

## WORKING DOCUMENTS

# Education and Social Mobility in Catalonia

## Executive Summary

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# Summary

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## Introduction

[Education and Social Mobility in Catalonia](#) is a research series structured as an ongoing analysis of the process of inequality of opportunity, using the various waves of the Fundació Jaume Bofill's [Panel on Social Inequalities in Catalonia \(PaD\)](#). This panel is a longitudinal survey that has provided a unique perspective on Catalan society since 2001. Data has been collected annually since 2001 from a sample made up of 1,991 households and 5,785 individuals. This survey covers a wide spectrum of disciplines that include socio-demographic data, education, work (labour and domestic), health, housing, income, language and political culture (as shown in the [Summary of Contents](#)). Since 2011, the survey has focused on education in particular.

This ongoing research programme on education and social mobility has given rise to three publications. The first publication was a book that assesses social mobility and inequality in educational opportunities using data from PaD-2005.<sup>1</sup>

The [second](#) was an addendum to the first publication, giving a brief re-assessment of social mobility in 2009 using data from the 8<sup>th</sup> wave of the PaD.

The [third publication](#) analyses social mobility in the life trajectories of individuals between 2003 and 2009 and pinpoints the most decisive factors associated with them.<sup>2</sup> It also highlights the extent of Catalonia's class fluidity and equal opportunities in an international context.

The sample used to obtain data on social mobility from parents to children was made up of 1,834 individuals in 2005 and 2,315 in 2009, aged 25-64. This sample was large enough to carry out an analysis just like that of Erikson and Goldthorpe, which was a comparative study on social mobility with specific cases in Britain taken from samples of a similar size to ours.<sup>3</sup> The sample used to assess inequalities in educational opportunities comprised 2,924 individuals aged 25-74 in 2005.

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<sup>1</sup> MARTÍNEZ-CELORRIO, X. & MARÍN, A. (2010). [Educació i mobilitat social a Catalunya](#). Barcelona: Fundació Jaume Bofill, col·lecció Polítiques, no. 71.

<sup>2</sup> MARTÍNEZ-CELORRIO, X. & MARÍN, A. (2012). [Crisi, trajectòries socials i educació](#). Barcelona: Fundació Jaume Bofill, col·lecció Polítiques, no. 79.

<sup>3</sup> ERIKSON, R. & GOLDTHORPE, J.H. (1993). *The Constant Flux: A Study of Class Mobility in Industrial Societies*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

## Understanding Social Mobility in Catalonia

Catalan society has often been described as and considered to be a dynamic, fluid society, open to new entrepreneurs and workers. However, beyond this mythical discourse which portrays a kind of Mediterranean California, very little research on social mobility in Catalonia has been carried out. The pioneering study by Esteban Pinilla de las Heras,<sup>4</sup> commissioned by the Fundació Jaume Bofill in the early 1970s, is a notable exception to this, although it is now outdated.

The present study was commissioned by the very same foundation on the basis of its Panel on Social Inequalities in Catalonia (PaD). The educational levels of parents and children (O-D) were compared to gather information on **inter-generational educational mobility**. The educational levels achieved by each social class over time were analysed to find out about inequality of educational opportunities. Five age cohorts in this analysis were monitored (1971-1980, 1961-1970, 1951-1960, 1941-1950 and 1931-1940) until 2005.

This study on **social mobility** is intended to ascertain the changes, movements and inheritance of social class recorded between the parents' generation (O) and the children's generation (D) in different age cohorts. The social class of parents and children in four age cohorts was compared (1971-1980, 1961-1970, 1951-1960 and 1941-1950), both in 2005 and in 2009.

There are two types of inter-generational mobility. **Absolute social mobility** (% of total changes in the social class of children in relation to that of the parents) which can easily be identified and is immediate for the individuals who experience it as **upward** or **downward social mobility**. If their class does not change in relation to that of their parents, this is classified as social reproduction or **inheritance**.

Moreover, **relative social mobility** (or social fluidity) is less obvious for individuals, but it does exist as a structural trait underlying the predominant pattern of social stratification in society. Relative social mobility determines the order of probabilities that social destinations (D) will or will not be linked to origins (O) in terms of class. This calculation uses the odds ratios which are not affected by the marginals of the mobility table. These models enable us to determine

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<sup>4</sup> PINILLA DE LAS HERAS, Esteban (1973). *Immigració i mobilitat social a Catalunya*. Barcelona: Fundació Jaume Bofill & Institut Catòlic d'Estudis Socials de Barcelona (ICESB).

the degree of fluidity or rigidity of the social structure between class origins and destinations.

Intergenerational studies on social mobility have a considerable retrospective capacity (in our case, the last 50 years) and provide greater knowledge of the **underlying structural trends** in society. Through research into absolute mobility, important questions about the dynamics and composition of social structure can be analysed and answered. Studying social mobility enables us to increase our knowledge of the following:

- Degree of inheritance (reproduction) or renewal of the class structure as a way of redistributing opportunities between generations.
- Influence of educational opportunities on higher or lower social mobility.
- Upward and downward social mobility according to gender, immigration and other status criteria (income, short-term employment, etc.).
- Empirical degree of classism and inequality or equality of opportunities which structures our society as open and fluid or closed and rigid.
- Predominance of meritocratic norms over class origins in the process of assigning individuals within the division of labour.
- Long-term contributions made by social and welfare policies to reduce or preserve social inheritance and class barriers.
- Contribution of social mobility and fluidity to class structure and cohesion by removing or reinforcing class frontiers.

In this analysis, the **structural pattern governing inequalities is identified** in order to find out which factor determines social destinations (D). The dominant factor (black arrow) that determines social classification is discussed. If destinations are linked to and conditioned by class origins (O), then the pattern is **classist**. If destinations are linked to the educational level (E) factor, the dominant pattern is **meritocratic** (acquired) and education becomes the central point of stratification, neutralising the impact of social origins.

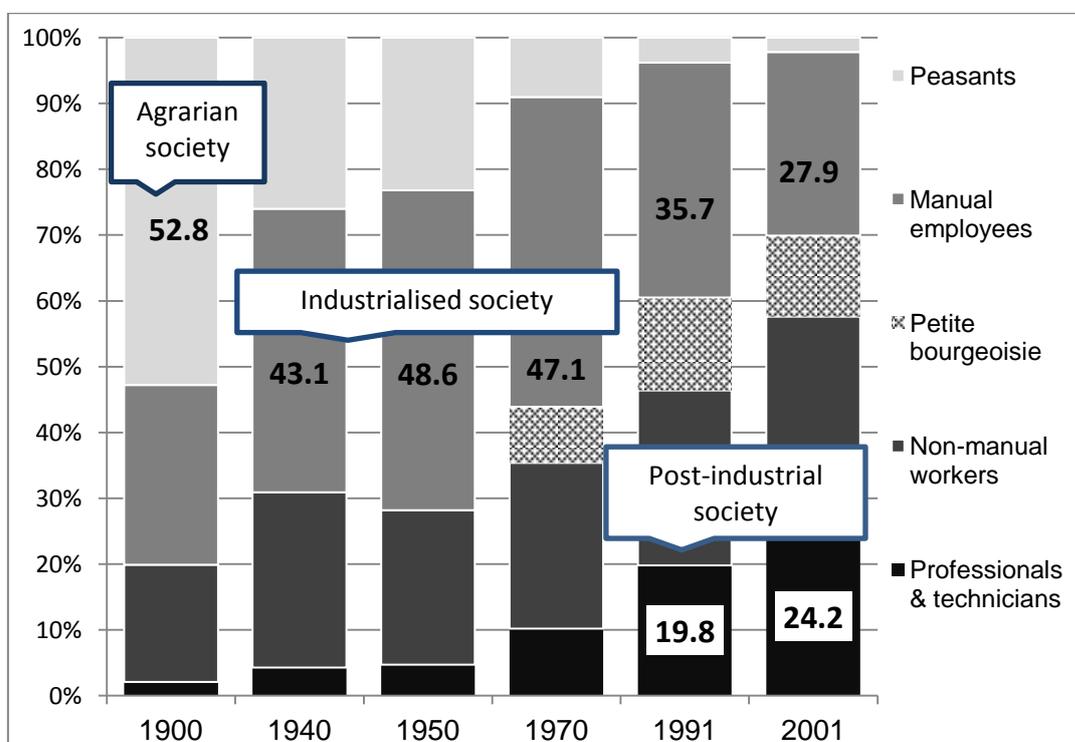
All in all, studies on social mobility are a recurring topic in sociology and they highlight the structure of the conflict between social origins and destinations in the societies studied. They take into account levels of economic development, division of labour and the social inequalities that determine their structure.

For these reasons, social mobility is a highly important and complex subject, the retrospective angle of which makes it possible to assess the degree of social justice and inter-generational prosperity that has been achieved. By analysing the cohorts of parents and children, the dynamics of social stratification over the last 50 years (1955-2005) can be analysed, and the context of a long-term historical framework can be established.

The data from the Catalan population censuses of 1900, 1940, 1950, 1970, 1991 and 2001 have also been used in this study to reconstruct a series, which is as uniform as possible, to then measure the changes made due to the creation or destruction of jobs which would have affected structural mobility.

Chart 1 shows the historical development of occupational stratification in Catalonia in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In 1900, industrial workers accounted for 27% of the active population and over half worked in agriculture. Industrialisation speeded up in the first quarter of the century and industry predominated from 1940 to 1970, but then it declined from the 1990s onwards. By 2001, the stratification profile was that of a middle-class post-industrial society, with the manual working class representing a third of the population.

**Chart 1: Social Stratification by Classes in Catalonia (1900-2001)**



Source: Martínez-Celorrío & Marín (2010) using data from the Catalan Censuses of 1900, 1940, 1950, 1970, 1991 and 2001 (INE)

### Social Classes: Definition and Clarification

- a) In modern societies, social classes are large interdependent social groups that are connected by economic and employment relations between individuals and institutions.
- b) They are not a quality or an attribute of the individuals but a shared position within the division of labour and in the hierarchy of inequality created by societies.
- c) They are not established at birth but are acquired or lost over the course of individuals' lifetimes (Destinations) from unequal starting points (Origins).

In order to categorise social classes, the CASMIN schema devised by Erikson and Goldthorpe<sup>5</sup> was followed, as this is the standard for occupational categorisation for origin (O) and destination (D) and it provides for international comparison. Another specific EG schema was also used which re-orders the CASMIN categories into different social mobility tables (EG 4-7-9). When studying the PaD data, different combinations of this schema were used; it was expanded into the EG-10 schema or grouped into 4, 6 and 7 categories according to the sample size available for the different bivariate correlations made.

**Table 1: Class Structure in Catalonia in 2005 and 2009: EG-10 schema**

		2005		2009	
I	Managers and administrators	4.4%	20.8	5.5%	22.5
II	High-level professionals	16.4%		17.0%	
IVa	Petite bourgeoisie (<10 employees)	6.6%	48.2	5.5%	48.3
IVbc	Self-employed	7.6%		9.2%	
IIIa	Routine non-manual employees	18.0%		20.0%	
IIIb	Routine-service skilled employees	6.0%		4.6%	
V	Supervisors and technicians	10.0%		9.0%	
VI	Skilled manual workers	12.9%	31.0	10.6%	29.2
VIIa	Semi-unskilled urban workers	17.0%		17.6%	
VIIb	Unskilled agricultural workers	1.1%		1.0%	
	Total	100	100	100	100
	N	2,374		3,163	

<sup>5</sup>ERIKSON, R. & GOLDTHORPE, J.H. (1993) Op. cit.

Source: Martínez-Celorrío & Marín (2010) using data from PaD (2005 and 2009).

The EG schema is organised as a relational schema between classes which determines their social relations of inequality and power with several dividing lines to separate them:

- The basic distinction between employees and bosses, differentiating between the petite bourgeoisie and employees (IVa), self-employed and independent workers (IVb) or employers (I) on one hand and the group of salaried employees on the other.
- The distinction in authority and power in labour relations: public and private sector managers (I) and supervisors (V) compared to other employees.
- Inequality of skills and knowledge: high-level professional (II), intermediate (IIIab-V), skilled manual (VI) and unskilled manual, non-manual and agricultural (VIIab).
- Differentiation into sectors: manual (VI-VIIab)/non-manual (I-II-IIIab-V); agricultural (IVc and VIIb); administrative (IIIa)/commercial and service (IIIb).
- The Weberian distinction between “work situations” (employed or unemployed individuals with less security, skills, autonomy and career prospects) and “market situations” (higher-level professionals and experts with greater social power in the market, larger incomes, more decision-making power and better career opportunities).

In order to have a hierarchical ordering of the classes in the EG model, which makes it easier to map upward and downward leaps within the social hierarchy, a synthetic inequality score was built based on seven indicators. Chart 2 shows the resulting stratification of the score (the left-hand axis of the Chart) and the hierarchy of average household income as stated for the PaD in 2005 (right-hand axis). This comparison helps to decide upon the hierarchy of steps on the social ladder.

The inequality score established to gauge the hierarchy of incomes in the first six social classes in Chart 2 proves to be more hierarchical for the last two working classes (VI and VII), which have a higher level of occupational insecurity, a higher risk of poverty, higher immigration, higher political alienation or demobilisation and less academic capital. This means that the points scored place the “lowest” classes in a clearer hierarchy and stratifies them into levels more sharply than the economic variable of income alone.

**Chart 2: Class Hierarchy by Income and Inequality Score**



Source: Martínez-Celorio & Marín (2010) using data from PaD (2005)

In order to compare mobility data on an international level, the CASMIN schema was followed, although our own hierarchical EG schema that separates classes V-VI (grouped in the CASMIN matrix) was also created to differentiate the supervisors/technicians (V) from the skilled manual workers (VI) and place class III beyond classes IV and V. This decision is in line with our inequality score (see Chart 2).

**Chart 3: Class Mobility Table: EG-7**

Father's class	Son's class						
	I-II	IV	V	III	VI	VIIa	VIIb
I-II	R	HOR	D1	D2	D3	D3	D3
IV	A1	R	HOR	HOR	D1	D2	D2
V	A1	A1	R	D1	D1	D2	D2
III	A2	A1	A1	R	D1	D1	D2
VI	A3	A1	A1	A1	H	D1	D1
VIIa	A3	A2	A2	A1	A1	H	HOR
VIIb	A3	A2	A2	A2	HOR	HOR	H

(I-II) Service class; (IV) Petite bourgeoisie; (V) Supervisors and technicians; (III) Routine non-manual employees; (VI) Skilled manual workers; (VIIa) Semi-unskilled urban workers; (VIIb) Unskilled agricultural workers  
 H: Inheritance; HOR: Horizontal; A1: Small Ascent; A2: Medium Ascent; A3: Large Ascent; D1: Small Descent; D2: Medium Descent; D3: Large Descent

Source: Martínez-Celorio & Marín (2010)

## 1. Significant Results

The analysis shows a cohesive society structured by a high rate of upward social mobility, a low class inheritance and a fluid equality of opportunities which:

- *Is weaker and more rigid between the two ends of the social scale (I-II vs. VII) but denser within a broad group of middle classes (III-IV-V).*
- *Becomes smaller and more restricted in the young cohort 4 (aged 33-42 in 2009).*
- *Is greater than that displayed in neighbouring countries, thus demolishing the stereotype of a closed, rigid and classist society.*

Although the analysis shows low public spending on social protection, education and grants/scholarships, the structure of Catalan society is meritocratic, fluid and not classist, in which:

- *Education (high/low) rather than the class origin (O) determines the class destination (D) of individuals, which confirms the fact that education is the main mechanism for social filtering and selection.*
- *Education has democratised opportunities for social ascent and it is the main factor that reduces social inheritance.*
- *However, there has been a continual inequality of educational opportunities between the two extremes of the social scale (I-II vs. VII) since the 1990s, with a 3-to-1 disparity of advantage between the top and bottom classes of society.*

## 2. Education and Social Mobility (PaD-2005)

1) During the period under analysis (1955-2005), the Catalan system of class stratification was overhauled on the basis of high absolute mobility (78%) and a low rate of class inheritance (22%). Between parents and children, upward social mobility (49.1%) predominated over downward mobility (18%); most of these changes were short leaps of mobility between adjacent classes.

These are the results for the population aged between 30 and 64, classified according to the EG-7 schema. The figures vary in accordance with changes in the categories in the schema and the age bracket (see book p. 56).

*Catalan society is highly mobile with a low rate of social inheritance*

In a recent study carried out using the CIS survey (2006) *Social Classes and Social Structure*, Catalonia was found to have the highest rate of social ascent in the whole of Spain for adults aged between 25-64 (Martínez-Celorrio & Marín, 2012b). The sample size provides for the separation of Andalusia, Catalonia and Madrid, but requires the regional grouping of three main areas: Eastern Spain (Valencia, Murcia and the Balearic Islands), inland Spain (Aragon, Catalonia, Castile and Extremadura) and the Atlantic regions (Canary Islands, Galicia, Asturias, Cantabria, the Basque Country and Navarra).

**Table 2. Compared Absolute Class Mobility in Spain (PaD-2005 and CIS-2006)**

	Upward	Downward	Horizontal	Inheritance
<i>Catalonia: PaD 2005</i>	46.5	20.1	10.3	23.1
<i>Catalonia: CIS 2006</i>	43.6	20.7	9.9	25.7
Atlantic regions	42.8	21.1	9.8	26.4
Eastern regions	41.6	21.8	13.1	23.5
<i>Spain (total)</i>	40.8	21.9	11.0	26.3
Madrid	40.4	25.6	7.5	26.5
Andalusia	40.1	20.9	14.3	24.7
Inland regions	35.6	22.1	11.0	31.3

Source: Martínez-Celorrio & Marín (2010 and 2012b) using data from PaD-2005 and CIS-2006)

According to the CIS-2006 data, Catalonia is the Spanish region with the highest upward social mobility in Spain whilst the inland regions have the least.

2) When compared by means of the CASMIN schema, Catalonia is one of the most mobile countries in Europe. The figures for upward mobility place Catalonia high up on the international scale. The rate of upward mobility for men is similar to that recorded in Sweden, the Netherlands and Italy (Breen, 2004). The rate for women is higher than that of the aforementioned countries and is equal to the highest international levels (Hungary and Israel).

Upward social mobility in Catalonia (35%) is also higher than that of the EU-5 sample (33%), which groups together five major European countries (see book p. 99). According to our own EG-7 schema, upward social mobility rises to 46% for those over 25 and 49% for those over 30. The percentage rises because the cost of young people joining the labour market has been absorbed by the time they reach 30.

***Both men and women show greater upward social mobility than in many European countries***

3) The high absolute mobility between parents and children (78%) is concentrated in middle-class destinations (III-IV-V) which expand to receive both those rising from below (VI-VII) and those falling from above (I-II). This wide band of middle classes acts as a buffer zone that cushions inequalities, balances the redistribution of destinations and renews the structure of opportunities. Much of the upward social mobility (69%) involves the working classes (VI-VII) ascending to the middle class.

This high absolute mobility significantly renews the composition of social classes and acts as a cohesion factor between classes (see book pp. 58-59). The only two mature, consistent classes which display high rates of class inheritance are the professional (49%) and working (37%) classes. The rest act as "bridge-classes".

***The high level of social mobility has strengthened Catalan social cohesion***

4) According to age, the cohort of those born between 1951 and 1960 has experienced the most upward social mobility (53%). This is not the best-educated cohort and its origin is primarily working and lower-class (56%) whose parents are Spanish (64%). Their role in post-industrial change has been to expand into professions in the welfare state and services economy (see book pp. 71-81).

Among the younger cohort from 1971-1980, upward social mobility is lower (40%) and downward mobility is higher (25%) for two reasons: firstly because it is becoming more

***The high rate of upward social mobility for the 1951-1960 cohort might not***

difficult to get into the labour market, and *be repeated* secondly because of the partial counter-mobility among young people, as many of them start out from middle-class origins which limit their margin for upward mobility.

5) Traditionally Catalonia has always been a destination for newcomers, which is why a large majority of social origins are from outside the country (59%). However, this does not mean that their parents lived or live there at the moment. Moreover, 51% of children born in Spain (25%) have the same upward mobility as those born in Catalonia (50%).

Furthermore, social mobility varies with the factor of origin outside Spain. Adult children born abroad have lower upward social mobility (26%) and higher downward mobility (42%) compared to others in their class of origin (see book pp. 85-88).

*There is no distinction between Catalan or Spanish origin when it comes to upward social mobility*

6) Among the destination groups with the highest levels of family income, those from upward social mobility predominate (56%) over those inheriting their class of origin (35%). Among these well-off groups, 31% come from worker and agricultural origins, 18% from the petite bourgeoisie and 24% from the managerial and professional class.

Not all upward social mobility results in improved status: 11% of those who rise upwards live in a poor household and 27% in a low-income household (see book pp. 89-92). Upward social mobility occurs in a flexible economy in which status is less secure.

*Upward class mobility does not always mean higher status*

7) Opportunities for mobility also vary significantly according to the working conditions of the destination groups (D). Among the civil servants in the survey, 60% have experienced upward social mobility while only 8% have moved down from their class of origin (O).

Among those in a "precarious state" (unemployed or with short-term employment) upward social mobility is 36% and downward is 33% (see book p. 93). Public policies (access to public services and labour market norms and regulations) have a direct influence on opportunities for social

*Those in a precarious state suffer from greater downward social mobility than civil servants*

mobility.

8) High absolute social mobility in Catalonia co-exists with a certain degree of mobility or social fluidity which has increased by 26% over the last twenty years at the expense of class rigidity. This means that the influence of class origins (O) is smaller and it is not as restrictive for children's destinations (D). This increased fluidity and permeability between classes is unlike the trend in Germany, the United Kingdom and France.

However, the data confirms the theory of social closing at the top (class I) and the bottom (class VII) ends with a barrier which is higher in Catalonia than in other countries (see book pp. 126-133).

***The increase in social fluidity is not enough at the two ends of the scale***

9) A meritocratic (rather than classist) pattern is confirmed, whereby social destinations (D) are determined more according to each individual's education (E) than by their class origin (O). The class origin (O) factor is only a determining factor for those with no education or those who have not completed basic levels of schooling (37% of those aged over 25).

This is a meritocratic pattern, but it could be much more inclusive. The inequality of opportunities in higher education and training can be explained by the poverty factor: growing up in a poor household limits a person's chances of gaining qualifications by 14 to 1 (see book p. 134-143). Inadequate and inefficient policy on grants and scholarships does not help to level out the educational playing field in terms of income.

***Catalonia is structured in a meritocratic pattern which excludes poor households***

Only one in every three poor households (27%) had any assistance for schoolchildren younger than 16 in 2004 (see pp. 144-146). The lack of grants hinders their progress at school and limits their chances of being able to opt for upper and lower middle-class professions.

10) Educational mobility between parents and children has been greater than social mobility. A total of 57% of adults over 25 have experienced upward social mobility in relation to their parents. A third of all upward mobility in education is a result of completing basic schooling, 38% secondary schooling and 30% higher education.

Educational democratisation has been very pronounced: most of those obtaining preliminary

***Educational mobility has***

*diplomatura* degrees (70%) and bachelor's degrees (51%) have parents with basic schooling or less. Only 22% of graduates have parents who are also graduates. ***been greater than social mobility***

11) The first cohorts to enjoy this equality of educational opportunities were those born in 1961. The class of managers, professionals and the petite bourgeoisie (I-II-IV) are the ones that have benefited the most from the expansion of education (1962-2005).

In the last 20 years, there has been constant inequality of opportunities between the two extremes of the social scale (I-II vs. VII) in terms of gaining university qualifications (3.5 to 1). This confirms the MMI (maximally maintained inequality) thesis, which is common in advanced countries (see pp. 174-184). ***Inequality of opportunities in university education has intensified since the 1990s***

12) Historically, it was higher education qualifications that made the greatest upward social mobility possible. The 1961-1970 age cohort is the one which has enjoyed the greatest equality of educational opportunities and the greatest fluidity between the two class extremes.

In the 1971-1980 cohort, master's and bachelor's degrees reinforced class inheritance. In contrast to previous years, once again in 2005 university qualifications became a classist vehicle of social inheritance among young people aged 28-38 (see pp. 191-204). ***University graduates account for 35% of all upward social mobility***

### 3. The Context of Boom and Bust (2005-2009)

2005 to 2009 was a period when the economy was booming, the employment rate was high (2006, 2007 and half of 2008) but then the economic recession hit (second half of 2008 and all of 2009). Therefore, it includes both upward social mobility that occurred during the boom period and downward mobility afterwards; these trends can best be analysed from the intra-generational perspective.

In just nine months, or three quarters, we went from an economic boom and more security and prosperity than ever before to an unprecedented economic depression which has resulted in a huge lack of confidence in governmental institutions. This situation was aggravated by an increase in social inequality and the risk of vulnerability.

*The 2009 analysis covers the results of the boom and part of the recession (an intra-generational approach)*

Between 2006 and 2009, official data from Idescat, the Statistical Institute of Catalonia (2011) highlighted a sharp increase in social inequality measured by the 90/10 ratio with a peak of 34%. The 90/10 ratio went from 7.51 in 2006 to 10.08 in 2009, which means that there was a great deal of inequality in the hierarchical redistribution of income between the top and bottom 10% of the population.

The data from the PaD (2009) shows that the economic recession is producing more social stratification of risk that redefines the structure of opportunities and exacerbates vulnerability. Although this is gradual, it affects all social classes:

- 67.5% of adults aged 25-64 worked continuously between 2008 and 2009. The other 14% were unemployed or inactive during the entire period and 18.5% moved from employment to unemployment or inactivity.
- The group with the greatest job security between 2008 and 2009 was the professional class (class II) with an 86% rate of continuous employment, whilst only 53% of semi-skilled or unskilled workers (VII) aged 25-64 worked continuously throughout the year.

The data shows a clear educational segmentation in terms of job security between 2008 and 2009: 82% of university graduates aged up to 64 worked throughout the year, as opposed to 56% of those with basic schooling or less. However, only 37% of people without

schooling worked throughout the year. They represent 11% of all those unemployed and the oldest cohort (55-64) predominates in this group.

It is worth mentioning that the data for 2009 includes new positions and professions created in the boom period (2006, 2007 and the first half of 2008). In the analysis of inter-generational mobility their unemployed or employed status was immaterial, as the focus was on the last class position attained by children in relation to that of their parents.

Table 3 describes the stratification of the adult population in nine classes according to the EG schema. The sample analysed in 2009 comprised 3,163 men and women aged over 25 and there were small variations compared to the class structure identified in 2005, which means that there was more polarisation in 2009.

**Table 3: Class Stratification in Catalonia (2009): EG-9 schema**

EG categories	SERVICE CLASS		MIDDLE CLASS				WORKING CLASS		
	I	II	Business owners		Employees		IIIb	VI	VII
			IVa	IVbc	V	IIIa			
<b>Total sample %</b> (N = 3,163)	55 (175)	17 (537)	5.5 (173)	9.2 (292)	9 (285)	20 (633)	4.6 (146)	10.6 (336)	18.6 (586)
<b>% Women</b>	30	59	55	38	29	64	74	24	58
<b>% Born outside Spain</b>	9	11	14	11	8	12	22	16	21
<b>% Born in Spain, not Catalan</b>	11	15	13	10	22	23	17	20	23
<b>% University graduates</b>	57	84	20	21	29	23	12	3	5
<b>% Unemployed</b>	11	4	6	--	3	16	16	19	18
<b>% Temporarily employed</b>	14	24	--	--	20	11	36	15	32
<b>% Subjective social ascent</b>	55	51	55	51	50	49	47	60	56
<b>% Subjective inheritance</b>	36	34	27	30	30	33	42	30	33
<b>% Subjective social descent</b>	9	15	18	19	20	18	11	10	11
<b>Total father's class</b>	15		17		5	17		15	31
<b>Total mother's class</b>	10		10		2	23		9	46

Source: Martínez-Celorrío & Marín (2010) using data from PaD (2009).

In the 2009 sample, the weight of the service classes (I-II) made up of managers and professionals increased from 20.8% in 2005 to 22.5% in 2009. In turn, the weight of the semi- and unskilled proletariat (VII) increased to 18.6% in 2009.

***In 2009 the class structure was slightly more polarised than in 2005***

The aforesaid increases at both ends of the scale point to greater class polarisation as the weight of the petite bourgeoisie (IVab) and the other middle classes (III-V) remains constant. Moreover, the weight of the manual workers class (VI) decreased to 10.6% in 2009 compared to 2005 when it was 12.9%.

The first row of the table shows the percentage of women in each social class and it highlights the occupational segregation according to gender, as mentioned in the book using data from 2005 (see Table 18, p. 82). The increased representativeness of the PaD sample helped to establish that 15% of the population living in Catalonia was foreign in 2009; this was under-represented in the 2005 sample when it was 5%.

The two social classes with the lowest percentage of foreigners are those associated with positions of authority: class I of managers (at 9%) and class V of middle-grade supervisors (at 8%). The social classes containing the largest number of foreigners are the working classes, specifically class VII, semi- and unskilled workers (at 21%) and class IIIb, skilled service employees (at 22%).

***The 2009 sample includes 15% of immigrants opposed to 5% in 2005. This factor has an impact on mobility data***

It is also these two fractions of the working classes which had the highest rate of temporary employment in 2009: 36% of class IIIb, service employees, and 32% of class VII, semi- and unskilled workers. The third least secure class is class II, expert professionals, with 24%. Moreover, in 2009 class VI, skilled manual workers, had a lower rate of temporary employment (15%) than in 2005 (32%), and the highest rate of unemployment (19%) out of all the classes.

By asking directly about individuals' social position in relation to their household of origin, the subjective perception of upward mobility, inheritance and downward mobility can be recorded.

The classes with the highest rate of subjective inheritance are the two top-ranking classes, class

***Middle classes (III-IV-V) have***

I, managers (36%), and class II, professionals (34%). Finally, the two classes with the highest rate of subjective upward mobility are the working classes VI (at 60%) and VII (at 56%).

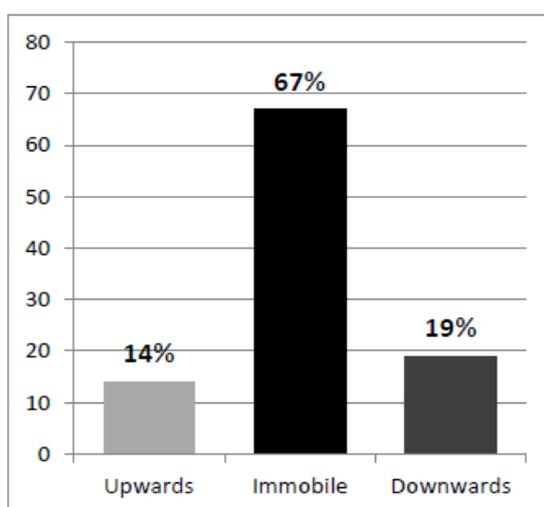
**18-20% of subjective downward mobility**

In our third book<sup>6</sup> the longitudinal class trajectories in a seven-year period from 2003 to 2009 were analysed based on the PaD panel survey. In this period, the main trend in social mobility was, in fact, immobility or staying in the same class (67%). Thirty-three per cent of respondents moved up or down the class system during this period:

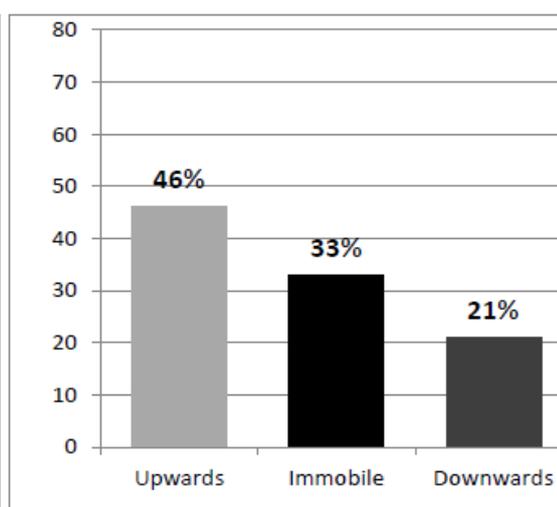
- a) Upward mobility, which allowed people to climb up the social ladder from where they were in 2003, was 14%.
- b) Downward mobility, which brought people further down the social ladder from the position they occupied in 2003, was 19%.

These charts compare the findings on intra-generational mobility and inter-generational mobility between parents and adult children. Whilst the social structure is very steady and static in the short term (with only 14% enjoying upward mobility), most of its structural change and class mobility take place in the long term (46% of upward mobility between parents and their children).

**Chart 4. Career Mobility**  
(Intra-generational, 2003-2009)



**Chart 5. Father/Son Mobility**  
(Inter-generational, 2009)



Source: Martínez-Celorrío & Marín (2010 and 2012a) using data from PaD

<sup>6</sup> MARTÍNEZ-CELORRIO, X. & MARÍN, A. (2012). *Crisi, trajectòries socials i educació*. Barcelona: Fundació Jaume Bofill, col·lecció Polítiques, no. 79.

The high degree of social mobility between parents and children is much greater than the more limited mobility for individuals throughout their life (Goldthorpe's counterbalance thesis).

Up until 2009, data from PaD suggested there was more impoverishment (38%) than downward class mobility (19%). Between 2003 and 2009, 38% of Catalans became poorer and moved into lower income quintiles. Volatility in income mobility is always greater than class mobility, where the structure tends to stay the same.

**Table 4. Career Class and Income Mobility in Catalonia (2003-2009)**

	Career class mobility	Income mobility rates
Upward mobility	<b>14%</b>	<b>21%</b>
Immobility	<b>67%</b>	<b>41%</b>
Downward mobility	<b>19%</b>	<b>38%</b>

Source: Martínez-Celorio & Marín (2012a) using data from PaD

Table 5 shows the increase or decrease in income experienced by each income quintile between 2003 and 2009. As shown below, income changes tend to be concentrated in adjacent quintiles without great leaps from one extreme to the other:

- 50% of people in the lowest and poorest quintile (quintile 1) do move into other quintiles but only 3% of them had reached the upper quintile by 2009.
- Halfway in the middle levels (middle quintile 3), 47% became poorer and dropped down the quintiles and 26% went up the quintiles.
- 53% of the richest quintile in 2003 (quintile 5) had moved downwards by 2009.

**Table 5. Average Income Per Quintile and Upward/Downward Mobility Rates (2003-2009)**

Quintile occupied in 2003	Average net yearly income per household	Upward income mobility	Downward income mobility
Lowest quintile 1	€11,500.80	50 %	--
Mid-low quintile 2	€21,515.60	21 %	33 %
Middle quintile 3	€31,119.10	26 %	47 %
Mid-high quintile 4	€42,828.40	18 %	43 %
Upper quintile 5	€69,651.80	--	53 %

Source: Martínez-Celorio & Marín (2012a) using data from PaD

**Young adults (ages 25-34) experienced the greatest income mobility**, which is to be expected during their transition into adult life. Almost 25% saw their income rise, although 44.3% became poorer or dropped down to a lower income quintile from where they were in 2003 (when they were still dependent on their family).

## 4. Catalan Social Mobility in 2009

As shown in Table 4, 15.2% of adults have higher class origins (I-II), 16.4% come from the petite bourgeoisie (IV), 22% were born in the middle classes (III-V) and 46% come from the working classes (VI-VII).

The rows across contain data on the “outflow” from each social origin. Thus, 44.7% of those who come from the managerial and professional class (I-II) end up in the same class as their parents; 10.2% end up in the petite bourgeoisie class (IV), 31.7% drop down to the middle classes (III-V) and 13.4% end up in the lower classes (VI-VII).

**Table 6. Social Mobility Table (EG-4): adults aged 25-64 (2009)**

		Son's class (destinations)					
		<b>I-II Service class</b>	<b>IV Petite bourgeoisie</b>	<b>III-V Middle Non- manual</b>	<b>VI-VII Working class</b>	<i>All (origins)</i>	
% row (outflow) % column (inflow)		(N)					
Father's class (origins)	<b>I-II Service class</b>	(158)	44.7 29.0	10.2 10.7	31.7 14.5	13.4 7.0	100 15.2
	<b>IV Petite bour- geoisie</b>	(96)	25.2 17.6	20.5 23.2	26.8 13.2	27.5 15.8	100 16.4
	<b>III-V Middle non- manual</b>	(130)	25.4 24.0	13.9 21.1	38.5 25.5	22.2 17.2	100 22.1
	<b>VI-VII Working class</b>	(160)	15.0 29.4	14.1 45.0	33.8 46.8	37.1 60.0	100 46.3
	<i>All (destinations)</i>	(544)	23.5 100	14.5 100	33.3 100	28.7 100	100 100

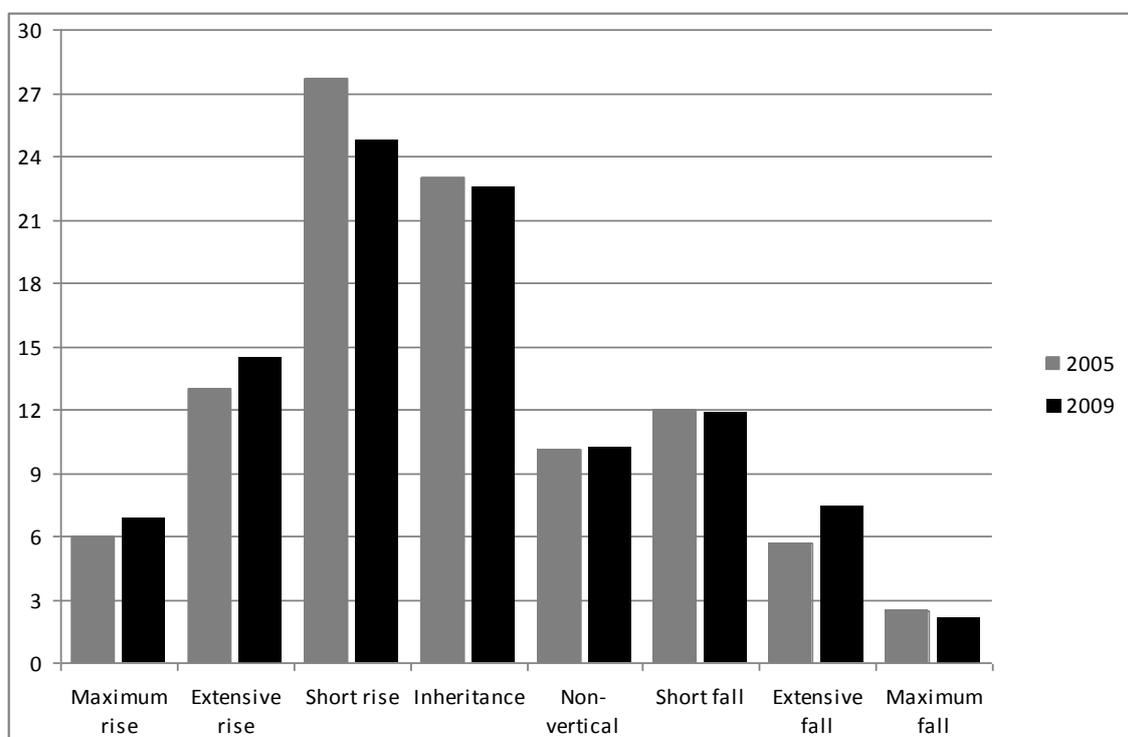
Source: Martínez-Celorrío & Marín (2010) using data from PaD (2009).

The columns contain data on the “inflow”, indicating the origins of each social class that is recruited. Thus, among those that currently make up the managerial and professional class (I-II), only 29% have parents of the same origin (inflow inheritance); 17.6% come from the petite bourgeoisie (IV); 24% from the middle classes (III-V) and 29% of the current managerial and professional class comes from the lower classes (VI-VII).

The EG-7 matrix was used to obtain the results for absolute mobility in 2009, which were very similar to those published in our book using data from 2005. In 2009 there was slightly less immobility due to a very small reduction in class inheritance, which fell from 23.1% in 2005 to 22.5% in 2009.

Between 2005 and 2009, vertical mobility increased (+0.7%) due to the increase in downward social mobility (+1.2%) and a slight decrease in upward mobility (-0.5%). This small but significant absolute overall variation was due to the economic crisis, the expansion of part of the sample and the PaD panel effect.

**Chart 6: Comparison of Social Mobility Rates in 2005 and 2009**



Source: Martínez-Celorrío & Marín (2010) using data from PaD (2005 and 2009).

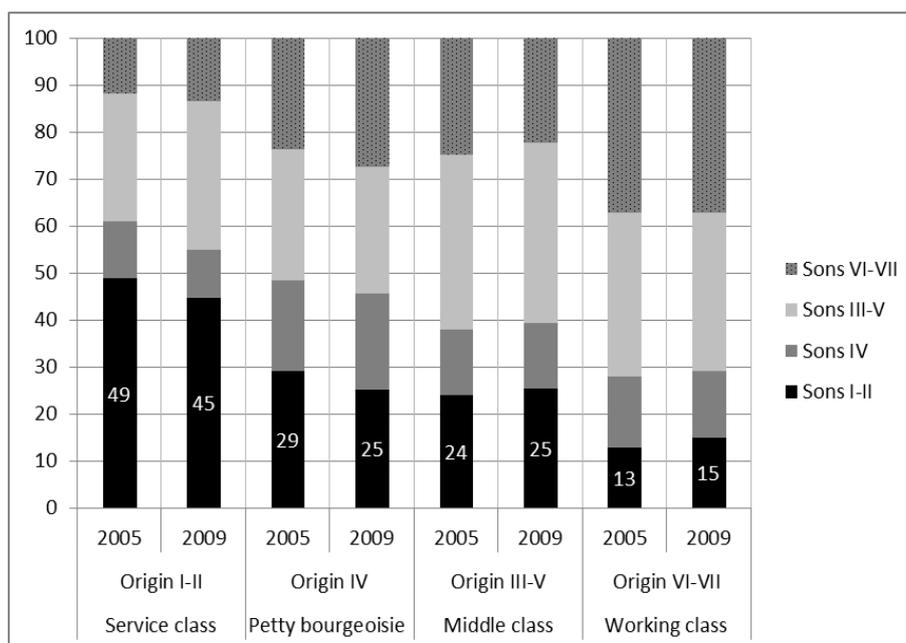
The chart shows more significant variations when the distance between upward and downward class movements is broken down. The maximum upward mobility is from the working classes VI-VII to the upper classes I-II. Extensive upward mobility means jumping at least 3 cells in the EG-7 matrix and short upward mobility means jumping at least 2 cells and ending up in adjacent classes. These criteria can be consulted in Chart 3 of this document.

### 4.1. Expansion of Both Upward and Downward Social Mobility

The increase in downward social mobility by 21.3%, the reduction in class inheritance and the maintenance of a very high rate of upward social mobility (46%) favoured a more fluid redistribution between the lower and upper classes in 2009 than in 2005:

- Access to the managerial and professional class (I-II) became much more democratic. Inheritance dropped from 49% to 45% and more members were recruited from middle and lower classes. In turn, the children of the upper class I-II suffered 5% more *déclassement* (45.1%) in 2009 compared to the middle (III-V) and working (VI-VII) classes.
- There is a parity between the top and bottom: 13% of I-II children go down to worker destinations but 15% of workers rise up to I-II destinations. The *buffer zone* theory: 48% of upward mobility for workers (VI-VII) is to the middle class levels (III-V).
- Fewer children of the petite bourgeoisie (IV) reached the managerial and professional classes (I-II) in 2005, and their downward mobility to working class (VI-VII) destinations was up by 4%.

**Chart 7. Outflow Mobility According to Compared Class Origins in 2005 and 2009: adults aged 25-64**



Source: Martínez-Celorio & Marín (2010) using data from PaD (2005 and 2009).

- Middle class children (III-V) are less likely to reach the higher classes (I-II) although their chances of *déclassement* to the working classes are fewer.
- The rate of inheritance of working class children (VI-VII) was the same as in 2005, namely 37%, although they had greater possibilities of reaching the higher classes (I-II).

According to the data collected from 2005 to 2009, inflow mobility and social class recruiting was stable with the exception of the service class (I-II) that had a more democratised access compared to the rest of social classes. Inflow social inheritance in I-II was 33% in 2005; this dropped to 29% in 2009. Absolute inflow rate to the top class (I-II) was now on par (29%) for children of this class and those of the working classes (VI-VII).

Half of all the destinations (48%) were to the middle classes (III-V): 24% of those joining it were university graduates and 44% had secondary school education. Nearly half of all the middle class destinations (III-V) came from worker origins (VI-VII).

Around 29% of children's class destinations were working class. In terms of inflow, a very high working class inheritance (60%) was pinpointed, associated with low academic capital (78% did not have secondary school education).

#### **4.2. Change in Social Mobility Patterns According to Gender**

Although women displayed greater upward social mobility (48%) than men (45.3%) in 2005, in 2009 it was the other way around; men experienced greater upward mobility (49.2%) than women (43.5%). Moreover, in 2009 women experienced greater downward mobility than men, unlike in 2005, as shown in Table 4.

This reversed pattern of mobility is due to an increase in occupational gender segregation which, between 2005 and 2009, affected women much more. Compared to 2005, there were fewer female upward destinations (I-II and IV) and at the same time they went down to more destinations in the lowest class groups (VIIab).

*Between 2005 and 2009, the pattern of mobility by gender was reversed*

This deterioration reflects the increase in semi- and unskilled female employment, which was very pronounced during the economic boom in the service sector where there were a considerable number of immigrants. Compared to 2005, women had greater immobility, less upward mobility to the middle classes and more downward mobility.

**Table 7: Comparison of Absolute Mobility Rates by Gender (2005 and 2009)**

	Men		Women	
	2005	<b>2009</b>	2005	<b>2009</b>
<b>Inheritance</b>	22.9	<b>21.4</b>	23.2	<b>24.1</b>
<b>Non-vertical mobility</b>	9.5	<b>8.8</b>	10.9	<b>11.3</b>
Total vertical mobility	67.6	<b>69.8</b>	65.9	<b>64.6</b>
<b>Upward mobility</b>	45.3	<b>49.2</b>	48.0	<b>43.5</b>
- Short upward mobility	26.6	26.3	28.9	23.3
- Extensive upward mobility	12.5	16.0	13.5	13.3
- Maximum upward mobility	6.2	6.9	5.6	6.9
<b>Downward mobility</b>	22.3	<b>20.6</b>	17.9	<b>21.1</b>
- Short downward mobility	13.5	11.3	11.1	11.8
- Extensive downward mobility	6.4	7.0	5.5	7.7
- Maximum downward mobility	2.4	2.3	1.3	1.6

Source: Martínez-Celorio & Marín (2010) using data from PaD (2005 and 2009)

However, women from poor and working-class origins (VI-VIIab) gained more access to the highest classes (I-II), which means that this channel for equal opportunities had improved. While only 11% of the whole managerial and professional classes were women from the working class (VI-VIIab) in 2005, by 2009 they accounted for 17% of classes I-II.

### 4.3. Age Cohorts and Social Mobility in 2009

Once again in 2009, the cohort with the greatest upward mobility was that of 1951-1960 which was ahead of all the others with an upward social mobility rate of 50%. Nevertheless, this figure was lower than that recorded in 2005 (53.2%).

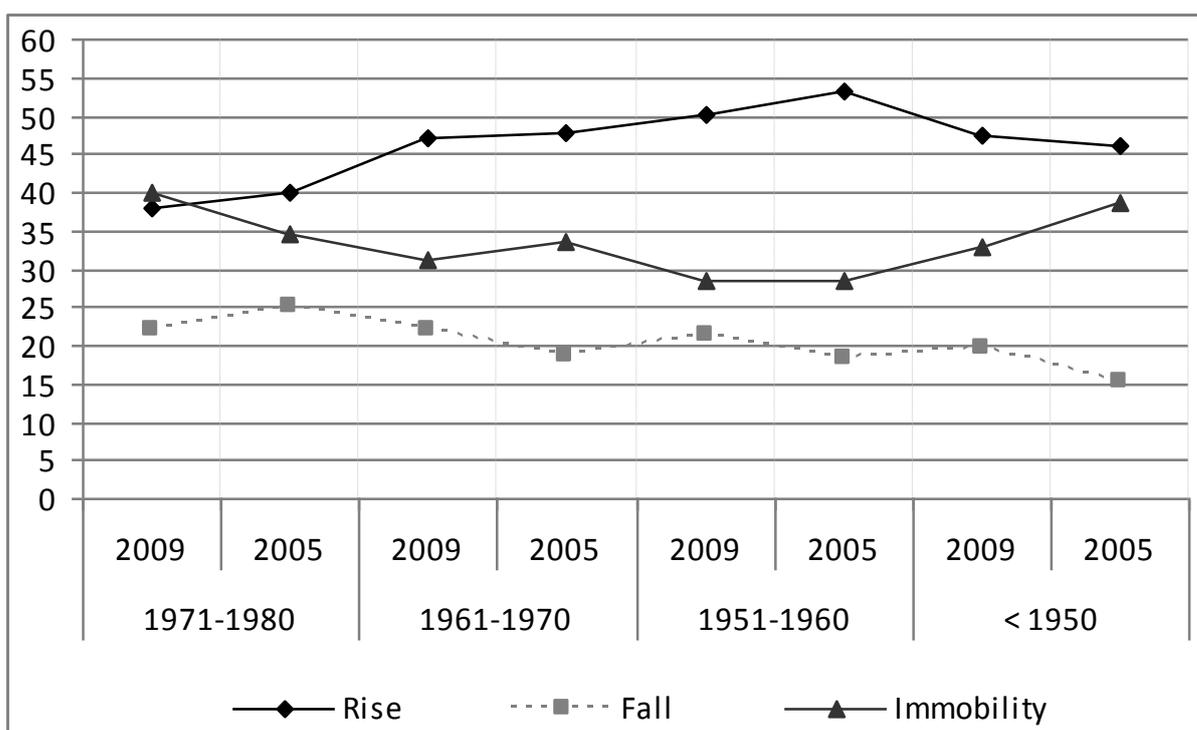
In 2009, the 1971-1980 cohort aged 29-38 was strongly affected by this and for the first time ever it showed more social immobility than upward mobility. This points to the revival of inheritance and the decline in upward social mobility for the younger cohort, as indicated in our book (see pp. 203 and 214). This is mainly due to the drop in the possible margin for upward mobility.

*The 1971-1980 cohort (aged 29-38 in 2009) for the first time displayed more social immobility than upward mobility*

This cohort has the biggest middle-class destination structure out of all the cohorts, that is, 78% of its destinations are middle-class: 27% reach higher destinations (I-II) and 51% reach destinations in the middle classes (III-IV-V). However, it is a cohort that starts off with the lowest proportion of working-class origins (32.8%) out of all the cohorts but it has the highest proportion of origins in the middle classes (47.2%) and the highest positioned professionals (20%).

This means that the cost of upward mobility is higher, the margin is smaller and there is a high probability of inheritance and immobility. This high starting point (67% middle class origins) is not repeated in the other cohorts, in which the greater number of working class origins means that there is more of a margin for upward mobility.

**Chart 8: Comparison of Upward and Downward Mobility and Immobility Rates in 2005 and 2009 According to Birth Cohorts**



Source: Martínez-Celorrio & Marín (2010) using data from PaD (2005 and 2009)

A large number of the two oldest cohorts (1951-1960 and <1950) have agricultural and working-class origins (46% and 56%), which they were able to rise out of because they lived through the rapid industrial development of the 1970s, the subsequent recession and the transformations (de-industrialisation and the rise of the tertiary sector) before today’s service economy came into being in 2009.

There was a considerable amount of opportunity available for upward mobility; more than there is nowadays for the younger cohort because the latter group started off from a higher point. Table 5 shows that 56% of the cohort born before 1950 came from the working classes, which means they started off from a lower point. 46% of the next cohort started off from working-class origins, and this percentage falls to 32.8% in the case of the 1971-1980 cohort.

*The oldest cohorts have enjoyed greater opportunities for upward mobility because of their lower starting point*

**Table 8: Structure of Class Origins and Destinations According to Age Cohorts**

	1971-1980		1961-1970		1951-1960		<1950	
	Father's class	Child's class						
I-II	20.0	<b>26.8</b>	17.9	<b>23.7</b>	13.9	<b>24.9</b>	9.6	<b>19.9</b>
III-V	47.2	<b>50.8</b>	29.0	<b>47.3</b>	32.4	<b>49.9</b>	34.4	<b>42.6</b>
VI-VII	32.8	<b>22.4</b>	46.9	<b>29.0</b>	46.3	<b>25.2</b>	56.0	<b>37.5</b>
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

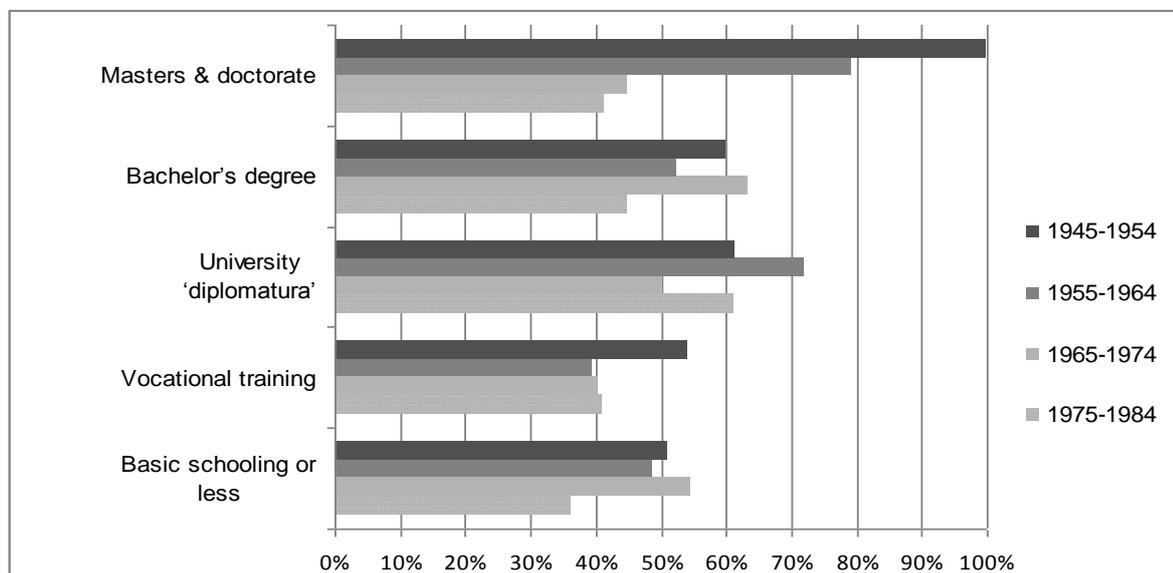
Source: Martínez-Celorrio & Marín (2010) using data from PaD (2005 and 2009).

#### 4.4. Social Mobility Through Education in 2009

The highest average rate of upward social mobility is 66.3% for higher university degrees (masters and doctorates). *Diplomatures* or preliminary degrees (61%) surpass bachelor's degrees (55%) in terms of upward mobility. With regard to the overall population, university qualifications (especially *diplomatures*) have been accessible launching pads for upward social mobility. For the first time ever, vocational training has had a greater elevator effect than basic schooling for the youngest group.

Chart 9 updates the data from 2005 included in Table 69 of our book (p. 195). It shows the rate of upward social mobility achieved by four age cohorts according to educational levels.

**Chart 9: Upward Social Mobility According to Educational Level and Age Cohort**



Source: Martínez-Celorrío & Marín (2010) using data from PaD (2009)

The data for 2009 clearly show that the higher the educational level, the greater the social fluidity and therefore the more independent social destinations (D) are of one's origins (O). This therefore confirms the fact that education is a factor that reduces origin-based classism and emancipates individuals that depend on the level of studies attained, as shown in the results in our first book (see pp. 137-140).

*Education is a factor that reduces origin-based classism and emancipates individuals that depend on the level of studies attained*

#### 4.5. Fluid Equality of Opportunities in 2009

A new analysis of relative mobility, or social fluidity, in 2009 was carried out. This type of mobility is different from the absolute mobility that has been discussed up to now. Social fluidity assesses the order of probability of social destinations (D) that may or may not be linked to class origins (O). It measures a structural dimension which is not perceived by individuals, but rather underlies the pattern of social stratification and indicates either the open/fluid nature of opportunities for mobility or their closed/rigid nature.

A log-multiplicative layer effect (LLE) model was applied to the EG7-CASMIN schema to determine the pattern of social fluidity according to gender in 2009. In our book, this was done for the whole 2005 sample according to age cohorts but without differentiating between men and women (see pp. 121-126).

Table 9 presents beta parameters according to cohorts and years of the sample. Taking those aged over 63 in 2009 as the baseline cohort, the results obtained using the Unidiff/LLE model were different from those for the 2005 sample.

**Table 9: Parameters for the Unidiff Model in 2009 and 2005**

Cohorts	Age in 2009	Beta (Mit)			
		Total 2009	Men 2009	Women 2009	Total 2005
<1947	>63	<b>1.00</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>1.00</b>	1.00
1947-1956	53-62	<b>0.71</b>	<b>2.15</b>	<b>0.38</b>	1.29
1957-1966	43-52	<b>0.63</b>	<b>1.09</b>	<b>0.54</b>	1.11
1967-1976	33-42	<b>0.69</b>	<b>1.20</b>	<b>0.69</b>	0.96

Note: Values greater than 1 point to an increase in classist rigidity. Values below 1 indicate decreasing rigidity.

Source: Martínez-Celorrío & Marín (2010) using data from PaD (2009)

The beta parameters show that Catalan society was much more fluid and less classist in the 2009 PaD sample than in the 2005 sample. The values for the whole of the 2009 sample were lower than 1, showing pronounced social fluidity which remains practically constant for all cohorts and assures equal opportunities.

The 1947-1956 cohort reduced its level of rigidity by 29% and increased its fluidity and equal opportunities. The next cohort, 1957-1966, reduced its classist rigidity even more (by 37%) in comparison to the baseline cohort. This makes it the cohort with the greatest fluidity; it is the least rigid in terms of classism and the greatest in terms of equal opportunities out of all the cohorts under analysis.

***Catalan society was much more fluid and less classist in the 2009 PaD sample than in the 2005 sample***

This process of decreasing classism seems to slow down with the following cohort, 1967-1976, for which rigidity increases by 6%. Even so, this cohort displays a 29% reduction in classist rigidity compared to the baseline cohort and continues to display a structure of equal opportunities.

The data from 2009 therefore confirms that the class structure is highly fluid and strongly based on equal opportunities, and this allows individuals to move between classes of origin and destination quite freely. It should be highlighted that this result was obtained for the population aged over 33 in 2009. This is a cut-off point at which the cost and instability of joining the labour market for young people is absorbed. It therefore marks the entry into adult destination classes.

With regard to men, classist rigidity clearly predominates in all cohorts (values greater than 1). The 1947-1956 cohort displays a very high peak of rigidity (2.15), which falls dramatically with the following cohort, 1957-1966 (1.09). This trend towards greater equal opportunities and less rigidity is reversed with the 1967-1976 cohort, for which there is a resurgence of class rigidity (1.20).

***Catalan social fluidity is female rather than male. Classist rigidity predominates among men***

These results, in terms of men, do not match the constant social fluidity model formulated by Erikson and Goldthorpe, given the dramatic changes in the pattern of fluidity/rigidity.

Instead of remaining stable, this pattern has undergone major variations: from an extreme peak of rigidity with the 1947-1956 cohort to a drastic fall with the next cohort, followed by a resurgence in the 1967-1976 cohort. The resulting pattern is therefore up-and-down. These sharp fluctuations indicate a variable social fluidity which is highly dynamic over time.

***Catalonia does not fit the model of constant or stagnant social fluidity***

The case of women does not match the constant social fluidity model either, given the progressive decline in what was initially a maximum level of fluidity. The 1947-1956 female cohort displays the beta value closest to (0.38).

It must be borne in mind that this is one of the first cohorts to have been emancipated from the patriarchal system and participate more actively in the job market, in professional (II), middle-grade (III-IV) and semi- or unskilled (VII) positions. Thus, it displays a maximum amount of fluidity (0.38) which is a historical exception that is unrepeatable.

***A pattern of social fluidity predominates among women, but it has decreased in recent years***

In conclusion, the beta parameters of the log-multiplicative model, which was applied to the data for 2009 for the same age cohorts as 2005, shows that **Catalan social structure is very open and non-classist; its fluidity of opportunities was better established in 2009 than in 2005.**

### **The Constant Social Fluidity Model (CSF)**

This model, formulated by Erikson and Goldthorpe,<sup>7</sup> states that once the process of industrialisation (in the 1960s and 1970s) was complete, relative mobility or fluidity between social class origins (O) and destinations (D) does not vary much in advanced societies and becomes similar in different countries.

The United Kingdom, Germany and Spain (see our first book, pp. 115-118) are countries which, regardless of the absolute mobility caused by changes in production and sectors, have not had increases in the fluidity of exchanges between origins (O) and destinations (D) and have continued to experience a constant flow or stagnation.

The paradox is that in these countries, education and welfare policies have not been able to reduce class inheritance or the influence of origins (O) on destinations (D) in order to break down class barriers.

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<sup>7</sup> Erikson, R. & Goldthorpe, J.H. (1993). Op. cit.

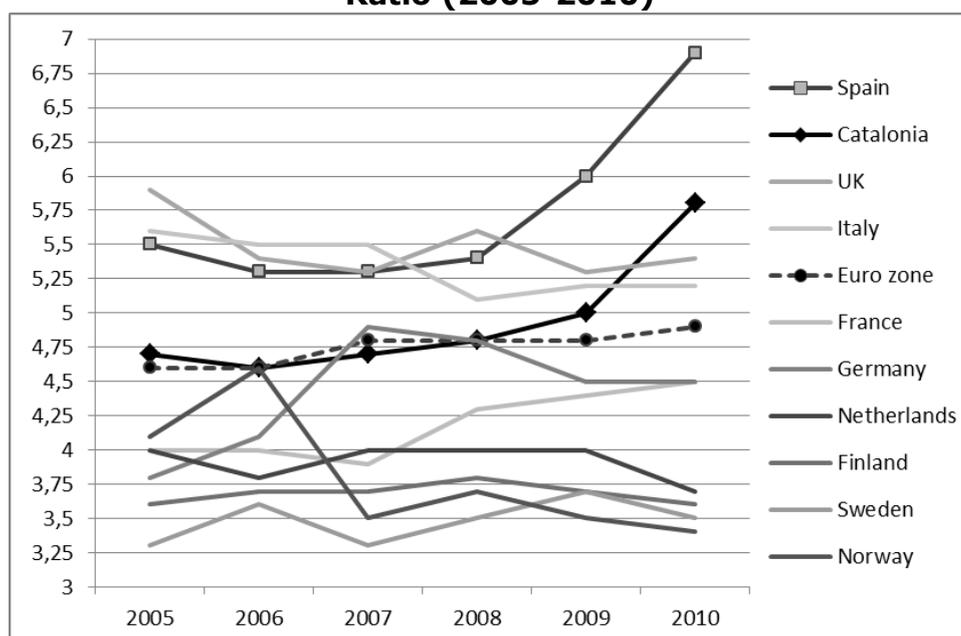
## 5. Catalonia Has a Less Rigid Class Structure than Some Other European Countries

Between 2005 and 2010, Catalonia and Spain had the biggest rise in S80/S20 inequality of income distribution, i.e. an increased gap between the 20% with the highest income and the poorest 20%.

This inequality gap has increased by 23% in Catalonia and 25% in Spain. The S80/S20 inequality ratio in Germany has increased by 18%, in France by 12% and in Sweden by 6%. However, some countries have reduced their inequality, such as Norway (-17%), the United Kingdom (-8%) and the Netherlands (-7%).

Historically, Catalonia has always been a region whose structure has had less inequality than the rest of Spain, and if Catalonia was taken out of Spain all together, this difference would be even more noticeable. With the start of the economic crisis and its negative consequences, Catalonia lost its position which used to be similar to the European average for inequality. It has been dragged down by the Spanish crisis, so it has had one of the highest increases in inequality as shown in the chart below.

**Chart 10: Evolution of S80/S20 Inequality of Income Distribution Ratio (2005-2010)**



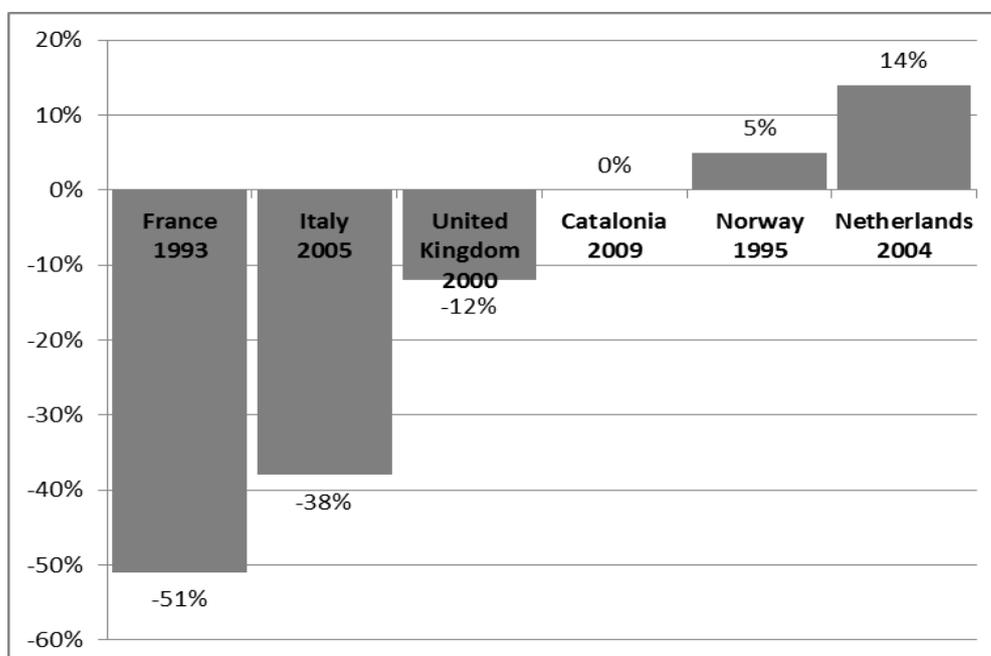
Source: Martínez-Celorio & Marín (2012a) using data from the European Commission (2012a), OECD (2011) and Idescat (2012)

The values of the most egalitarian countries in Europe (Norway, Sweden, Finland and the Netherlands) do not exceed 3.75 in the S80/S20 ratio. Those of Germany and France do not go beyond 4.5 and remain below the Eurozone average. Spain, Italy and the UK have always been the countries with the highest rate of inequality and since the start of the economic crisis, Catalonia has moved from the moderate group to form part of this latter group of regions that traditionally have had high levels of inequality.

Despite the increased inequality in the distribution of income due to the current economic crisis, Catalonia has a less rigid class structure and offers more equality of opportunity than some European countries.

In previous research, the proportional increase in fluidity across the class structure between parents and children in Catalonia was calculated and a 36% reduction in class rigidity was observed. However, Catalonia could not be ranked as a country to illustrate its comparative positioning. This requires standardising the samples according to the Erikson and Goldthorpe's statistical models (1993).

**Chart 11:** Comparison of Catalonia's Equality of Opportunities  
(Fluidity: positive numbers / rigidity: negative numbers)



Source: Martínez-Celorrío & Marín (2012a) using data on PaD (2009), Ringdal (2004), Vallet (2005), Schizzerotto (2005), Ganzeboom & Luijkx (2004) and Heath & Payne (2000).

**Catalonia's class structure is more fluid than that of France, Italy and the United Kingdom.** Nevertheless, its degree of fluidity and equality of opportunities is still surpassed by that of the Netherlands and Norway, which are the least classist societies.

As shown in the chart, the class structure in France in 1993 was 51% more rigid than the Catalan class structure in 2009; the Italian class structure was 38% more rigid and the British 12% more rigid. However, in 1995 Norway's class system was 5% more fluid than that of Catalonia and the Netherlands was 14% more egalitarian.

## Conclusions: The “Social Elevator” Has Worked with Restrictions at Either End

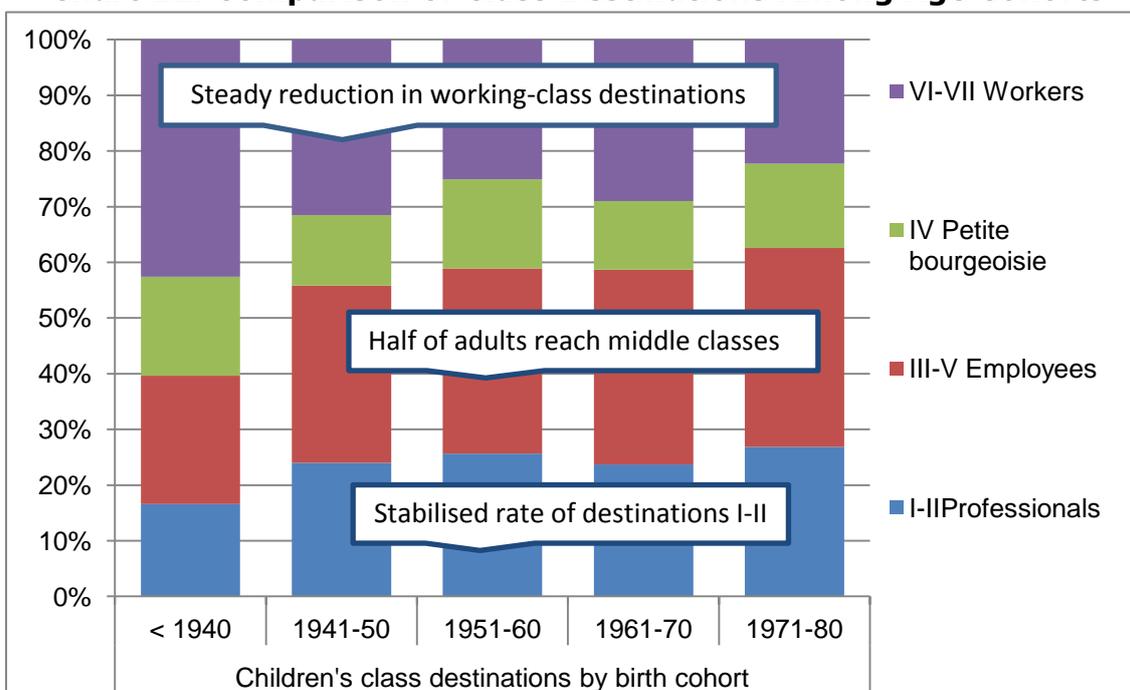
The overall conclusion from this research is that the so-called “social elevator” has worked in Catalonia throughout the period considered (1955-2005-2009). This retrospective period includes and accrues the effects of Franco’s autarky, Fordist industrialisation, post-industrial tertiarisation and the emergence of the current crisis.

The parents of the oldest cohort (aged 55-64) were born in the first quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and are shown with their last active occupation (and an occupational maturity or stabilisation that dates back to around 1955). This means that the period in question gives a retrospective idea of the last 50-55 years.

Our study began with the autarkical, patriarchal Francoist society and 50 years later ended with the bourgeois society dominated by middle and technical classes that are much more skilled and post-patriarchal, but are also more insecure and vulnerable in terms of employment and status, which is normal in a flexible, service economy open to the world.

*The analysis covers structural trends over the last 50-55 years*

**Chart 12: Comparison of Class Destinations Among Age Cohorts**



Source: Martínez-Celorio & Marín (2010) using data from PaD (2009)

Together with the decline in the working-class component of the population, two other structural trends emerge. The first is the slow but steady expansion of the managerial and professional class (I-II) that represents nearly 30% of all destinations for the youngest cohort, that of 1971-1980.

The second is the trend for 50% of class destinations which stays within the bracket of the middle classes (III-V) from the 1951-1960 cohort onwards, so that an extensive buffer zone is created, concentrating mobility and fluidity from both above and below.

The overall balance of mobility creates a social levelling effect which unites the class structure and reduces the impact of initial inequalities. Access to the middle classes (III-V) and to the petite bourgeoisie (IV) is highly fluid and open across all social classes. Given the considerable absolute increase in these middle classes (III-V) in the subsequent generation, this broad intermediate area or buffer zone is the central space for mobility.

***Access to mid-level destinations (III-V) and to the petite bourgeoisie (IV) is much more fluid across all social classes than access to the higher levels (I-II)***

The classes at the two ends of the scale are those with the highest outflow inheritance: 49% of the children of managers and professionals (I-II) and 37% of those of the working classes (VI-VII) are second-generation. This indicator highlights a great deal of consistency and demographic maturity of the structured classes with their own identity. The other classes (III-IVabc-V) may act as bridge classes with more fluid borders where class consciousness is not as well-established.

However, high upward mobility, a low inheritance rate and a noticeable pattern of social fluidity cannot be attributed to the insufficient investment in social and redistributive policies.

As shown in Table 10, Catalonia displays high to medium indicators of social inequality and very low levels of expenditure on social or educational issues and grants when compared to Sweden and the Netherlands (with which it shares social mobility traits).

Accordingly, given the absence of fiscal and state sovereignty, the explanation for Catalan meritocratic fluidity can be explained by historic and cultural factors and distinctive values (egalitarianism, tolerance, work, enterprise) which make Catalonia an "escalator region" (a land of opportunity).

**Table 10: Comparative Indicators of Inequality, Mobility and Social Spending**

	SOCIAL INEQUALITY (2004)			SOCIAL MOBILITY (2000)		SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL SPENDING (2005-2006)		
	Gini index	S20S80/	P10P90/	CASMIN inheritance (men)	CASMIN upward mobility (men)	% social spending /GNP (2006)	% public spending on education/ GNP (2005)	% spending on grants /public spending on education
Sweden	22.5	3.2	2.6	29	36	31.5	6.4	11.1
Netherlands	25.1	3.6	2.9	34	37	27.9	5.0	12.8
Germany	25.5	3.7	3.0	40	33	29.7	5.1	7.9
Hungary	27.3	4.0	3.2	28	35	21.9	5.6	5.7
France	27.6	4.0	3.2	33	29	31.4	6.0	3.8
<b>Catalonia</b>	<b>29.2</b>	<b>4.8</b>	<b>7.9</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>17.8</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>2.0</b>
Spain	30.7	5.2	4.4	32	--	20.9	4.6	3.0
Italy	32.1	5.3	4.1	28	35	26.4	4.7	4.3
United Kingdom	34.0	5.7	4.4	34	31	26.3	6.2	6.6
Poland	35.2	6.4	5.1	32	26	19.7	5.9	1.8
USA	35.7	6.0	5.4	--	--	15.9	7.1	8.1

Source: Martínez-Celorrío & Marín (2010)

If Catalonia could pay off its fiscal deficit with Spain and use more resources for social and education policies, the Catalan class system would be more fluid and even more socially just.

- The predominant pattern of meritocratic fairness is a defining trait of the Catalan identity and social stratification. It needs to be preserved in the light of increasing inequality and erosion of social cohesion caused by the current economic crisis. The crisis must not be used as an excuse to stop investing in opportunity.
- Our study pinpoints a predominant meritocratic pattern which excludes those whose social origins lie in poverty. This calls for a dramatic reconsideration of grant and scholarship policy-making in order to guarantee effective equal opportunities to reduce the rate of failure and drop-outs at school, provide drop-outs with a second chance to return to their studies and motivate children from the most disadvantaged social groups.

- The higher rate of inheritance and lower social fluidity at the two ends of the scale are a structural consequence of the pre-existing and persistent educational inequality. Following a considerable drop in inequality during the 1980s, inequality of opportunities in terms of getting into university and acquiring qualifications has remained steady since the mid-1990s. A lot still has to be done to reduce the difference in qualifications and ambition which separates the children at the two ends of the social scale.
- This restrictive pattern affecting the two ends of the social scale can be corrected if institutions make a concerted effort to do the following: a) neutralise the impact of social inheritance and segregation in the schema of opportunities; b) guarantee the quality of primary and secondary schools for all and encourage talent to achieve excellence and responsibility; c) activate transversal and regional policies for social inclusion and empowerment for the most vulnerable, socially-disadvantaged families and neighbourhoods.
- With regard to historical comparison, the consolidation of a demographic majority of middle classes (65% of all destinations) gives rise to a reduction in the margin for upward social mobility and reinforces social inheritance as a trend for the future. The high rate of social mobility experienced by the 1951-1960 cohort (the majority of which has a working-class origin) could not be repeated by the 1971-1980 cohort (the majority of which has a middle-class origin). Such massive upward social mobility is unlikely to be repeated in today's global economy that is based on services and knowledge.
- If a solution to the crisis involves the expansion of the expert (I-II) and technician (V) classes, this may open up a certain margin for upward social mobility. This would reinforce the importance of completing high levels of technical and/or university education in order to rise in class, as well as the increased vulnerability of those who do not reach such levels.
- Although the formal education system does not manage to completely counterbalance the social inequalities that children start out with, the formal education system does much more to create equality than the system of lifelong learning. Therefore, further cuts to the public education system must be counteracted and the more vulnerable schools should be provided with more resources, teachers and grants, as this is

how the system can best counterbalance pre-existing social inequalities.

- The system of lifelong learning is very weak considering the crucial role it plays in reactivating the economy and strengthening productivity in the near future. This has given rise to an increase in the rate of participation in lifelong learning, which is considered to be a basic right of citizens to continuously upgrade their qualifications.
- Nowadays, the existing system of lifelong learning is essentially used to reinforce social inequalities and it does not act as an open and flexible mechanism to provide individuals with a second chance. That being the case, decisive action must be taken to certify work experience and skills so as to increase adult re-entry into formal and higher education, particularly among groups that are not qualified and who only have a basic level of education, if any.