1. Introduction:

Higher education should be studied in relation to State, Government and politics. There are very few endogenous dynamics. University Public policies create institutional logics, rules, regulations which shape general patterns of behavior and actions of its involved actors but also they introduce new institutional innovations, frameworks and incentives which orient them or they introduce changes and transformations in them.

The aim of this paper is to explore and analyze how the regional policy environment (legal rules, higher education regulations, university dynamics, etc.) influences the organizational practices and patterns that universities have it, focusing the attention on the issue of Human Resource Management (HRM onwards). In this paper, we analyze effects of regional HE public policies on hiring and promotion practices of universities. We pretend to understand why University employment practices diverge over time and explore the influence of institutional pressures derived from regional policies.

Through a case study of Spanish public universities we address the question of whether or not academic HRM policies of universities are aligned with the dominant logic do exists in regional policy of its institutional environment and if this kind of public policy determines or not the organizational behavior of universities. We explore whether universities in the same region respond by adopting similar hiring and promotion strategies to the common regional policies framework, and become highly differentiated from universities in other regions in the context of a multilevel governance system.

To empirically address our question we have examined the diffusion of “labour contracting” of permanent academics in universities, as new organizational practice in the context of competing institutional logics, and have compared how different institutional pressures from the state (regional Governments’ policies) have shaped the organizational practices and the overall institutional logics in two regions.

We present a dynamic comparison (space and time) under a quasi experimental design for cases comparison centered on observed differences in HE policies and instruments adopted by two selected regions of Spain (Andalusia and Cataloni a), to analyze their impact and influence on

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1 This work takes part of the doctoral research “Governance and organizations of universities: the Spanish case” (MINECO: FPI/BES-2012-062391) which carries on CSIC Institute of Public Goods and Policies (IPP) under the direction and supervision of the Dra. Laura Cruz-Castro (laura.cruz@csic.es) and the Research Prof. Dr. Luis Sanz-Menéndez (luis.sanz@csic.es), researchers at CSIC. This doctoral research project is registered within the Ph.D. Program on Law, Government and Public Policies that organize the Autonomous University of Madrid (Department of Political Science and International Relations) and the Spanish National Research Council (Institute of Public Goods and Policies).
academic labour structures and organizational practices of its universities. After the devolution, regional governments have developed and implemented diverse policies leading to differentiation and diversification of the traditionally homogeneous Spanish Public University System. An analysis from a regional perspective provides us with an interesting methodological opportunity for comparative research. The Spanish quasi-federal system (Regions as States) provides a remarkable setting to monitor/measure/compare interstate variations.

We have used triangulation methods and techniques, combining quantitative and qualitative information and a variety of data sources to empirically approach our variables of interest.

These issues are relevant for theory and practice: our interest is to shed some light on the effect of HE regional policies on behavior patterns and organizational practices that universities have regards to academics HRM. We therefore attempt to build analytical associative links between environmental changes (institutional and material) and organizational dynamics and transformative organizational processes. From the policy side, we believe that higher education policy design and implementation can benefit from the feedback provided by empirical research about public policy and use of institutional incentives (sticks, carrots and even sermons) as public policy instruments oriented to influence over University behavior, in a transformative or stabilizer sense.

The paper is organized as follow. We first draw theoretical related with our object study. Next, we present the basic descriptive features of the Spanish Public University System and a brief historical account of policy reforms, specifically in those topics related with academic human resources. We then expound the methodology, with an empirical analysis of HRM University regional HE policies in selected autonomous regions and general trends of the University employment structured which can be observed there. Finally, some preliminary conclusions are offered.

2. Theoretical framework:

This work is theoretically supported by three main literature streams: institutionalism and dynamics of change; change in public policies; and analysis of divergences and convergences between regions policies after competences devolution process.

Institutions and institutional pressures

Institutions are metaphorically conceptualized as “the rules of the game” (North 1990; Scott, 1995/2008). Institutions include formal rules (laws, regulations) and informal constraints (customs, norms, cultures).

Universities (specifically those that are fully public ones) are highly dependent from political power from of economic and political point of view. Political power understand as a whole of external institutions do have competences on HE and research, are in charge to establish general rules of the game in which act universities, formal and informal rules that restrict behaviour and organizational autonomy of universities, limiting its internal management and governance.

Indeed, one of the key empirical dimensions of University autonomy is the decision-making capacity over employment and human resources.

Mainly, our research looks for understand the way in which organizations absorb policy and regulatory pressures through organizational practices and institutional innovations.

Moreover, our paper uses elements of organization theory as a way to test as universities respond to institutional pressures (reforms and policy actions by governments). Institutionalists
have demonstrated that regulative, normative and cognitive forces shape how new organizational practice models emerge and diffuse throughout organizations (Scott, 1995, 2008).

In our case, we explore why universities show adherence or not to academic HRM policy actions promoted by regional governments and why universities respond actively or passively to institutional incentives which are introduced by regional governments. In this sense, this paper is also concerned with the dynamics of change. Organizational change in higher education has been recently analyzed from two complementary perspectives: resource-dependence theory and neo institutionalism (Cruz-Castro and Sanz-Menendez, 2015; Gornitzka, 1999; Gornitzka and Maasen, 2000).

**Relationship between politic power and universities and public policy change**

Relations between state, universities and society has been deeply analyzed in HE specialized literature. Clark’s seminal work (1983, 1995) already exposed a typology of HE systems which classified different systems on basis of distribution of power do exist between the relevant actors (Clark’s triangle: state, market and academic oligarchy). Since then, numerous authors and analysts (among others: Goedegebuure et al., 1994; Gornitzka, 1999; Van Vught, 1989, 1995) have theorized on role that state plays in coordination, steering or governance processes/relations of HE. These authors among others have focused its attention in how intervention, control or regulation political actions –HE public policies, regulations and frameworks- constrain institutional autonomy and organizational nature of academic organizations.

More recent literature on HE governance (among others: De Boer et al., 2010; Enders and File, 2006; Paradeise et al., 2009; Santiago et al, 2010) has highlighted the changing role which state plays in University governance: from state control/supervision model to a steering from a distance. Moreover, the state has lost power and influence capacity on University governance in favor of other actors and stakeholders (regions, European Union, external interest groups, etc.) which has transformed University governance toward a more complex (multi-actor) and multi-level nature: network University governance (Ferlie et al., 2009; Van Kersbergen and Van Warden, 2004).

Recent contributions (e.g. Amaral et al., 2002; Paradeise et al., 2009) have analyzed changes happened in University governance of European countries after recent University reforms promoted by European Union and EU national governments.

**Divergences and convergences between regions policies: federalism and devolution effects on HE policy**

North-American HE literature that has studied American universities (e.g. McLendon, 2003) has developed an interesting comparative research agenda on divergences between HE policies of different states and its impact on University system. In this context it also has been analyzed institutional innovations in policies and HE policy diffusion. Thus, American federalism, as well as other national systems that are strongly federal or decentralized as the Spanish case offer a good opportunity to study how states or regions experiment and adopt diverse programs and policies following imitation processes of other regions considered as early adopters.

In this sense, it has been analyzed how decentralization processes and devolution of competences to states/regions (mid level government authorities) promote patterns of convergence or divergence between public policies. For instance, Keating (2005), who analyzed national HE systems of Scotland and England, concluded that after an initial convergent process
between both systems, devolution process started in 1999 has produced an emergence of differentiated policies which has been consolidating an existence of general patterns of divergence between these two systems. Gallacher and Raffe (2012) neither found clear results in favour of hypothesis that sustains competences devolution itself produces divergent policies, which is partially explained by existence of some associated factors that exert pressures in favour of convergence or they limit grade of divergence do exist it. More recently, it has been analyzed effects that differentiation of policies has on its systems (Mackinnon, 2015).

### Universities as organizations: ideal types, models and organizational attributes

The classification of universities into different models has received much scholarly attention. Diverse works have tried to characterize and classify national University systems (Clark, 1983; Dobbins & Knill, 2009; Dobbins et al., 2011; etc), and also they have advanced on identification of attributes and conducts of universities as organizations (Whitley, 2008; 2012).

Taking variations in strategic autonomy further, Whitley (2012) applies the concept of organisational actorhood to distinguish among hollow, state-contracted, state-chartered and private-portfolio universities. His ideal types are more related to decision-making capacities regarding resources, employment, research and teaching at the organizational level as opposed to governance relations. Whereas hollow universities would largely lack actorhood and have no weight in major decision spheres, the state-contracted and state-chartered ones would have greater autonomy. Hence, the latter would wield the power to award degrees and the legal capacity to recruit and reward academics on their own terms. The private portfolio universities would have the greatest discretion with respect to the state, yet they would be constrained by scientific elites to provide project funding and reputational assets.

### 3. HRM in Higher education: towards a transformation of University employment patterns.

Human capital constitutes the cornerstone of organizations, and academic staff constitutes the core of universities. Organizations in general are confronted with internal and external pressures prompting them to pursue staff policies in a proactive way. Thus, it becomes increasingly important for organizations to develop human resource management.

In public sphere, employment relationships are moving away from the patterns of relationship associated with the public sector, to a more hybrid form incorporating private sector elements (Weert and Van Vucht Tijssen, 1999).

In higher education, two main types of employment relationships can be distinguished: the civil or public and the private type, each with its corresponding employment status. In the former type, academic staff have the legal status of civil servant and are public officials. Their employment is a ‘service’ relationship, not a contractual one, and it is regulated by public law. In continental European countries this is the most common type: University professors are civil servants falling within the framework of public employment. Its power, privileges, and conditions of employment are protected by constitutional or administrative law (Neave and Rhoades, 1987). University professorship with a status of civil servants has been predominant in continental University model (e.g. German Beamte; French fonctionnaires; or Spain funcionarios) facing to system of academic tenure which has existed in Anglo-saxon University systems. Institutions of most Anglo-Saxon countries, even though financed for the greater part from public sources, are formally not part of the state. They preserve a non-governmental character, irrespective of whether they are public or private institutions, and academic staff has
the legal status of employee and their working conditions are regulated by contracts of employment under private law. 

The two types of employment relations differ in the way terms and conditions of service are determined. In the public type these are settled unilaterally and academic staff are supposed to be loyal to the state in return for job security, usually on a lifetime basis. In the contractual type, the substance of the obligations of staff is settled bilaterally between employers and employees, either on an individual basis or, as is often the case, through collective bargaining between the representatives bodies.

HE specialized literature (e.g. Weert and Van Vucht Tijssen, 1999) has highlighted two important transformations within of academic HRM: a) the changing composition of academic staff; and b) changing authority in the management of institutions. 

Regard to first one, due to budget cuts, fluctuations in student enrolments, and internal reorganizations, universities have been driven to offset financial risks by employing temporary staff. In some countries, number of part-time and off-track full-time appointments appears to be expanding rapidly to that of traditional full-time, tenured appointment. In other countries, the proportion of academic staff of a non-permanent basis is between a fifth to a half of all academic staff with a median of about a third (Farnham, 1999). Because of rigidities and the legal implications, the system of tenure (especially when occurs on basis of civil servant status) has come under attack.

These changes in employment structures give rise to what Farnham (1999: 28) calls the emerging ‘flexiUniversity’: a core group of permanently employed, secure, relatively well paid academic staff, supported by an ‘invisible faculty’, consisting of peripheral groups of casually employed, insecure, poorly paid staff, doing routine teaching, instruction and research tasks. Generally, the division within the academic profession, in particular between tenured and temporary staff, leads to a segmentation within the academic profession (Weert and Van Vucht Tijssen, 1999).

Regard to second one, demands for greater accountability, global competition and effectiveness have called for the reduction of the power of departments as basic organizational subunits in favour of more managerial modes of decision-making, traditionally characteristic of Managerial University model predominant in Anglo-saxon systems. In opinion of some authors, these transformations represent a modernization of employment relationships, which is understood as a market-life agreement which enables employers (universities) to manage their institutions as flexible corporations. This flexibility includes the liberalization of the rules governing the recruitment and selection of staff, personal contracts of service, and which, according to the employers, requires the abolition of the civil service status for academic staff.

In sum, all these debates are in part due to the current argument concerning the entrepreneurial, more market-responsive universities. The above is narrowly linked to debate of organizational character of universities. The complexity of HRM, the recruitment, deployment, retention and reward systems all require strategic thinking at every management level, and this is only is possible in real strategic organizations that do have a full institutional autonomy in key decision spheres as management of its human capital.

On this basis and applying to European context (specifically the Spanish case), in order to study policies (from regional governments) or organizational practices (from internal University governments) in the area of HRM we can differentiate two different HRM models or
perspectives that are opposed among them: an adaptive managerialism and a bureaucratic professionalism.

First of them, influenced by New Public Management paradigm, it sustains a transformative vision of employment relations in University organizations through use of managerial instruments as performance based mechanisms and institutional incentives which allow a gradual evolution to regular labour relations: from civil servants to contracts.

Under this model, dominant employment practice would be a combination of open ended and fixed-term labour contracts justified by a higher strategic flexibility for its organizations and HR University managers.

Second of them, influenced by Bureaucratic professionalism paradigm, it sustains a conservative vision of professorship hiring in the existing authority structures keeping the tenure expectations. Under this HRM model, University professor hiring is considered as an instrument which is part of the promotion process and progress in the academic ladder up to the traditional civil servant position. Here, dominant employment practice would be civil servant based permanent positions as a means to provide power and autonomy to the academics.

4. Contextual framework: some key elements on Spanish Public University System.

The Spanish University system is similar to other Latin-American or European systems like those of France, Italy, and even Germany, where public universities account for the greatest share of the system.

Regard to organizational character, Spanish public universities present some elements typical of state-contracted organisations with some elements of state-chartered ones. According to Whitley’s ideal type’s dimensions, Spain’s universities show a limited discretion grade over resource allocation and over employment decisions and policies; they also own a limited discretion over student selection, degree programs and assessment; and they enjoy of a considerable discretionary level over organizational structures, establishing and closing departments. By the other hand, Spanish public universities show a considerable dependence grade on state funding, and also a highlighted grade dependence on scientific elites in establishing research priorities and performance standards.

Successive University laws, regulations and frameworks that have experienced the Spanish Public University System have determined organizational nature of its universities. Then, Spain’s Public University System, before the transition to democracy, followed a state-centred model. The central government coordinated almost all aspects of higher education (HE): admission rules, curricula, exams, recruitment and promotion of professors, salaries, appointment of Rectors, etc.

Overall, however, policy reforms over the last decades (LRU/1983; LOU/2001 and LOMLOU/2007) have produced limited effects in changing the way universities function. Spanish Universities have moved out of a “hollow” organisational category into a type which resembles state-contracted organisations with some elements of state-chartered ones, where communities often preclude opportunities and capacities of coherent management (Cruz-Castro and Sanz-Menendez, 2015). Spanish universities play under an effective guardianship which is shared between state and autonomous regions, which moreover are managed by powerful corporations of professional academics. Thus, universities are constitutionally autonomous from Government but subjected to public sector rules as regards budgeting, human resources management, contracting, etc.
Regard to Human Resources Management, Spanish public universities have experimented a progressive improvement of its level of internal autonomy in organizational matters. Before the transition to democracy, the University system has always been characterized by a dual academic employment structure (Cruz-Castro and Sanz-Menendez, 2015): a) temporary professors or researchers working on fix term contracts, under lectureship, PhD fellowships or temporary contracts for research projects; and b) permanent professors (with civil servant status and life employment guaranteed by the State) after winning a public ‘tournament’ (Mora, 2001). Until it was passed University law of 2001, universities could decide on application and choice of academic HRM and about what academic career should be predominant. In a period of rising of students and expansion of system, University managers had to decide how to reach an equilibrium point in number of academic positions with a civil servant status (lifetime employment) and number of temporary hired University professors. Every University found its particular equilibrium in the organizational relation of civil servants and temporary hired professors. In this time, all Spain’s public universities played under a homogeneous and identical regulatory framework law. The 2001 University law (LOU) established new types of contractual arrangements (visiting professor, assistant doctorate professor, contracted doctorate professor, etc.). The main novelty was introduction of a new tenured academic category (PCD) with a non civil servant status, which it was similar than other associated professor position with civil servant status (PTU). By first time University law of 2001 (LOU) allowed to universities a capacity to choose freely what kinds of academic positions could be opened: since then, universities were fully competent in the creation of new academic positions and they were direct responsible of evolution of work staff relations. The law allowed the universities to choose how manage these human resources, by hiring and recruiting based on the traditional civil servant positions –PTU and CU- (mainly Spanish citizens) with life employment, or start hiring –PAD and PCD- with more flexible labour conditions and salaries under private employment regulations. With the introduction of new academic positions of tenured hired professor (Profesor Contratado Doctor, PCD onward), universities could choose among integrate these new academic positions as a parallel academic career (in order to conclude progressively the civil servant model) or as a transitional stage in academic careers that was previous to access to civil servant academic categories (PTU and CU). Universities could maintain general inertia already created by previous system with its traditional HRM model based on civil servant professors with a lifetime employment or starting a new and alternative way based on HRM model oriented to hiring. Moreover, this law led a deep competences devolution in favor of regional governments who since this moment were responsible of regulation of University funding, setting of student tuition fees, labour conditions, salaries, selection of professors, academics promotion, etc. Regional governments became most powerful actors in Spain’s University System, capable of develop its own regulations and HE public policies. The last partial reform took place in 2007 (LOMLOU). It abolished the habilitation system, introducing instead an accreditation process for all civil servant and contracted positions (Bosch, 2006), in where only some temporary academic positions (e.g. visiting professors, assistant professors, etc.) did not require to complete this process. Accreditation procedures were to be performed by a central quality assessment agency – ANECA-or a regional counterpart which have emerged for HE devolution process and have acquired a highlighted role, showing an increasing influence capability on institutional environment of its regions.
Then, while accreditation procedures to civil servant academic positions (CU or PTU) are centrally managed by the ANECA (central agency), accreditation procedures to other permanent or temporary academic positions (PCD or PAD) can be managed itself by regional agencies and also by central agency. The above, has allowed that exist important differences in diverse evaluation systems and accreditation requisites do exist in different autonomous regions with quality assessment agencies (Galán et al., 2014).

5. Methodology and empirical material:

To empirically address our question we have examined the diffusion of “labour contracting” of permanent academics in universities, as new organizational practice in the context of competing institutional logics, and have compared how different institutional pressures from the state (regional Governments’ policies) have shaped the organizational practices and the overall institutional logics in two regions. This work does not analyze questions related to causes that explain the emergence in some regions of a new and differentiated framework law in HRM in favor of a change, and why not has happened in other ones.

Methodologically, we have tried a quasi-experimental approach (Cook and Campbell, 1979; Cook et al., 1990; Cook, 2015), with the dynamic comparison (Gerring and Dermott 2007) of 16 public universities in two regions; we adopt a most similar cases design, in which we select regional university systems that were mostly similar (size, regulative environment and policy) in t₀ but one of which has been characterized by change-oriented research and HE policy while the other is not. We expect to find different employment practices over time (comparing t₀ and t₁) and signs of different institutional logics in universities in the two regions, and to be able to make plausible associations between policy and its effects. The expectation is that we would find heterogeneity across universities in different regions and similarity among universities in the same region.

We have used triangulation methods and techniques, combining quantitative and qualitative (text and interviews) information and a variety of data sources to empirically approach our variables of interest:

Firstly, to address the organizational practice dimension, we have performed a quantitative analysis of the aggregated data on the evolution of the academic employment, by different types, by the 16 selected universities between 1998 and 2009. From this data we have constructed a macro indicator of the evolution of the employment structure. The key indicator regarding HRM has been taken to be the number of academic staff with labour contracts (fixed term or open-ended) as compared with civil servants (life employment), in the academic faculty. In sum, we determine the ratio contract (c) / civil servant (cs). Our source of information is public statistical data that do not provide longitudinal data, but rather annual stocks of professors employed. This enabled us to monitor the stock of public University academic staff at the end of each year/academic course without considering the flows (entries and exists). After comparing the evolution of universities in terms of academic staff employed, we analyze the specific patterns of change in composition (civil servants vs. hired professors).

Secondly, in order to address the policy dimension, we have made archival and document analysis of university reports and regional legislation that has allowed us to characterize our two regional cases along two different policy models, one of which is clearly change oriented while the other is not. We have complemented this secondary information with qualitative data coming from more than 50 interviews in universities (mainly with academic authorities), in Regional Governments and with some union representatives.
6. HRM University regional HE policies: between change and stability

The devolution process of university competences happened in Spain after University reform of 2001 (LOU) have produced different consequences on normative development which have carried on different autonomous regions in last years. Previous works have drawn how devolution process in HE competences have produced the emergence of divergences among autonomous regions in some aspects related to salaries or economic incentives (Garcia-Vaquero, 2005), efficiency (Casani et al., 2012) or access systems to academic positions (Galán et al., 2014).

Our analysis of two Spanish regions confirms the above, showing clear divergences in other relevant aspects as University funding model, regional plans to support research and innovation or public setting of tuition fees for University students. We use as case studies regions of Andalusia and Catalonia, two cases which share some structural characteristics (e.g. a high pluralism of public academic and research organizations, a high number of enrolled students in its University system, or similar public investment in HE and R&D), but for instance they differ clearly in its research performance (e.g. Catalan universities often appear in best position in international University rankings and historically have showed a higher research performance than Andalusian universities). In both regions, political traditions that historically have governed it have been different (social democrat in first one, nationalist and socialist in second one). Last, most important element to our research is that both regions present two different types of academic HRM policies: one of them oriented to promote a change of traditional model of management of Human Resources in Public University System (historically based on University professors as civil servants of State) which could be considered as an example of adaptive managerialism; and another one oriented to continue with this traditional model highly consolidated from cultural and sociological point of view which could be considered as an example of bureaucratic professionalism.

6.1. Regional University HRM policies oriented to change: the case of Catalonia

Unlike other autonomous regions which have applied the general state legal framework, Catalonia always have shown an active and dynamic role in its legislative development, in where has acted in an innovative way. Moreover, as regards to promotion of public policies, regional authorities have intervened in strategic spheres of HE and science. Like other Spanish regions which have elaborated it own regional University law, in 2003 (LUC) Catalonia introduced a new regulatory framework which it promoted the building of an University system highly differentiated and heterogeneous, which it incorporated diverse cultural, social and political singularities historically recognised to this region. This legal framework applied important novelties in relevant dimensions as University organization and structure, governance, research and teaching quality evaluation or economic funding of universities.

In relation with University HRM dimension, Catalonia is the unique Spanish region which has promoted and developed in fact a regional differentiated academic careers system taking as legal basis the academic category of permanent hiring does exist in Spain (PCD). Catalan autonomous government enabled the existence of a parallel professional career in University sector different than traditional academic career based on civil service. The above, offered to universities new instruments to establish hiring with academics and researchers, with similar
working warranties of its homologous academic categories with a civil servant status, but gifted of a higher organizational flexibility.
Under this specific model, regional authorities developed two new formulas of tenured hiring (Profesor Agregado: PCD-A, equivalent to Associate Professor; and Catedrático Contratado: PCD-C, equivalent to Full Professor), alternatives or complementsaries to those existent in civil service model (Profesor Titular: PTU; and Catedrático de Universidad: CU), and then with an identical level or attributes. An access to these new academic categories only is possible through an accreditation that offers regional quality evaluation agency –AQU- who has established a merits and requisites mainly based on research capabilities and high performance.

A strong commitment of regional authorities with this differentiated model has been clearly visible, in an evident bet to (permanent) hiring policy in detriment to civil service (life employment) policy in universities. Proof of this, is that Catalan government has created a solid structure of institutional incentives oriented to organizations (universities) but as well as to individuals (professors and researchers), with a clear objective: to become these new instruments in an attractive way to hire professors in universities, and of course in an interesting way to develop a professional career to academics.

In order to satisfy first condition, regional authorities have destined important economic resources to stimulate the academic hiring in universities, promoting for instance co-funding to academic hiring programs as Serra Hunter whose initial objectives were funding until 50% of contracts of stabilisation of junior researchers and/or attraction of external talent following high-level international standards. The above, reduced or alleviated the classical additional economic charge that hired professors had in comparison with civil servants professors (derived to different contributions of universities as employers to Social Security System).
Regards to second condition, Catalan governments in collaboration with universities and trade unions have established a high quality working conditions clearly assimilated to its homologous civil servants with an equivalent academic category. Thus, hired professors of Catalan public universities enjoy of a better salary conditions than its colleagues of other regions –even that colleagues than are civil servants- (considering that regional governments are responsible of regulation of salaries and other general working conditions of hired professors in contrast with civil servants that are regulated by the State).
Moreover, hired professors can receive economic incentives based on research (‘sexenios’) and teaching (‘quinquenios’) performance, similar to those classical that only civil servants professors receive (another competitive advantage in comparison with colleagues of other regions that can not perceive it) which are compatible with additional ones that regional authorities establish it to overall of University professors. Regards to other working conditions, hired professors enjoy of a similar work balance (teaching-research load) than civil servants professors and also other identical advantages in terms of licences, leaves or sabbatical periods linked to research or teaching activities.
Last, but not least important is that these collective of professors enjoy of a certain protection in terms of institutional power (as social minority that still are), and for this reason is promoted its presence and real participation (specially of them who are permanent) in different decision making processes which take place in internal governance structures.

All these facts and empirical evidences seem indicate that successive regional governments of this autonomous region have established a solid net of institutional incentives clearly oriented to change traditional organizational practices of universities, as essential path to transform the historical HRM model of universities based on civil service that have existed in Spain during decades.
The above has happened simultaneously to a committed institutional strategy with the internationalization and research excellence of Catalan University and Research System, in where different public policy initiatives as ICREA (2001), AQU (2001), Serra Hunter (2003) or CERCA research institutes (2010) have contributed notably to improve basic principles as differentiation, excellence or internationalization of public universities and research institutes of Catalonia, producing a very strong impact over its overall performance system. All these programs and initiatives share an axiom: the commitment to research of high quality (e.g. research and teaching evaluations that does AQU) or the achievement of higher scientific excellence and internationalization (e.g. attraction and recruitment of external talent), only can be reached through academic hiring structures and instruments more flexible and adapted to international standards. And precisely, new instruments of academic hiring which there are in Catalonia are organizationally more flexible, but also more competitive and attractive, and at the same time more severe from point of view of research evaluation, providing to Catalan universities a strategic competitive advantage to adapt to new environmental demands do exist.

6.2. Regional University HRM policies oriented to stability: the case of Andalusia

Andalusia, like Catalonia did, was one of the first autonomous regions which passed its own regional University law (LAU: 2003), recently reformed it (TRLAU: 2013). Nevertheless, unlike to Catalan law, it represents a basic displacement of general contents that do exist in national regulation, whatever has promoted a barely differentiated regulatory framework unable to build up a peculiar regional University system strictly. It seems in tune with limited differentiation do exists among universities as result of regional policies more worried to homogenisation and social equity.

In relation with University HRM dimension, Andalusia, as most of Spanish regions, has not developed a differentiated academic careers system, and it has not promoted a parallel professional career to traditional based on civil service. The Andalusian case is an illustrative example because is clearly visible that a new academic hiring instrument (PCD) which (as a tenured category) it was designed by policymakers as an end aim itself in academic ladder it has not been legally developed neither promoted from governmental authorities of this region. Unlike to Catalonia, Andalusian government has not stimulated a change of traditional University organizational practices related to academics HRM, and even it could be observed certain signals that show a partial bet and commitment with the historically consolidated civil servant HRM model.

Neither universities nor professors have had sufficient institutional incentives from regional authorities to consider attractive the hiring way as an alternative to civil service regime. First ones, further of organizational flexibility ‘mantra’, have not received economic support to reduce the higher labour cost of hired professors in comparison with labour cost of civil servants professors. Second ones, clearly have received unequivocal signals from institutional framework and environment that show hired professors in Andalusian University System do not enjoy of an identical social and professional treatment than its homologous colleagues with civil service status.

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2 The first text of Andalusian University Law (LAU, 2003) included two modes of permanent labour hiring (PCD): an ordinary and other extraordinary more oriented to recruitment of professors with a research profile, but in practice it barely has been developed or promoted. Last modification eliminated this distinction.
Thus, even if tenured hired professors (PCD) of Andalusian public universities enjoy of identical salary than its colleagues who are civil servants ones (PTU), hired professors cannot receive economic incentives based on research (’sexenios’) and teaching (quinquenios) performance that only civil servants professors receive, although they whether can apply (previous accreditation of two years of seniority) to those additional ones that regional authorities establish it to overall of University professors (frozen by regional authorities since of beginning of economic crisis). The above clearly place to hired professors in a worse salary conditions than its colleagues of other regions and of course than those are civil servants. In this sense, regional framework law forbids expressly that no hired professor can overcome salary conditions of an associate professor with a civil service status.

In change, regards to other working conditions, hired professors enjoy of a similar work balance (teaching-research load) than civil servants professors and they also own other identical advantages in terms of licences or leaves linked to research or teaching activities, or concession of retirement bonuses.

In relation with institutional power, it seems there are some restrictions to temporary hired professors in order to perform government responsibilities within of universities.

All these facts seem indicate that successive regional governments of this autonomous region have not established institutional incentives oriented to change traditional organizational practices of universities based on selection and promotion of professors with a civil service status. Besides, there are other ones that even show a certain policy of promotion of civil service HRM model. For instance, tenured hired professors can obtain an economic bonus (of similar amount that sexenios and quinquenios) when they access to similar tenured position but with civil service status (from PCD to PTU).

The above has happened in an institutional environment of HRM framework (established in the collective agreement signed between universities and trade unions) where has been consolidated the principle of collective academic promotion as a quasi fundamental right of University professors that is over the organizational choice of universities to decide individually what professor should be academically stabilised and/or promoted, and under what academic category or recruitment mode.

7. Organizational responses of Catalan and Andalusian public universities to change vs. stability HRM policies

As we have observed above, Catalan regional authorities have established highlighted incentives to modify behaviour patterns of universities in academic HRM sphere, while regional government of Andalusia did not it, and even has promoted shyly a HRM public policy oriented to stability. But, our question here is: Do these regional HRM public policies have changed behaviour patterns regards to academic HRM of universities?

Our analysis of employment structures of universities (from 1999 to 2009), which we are going to develop afterwards indicates that most of universities of both regions show a trend in tune with kind of HRM public policy adopted by its regional authorities. At the same time, in universities of every region can be observed certain elements that indicate a logic of adherence to institutional pressures, although with some intra-state differences. In most of Catalan public universities can be observed like formal institutional power that internal rules assign to hired professors group is similar or even identical than do exists to civil servants. For instance, most of Catalan universities have established an identical representation quota to civil servants or hired doctors professors in diverse representative and governing bodies (e.g.
Academic Senate: 'Claustro Universitario' or Governing Board: 'Consejo de Gobierno', and they also enjoy of an identical percentage of weighted vote within of electoral system to elect University rector. Temporary hired professors in change, own less institutional power within of internal governance structures of universities, but in some universities (e.g. UPF) appear clearly protected within the general group of 'other research and teaching staff'.

In contrast, most of public universities of Andalusia follow assigning more institutional powers to civil servants professors in different representative and governing bodies and also in the system of election of rector. Concretely in some universities, tenured and temporary hired professors have an identical representation power than other academic groups like non doctors civil servants, assistant professors, visiting professors, research-teaching assistants or even doctoral students.

The above gives strength our hypothesis that regional HRM public policies have an influence on organizational practices and behaviour patterns related to academic HRM of universities.

Another relevant question here is: what motivations have lead to universities to adhere/align to institutional pressures do exist in its regional environment?

For the Catalan case, we can draw some possible explanations related to committed responses of Catalan public universities with a change of academic HRM model: first, the existence of a strong institutional structure of incentives (e.g. most clear is co-funding of hired professorship positions) in favor of professorship hiring, reducing or revoking negatives effects. Second, higher environmental pressures as consequence of a high academic-scientific competition (for achieve resources in general) between middle-class research universities and research institutes. Third, a real strategic chance for universities to achieve more easily competitive resources (e.g. personnel, infrastructures, research funds/grants, etc.) from regional competitive plans/programs which traditionally have been highly linked to research performance, and accepting that these new academic figures own a profile clearly oriented to research (with requisites established by regional quality agency highly demanding in research activities). Fourth, hiring processes to select and recruit professors and researchers provide to universities a higher organizational autonomy to introduce its owns selection criteria and they allow to align its with their strategic profiles as universities (e.g. according to international standards for instance). Fifth, professorship hiring (that is regulated by regional laws) is more adaptive to singularities and specificities of Catalan universities (e.g. interests, strategies, challenges, etc.) and also of Catalan context, than civil servant model (that is more restricted and regulated by state laws).

In the case of Andalusia, we also can draw some explanations related to committed responses of Andalusian public universities with a consolidation of academic HRM model or non transformation toward another one based on hiring: first, the lack of institutional incentives oriented to become attractive an academic HRM based on professorship hiring (what reasons have public universities had to open hired professor positions with a high labour cost than civil servants positions?). Second, from regional authorities have had some institutional signals in favor of professorship with civil servant status (e.g. extra economic bonus as reward to access civil servant position), that sometimes have been justified under a discursive rhetoric of research and teaching quality are more easily achieved from civil servants positions, with salaries and work conditions more stable and safe. Third, environmental pressures are lower as consequence of a higher homogenization between universities and a lower competence between them. Fourth, from sociological point of view Andalusia is a regional context in where historically has been a strong dependence of public-administrative structures and it has been an ingrained culture in favor of follow a civil servant career as a comfortable professional option, could explain these behavior patterns within of universities.
7.1. Evolution and general trends of the University employment structure in Andalusia and Catalonia:

In order to analyze the evolution and general trends of the University employment which have been happened for last decades, we believe that the share of “civil servant”, “hired permanent” and “fix-term contracted” over time are good indicators of the dominant model of employment in universities and their trends and evolution. A dynamic analysis of a macro indicator of the evolution of the employment structure provides an idea of the “dominant” model of employment/HHRR management in universities.

Our period of analysis includes a decade from 1999 to 2009, which allow us to analyze changes in trends that produced after passing of University reform of 2001 (LOU) which provided Regional Governments with very strong powers regarding the use of non-civil servant academic categories. At the same time, our analysis is extended until 2009 in order to control some possible effects which has economic crisis had on employment structures of universities or its HRM policies (e.g. state government limitations on hiring rate of public employees in Public Administrations). Then, to monitor the “policy effects” we should take into account (and separate) the effects of the crisis, then the analysis refers to the pre-crisis period. What matter are the changes in trends.

First, it is important to highlight that universities are autonomous and they are responsible of creation of academic positions, deciding loosely number and type of positions which that open every academic year.

Second, we have looked at some conglomerates of universities by region and also by age. If we compare clusters or conglomerates of universities (old and new universities), we are observing remarkable interstate differences between it has happened in universities of Andalusia and Catalonia respectively.

Graph 1. Evolution of academic employment structure by regions and type of universities (1999-2009)
Graph 1 shows that Andalusian –old and new ones- universities are characterized by uptrends on average rates of tenured professors (hired and civil servants), which are more stressed in those universities younger’s; while in Catalan universities case we can observe downtrends which are still more strong in those universities with a less seniority.

The same graph, also shows that average rate of civil servants in universities of Andalusia barely changes between 1999 and 2009 in younger universities (placing itself around 40%) or it slightly changes in older universities (-5%), while for Catalan universities variations are clearly more significant in both cases (around -15%).

The evolution of employment structure which can be observed in Andalusian universities (especially in those older ones) is most similar that it has happened in Spain overall, which it could us lead to think in Catalan case as an outlier case within of the Spanish Public University System.

If we observe graph 2, we can observe as in Catalan universities (old and new ones) academic employment structures have notably changed between 1999 and 2009, showing an important reduction of number of civil servant professors (-9%) and a highlighted increment of temporary hired professors. In Andalusia, we can observe opposed data for old and young universities because from 1999 to 2009 is visible a relevant increase of number of civil servants professors (between +5% and +8%), being also a common element the rising of temporary hired professors.

![Graph 2. Comparison of academic employment structure and its trends by región and types of universities](image)

If we analyze trends that have happened in every University of Andalusia and Catalonia, we can see do exists a convergent behaviour pattern in employment structure of intrastate universities between 1998 and 2009. Thus, graph 3 shows all public universities of Andalusia have had a similar trend during for this period, being characterised by an increment in number of civil servants professors. Specifically, in some universities (e.g. US, UMA, UGR, UH o UJA for instance) can be observed a stressed increment which is sustained in all period, while other universities (e.g. UCO, UAL o UCA for instance) have showed a low or moderated increment per year.
Graph 3. Evolution of academic employment structure in Andalusian universities by universities (1998-2009)

Last, graph 4 shows as nearly all public universities of Catalonia (with exception of UdG and UdL) have followed a similar trend characterized by a decline in number of civil servant professors from 1998 to 2009. Specifically, we can observe some cases of universities with a stressed decline which has been constant for this period (e.g. UPC or UB for instance) and other universities in where registered drop has been low or moderated (e.g. UAB, URV or UPF for instance).

Graph 4. Evolution of academic employment structure in Catalan universities by universities (1998-2009)
8. Conclusions:

This paper explores how regional HE policies have an influence on HRM organizational practices, hiring and promotion strategies of universities. To address this question we have adopted a quasi-experimental approach with the dynamic comparison of 16 public universities of two Spanish autonomous regions selected on a most similar cases design, in where we have analyzed differences that can be observed in HE public policies of this regions (Andalusia and Catalonia) in order to interpret its possible effects on academic employment structures of its universities.

Two regions that we have analyzed present two different types of academic HRM policies: one of them oriented to promote a change of traditional model of management of HRM in Public University System (historically based on University professors as civil servants of State); and another one oriented to continue with this traditional model highly consolidated from cultural and sociological point of view. Thus, Catalan regional authorities have established highlighted incentives to modify behaviour patterns of universities in academic HRM sphere toward a new model based in hiring, while regional government of Andalusia did not it, and even has promoted shyly an University HRM public policy oriented to stability of traditional model. Thus, in the same period (2001 onward) in which these regional policies have been established, our findings show a significant change in the employment structure trends in universities located in one of the regions (Catalonia) moving away from the civil servant model over time and in comparison with the other (Andalusia). Our interpretation, supported by empirical evidence obtained of archival and document analysis of university reports and interviews with University managers and union representatives, is that existence of clear institutional incentives in one of the regions with policies oriented to change in University HRM model could explain these significant changes in behaviour patterns and organizational practices of its universities. For instance, Catalan public universities seem to have received stimuli enough to transform its habits, routines, behaviour patterns and practices within of HRM sphere, which could mean a change of organizational culture of universities in opinion of some government responsible of there.

By the other hand, these transformational processes only take place in an institutional context in where do exist a confluence of interests, positions and political willingness between regional governments, universities and other interest groups (e.g. trade unions). For instance in Catalonia, public universities have showed organizational responses of adherence to institutional pressures because from the beginning were convinced of diverse advantages and goodness to implement a new model, evidencing a solid willingness to commit with them. Otherwise in Andalusia, in where regional government did not promote policies oriented to change the University HRM model, public universities never showed a real willingness to impulse a transformation of model, acting in connivance with no change institutional pressures existent.

Analysis that we have presented reveals that policies and measures promoted by regional government are highly important and seem to have an influence on strategic and organizational behaviour of public organizations that are clearly dependent of them, as are universities. Our findings indicate as an adequate combination of regulations (‘sticks’), sometimes guided by institutional innovations (e.g. creation of new permanent academic categories with a non civil servant status); accompanied of enough resources which do it possible and a solid structure of institutional incentives (‘carrots’); and a good discursive rhetoric (‘sermons’) could gradually
change the trajectory of universities and they could become a real driver of organizational change.

Moreover, policy impacts appear associated to University transformation into the more managerial models and to increase the opportunities for improving performance. The adoption of public policies oriented to transformation of professional-bureaucratic University model by other influenced by Managerialism, are providing of strategic capabilities and organizational skills that are key to the improvement of its end performance in highly competitive and dynamic environment as current one.

In HRM sphere, universities which recently have been opting by a model mainly based on hiring of permanent or temporary professors, own a bigger organizational flexibility and autonomy capacity in order respond to new challenges and changes which are emerging in current socioeconomic context (e.g. recession, downfall of incomes, public funding, institutional restrictions etc.) but as well as research landscape (e.g. new demands, scientific disarrangements, innovations, etc.).

Last, policies before mentioned could help to change the expectations and values of professors about the academic careers, University model, etc., and provide support for the transformational effects that take place in its institutional environments. For instance, the homogenization process which in terms of work conditions, rights and characteristics it has happened in Catalonia between hired and civil servants professors, probably will have changed values and perceptions of University community on academic career based on hiring.

Findings here showed have analytical relevance, but also political one. Results support the idea that policy matters. In our analysis, HE and research public policies appear as highlighted drivers of organizational change capable to transform strategies, behavior patterns or practices of universities, which should be considered in further analysis that analyze influence of environment on organizational change dynamics. Here, the lesson that can be learnt by the government could be that policies are more easily implemented when they are accompanied of incentive mechanisms and when is product of a political bargaining oriented to achieve a bigger willingness between different participant actors to commitment with them. Nevertheless, to establish new policies in the area of HRM is not a short-term process. It requires time and energy and leadership at all levels within of external political power (regional governments in our case) and within of internal governance structures of universities.

Lastly, this paper has only considered an analysis of two autonomous regions. Further analysis would include a bigger number of selected cases (regions) in order to contrast and validate results here obtained. Moreover, a bigger number of cases would also allow to know whether in other Spanish regions are producing a convergence process regard to regional HE public policies or otherwise do exist divergence among them.
9. References:


