



Intergovernmental Lobbying in Brazil: Municipal Associations and Their Role as Interest Groups in the Brazilian Federation¹

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This article on intergovernmental lobbying in Brazil analyzes the National Front of Mayors (FNP) and the National Confederation of Municipalities (CNM) from 2001 to 2018. It uses research of documents, journalism, opinion surveys, and interviews and tests three hypotheses. The first is whether the economic, political, and social context and federal policies induce local lobbying to seek regulatory and financial protection from the central government. The second is whether the number of associated cities influences the relationship with the leaders of the entities, which was partially confirmed. In the CNM and FNP, some topics generate agreement and others disagreement, while there is more internal unity in the CNM. The third hypothesis is that lobbying arenas are effective as long as they generate benefits, which was tested with the Federative Articulation Committee, in which the CNM and FNP participated, but which gradually lost status. The findings show the usefulness of the hypotheses for studying municipal lobbying.

Keywords: municipal lobbying; federal government; interest groups; local government

Introduction³

Municipal lobbying is a common practice in federal and non-federal countries. According to the Center for the Study of Federalism, the process involves governments lobbying other governments through associations of state and local governments and their officials. Intergovernmental lobbying involves advocacy of regional interests to influence federal government decision-making. Lobbying does not refer to a specific influence campaign, but to action in defense of broad and on-going interests, as defined in the literature on interest groups. Lobbying is one of the forms of relations between a

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national government and local governments in which municipal entities act as interest groups (Haider, 1974; Hays, 1991; De Soto, 1995; Jensen, 2019). The literature on interest groups considers lobbying as an effort to shape government actions through information, persuasion, and the role played by institutional representation (Baumgartner; Leach, 1998; Chenier, 2009; Payson, 2018).

Associations that represent municipalities work with this logic and compose a nation's network of political actors, which includes the national congress and federal government (Jensen, 2019). Intergovernmental lobbying represents territorial interests, as distinguished from other interest groups, usually associated more strictly with economic sectors (Freeman; Nownes, 1999). Municipal associations are actively engaged in responding to legislative initiatives of the central government and other issues. (Kolsut, 2018). Differently from lobbying by private interest groups, government lobbyists see themselves as insiders and as having more legitimacy, and affirm this to reinforce the demands they make of policymakers. Municipal government associations use this profile to assert that their influence and lobbying are more aligned with public interests, which helps reinforce their discourse of greater legitimacy, based on efforts to develop solid intergovernmental partnerships (Abney, 1998; Freeman; Nownes, 1999).

There is literature in political science and studies on local power in the US and European contexts that has worked with the concept of intergovernmental lobbying for decades (see Haider, 1974; Cammisa, 1995; Nugent, 2009). In the US case, the so-called "Big Seven" composes various associations of state and local governments and officials, including: the Council of State Governments, the International City/County Management Association, the National Association of Counties, the National Conference of State Legislatures, the National Governors Association, the National League of Cities and the United States Conference of Mayors. However, even in the United States and Europe little is known about the defense of interests by associations that represent local governments in relation to their national spheres (Freeman; Nownes, 1999; Loftis; Kettler, 2015; Goldstein; You, 2017; Jensen, 2019; Payson, 2020).

This is even more evident in the Brazilian federation because of the total lack of research on municipal intergovernmental lobbying. To our knowledge, this is the first Brazilian study on intergovernmental lobbying - which considers actions by local governments - and it intends to contribute to the agenda on studies of local power. The only study we found on the issue has a section that analyzes lobbying by municipalities during the military regime (Medeiros, 1985). In this study, we analyze the intergovernmental lobbying from 2001 to 2018 of the National Front of Mayors FNP⁴ and

⁴ FNP was created in 1989 to represent the interests of larger cities. It includes 392 municipalities (26 state capitals and municipalities with populations above 80,000). It represents the so-called G-100 (cities with large populations but per capita income, and Municipal Participation Fund (FPM) support below the average of smaller cities). See the presentation at: <<http://www.fnp.org.br/>>.

the National Confederation of Municipalities CNM⁵, which are the two most powerful and important representatives of municipal interests⁶. The Brazilian Association of Municipalities (ABM) has fewer members and less political influence. Many of ABM's associated municipalities are also linked to the CNM, which justifies leaving it out of the study. Therefore, the study of the CNM and FNP allows us to analyze intergovernmental lobbying, covering practically all Brazilian municipalities.

Since 1988, municipal associations have been important actors in Brazilian intergovernmental relations. Their growing engagement in defense of municipal interests at the federal level is related to three main factors. First, the 1988 Federal Constitution gave municipalities greater freedom (Resende, 2008; Pires, 2016), which changed how local and federal governments interact. Second, as administrative competencies were decentralized and municipalities gained greater power to define their public policies, the need for funding, technical resources, and intergovernmental coordination increased (Arretche, 1999; Grin; Abrucio, 2018a). Third, an increasing number of legislative and constitutional measures have impacted municipalities (Arretche, 2012). These three factors increased the recognition by municipalities of their role as constituent units and stimulated them to intensify their lobbying at the federal level.

Research on CNM and FNP activities is useful to shed light on a subject that is practically unknown in Brazilian political science. Investigating municipal lobbying involves broad theoretical implications, as the work dialogues with the literature by testing, building, and proposing hypotheses to ascertain their applicability to the national context. Since municipalities are federative entities in Brazil with constitutional autonomy, this study helps test the plausibility of theoretical premises in a federal scenario where municipalities are not so-called "state creatures". Reviewing intermunicipal intergovernmental lobbying in Brazil by analyzing the cases proposed can expand the possibilities for comparative research available to researchers in other countries.

As cities have gained more roles and federal regulations have increased since the 1990s (Beer, 1978; Conlan; Posner, 2008), municipal lobbying and government exchanges have grown. In this context, the study has three objectives. The first is to examine the lobbying agenda within the political and economic context (Loftis; Kettler, 2015) and considering government actions. The second is to examine whether the lobbying agenda defined by the political leaders of the associations corresponded to the aspirations of their member municipalities (De Soto, 1995). The third is to investigate how the existence of an institutional locus (Cammisa, 1995), the *Comitê de Assuntos*

⁵ CNM was established in 1980. It seeks to consolidate the municipal movement and support the self-sufficiency of municipalities. It defends mostly smaller and medium-sized municipalities (with populations ranging from 20,000 to 150,000) in relation to the federal government and congress. It has 4,825 member municipalities. Official website: <<https://www.cnm.org.br/>>.

⁶ There is a third association, the Brazilian Association of Municipalities (ABM), which is the oldest (founded in 1946), but it has lost power over time, and now has only 150 associated cities.

Federativos (Committee of Federative Affairs - CAF), which comprised federal organs and municipal associations (Grin; Abrucio, 2018b), influenced municipal lobbying.

In line with Kolsut (2018) and Jensen (2019), this article discusses political, institutional, and socioeconomic factors that influenced CNM and FNP lobbying at the federal level. The activities of these entities maintain and strengthen the federative system by defending municipal interests before the federal government (Nugent, 2009). The limited study of intergovernmental relations in Brazil, and the activities of CNM and FNP as interest groups, are key reasons that justify this research.

In this light, the study has three research questions. 1) How does the economic, political, and social context influence intergovernmental lobbying? 2) To what extent does the size of associations in terms of the number of members affect the organization of their lobbying actions? Third, how does the functioning of an institutionalized lobbying arena affect the political action of municipal associations?

This article is organized as follows. The first section, "Theoretical framework: the literature on intergovernmental lobby in literature", organizes the literature and presents four hypotheses. The second section, "Methodological strategy", describes the methodological procedures. The third section, "Findings and discussion", emphasizes three main issues: conditions in the political and economic environment and central government actions; agendas under discussion: municipal priorities and policies adopted by CNM and FNP; and the CAF as the institutionalized arena of intergovernmental lobbying. The final section presents the conclusions of the research.

Theoretical framework: the literature on intergovernmental lobbying

Intergovernmental lobbying is critical to the vitality of local governments because of its capacity to influence national political processes, which explains the rise of local lobbying associations. The way these associations engage with intergovernmental lobbying is an important indicator of the character of intergovernmental relations (Entwistle; Laffin, 2003). While there is vast knowledge on interest groups, there is little specific research about governmental associations and intergovernmental lobbying (Cigler, 2012; Shot, 2015). Intergovernmental lobbying is a political process and a coordinated effort to defend interests and influence federal policymaking (Farkas, 1971; Haider, 1974; Beer, 1978; Chenier, 2009; Kettunen; Kull, 2009; Nugent, 2009). This collective action is organized through municipal representation associations that are classified as public-interest groups (Radyn; Boase, 2000).

In general, larger and richer municipalities are better prepared for intergovernmental lobbying, while smaller and less wealthy ones are less inclined to defend their demands (Browne, 1978; Callanan; Tatham, 2014; Payson, 2018). This confers legitimacy to a central organization that can represent interests common to municipalities (Callanan, 2012; Agranoff, 2014). For municipalities to influence national

policymaking, their collective intergovernmental lobbying is essential (Farkas, 1971; Smith, 2008).

The literature has focused on three factors that shape lobbying strategies of municipal lobbying associations: their institutional structures, their access to the upper levels of government, and the composition of association members (Shot, 2015). This study organizes its theoretical model differently as it is focused on explaining main factors that influence intergovernmental lobbying: a) external aspects (the political and economic context); b) characteristics of the associated cities; and c) the institutional nature (the arena where the lobbying takes place, and the type of policies demanded).

External conditioners to intergovernmental lobbying

Two factors important to intergovernmental lobbying are highlighted in the literature: a) social and economic environment variables; and b) actions of the federal government that impact localities. According to Loftis and Kettler (2015, p. 1), "municipalities taking a strategic approach should consider national politics when formulating lobbying strategies to maximize their chance of success. When the national political landscape provides more opportunities for success for local governments, they should spend more on lobbying".

The literature emphasizes the relationship between social issues (demands for public services) and economic and tax vulnerabilities (low tax revenue) with municipal lobbying at the federal level (Lowery *et al.*, 2012; Loftis; Kettler, 2015). There are connections between intergovernmental lobbying and the national political and economic setting that shape the behavior of municipal associations (Peterson, 1981; Hays, 1991). Political opportunities such as the national political "climate", changes in the ruling party leadership, fluctuations in approval or rejection of given issues, and alignment between the political views of the associations and the national government influence lobbying (Entwistle; Laffin, 2003; Smith, 2008). In the economic arena, recessions and unemployment increase the chance of cities investing in intergovernmental lobbying (Loftis; Kettler, 2015).

In the United States, Lowery *et al.* (2012) highlight that the economic decline that provoked fiscal stress of the states, coupled with the Republican Party's control of Congress – with its growing hostility towards the public sector – impacted the actions of local government associations. The implementation of public policies depended on the capacity of these interest groups to shape public decision-making at the upper levels. This means that the rise in intergovernmental lobbying could not be ignored, in spite of opposition from the Republican Party. In response to its aversion to a growing public sector, governmental lobbying expanded, including from Republican-led state governments.

Intergovernmental relations influence federal government actions that impact localities. "Central-local relations are like a game, in which central and local participants maneuver to secure advantages, use resources that maximize their influence on the results, and try not to become dependent on other players" (Rhodes, 1988, p. 42). An important issue is to evaluate how relationships are created between the different political parties represented in the central sphere and local government associations.

Local governments lack direct electoral representation in the national congress. Yet they are willing to pay to get additional attention in their national capital to defend their needs (Loftis; Kettler, 2015). Localities are part of the federal system and engage with other spheres of government, which leads them to demand attention through actions at the federal level (Payson, 2018). This situation influences the form and content of intergovernmental lobbying. There is a link between intergovernmental lobbying and federal policies and actions. Local governments make program and expenditure choices to expand their chances in these actions. Since the possibility of political and economic dependency on the federal government is also pertinent, municipal choices can be understood by considering what municipalities seek to obtain from the national government and how.

Two mechanisms explain how municipal associations mobilize efforts to influence the federal government (Callanan; Tatham, 2014). First, financial mobilization (to secure financial support to face changes in the economic and social context). Second, action in relation to federal regulations.

Internal conditioners of intergovernmental lobbying

Populational and socioeconomic heterogeneity and the number of associated municipalities strongly influence the content of intergovernmental lobbying (Farkas, 1971; Hays, 1991; Cammisa, 1995) (Chenier, 2009; Lowery *et al.*, 2012). Municipalities focus their lobbying on issues over which they try to obtain jurisdictional responsibility and those in which their interests coincide (Hays, 1991). However, internal conflicts in mostly rural county associations in the United States are reflected on their agendas. The greater the internal conflicts within these counties, the fewer were the lobbying issues these associations defended (Cigler, 1994). This study found that the heterogeneity of members of municipal lobbying associations influences the interests and strategies of intergovernmental lobbying.

Municipal interests can be more cohesive or more fragmented, based on their regional diversity, population size, and social and economic indicators. Therefore, associations representing economically stronger regions prioritize lobbying over regulatory issues, while weaker ones prefer to focus on gaining fiscal support (De Soto, 1995; Callanan; Tatham, 2014). Municipal associations operate in many fields, yet their lobbying usually gives little priority to distributive issues (Donas; Beyers, 2013). But the

question is how and whether municipal associations can mobilize political resources and generate territorial coordination (VGN, 2008; Chenier, 2009; Kettunen; Kull, 2009; Nugent, 2009; Kjærgaard, 2016). It is important to recognize that their capacity “to identify and pursue common interests is hindered by the diversity of municipal conditions. Associations represent municipalities with widely different populations” (Shot, 2015, p. 42-43).

Heterogeneity also results from the role of political parties within these associations (Johnson, 2005; Nownes, 2014; Payson, 2018; Jensen, 2019) and the influence of parties on relations among the municipalities. The ideological spectrum can weaken or intensify the defense of interests before the national government. Moreover, larger municipalities are more prone to lobbying by themselves, rather than relying on municipal associations. De Soto (1995) compared the priorities of direct municipal lobbying with those defined by representative associations. Municipal representatives tend to confer equal weight to taxes and revenues, environment, and public safety, while entities representing smaller municipalities prioritize taxes and revenues.

Party disputes are a critical issue in intergovernmental lobbying. The actions of governor associations in the United States suggest that party lines have gained weight in federative disputes (Jensen, 2017). Although the analytical focus of regional lobbying associations is intergovernmental relations, party ideology influences this lobbying. In sum, lobbying will be effective if three conditions are met: municipalities must be tightly united, they must show that they are experiencing real fiscal pain, and demonstrate that they have the best response (Smith, 2008).

Dissonance between municipal associations and the individual member cities can be explained by the logic of collective action (Olson, 2015): larger and more heterogeneous groups find alignment more challenging than smaller ones, and larger groups suffer from greater disagreement between political leaders and the cities.

Institutional conditioners of intergovernmental lobbying

Lobbying by the associations prioritizes cash-transfer and income redistribution programs, and regulatory issues to offset limitations of individual municipalities in political engagement (Peterson, 1981; Hays, 1991) and obtaining fiscal assistance (Pelissero; England, 1987). The type of public policies addressed (regulatory, distributive, and redistributive) (Lowi, 1972; Cammisa, 1995) results not only from the resources and capabilities of representative associations, but also from the existence of suitable intergovernmental links (Donas; Beyers, 2013). Municipal interest groups working on the national level can be present in different arenas (Baumgartner; Leech, 1998) or unify their work through entities such as the National League of Cities or the Conference of Mayors, to draw a parallel between US organizations and CNM and FNP in Brazil.

Municipal lobbying is facilitated when municipalities have personal and political ties with the higher echelons of power (Haider, 1974; Cigler, 1994; Cammisa, 1995; Nownes, 1999; Nugent, 2009; Shot, 2015). When comparing interest groups, Radyn and Boase (2000) point out that, in Canada, where the executive branch is stronger, interest groups prioritize administrative entities, while in the United States, the associations prefer lobbying Congress. Institutionalized arenas for intergovernmental power allow municipalities to lobby as insiders in decision-making (Abney, 1988; Chenier, 2009). Cigler (1994) observed that state lawmakers in the US considered municipal associations “just another interest group,” which discouraged the organization of intergovernmental channels of expression to meet local demands.

It is important to identify institutionalized intergovernmental forums in which municipalities participate, since the decisions of these forums impact municipalities (Nugent, 2009). In Australia, the Australian Local Government Association had a seat on the Council of Australian Governments (Painter, 1998). In Switzerland, the Swiss Union of Cities and Towns and the Swiss Association of Cities partake in the Council of Canton Governments (Schmitt, 2006). Subnational lobbying in Brussels, the seat of the EU, institutionalizes the efforts of regional governments (Greenwood, 2011; Callanan, 2012; Callanan; Tatham, 2014). Therefore, the more formal the intergovernmental relations between local and national governments, the less likely that local interest demands remain ignored (Nugent, 2009; Agranoff, 2014).

However, can municipal associations be coopted by federal authorities and thus have their influence reduced when defending municipal interests? (Berman, 2003). What is the role of intergovernmental lobbying if there is asymmetry between local and central powers? (Entwistle; Laffin, 2003). These questions derive from the existence of intergovernmental arenas in which cities generally have less organizational, political, and technical resources than federal government entities. Thus, it is important to analyze how these forums are organized to allow for municipal lobbying, which generates a type of asset called the “advice advantage” (Nownes, 1999, p. 113). Accordingly, a political challenge for municipal lobbying is to overcome the “fact that they [municipalities] lack a formal position as federal actors” (Haider, 1974, p. 256). For this reason, political-institutional recognition is critical to municipal lobbying, and intergovernmental arenas are useful for this goal (Lapira; Thomas; Baumgartner, 2014).

According to Chenier (2009) and Johnson (2005), two mechanisms trigger municipal lobbying. First, institutionalized intergovernmental networks influence decision-making whenever a minimal consensus is a possible outcome. Second, if more integrated channels of intergovernmental relations are not capable of building consensual demands, and the cost of acting collectively is considered too high to obtain benefits, municipal entities can bypass these channels and negotiate directly with the national government.

In short, three dimensions that influence municipal intergovernmental lobbying should be considered: environmental contextual factors, characteristics of local governments, and the existence of institutionalized intergovernmental channels.

Developing hypotheses

The construction of the hypotheses assumed that the relationship between the causal factors and the effects on the intergovernmental lobbying of the CNM and FNP can be explained by the causal mechanisms. The causal mechanisms are events that change the relationships between a set of elements in similar environments and different situations. Causal mechanisms are independent factors that allow us to understand how X (independent variable) affects Y (dependent variable). The mechanisms seek to make intelligible the regularities observed in a phenomenon and how they occur, considering the hypotheses (Hedstrom, 2009). For this reason, Mahoney (2003) argues that causal mechanisms help to overcome the "black box" problem that arises when causal inference seeks to establish associations between variables.

Intergovernmental lobbying is influenced by the economic and political situation

Municipal associations define their lobbying agenda based on the political and economic situation and federal government policies. We assume that entities adjust their tactics in the face of changes to external conditions. To the extent that cities can be affected by economic and political variables, it seems reasonable to assume that they will invest in lobbying to defend their interests (Loftis; Kettler, 2015). We expect that political and economic variables influence local governments and serve as inputs for lobbying of municipal associations. The economic situation and political climate produce pressure for greater provision of public services, which in turn drives intergovernmental lobbying (Peterson, 1981; Hays, 1991; Entwistle; Laffin, 2003; Smith, 2008). Research seeks to gather evidence about lobbying in the light of opportunities, threats, strengths, and weaknesses existing at the federal level that impact relations between municipal associations and the federal government (Rhodes, 1988; Entwistle; Laffin, 2003; Loftis; Kettler, 2015).

Given that the economic, political and social context does not present constant factors, variables or even conditions, constructing hypotheses with a limited scope does not allow capturing the diversity of issues over the 18 years and five different governments at the federal level considered in this study. For this reason, the decision was made to build a broader theoretical hypothesis, as the literature has worked with this topic, and operationalize it empirically in each period of national government from 2001 to 2018.

Hypothesis 1 (H1): *The economic, political, and social context, as well as federal policies, induce intergovernmental lobbying to seek financial and regulatory protection.*

Size and heterogeneity influence the lobbying alignment between locations and associations

Various challenges arise when mobilizing political resources and securing coordination among heterogeneous municipalities that can produce divergences between the political leaders of the municipal associations and the localities (De Soto, 1995; Kjærgaard, 2016). According to the logic of collective action (Olson, 2015), larger and more heterogeneous groups find alignment more challenging than smaller ones, which can give political leaders of rank-and-file municipal associations more autonomy. In this light, we assume that groups with more associates face more difficulty to engaging in collective actions that express shared interests and a common intergovernmental lobbying agenda.

This hypothesis questions whether municipal characteristics are inputs that influence the behavior of municipal associations. Measures that could capture the dispersion within and the internal diversity of a group can offer parameters to discuss this argument (Shot, 2015). Intergovernmental lobbying is a type of action whose content and form derive from the cohesion of interests of the associated municipalities (Hays, 1991). We expected to find evidence that mismatched agendas between cities and municipal associations result from disparities between lobbying actions of the associations and the demands brought forth by the cities.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): *The greater the number of municipal members in national associations, the higher the probability of disagreement between the leaders of associations and cities.*

In the government of President Fernando Henrique Cardoso (1999-2002), the Secretariat of Federative Affairs was created to strengthen ties with municipalities. However, under Lula from 2003 to 2010, it became much more formalized with the Committee of Federative Affairs (CAF). During the two terms of President Dilma Rousseff (2011-2016), this arena gradually lost importance, which created incentives for the return of bilateral lobbying between each municipal association and the federal government. During the Michel Temer government (2016-2018), the CAF was extinguished and the relations of the municipalities with the central government went back to the model in use during the Fernando Henrique Cardoso tenure.

This hypothesis investigates whether the CAF conditioned the proposals submitted by intergovernmental lobbying (Nownes, 1999). This institutional locus (Donas; Beyers, 2013; Lapira; Thomas; Baumgartner, 2014) was responsible for organizing intergovernmental relations between the federal government and municipal associations. In pursuing fiscal help (Pelissero; England, 1987), for instance, this forum

persuaded the federal government to expand the Municipal Participation Fund (FPM). For CNM, this was an achievement attained with the federal executive branch. Greenwood (2011) affirms that the recognition of arenas provides greater legitimacy to connections between the levels of government and reduces the view of subnational agents as "lobbyists." Formal arenas for negotiations between the federal government and localities can reinforce intra-state channels of lobbying and the behavior of local political actors as well as weaken incentives to bilateral lobbying.

Hypothesis 3 (H3): *Institutionalized arenas for lobbying are effective and benefit all national associations.*

Methodological strategy

The study investigates the intergovernmental lobbying of the CNM and the FNP. Although municipalities are governed by elected public authorities, this does not change the analytical focus: intergovernmental lobbying is carried out by institutionalized associations in favor of localities and not in favor of incumbents. For this reason, municipalities and not citizens are the object of the actions of the CNM and FNP. Based on Gerring (2004), this is a type I case study as it addresses the CNM and FNP from 2001 to 2018. It is a type of confirmatory research as it tests theory and concepts about intergovernmental lobbying in Brazil. Considering the hypotheses, the causal relationship analyzed is probabilistic as it depends on the economic and political context, federal public policies, actions of the CNM and FNP and their associated municipalities, and the functioning of the CAF, which can alter intergovernmental lobbying. The methodological strategy attends to the characteristics highlighted by Gerring (2004) to define a case study research design.

The period between 2001-2018 was selected for two reasons: a) to be able to conduct a longitudinal analysis that can identify whether the lobbying demands can be organized around structuring axes over time; and to b) control the selection bias that could result from relations between the FNP and CNM and the federal government. Over this period, Brazil had four presidents from three political parties (PSDB, PT, and MDB). The chosen period is useful for expanding the variance of the phenomenon (governments from different parties) and for testing the hypotheses and causal mechanisms. Finally, there is limited data available from before 2001.

For the first hypothesis, the main source of information was the study of news archives to identify contextual factors that could be correlated to intergovernmental lobbying, as follows:

- It first identified political and economic facts between 2001-2018 using the online archives of Brazil's two largest newspapers (the Folha de S. Paulo and O Estado de S. Paulo), as well as the Correio Braziliense, the largest newspaper in the Federal District, where the CNM and FNP are based.

- We used search keywords: “*Frente Nacional dos Prefeitos*” (National Mayor's Front), “*Confederação Nacional dos Municípios*” (National Confederation of Municipalities), “*municípios*” (municipalities), and “*governo federal*” (federal government). We classified issues prioritized by these associations, considering the political and economic situation, and federal public policies associated with these facts.
- The open-source software Iramuteq was used to group similar content, which was transferred to an Excel worksheet that provided the database for the empirical analysis.
- Documental analysis of lobbying demands made by CNM and FNP before the federal government and evaluation of the main themes of the economic and political situation.
- Comparison of the economic, political, and social facts and federal public policies with CNM and FNP lobbying demands classified according to type of policy (Lowi, 1972; Hays, 1991; Cammisa, 1995), to identify their relation to the country's political and economic setting and federal government initiatives. We used the positions expressed by the associations in official documents.

The second method was a review of documents found on the CNM and FNP websites, including proposals made to the federal government, to obtain information about their political and institutional agendas, in line with research by Shot (2015) on the Canadian Association of Municipalities. This informational content is used as input for CNM and FNP lobbying. We tried to determine whether the demographic and socioeconomic profile of the municipalities influences the type of interest defended and to which level of government or jurisdictional area the demand is submitted (Cigler, 1994; Shot, 2015).

The third instrument was a web survey (via Survey Monkey), which was applied to a simple random probability sample of municipalities (90 percent confidence interval and 10 percent margin of error). It checked whether the priorities and policies adopted by CNM's and FNP's national leadership coincided with the municipal demands (De Soto, 1995). Marks, Haesly, and Mbaye (2002) relied on a survey to identify the priorities of subnational government associations in relation to the European Union. The survey focused on municipal demands, but also on perceptions regarding the priorities and assessment of the work of the municipal associations.

The survey questions were formulated to obtain information for H2. Therefore, only survey questions were analyzed that allowed the opinion of municipal leaders (in principle, mayors or political advisors designated by political leaders to answer the survey) to be compared with those expressed by CNM and FNP leaders. This way of comparing opinions and perceptions to assess whether there is agreement or disagreement on topics of common interest between the two types of actors is based on De Soto (1995), who compared the responses of US cities with county associations. This study made comparisons in the same way, although De Soto used a survey for both

groups, while in this work, since at the national level there are only the CNM and FNP, the survey was applied only to municipalities associated with these entities. The research was applied considering the data set of municipalities associated with the CNM and the FNP. The questions that make up the survey were obtained in interviews with FNP and CNM leaders for later checking with the municipalities. The survey is available online at Appendices 1 and 2: <https://osf.io/7a2hq/?view_only=a6c911b010464a889851e16edc48d8cc>.

As a fourth resource, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the national leadership of CNM and FNP to compare their political priorities with those expressed by the cities. This tool was used by Cammisa (1995), who interviewed leaders of subnational associations about their lobbying at the US Congress. In this study, this technique was used to analyze the performance of the CNM and FNP at the CAF, given that it was an institutionalized arena that included both entities. The goal was to assess whether intergovernmental lobbying aligned interests between political leaders and associated municipalities, considering their socioeconomic, populational, political, and economic profiles. The semi-structured interviews are available on the online Appendix 3 and 4: <https://osf.io/7a2hq/?view_only=a6c911b010464a889851e16edc48d8cc>.

Findings and discussion

Inputs from the political and economic environment and from central government actions

Tables 1a and 2a show that the lobbying agenda of CNM and FNP, from 2011 to 2018, was organized around three fronts: municipal revenues, municipal expenses, and financing of public policies. Each entity is presented separately and two types of political and economic environmental factors and central government actions are listed that influenced the lobbying of CNM and FNP. These contextual factors were derived from the research in the newspapers that allowed identifying, in each year, the main issues that affected the municipalities, considering the manifestation of the CNM and FNP in these press vehicles. The second step was to analyze the documents to identify FNP and CNM actions to defend municipal interests, which allowed the actions to be summarized under these three main themes: municipal revenues, municipal expenses and financing of public policies. Each column identifies the issues of intermunicipal lobbying in each presidential term from 2001 to 2018.

The tables were organized by associating, in each presidential administration between 2001 and 2018, three types of contextual factors that influenced intergovernmental lobbying: political factors (P1, P2...), economic factors (E1, E2...), social factors (S1, S2...), and federal public policies (PP1, PP2...) with the lobbying actions of FNP and CNM on each of the three issues. In the case of FNP, we found 6 political facts, 6 social ones, 11 economic ones, and 21 federal public policies that

influenced its lobbying. In the case of CNM, the research found 5 political facts, 9 economic ones, and 24 federal public policies that influenced its lobbying. The FNP proposed 21 lobbying actions regarding municipal revenues, 9 on municipal expenses, and 22 measures related to the financing of 22 public policies. The CNM proposed 15 measures on municipal revenues, 11 on municipal expenses, and 28 considering the financing of 25 public policies.

It is worth noting that, on each of these three issues, the lobbying of the FNP and CNM lasted for one or more presidential terms, which can be seen by considering their presence over time. The empty cells, colored in gray, show, in each presidential term, an absence of lobbying, while the white lines emphasize the lobbying actions and their connections with contextual factors. However, in many cases, the same lobbying action was motivated by different or additional contextual factors in different political situations. For example, during the first Lula government (2003-2006), lobbying regarding municipal revenues was motivated by the view on the municipal economic crisis (E3) and two federal public policies (LRF and tax reform). In the Temer administration (2016-2018), the fiscal adjustment and budget cuts of the federal government (E5) and federal fiscal crisis (E10) were also important in justifying the FNP's lobbying actions.

The information available in each table considers the codification as follows in Tables 1a and 2a:

Table 1a – Codifications of contextual factors influencing the FNP lobby

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Political facts: political transition between administrations (P1), 2013 population protests (P2), protests against corruption (P3), political crisis in the federal government (P4), political and social polarization (P5), social pressure for better public services (P6). 2. Social facts: rise in cases of dengue fever (S1), urban criminality (S2), violence related to drug trafficking (S3), crisis in urban public transportation (S4), housing crisis (S5), public health crisis (Zika virus and microcephaly) (S6). 3. Economic facts: federal fiscal crisis (E1), economic slump (E2), municipal fiscal crisis (E3), international economic and financial crisis (E4), falling federal and municipal tax revenues (E5), fiscal adjustment and budget cuts of the federal government (E6), falling income and employment (E7), fiscal war – municipalities dispute investments by offering tax cuts (E8), 2014 FIFA World Cup (E9), federal fiscal crisis and public sector financing crisis (E10), energy crisis (E11). 4. Public policies: LRF⁷ (PP1), CPMF (PP2), tax reform (PP3), SUS (PP4), PNATE (PP5), National School Lunch Program (PNAE) (PP6), PSF (PP7), PNM (PP8), National Solid Waste Program (PP9), Basic Education Maintenance and Development and Teacher Appreciation Fund (FUNDEB) (PP10), Growth Acceleration Program (PAC)⁸ (PP11), federal government tax reduction policy (PP12), <i>Minha Casa, Minha Vida</i> [housing policy] (PP13), Mais Medicos [More Physicians] (PP14), public expenditure limits (PP15), federal government urban agenda (PP16), PNDE (PP17), Urban Public Transportation Promotion Program (PP18), National Sanitation Program (PNS) (PP19), SNE (PP20), PRONATEC (PP21), SNC (PP22). |
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⁷ The Fiscal Responsibility Law was enacted in 2000 and defined rules for public finances at all levels of government.

⁸ The Growth Acceleration Program was a federal initiative created in 2007 to stimulate the economy through public works.

Table 2a – Codifications of contextual factors influencing the CNM lobby

1. Political facts: 2013 population protests (P1), protests against corruption (P2), political crisis in the federal government (P3), political and social polarization (P4), social pressure for public services (P5).
2. Economic facts: federal macroeconomic balance (E1), economic slump (E2), municipal fiscal crisis (E3), international economic and financial crisis (E4), falling federal and municipal tax revenues (E5), fiscal adjustment and federal budget cuts (E6), falling income and employment (E7), social security reform (E8), energy crisis (E9).
3. Public policies: LRF (PP1), CPMF (PP2), tax reform (PP3), real increase of minimum wage (PP4), SUS (PP5), PNATE (PP6), PNAE (PP7), EJA (PP8), PETI (PP9), CadÚnico⁹ (PP10), Charter of the Cities (PP11), PSF (PP12), ACS (PP13), PNM (PP14), National Solid Waste Program (PP15), FUNDEB (PP16), PAC (PP17), tax reduction policy (PP18), *Minha Casa, Minha Vida* housing program (PP19), More Physicians program (PP20), PNMU (PP21), PRONAF (PP22), public expenditure ceilings (PP23), PNE (PP24), PNS (PP25).

Analyzing the CNM and FNP lobbying

Based on documents made available and the websites of CNM (<<https://www.cnm.org.br/>>), *Marcha dos Prefeitos* (the March of Mayors) (<<http://www.marcha.cnm.org.br/>>), and FNP (<<https://www.fnp.org.br/>>), we observe that the political and economic situation and federal public policies were key inputs for intergovernmental lobbying. In all the presidential terms, there were explanatory nexuses between social vulnerability (sparking demand for public services) and the country's economic and political situation and the municipal fiscal situation (less local tax revenues) and municipal lobbying at the federal level (Hays, 1991; Loftis; Kettler, 2015; Lowery *et al.*, 2012).

⁹ *CadÚnico* is a combined federal database that includes all low-income citizens eligible to receive government aid under all existing programs.

Table 1 – FNP lobbying demands and their association with the political and economic situation and public policies of the federal government

Issues	FHC (2001-2002)	Lula I (2003-2006)	Lula II (2007-2010)	Dilma I (2011-2014)	Dilma II (2015-2016)	Temer (2016-2018)
Municipal revenues						
1. Service tax rates (ISS)	E2/E10/PP1		E4/E5/E8	E3/E5/E8/P6	E3/E5/E8	
2. Taxes on assets (ISS, ITR, ITBI and IPTU) ¹⁰					E3/E4/E5/E8	E3/E10/E5
3. New IPTU tax code				E3/E5/P6		
4. Federal fund transfers: increase in the FPM		E3		E3/E5		
5. Federal transfers: CIDE ¹¹		E3/PP3				
6. Federal fund transfers to offset drop in FPM ¹²		E3/PP3				E1/E3/E10/E5
7. Municipalization of CIDE		E3		E3/E5		E1/E3/E10/E5
8. Education voucher transfers ¹³		E3				
9. Federal fund transfers: oil royalties ¹⁴		E3	E4/E5	E3/E5/PP3		E1/E3/E5/E10
10. ITR		E3/PP1	E4/E5			
11. PASEP ¹⁵		E3/PP3				
12. Federal credits for financially sound cities		E3/PP1				
13. Export Promotion Fund: replace losses in Manufactured Goods Tax (IPI)				E3/E5		
14. Duty-Free-Shop Law (border towns) ¹⁶						
15. Federal emergency aid to cities				E3/E5		
16. Withholding of ISS of federal organs					E3/E10/E5	
17. Withholding of Corporate Income Tax (IRPJ)					E3/E10/E5	
18. Participation in repatriation of illegal funds ¹⁷					E3/E10/E5/E7	E1/E3/E10/E5
19. Access to court deposits to guarantee loans					E3/E10/E5	E3/E10//E5/PP1
20. Specific FPM for G100 municipalities ¹⁸					E3/E10/E5/PP1	
21. Outstanding payments under the LRF					E3/E11//E5/PP1	E1/E10/E5/PP1
22. Tax to Fund Street Lights (COSIP) ¹⁹	E3/E11					



¹⁰ Taxes on Services (ISS), Urban Properties (IPTU), and Assets Transferred Among Living Natural Persons (ITBU) are taxes that municipalities are authorized to collect.

¹¹ Contributions of Intervention in the Economic Domain (CIDE) are taxes on some products that are collected only by the federal government.

¹² The Municipalities Participation Fund is a redistributive fund guaranteed under the constitution and from which the federal government must make transfers to municipalities.

¹³ The Education Voucher is a 2.5-percent bonus paid by companies to their employees which must be used only for education costs.

¹⁴ The transfer of oil royalty funds to municipalities was a federative dispute that came in the wake of the discovery of oil in ultra-deep waters (in the pre-salt layer). These funds should be shared by cities and paid by the Brazilian state-controlled oil company, Petrobras.

¹⁵ The Public Servant Asset Program (PASEP) was a fund created for public-sector employees and intended for all levels of public servants.

¹⁶ The Duty-Free Shop Law (2012) allowed the installation of tax-free retailers in Brazilian border towns.

¹⁷ Using legal means, the federal government managed to repatriate funds illegally invested in other countries or which resulted from embezzlement of public money.

¹⁸ The G-100 is a group of cities with large populations but low tax revenues that seek special treatment by the federal government.

¹⁹ COSIP is a tax on street lighting that municipalities began to charge after a 2002 constitutional amendment was approved.

Table 1 – FNP lobbying demands and their association with the political and economic situation and public policies of the federal government (Cont.)

Issues	FHC (2001-2002)	Lula I (2003-2006)	Lula II (2007-2010)	Dilma I (2011-2014)	Dilma II (2015-2016)	Temer (2016-2018)
Municipal expenses						
1. Renegotiation of debts with the federal government		E3/PP1	E4/E5/PP1	E3/E5/PP1	E3/E10/E5/PP1	E3/E10/E5/PP1
2. Rules for court ordered payments (<i>precatórios</i>) ²⁰		E3/PP1	E4/E5/PP1	E3/E5/PP1	E3/E10/E5/PP1	E3/E10/E5/PP1
3. Exemption: federal taxes on municipal purchases		E3				
4. Negotiation/offsetting of social-security debts			E4/E5	E3/E5/PP1		E1/E3/E5/E10
5. Extension of time to close landfills				E3/E5/PP9		
6. Matching of social security and federal accounts ²¹				E3/E5	E3/E5/E10/PP1	E3/E5/E10/PP1
7. Salaries (teachers' minimum wage [PNM])				E3/E5/PP8	E3/E5/E10/PP8	E1/E5/PP8/PP1
8. Street lighting fund transfer					E3/E5/E10	
9. Time to implement local sanitation plans					E3/E5/E10/PP19	
Financing of public policies						
1. Sanitation	S1	S1/PP19		E1/E10/S1/S6/P19		
2. Public safety/create national system		S2				
3. Public safety/national citizen security program			E4/E5/S2			
4. Urban mobility / traffic safety		E3/S3/PP16				
5. Urban mobility/taxes on public transport rates				E3/E5/PP18	E2/E3/E5/E7/S4	
6. Urban mobility/street upkeep/urban mobility programs (PAC)		S3/PP16	S4	E1/E2/E3/E5/PP18	E1/E3/E5/PP11	E1/E3/E5/PP11
7. Urban mobility/Green CIDE: finance urban public transportation						E3/E5/S4/PP18
8. Education/school lunches (PNAE)	E1/E2/PP6					E3/E5/E10/PP6
9. Education/public school transportation (PNATE)		E3/PP5				E1/E5/E10/PP5
10. Education/FUNDEB		E3/PP6	E4/E5/PP10			
11. Education/expand National Technical Education Program (PRONATEC)				E1/E3/E5/P2/P6		



²⁰ Court-ordered payments (*precatórios*) is a debt a public entity has with a private individual or business that a court determines must be paid.

²¹ Matching of social security accounts is a procedure in which the federal government and municipalities negotiate the payment of such debts the latter have with the former.

Table 1 – FNP lobbying demands and their association with the political and economic situation and public policies of the federal government (Cont.)

Issues	FHC (2001-2002)	Lula I (2003-2006)	Lula II (2007-2010)	Dilma I (2011-2014)	Dilma II (2015-2016)	Temer (2016-2018)
Financing of public policies						
12. Education/children's education				E1/E3/E5/P2/P6		
13. Education/National Education System (SNE)						E3/E5/E10/PP20
14. Education/National Education Development Plan			E4/E5/PP17			E3/E5/PP17
15. SUS/Family Health Program (PSF) ²²			E4/E5/PP4	E4/E5/E3/P2/P6	P2/P6/E10/S6/E5/PP2	E1/E5/PP4
16. SUS/More Physicians Program ²³					P2/P6/E3/E5/E10/PP14	E1/E3/E5/PP14
17. SUS/Constitutional Amendment (EC) 29/2000 ²⁴						E1/E3/E5/PP14
18. SUS/funding using the Financial Transaction Tax (CPMF)				E1/E2/E3/E5/P2/P6		S6/E5/E10/PP2
19. SUS/simplify rules for federal fund transfers						E1/E5/E10/PP4
20. Implement National Culture System (SNC)						E3/E5/E10/PP21
21. Low-income housing ²⁵		S5/PP16		E3/E5/E6/PP13	S5/E10/E3/E5/PP13	E1/E3/E5/PP13
22. Outstanding federal payments to cities						E1/E3/E5/E10

Source: Prepared by the author based on research in newspapers and documents from municipal associations.

²² The PSF is a public policy for basic and preventive care in municipalities; the local governments have to organize and hire professionals, who are paid with federal funds.

²³ *Programa Mais Médicos* (More Physicians Program) is a federal initiative that hired Cuban physicians to work in small towns and in the outskirts of large metropolises.

²⁴ The EC 29/2000 Constitutional Amendment defined percentages of public funds that must be invested in healthcare: municipalities must invest at least 15 percent of their revenues.

²⁵ *Minha Casa, Minha Vida* is a federal program designed to encourage building homes for the poor.

Table 2 – CNM lobbying demands and their association with political and economic conditions and public policies of the federal government

Issues	FHC (2001-2002)	Lula I (2003-2006)	Lula II (2007-2010)	Dilma I (2011-2014)	Dilma II (2015-2016)	Temer (2016-2018)
Municipal revenues						
1. ISS: expand the service tax base	E1	E3/PP3		E2/E3/E4/E5	E3/E4/E5	
2. ITR: transfer collection to municipalities		E3/PP3	E4/E5/PP18			
3. ITBI: collection in gradual levels		E3/PP3				
4. Federal credit to financially organized municipalities		PP1				
5. Federal transfers: increase in FPM		E3/PP3	E4/E5/PP18	E2/E5/E6/PP3		E2/E3/E5
6. Education voucher transfers		E3/PP3				
7. Federal transfers: participation in CIDE		E3/PP3				
8. Export Promotion Fund: replace losses in Manufactured Goods Tax (IPI)		E3/PP1				
9. End of federal tax offsets in FPM taxes		E3/PP1				
10. Oil royalties sharing			E4/E5/PP18	E2/E3/E4/E5/E6	E3/E4/PP18	
11. Distribution of state and federal taxes			E4/E5/PP18			
12. Federal emergency aid				E2/E3/E4/E5/E6		
13. Federal tax incentives				E2/E4/E5/E6/PP19		
14. COSIP	E3/E9					
15. National Municipal Investment Fund				E2/E3/E5		
Municipal expenses						
1. Environmental equipment purchases: tax exemption	E1/PP1	E3/PP1	E4/E5/PP1			E2/E3/E5
2. Negotiation of social-security debts	E1/PP1	E1/E3/PP1	E4/E5/PP1			
3. Associate municipal social security to the federal scheme					E3/E4/E8	
4. Maintain specific social security schemes			E4/E5/PP1			
5. Matching of social security and federal accounts	E1/PP1	E1/E3/PP1	E4/E5	E3/E4/E5/PP1		
6. PIS/PASEP: review calculations			E4/E5/PP1		E3/E4/PP1	
7. Court-ordered payments (<i>precatórios</i>)		E1/E3/PP1	E4/E5/PP1			
8. Renegotiation of debts with the federal government		E1/E3/PP1				E2/E3/E5/PP1
9. Salaries (teachers, community health workers, ACS)			E4/E5/PP13/PP14/PP4	E3/E5/PPA13/PP14	E3/E4/PP14	E2/E3/E5/PP14/PP23
10. Extension of time to close landfills			E4/E5/PP15	E3/E5/PP15	E3/E4/PP15	E2/E3/E5/PP15
11. Time to prepare Urban Mobility Plans (PNMU)				E3/E5/PP21		



Table 2 – CNM lobbying demands and their association with political and economic conditions and public policies of the federal government (Cont.)

Issues	FHC (2001-2002)	Lula I (2003-2006)	Lula II (2007-2010)	Dilma I (2011-2014)	Dilma II (2015-2016)	Temer (2016-2018)
Financing of public policies						
1. SUS/EC29/2000	PP5	E1/E3/PP5	E4/E5/PP5	E3//E5/PP5	E3/E5/PP2	
2. SUS/basic lower limit		E1/E3/PP5		E3/E5/PP5		
3. SUS/PSF/ACS		E3/PP12/PP13		E3/E5/PP12	PP2	
4. More Physicians Program			E4/E5/PP12/PP13	E3/P1/P5/PP20		
5. Urban mobility: reduce taxes on public transport rates		E3/PP18		E3/E5/PP18	E3/E4/PP21	E2/E4/P5/PP21/ PP23
6. Urban mobility/CIDE funds			E4/E5/PP18			
7. Anti-poverty programs / cash-transfer policies: Single Registration (<i>CadÚnico</i>)			E4/E5/PP18			
8. Anti-poverty programs/Child Labor Eradication Program (PETI)		E1/E3/PP9				
9. Anti-poverty programs/ <i>Bolsa Família</i> Program		E1/E3/PP10				
10. Education/FUNDEF		E1/E3/PP6/ PP7				
11. Education/FUNDEB			E4/E5/PP6/PP7	E3/E5/PP16		E2/E3/E5/PP8
12. Education/transportation and school lunch		E1/E3/PP8		E3/E5		E2/E3/PP6/PP7/ PP23
13. Children, youth, and adult education (EJA)		E3/PP16		E3/E5/PP8		
14. National Education Plan		E1/E3	E4/E5/PP8			E2/E3/E5/PP24
15. Tourism and Culture Policy			E4/E5			E2/E3/E5/P5
16. Farm policies/land credit		E1/E3/PP22	E4/E5/PP22			
17. Farm policies/National Family Farming Program (PRONAF)		E1/E3/PP22				
18. Farm policies/National Financing Fund		E1/E3				
19. Science and technology/Financing: research centers and digital inclusion		E1/E3	E2/E4/E5			
20. Urban policies/implementation of the City Statute ²⁶		E1/E3		E3/E5/PP19		



²⁶ The City Statute is a federal law that establishes rules for local urban planning.

Table 2 – CNM lobbying demands and their association with political and economic conditions and public policies of the federal government (Cont.)

Issues	FHC (2001-2002)	Lula I (2003-2006)	Lula II (2007-2010)	Dilma I (2011-2014)	Dilma II (2015-2016)	Temer (2016-2018)
Financing of public policies						
21. Urban policies/housing programs		E1/E3	PP17			
22. Urban policies/urban sanitation		E1/E3	PP17			
23. Urban policies/municipal transit authorities		E1/E3				
24. Urban policies/decentralize the National Traffic Safety Fund		E1/E3				
25. Urban policies/environment and sanitation		E1/E3				E2/E3/E5/PP25
26. Urban policies/Regional Development Fund		E1/E3		E3/E5/PP17		
27. Urban policies/reduction of municipal matching payments and PAC projects			E4/E5/PP17			
28. Urban policies/outstanding federal payments to cities			E4/E5/PP17			

Source: Prepared by the author based on research in newspapers and documents from municipal associations.

Regarding municipal revenues, intergovernmental lobbying was intensified by economic crises and their social effects (unemployment and higher demand for public services), because the volume of resources necessary to expand municipal actions impacted their finances (see Loftis; Kettler, 2015). Accordingly, based on Lowi (1972) and Cammisa (1995), lobbying designed to boost municipal revenues was: a) redistributive (intergovernmental fund transfers, such as the FPM, fuel tax [CIDE], oil royalties, and Export Promotion Fund); b) distributive (emergency government aid, other federal programs [PASEP and IRPJ]); b) regulatory, which increase municipal revenues (changing regulations for service taxes [ISS], rural property tax [ITR], municipalization of the CIDE, and new property tax [IPTU] and new real estate tax [ITBI]).

The pursuit of new sources of municipal revenues was continuous and aligned with two contextual factors. The first is the economic situation, given that weak economic activity impacts income and employment, municipal fiscal crises, public sector financing crises, and reduces federal tax receipts. In these cases, the mechanism of financial mobilization was always responsible for explaining municipal lobbying. The second are federal policies and government proposals such as the Fiscal Responsibility Law (LRF), tax reduction policies and tax reforms and their effects on local tax receipts. These external environmental conditions influenced what was being lobbied for (Loftis; Kettler, 2015).

Lobbying for the approval of the Tax to Fund Street Lighting (COSIP) exemplifies two conjunctural facts that represented windows of opportunity for CNM action: the 2001/2002 energy crisis and the political transition from the Fernando Henrique Cardoso administration (1995-2002) to the Lula administration (2003-2006), which helped approve this measure that generated revenues for municipalities (interviews 2 and 3). At the same line, the political transition that followed the impeachment of President Dilma (2015-2016) created a favorable setting, and in 2016, the Temer administration (2016-2018) agreed to share with municipalities funds repatriated from abroad to compensate for unpaid taxes (interviewee 5). "The complex political and economic situation played a big role and, within this process, we [CNM] managed to get a share of the funds repatriated from abroad" (interviewee 2). This is an example of how the national political mood and the change in administrations created a window of opportunity (Peterson, 1981; Hays, 1991; Entwistle; Laffin, 2003; Smith, 2008).

Within the scope of municipal expenses, some public policies were also influenced by lobbying. Demands involving social security debts, outstanding loans from the federal government and court-ordered payments were also influenced by a worsening national economic crisis and deteriorating municipal finances. Available documentation illustrates an association between the performance of the national and international economies – including the 2008 financial crisis – and intergovernmental lobbying.

The discussion of the social-security reform grew in importance because it would be implemented nationwide. Rules were also included for the minimum wage for teachers

and community health workers as well as new requirements for cities in the National Sanitation Plan, National Urban Mobility Plans, and National Solid Waste Plans. By the same token, the LRF impacted municipal expenses because its rules concerned expenses and debt, which were continuously criticized by the localities. The federal government's tax reduction policy reduced funds transferred to municipalities, which increased pressure on local expenditures. There were two types of policies: a) regulatory (e.g., rules for paying court-ordered payments, rules for paying wages of teachers and health agents and the time to implement the national sanitation plan and requirements under the National Urban Mobility Plan); and b) distributive (e.g., negotiation of debts with the federal government and with the social security authorities).

CNM and FNP demanded federal government action in relation to the financing of public policies (Payson, 2018), which influenced the content of lobbying. In some areas, lobbying sought direct federal funds (education and health), indirect funds (lower public transport fares through lower taxes), or loans (farming). In healthcare, because of the crisis of public financing and problems such as dengue fever (since 2001) and the Zika virus (since 2013), demands have gradually changed. For example, FNP began to back the restoration of a tax on financial transactions to secure funds (the Provisional Contribution on Financial Transactions had been applied on financial transactions from 1996 to 2007). There was a connection between social vulnerability (demand for public services) and intergovernmental lobbying of municipalities at the federal level (Lowery *et al.*, 2012; Loftis; Kettler, 2015).

CNM and FNP took advantage of the national political climate to gain political support and align their demands with the positions defended by the federal government (Entwistle; Laffin, 2003; Smith, 2008). An example of this was the *Mais Médicos* (More Physicians) program, which was launched following the 2013 protests in which society demanded better public services, among other issues. This process also resulted in continued lobbying for lower public transportation fares and less federal taxes, an initiative that was not successful at the federal level. This was also the case of demands for improved public safety measures to tackle urban criminality, which especially plagues large cities.

Of equal importance, particularly for the FNP, were the effects of social problems on state capitals and other cities. The issues included crime, traffic violence, the growth in cases of dengue fever and the Zika virus, the housing crisis, public health, and public transportation. These were also inputs for intergovernmental lobbying, including the More Physicians program:

Then, in the *Mais Médicos* [program] we had this, Brazil's economic growth, private healthcare booming, few doctors, and the evident results of these figures. Few available doctors and high demand for healthcare caused medical fees to skyrocket. At the time [2013], the cost of [hiring] a physician to work a few hours a week was close to R\$30,000, but small

towns and the outlying districts of large metropolises could not get hold of them [...]. This was an extremely well-known, example of a successful bottom-up program (interview 4).

Policies concerning financing for public housing had the largest number of lobbying demands from CNM and FNP, because the issue requires the implementation of actions at the local level. The importance given to proposals submitted to the federal government is greater (see Tables 1 and 2) for areas such as sanitation, public safety, urban mobility, education, health, housing, anti-poverty programs, tourism and culture, farm policy, and urban policies. Lobbying over distributive and redistributive issues was more common because securing financing for federal policies has become vital to their implementation. However, regulatory issues have also been relevant (e.g., rules for adhering to such policies, such as matching payments).

Considering federal policies and their effects on municipalities in relation to local revenues, expenses, and loans made to implement public policies, municipal associations mobilized to prevent the regulation of measures that they considered contrary to their interests. There is considerable evidence to support the hypothesis that the intergovernmental lobbying agenda is strongly influenced by the national political and economic situation. FNP's and CNM's lobbying demands show that their agenda was closely related to the economic and political situation and federal public policies. National issues and government initiatives were important inputs for intergovernmental lobbying (Lowery *et al.*, 2012; Loftis; Kettler, 2015) from 2001 to 2018. Economic, political, and social facts, as well as federal policies, help to explain the type of demands made (distributive, redistributive, or regulatory) and the content of municipal lobbying. Moreover, both explanatory mechanisms help to understand the motivations for the political behavior of municipal associations.

Agendas under discussion: municipal priorities and policies adopted by CNM and FNP

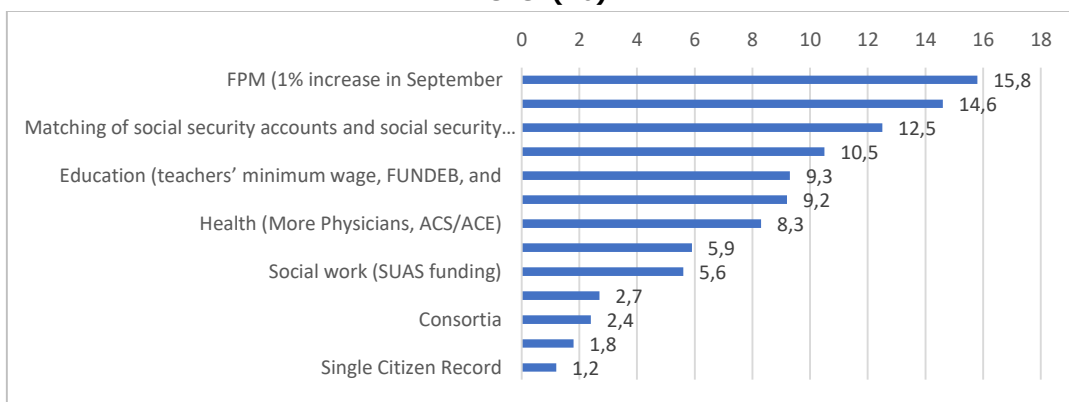
This section discusses whether the lobbying priorities defined by the CNM and FNP coincide with those of the municipalities. Based on a survey carried out with municipalities, we compare the vision of CNM and FNP, obtained through interviews, to assess whether municipalities have different lobbying priorities than the municipal associations. The argument is that this process is influenced by local heterogeneity (De Soto, 1995; Shot; 2015). In empirical terms, we analyzed three issues obtained from a web-survey: a) CNM and FNP lobbying priorities before the federal government; b) issues that should be prioritized by the federal government to meet municipal demands; and c) aspects that make it difficult for national associations to defend municipal interests.

The survey listed optional responses based on the document research on issues of municipal interest and asked municipalities to nominate the five they considered most important. The answers were compiled to rank the opinions of the municipalities. These

answers were then compared with those expressed by the political leaders of both associations. In relation to the third issue, we considered only the opinion of the cities, because it refers to how they perceive the lobbying of CNM and FNP.

The first question asked what, according to the cities, were the most important issues defended by both associations. For the CNM, graph 1, shows the responses from the municipalities.

Graph 1 – CNM lobbying priorities, according to the municipalities, at the federal level (%)



Source: Prepared by the author based on web-survey findings. Sample of 67 municipalities. N = 338 answers.

Considering the priorities expressed by the CNM, there is considerable alignment on the issues between the association and its members, except for two, for which the positions are reversed: a) a 1-percent increase in the Municipal Participation Fund is more important to the municipalities; b) reviewing the legislation on ISS is more relevant to CNM leaders. The other items are less important for both CNM and its members. Regarding the view of CNM, interviews 1, 2, and 3 suggested five lobbying priorities at the federal level: legislation to review ISS, social security reform, funding for federal programs (FUNDEB and More Physicians), sharing of oil royalties, and the federative pact. Of secondary importance were, a 1-percent increase in the FPM, sharing of education-salaries, a review of the law on administrative misconduct, and tax reform.

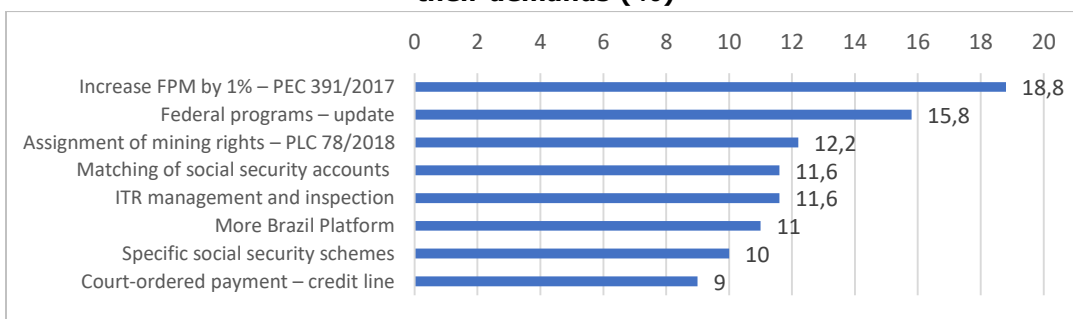
CNM has a more heterogeneous membership of municipalities (with almost 5,000 associates). According to Shot (2015), there would be greater discrepancy between them and the association leaders, something that we failed to observe because there is no significant dissonance between CNM and its affiliates, especially considering that these municipalities constitute a large and more heterogeneous group. There is little empirical support for this, as the greatest disagreement is over ISS and FPM. Considering the literature (De Soto, 1995; Smith, 2008; Callanan; Tatham, 2014), CNM prioritizes tax demands, as it mainly defends smaller cities. The four main issues indicated by the

municipalities have distributive and redistributive fiscal impact (an increase in the FPM, social security reform, tax reform, and sharing of oil royalties). Regulatory issues were less commonly mentioned (rules on public bids, rules on intermunicipal consortia, and *CadÚnico* procedures).

However, considering the coinciding agendas, we found that CNM manages to mobilize political resources and interests, and provide organizational coordination of territorially scattered and unique municipalities (VGN, 2008; Chenier, 2009; Kettunen; Kull, 2009; Nugent, 2009; Kjærgaard, 2016). The diversity of municipal conditions (Shot, 2015) has not hindered municipal representation, and the significant alignment between municipal and CNM demands represents, for most issues, inputs for intergovernmental lobbying.

The second question attempted to identify issues that should be the focus of the federal government to meet municipal demands (Graph 2).

Graph 2 – Federal government priorities, according to municipalities, to meet their demands (%)



Source: Prepared by the author based on web-survey findings. Sample of 67 municipalities. N = 335 answers.

According to Cigler (1994), municipal associations tend to focus their lobbying on initiatives that improve the fiscal situation of municipalities, even if municipal agendas are not restricted to this issue (Farkas, 1971). Data suggest that cities ask for more intergovernmental support from the Municipal Participation Fund, with transfers derived from the PLC 78/2018²⁷. This is also the case in relation to requests to update federal transfers to the cities under federal programs of which they are part and to match social security funds, because both impact local expenses. These four measures show that localities prefer to shift more responsibility to the federal level when it comes to municipal fiscal issues.

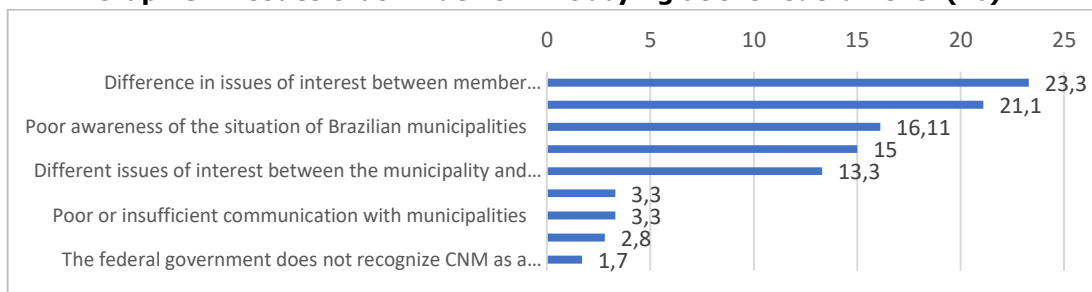
For CNM (interviews 1, 2 and 3), the priorities are, in this order: federally matched funding for social security accounts; increasing the FPM by 1 percent; updating

²⁷ The supplementary bill no. 78/2018 allows Petrobras to sell up to 70 percent of the areas involving assignment of mining and oil exploration rights and sets guidelines for the auction of any surpluses.

rules for financing federal programs – that lead to rising municipal expenses; rules to organize their own retirement schemes apart from the federal one; and lines of credit to cover court-ordered payments. This indicates that municipal heterogeneity has a greater weight as an element of discord within the CNM's position, as indicated by Shot (2015; Lowery *et al.*, 2012). For example, matching social security accounts is more important for CNM and less relevant for the cities. The second and third priorities coincide, but this is not the case of the assignment of mining rights, court-ordered payments, collection of ITR, and retirement schemes. Based on Shot (2015), the "capacity of associations to identify and pursue common interests is hindered by the diversity of municipal conditions. Associations represent municipalities with widely different populations" (Shot, 2015, p. 42-43). The findings are aligned with the explanatory mechanism presented: larger and more heterogeneous groups find alignment more challenging than smaller ones, which increases disagreement between the CNM and its associated municipalities.

We asked what were the three issues that most hinder CNM lobbying, according to the cities, in its defense of their interests at the federal level. The responses presented in Chart 3 are quite enlightening because they show that differences in the context and local interests of the associated municipalities hinder lobbying initiatives. These data are in line with the findings of Olson (2015) and Shot (2015): collective actions of larger and more heterogeneous groups are more difficult to align than those of smaller ones. The literature offers some explanations for these answers. The difference in themes of interest among municipalities, especially associations with many members, such as the CNM, is explained by population and socioeconomic diversity (Hays, 1991; Chenier, 2009; Lowery *et al.*, 2012), which affects their intergovernmental lobbying agendas (Farkas, 1971). Another important issue, the poor awareness of the situation of Brazilian cities, is explainable according to Smith (2008): if cities do not show that they are strongly united and that they are facing fiscal problems, their lobbying actions will not be effective.

Graph 3 – Issues that hinder CNM lobbying at the federal level (%)



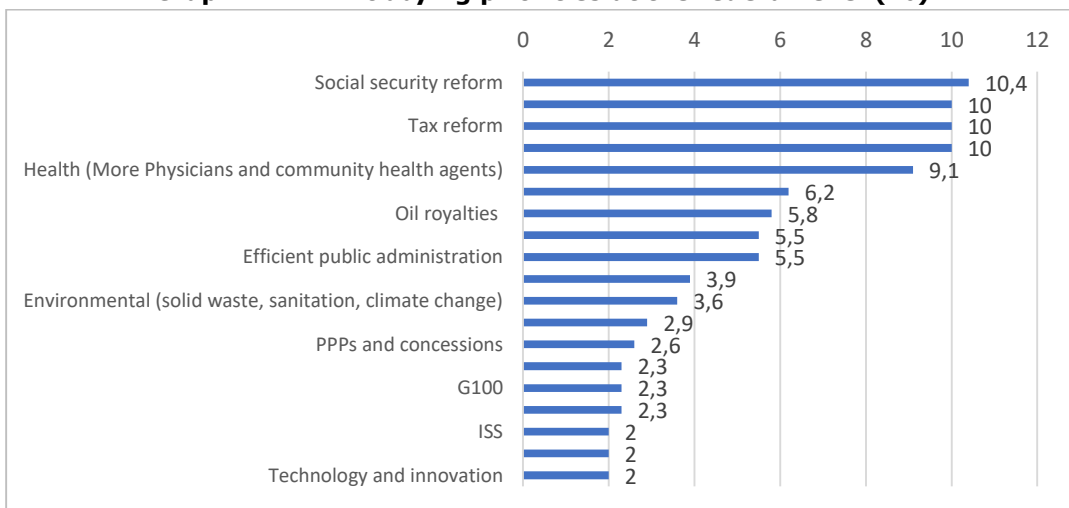
Insufficient technical support to serve municipalities. Municipalities have different interests than the association. CNM lacks strength and political connections with the federal government.

Source: Prepared by the authors based on web-survey findings. Sample of 67 municipalities. N = 180 answers.

Furthermore, the research empirically contributes to the debate on intergovernmental lobbying by showing that the CNM's low technical support to localities is also relevant to the lack of preparation among local governments on topics of interest (the fourth most important reason). The last question with a relevant percentage of responses demonstrates that the CNM does not have political strength in relation to the federal government, which affects its lobbying capacity. This is in line with the findings of Nugent (2009): local government associations must have the political conditions to defend their members to obtain legitimacy.

Regarding the FNP, its member cities believe that the association's lobbying is focused on the following: fiscal issues (funding for education, social security reform, and tax reform) and regulatory issues (federative pact and health policies). Issues such as urban mobility, social security legislation, and attention to the G100 municipalities are not priorities (Graph 4). For the FNP (interviews 4, 5, and 6), the most important issues when interacting with the federal government were the following: a) top priority: court-ordered payments, community health agents, and More Physicians (*Programa Mais Médicos*), social security legislation, and urban mobility; b) lower priority: the federative pact, tax reform, debt with the federal government, urban development, social security reform, and G100. Of the five top priorities named by the cities, only health issues match the vision of the association leaders. This dissonance was also found by (Hays, 1991) and (Cammisa, 1995): municipal populational and socioeconomic heterogeneity influence the content of policies resulting from intergovernmental lobbying.

Graph 4 – FNP lobbying priorities at the federal level (%)



Source: Prepared by the author. Sample of 61 municipalities. N = 308 answers.

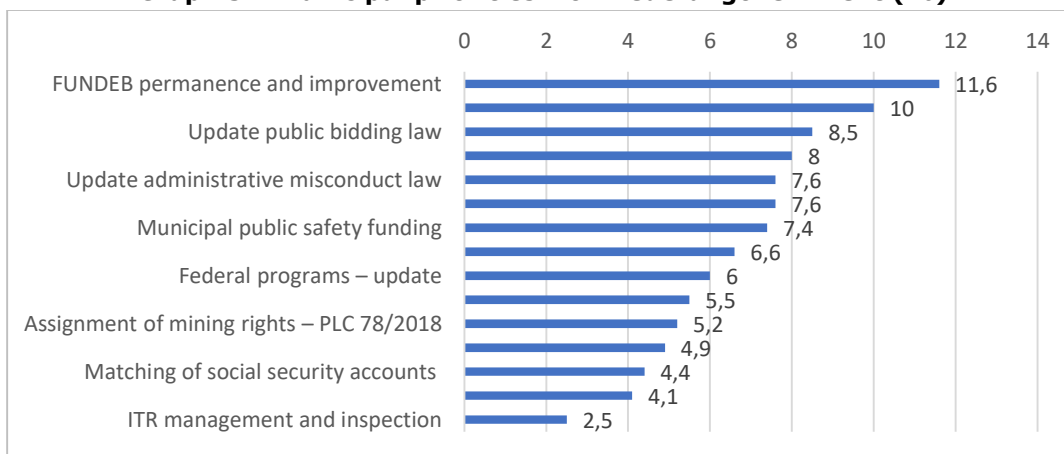
In the second group of issues, greater consensus is seen on issues such as tax reform, the federative pact, and social security reform. Court-ordered payments are not

a key issue and urban mobility is in an intermediary position. We should point out that FNP members include the city of São Paulo (population 12 million) and the city of Rio de Janeiro (population 6 million), other capitals with populations above 2 million, cities with over 80,000 inhabitants, and G100 municipalities (which have large populations but less revenue than cities in similar situations). The FNP lobbies on regulatory issues (e.g., tax reform, federative pacts, and SDG), while cities associated with the CNM prioritize fiscal issues (De Soto, 1995; Callanan; Tatham, 2014). The most relevant agendas suggest more propensity to ensure or expand jurisdictional responsibility for the municipalities (Hays, 1991), despite the different priorities of the interests defended by the local governments and the association leaders.

Indeed, this discrepancy in agendas is a relevant issue for intergovernmental lobbying input, as found by Farkas (1971). In the case of FNP, even with a small number of municipalities, it is not sufficient for priorities on intergovernmental lobbying issues to be aligned between the cities and the association, which would support H2. The differences between the FNP and its associates can be understood not only by the size of the associated municipalities, but also because larger municipalities are more likely to lobby by themselves, rather than rely on municipal associations (Payson, 2018). This characteristic of municipal membership explains the figures in Graph 4 and the opinions manifested by the FNP's leaders.

Graph 5 shows the opinion on FNP's priority agenda discussed above. Generally, there is a difference between the issues that municipalities expect the federal government to address and the FNP's lobbying agenda. Of the seven most relevant issues, three are regulatory (the public bidding law, the administrative misconduct law, and more flexible rules for projects with federal funding) and four are fiscal in nature (financing for education, social assistance, and public safety).

Graph 5 – Municipal priorities from federal government (%)

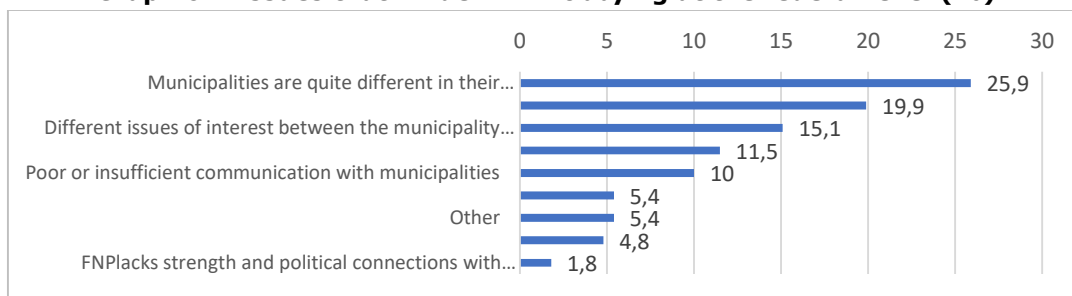


Source: Prepared by the author. Sample of 61 municipalities. N = 364 answers.

Considering the FNP's position (interviews 4 and 5), the key issues are, in this order: revise the administrative misconduct law, court-ordered payments and credit lines, dedicated retirement schemes, alternatives for urban solid waste fees, revising the public bidding law, restoring the SUAS budget, and assignment of mining rights (bill 78/2018). The first, fifth, and sixth issues coincide with the preference of the cities, yet with a different order of priorities. Although the FNP has fewer members, it appears to be more heterogeneous in terms of internal views (Shot, 2015), which is illustrated by the differences between the issues prioritized by its leaders and by the member cities. In this way, the FNP differs from the findings of Donas and Beyers (2013): the municipal associations operate in many fields, yet their lobbying gives little priority to distributive issues. The FNP's agenda is broader, more scattered and diffuse than CNM's, which affects the understanding of priorities by the member cities and generates more dissonance. Furthermore, size matters because larger cities usually find open doors at the federal government (Payson, 2018), and do not always need support from the FNP. The bilateral lobby also explains the dissonance of priorities.

Finally, we asked what the three issues were that most hinder FNP lobbying at the federal level (Graph 6). The two main reasons are related to municipalities' socioeconomic situations and diverging municipal interests. The third issue regards the different agendas of cities and the FNP. Although the FNP had 392 associated cities at the time of the study– which is much fewer than CNM's 4,825 members – the heterogeneity of the cities is an important factor for the limits to FNP's lobbying, in the opinion of the associated cities, which is in line with the arguments of Shot (2015). The responses are similar to the CNM case, as are the theoretical explanations. Furthermore, the responses show how the heterogeneity of the associated cities finds alignment more challenging, according to the logic of collective action (Olson, 2015).

Graph 6 – Issues that hinder FNP lobbying at the federal level (%)



Source: Prepared by the author. Sample of 61 municipalities. N = 166 answers.

There is empirical evidence to validate H2, especially in the case of CNM, where there is greater alignment between its agenda and that of the cities when lobbying at the federal level. However, on other issues, this mismatch is more evident. The cities claim

that the differences between them, in terms of their interests and socioeconomic situations, impact intergovernmental lobbying of both CNM and FNP. Intergovernmental lobbying is guided by a set of common interests held by national associations and cities (Hays, 1991). This is the central issue that, according to the CNM and the FNP member cities, hinders lobbying. According to Shot (2015), internal diversity and dispersion between the associations and member municipalities are relevant aspects for the differences in positions observed in both cases.

But H2 is not confirmed for the arguments related to collective action (Olson, 2015) for two reasons. CNM has more cities and better alignment on lobbying issues. Although it is a larger group, it has been more successful in unifying agendas than FNP. Although CNM is a large and heterogeneous association, it represents thousands of small municipalities that, on their own, do not have the political resources for intergovernmental lobbying. The FNP has a smaller but more heterogeneous membership, which makes it more difficult to unify the positions of the member cities. The CNM's "power of association" is replaced by the "power of the municipalities" (the state capitals and largest cities) when bilateral lobbying is more effective and does not require the political support of the FNP. The empirical finding is that size and heterogeneity as characteristics of interest groups do not necessarily behave as obstacles to collective action. These two explanatory mechanisms help to understand the existence of distinct lobbying agendas between the municipalities and CNM and FNP.

CAF as the institutionalized arena of intergovernmental lobbying

This section discusses whether the existence of an institutionalized intergovernmental arrangement shaped the lobbying strategies of FNP and CNM. Defending municipal interests does not depend only on the action of the interest groups themselves (Peterson, 1981; Pelissero; England, 1987; Hays, 1991), but also on the characteristics of the arenas where they engage (Baumgartner; Leech, 1998; Beyers; Donas; Fraussen, 2014). We investigate whether the CAF influenced municipal lobbying because both CNM and FNP were part of this federative forum created within the office of the President of the Republic (Grin; Abrucio, 2018b).

For CNM, the CAF was an important achievement that created a federative forum to address the interests of municipalities (interviews 1 and 2). Especially during the first Lula government (2003-2006), "we said, we want this, and the government replied hey, you can't for this reason, but we can do something else". Over time, this willingness diminished, which began to strain the relationship and the "attempts to fix everything so that it would go as the government wanted" increased (interview 2). This change began during the second Lula government (2007-2010) and became more evident until the second term of President Dilma (2015-2016). The "CAF ceased to exist, 'because' they only called us to play their game". An example of this is the case of the [sharing] of oil

[royalties]" (interview 3). For this reason, CNM gradually moved away from this arena and began to focus on bilateral lobbying with government bodies. Additionally, the high turnover of government representatives and the difficulties faced in implementing any decisions at the ministerial level further eroded its legitimacy. During the Dilma administration (2011-2014), CAF lost momentum and the tug-of-war between the government and CNM (interview 2) was aggravated, which further encouraged the creation of bilateral channels (interviews 1, 2, and 3).

CAF's organizational structure was also criticized. There were decisions by consensus and unequal associations in terms of political density and territorial capillarity, such as the ABM and FNP, given that their votes had equal weight (interviews 1 and 3). Moreover, "our position [CNM] was independent while the others were tied to the government. Then, during voting, we were a minority and I [as a CNM leader] was left out" (interview 3). Additionally,

with the "ABM led by the PT [Workers' Party] and the National Mayor Front also led by the PT, [...] the CAF [became an] arena of confrontation [, which only intensified due to the imbalance created in the CAF]. CNM was in opposition [...] since both associations supported the government in most official positions within the CAF, which caused attrition for CNM" (interview 1).

The CAF gradually became an internal government forum, which opened the possibility for co-optation based on the existing relationship with municipal associations. CNM leaders believe that the ABM and FNP tended to be co-opted (see Berman, 2003) by the federal government, which politically isolated the CNM, which gradually left the CAF (interview 1), and thus reduced the "advice advantage" (Nownes, 1999, p. 113) over time. CNM believed that its political power had grown considerably and that several of its achievements were shared with others as if they had been collective gains. "That was it then, both the co-optation and this attempt to disseminate its achievements. This was when the CNM decided [to] leave the CAF. Weakening the CAF and no longer bow down to it" (interview 1). This suggests that its interests grew stronger to the detriment of the consensus around federative issues. Thus:

Since the CAF's agenda required consensus between associations and the government, the latter tried to impose the agenda on us, which we did not accept. The CAF then ceased to be an area for discussion and became one of approval. This ended up causing trouble, and the CAF lost its importance and its early capacity of influence. [It] became a forum for people who say yes, and this caused trouble (interview 2).

There were relevant achievements, such as Supplementary Law 116/2003, which expanded the scope of services subject to the ISS tax and COSIP (interviews 1, 2, and

3). However, these results of intergovernmental lobbying involved agendas that lacked federal funding: “Law 116 was money from the people, from companies, [and] the federal government did not contribute [to the] federative pact, [as this] was total manipulation, intense warfare” (interview 3).

Accordingly, the CAF did not influence CNM’s lobbying (e.g., there was friction between CNM and the federal government involving ISS legislation and FUNDEB funds). For this reason, CNM believes that the achievements were secured “outside” this forum: “95 percent bilaterally as a result of engagement” (interview 3). “Anytime we brought up something at the CAF that involved federal funding, it would just stall; [this meant] that everything was built in parallel. Arriving there, when everything had already been decided and there was no way out, the CAF joined the party and would say “yes, we support it” (interview 3). However, the forum brought some progress: the collection of the Rural Territorial Tax was transferred to the cities, the municipal share of the education voucher was transferred to the cities, school transportation was funded, and the FPM was increased by 1 percent (interviews 2 and 3).

During the Temer administration (2016-2018), with the CAF’s political capacity completely weakened, CNM engaged directly with the President of the Republic. “We had more than a CAF, we had direct contact with the President” (interview 2). For example, the conciliation of social security accounts and negotiation of social security contributions, repatriation of foreign-based assets, and payment of 95% of the minimum wage to community health agents by the federal government were achievements that had a greater financial impact on municipalities where federal funds are involved. Thus,

[The] question is: why bring in the CAF if the CAF would only make things difficult for CNM and we were there in the government? [...]. When CNM manages to lobby its agenda directly with the federal government without any other help [...], not bothering with other large city agendas, it no longer makes sense. [...]. I would tell you then that using the bilateral mechanism during the Temer administration, CNM achieved much more than in the CAF. [...]. We either ignored the other associations or felt no need to engage with them (interview 1).

One of the reasons for this behavior was the relationship between the CNM president, President Temer, and his chief of staff, which is supported by the findings of Haider, 1974; Cigler, 1994; Cammisa, 1995; Nownes, 1999; Nugent, 2009; and Shot, 2015. Lobbying strategies resulted from the access CNM enjoyed through personal and political ties with the higher echelons of the executive branch. For CNM, the CAF only expanded the risk of producing unsuccessful exchanges, as found by Abney (1988) and Chenier (2009).

Despite being a formal arena, access needed to propose agendas of interest (Nugent, 2009) was insufficient to strengthen this intergovernmental forum to include

municipal inputs in its decisions (Agranoff, 2014), except during the Lula administrations (2003-2010). For CNM, the CAF was not effective for having the federal government acknowledge municipal demands (Nugent, 2009) or in institutionalizing lobbying when federal expenses or financial issues were at stake (Greenwood, 2011; Callanan, 2012; Callanan; Tatham, 2014).

However, even without having a formal position as a federal actor (Haider, 1974), the CNM began to realize that its political power had grown, which led it to conclude that bilateral lobbying would be more effective than sharing an agenda with the FNP and the ABM. Faced with the political stalemates in the CAF, the CNM gradually took on the role of representing “elected generalists” (Callanan, 2012; Agranoff, 2014) and defending its members (Browne, 1978; Callanan; Tatham, 2014; Payson, 2018).

In the case of CNM, H3 is confirmed in two ways. At first, the CAF discussed issues of municipal interest and generated benefits, but over time these results were reduced. For the CNM, when the CAF became an arena co-opted by the federal government aimed at producing public policies that did not coincide with the agenda of municipalities, CNM understood that CAF was no longer an institutionalized arena for lobbying that would provide benefits. For this reason, CNM gradually saw direct bilateral lobbying with the federal government and Congress as the best method to generate benefits for its purposes.

For FNP, the CAF represented a forum of agreement, discussion, and “federative dispute,” which was organized by the Subdepartment of Federative Affairs of the Cabinet of the President of the Republic. The CAF sought to substitute bilateral lobbying of city mayors with a structured dialogue with the federal government (interview 7). The FNP was successful in channeling joint lobbying agendas of CNM and ABM, in issues such as Law 116/2003 (which reviewed ISS tax rates) and the federal law that authorized municipalities to collect ITR (interview 4).

The CAF had some legitimacy through the end of the second Lula administration (2007-2010), it was effective for mediating discussions between the federal government and the cities (interview 5). Working groups comprised of representatives of CNM, FNP and ABM prepared the CAF meetings and presented proposals. These working groups lost momentum over time because this type of technical approach to proposing alternatives to federative issues was discontinued after 2011. “During the second Lula administration, I believe that the CAF was already weakened, but it really went downhill with [President] Dilma” (interview 4).

Although during the Rousseff government, some initiatives were approved in this forum, e.g. More Physicians and bills concerning court-ordered payments (interview 7). During the time CAF operated, the weekly meetings of the technical secretariat were the entrance point for requests. But one episode helped disqualify it. At one CAF meeting CNM disagreed with the work on rural school transportation. The technical secretariat questioned: “What are we doing here?” This gradually deconstructed the feasibility of

group work. This was a poignant example indicating the reduced empowerment of the technical secretariat (interview 4).

The federal government made a mistake that would cost it the termination of the CAF. It failed to understand that the forum required a minimum of institutionalization and documentation. After a while, the summoning of meetings and their agendas ceased to have supporting documents. Another problem that impacted the operation of the CAF was the intense turnover of ministers, which meant connections had to be regularly re-established with new work teams (interview 4).

We should keep in mind that the relationship between the federal government and CNM got worse during the second Lula administration, especially because of diverging positions on issues such as the refinancing of social security debts of the cities. Moreover, the government unsuccessfully pressured to prevent the reelection of CNM's president. "This is when the relationship gets even more complex, when CNM says 'why should we sit on the negotiation table with you'. They began to boycott CAF's technical meetings, which included executive secretaries [...] (interview 4). The CAF was an important arena until the political differences between the federal government and the CNM became clearer and the gap between the municipal associations widened (interview 4).

The FNP does not agree with CNM's argument that CAF was politically co-opted because the largest cities were governed by mayors from PT, which was also the party that led the federal government from 2003 to 2016. "The federal government never had the opportunity to co-opt our positions in the CAF because of our transparency and membership. With nearly all parties represented [among member municipalities], we could not hesitate. There was no such thing as my party's or my government's interests: everything was the municipality's interests (interview 7).

The CAF set the agenda on municipal issues when the economy was booming. Yet when the situation turned sour, federative differences emerged over issues, such as renegotiating the debt, when the government "put the brakes on." This happened during the first Dilma administration (2011-2014). To make matters worse, Vice-President Temer was appointed to engage with the municipalities. But "the situation was more dramatic for the mayors: how could they bail out Temer, knowing that the CAF had lost importance and that there was an open conflict between the president and the vice president? (interviews 4 and 5).

During the Dilma administration (2011-2015) and to a larger extent during the Temer administration, the CAF declined and CNM and FNP came back to pursue bilateral agendas. Furthermore, political differences between the municipal associations became even more heated and strengthened a more individual lobbying agenda at the federal level (interview 6). But this approach is much less effective, because the diversity of perspectives among the parties in the federative arrangement means that an arena such as the CAF is critical to promoting common agendas and avoiding overlapping, as

happened with the change in ISS legislation during the first Dilma administration. While an arena like CAF can strengthen municipal lobbying, it is impressive that the three associations did not grasp something so obvious (interview 4).

FNP presented a more emphatic defense of an institutionalized federative arena as supported by much of the literature. The FNP understood that this model facilitated the work of cities as insiders in decision-making (Abney, 1988; Chenier, 2009). However, over time, the federal government ceased encouraging this channel for intergovernmental relations (Cigler, 1994). Opposing bilateral lobbying, the justification is that the more formal the intergovernmental relations between local and national governments, the less likely that local interest demands would be ignored (Nugent, 2009) and the greater the chance that their inputs will be considered (Agranoff, 2014). However, the “advice advantage” (Nownes, 1999, p. 113) lost power, and cities reduced their ability to influence federal public policies (Farkas, 1971; Smith, 2008).

Indeed, the CAF remained an institutional arena (Lapira; Thomas; Baumgartner, 2014) that channeled intergovernmental lobbying with its discussion forums and public policies that were approved by consensus with the federal government and municipal entities. This forum enabled mechanisms for municipal lobbying, which until that point had been absent from Brazilian intergovernmental relations. It created a venue for political and institutional recognition that was critical to the defense of municipal interests. It helped the FNP and CNM overcome the “fact that they lack a formal position as federal actors” (Haider, 1974, p. 256). While it was able to act as a formal forum for intergovernmental relations (Agranoff, 2014), the CAF was a place of input for municipal lobbying alongside the federal government.

In the second Lula administration (2007-2010), the CAF lost its ability to produce agreements between municipalities and the federal government. In line with hypothesis H3, and based on the assessments of FNP and CNM, the CAF shaped and channeled municipal lobbying. As long as it enjoyed the legitimacy to make decisions, it was a forum validated by all the political actors (Nugent, 2009), as it generated collective and consensual benefits. When the loss of its political importance gradually implied the return to bilateral lobbying, municipal associations began to bypass CAF and negotiate directly with the national government.

Conclusions

This article discussed municipal lobbying in the intergovernmental arena through associations representing local governments (Haider, 1974; Hays, 1991; De Soto, 1995; Jensen, 2019). It analyzed municipal lobbying at the federal level by CNM and FNP, and it shows that municipal lobbying is part of intergovernmental relations in Brazil. With the new self-sufficient status achieved in 1988, cities became critical to the implementation of decentralized public policies. For this reason, they became political actors with intense

presence in the federative system, which helped boost their organized lobbying. The questions asked by this research about the inputs of municipal lobbying sought to identify contextual, institutional, and local factors that influenced lobbying of municipalities.

When organizing the three-dimensional theoretical model and testing its assumptions, this study on municipal lobbying, the first in Brazil, shows that, based on an analysis of CNM and FNP lobbying, there is support for the arguments presented. The investigation identified three explanatory mechanisms (Tilly, 2001; Mahoney, 2003) that impact the behavior of municipal associations regarding their demands at the federal level. According to the literature, other research has already highlighted these mechanisms, but they were tested separately. Our study attempted to combine different perspectives to analyze their impact on municipal lobbying. The contribution of our article is to propose an analytical model comprising three dimensions that can condition the agenda of municipal lobbying.

The findings suggest that municipal associations prepare their lobbying demands considering the economic and political situation and public policies (Lowi, 1972; Hays, 1991) proposed by the federal government. The associations are sensitive to the socioeconomic and political situation of the municipalities, but not very aligned in relation to the priorities presented by the cities, because of differences between municipalities and the municipal associations regarding the lobbying agenda. Having an institutionalized arena of intergovernmental cooperation influences the behavior of the municipal associations, which may see such an arena at times as beneficial while at other times deny its importance when the associations calculate that bilateral lobbying can be more productive.

The discussion shows that the mechanisms that help explain municipal lobbying can operate separately, but most often there is convergence among them. For example, demands for changes in ISS legislation to expand local revenues were influenced by political and economic factors (e.g., economic crisis and the financing of local governments). There was a need to expand the tax base in cities with poor fiscal capacity (interviews 2, 4), which influenced the decisions of municipal associations in the discussions held at the CAF, which ultimately, along with the federal government, supported changes in national legislation on this tax.

However, broader differences between CNM's and FNP's lobbying, based on the heterogeneity and size of each group (Olson, 2015; Shot, 2015), were fewer than expected. The characteristics of the symmetric federalism in Brazil help explain that although the member cities of both associations are quite different, the symmetry of the rules induces great similarity in the intergovernmental lobbying agendas of CNM and FNP. For this reason, in relation to H2, for example, there were more shared issues than expected, even though the profile of the municipalities influences the lobbying agenda at the federal level.

Despite their different proposals, the two associations share similar lobbying content. Nonetheless, each association interprets and reacts differently to economic and political situations. They also had different understandings of the role of a federative arena for cooperation, such as CAF. This case is in disagreement with the international literature, because according to Cigler (1994), the largest cities opt for individual and bilateral lobbying, while in Brazil, after 2010, this became the priority of CNM, but not of FNP.

This is the first study on this subject in Brazil, and it has limits. The empirical work did not consider other arenas where intergovernmental lobbying takes place, such as the National Congress, and did not analyze the lobbying of CNM and FNP at sectoral ministries. Other instruments, such as network analysis, could deepen understanding of intergovernmental lobbying. Furthermore, it would be relevant to advance the research to construct the causal chain behind each explanatory mechanism linking independent and dependent variables (X-Y). Finally, the study did not investigate whether the three analytical dimensions can influence municipal lobbying in an integrated manner (e.g., the case of ISS legislation) or if each explanatory mechanism can influence lobbying separately.

Municipal lobbying in Brazil is fertile ground for studies in political science. Considering the theoretical and analytical model proposed, and the way this study analyzed the activities of FNP and CNM, the research can be used in future investigations. It is hoped that this contribution helps expand this incipient agenda in the field of studies on local governments and intergovernmental relations.

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Interviews

Eduardo Stranz – CNM Technical Coordinator

Gilberto Perre – FNP Executive Director

Gustavo Cezario – CNM Executive Director until June 2019

João Coser – Former mayor of the city of Vitória and President of FNP (2009-2012)

Jonas Donizette – Mayor of the city of Campinas and President of FNP (2018-2020)

Márcio Lacerda – Former mayor of the city of Belo Horizonte and President of FNP (2012-2014)

Paulo Ziulkoski – President of CNM until December 2018.

Resumo

Lobby Intergovernamental no Brasil: Associações Municipais e seu Papel como Grupos de Interesse na Federação Brasileira

Este artigo sobre o lobby intergovernamental no Brasil analisa a Frente Nacional de Prefeitos (FNP) e a Confederação Nacional de Municípios (CNM) de 2001 a 2018. Utiliza pesquisa documental, jornalística, survey e entrevistas e testa três hipóteses. A primeira é se o contexto econômico, político e social e as políticas federais induz o lobby local para buscar proteção regulatória e financeira do governo central. A segunda é se o número de cidades associadas influencia a relação com os líderes das entidades, em parte confirmado. Na CNM e FNP há temas que geram acordo e desacordo e na primeira há mais unidade interna. A terceira é arenas de lobby são efetivas enquanto geram benefícios, o que foi testado com o Comitê de Articulação Federativa, na qual a CNM e FNP participaram, mas que gradualmente perdeu status. Os achados mostram a utilidade das hipóteses para estudar o lobby municipal.

Palavras-chave: lobby municipal; governo federal; grupos de interesse; governo local

Resumen

Lobby Intergubernamental en Brasil: Asociaciones Municipales y su Rol como Grupos de Interés en la Federación Brasileña

Este artículo, sobre el lobby intergubernamental en Brasil, analiza el Frente Nacional de Alcaldes (FNP) y la Confederación Nacional de Municipios (CNM) de 2001 a 2018. Utiliza investigación documental, periodismo, encuestas y entrevistas, y prueba tres hipótesis. La primera es si el contexto económico, político y social y las políticas federales inducen al lobby local a buscar protección regulatoria y financiera del gobierno central. La segunda es si el número de ciudades asociadas influye en la relación con los dirigentes de las entidades, algo parcialmente confirmado. En el CNM y el FNP hay temas que generan acuerdos y desacuerdos y en el primero hay mayor unidad interna. La tercera es que las instancias de lobby son efectivas en la medida que generen beneficios, lo que se comprobó con el Comité de Articulación Federativa, en el que participaron el CNM y la FNP, pero que paulatinamente fue perdiendo estatus. Los resultados muestran la utilidad de las hipótesis para estudiar el lobby municipal.

Palabras clave: lobby municipal; gobierno federal; grupos de interés; gobierno local

Résumé

Lobbying intergouvernemental au Brésil : les Associations municipales et leur rôle en tant que groupes d'intérêt dans la fédération brésilienne

Cette article sur le lobbying intergouvernemental au Brésil analyse le Front national des maires (FNP) et la Confédération nationale des municipalités (CNM) de 2001 à 2018. Elle utilise la recherche documentaire, le journalisme, les enquêtes et entretiens et teste trois hypothèses. La première

question est de savoir si le contexte économique, politique et social et les politiques fédérales incitent le lobbying local à rechercher une protection réglementaire et financière auprès du gouvernement central. La deuxième question est de savoir si le nombre de villes associées influence la relation avec les dirigeants des entités, ce qui est en partie confirmé. À la CNM et au FNP, il y a des sujets qui génèrent des accords et des désaccords, il y a plus d'unité interne dans celle-ci. La troisième est que les instances de lobbying sont efficaces tant qu'elles génèrent des bénéfices, ce qui a été testé avec le Comité d'articulation fédérative, auquel participaient le CNM et le FNP, mais qui a progressivement perdu son statut. Les résultats montrent l'utilité des hypothèses pour étudier le lobbying municipal.

Mots-clés : lobbying municipal ; gouvernement fédéral ; groupes d'intérêt ; gouvernement local

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