *Citizenship and Immigration Plan 2009-2012*. Unlike the previous two official plans which were developed under the PSC-led tripartite coalition, the *Citizenship and Migration Plan: Horizon 2016* was developed by the new CiU-led government of Artur Mas. The Government of Catalonia approved the *Citizenship and Migration Plan: Horizon 2016* on April 22, 2014.

Like the *Citizenship and Immigration Plan 2009-2012*, the Generalitat presented the *Citizenship and Migration Plan: Horizon 2016* as a cohesive and comprehensive framework and guideline for Catalonia’s activity in the immigration and integration field. As the new CiU Minister of Social Welfare and Family, Neus Munté i Fernàndez, remarked in the text’s introduction, the *Citizenship and Migration Plan: Horizon 2016* represented “a strategic programme document which includes all the public policies implemented by the Government of
Catalonia through its various departments, often in partnership with other stakeholders such as local councils, community players and social organisations” (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2014, p. 5). As with earlier immigration plans, the Catalan Generalitat designed the *Citizenship and Migration Plan: Horizon 2016* “to specify key lines and mechanisms so that migration policy is fully operational in terms of resources and realistic in terms of objectives” (ibid., p. 7). The text also framed the 2014 Plan as the product of a collaborative consultation effort consisting of government and civil society actors, and that it represented a “shared work that benefits society as a whole” (ibid., p. 5).

As with the previous plan, the Government presented the *Citizenship and Migration Plan: Horizon 2016* as a continuation of the region’s active involvement in the immigration field. Munté i Fernàndez argued that the new Plan followed the goals of previous Catalan immigration initiatives, whereby “[m]anaging and governing migration is the main objective of a plan that updates and renews the key lines in previous interdepartmental immigration plans, the first of which dates back to 1993” (ibid.). She added that the new plan represented the same type of “cross-cutting, collaborative approach needed to rise to the many challenges of being a modern, open country which is exposed to permanent migratory flows” (ibid.).

Echoing its 2009 predecessor, the 2014 Plan framed itself as a necessary and appropriate response to the societal, economic and political changes that had taken place in Catalonia in recent years. A reflection of these changes was the use of the word “migration” in the plan’s title rather than the word “immigration” which had been used in the titles of previous plans, a change that was designed to reflect the growing emigration levels prompted by the economic downturn, as Munté i Fernàndez explained:
For the first time we have replaced the word “immigration” by “migration”. This change is no accident but in fact quite the reverse, since it reflects the Catalan Government’s commitment to addressing the new dynamics of migration that are becoming consolidated as a result of the current economic crisis. This could be summarised as fewer people coming in, although there continue to be some, and larger numbers leaving, especially but not only foreign-born people. Societies are changing and this means the public authorities need to constantly up-date their priorities, especially when resources are dwindling (ibid.).

Other new developments cited by the new Plan that influenced its content and policy recommendations included the ongoing debate over Catalan self-determination, recent legislative changes including the Catalan Law of Reception, and lastly, the findings of the Monitoring Commission’s 2012 report and its recommendations regarding the future enactment of the National Agreement on Immigration’s provisions (ibid., p. 7 & 35-36).

In spite of all these developments, the Citizenship and Migration Plan: Horizon 2016, as with the 2009 Plan and the 2012 Report that preceded it, tried to strike a balance between adjusting to changing circumstances and maintaining the integrity of the Catalan immigration framework. Munté i Fernàndez, in her introduction to the Plan, for example, emphasized the need to reinforce the existing Catalan model and adapt it to the changing immigration realities (including its growing emigrant population abroad) while also preserving the distinct goals and principles that have underlined the region’s involvement in the immigration/integration field for the past three decades. She stated:

Catalonia needs to continue to make its own way and consolidate insofar as it can its own model and the things that set it apart, which are also reflected in the inclusion of newcomers and in support for compatriots who go abroad in search of new opportunities (ibid., p. 5).
Framing the National Agreement on Immigration and its goals

Each of the three documents repeatedly framed the National Agreement on Immigration as an important and positive development for Catalonia and its activity in the immigration/integration realm. The documents often describe the National Agreement as a continuation of Catalonia’s tradition of active involvement in the immigration field, yet also representing a qualitative step forward compared to past Catalan immigration measures. The *Citizenship and Immigration Plan 2009-2012*, for example, explained that the National Agreement on Immigration represented a significant collective response by Catalonia to the escalation of the “structural phenomenon” (in Catalan, “un fenomen structural”) of immigration in recent years:

> With the intensification of the arrival of foreign immigrants over the last decade, it became necessary to go further in managing the phenomenon through a process of joint thinking with the various actors involved that would lead to a major national agreement. This agreement would establish the short-, medium- and long-term consensus needed to manage migration, maintain social cohesion and improve the welfare of the whole Catalan population. It would be an agreement that met the needs of society at large, and which could be summarised in three main areas:

1. The need to bring order to migration flows. 2. The need to avoid the perception of competition for public resources. 3. The need provide an ever more diverse society with factors for cohesion (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2009, p. 70).

The documents similarly regard the National Agreement as a foundational component of Catalonia’s present immigration and integration framework, one that subsequent immigration plans and initiatives are obligated to fulfill and develop. Minister Carme Capdevila, for example, in her introduction to the *Citizenship and Immigration Plan 2009-2012* described the 2008 National Agreement on Immigration as the most recent phase of the Catalan tradition of political and social cooperation in the immigration field, and argued that the *Citizenship and
Immigration Plan 2009-2012 has been designed by the Catalan Government “to implement the measures and actions envisaged in the Agreement” (ibid., p. 7). Her cabinet colleague, the Secretary for Immigration, Oriol Amorós i March, similarly stated that the 2009 Plan represented the Generalitat’s attempt “to settle the measures and actions provided for in the [National] Agreement” (ibid., p. 9).

The Citizenship and Migration Plan: Horizon 2016’s attitude and relationship towards the National Agreement on Immigration also reflected this twin commitment to continuity and reform. The text of the 2014 Plan framed the National Agreement on Immigration as a major influence of its overall vision for immigration and integration in Catalonia and the foundation for many of its policy recommendations. It described the National Agreement and the 2012 Monitoring Commission review of the Agreement as “fundamental documents on which the Plan’s new outline is based” (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2014, p. 7). The Citizenship and Migration Plan: Horizon 2016, however, noted the need to adapt various provisions of the National Agreement “in order to tailor them to the current economic and social situation” facing Catalonia, recognizing “that government should deliver efficient and appropriate responses to new social demands and needs” (ibid., p. 35).

The documents often emphasized the vision of Catalan society articulated in the National Agreement and how the accord acts as a device for fostering social cohesion within an increasingly diverse population. Both the Citizenship and Immigration Plan 2009-2012 and the Citizenship and Migration Plan: Horizon 2016 emphasize the National Agreement’s commitment to social diversity and social coexistence, in which it defines Catalonia as “a diverse society committed to cohesion, the result of building a shared common project created through
the participation of all and governed by the defence of individual and collective rights”
(Generalitat de Catalunya, 2009, p. 9; Generalitat de Catalunya, 2014, p. 17).40

The documents also frequently comment on the broad-based support for the National Agreement within Catalan politics and civil society, a level of support that provides a foundation for the region to act assertively in the immigration field. Oriol Amorós i March’s introductory section to the Citizenship and Immigration Plan 2009-2012, for example, describes the Agreement as the by-product of an “intensive process of discussion and consensus” (in Catalan, “procés de reflexió i consens”) (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2009, p. 9). The text of the 2009 Plan later states that the National Agreement was “viewed as a new consensus to ensure coexistence in Catalonia” and that it had been developed in a way that both “recognises the knowledge and experience of the various social, political, economic and local actors” in the immigration and integration fields, as well as represented “a process of governance, participatory democracy and networking” through its inclusion and consultation of the Catalan public and various civil society groups (ibid., p. 70). The Monitoring Commission report similarly stated that the National Agreement “allowed consensus on migration management policies” (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2012, p. 1). In the same fashion, the Citizenship and Migration Plan: Horizon 2016 described the National Agreement as “a major consensual agreement that provides guidelines for public policy on migration in Catalonia”, as well as “modified the Catalan institutional context for public policy on integration” (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2014, p. 17). The 2014 Plan goes further in arguing that the National Agreement “establishes the consensus required to manage

40 The wording of the 2009 Plan’s statement differs slightly from the wording of its 2014 successor, stating that the National Agreement “defines Catalan society as a diverse society and is committed to cohesion, the result of building a shared common project created through the participation of all and governed by the defence of individual and collective rights” (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2009, p. 9).
migration, maintain social cohesion and improve levels of wellbeing for the people of Catalonia as a whole” (ibid.).

**Framing of “immigration” and the new phenomenon of “emigration”**

The framing of “immigration” in these three documents reflects the broader pattern of continuity with the National Agreement, in that there is ongoing recognition of the significance of immigration for Catalonia, as well as reflects the broader requirement of addressing changing conditions in the region, largely tied to the economic downturn, rising unemployment and growing levels of emigration. On one level, the later Generalitat plans have repeated the National Agreement’s framing of immigration as a major demographic phenomenon and a significant issue of concern facing Catalonia and Europe as a whole. As noted above, the 2009 Plan re-used the National Agreement’s description of immigration as a long-running “structural phenomenon” facing Catalonia. The Plan further explained that the “[m]igratory movements of people are a constant throughout history”, and described immigration as one of the major sources of population growth for Catalonia over the past decade, noting that “[o]ver the last ten years (1999-2009), the total population of Catalonia has grown by more than 1.2 million people while growth in the number of resident foreigners alone has been more than one million” (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2009, p. 13).

In spite of these similarities with the National Agreement’s framing of the immigration phenomenon, these documents have also had to respond to new migratory developments that the National Agreement provides little to no guidance in addressing. While the National Agreement had attempted to appreciate the severity of the economic changes taking place in Catalonia at the
time of its signing, other developments that subsequently happened were completely unforeseen by the Agreement’s drafters and are therefore rarely mentioned or completely ignored in the final text. Consequently, the subsequent documents have attempted to adapt the National Agreement’s vision of immigration and integration to a variety of phenomena it was not designed to address. Emigration is perhaps the most noteworthy phenomenon. The National Agreement’s understanding of Catalonia’s migration process is decidedly unidirectional, in that it is concerned with the flow of migrants into Catalonia rather than out of it. As such, a discussion of emigration is almost nonexistent in the text of the National Agreement, as it simply was not a significant issue of concern at the time of the Agreement’s negotiation, nor had it been for decades in Catalonia. With the onset of the economic crisis, however, and with it, rising levels of unemployment within Catalonia (particularly in sectors with large proportions of migrant labour, such as the construction industry), the number of recent immigrants and native-born Catalans that began to leave the region to seek economic opportunities elsewhere, rose significantly. The Citizenship and Migration Plan: Horizon 2016 summarized the growing emigration phenomenon in the region, and the difficulties in adapting the National Agreement on Immigration to a new “paradigm” of increasingly “bi-directional” migration in Catalonia:

The current economic crisis has also brought about a paradigm shift not envisaged in the NAI: emigration. In addition to immigrants, whether naturalised or not, returning to their countries of origin, young Catalans are now deciding to move abroad. Hence there is a new stage where movement is in two directions. However, as the “Emigration from Catalonia” conference concluded, “we are not suggesting that emigration should be adopted as an alternative, or used as a form of escape valve. Nor should we forget that a great deal of work remains to be done with regard to the management of immigration, as it would be a decidedly backward step for Catalan society to squander all the advances and achievements that have been made in this area.” In addition, it is also necessary to enhance factors such as local people’s awareness about the arrival and settlement of immigrants and the level of social cohesion Catalan town councils have been able to
maintain in coordination with other supramunicipal authorities and the Government of Catalonia (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2014, p. 40).

While continuing to emphasize the importance of immigration as a structural demographic phenomenon within Catalonia, the Citizenship and Migration Plan: Horizon 2016 nonetheless concludes that in terms of the region’s overall migration pattern “Catalonia is going from immigration to emigration”, a development that it attributed to “the difficult economic situation” that Catalonia has faced in recent years (ibid., p. 34). Specifically, the document contends that the migration patterns have altered with both “the slowdown in arrivals” to the region being matched “by an increase in outflows from Catalonia”, whereby, in 2012, Catalonia experienced a greater number of foreigners permanently leaving the region compared to the number of foreigners entering and settling in Catalonia (ibid., p. 26). This emigration trend continued between 2012 and 2014, with the number of emigrants leaving Catalonia exceeding the number of immigrants settling in Catalonia (see Figure 2).

41 Specifically, the 2014 Plan explains that in Catalonia in 2012, “for the first time in the last ten years [...] net migration of foreigners was negative with 104,480 coming in (83.1% from abroad and the rest from other regions) and 107,884 leaving (81.6% going abroad)” (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2014, p. 26). A similar report noted that since 2009 emigration levels from Catalonia had grown eight to nine per cent per year, and that by 2013 over 200,000 Catalans were living abroad, mostly in other EU member states, as well as in Argentina, Mexico, Venezuela and the United States (CIDOB, 2013, p. 4).
Building on the same theme, the *Citizenship and Migration: Horizon 2016* also discussed the growing Catalan emigrant community living outside of the region, a population group it referred to as “Catalans abroad” (in Catalan, “població catalana a l’estranjer”). The 2014 Plan noted that as of January 1, 2013, “there were 203,250 Catalans registered abroad”, of which it explained that “[t]he majority (127,524 or 63% of the total) are people born abroad who, in spite of having lived in Catalonia, have emigrated” (ibid., p. 28). It cautioned however that the emigration phenomenon is not exclusive to recent immigrants to Catalonia and noted “[t]here has also been an increase in the number of Catalans born in Catalonia living abroad” in recent years, with many Catalans settling in the Americas and in other parts of the European Union (ibid.).

The attention the 2014 Plan paid to this “Catalans abroad” population group is significant because emigrants from Catalonia were largely ignored in past Catalan immigration plans including the National Agreement. These earlier plans instead regarded the Catalan population

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**Figure 2: Immigration and emigration numbers (2005-2014)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>External Migration: Immigration numbers to Catalonia</th>
<th>External Migration: Emigration numbers from Catalonia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>162,936</td>
<td>26,630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>186,570</td>
<td>51,474</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>201,733</td>
<td>67,214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>176,613</td>
<td>81,326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>125,252</td>
<td>111,427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>124,494</td>
<td>113,741</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>118,146</td>
<td>100,589</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>92,625</td>
<td>98,776</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>85,908</td>
<td>106,657</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>99,543</td>
<td>108,495</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Instituto Nacional de Estadística, n.d.)
as territorially bounded within Catalonia itself, and therefore did not equate individuals who had resided in Catalonia but then later emigrated as members of the Catalan community. In contrast, the 2014 Plan’s category of “Catalans abroad” had the effect of expanding the official understanding of the Catalan community beyond the region’s boundaries. The 2014 Plan went beyond simply recognizing this new group of Catalans, but also called for increased government action specifically targeting the “Catalans abroad” population, and argued that the “[g]overnment needs to ensure that people who emigrate do not lose their link with Catalonia” (ibid., p. 34).

Despite the continued framing of immigration as a major priority and an issue of concern for Catalonia by the Generalitat in the years following the National Agreement, recent survey data has suggested that public concerns surrounding immigration had dropped since 2008. As noted in Chapter Five, the final text of the National Agreement repeatedly characterized immigration as an issue of growing public concern during the mid-2000s, with a large number of respondents identifying it as one of the region’s “biggest problems”. Six years later, however, the Citizenship and Migration Plan: Horizon 2016 reported a significant shift in Catalan public opinion, whereby “perception of immigration as a problem” had fallen, as had “the importance attached to immigration” among survey respondents (ibid., p. 18).

This decreased public concern with immigration nonetheless coincided with growing official concern on the part of the Catalan Generalitat with rising levels of xenophobic political discourse that has coincided with the economic downturn. Since 2008, many European societies have experienced a sharp rise in support for racist and xenophobic far-right political movements in the wake of the economic crisis (see the rise of the Front National in France and the Golden Dawn party in Greece), who have capitalized on public concerns with unemployment, economic
insecurity and illegal immigration (Bistis, 2013; Hobolt, 2015; Treib, 2014). Catalonia and Spain have not been immune to these developments, as far-right/neo-fascist parties have begun to achieve electoral success at the municipal level (such as the fringe party, Platforma per Catalunya), in part by stoking public concerns surrounding immigration and recent immigrant communities.

The final text of the National Agreement on Immigration did address the subjects of “xenophobic and racist discourses” and recommended assertive action to combat them and prevent their broader dissemination. Since that time, the Catalan Generalitat has recommended an intensification of these anti-discrimination efforts as the economic and social context has become more conducive to the spread of racist and xenophobic attitudes and discourses. Both the 2012 Monitoring Commission report and the Citizenship and Migration Plan: Horizon 2016 reflects the Generalitat’s growing concern towards xenophobia and far-right political movements. The 2012 Monitoring Commission report warned about the development of anti-immigrant/xenophobic sentiments among Catalans arising from the “profound socioeconomic transformations” facing the region, sentiments that the report argued had the potential to undermine the Agreement’s vision of a cohesive society (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2012, p. 2). In this regard, the report called for a reaffirmation of the values of inclusion and social integration articulated by the National Agreement and argued that the Catalan government should explain to the wider population the realities of immigration in the region and combat negative perceptions and stereotypes of immigration and immigrants, adding that:

[W]e must remember the importance of messages in the public perception and in the understanding of the migratory fact and must therefore reaffirm the defence of democratic values, of promoting coexistence and of citizenship based on rights and
duties, of the equality of opportunities, of recognition of the difficulties that can arise from the migratory fact, at the same time, of the effects of diversity (ibid.).

The 2014 Plan meanwhile cautioned that despite the decreasing “perception of immigration as a social problem” among Catalans in recent years, Catalonia should not become complacent in its efforts to combat racist and xenophobic attitudes (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2014, p. 34). It specifically warned against “[t]he rise of political parties with xenophobic discourses” within Catalan municipal politics in recent years, and argued that the presence of these movements within the region necessitated an aggressive response on the part of Catalan government and society (ibid.).

Factors motivating immigration to Catalonia (as well as emigration from it)

As in the National Agreement, the later documents emphasize the strong economic and material motivations that are driving migration to Catalonia, but also highlight the motivations that have recently encouraged emigration from the region. Echoing the language of the National Agreement, the Citizenship and Immigration Plan 2009-2012 describes the socio-economic inequality between the Global North and Global South as a significant factor that has encouraged immigration to Europe broadly and Catalonia specifically in recent years:

Today Europe – and in particular the member states of the European Union, including Catalonia – is the main destination of international migratory flows due to a number of factors, including the social and economic gap between sending and host countries and the growing demand for labour in specific sectors in the host countries” (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2009, p. 11).
The documents, however, do not strictly attribute recent immigration levels to economic motivations and argue that a broad variety of factors had coincided to attract immigrants to Catalonia over other destinations, such as “[t]he introduction of more restrictive immigration policies in northern Europe” during the 2000s (ibid.). Indeed, the Citizenship and Immigration Plan 2009-2012 emphasizes the large number of non-economic categories of immigrants that have moved to the region in recent years, including asylum seekers, students, as well as family members of earlier immigrants (ibid., p. 14). In this respect, the documents have preserved the National Agreement’s conception of immigration as a multi-faceted phenomenon in which diverse motivations (economic, humanitarian, familial, and educational) have drawn newcomers to the region in recent years.

In contrast, to the National Agreement, however, these later documents have also explored the factors that have been undermined immigration levels to Catalonia as well as encouraged the flow of emigrants out of the region. The Citizenship and Immigration Plan 2009-2012, for example, emphasized the negative impact of the recent economic downturn on immigration levels, explaining that “by contrast to the economic boom during the ten years from 1998 to 2007, in 2009 the economic climate is a lot less favourable”, and that as a consequence “the flow of people seeking work appears to have stopped” whereas other sources of immigration to the region such as “people arriving for family reunification” has continued, “albeit at a lower rate than in previous years” (ibid., p. 15). Overall, the 2009 Plan noted that Catalan statistical projections for the 2008-2021 period suggest that “migratory growth in Catalonia will be positive”, but still lower than during the preceding era of economic prosperity (ibid.).
The 2012 Monitoring Commission report reiterated these findings, arguing that the 2008 economic downturn has had “consequences that affected all of society: workers, families and public administrations with a drastic reduction in revenue” (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2012, p. 1). It similarly noted the significant rise in unemployment that accompanied the economic downturn particularly in the Catalan construction sector, which it explains was particularly damaging to the region’s “male population of immigrant background” (ibid.). Finally, the report highlighted “[t]he close relationship between immigration and access to the labour market”, and attributed this close relationship with both the decreasing levels of immigration to the region along with the rising levels of emigration (ibid.). In the view of the report, the outflow of people from Catalonia was for predominantly economic reasons, leading to a significant reduction of skilled labour. It explained that this emigration wave was diverse and consisted of “the exit of immigrants to their countries of origin or to other states that are centres of migrant attraction, as well as the exit of native population to other countries in search of employment opportunities”, as well as warned of the economic cost of this emigration in which “a significant percentage of the native emigrants are qualified professionals” (ibid.). Two years later, the Citizenship and Migration Plan: Horizon 2016 continued to note the declining immigration levels facing the region as well as the growing levels of emigration. The 2014 Plan argued that the strong economic factors that had spurred record-breaking immigration levels to Catalonia in the past decade (a phenomenon that heavily influenced the National Agreement’s understanding of immigration patterns) had changed significantly since 2008:

However, it cannot be ignored that the economic situation has changed compared to 2008. Economic slowdown has not only reduced demand for labour but also increased unemployment and inequality, destroyed jobs (especially unskilled jobs often with high rates of turnover and seasonality and low wages) and led to a fall in economic activity to
such low levels that it is difficult to forecast an upturn (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2014, p. 40).

The 2014 Plan similarly cautioned that “after a decade strongly marked by the arrival of newcomer foreigners” to Catalonia, it was predicting a general “stabilisation” of immigration levels in the near future coupled with “appreciable Catalan emigration abroad” (ibid., p.18).

Positive and negative side effects of immigration

As in the National Agreement, the Catalan Generalitat continued to frame immigration as a source of positive demographic change for Catalonia and for Catalan society. The Citizenship and Immigration Plan 2009-2012 noted the correlation between immigrants and the increased birthrate and marriage rate in Catalonia in recent years (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2009, p. 32). There also were frequent connections drawn between immigration as a source of labour and economic growth for Catalonia, as in the text of the National Agreement, though the documents noted that this connection was more complicated due to the post-2008 economic realities. The 2009 Plan noted the importance of recent immigrants as a source of new labour for the Catalan economy in the past decade (ibid., p. 33). The Plan similarly notes how “foreigners” on average have had a higher participation rate than that of the “indigenous population”, with a higher proportion of the foreigner population in the working age group (ibid., p. 34). Consequently, the 2009 Report cautions the “foreign population” of Catalonia has been particularly susceptible to
the economic changes that Catalonia, Spain and Europe have experienced in recent years as well as disproportionately affected by the rising levels of unemployment (ibid.).

This concern with unemployment leads into the documents’ discussion of various negative side effects associated with immigration (several of which the final text of the National Agreement had identified in 2008). The Citizenship and Immigration Plan 2009-2012, for example, continued to emphasize the increased pressure that immigration placed on Catalan public services, drawing on concerns expressed in Line 2 of the National Agreement on Immigration. The Plan noted that “migratory flows over the last years have led to major demographic and social changes in Catalonia”, whereby “the arrival of foreigners has also had an impact on public services, which have seen a rise in demand while the people they attend to have become more heterogeneous with a consequent need to diversify supply” (ibid., p. 39). It noted that the Catalan educational system in particular has had to adapt to rising immigration levels and that the number of foreign students enrolled “has been increasing in lockstep with the change in the foreign-born population registered in Catalonia” (ibid.).

Another negative side effect identified in the National Agreement and subsequently prioritized by later Generalitat documents was irregular immigration. The 2009 Plan, for example, addressed the subject of “irregularity in terms of residence” and the challenges it created for both Catalan society and for irregular immigrants:

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42 The 2009 Plan cautions that in spite of its pronounced impact on recent immigrants to Catalonia, the economic crisis has proven detrimental to the Catalan population at large, whereby since 2008-2009, “the unemployment rate among men doubled for Spaniards and foreigners alike” as well as increased for women in Catalonia during the same period (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2009, p. 35). It further explains that the Catalan construction sector, a major source of employment for the region’s immigrant population, was the heaviest hit by the economic downturn (ibid).
Not having one of these residence or student permits means that anyone who is not a Spanish citizen is then undocumented and extremely vulnerable, with serious legal, social and economic consequences: they have no right to work, to get documents, to move around freely, to public participation, to housing assistance, to Social Security benefits, etc. From the economic point of view, as they cannot access legal employment, they are forced into the black economy and exploited labour (ibid., p. 38).

Recent developments in Catalonia have also adversely affected irregular migrants and the *Citizenship and Migration Plan: Horizon 2016* emphasized the negative impact of the economic downturn on immigrants in irregular situations, in particular the growing problem of “supervening illegality” regarding foreigners in Catalonia who had lost their residence permits after a prolonged period of unemployment. The 2014 Plan also emphasized the need to prevent the economic exploitation of recent immigrants, and called for greater “training and work experience” in terms of fostering “equal opportunities” in the job market, as well as ensuring safe options for immigrants “who decide that they have not been successful in Catalonia and opt to voluntarily return to their country of origin” (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2014, p. 42).

In spite of the attention paid to irregular migration in both immigration plans, the same documents also noted that the levels of irregular migrants living in Catalonia had decreased in the years following the signing of the National Agreement. This decline coincided with the economic downturn, the decreasing number of immigrants in general moving to the region and rising levels of recent immigrants opting to leave. Consequently, the *Citizenship and Immigration Plan 2009-2012* explained that in spite of the difficulty in estimating the number of “undocumented” residents of Catalonia, that “[t]he figure for undocumented immigrants is falling every year in both Spain and Catalonia”, a decline it attributed to both emigration and
increased levels of naturalization among recent immigrants to Spain (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2009, p. 38).

**Framing of “identity”, “cultural diversity”, and “common public culture”**

The later documents repeat the National Agreement’s conception of Catalonia as a country with a long history of immigration, which has been instrumental in its political and social development. The *Citizenship and Immigration Plan 2009-2012*, for example, stated that “Catalonia is a nation built, in part, as a result of migration” (in Catalan, “Catalunya és una nació construïda, en part, gràcies a les migracions”) (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2009, p. 7). The 2009 Plan also emphasized Catalonia’s long history as a destination point for migrants from all over Europe and the Mediterranean:

The geographic location, trade relations, political and religious conflicts and economic growth of Catalonia and the territories around it have meant that historically the country has been affected by migratory movements: Phoenicians, Greeks, Carthaginians, Romans and Germanic peoples arrived there throughout ancient history, Saracens and Franks arrived in the Middle Ages and people from Occitania and Italy in the modern era (ibid.).

Similarly, the 2009 Plan noted the close relationship between migration and Catalonia’s development as a modern industrial economy and society during the 19th and 20th centuries, during which the region experienced significant “major inward migration from around Spain” as well as periods of emigration as “Catalans have been forced to leave for economic and political reasons” (ibid., p. 12).

The combined effect of this ongoing influx of diverse peoples has had a significant impact on Catalonia’s modern development. The 2009 Plan, for example contended that “[a]ll of
these groups from various places have settled and helped to build the country as it is today’’ and that:

It is for this reason that the description of Catalonia as a host territory has become widespread. Its geographical location and economic and trade entrepreneurship have historically been essential factors in attracting immigrants with its consequent demographic growth (ibid.).

The 2009 Plan further argued that contemporary Catalan society owes its present form, social diversity and vitality to the continual influx of newcomers over the years:

A range of structural and temporary factors have brought a million people who speak over 250 languages to Catalonia from more than 170 countries. They are people who have contributed to one of the most important periods of progress in our history; people who have helped to transform towns and cities; people who have called for efforts to adapt and provide training and knowledge; people who have made Catalonia more visible than ever in the world and, in turn, have brought the world to Catalonia (ibid., p. 7).

The 2014 Plan, however, emphasized that Catalonia’s history as a country of immigration had shifted in recent years in conjunction with the rising emigration levels facing the region. The plan cautioned, “[s]ociological and demographic data indicate a turning point in migratory dynamics brought about by the difficult economic situation in Catalonia” (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2014, p. 40). Consequently, this “turning point” required a re-conceptualization of Catalonia and its sense of itself as a country of immigration and as a “host society”:

This figure highlights the impact of the new mobility in Catalonia, a complex and multidimensional reality which will undoubtedly become commonplace in our society. This conceptual change means a shift from referring exclusively to immigration policy to address migration policies, taking into account how the new dynamics of migration affect and will affect Catalan society. The intrinsic fact that Catalonia has always been a host territory must become a strength when envisaging the new reality of emigration. When tackling this challenge we cannot underestimate what we know as the country of immigration that we are. Hence we need to provide people who choose to emigrate with
all the necessary information and guidance so they can make decisions with full knowledge of the facts, make certain that the quality of their experience abroad is assured, and also help them to maintain their ties with Catalonia and hence enable them to return later on so they can contribute their skills, experience and training to Catalonia’s economic recovery and social cohesion. The objective of government action should be to enhance living conditions and the production community so that migration is not a necessity due to lack of work or the absence of prospects for professional development in one’s own country, but rather a decision based on career opportunities and benefits in a globalised world featuring ever increasing mobility (ibid., pp. 41-42).

Occasional references to the Catalan “nation” and “nationhood” also appear over the course of the later documents, echoing the National Agreement’s association between Catalan nationhood with Catalonia’s reality as a diverse immigrant-receiving society. As noted above, the Citizenship and Immigration Plan 2009-2012, stated, “Catalonia is a nation built, in part, as a result of migration” (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2009, p. 7). Similarly, one of the major “objectives” of the 2009 Plan was to “[h]elp to ensure Catalonia is a nation that is inclusive, intercultural and participatory” (in Catalan, “[p]romoure que Catalunya sigui una nació inclusiva, intercultural i participativa”) (ibid., p. 77).

The 2009 Plan also reiterated the National Agreement’s association between the idea of a “common public culture” and the Catalan nation stating that one of the principles of the common public culture is that:

A shared public culture is a shared space for communication, coexistence, appreciation and participation in our differentiated diverse society, so that the national project remains the benchmark to which everyone who lives and works in Catalonia is committed (ibid., p. 75).
Similarly, the 2009 Plan stressed:

The collective construction of a shared public culture is one of the main priorities of the National Agreement on Immigration and consequently also of this *Citizenship and Immigration Plan 2009-2012*. Shared public culture means a shared space for communication, coexistence, recognition and participation in our diverse and differentiated society so that the Catalan nation can continue to be the point of reference for everyone who lives and works in Catalonia. The shared public culture sees integration as a two-way, dynamic and continuous process among the people who live in an area: those who have recently arrived, those who have settled there beforehand and those who have been born there (ibid., p. 138).

The 2014 Plan noted that past Catalan government measures in the immigration field, such as the *1993 Interdepartmental Immigration Plan* “objective” to “encourage the participation of immigrants in nation building” (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2014, p. 16). The Plan also emphasized the common public culture’s association with Catalan nationhood:

We live in a context of multiple and variable identities where identification factors (religion, community, nationality, etc.) are also diverse. Hence the common public culture has to be built in the framework of a shared space for communication, coexistence, recognition and participation so that the Catalan nation remains the benchmark for everyone who lives and works there. The foundations of this common public culture are the democratic values to which we aspire due to tradition, respect for human rights and the importance attached to equality and pluralism (ibid., p. 44).

The plan also frequently referred to the “national question” or the “national transition” surrounding the question of Catalan independence from Spain (ibid., p. 41) and emphasized the need to include immigrants within this debate (ibid., p. 49).
Framing of “integration”

Following the terms of the National Agreement, the Catalan Generalitat continued to place an emphasis on the political and legal integration of newcomers and associated their successful integration with the health and vitality of Catalan democracy. The *Citizenship and Immigration Plan 2009-2012*, for example, argued that “[i]n a host society that sees itself as an inclusive democracy, the recognition of the rights of foreign immigrants is a key factor in providing them with decent living conditions and ensuring appropriate adaptation” (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2009, p. 57). The 2009 Plan also noted the pronounced debate, Catalonia, Spain and Europe have experienced in recent years in terms of standardizing the political rights of recent immigrants with those of their host societies:

As part of this double focus of individual rights and as structural parts of Catalan society, the debate on the recognition of immigrant rights has been transformed into a debate about their degree of equality with nationals and which rights may be affected by legal and continuous residence, and even naturalisation, without prejudice to the twin-track approach mentioned above. Over recent years, the debate about the rights of immigrant foreigners has taken place in neighbouring countries. In Spain it has received a major legislative boost but also a jurisprudential one from the Constitutional Court in particular. According to this jurisprudence, immigrant foreigners have some rights, and it is the legislator who, within this constitutional framework, may determine the conditions for enjoying these rights. This has led to the distinction between three main groups of rights...” (ibid., pp. 57-58).

In terms of the broader Catalan model of social and linguistic integration for newcomers, the documents reiterated the Catalan government’s commitment in past immigration plans and in the National Agreement to ensuring equal rights between immigrants and the existing population, equal access to public services and ensuring the successful integration of newcomers into the Catalan language. The Catalan Secretary for Immigration, Oriol Amorós i March, in his introduction to the *Citizenship and Immigration Plan 2009-2012* praised the integration model...
that Catalonia had developed over two decades, and emphasized its achievements and its enduring promise and ability to support the successful integration of newcomers into the future:

Over the last twenty years a model for integrating immigrants has been built up based on Catalonia’s experience over its history and with the involvement of various institutions and organisations. This model has shown itself to be capable of adapting to new realities which has enabled the needs of the new demographic, social and economic reality of Catalonia to be met (ibid., p. 9).

The new plans also continued to emphasize the importance of linguistic integration for immigrants as a being closely tied to their broader social integration. Like the National Agreement, the 2009 and 2014 Plans emphasized the importance of both the Catalan and Castilian languages in their discussions of linguistic integration. The Citizenship and Migration Plan: Horizon 2016, for example, stated, “[a] fundamental aspect of immigrants’ integration in Catalonia is learning Catalan and Spanish”, as well as stressed that “[s]peaking these languages is a basic factor in social and labour integration and social cohesion” (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2014, p. 44). As with the National Agreement, however, the 2014 Plan celebrated the increasingly multilingual character of Catalan society, but also emphasized the preferred status of the Catalan language within Catalonia’s integration model, in which it stated “Catalan should remain the common language and continue to be promoted as a tool for social cohesion”, as well as described Catalan as “Catalonia’s own language” and “a language of opportunity and should be used for the interaction of all people living there” (ibid.). Reflecting this preferred status, both the 2009 and 2014 Plans analyzed the levels of Catalan linguistic knowledge among “foreigners” and provided commentary on how to improve these levels in the future (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2009, p. 40; Generalitat de Catalunya, 2014, p. 30).
Changing conditions and integration challenges and concerns

Though these documents expressed a commitment to continuity in relation to the Catalan integration model that had been articulated through past Generalitat immigration plans and through the National Agreement, they recognized the need to adapt the integration model to the changing conditions in Catalonia after 2008. The Citizenship and Migration Plan: Horizon 2016, for example, called for a re-conceptualization of the concept of social diversity in Catalonia in reaction to recent developments and contended that the region’s integration policy needed to be adapted to address changing social realities:

Although the word integration has been used in Catalonia since the early 20th century, nowadays we need to add some new components to it. The country currently hosts many forms of social and cultural diversity. Existing processes in migratory dynamics are complex and rich in nuances, since in addition to the diversity now inherent in our society there are also other phenomena such as remigration, transnationality, the children of migrants, international protection and so on. We live in a context of multiple and variable identities where identification factors (religion, community, nationality, etc.) are also diverse (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2014, p. 44).

Various documents have also noted several impediments to the social and economic integration of newcomers to Catalonia that had developed since the signing of the National Agreement on Immigration. The Monitoring Commission report, for example, noted that there was evidence of poorer educational outcomes among “newcomer students” in recent years, making it “necessary to continue implementing measures that facilitate the personal and professional future of youth” in Catalonia (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2012, p. 2). The Citizenship and Migration Plan: Horizon 2016 highlighted in particular the negative impact of the economic downturn on the integration and living conditions of newcomers to Catalonia. The 2014 Plan noted the continuing high levels of unemployment among both “foreigners” and the
“native population”, but cautioned that “[t]he current socioeconomic situation particularly affects immigrants” whose level of unemployment “is twice that for local people” (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2014, pp. 33-34). The 2014 Plan also explained that “the unemployment rate for foreigners is significantly more volatile than it is for Spaniards, which reflects the seasonal nature of the sectors where foreigners tend to be over-represented such as accommodation and food services and retail” (ibid., p. 33).

In spite of this emphasis on adapting Catalan integration methods to changing circumstances, the Citizenship and Migration Plan: Horizon 2016 nonetheless promoted and upheld the National Agreement’s foundational concept of a “common public culture”.\(^{43}\) In this respect, the Plan argued that the best response to the changing social conditions and increasingly complex social diversity within Catalonia was a re-emphasis on the common bonds of nationhood and citizenship and the rights and responsibilities associated with it, which would transcend and bind together the diverse elements of Catalan society:

Hence the common public culture has to be built in the framework of a shared space for communication, coexistence, recognition and participation so that the Catalan nation remains the benchmark for everyone who lives and works there. The foundations of this common public culture are the democratic values to which we aspire due to tradition, respect for human rights and the importance attached to equality and pluralism (ibid., p. 44).

\(^{43}\) This includes a recommitment to some of the policy initiatives associated with the common public culture that were highlighted in the Final Version of the National Agreement on Immigration, including Catalan linguistic training programs and measures to promote respect for religious pluralism within Catalan society (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2014, p. 45).
Framing of the different levels of government (Catalonia, Spain and Europe)

Both the Citizenship and Immigration Plan 2009-2012 and the Citizenship and Migration Plan: Horizon 2016 repeated the National Agreement’s conceptualization of immigration as a multi-level phenomenon in which the Catalan Generalitat is one of several prominent actors with a role to play in the immigration field, but also called for the Generalitat to continue to develop their authority and policy responsibilities in this area. In describing the “statutory and jurisdictional framework” surrounding immigration, the 2009 Plan explained that “[t]he legal system for foreigners is determined by various political and administrative levels with powers that in one way or another impact on immigration and the rights and duties of immigrants” (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2009, p. 43). The 2014 Plan similarly explained, “[p]olicies for citizenship, diversity management and social cohesion are characterised by what we call multi-level governance, where decisions taken interdependently by the various levels of government directly affect social policies” (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2014, p. 37). Similarly, it explained that “[t]he regulatory framework for migration (immigration and emigration) that affects us is shaped by a variety of rules produced by different legal systems”, and that the “[p]owers in this area are distributed between the various political authorities (EU, national, regional and local)” (ibid., p. 11).

The 2009 Plan also noted that due to the number of actors involved in the immigration field, a certain degree of fluidity invariably arises in terms of power and responsibilities between the different levels, and explained that “legislation and regulations do not remain fixed over time, indeed quite the reverse; they change relatively frequently resulting in a restructuring of the authority assigned to each political and administrative level” (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2009, p. 43). As a consequence, “[e]very time the distribution of authority is restructured, this opens up
the possibility of fresh regulatory changes in the legal system applicable to immigration”, such as the ratification of the 2006 Statute of Autonomy which expanded the power of the Catalan Generalitat in the immigration field. Indeed, the 2012 Monitoring Commission report highlighted recent Spanish legislative changes in the immigration field as one of the major new developments that has affected the Catalan immigration and integration framework since the passage of the National Agreement (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2012, pp. 2-3).

A final development in the intergovernmental realm, largely unforeseen by the National Agreement on Immigration has been the growing political polarization between the Catalan Generalitat and the Spanish government in recent years, as public support for Catalonia’s “right to decide” on its future relationship with Spain has grown significantly. At the time of the planning, negotiation and signing of the National Agreement on Immigration, pro-independence sentiment remained a significant but marginal force in Catalan politics, advocated solely by the ERC, segments of the CiU and ICV-EUiA, and a collection of smaller secessionist parties. The majority of Catalan political opinion on the subject of self-determination supported a moderate Catalanist agenda of securing greater autonomy and recognition for the region within the Spanish state (with a smaller but vocal unionist minority that supported preserving the status quo in terms of Catalonia’s autonomy relative to the Spanish government). The National Agreement on Immigration was similarly “autonomist” rather than “secessionist” in its outlook regarding Catalan self-determination.\(^4\) As shown in the preceding chapter, the National Agreement was somewhat limited in its political ambitions for Catalonia, and simply called for the full

\(^4\) As the next chapter discusses further, the National Agreement reflected an autonomist outlook despite the support it earned from pro-independence parties like the ERC and despite the opposition it generated from unionist parties like the Ciutadans who characterized the Agreement’s objectives as “sovereignist”.
realization of Catalonia’s jurisdictional autonomy in the immigration and integration fields under the terms of the 2006 Statute of Autonomy, and otherwise respected the jurisdictional autonomy of the Spanish state in these policy areas.

Since that time, however, a series of political developments that were largely unrelated to the National Agreement on Immigration, have shifted the political context in which it operated. Views on Catalan self-determination have radicalized in recent years, as the debate has polarized around pro-independence and unionist positions, and has squeezed out the moderate Catalanist autonomist position that predominated in the region only a few years ago (and which heavily influenced the final text of the National Agreement on Immigration). The *Citizenship and Migration Plan: Horizon 2016* argued that “the national question” represented a new “major issue on the political agenda in Catalonia”, in which civil society actors and movements had mobilized and demonstrated in favour of a broad societal debate on Catalonia’s right to self-determination, and contended that “these new key factors need to be built into the three lines of the [National Agreement on Immigration] which remain fully valid” (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2014, p. 41). Accordingly, the Generalitat designed the 2014 Plan partly in response to this broader process and debate over “national transition” (in Catalan, “transició nacional”) and the “right to decide” (in Catalan, “dret de decidir”) and contended that the self-determination debate must inform and influence discussion over immigration and integration policy in the region, and that measures should be taken to encourage immigrant participation in the public debates surrounding the “national transition”:

The last of the cross-cutting areas is new with respect to the [National Agreement on Immigration] and an important issue in recent times on the national political agenda: the possibility that the people may decide whether Catalonia should become a state that is independent of Spain. Migratory movements have not only brought demographic strength
to the country and provided it with greater economic growth but have also helped to enhance its national identity. This new challenge is a unique opportunity to strengthen social cohesion and ensure that as many residents of Catalonia as possible can decide on its future. Faced with the challenge of implementing a large national project, the public must be provided with the participation forums required to strengthen social cohesion and society as a whole. Since the transition period Catalonia has seen several examples of how immigrants have been some of the people who sought to restore political institutions or demanded social rights. However, it has been found that immigrants are less interested than natives about Catalan political issues. Hence activities are to be carried out that promote public and political participation by immigrants.

As part of building state structures open discussions are needed in government, civil society, business organisations and trade unions to gather ideas about immigration procedures, possible migration and immigration policy, the integration model to be used, human rights and the fight against racism and xenophobia (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2014, p. 49).

Conclusion

The various plans and reports attempted to strike a balance between continuity and reform in terms of their relationship to the National Agreement on Immigration. On one hand, the documents frequently emphasized the need to respect the vision articulated in the National Agreement in terms of fostering an open and inclusive society, preventing discrimination, promoting social, political and economic equality between newcomers and the existing population, and ensuring the effective integration of newcomers into the common public culture and the Catalan language. These documents frequently framed the Agreement as a guiding framework for the Catalan government’s and civil society’s activity in the immigration, settlement and integration fields. Consequently, the National Agreement heavily influenced the guiding principles, framing strategies and policy recommendations contained within the three documents, which similarly framed themselves as practical measures designed in part to fulfill
the National Agreement’s vision of Catalonia as an open and inclusive immigrant-receiving society.

Nonetheless, there was an ongoing recognition of the need to adapt the Agreement’s vision to changing conditions. This recognition grew more pronounced over time, with the *Citizenship and Immigration Plan 2009-2012* being more muted in its calls for reform other than emphasizing the changing economic conditions and their impact on the integration prospects of recent immigrants, while the 2012 Monitoring Commission Report and the *Citizenship and Migration Plan: Horizon 2016* were more vocal and wide-reaching in their analyses and recommendations in response to a variety of new developments including xenophobic political parties, rising emigration levels, and the debate over Catalan independence. In this respect, most of the documents attempted to strike a balance between respecting and preserving the main principles and guidelines of the National Agreement on Immigration (and the Catalan immigration/integration model in general), but also called for important changes to respond to migratory patterns and an economic, social and political context that had altered significantly since December 2008.

The framing strategies for key concepts explored in the National Agreement, such as “immigration”, “immigrants”, “diversity”, and the role of the Catalan government in the immigration field, similarly reflected this twin tension of continuity and reform in the later Generalitat documents. The documents all echoed the National Agreement’s framing of immigration as an important and ongoing structural phenomenon for Catalonia, and continued to frame Catalonia as a “country” or “nation” with a long history as a destination point for immigrants. Nonetheless, the three documents also conveyed the idea that the migratory
dynamics that Catalonia has experienced in recent years were qualitatively and quantitatively different from the dynamics that served as the inspiration for the National Agreement. While the National Agreement framed immigration as a predominantly uni-directional phenomenon characterized by the flow of immigrants from abroad into Catalonia (of which the majority were economic migrants), by the time of the *Citizenship and Migration Plan: Horizon 2016*, the migration pattern had become bi-directional with the number of people leaving Catalonia frequently outnumbering those entering and settling in the region. The economic downturn since 2008 similarly had a varied impact on public attitudes surrounding immigration. On one hand, the recent decrease in immigration levels and increase in emigration rates led to decreased concern with the subject of immigration among the general population, but on the other hand, the growing levels of economic insecurity had also encouraged the emergence of far-right political movements whose xenophobic political messages had gained traction in certain segments of Catalan society.

The later Generalitat documents also echoed the National Agreement in their multi-faceted descriptions of immigration as a broader demographic phenomenon and in their descriptions of the varied motivations that were driving migrants to Catalonia (of which economic motivations continued to occupy a prominent, though diminished, role). Building on the new theme of emigration, however, the later documents differed from the National Agreement by exploring the factors that had compelled people to leave Catalonia in recent years. As such, the documents framed emigration as a largely economic phenomenon, in which recent immigrants and native-born Catalans had left the region due to high unemployment rates and lack of opportunities since the 2008 economic downturn.
The documents also continued the National Agreement’s approach of framing immigration as a subject with varied effects on Catalonia and Catalan society. They re-iterated the National Agreement’s conception of immigration as providing positive demographic contributions to the regional population, and in the 2009 Plan continued to note the benefits associated with new immigrant labour for the Catalan economy. Nonetheless, the developments that had taken place in Catalonia in recent years had only exacerbated many of the negative side effects associated with immigration that the National Agreement initially identified. The later documents continued to emphasize the pressure on Catalan public services that recent immigrant populations exert and the difficulties in adapting these services to a new and diverse population. Similarly, concerns expressed in the National Agreement regarding the marginalized and frequently exploited irregular immigrant population in Catalonia have only become more pronounced as time has passed as the economic downturn has made these migrants even more vulnerable (though the number of irregular immigrants has dropped significantly since 2008).

The framing of Catalonia as an immigrant-receiving country or nation characterized by deep internal diversity, in part, because of past immigration also returned in the later Generalitat documents, but in an altered form. The later plans continued to emphasize the region’s long history as a destination point for immigrants, a history that predates Catalonia as a modern industrial economy with a modern sense of national identity, but which was intensified during the modern era. Similarly, they noted the varied national, ethnic, religious and social diversity that immigration had brought to the region and celebrated this diversity as a positive contribution to Catalonia, which again echoed the framing of the National Agreement on Immigration. Nonetheless, the theme of changing conditions returned in relation to social diversity, in which
later documents like the *Citizenship and Migration Plan: Horizon 2016* argued that in the same way that rising emigration levels required a re-conceptualization of the Catalonia’s relationship with migration as a whole, it also required a re-conceptualization of Catalonia as a “host society”. Indeed, the 2014 Plan’s in-depth exploration and recommendations regarding the new “Catalans abroad” category suggested a broadening of the Catalan “community” beyond the boundaries of Catalonia itself to an extensive and amorphous expatriate population abroad, something that went decidedly against the territorially bounded notion of Catalan identity articulated in previous immigration plans and in the National Agreement. In spite of this recognition of changing conditions, the documents all adhered to the National Agreement’s vision of a common public culture for Catalonia in which Catalan functions as the common language. Indeed, in spite of the 2014 Plan’s call for a reconsideration of the Catalan integration model in relation to the new patterns of migration and social diversity that Catalonia is contending with, it nonetheless re-emphasized the over-arching framework of the common public culture articulated in the National Agreement, grounded in respect for “plurality” and “democratic values” and where “the Catalan nation remains the benchmark for everyone who lives and works” in the region.

Lastly, the understanding of immigration as a policy area characterized by intergovernmental complexity has persisted in the later Generalitat documents, however, the intergovernmental context between Catalonia and Spain has become tenser in recent years. As noted in previous chapters, the deteriorating political relationship between the Catalan Generalitat and Madrid, coupled with the upsurge of pro-independence sentiment within Catalan civil society, has substantially altered the political environment in which the National Agreement
on Immigration operates. While a moderate, Catalanist, autonomist consensus in which Catalonia seeks to maximize its jurisdictional autonomy within the Spanish state may have shaped the debate and final content of the National Agreement on Immigration, that consensus no longer holds in the region. Instead, the increasingly polarized political atmosphere between pro- and anti-independence forces means that the National Agreement requires adaptation to serve new objectives, particularly if Catalonia eventually realizes independence in the near future.
Chapter Six – Political discourse regarding the National Agreement on Immigration

Catalonia’s experience in recent years, both in the development of the National Agreement on Immigration and in the evolution of its immigration/integration framework is representative of the broader decentralization and politicization trend surrounding immigration matters that has characterized many Western societies. As the previous chapters demonstrated, political concerns in Catalonia surrounding immigration have informed, as well as been informed by, broader political debates surrounding Catalonia’s autonomy within Spain and its powers of self-government. This chapter will develop this idea further by exploring to what degree immigration has been politicized in the Catalan context in terms of partisan politics. It analyzes how the major Catalan parties have articulated their own agendas and policy solutions to address public concerns surrounding immigration, as well as how ideological cleavages within the Catalan party system have shaped the attitudes of the major Catalan parties towards immigration. In this respect, the National Agreement on Immigration represented an interesting example of cross-party collaboration and compromise on immigration matters among the Agreement’s signatories (the CiU, PSC, ERC, ICV-EUiA), while simultaneously representing its politicization due to the opposition of parties that remained outside the Agreement (the PPC and the Cs).

The sources that were selected for the statements by politicians and representatives of the major parties were from official party documents, election campaign manifestos, official press statements and parliamentary transcripts. The official statements and press statements that were analyzed were selected through searches of the phrase “Pacte Nacional per a la Imigració” on
the official websites for the six major political parties, while the parliamentary transcript material was selected through searches of the same phrase in the Catalan Parliament’s online database. As in the previous chapters, to conduct the frame analysis component of my research, I employed NVivo qualitative data analysis software to identify and code key words and phrases that serve as the focal point of this analysis relating to the intersection between immigration, Catalan nationalism and self-government including “immigration”, “migration”, “immigrant”, “migrant”, “nation”, “diversity”, “identity”, “culture”, “integration”, “Catalonia”, “Spain” and “Europe”.

The chapter begins with an overview of the Catalan political system, the six major parties within Catalan politics at the time of the Agreement’s negotiation and signing, and the relationship of these parties to broader socio-economic and territorial cleavages in Catalan politics. The chapter then focuses on the political debate surrounding the National Agreement, and the framing strategies employed by the major parties with representation in the Catalan parliament during this time. The inter-party discourse and debate over the National Agreement is informative in terms of its connection to wider struggles within Catalan politics over the subjects of immigration and integration, as well as over the power of the Catalan Generalitat in these policy fields. The chapter analyzes areas where the parties were in broad agreement, such as their framing of immigration as a “challenge” as well as an “opportunity” for Catalonia, and their common emphasis on Catalonia’s history as a destination point for immigrants to Spain. It also analyzes the important differences between the parties that ultimately shaped their decisions to support or oppose the National Agreement in 2008, including the question of whether or not the National Agreement represented an effective and necessary response to the challenges posed
by contemporary migration, with the accord’s proponents emphasizing either its potential at fostering social cohesion or at fostering social equality, and the opponents framing it as discriminatory, ineffective and/or sovereignist and anti-Spanish in outlook.

**Overview of the Catalan party system**

Since the creation of the State of Autonomies in the late-1970s, regional political systems have developed over time in each of Spain’s seventeen autonomous communities. The regional systems are roughly modelled on the larger Spanish political system, in which each autonomous community possesses “a regional government chaired by a president and a parliament”, and where each parliament is elected through a system of proportional representation that traditionally favours regional branches of the two main Spanish parties, the Partido Socialista Obrero Español (PSOE) and the Partido Popular (PP) (Magone, 2009, pp. 216-217).

In accordance with the development of these regional political systems and the election of regional parliaments, distinct party systems have also developed in each of the seventeen autonomous communities, though the degree of distinctiveness varies considerably. Magone (2009) identifies two “groups” of regional party systems in Spain; the first characterizes thirteen autonomous communities in which after every election regional branches of the PSOE and PP “are able to achieve an absolute majority or at least a working majority”, and therefore mirrors the dynamics at play in the Spanish party system (p. 225). The second group characterizes the remaining four autonomous communities (Catalonia, the Basque Country, the Canary Islands and the Balearics) where working majorities are more difficult to attain due to the strength of local regionalist and nationalist parties (ibid.). Catalonia therefore represents an outlier in the
Spanish context in terms of the pattern of its party politics, whereby the regional branches and allies of the larger Spanish parties in Catalonia (the PSC, PPC, ICV-EUiA, and Cs) face strong competition from Catalan-based nationalist parties (the CiU and ERC). The following is a brief overview of the six main parties in the Catalan party system.

**Convergència i Unió**

Convergència i Unió (CiU) (in English, “Convergence and Union”), was a federation of two political parties, Convergència Democràtica de Catalunya (CDC) and Unió Democràtica de Catalunya (UDC) that together traditionally acted as the largest party in Catalan parliamentary politics since the restoration of regional self-government. Party responsibilities and positions were divided 75:25 between the CDC and UDC (Magone, 2009, p. 168). The leadership of the party (and with it the position of Catalan President from 1980 to 2003 as well as from 2010 to the present) was always held by the leader of the CDC (Jordi Pujol from 1978 until 2003 and Artur Mas from 2003 to the CiU’s dissolution in 2015), while the CiU party caucus in the Spanish Cortes was led by the UDC leader Josep Antoni Duran i Lleida from the 1990s to the 2010s.

The CiU was a centre-right and moderate Catalan nationalist party (Martí, 2013, p. 508). Of its two former constituent parties the CDC articulates an economically liberal ideology and is affiliated at the European level with the Alliance for Liberals and Democrats for Europe, while the UDC is Christian democratic in outlook and is affiliated with the European People’s Party.

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45 Dowling (2005) argues that the CDC consists of “liberal and conservative nationalists” (p. 106).
During the years of their formal association, the CDC was the more explicitly nationalist of the two parties, favouring greater Catalan autonomy that would eventually culminate in independence from Spain (Magone, 2009, p. 168). The UDC also favoured greater political autonomy for Catalonia, but resisted the idea of independence and frequently fought with the CDC over the latter’s secessionist tendencies (ibid.). Until recent years, the CiU as a whole was circumspect in terms of its ultimate political ambitions for Catalonia relative to the rest of Spain. Though containing pro-independence elements, the CiU traditionally avoided explicit statements about Catalan independence, and prior to the 2012 Catalan parliamentary election was seen as an “autonomist” party, committed to securing national recognition for Catalonia and maximizing its political autonomy within the Spanish state rather than outside of it (Keating, 2001a; Martí, 2013). The CiU was also pro-European and supported Spain’s (and by extension, Catalonia’s) greater integration into the European Union, which it traditionally regarded as an alternative arena to the Spanish state for the pursuit of national recognition and greater political autonomy (Nagel, 2004, p. 65).

Dowling (2005) described the CiU as “the most important nationalist formation in the Spanish state and the most successful representative of stateless nationalism in western Europe”, noting that their “political dominance” of Catalonia “has turned the Catalan question into a central preoccupation of the Spanish state” since the time of Spain’s democratic transition (p. 106). The party also played an important role in Spanish politics, holding the balance of power in the Spanish Cortes during the minority government years of the PSOE prime minister, Felipe González, and the PP prime minister, José María Aznar, between 1993 and 2000. In commenting on its influence during this period, Michael Keating (2001a) remarked that the “CiU
is committed to playing a role in Spanish politics”, and that while the influence of a Catalan nationalist party over the Spanish government was a source of acrimony among some Spanish political commentators, he contended that the CiU’s actions were “undeniably a means for tying Catalonia into Spain while allowing it to develop its own personality at home” (p. 196).

The 2012 Catalan parliamentary election nonetheless proved to be a decisive turning point in the history of the CiU. The CiU’s endorsement of Catalonia’s “right to decide” during the election provoked division between its two constituent parties in the aftermath of the vote, with the CDC adopting a pro-independence posture and the UDC questioning the idea of Catalan independence (Martí, 2013, p. 514). Eventually the subject of independence proved too divisive and the two parties dissolved the CiU in June 2015. In the September 2015 parliamentary election, the CDC ran as part of a joint electoral list of pro-independence candidates under the name Junts pel Sí (JxSí) (in English, “Together for Yes”), a list that included the ERC and leaders of two pro-independence civil society groups, Assemblea Nacional Catalana and Òmnium Cultural, while the UDC ran as an independent party in the election. Junts pel Sí won 39.6 per cent of the vote and a plurality of seats (64 seats) in the Catalan parliament while the UDC won 2.5 per cent of the vote and failed to win any seats in parliament (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2015).

Partit dels Socialistes de Catalunya (PSC)

The Partit dels Socialistes de Catalunya (in English, “Socialists’ Party of Catalonia”) formed through the unification of three smaller socialist parties in 1978 and became an
autonomous regional affiliate of the Spain’s main socialist party, the PSOE (Balcells, 1996, p. 174). On socio-economic issues, the party describes itself as “progressive and leftist” and argues that as socialists they are committed to “building a society based on the full and effective realization of the values of liberty, equality, fraternity, social justice, solidarity and peace” (Partit dels Socialistes de Catalunya, 2008). Regarding Catalonia’s relationship with the Spanish state, the PSC describes itself as a “Catalanist” party committed to Catalan “freedom and self-government” with the goal of fostering “an open, advanced, and inclusive society, capable of uniting people of diverse backgrounds”, as well as a “federalist” party that regards Spain as “plurinational, pluricultural and plurilingual” (ibid.). The PSC also describes itself as “Europeanist” and pro-EU, and like the PSOE, affiliates at the European level with the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats.

The main opposition party in Catalan politics during the 1980s and 1990s, over time, the PSC gradually established itself as a credible alternative to the governing CiU and a defender of Catalan self-government within Spain. By the 2003 Catalan parliamentary election, the party was able to form and lead a coalition government with the other major leftist parties in parliament, the ERC and ICV-EUiA, a coalition that the parties successfully renewed after the 2006 parliamentary election. During this time, the party articulated an aggressive autonomist agenda for Catalonia that culminated in the passage of the 2006 Statute of Autonomy, which expanded the region’s powers of self-government and initially included recognition of Catalonia’s national distinctiveness within Spain. Since losing office in 2010, the party has generally opposed the rising secessionist sentiment in Catalan politics and called for broader constitutional reform of the Spanish state, and in the 2012 Catalan parliamentary election
campaigned on transforming Spain into a full-fledged federation as a means of providing Catalonia with greater autonomy (Martí, 2013, p. 512). The party has also experienced extensive internal debate over the subject of Catalonia’s “right to decide” regarding its future relationship with Spain and over the constitutional legality of a Catalan referendum on independence (ibid., pp. 512 & 514). In the 2015 election, the PSC captured 12.7 per cent of the popular vote and won sixteen seats in the Catalan parliament (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2015).

**Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya (ERC)**

The Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya (in English, “Republican Left of Catalonia”), as its name suggests, is leftist and republican in its ideological outlook. For many years it was also one of two major nationalist parties in Catalan politics along with the CiU; however, the ERC’s nationalist agenda traditionally differed from that of the CiU in two major respects. First, the ERC’s vision of the Catalan nation is much broader than that of the former CiU, and extends beyond Catalonia’s autonomous community boundaries to encompass the wider “Països Catalans” (“Catalan Countries”), which according to the party, includes neighbouring Catalan-speaking territories such as, the Balearic Islands, Valencia, the “La Franja” region in Aragon, “Northern Catalonia” in France, and the Principality of Andorra (Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya, n.d.). The second major difference has been the party’s political aspirations for Catalonia, in that the ERC has been overtly secessionist since the early 1990s, advocating for the independence of the Països Catalans within a reformed EU. The party is similarly pro-European in outlook, and desires the reconstruction of the EU into a “Europe of the Peoples”, one where
“the existing states fade away and small nations and regions take their place” (Keating, 2000, p. 34). At the European level, the ERC is affiliated with The Greens – European Free Alliance.

The ERC is also one of the oldest parties in Catalan politics, but with a varied electoral history. Founded in 1931, the ERC were the dominant nationalist party in Catalonia in the 1930s during the time of the Second Spanish Republic and the Spanish Civil War. Following the restoration of democracy in Spain in the 1970s, however, the ERC found themselves in a marginalized position relative to their nationalist counterparts in the CiU and their leftist counterparts in the PSC. Greer (2007) attributes the party’s weaker electoral performance during the late-20th century to its internal divisions, activist leadership, and more radical vision of Catalan self-determination, which in turn alienated potential support for the party from major Catalan civil society organizations and elites (pp. 130-131).

Nonetheless, over the decades, the party has played a key role in Catalan politics, acting as a partner in the tripartite coalition between 2003 and 2010 (with the exception of a brief period where they withdrew from the coalition over a disagreement regarding the reform of the Catalan Statute of Autonomy), as well as providing legislative support to the minority CiU governments of 1980 to 1984 and of 2012 to 2015. The party has done well in the present political environment in Catalonia, in which the ERC’s pro-independence stance has translated into strong electoral showings in the 2012 Catalan parliamentary election and the 2014 European elections. Similarly, the party has been at the forefront of the campaign for a Catalan independence referendum, working in collaboration with pro-independence elements within the former CiU, smaller secessionist parties, and civil society movements like the Assemblea Nacional de Catalunya. As noted above, in the 2015 parliamentary election, the party ran as part
of the pro-independence Junts pel Sí electoral list, along with the CDC, Assemblea Nacional de Catalunya, and Òmnium Cultural, and won a plurality of seats in the Catalan parliament.

Iniciativa per Catalunya Verds – Esquerra Unida i Alternativa (ICV-EUiA)

Formed from the remnants of several leftist and Green parties, including the once powerful Partit Socialista Unificat de Catalunya (PSUC), the Iniciativa per Catalunya Verds – Esquerra Unida i Alternativa (in English, “Initiative for Catalonia Greens – United and Alternative Left”) is a coalition of two left-wing parties. The ICV defines itself as a “democratic, Catalanist, republican, leftist, ecologist, feminist” political grouping, working in collaboration with “all people who want to transform the world, overcome capitalism, and who share the values of social justice, peace, equality, radical democracy, liberty, secularism and solidarity” (Iniciativa per Catalunya Verds, n.d.). The EUiA similarly describe themselves as a “leftist” and “anti-capitalist” party, that desires “equality in economic, political, social and cultural affairs” within the context of “a habitable and sustainable planet” as well as “a society with social justice, full individual and collective liberties, [and] radical democracy” (Esquerra Unida i Alternativa, 2008). The party also asserts and defends “Catalonia’s national rights” including the right to democratic self-determination, as well as promotes the idea of a “federal and plural Catalonia” connected with the “other peoples of Spain and with Europe” (ibid.). At the European level, the ICV is affiliated with The Greens – European Free Alliance while the EUiA is affiliated with the Party of the European Left.
Like the relationship between the PSC and the Spanish-wide PSOE, the ICV-EUiA historically has had a complicated relationship with the Spanish-wide Izquierda Unida (IU) and its predecessor the Partido Communista Español, particularly regarding the subject of Catalan self-government. The EUiA serves as the IU’s regional affiliate in Catalonia, while the ICV is independent of the IU but cooperates with the party electorally at the Spanish level. Traditionally a minor electoral force in Catalan politics, the ICV-EUiA was similarly the smallest partner in the leftist tripartite coalition from 2003 to 2010. Over the years, the party has become more explicitly Catalanist as well as tolerant of the idea of the Catalan self-determination. Though the ICV-EUiA endorses Catalonia’s “right to decide” on independence through a referendum, the party has refused to take a clear stance on the issue and its members are divided between those that advocate for Catalan independence and those promoting alternative political solutions such as securing greater political autonomy for Catalonia within a federal Spain (Martí, 2013, p. 510).

In the 2015 Catalan parliamentary election, the ICV and EUiA ran in a broader electoral alliance, Catalunya Sí que es Pot (in English, “Catalonia, Yes We Can”), with the new left-wing anti-austerity party, Podemos (in Catalan, “Podem”, and in English, “We Can”). Catalunya Sí que es Pot won 8.9 per cent of the vote and eleven seats in the Catalan parliament (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2015).

Partit Popular de Catalunya (PPC)

The Partit Popular de Catalunya (in English, “People’s Party of Catalonia”) is the regional affiliate of Spain’s present governing party the Partido Popular (itself a descendent of the post-Francoist, right-wing, Allianza Popular). Ideologically, the PPC is right wing and
conservative, and has generally been the most explicitly pro-Spanish and unionist party in Catalan regional politics, as well as the staunchest opponent of Catalan nationalist demands for greater autonomy within Spain. Like their Spanish-level counterparts in the Partido Popular, the PPC are affiliated with the European People’s Party at the EU-level.

The PPC have historically been a marginal opposition party in the Catalan context due to the dominance of the CiU among right-wing Catalan voters and the unpopularity of the Spanish-wide PP in the region, due in part to its association with the former Franco regime (Greer, 2007, p. 131). Its marginality has also been attributable to the PPC’s tendency of openly opposing the broader “consensus” that has existed among the major nationalist (CiU and ERC) and Catalanist parties (PSC and ICV-EUiA) on the issues of language and Catalan self-government (Greer, 2007, p. 131). During the 1990s, the party criticized Catalonia’s linguistic normalization policy and pledged to “protect” the rights of Castilian-speakers in the region, statements that provoked a backlash from the other major political parties and prominent Catalan civil society organizations (ibid.). The PPC similarly opposed the efforts to reform Catalonia’s Statute of Autonomy in the mid-2000s, and publically condemned the recent pro-independence turn in Catalan politics and the attempts by Catalan nationalists to hold a referendum on independence. In the 2015 parliamentary election, the PPC ran as an independent party and won 8.4 per cent of the popular vote along with eleven seats in the Catalan Parliament (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2015).
A relatively new party in Catalan and Spanish politics, the Ciutadans – Partit de la Ciutadania (in English, “Citizens – Party of Citizenry”) emerged in the mid-2000s as an “anti-nationalist”, unionist, centrist party, explicitly opposed to the agenda of Catalan nationalism. As Martí (2013) explains, as a part of the Ciutadans’ “anti-nationalist” outlook, “the party [...] constantly denounces the excesses and lies of Catalan nationalism, while arguing that Catalonia is, according to the Spanish Constitution, a nationality and already enjoys substantial self-government” (p. 511). Like the PPC, the party rejects the idea of greater self-government for Catalonia and endorses the Spanish constitutional status quo, as well as attempts to capitalize on popular disaffection among Catalonia’s Castilian-speakers towards Catalan linguistic normalization and what the Ciutadans characterize as the more “assimilationist” aims of Catalan nationalism. In contrast to Catalan nationalist efforts at promoting the distinctiveness and particularity of Catalonia and the Catalan people within Spain, the Ciutadans promote the idea of an undifferentiated Spanish citizenship, in which the Spanish constitution and existing political framework represents both the best guarantor for the freedoms of all Spanish citizens regardless of background, language or ethnicity. At the European level, the Ciutadans are affiliated with the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe.

In recent years, the party has expanded its electoral activities to the entirety of Spain campaigning under the Castilian name, “Ciudadanos”, and has promoted itself as a centrist, third-way alternative to the traditionally dominant two parties within Spanish politics, the PSOE and the PP. The party experienced moderate electoral success in the 2015 regional elections across Spain. Similarly, in the 2015 Catalan parliamentary elections, the Ciutadans increased
their vote share dramatically, capturing 17.9 per cent of the popular vote and 25 seats, becoming
the largest opposition party in the Catalan Parliament (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2015).

Cleavages in the Catalan party system

Based on the above overview it is evident that the Catalan party system consists of complex divisions, in which parties differ from one-another by their left/right ideological stances on socio-economic issues, as well as by their positions on “territorial” issues pertaining to Catalonia’s relationship with the Spanish state. Regarding the territorial cleavage, all three of the territorial issues that Hepburn identified (as discussed in Chapter One) regarding 1) “the politics of territory”, 2) “the culture of territory”, and 3) “the economics of territory” are present in the Catalan case and serve as points of division between the different parties. Nonetheless, not all concerns are of equal importance in Catalan politics; indeed, the “politics of territory” can be regarded as the most prominent as well as influential over the other two concerns, in that the autonomy that Catalonia exercises within the Spanish state ultimately shapes its authority in the areas of culture, language, identity and economic development. Accordingly, when discussing the territorial cleavage in the Catalan party system it is more useful to conceptualize it in terms of Hepburn’s “politics of territory” category, or as David Martí (2013) describes the cleavage, in terms of Catalonia’s “constitutional status” within the Spanish state (p. 508). Figure 3 below provides a visual representation of both the left/right socio-economic and territorial cleavages in Catalans politics and the position of the six major Catalan parties with parliamentary representation at the time of the National Agreement on Immigration, in relation to these cleavages:
Beginning with the Catalan left-right axis, at the farthest left on the spectrum are the “post-communist”/ecologist Iniciativa per Catalunya Verds – Esquerra Unida i Alternativa (ICV-EUiA) followed on the centre-left by the Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya (ERC) and the Partit dels Socialistes de Catalunya (PSC). As noted in the overview of the parties above, this left-wing ideological affinity among the PSC, ERC and ICV-EUiA allowed them to form a tripartite coalition government between 2003 and 2010. In the middle of the spectrum sits the centrist Ciutadans – Partit de la Ciutadania (Cs), articulating a socially liberal ideology. Further to the right sat the former Convergència i Unió (CiU) with its mixed economic liberal and Christian democratic ideology, followed finally by the more socially conservative and economically liberal Partit Popular de Catalunya (PPC).
The Catalan territorial axis cuts through the left-right axis, complicating any potential ideological affinity among the parties. On the Catalan nationalist end of the spectrum, parties divide between those in favour of Catalonia’s independence from Spain – namely, the ERC since the early 1990s – and parties seeking greater autonomy and distinct national status for Catalonia within the Spanish state – traditionally, the CiU, though the party moved to a pro-independence stance in its last years. In the middle of the spectrum, sit the “Catalanist” parties, the PSC and the ICV-EUiA, which regard Catalonia as a distinct community within the Spanish state and in some cases support asymmetrical status and powers for the region within Spain, but also traditionally uphold Spain’s territorial integrity. Finally, at the Spanish nationalist/unionist end of the spectrum sit the PPC and the Cs, parties that have traditionally opposed greater autonomy or distinct status for Catalonia within Spain and instead promoted the unity of the Spanish state and Catalonia’s inseparable place within it.

Appreciation of both these axes and the relationship of the different parties to them is essential in understanding the attitudes of the different parties towards one-another and their willingness to cooperate.46 Catalan nationalist and Catalanist parties have been able to work and govern together in the past, in some cases even cutting across left/right ideological differences between the parties (for example, the centre-right CiU’s willingness to work with left-wing nationalist and Catalanist parties like the ERC and the PSC). By comparison, coalitions between Catalan nationalist and Spanish unionist parties have been rarer (although the CiU has found

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46 As Andrew Dowling (2005) notes, simply dividing these parties into Catalan “nationalist” and Spanish “state-wide” categories fails to capture their complex positions on the relationship between Catalonia and Spain, in particular, the Catalanist but “non-nationalist” outlook of parties like the PSC and the ICV-EUiA (p. 117).
ideological common ground with the right-wing unionist PPC on fiscal and economic matters in the past).

The Catalan party system and the politics of immigration and integration

The attitudes of the major political parties in Catalonia towards immigration and integration have evolved over time, as these issues have become more salient and complicated in the Catalan context. As noted in the previous chapter, a cross-party consensus pre-dominated in previous decades regarding the need to integrate newcomers (both from Spain and abroad) into the Catalan language, society and economy, one that was supported by both past CiU governments and the tripartite coalition of the PSC, ERC and ICV-EUiA. Similarly, various parties remained outside of this consensus, and criticized the preferential status that the Catalan integration framework bestowed on the Catalan language relative to Castilian, namely, the PPC and since the mid-2000s the Ciutadans. In spite of this larger pattern, where in it is possible to classify parties either as “inside” or “outside” the official consensus, the attitudes of the different parties regarding immigration and the place of immigrants within Catalan society have shown interesting variations that reveal the complex interactions between immigration and the economic and territorial cleavages within the Catalan party system. The chapter will now explore these interactions through an analysis of the party framing strategies regarding the National Agreement on Immigration.
Initial proposals for a National Agreement on Immigration

The idea of an inter-party accord on immigration appeared in Catalan political discourse over two years before the signing of the actual National Agreement on Immigration in December 2008. The 2006 Catalan parliamentary election served as the starting point for the debate in which both the PSC and the ERC, proposed the idea of a national pact on immigration in their election platforms to build on Catalonia’s new Statute of Autonomy and the powers the region had gained in immigration matters. The PSC platform expressed the party’s desire for a political and social consensus on the immigration issue, and noted that the party:

[W]ants to promote a national accord among all the stakeholders in the immigration field: civil society, social actors, the media, political parties, etc., to collect all the feelings around this issue and channel them in an orderly manner based on mutual respect, avoiding confrontation and reducing its impact (Partit dels Socialistes de Catalunya, 2006, p. 59).

Similarly, the ERC, in their 2006 platform, committed itself to fostering legislative “consensus” on major policy issues facing Catalonia within parliament. The party pledged that “[t]he next legislature must be, then, one of social and political consensus and, consequently, overcoming partisanship on the great subjects of the country and of participation by social actors in its design” and highlighted “three major areas” in which they would work to reach “national agreements” with the other parties: 1) “infrastructure and energy”; 2) “health and welfare”; and 3) “immigration” (Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya, 2006).

Immigration similarly occupied a prominent place for other major political parties during the 2006 campaign, though none of these parties proposed an inter-party accord regarding immigration and integration matters along the lines of the PSC and ERC. Certain parties did however propose broad-based inter-party agreements on policy issues related to immigration,
such as the ICV-EUiA’s proposal for a “National Agreement on Social Inclusion” in Catalonia (Iniciativa per Catalunya Verds – Esquerra Unida i Alternativa, 2006). The main opposition parties in the Catalan parliament, the CiU and PPC, along with the Ciutadans who in 2006 were contesting their first election, all criticized the tripartite coalition’s governing record in the immigration field and offered their own proposals for strengthening immigration and integration policy in the region. The CiU proposed measures to strengthen Catalonia’s existing integration mechanisms and to improve the flow of skilled labour into the region, as well as called for stronger measures to combat illegal immigration (Convergència i Unió, 2006). The PPC articulated a series of principles designed to guide policy regarding immigration, with an emphasis on fostering legal immigration and preventing/combating illegal immigration, with a major proviso being that their policy recommendations were oriented more towards the Spanish level of government than the Catalan one (Partit Popular de Catalunya, 2006). Lastly, the Ciutadans raised concerns regarding the “social exclusion” of certain segments of the population, with immigration being cited as a potential “personal situation” that increases the chance of exclusion in terms accessing employment, housing, and social welfare (Ciutadans, 2006, p. 31). The party supported granting the right to vote to immigrants in municipal elections, as part of its commitment to a more participative and stronger democracy (ibid., p. 9). Like the PPC, the Ciutadans also voiced concern about illegal immigration within its broader statements on crime and security, highlighting illegal immigration networks as one of the major criminal challenges facing the region (ibid., p. 18).

A common theme running through the discourse of the various parties during the 2006 election was the framing of immigration as a “priority issue” or “challenge” that Catalonia
needed to address either through legislative reform or for parties like the PSC, ERC, ICV-EUiA through the creation of a broad-based political and social consensus that would guide Catalan immigration and integration policy in the future. The PSC noted in their platform the prominence of immigration and immigrants in Catalan society and proposed addressing it in an open manner to foster agreement among the affected and relevant stakeholders in the region:

[T]he configuration of a society where the immigrant presence is more and more extensive demands being, as much from those in the political realm as from those in the social, permanently mobilized in search of consensus, respecting the autonomy of all parties, to strengthen their efforts in favour of permanent dialogue, and avoiding political confrontation (Partit dels Socialistes de Catalunya, 2006, p. 59).

The ERC similarly framed immigration along with the other areas where they would work for inter-party agreement, “infrastructure and energy”, as well as “health and welfare”, as one of “three major issues for the country and the people” (Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya, 2006). Together, the ERC contended, these issues had significant implications for Catalonia’s future in terms of “permitting sustainable development and economic competitiveness”, “achieving equality in personal development and eradicating individual and group marginalization”, and lastly, in terms of “improving the present and achieving a better future” (ibid.). The CiU in their 2006 platform also framed immigration as a “repte” (“challenge”) that affects all aspects of Catalan society and its powers of self-government (Convergència i Unió, 2006). The PPC in their 2006 platform similarly framed immigration as an inescapable reality for Catalonia, but differed from the other parties, and particularly the left-wing tripartite coalition partners, however, in their conceptualization of immigration as a more unpredictable phenomenon that must be managed effectively by the host society (Partit Popular de Catalunya, 2006). Accordingly, the PPC placed greater emphasis on controlling the influx of newcomers
into the region, with the party arguing that Catalonia, “like all societies”, has a “limit” to the amount of newcomers it can receive and effectively integrate (ibid., p. 4).

The concern demonstrated by the different parties towards immigration and the integration of immigrants in Catalan society, frequently intersected with broader ideological and policy concerns surrounding the economy, social cohesion, self-government, language policy and the relationship between Catalonia and the Spanish state. The left-wing parties associated immigration concerns to questions of rights and social equality. The PSC, for example, tied their desire for a broad-based national agreement on immigration to their goal of fostering a socially equitable and cohesive Catalonia, with their platform arguing that

[T]he construction of cohesive Catalonia based on respect for rights and freedoms of all who reside in the territory of Catalonia in the context of a democratic state of law, requires making a special effort to be on top of circumstances and able to face the present stage of integration of newcomers with guarantee of success for the coexistence of all citizens (Partit dels Socialistes de Catalunya, 2006, p. 60).

In a similar vein, the ICV-EUiA promoted the idea of a “National Agreement on Social Inclusion in Catalonia” as part of its commitment to fostering political and socio-economic equality in Catalan life, in which they warned that immigration has the potential to foster greater social inequality in the region:

The new immigration also poses important challenges for social inclusion. We cannot permit social divisions arising from the inability to integrate into our society the newcomers as new citizens with the same rights and responsibilities (Iniciativa per Catalunya Verds – Esquerra Unida i Alternativa, 2006, p. 7).
The ERC, meanwhile, in articulating their vision of a social/political consensus on the “major issues” facing Catalonia, paired their left-wing commitment to social equality and cohesion with a larger project of nation-building for Catalonia, in which “culture” plays a central role, stating:

The search for consensus is fundamental in all these aspects that build Catalonia’s social and territorial cohesion, our cohesion as a dynamic nation, nation of people. Therefore, this should be the legislature to situate culture at the forefront [...] Culture understood as a formation and as a creation, as a heritage and as a source of enjoyment. ERC considers culture as a priority (Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya, 2006, p. 6).

The CiU meanwhile situated their comments and concerns surrounding immigration and immigrant integration in relation to their pre-existing understanding of the strengths and components of the Catalan integration model. The party’s 2006 platform emphasized that in spite of rising immigration levels, Catalonia continued to be a country with a high level of social solidarity, and contended that this solidarity should inform the region’s attitude toward issues and concerns arising from migration. The party proposed that newcomers to Catalonia should assume various rights and responsibilities as a means of fostering integration, as well as highlighted the importance of the education system within the integration process for newcomers, including its role in imbuing societal norms among immigrant children. The CiU platform, in keeping with party’s traditional nationalist stance, also characterized the Catalan language as “the language of immigrant integration” within Catalonia (Convergència i Unió, 2006, p. 138).

Finally, the Ciutadans in their 2006 platform, in articulating their vision of “inclusion of immigrants in the society” explicitly attacked the established Catalan integration model, drawing on traditional Spanish unionist critiques of Catalan integration and language policy. The party
called for the “(reconversion) of part of the infrastructure for linguistic normalization into general integration services” based on a new bilingual integration model centred on “teaching both of Catalonia’s languages (Catalan and Castilian) and free courses on the political and institutional organization of Spain” (Ciutadans, 2006, p. 33). The party also argued that they “will expand and strengthen the educational resources to ensure the learning of two Catalan languages (Catalan and Castilian) and of the norms of the host society” (ibid.).

**Negotiations surrounding the National Agreement**

Following the election and the re-creation of the tripartite coalition government of the PSC, ERC and ICV-EUiA in 2006, the various parties began to position themselves for negotiations surrounding a national accord on immigration. As a preliminary move, the tripartite coalition produced their legislative agenda for the next four years, entitled the “Government Plan 2007-2010”. In its provisions regarding “social cohesion and citizenship” the Government Plan 2007-2010 proposed “to universalize social services by making them accessible to all citizens” and “to promote citizenship policies that favour the integration of the newcomer population in a cohesive society”, as well as included commitments to promote gender equality, to encourage the use of Catalan in everyday society, and to foster a broader culture of social coexistence (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2007). All of these objectives later appeared as policy goals in the final text of the National Agreement on Immigration.

Following the election, the official opposition (and largest party) in the Catalan parliament, the CiU, also articulated their willingness to negotiate and sign an immigration pact with the tripartite government, in addition to other agreements on a range of policy issues. In
January 2007, the CiU leader, Artur Mas, noted his party’s willingness to reach agreements with the tripartite government on the issues of “immigration, housing and research, as well as other topics such as infrastructure, the economic model, financing, and citizen security” (Convergència i Unió, 2007, January 20) later adding that their signing was dependent on the government providing “a unified position” and only if “the positions of the CiU, besides being heard, are included in the final agreement” (Convergència i Unió, 2007, January 25). Mas particularly highlighted the need for discussion on the subject of immigration, arguing that it is a “debate that cannot be postponed” and encouraged the tripartite government to “bring to the negotiating table” a “strong position” on immigration management (ibid.). He also emphasized in June 2007 that in order for these national agreements on major policy issues to be truly “national” in scope they must include the CiU as the largest party in parliament (Convergència i Unió, 2007, June 5).

Introducing and framing the National Agreement as a positive and necessary response

The political debate surrounding the National Agreement on Immigration began in earnest in early 2007, when the Catalan parliament first began to debate the issue and the different parties began to articulate their respective positions on the Agreement. The Catalan Generalitat and the members of the constituent parties to the tripartite coalition immediately began to frame the National Agreement as a significant and necessary measure for Catalonia to pursue due to the extreme levels of immigration the region had experienced in recent years and the social pressures this immigration was creating (Comissió de Benestar i Immigració, 2007, April 10; Comissió de Benestar i Immigració, 2008, July 1, p. 20; Parlament de Catalunya, 2008, July 2, p. 65). For example, in March 2007, the Minister of Social Action and Citizenship of the
tripartite coalition, Carme Capdevila i Palau of the ERC, emphasized the need for Catalonia to address the social changes taking place that were being brought on by immigration:

One of the greatest challenges that Catalan society has today, without doubt, is to construct a society where all citizens [...] can live together sharing a common project. The reality of immigration is possibly the principal factor of social, political and cultural change in our time [...] For this reason, the Government understands actions and policies in the area of immigration as something strategic [...] that demands maximum social and political consensus (Comissió de Benestar i Immigració, 2007, March 7, p. 11).

The National Agreement on Immigration, therefore, according to Capdevila, represented the Generalitat’s response to this pressing need for a new direction in immigration matters:

In this sense, we believe it necessary to promote during this mandate the National Agreement on Immigration, which should be the expression of commitment of the different social, civil, institutional and political actors and the country, of the need to confront strategically the challenge of immigration in Catalonia. [...] The Government expresses the wish that the National Agreement on Immigration is fundamentally and primarily a useful tool, which is oriented to addressing and resolving the principal challenges that the management of migration presently has, as well as profiting from its opportunities (ibid.).

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47 Carme Capdevila i Palau, the Catalan Secretary of Immigration (and fellow ERC parliamentarian) Oriol Amorós i March, and other representatives of the tripartite coalition government would continue to frame immigration and its significant impact on Catalan society along these lines in the following months and years, referring to immigration as “the main force of social, political and cultural change in our society” (Comissió de Benestar i Immigració, 2007, April 10, p. 3), as “a fact that is structural, a fact that transforms us” (ibid, p. 10), or as a “highly positive phenomenon” for Catalonia provided it is managed effectively (Parlament de Catalunya, 2008, October 1, p. 20). This point regarding the impact of immigration was echoed over this same period by the main opposition parties, such as the CiU who referred to immigration as “a challenge and an opportunity that we have as a country, and one we must approach without partisanship” (Parlament de Catalunya, 2010, April 28, p. 16), and the PPC which referred to immigration as a phenomenon with “effects and consequences in the economic, social and coexistence spheres” (Comissió de Benestar i Immigració, 2008, July 1, p. 11).
This sentiment was echoed by the main opposition party, the CiU, which also voiced their support for the accord but insisted that it receive their party’s support in order to be legitimate and reflective of a broader political consensus among the major actors and viewpoints in Catalonia. A CiU parliamentarian, Josep Lluís Cleries i González, for example stated his party’s support for the Government’s immigration agenda in March 2007, while also calling for the creation of a “true” national agreement and not simply an accord among the parliamentary parties:

[F]or us immigration is one of the challenges we have as a country and count on the support of Convergència i Unió for the national agreement – that must be a true agreement and where it is not left to the political forces that form part of this Parliament – for the law of reception, for the law of integration, and for the implementation of the Statute (ibid., p. 19).

Indeed, in the course of the Agreement’s negotiations, certain parties frequently emphasized the broad-based support and participation that the accord had garnered, arguing that this support and participation gave the Agreement and its vision of Catalonia popular legitimacy (Comissió de Benestar i Immigració, 2007, April 10, p. 4; Comissió de Benestar i Immigració, 2008, July 1, p. 20). An ERC spokesperson, Anna Simó, stated in late 2008 that the forthcoming Agreement was “the culmination of an intense participative phase [...] in which over 2,500 proposals were collected”. Simó stressed that the National Agreement must be considered in three “senses” namely: “[t]he diagnosis of what has taken place in Catalonia in the last ten years, where it has received more than one million newcomers; listening to stakeholders and citizens on the needs arriving from this diagnosis; and finally providing a useful consensus-based response” (Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya, 2008, December 3). For the ERC, according to Simó, the
outcome of these three demands should be that “the phenomenon of immigration is managed and managed well, that it avoids competition between people who live in Catalonia for public resources, and where the goal is to live in a diverse society and not to live in a diversity of societies, one next to the other” (ibid.). Similarly, the leader of the EUiA, Jordi Miralles, in a statement from late 2008 argued that in his party’s view “the Agreement is a good proposal that recognizes an objective fact: that the Catalonia of today is a diverse society”, as well as emphasized the broad-based support for the National Agreement on Immigration in which he described it as “a pact designed by the majority” (Esquerra Unida i Alternativa, 2008, December 15).

Some partisan criticism did take place among the negotiating parties, though this criticism focused on the pace of the Agreement’s negotiations not on the goal of the Agreement itself. In the months preceding the National Agreement on Immigration’s signing, Artur Mas and the CiU repeatedly criticized what they regarded as the tripartite coalition’s lack of seriousness on reaching an agreement (Comissió de Benestar i Immigració, 2007, April 10, p. 11; Comissió de Benestar i Immigració, 2008, July 1, p. 8). Mas complained in June 2007 about the slow pace of the negotiations, and criticized the tripartite government of José Montilla for not providing “a clear roadmap” and failing to treat immigration “as a priority” (Convergència i Unió, 2007, June 5). In another statement the following October, Mas criticized the tripartite’s “paralysis” in their management of immigration, arguing that they were acting as “a day-to-day administrator” of immigration issues, rather than a government that “speaks clearly and leads” on immigration (Convergència i Unió, 2007, June 6). Mas reiterated this point the same month in which he noted that immigration represents “an issue that must be addressed with energy and
firmness” as it is “of clear public interest”, and advised Montilla and the tripartite government to “not be afraid” and begin “accelerating” negotiations on the subject as “the obligation of a government is not to watch from the sidelines but to enter the field of play” (Convergència i Unió, 2007, October 3).

Unionist criticism of the National Agreement

The PPC and Ciutadans, however, largely remained outside this negotiation process. The PPC avoided public statements on the National Agreement, instead tying the issue of immigration to broader economic concerns, citing in particular the rising unemployment rates among irregular migrants (Partit Popular de Catalunya, 2008, September 18) as well as calling for a broad inter-party collaborative response to the economic crisis (Partit Popular de Catalunya, 2008, October 3). By contrast, the Ciutadans publically criticized the negotiations surrounding the National Agreement and the participants in these negotiations over the course of 2008. In an opinion piece in the Spanish newspaper, El Mundo, from June 2008, a Ciutadan spokesperson attacked the National Agreement negotiations as part of a broader critique of Catalonia’s language policy. The article characterized the negotiations surrounding the National Agreement on Immigration as symptomatic of the Catalan nationalist goals of cultural homogeneity and unilingualism. The goal of the National Agreement and related efforts in the immigration field, according to the piece was “to turn immigrants into bait for national construction” (Ciutadans, 2008, June 15).

48 The PPC did comment on the National Agreement on numerous occasions in parliamentary proceedings, but often as a way of criticizing immigration conditions in Catalonia more generally (Comissió de Benestar i Immigració, 2007, April 10, p. 16; Comissió de Benestar i Immigració, 2008, July 1, p. 11).
The emphasis on linguistic integration into the Catalan language, as opposed to bilingual integration into Catalan and Castilian, garnered specific criticism, which the piece characterized as part of “an obsession with identity” within Catalonia’s institutions, “whose legitimating foundation is the proper [Catalan] language and whose goal is to construct a Catalan nation, free of the Spanish culture” (ibid.). It cautioned that the efforts of the National Agreement negotiations were not inherently objectionable and added that “[m]any of the recommendations would be acceptable, if they did not exclude Castilian, but are offensive because they are designed to induce immigrants to internalize Catalan as the sole language of Catalonia” (ibid.). In this respect, the National Agreement represented a mechanism for eliminating social diversity, in particular Catalonia’s association as part of “the plural culture of Spain” in favour of social uniformity under ‘the maxim: “One nation, one proper language and one culture”’ (ibid.).49 In a different 2008 opinion piece for the Spanish newspaper *ABC*, another Ciutadans spokesperson attacked the provisions of the National Agreement on Immigration pertaining to “the management of migratory flows” and its proposed reduction in the number of years required to achieve full citizenship, arguing they represented an infringement on the constitutional jurisdiction of the Spanish government (Ciutadans, 2008, July 20).

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49 The Ciutadans piece also draws a connection between Nazism and Catalan nationalism at the end of the article, in which the author characterizes the Generalitat’s goals of “social cohesion, normalization or defence of the Catalan linguistic eco-system” as being no more than “cultural racism” towards the Castilian language and Spanish culture (Ciutadans, 2008, June 15).
Signning of the National Agreement on Immigration

The signing of the National Agreement on December 19, 2008, led to multiple public statements by the various Catalan political parties explaining their reasons for either supporting or opposing the agreement. The parties that supported the Agreement continued to frame it as a positive step that would allow Catalonia to better manage the influx of newcomers and their integration into Catalan society, as well as argued that the accord reflected the priorities and popular will of the Catalan people and ultimately represented a significant social and political consensus on immigration and integration matters. The PSC’s official press statement regarding their decision to sign, for example, described the National Agreement as “the principal guide to migration policy in Catalonia in the following years”, and emphasized that the accord had garnered “the support of diverse political forces and social organizations” in Catalonia (Partit dels Socialistes de Catalunya, 2009, January 5). The ERC in a public statement from December 18, 2008 described the agreement as “one of the four great strategic accords” that were initiated that legislative session. The Minister of Social Action and Citizenship, and ERC parliamentarian, Carme Capdevila, further stressed that the Agreement:

[R]epresents a qualitative and quantitative jump in commitment with immigration policy in Catalonia, because it includes a consensus-based analysis on the strong transformations experienced, agrees on the set of challenges facing [Catalonia] and the actions to be taken to ensure coexistence, better social cohesion and equality of opportunities for everyone (Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya, 2008, December 18).

The ERC statement further noted that the three main “lines” of the National Agreement “directly responded to the three principal demands raised by citizens regarding the challenge of immigration” during the Agreement’s expert and public consultation phases (ibid.). As Minister
Capdevila explained, “the people asked for three things: governing migratory flows, preventing competition over public services and to live in a diverse society, not a diversity of societies”, which she contended were reflected in the Agreement’s “three axes: management of migratory flows and access to the labour market, adaptation of public services to a diverse society and integration in common public culture” (ibid.).

Meanwhile, the statements by the smaller left-wing partners to the tripartite coalition, the ICV and the EUiA, emphasized the National Agreement’s potential in eliminating inequality and social divisions between recent immigrants and the wider Catalan population, particularly regarding access to public services and the right to vote. In an ICV statement from December 19, 2008 the party’s youth wing (Joves d’Esquerra Verda) spokesperson, Delfina Rossi, argued the National Agreement has brought about the “normalization of services” for all the inhabitants of Catalonia, as well as “recognizes the right of suffrage for migrants” in addition to other “basic rights” (Iniciativa per Catalunya Verds, 2008, December 19). Their EUiA partners issued a press release on December 19, 2008 in which the party’s leader Jordi Miralles, stated that the “the agreement is good news for Catalonia”, adding that it could be re-titled the “National Agreement for the Catalonia of today”, because it is “a commitment and a meeting point for guaranteeing the rights and duties of the 7.5 million Catalans” (Esquerra Unida i Alternativa, 2008, December 19). Miralles emphasized the broader inclusiveness fostered by the agreement, stating that “this is not an Agreement for immigrants, but an agreement for guaranteeing the rights and duties of all the men and women who live in Catalonia, regardless of where they were born” (ibid.). He added that the Agreement “means an advance in democracy” in that “after
five years of permanent residence, immigrants can vote in municipal elections” and because “it reduces the time to acquire citizenship” (ibid.).

Following the passage of the National Agreement, the tripartite coalition partners continued to celebrate it as a major achievement and to emphasize the broad degree of consensus it had fostered among various segments of Catalan society. In a PSC press release, their spokesperson, Consol Prados, spoke positively of the National Agreement, and how “the PSC has long claimed the need for consensus on immigration policy”, specifically, “[a] social and political consensus necessary to confront a strategic subject for the country” (Partit dels Socialistes de Catalunya, 2009, February 15a). In another press release, Prados again remarked how “the PSC always emphasized the need of arriving at an accord like this, with a broad social and political consensus” (Partit dels Socialistes de Catalunya, 2009, February 15b). In an ERC statement from February 18, 2009, party spokesperson Pere Bosch, emphasized the broader unifying potential of the National Agreement for Catalan society, in that it:

[S]ends all citizens, both those who arrived in recent years as well as those here for generations, a very clear message: the commitment to confront the challenges and the actions necessary to ensure good coexistence, better social cohesion and equality of opportunity for everyone (Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya, 2009, February 18).

The three main opposition parties remained divided in their overall assessment of the National Agreement, and continued to split along nationalist/unionist lines, with the CiU praising both the accord and their role in shaping its final content and provisions, and the PPC and Ciutadans condemning the Agreement and the parties that supported it. The CiU’s framing of the accord differed, however, from the framing strategies of the tripartite coalition partners,
placing less emphasis on the potential of the Agreement to serve egalitarian and democratic purposes, and more on its potential as a mechanism for fostering social cohesion and ultimately for Catalan nation-building (as well as highlighting the role of their party in shaping the accord) (Parlament de Catalunya, 2009, October 14, p. 56-57; Parlament de Catalunya, 2010, April 28, p. 16). A press statement by the party issued at the time of the Agreement’s signing emphasized various CiU amendments that had been included in the final version of the accord and which the party argued would strengthen Catalonia’s authority in the reception, settlement and integration of immigrants, including: 1) the Generalitat developing an integration accreditation system for newcomers, based on their knowledge of Catalan society, the labour system, and the Catalan language; 2) ensuring that the right to vote in municipal elections for newcomers is dependent on permanent residence status and positive evidence of their integration efforts; 3) the development of a Catalan universal reception service; and 4) granting municipalities the tools and knowledge necessary to combat problems pertaining to immigration and immigrant population, including substandard housing and rights abuses (Convergència i Unió, 2008, December 19). The party was also eager to justify their decision to be the only opposition party to sign the National Agreement on Immigration. To this end, the CiU emphasized that their support was dependent on the tripartite coalition’s willingness to incorporate the party’s concerns in the final version of the Agreement, but also stressed that their support for the Agreement was a reflection of the significance of immigration in the Catalan context, which the CiU described as “an essential change for the country, that will largely mark the collective future of Catalonia” and that therefore the “CiU, as a political Catalanist movement, should do everything possible to participate actively in the design of a pact on one of the principal challenges of the present and the future” (ibid.).
After its passage, the CiU frequently cited the importance of the National Agreement in their broader commentary on the management of immigration and integration matters in Catalonia. The party invoked the National Agreement in their comments surrounding the subsequent immigration legislation like the Catalan Law of Reception, arguing that it required the same careful debate and broad-based consensus as was granted to the National Agreement on Immigration, and insisted that the new law be designed in accordance with the provisions of the National Agreement (Convergència i Unió, 2009, February 6). The CiU also continued to emphasize their support for the National Agreement on Immigration as evidence of the seriousness that they granted to immigration, and argued that their role as the sole opposition party to support the agreement was proof that they placed the proper management of immigration/integration above everyday partisan competition (Convergència i Unió, 2010, March 16).

For those parties that remained outside the National Agreement, the Partit Popular de Catalunya (PPC) and the Ciutadans (Cs) various explanations were given for their abstention or opposition, generally centring on the ineffectiveness of the Agreement at addressing the immigration challenges facing Catalonia or because of a perceived “nationalist” bias to the Agreement. On the day of the signing, the PPC released a statement drawing on comments by their leader Alicia Sánchez-Camacho in which the National Agreement was characterized as “a lost opportunity” one that “sadly, will become worthless because it does not address the real immigration situation” in Catalonia (Partit Popular de Catalunya, 2008, December 19). Similarly, in a Ciutadans public statement from December 18, 2008, their parliamentary spokesperson Antonio Robles argued that “the supposed pact on immigration” was “drawn from
a sovereignist conception of Catalonia” that reflected its proponents’ “disaffection with Spain”, and emphasized that “the Ciutadans always oppose and denounce such plans” (Ciutadans, 2008, December 18).

The two parties both argued that they opposed the accord because certain provisions represented an intrusion by the Generalitat into the jurisdictional authority of other levels of government. The PPC argued that the National Agreement “established a series of rights” for immigrants, including rights in relation to issues that are outside the jurisdictional scope of the Catalan Generalitat such the “the vote or nationality”, as well as cautioned that the Agreement makes “little reference to necessary obligations” that are expected of newcomers (Partit Popular de Catalunya, 2008, December 19). A Ciutadans spokesperson, similarly argued that the National Agreement would lead the Generalitat to intrude in the jurisdictional responsibilities of the state and municipal levels of government, including “the capacity to grant citizenship and the setting of requirements to access it, access to public office, the right to vote” as well as European level jurisdictional responsibilities like “the direction and management of family reunification” (Ciutadans, 2008, December 18).

The two unionist parties also justified their opposition to the Agreement because of what they perceived as the privileged status that the accord bestowed on the Catalan language within its integration framework and its discriminatory attitude towards Castilian. The PPC, for example, argued that the integration responsibilities expected of newcomers in the National Agreement “is limited to learning Catalan”, with the added effect of “relegating Castilian to an optional language” within the integration process (Partit Popular de Catalunya, 2008, December 19). The party contended that the exclusion of Castilian from the integration process was a
serious error, and noted that “[f]or the sake of immigrants themselves, we need training in both languages in conditions of equality because, once in Spain, immigrants have freedom of mobility to all the autonomous communities and the Schengen zone” (ibid.). In the Ciutadan statement, meanwhile, the party’s spokesperson argued that the National Agreement “has established the exclusion of Castilian in the reception plans and imposes Catalan as the sole language of reception” (Ciutadans, 2008, December 18). The Ciutadan statement also criticized what they regarded as the broader nationalist goals of the National Agreement, and argued that it “is designed in order to construct a nation, therefore, the immigrant is taken as a thing, to enlist and educate in the supposed sovereignist values in the cultural, linguistic and political plane” (ibid.). The Agreement’s provisions regarding the acquisition of citizenship, the party argued, were indicative of these nationalist goals, granting the Generalitat the authority “to screen and educate all those assimilated immigrants in order to make them part of their national cause” (ibid.).

In the aftermath of the signing, the PPC and Ciutadans continued to criticize the National Agreement on Immigration and propose alternative immigration strategies. Unionist criticism continued to centre on specific themes, namely, the overall ineffectiveness of the National Agreement at responding to what they regarded as the region’s “real” immigration challenges (such as irregular migration), and the Catalan nationalist goals that underlined the Agreement and dictated its policy provisions, particularly regarding the expanded role of the Generalitat and the promotion of the Catalan language (Comissió de Benestar i Immigració, 2009, July 14, p. 25). Regarding the question of the Agreement’s effectiveness, the PPC leader, Alicia Sánchez-Camacho repeatedly characterized the National Agreement on Immigration as “worthless” and incapable of addressing the region’s immigration challenges. Sánchez-Camacho and the PPC
coupled their criticism of the National Agreement with broader comments on the need to combat illegal immigration in Catalonia and Spain. In a PPC press statement from January 2010, for example, Sánchez-Camacho argued that:

[The National Agreement on Immigration is worthless and has not served for integrating immigration nor prevented illegal immigration, it has created more ghettos and marginality. For this reason, we propose legal reforms to the [Spanish] Congress of Deputies for unifying criteria and to apply with rigour the laws to prevent illegal immigration (Partit Popular de Catalunya, 2010, January 16).

Sánchez-Camacho further emphasized the key role of the central government in managing immigration and integration in the Spanish/Catalan context and the superior resources that the Spanish state can bring to bear compared to the Catalan Generalitat. Accordingly, she stressed that “the best manner of defending legal immigration and integrate it is to prevent illegal immigration with all the state’s legal instruments” (ibid.). She similarly criticized the outcomes of the immigration process in Catalonia echoing a concern from the party’s criticism of the National Agreement at the time of its signing, that Catalonia is overly focused on “speaking of the rights of immigrant and not of their obligations” thereby preventing “true social integration from legal immigration” (ibid.).

The Ciutadans meanwhile produced an extensive official critique of the National Agreement written in Castilian. The piece serves as an in-depth analysis of the broader objectives and key provisions of the National Agreement as well as a justification of the Ciutadans’ opposition to it, which is grounded in both an ideological opposition to the Agreement’s “nationalist” objectives as well as the argument that the Agreement is unable to respond to the “real” immigration problems facing the region:
The Cs have rejected [the National Agreement on Immigration] because it establishes unacceptable conditions for the acquisition of the rights of citizenship, and because it instrumentalizes the phenomenon of immigration for the service of nation building in Catalonia. On the other hand, this plan is not a solution to the problems caused by population growth, as its priority is not on expanding and improving basic public services, but on creating an immigration policy at the margins of the State, that restricts freedoms and labour mobility (Ciutadans, 2009, p. 2).

Echoing their critique of the National Agreement at the time of its signing in which they argued the Agreement turned immigrants into tools for Catalan nation building, the Ciutadans attacked multiple provisions of the Agreement that they regard as “instrumentalizing” immigrants for nationalist ends. The party criticized the Agreement’s definition of immigrants as “people arriving from everywhere”, which they argued “consider[s] as immigrants any person not born in Catalonia, whether or not they are foreign”, to the effect that people moving to Catalonia from other parts of Spain are also considered “immigrants” under the Agreement’s framework (ibid., p. 3). The National Agreement’s provisions regarding “social cohesion” and the construction of a “common public culture” also came under criticism for their nationalist objectives, with the Ciutadans arguing:

Article 25 establishes that the goal of the cohesion policies is “the national project continues to be the reference point with which the people who live and work in Catalonia commit”. Here not only is assumed that all the population of Catalonia is committed to the nationalist project, which is clearly wrong, but demands from everyone who wants to settle in Catalonia that they accept the duty to commit to this project in exchange for effective integration, in other words, in exchange for not being treated as a second class citizen. Thus, the Agreement intends to impose a nation-building project that most Catalans do not share, and therefore excludes. This blackmail intended to subdue citizens is made in the name of their integration in a “common public culture”, an expression that is repeated more than twenty times (ibid.).
The Ciutadans also attacked what they regarded as “[r]ights in exchange for integration” in terms of the emphasis that the National Agreement’s “common public culture” places on integration into the Catalan language at the expense, in their view, of the rights of Castilian-speaking newcomers to Catalonia:

[T]he wording of the text makes it very clear that “integration” is understood here as nationalist indoctrination. [...] It is established that the vehicular language of reception is Catalan and the reception service guarantees first learning the Catalan language (Measure 24). Castilian is not considered in any way a common language and only is taught to those persons that require it, provided they demonstrate linguistic competency in Catalan (Article 163) (ibid.).

The party’s critical attitude toward the National Agreement is echoed in an opinion piece by Ciutadan spokesperson José Domingo that characterized the “national consensus” behind the Agreement as being limited to socialist and pro-independence parties and like-minded immigrant associations, as well as attacked the Agreement’s language provisions:

[T]o define Catalan as “vehicular language of reception”, knowing that thousands of foreigners who have Spanish as their maternal language find work and hospitality in our land. This language allows them to communicate with the rest of the population, with the exception of a small number of obstinate people that strive to make them see that they will only be welcome if they speak Catalan (Ciutadans, 2008, December 25).

Domingo also condemned the National Agreement’s provisions as merely a disguised form of exclusivist or ethnic nationalism, stressing that in spite of the efforts of the Agreement’s signatories to characterize its provisions as “progressive”, that they are ultimately similar to “reactionary [immigration] measures” employed in other European settings like “Padania, Austria or Flanders’ (ibid.). In this respect, the Ciutadans portrayed the National Agreement as being retrograde and out of touch with the reality of contemporary transnational migration and
the global economy, and therefore contended that its linguistic provisions were designed to make life “more difficult” for migrants in terms of “their life and mobility” (ibid.).

Conclusion

Catalonia represents a distinct political environment within the Spanish state, where ideology, nationalism, language and historical grievances intersect to create a complex party system composed of leftist, centrist and rightist parties, which are also nationalist, Catalanist or unionist in outlook. Such partisan complexity is compounded by an electoral system that makes single-party majority governments relatively rare, necessitating complex (and sometimes, unlikely) inter-party coalitions and alliances. Catalonia’s status as an immigrant-receiving region and questions surrounding how to integrate its diverse immigrant population effectively, add extra levels of complexity to an already unpredictable and potentially fractious political system. The views of the different parties regarding the relationship between immigration and Catalan identity, the powers of the Catalan government relative to Spain in the immigration field, the place of immigrants in Catalan society, and the terms of what constitutes “successful” integration for immigrants, have differed considerably, as the parties have attempted to balance Catalonia’s immigration reality with their ideological perspectives on broader socio-economic divisions and on Catalonia’s status within the Spanish state. In spite of past efforts to forge inter-

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50 Other criticisms included allegations that the National Agreement was not universal in its applications, with another Ciutadan opinion piece contending that the Agreement “is only for poor people” and that wealthy/celebrity immigrants to Catalonia, like the Argentine footballer Lionel Messi, will not be expected to abide by the Catalan language provisions of the agreement (Ciutadans, 2008, December 21).
party consensus on the issues of immigration and integration, dissonant voices have persisted, and the issues have remained politicized.

In this respect, the political and inter-party discourse surrounding the National Agreement on Immigration demonstrates the continued politicization of immigration as an issue in Catalonia and its numerous connections to broader debates over Catalan nationalism and self-government. The Agreement emerged from an environment in which the demographic realities of immigration had pushed it to the top of the political agenda, and where the various parties were all united in a broad consensus that immigration represented a significant “challenge” for the region that required an aggressive government response. Any semblance of unity on this issue broke down, however, once specific solutions were proposed with the parties dividing first on their assessment on whether or not the National Agreement on Immigration represented an effective response to the challenge of immigration, and then dividing once again in their rationales for supporting or opposing the accord (rationales that ultimately were shaped by the ideological outlooks of the different parties).

The major Catalan political parties were consistent in their support or criticism of the National Agreement throughout its negotiation and signing, as well as in its aftermath. The signatory parties, PSC, ERC, ICV-EUiA, and CiU, all recognized the need for aggressive action on the part of the Catalan Generalitat in the immigration field in the lead-up to the negotiations (with the PSC and ERC calling for an inter-party immigration accord as early as 2006), and all framed the National Agreement as a successful exercise in gauging public concerns towards immigration and in forging an effective “consensus” on how to respond to these concerns. On one level, the support of these four parties for the National Agreement and an expanded role for
the Catalan Generalitat in the immigration and integration realm is understandable, considering their relationship to the regional cleavage in Catalan politics and their role as voices for Catalanism (PSC & ICV-EUiA) or Catalan nationalism (CiU & ERC), as well as their role as supporters of greater Catalan autonomy within Spain (PSC, CiU, ICV-EUiA) or of Catalan independence (ERC). The divergent rationales that the different parties offered for supporting the accord, however, reflect partisan and economic ideological differences between the four, with the left-wing tripartite coalition partners (in particular, the ERC and ICV-EUiA) emphasizing the potential of the National Agreement at fostering social and political equality between newcomers and the existing Catalan population, and the centre-right CiU expressing greater concern with fostering social cohesion and ensuring that immigrants are integrating “properly” into Catalan society in terms of respecting its language and norms.

The two other larger parties with representation in the Catalan parliament (PPC and Ciutadans) were also consistent in their skepticism or outright opposition to the National Agreement, arguing throughout that the Agreement would be ineffective at addressing the immigration-related challenges facing the region. The unionist stance of both parties served as the main foundation for their opposition, and reflected their broader opposition to expanding the power of the Catalan Generalitat relative to the Spanish state. This Spanish unionist stance is evident in their mutual framing of the Spanish level of government as the proper level to be managing immigration matters in Spain, and their framing of the National Agreement as an unwelcome intrusion by the Catalan Generalitat into the immigration realm. Spanish unionism and anti-Catalan nationalism also framed their opposition to the linguistic integration provisions of the National Agreement, opposition that was most pronounced in the case of the Ciutadans
which repeatedly framed the National Agreement as “sovereignist” in its objectives and
discriminatory in its treatment of Castilian-speaking migrants. Ultimately, the statements and
criticisms by these parties are most revealing of the dissensus that the National Agreement
generated in Catalan politics, and how the Generalitat’s attempts at fostering an enduring
political consensus on immigration matters ultimately failed to reconcile the older regional
cleavage in Catalan politics over Catalonia’s relationship with the Spanish state, a point that will
be explored further in the following chapter.
Conclusion

Catalonia’s 2008 National Agreement on Immigration represented a major achievement on the part of the diverse collection of expert consultants, public participants, as well as political and civil society actors that drafted, debated, and negotiated the accord. The Agreement was a significant achievement on a number of levels, and it provides an interesting point of juxtaposition with a number of broader political phenomena in both Catalonia and the wider world, as well as with existing academic literature on the relationship between minority nationalism and immigration.

At the broader thematic level, the National Agreement on Immigration represented both an example of the complex relationship between minority nationalism and immigration highlighted by scholars like Carens, Kymlicka, Keating and Zapata-Barrero in recent years, and an attempt by a minority nation to preserve, adapt and promote its sense of national identity (and the key linguistic characteristics associated with it) within a society that has become increasingly diverse. At the case level, the National Agreement provides insights into the evolution of Catalan nationalism and the region’s struggle for greater political autonomy and self-determination, particularly in the immigration and integration realms. Specifically, the National Agreement represented both a continuation of Catalonia’s existing policies and practices in the immigration field, but also an attempt to expand and intensify the region’s power and role in the reception, settlement and integration of newcomers in Catalan society. Further, the National Agreement’s introduction at a time of profound economic, demographic and political change for Catalonia, Spain and Europe, allowed for an examination of how well the vision of Catalonia as an open and inclusive immigrant-receiving society has endured in recent years in response to
economic insecurity, unemployment, emigration, xenophobia and rising secessionist sentiment.

Finally, at the political actor level, the National Agreement on Immigration allowed for analysis of the politicization of immigration in the Catalan context, and the complex attitudes and framing strategies articulated by Catalonia’s main political parties, particularly as they related to the broader territorial cleavage within Catalan politics between Catalan nationalism and Spanish unionism. This chapter explores each of these levels, and the research questions associated with them, before providing some closing observations on the National Agreement on Immigration.

**Thematic level: Relationship between minority nationalism and immigration**

The Catalan experience reveals several points of intersection with the wider academic literature and debates surrounding minority nationalism and immigration, particularly surrounding the ability of transnational migration to challenge or problematize national identities, the complicated and contested role of language in relation to minority nationalist integration projects, the impact of historical and structural factors on minority nationalist responses to immigration, and the complex relationships between minority nationalism, regional self-government and immigration/integration policy; each point is explored in turn in the following sections.

**Nationalism, migration, and the complex challenges for minority nations like Catalonia**

This dissertation has approached the subject of nations and the collective sense of “nation-ness” or “national identity” from two (somewhat opposing) viewpoints, emphasizing both the historical significance, institutional entrenchment, and enduring character of nations and popular identification with nations, but also their socially constructed character and potential for
internal contestation, debate and re-definition in response to changing societal dynamics and political discourse. Immigration and its wider relationship with nationalism provide an important example of this dual/conflicting understanding of nations and the national identities associated with them. On one level, immigration (and the social and cultural diversity that generally accompanies immigration) acts as a generator of internal contestation within a national community, as the influx of newcomers and the changing characteristics of a society invariably force a community to re-assess what constitutes the “nation” and what it entails to belong to the “nation”. However, immigration also can act as an impetus for the strengthening of national identities and for political mobilization, as it forces a national community to either re-assert or re-define the key characteristics of national belonging to either include or exclude the new diversity present within their society, as well as forces it to strengthen the power of the national state to better control the influx of newcomers and their integration within national society.

As noted in Chapter One, minority nations find themselves in a complicated position relative to immigration due to their pre-existing minority status within a larger multinational polity and their limited powers of self-government in the immigration realm relative to the central government of the multinational state. In response, as scholars like Barker, Carens, Kymlicka, Zapata-Barrero, and Keating and McGarry have noted, certain minority nations have attempted both to strengthen their powers of self-government in the immigration and integration realm, as well as adjust their understandings of national identity and belonging to include the diverse array of newcomers living within their societies while simultaneously attempting to preserve the idea that they represent distinct national communities.

Catalonia’s efforts in the immigration realm in recent decades reflect this complex dynamic among minority nationalism, immigration, and regional self-government, where
Catalonia’s efforts to respond to the growing number of immigrants settling in the region has led to attempts to secure greater political autonomy in immigration matters from the Spanish state, as well as attempts to adapt Catalan nationalism to the changing demographic conditions in Catalonia by articulating what Kymlicka and other scholars refer to as a “liberal-inclusive” sense of Catalan national identity. As discussed in Chapter Three, since the 1980s, when the newly restored Catalan Generalitat first began to articulate policies to “integrate” the region’s large number of “internal migrants” from the rest of Spain, Catalonia has articulated what its political leaders have framed as a civic conception of national identity, one that is open to immigration and diversity but that expects newcomers to integrate into a common Catalan-speaking national community. It is this linguistic component to the Catalan nationalist project, however, that makes it controversial in certain political circles and opens it to criticism, as discussed in the following section.

Fostering inclusiveness while promoting diversity: The challenge of linguistic integration

The Catalan integration model reflects many of the features of the Québécois interculturalism model, with its liberal emphasis on legal and political equality between newcomers and the existing population, its emphasis on democratic civic participation by all citizens regardless of place of origin, and its inclusive acceptance of most forms of cultural, social, linguistic and religious diversity, while at the same time obliging newcomers to abide by certain prescribed norms and practices (particularly regarding language). Specifically, the model frames the Catalan language as the common linguistic medium of public life and one of the primary social bonds among Catalan citizens. To its proponents, this model represents an effective compromise between the desire among nationalists and Catalanists to make Catalonia
open and inclusive to the diverse newcomers settling within its borders while also preserving the linguistic (and by extension national) distinctiveness of the region. To its unionist opponents, however, the model’s active promotion of the Catalan language within public life makes it discriminatory against the region’s large Castilian-speaking population, leading to accusations that the Catalan immigration/integration model is fundamentally illiberal and a manifestation of an exclusivist/ethnic form of nationalism.

This last point regarding the role of the Catalan language in the integration model is significant in that it reveals that in spite of efforts by nationalist political actors (and by various scholarly accounts of minority nationalism) to frame minority nationalist integration policies like the one in Catalonia as civic and inclusive, the linguistic foundation of these integration projects continues to serve as a focal point for criticism by opponents of minority nationalism. Specifically, minority nationalist language policies continue to serve as a means for critics to characterize minority nationalism as a form of “ethnic nationalism” that engages in “illiberal” integration policies.

This issue reflects the amorphous role of language as a component of identity, in particular, the role of language in minority nationalist integration projects and the broader question of whether language can act as both the foundation of minority national distinctiveness and the foundation of broader civic inclusiveness. As the Catalan case reveals, within broader minority nationalist struggles, proponents of minority nationalism are able to frame the minority national language as a necessary but learned component of political identity, one that people may not possess when they first attempt to join a political community, but that they can be socialized and educated into. In this perspective, the minority national language represents a “civic value” of citizenship and national belonging, it is the public medium in which civic participation and
discourse takes place and therefore to integrate newcomers into the minority national language is to include them into the political life of the minority nation. Similarly, from the perspective of minority nationalists, the minority national language operates along the same level as other civic commitments to the rule of law, to democracy and to individual rights and freedoms, though unlike these more abstract civic values that transcend different societies (at least in the Western world), the civic commitment to the minority national language is historically/culturally-rooted and contextually specific to the minority nation in question. In this perspective, the role that language plays in the civic life of the minority nation mirrors the role that language plays in the context of a sovereign state, whereby one language (or more) invariably enjoys official recognition and status in public interactions and where it is expected that recent immigrants to the sovereign state should be integrated into this official public language as a part of their broader process of naturalization and as a means of ensuring their inclusion in the state’s political, economic and social life.

It is this linguistic/contextual foundation to minority nationalist projects, however, that also allows other political actors (namely, critics of minority nationalism) to frame the minority national language as an ascribed and exclusive characteristic. In the perspective of these critics, language operates on a level that is closer to ethnicity or culture in that people are born and raised into a particular language group, which allows minority nationalists to use language as a point of division within society between the “native-born”/“native-speaking” population and the “immigrant”/“non-native speaking” population. The minority national language, according to these critics, therefore either serves as an arbitrary division within society between who “belongs” and who “does not belong” to the minority nation or the ability to speak the language serves as an unreasonable and onerous requirement to membership in the minority nation that is
imposed on newcomers by minority nationalists. Specifically, in the Catalan case, opponents of minority nationalism frame linguistic integration into the Catalan language as an unnecessary and illiberal imposition on newcomers to the region, with some even advocating that the Catalan linguistic normalization policy has an even deeper political purpose of “indoctrinating” newcomers in favour of the goals of Catalan nationalism as well as indoctrinating them against the Spanish state and the Castilian language.

Catalonia therefore shares many similarities with other minority nations (in particular Quebec) that have attempted to secure greater political autonomy in the immigration realm and to re-define the terms of national identity to incorporate the growing diversity within their societies (including sharing the traditional criticisms of these minority nationalist projects and the accusations that their commitments to linguistic distinctiveness are inherently illiberal and exclusivist). In this respect, Catalonia is part of a broader trend among minority nations identified by scholars like Kymlicka to persevere and endure in the face of modernization and globalization, as well as adapt in the face of changing social and political circumstances, with Catalan nationalists demonstrating a willingness to re-define understandings of the national community in response to the demographic changes taking place within their society and to promote a civic and inclusive understanding of Catalan citizenship and national belonging while simultaneously attempting to preserve the linguistic foundation of their national distinctiveness.

**Minority nationalist immigration models as products of their particular multinational contexts**

The Catalan nationalist struggle, as Chapters Two and Three demonstrated, has been heavily influenced by the historical development of the Spanish state and its ambivalent attitudes towards the demands of minority nationalist movements within its borders (alternating between
de-centralizing accommodation and centralizing repression). It is therefore important to understand the Catalan immigration/integration model as not simply a reflection of wider trends that are common to other minority nations in the Western world, but also to recognize that the model is a by-product of Catalonia’s particular historical-structural context, namely, how it has been shaped by the region’s past minority nationalist struggles and how it represents a response to earlier periods of political repression by the Spanish state towards Catalonia. In particular, the main features of the Catalan immigration model, with its emphasis on the integration of newcomers into the Catalan language, were developed in response to the demographic and political legacies of Francoist Spain, when the region experienced significant Castilian-speaking migration from the rest of Spain and the Catalan language was officially marginalized by the central government in order to foster a monolingual Castilian-speaking society. The idea of Catalonia as a minority nation within Spain with its own distinct national language and that has experienced a historical legacy of structural discrimination all act as foundational assumptions of the Catalan immigration/integration model, as well as political justifications for the Generalitat’s active promotion of the Catalan language in public life and as the main language of immigrant integration (or of immigrant “assimilation” according to critics of the model).

The Catalan model should also be understood as having developed in response to the dynamics of the wider system of multi-level governance that Catalonia operates within, and in which the Spanish and European levels exercise considerably more power than the Catalan Generalitat. Catalonia’s status as an autonomous community and “historic nationality” within Spain coupled with its status as a “region” within the European Union, has both shaped and constrained the development of the Catalan immigration model. Its status as an economically vibrant region within Spain and the European Union facilitated the influx of significant waves of
internal and external immigrants to Catalonia in recent decades, forcing the region to adapt its integration programs and public services to a growing and increasingly diverse population. Similarly, immigration served as an impetus for Catalonia to challenge the existing system of multi-level governance, as the region attempted to adapt to its status as a major destination point for immigrant settlement by seeking greater authority in immigration matters from the Spanish government.

Immigration therefore has operated in a complex and dynamic relationship with the modern development of Catalan nationalism and the struggle for Catalan self-government/self-determination within Spain and the European Union, one that is mutually constitutive in which Catalan nationalism and the Catalan self-determination struggle has influenced immigration discourse and policy, and immigration discourse and policy has influenced Catalan nationalism and its relationship with the Spanish state. It has acted as the impetus for both a re-examination, adaptation, and “re-conceptualization” (to draw on Zapata-Barrero’s terminology) of Catalan nationalism and national identity as the Catalan population has become increasingly mobile and diverse, but also has acted as the impetus for a re-affirmation of certain national traits that are distinct to Catalonia but that newcomers can also share and participate in, namely, the Catalan language. Similarly, the subjects of immigration and integration have both been shaped by the broader dynamics of Catalonia’s nationalist struggles for self-determination and greater political autonomy within Spain and Europe, as well as actively shaped these nationalist struggles, whereby the Catalan Generalitat’s authority in the immigration and integration fields have become key points of intergovernmental contestation between Catalonia and Spain in recent years.
Ultimately, as a reflection of the broader relational dynamic between minority nationalism and transnational migration, the Catalan experience demonstrates how immigration invariably complicates but does not necessarily undermine the claims and objectives of minority nationalists. Immigration has strengthened Catalonia’s claims for self-determination and allowed nationalists to expand the scope of their political ambitions. Immigration (and specifically the desire to control or shape immigration flows and integration outcomes) continues to serve as a mobilizing force for nationalists, and in the Catalan case, has motivated nationalists to attempt to maximize political autonomy in the immigration realm and to broaden official narratives and popular understandings of Catalan national identity to include newcomers. In this respect, the 2008 National Agreement on Immigration represents an important by-product of this complex relationship between immigration, nationalism and the struggle for self-government in the Catalan context. Specifically, I contend that the Agreement represented a major attempt by Catalonia’s political leaders and key civil society actors to adapt Catalan nationalism and Catalonia’s powers of self-government to the realities and challenges of contemporary transnational migration patterns, namely: 1) the challenge of adapting a sense of minority nationhood and national identity to the demographic reality of an increasingly diverse society; and 2) the challenge of securing greater political authority in the immigration/integration policy realm from the larger multinational state. How the signatories attempted to address these challenges through the National Agreement on Immigration is explored in detail in the following section.
Case level: The National Agreement and the Catalan integration model

Drawing on the ideas of Carens and Zapata-Barrero, the dissertation’s analysis of the content, themes and framing strategies employed in the National Agreement on Immigration (and in subsequent immigration plans) is significant in terms of what it reveals about the character and values of contemporary Catalan nationalism, as well as how the various political and civil society signatories to the Agreement attempted to adapt or “re-conceptualize” Catalan nationalism in response to the region’s growing social diversity. In particular, the frame analysis revealed attempts to build on (but improve) the region’s existing integration framework in order to articulate an inclusive and socially cohesive Catalan nation that was autonomous but politically integrated within Spain and Europe, as well as efforts to adapt the National Agreement (and by extension official and popular understandings of the Catalan national community) to new political and demographic realities (including an increasingly de-territorialized understanding of the Catalan nation).

The National Agreement as a continuation and adaptation of the Catalan integration model

The National Agreement on Immigration, as Chapter Four discussed, represented both a continuation and an amplification of the immigration/integration model that the Catalan Generalitat had developed since the 1980s. As in the past, the National Agreement framed Catalonia as a “country of immigration” both due to its lengthy history of receiving migrants from other parts of Spain, and due to its status in recent years as a primary destination point for immigrants from abroad. The key points of difference between the Agreement and previous Generalitat policy, however, were the National Agreement’s repeated assertions that the scope and impact of immigration to Catalonia has intensified qualitatively and quantitatively in the 21st
century, and its recommendations that Catalonia similarly intensify the scope of its immigration and integration policy and practices. It accordingly characterized “immigration” as a significant demographic phenomenon and “challenge” for Catalonia, one that must be managed effectively for both the benefit of immigrants and the wider Catalan population. The Agreement also framed its three “lines” as an official response to major public concerns surrounding the influx of immigrants, rising demand on public services and growing social diversity. It also attempted to re-situate these public concerns surrounding immigration towards producing positive outcomes for Catalonia as a whole, as reflected in the titles of the three “lines” of the National Agreement: “management of migratory flows and access to the job market”, “adapting public services to a diverse society”, and “integration of newcomers in a common public culture”. In this respect, the National Agreement framed immigration and immigrants as challenges that Catalonia must aggressively address, but also framed them as opportunities to strengthen the Catalan Generalitat and its powers of self-government in the interests of fostering labour mobility and economic growth, universal public services, and social cohesiveness within Catalonia.

The National Agreement and Catalonia’s broader experience of securing autonomy in the immigration field represent an interesting point of comparison with broader minority nationalist immigration projects, which as Kymlicka explains, have generally been motivated by a desire to control both the “volume of immigration” and the “terms of integration” for immigrants into the minority national community. As Chapter Three reveals, Catalonia has struggled to secure autonomy over either aspect of the immigration process from the Spanish government, with the region making limited gains over controlling the volume of immigration into Catalonia, and more substantive – though still narrow – gains in shaping integration outcomes (particularly regarding linguistic integration). The content of the National Agreement further entrenches this
pattern of limited Catalan control over the volume of immigration, and greater Catalan control over the terms of integration. Specifically, the Agreement frames the flow of the immigrants into Catalonia as a demographic phenomenon that exists largely outside of the Generalitat’s direct control, and contends that the most that Catalonia can do to adapt to this demographic phenomenon is simply to attempt to control the effects of immigration on Catalan society by improving the settlement and integration outcomes of newcomers within Catalonia.

**Framing Catalonia as a cohesive and inclusive nation within Spain and Europe**

Echoing past Catalan integration policy, the National Agreement framed the Catalan “nation” as a liberal-inclusive and civic one, which respects the cultural, linguistic, and religious diversity of Catalonia’s inhabitants, but where the Catalan language, coupled with shared citizenship rights and responsibilities, ultimately take priority and work to bind the diverse elements of Catalan society together. The Agreement at numerous points emphasized the need for “social cohesiveness” and the need to eliminate xenophobic and racist attitudes within Catalan society. It similarly strived to eliminate institutional differentiation between immigrants and the established population with its emphasis on newcomers sharing the same rights (including the right to vote), the same economic opportunities, and the same level of access to public services as that of the rest of the Catalan population. The concept of the “common public culture” in which the Catalan language possesses a privileged status as the “common public language” served as the centrepiece of this liberal-inclusive vision of the Catalan nation and of Catalan citizenship within the National Agreement, and ultimately this concept represented the Agreement’s most important contribution to the existing Catalan integration model. The Agreement’s framing of the “common public culture” was explicitly egalitarian in its goals, as
well as designed to ameliorate existing social/structural inequalities based on gender and age. Within this framework, the emphasis that the National Agreement placed on the Catalan language represented a continuation (but also intensification) of past Catalan language and integration policy, which conceptualized Catalan as the common medium for public communication and that emphasized that all citizens have both the right and the obligation to participate within this common Catalan-speaking medium. In this regard, the notion of a common public culture grounded in the Catalan language represented a strengthening of the policy of “linguistic normalization” that has characterized Catalan education and integration policy and served as an important foundation to the official civic image of the Catalan national community.

In terms of broader implications for Catalan self-government and the Catalan-Spanish relationship, the language of the Agreement was more ambiguous. In spite of its support by prominent nationalist and secessionist parties, the drafters of the National Agreement largely respected the existing status of the Catalan Generalitat within the framework of both the Spanish state and the European Union, and attempted to abide by the constitutional rules and treaty provisions of these two higher levels of government. Nonetheless, the Agreement did envision an expanded role for the Catalan Generalitat within the immigration realm. Accordingly, and in spite of the Agreement’s recognition of the intergovernmental complexity surrounding immigration policy in the Catalan context, it framed the Catalan Generalitat as the prominent player in the immigration field, as well as framed the subject of immigration largely in reference to Catalan concerns and needs rather than the needs and concerns of either Spain or Europe. In this respect, the overall language of the Agreement was “autonomist” in outlook, and attempted to maximize Catalonia’s authority and influence within a wider system of multi-level governance.
Adapting the National Agreement (and its vision of Catalonia) to changing realities

The decision by the various political and civil society signatories to the National Agreement to reach an accord on immigration matters in late 2008 proved problematic in the years that followed. The National Agreement, with its optimistic vision of Catalonia as an economic powerhouse attracting waves of migrants every year within a relatively stable political system, quickly became challenged by the economic downturn, the fiscal difficulties facing the Spanish government and the Catalan Generalitat, rising unemployment and emigration levels in Catalonia, the development of new far-right xenophobic movements, and the intensification of intergovernmental struggles between Catalonia and Madrid coupled with growing popular support for Catalan independence.

As discussed in Chapter Five, the Generalitat did not allow these changing conditions to alter its commitment to the National Agreement, its principles, or its prescriptions for Catalan self-government in the immigration realm. Subsequent government plans and reports maintained the emphasis on fostering an open and inclusive Catalan society grounded in common rights, responsibilities, and the Catalan language, and the National Agreement has remained a foundational document for subsequent Generalitat immigration initiatives. Nonetheless, this emphasis on continuity with the National Agreement has been paired with a practical recognition of the need for reform, in order to address conditions that have substantially altered since 2008. As noted above, the National Agreement could not predict the extent of the economic downturn that was beginning in 2008, nor could it predict some of the demographic and political
developments that have taken place since, in particular, the shifting migratory dynamics in the region due to rising emigration levels and the growing prospect of Catalonia’s secession from Spain. Accordingly, subsequent documents have argued for a re-assessment of Catalonia’s status as a “country of immigration” and a successful “host society” for newcomers in the light of recent developments.

While most of their recommendations do little to alter the liberal-inclusive vision of Catalan nationhood that the Generalitat has promoted for years and which the National Agreement continued and amplified through its concept of a “common public culture”, others have the potential to radically alter this vision. In particular, the new category of expatriate “Catalans abroad” introduced in the Citizenship and Migration Plan: Horizon 2016, creates several challenges for this liberal inclusive understanding of the Catalan nation. Through this new category, the territorially bounded concept of the Catalan nation (in which residence in Catalonia is what defines a “Catalan” – along with the associated rights and responsibilities) has been replaced with a more amorphous concept whereby people outside of Catalonia can be considered Catalan through a prior connection they have to the region. This development is significant and reveals certain inadequacies with existing theories of minority nationalism in relation to immigration. As noted in Chapter One, multiple scholars – including Carens, Keating, Kymlicka and Shafir – have emphasized the “liberal”, “inclusive” and “territorially bounded” understandings of nationhood that have been articulated by minority nations like Quebec, Catalonia and Scotland. According to these scholars, the territorial character of these nations is closely related to their liberal/inclusive understandings of nationhood, whereby minority nationhood is in part associated with individuals residing within a defined self-governing territory and is potentially open to anyone who moves into that defined territory – as
opposed to minority nationhood being associated with a non-territorial group of people that share certain ascribed characteristics (for example, a common ethnic origin).

The Catalan experience in recent years however has challenged the notion that Catalonia is a territorially bounded national entity, and more broadly suggests that the territorial understanding of minority nationhood fails to capture the increasingly transnational character of certain identity groups or communities. If the Catalan nation is increasingly being defined as a community that extends beyond the boundaries of Catalonia itself, this re-definition suggests that Catalan identity is becoming a transnational or “de-territorialized” phenomenon in which “being Catalan” can simply be based on some prior connection to the region (based on language, birth, past residency, and/or emotional connection), which has significant implications for what the Catalan nation represents. On one level, this new definition of Catalan national identity could be a broader and more inclusive form of identity, but also a weaker one that would be harder for Catalan nationalists to mobilize for political purposes. On another level, it has the potential to be a more exclusive form of national identity as the “prior connection” that individuals are supposed to have to Catalonia in order to be considered “Catalan”, could be defined by nationalists in narrower terms than it has been in the past. This new definition of Catalan national identity also raises interesting implications for the wider Catalan nationalist political project. Traditionally, Catalan nationalism (like other minority nationalist movements) has been motivated by the goal of maximizing political authority within a specific territory, a goal that becomes increasingly problematic when the Catalan national community extends beyond that territory and beyond the jurisdictional reach of the Catalan Generalitat.
Political actor level: The National Agreement and the politicization of immigration

The frame analysis of the political discourse in Chapter Six reveals that immigration serves as an important focal point for public debate and concern within Catalonia, one that extends beyond the elite level of the Catalan Generalitat, the bureaucracy and regional political parties, to the popular level and to various civil society and economic actors within the region. The chapter also reveals that in spite of nearly universal recognition that immigration represents a significant issue for Catalonia requiring some form of public response, the exact content of that response remains a point of division within Catalan politics. This division ultimately complicated any attempt to construct a national consensus on immigration, and revealed how minority nationalist efforts to develop a coherent and long-term response to immigration can be influenced (and undermined) by more immediate and practical political realities.

Intersection between the National Agreement and existing political cleavages in Catalonia

The National Agreement on Immigration represented a continuation of the attitudes of the major parties that have articulated immigration and integration policy in the Catalan context since the restoration of self-government, namely, the PSC-ERC-ICV-EUiA coalition and the CiU. As noted above, the terms of the National Agreement largely built on past policy initiatives and interdepartmental plans on immigration/integration matters rather than deviated from this earlier tradition. As in past immigration plans endorsed by both CiU governments and the tripartite coalition, issues like labour mobility, anti-discrimination measures, Catalan linguistic normalization and social cohesion were given priority in the text of the National Agreement, as
were efforts to strengthen the power of the Catalan Generalitat in the immigration/integration field relative to the Spanish government.

Public comments by the different parties, however, reflected important differences among them in terms of what they regarded as the Agreement’s most important provisions and its potential for Catalan society and Catalonia’s powers of self-government. For the left-wing tripartite parties, there was a greater emphasis on the National Agreement’s ability at improving democratic engagement and fostering social equality through its provisions on voting rights and universal access to public services. For these parties, and particularly the ICV-EUiA, the National Agreement’s vision of social cohesion was more about eliminating social inequality between poorer migrants and the wealthier established population as it was about fostering linguistic integration or improving labour mobility. For the centre-right nationalist CiU, in contrast, their amendments to the National Agreement demonstrated the party’s concern with the civic responsibilities associated with “being Catalan”, particularly, the ability and willingness of newcomers to integrate into the Catalan language. In this respect, the CiU’s attitude towards the National Agreement, in part, reflected their traditional “nation-building” understanding of immigration, integration, and language policy. The prominent role of political parties in developing the National Agreement reflects Barker’s observations about minority nationalist elites and their particular understandings of the nation and how they serve as influential factors in shaping immigration and integration policy, as well as reveals how immigration policy can change over time in relation to evolving (and contradictory) elitist/partisan understandings of the nation (for example, the conservative cultural nationalism of the CiU being paired in the text of the National Agreement with the leftist egalitarianism of the ERC and the ICV-EUiA).
The decisions by the PPC and the Ciutadans to remain outside of the National Agreement and their critical framing of the Agreement’s goals and provisions, meanwhile, represented a continuation of both parties’ opposition to the main goals of political Catalanism and Catalan nationalism in terms of securing greater self-government and national recognition for Catalonia within Spain, as well as in terms of promoting Catalan as the dominant public language of the region over Castilian. Important similarities and differences are evident in their respective lines of criticism towards the National Agreement. On one level, both parties attacked the National Agreement for its efforts to expand the powers of the Catalan Generalitat in the immigration/integration field relative to the Spanish state. Both the PPC and Ciutadans framed the National Agreement as an unjustified and unnecessary intrusion on the part of the Generalitat into the jurisdictional responsibilities of other levels of government, in particular the Spanish government. In this respect, the opposition of the two parties is consistent with their past attitudes surrounding Catalan self-government, in which they argued that the region already possessed sufficient autonomy and any effort to strengthen that autonomy would have the effect of weakening the unity of the Spanish state, something that neither the PPC nor the Ciutadans were willing to permit. The PPC’s comments regarding the superior resources that the Spanish government could exercise in the immigration field coupled with the Ciutadans’ allegations that the National Agreement originated from a “sovereignist” conception of Catalonia demonstrated the two parties’ shared conviction that the central government is the rightful leading actor in immigration matters in the Spanish context and that neither Catalonia nor the other autonomous communities should challenge the central government’s role.

Further, the two parties have drawn on their past opposition to Catalan linguistic normalization policy to criticize the integration provisions of the National Agreement,
particularly its conception of a “common public culture” in which Catalan represents the “common public language”. As in their past criticism of the language policy goals of Catalan nationalists, the PPC and Ciutadans framed the National Agreement’s efforts to promote the Catalan language as illiberal and divisive measures, and argued that they infringed on the rights of Catalonia’s Castilian-speakers and attempted to create a new “nationalist” public culture devoid of connections with the rest of Spain. These attitudes are evident in the PPC’s concerns that the National Agreement created integration standards (with its de-emphasis of the Castilian language) that impeded the flow of people between Catalonia and the rest of Spain, as well as the Ciutadans’ argument that under the National Agreement immigrants became a resource for assimilation (and more-or-less indoctrination) in the pursuit of broader Catalan nationalist objectives such as Catalan unilingualism and Catalonia’s secession from Spain. More broadly, they represented the continuation of an older narrative that has existed within academic and popular discourse that minority nationalism is inherently ethnic, exclusivist and discriminatory unlike the civic inclusive citizenship regimes of sovereign states, in which Spanish unionist voices repeatedly attempted to contrast what they framed as the exclusivist and illiberal goals of Catalan nationalism with the “culturally neutral” and inclusive/liberal senses of belonging articulated by the Spanish state and the European Union.

Ideological differences however, existed between the two unionist parties that led to different attitudes surrounding immigration and different prescriptions for addressing its side effects. The PPC, echoing the attitudes of their Spanish-wide counterparts the Partido Popular and other right-wing parties in Europe were far more concerned with the issue of irregular migration and continually drew a distinction between legal migrants and those who were in Spain unofficially for suspect and possibly criminal purposes. The Ciutadans, meanwhile,
shared many of the tripartite coalition’s commitments to fostering social equality and combating discrimination against immigrants. The main difference between the Ciutadans and the tripartite coalition, however, was that the former regarded the common rights that all Spanish citizens share under the Spanish constitution (and the European Union treaties) as representing the best guarantor of equality for both newcomers and established citizens within Catalonia.

The tension between the ideal and the reality of minority nationalist integration projects

Regardless of their similarities or differences, the opposition and criticism of these two parties represented an important source of dissensus to the supposed “national consensus” that had been constructed on immigration matters in 2008. In this respect, the National Agreement on Immigration ultimately produced the type of sub-state politicization and division that Hepburn and Zapata-Barrero argue is frequently associated with the decentralization of immigration and integration matters, in spite of the efforts by the Agreement’s signatories to prevent this type of politicization from happening in the Catalan context. Indeed, the final text of the National Agreement repeatedly framed itself as the product of a broad-based political and social consensus, and argued that its findings had popular legitimacy and input and should therefore serve as the foundation for the region’s activity in the immigration and integration fields for the near future. Similarly, the four signatory parties repeatedly framed the Agreement as an expression of the popular will of Catalans in order to justify their decisions to sign and support the accord. In this respect, the opposition of two major political parties to both the content and underlying principles of the National Agreement undermined its image as a “national consensus” for Catalonia and allowed the subject of immigration to remain a source of political debate. Their opposition was predictable, and indeed the nationalist/Catalanist premises that
underlie the National Agreement on Immigration likely prevented these two unionist parties from ever supporting the accord. Nonetheless, this unionist opposition is significant and has the potential to mobilize various elements of Catalan society against the terms of the National Agreement (or against the Catalan immigration/integration model more broadly) in the future, either by mobilizing Castilian-speakers against its Catalan language provisions or in the case of the PPC by fostering xenophobic and negative attitudes towards recent immigrants through the politicization of the issue of irregular immigration.

More broadly, the politicization of immigration in the Catalan context reveals an important tension that often arises between the “ideal” and the “reality” of minority nationalist integration projects. Specifically, the liberal-inclusive intentions of minority nationalists are frequently mediated or undermined by the pursuit of greater autonomy and the short-term pressures of partisan/electoral politics. As the experience with the National Agreement on Immigration demonstrates, nationalist leaders can devote considerable time and energy to coalition-building and fostering consensus around controversial political issues such as immigration, only for those measures to be immediately challenged and undermined by opponents of the minority nationalist project and by the every-day motivations and pressures of party/electoral politics. In this respect, the National Agreement is an example of minority nationalist ideals meeting the complicated realities of Catalonia’s ambiguous and frequently acrimonious relationship with the Spanish state. Specifically, the Agreement represented the Catalan nationalist ideals or goals of securing political primacy over immigration and integration matters and of fostering consensus and cohesion over immigration matters within an increasingly diverse society. However, these ideals and goals invariably ran up against the practical realities of a society that is deeply divided over Catalonia’s relationship with Spain, and a regional party
system that is shaped in large part by the territorial cleavage between Catalan nationalists, Catalanist moderates and Spanish unionists. In this respect, the National Agreement demonstrates how a political project designed to foster “national” inclusion and togetherness surrounding immigration within a minority national setting, can easily degenerate into another focal point for debate and division in the ongoing struggle between the supporters and opponents of minority nationalism.

**Final observations**

The National Agreement represented a bold attempt at fostering political, economic and social consensus on the invariably divisive topics of immigration and integration. Its provisions and scope were large and multi-faceted and attempted to provide an effective guide for the region for the next twenty years. Its vision of the Catalan nation, moreover, represented an ambitious attempt by various political and civil society actors to adapt or “re-conceptualize” Catalonia’s sense of national identity and national belonging to respond to the broader demographic and societal changes that the region had experienced in the past decade due to transnational migration. Nonetheless, various factors, both inside and outside the control of the signatories to the Agreement have affected its long-term viability.

From the beginning, Spanish unionist opponents of the National Agreement on Immigration have attempted to undermine its official image as an inclusive consensus-based accord that binds the diverse elements of Catalan society together, by characterizing it as a divisive and exclusivist Catalan nationalist project. At a broader level, however, the circumstances and premises that underlined the National Agreement have changed. While the
Agreement was designed in the context of a Catalonia with a relatively stable economy and rising immigration levels, these circumstances quickly altered. Instead, the economic crisis of recent years has sent immigration rates plummeting, emigration rates soaring and undercut the fiscal stability and financial resources of the Catalan Generalitat. Catalonia became an “emigrant producing region” with diminished capacity to respond to the demands of its population (either newcomer or established), and where xenophobic political movements have been on the rise in recent years.

All of these events demonstrate the challenges and perhaps the futility of attempting to construct a “public consensus” on an issue as complex and potentially divisive as immigration and related questions of integration, language and national identity. As the Catalan case demonstrates, simply securing agreement among all the major political actors is challenging enough, let alone expecting that the political, economic and social conditions that served to underline an agreement will endure into the long term. In the time between the signing of the National Agreement and the present day, the tripartite coalition was defeated and the CiU returned to power, key provisions of the 2006 Statute of Autonomy were struck down by the Spanish Constitutional Court, an economic downturn threatened the fiscal stability of the Spanish state, the Catalan government as well as the entire Eurozone, and the Catalan independence movement has grown from a marginal political force to a mass movement that has re-shaped the Catalan party system and poses a real challenge to the unity of the Spanish state. Understandably, the signatories to the National Agreement did not and could not foresee the majority of these changes in December 2008. In spite of the changing circumstances, however, the Generalitat and major political signatories continue to endorse the principles of the
Agreement and its liberal-inclusive vision of the Catalan nation (though the scope of that nation has problematically expanded in recent years to incorporate a growing number of economically-motivated expatriate “Catalans abroad” challenging the conventional image of the Catalan nation and minority nations in general as territorially bounded entities).

The National Agreement was also significant in that on numerous levels it represented the encapsulation of a broader minority nationalist self-determination struggle, one that prompted political debate within the minority nation itself over the terms of Catalan identity and nationhood, as well as tied into an ongoing intergovernmental struggle between the minority nation and its larger multinational state over the authority of the Catalan Generalitat within Spain. The political debate within Catalonia over the National Agreement quickly intersected with and reinforced the broader territorial cleavage in Catalan politics. The main Catalan nationalist parties (the CiU and ERC) and their Catalanist counterparts (the PSC and ICV-EUiA) endorsed its vision of Catalonia; the Spanish unionist parties (the PPC and Ciutadans) rejected it on largely anti-Catalan nationalist grounds. Proponents framed the Agreement in the same vein as other liberal inclusive re-imaginings of the minority nation in the Western world – with an emphasis on political and legal equality, common rights and civic responsibilities, coupled with a strong commitment to the preservation of the distinct characteristics of Catalan nationhood, namely the Catalan language. Opponents, by contrast, framed the Agreement as an example of the exclusivist and discriminatory character of nationalism broadly and of Catalan nationalism in particular, one that treated immigrants as raw material for nationalist “indoctrination” and that treated Castilian speakers as outsiders within Catalan public life. These same critics also condemned the National Agreement for indirectly creating boundaries between Catalonia and the
rest of Spain, and for fostering a Catalan public culture that was devoid of Spanish/Castilian influences.

At a broader level, the ongoing political debate over Catalonia’s future relationship with Spain increasingly affected the National Agreement and its vision of Catalonia. The autonomist vision of Catalan self-government articulated in the National Agreement in which the Catalan Generalitat would gradually expand its powers in the immigration field while remaining within the Spanish state became problematic and outdated in a political environment in which partisan and popular viewpoints are increasingly polarized between Catalan independence on one hand and the preservation of the Spanish constitutional status quo on the other. Recent experiences in Catalonia therefore suggest that the territorial cleavage within minority nationalist contexts can ultimately supersede public concerns surrounding issues like immigration and integration and reinforce existing political divisions between regionalists/sovereignists on one side and unionists on the other. The National Agreement and the subjects of immigration and integration more broadly have therefore become subsumed into the wider debate surrounding Catalonia’s “national transition” and its “right to decide” whether to become an independent country. As such, the future status of the National Agreement on Immigration and the ability of the Catalan Generalitat to continue to carry out the Agreement’s vision of an open and inclusive Catalan society will depend largely on the steps that Catalonia’s political leaders and electorate take in the near future regarding the subject of independence, and on the response of the Spanish state to these independence efforts.
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