

## Chapter 8

# Migration and Social Mobility Between Argentina and Spain: Climbing the Social Hierarchy in the Transnational Space



Laura Oso and Pablo Dalle

**Abstract** This chapter analyses the relationship between migration and social mobility in Argentina and Spain from a transnational perspective focusing on two dimensions: the patterns of intergenerational social mobility of immigrants and natives in both countries; the social mobility strategies and trajectories of Galicians families in Buenos Aires and Argentinians, of Galician origin, who migrated to Galicia after the 2001 crisis. The chapter begins by contextualizing the migratory trends in Europe and Latin America. This is followed by a comparative study of how immigration impacts on the class structure and social mobility patterns in Argentina and Spain. Quantitative analysis techniques are used to study the intergenerational social mobility rates. The statistical analysis of stratification and social mobility surveys have been benchmarked against previous studies conducted in Argentina (Germani, G., *Movilidad social en la sociedad industrial*. EUDEBA, Buenos Aires, 1963; Dalle, P., *Movilidad social desde las clases populares. Un estudio sociológico en el Área Metropolitana de Buenos Aires (1960–2013)*. CLACSO/Instituto de Investigaciones Gino Germani-UBA/CICCUS, Buenos Aires, 2016) and Spain (Fachelli, S., & López-Roldán, P., *Revista Española de Sociología* 26:1–20, 2017). Secondly, qualitative research methods are used to consider the social mobility strategies and class trajectories of migrant families. We analyse two fieldworks, developed in the framework of other research projects (based on 44 biographical and semi-structured interviews). These case studies were carried out with Galicians that migrated to Argentina between 1940 and 1960 and Argentinians, of Galician origin, who migrated to Galicia after the 2001 crisis.

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## 8.1 Introduction

Migratory flows between Spain and Argentina are related to the economic development of both countries, set within the wider context of the migration patterns that have evolved between Europe and Latin America. Between the late nineteenth century and the mid-twentieth century, Spaniards emigrated to Argentina, with Galicians comprising the largest number of immigrants. However, the end of the twentieth century registered a change of direction, with Argentineans now travelling to Spain. Unequal conditions on both continents, and particularly between these two countries, in terms of economic growth, job opportunities and income levels, which together impact on social mobility “expectations”, have traditionally developed a transnational dynamic on both sides of the Atlantic. This route has witnessed the emergence of migratory flows in both directions that have built up strong social networks between the origin and host societies, laying the foundations for material and symbolic resources that have favoured the social mobility of families within the transnational space.

Our text aims to contribute to the debate on migration and social mobility by analysing migratory flows between Latin America and Europe, and specifically between Argentina and Spain. Our analysis is based on two academic traditions: studies into social stratification and mobility, and literature on international migration. We will now consider how these two traditions have addressed the connection between migration and social mobility.

## 8.2 The Migration-Social Mobility Connection: An Issue for Debate

Despite the considerable progress of social mobility studies within the field of Sociology, attributable to the application of sophisticated statistical techniques such as path analysis and especially the wide range of long-lineal analysis models (Cuin 1993; Hout and Di Prete 2006), very little work has been conducted into the relationship between social mobility and migration or spatial mobility.

From a quantitative approach, scientific production has focused particularly on the way migration impacts on the class structures of the host societies. Certain authors posit that immigration is associated with economic growth and development, thereby acting as an encouragement to upward social mobility. Although there is a clear lack of consensus as to whether migrants are drawn by more open societies or whether immigration leads to the opening up of the class structure, it is

assumed that international immigration has a positive effect on the openness of class structures (Yaish and Andersen 2012; Yaish 2002).

As for migrant generations and their social mobility patterns, a number of researchers have proposed a “succession model”: new arrivals are inserted at the base of the class structure, which has a “push effect” on the native population and earlier waves of migrants (Lipset and Bendix 1963; Germani 1963; Blau and Duncan 1967; Richmond 1988). Germani (1962) observed also a different effect: when faced with mass international migration, less consolidated social structures experience a “replacement effect” of the native society, leading to the creation of a new social structure and the upward structural mobility of the migrant population, like the first waves of immigrants from North Europe in the United States, the immigrants from South Europe (mainly Italy and Spain) in Argentina and Ashkenazi immigration to Israel.

Regarding migrants’ children, literature has traditionally followed the “linear assimilation” theory, whereby the upward social mobility of newly arrived ethnic groups is considered a question of time, and is dependent on their gradual inclusion of the cultural values held by the host middle classes (Park 1928; Warner and Srole 1945; Germani 1963 on Argentina). Later studies questioned this theory, associated with the “American dream”, highlighting the need to address ethnic as well as cultural considerations as the North American middle class is of European-white origin (Perlmann and Waldinger 1999; Perlman and Waldinger 1997). In a study carried out in the USA, Portes and Zhou (1993) criticised the “lineal assimilation” theory, opening a new line of analysis based on the “segmented assimilation” hypothesis. These authors identified three types social and cultural integration and class insertion trajectories among the migrant population: (1) the *mainstream assimilation*, which involves the incorporation of middle class standards and rules, favouring the long-distance upward mobility of the working classes; (2) the *strength of ethnic capital*: some groups conserve their identity through strong ties that, despite hostile contexts of discrimination and blocked access to opportunities, allow for short-distance upward mobility based on the economic activity of the endo-group; and; (3) *downward assimilation*: certain subordinate ethnic groups lose their cultural identity. The absence of dense social networks makes them more vulnerable to discrimination, and therefore their class trajectory is limited to intergenerational reproduction within the informal working class, and they are often trapped within a permanent circle of poverty that extends over various generations.

Turning to European literature, Thomson and Crul (2007) stress the importance of analysing the interrelation of four factors that intervene in the social mobility of the migrant population and their descendants: whether the opportunities structure is closed or open; the ethnic group’s culture, the density of their social relationships and their economic resources; family/personal agency; and the institutional context of the host society.

Recent studies have shown that although migrants tend to enter their new society on the lower rungs of the class ladder, their children will manage to position themselves on a par with the native population. Generally speaking, migrants procure intra-generational upward social mobility through the small-scale bourgeoisie in

niches of economic activity. However, they are blocked from access to the privileged middle classes that requires higher education qualification and the internalisation of the cultural capital of the middle classes hegemonic to the host society. However, migrants' children tend to equal—and on occasions even exceed—the native population in terms of their upward social mobility rates (Goldthorpe et al. 1997; Yaish 2002). As we have indicated, some authors consider that immigrants' children achieve longer distance social mobility in the light of their capacity to assume the hegemonic culture of their host society, a process that is less arduous in the case of ethnic groups that identify more closely with said culture (Portes and Zhou 1993; Portes and Rumbaut 2001).

As we have seen, most studies focus on either the impact of immigration on social structures, or the intra and inter-generational mobility trajectories of the migrant population and their descendants from the perspective of the host country. Nevertheless, in recent years, the transnational approach, addressed extensively in international migration literature, has required a vision that looks beyond traditional considerations when studying the connection between migration and social mobility. Indeed, and as discussed by Favell and Recchi (2011), international migratory flows have transformed the notion of social mobility that dominated scientific production until the late twentieth and early twenty first centuries, questioning the idea of social mobility as a closed system comprising static social classes, built within national borders. New analyses are required that seek to determine the impact of population flows on the social structure of countries, and that also consider the transnational dynamics that take place between the migrants' contexts of origin and destination in order to shed light on the connection between migration and social mobility.

The family biography, which highlights the resources that are mobilised and deployed between generations, provides an alternative approach to the quantitative research that has dominated social mobility literature, which is perhaps more suited to the analysis of social mobility dynamics in the transnational space. Yet it has received scant attention when addressing the problems arising from social mobility within migration (Bertaux and Thompson 1997; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Dalle 2013, 2016; Oso and Suárez-Grimalt 2017; Oso et al. 2019; among others). Furthermore, research has generally failed to combine quantitative and qualitative studies that consider the connection between migration and social mobility (Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Favell and Recchi 2011; among others).

This chapter aims to contribute to this scholarly debate by addressing social mobility within the context of international migration from both a quantitative and qualitative approach, thereby moving beyond previous studies. Not only does it take an in-depth look at the impact of immigration on class structures within the host society, but also on the intergenerational social mobility rates of the immigrant population. One of the contributions of this chapter is that it also addresses this research question from a comparative perspective. It analyses the international class mobility patterns of the immigrant population in Spain and Argentina during the first decade of the twenty-first century, comparing them with those of the native population. Furthermore, it considers the key channels for upward social mobility of migrants

within each country and reflects on the impact immigration has on the general degree of fluidity within the Spanish and Argentinean class structures.

Furthermore, this chapter adopts a transnational approach to the analysis of migration and social mobility, looking beyond the host context. This requires the analysis of how class positions shift with comings and goings within the transnational space. In line with other research conducted by the authors, (Oso and Suárez-Grimalt 2017; Oso et al. 2019), it reveals the essential need to consider several major key factors, rather than limiting research to education and occupational trajectories of social mobilities: patrimonial, business, and marriage strategies, as well as investments in social, human and legal capital (Spanish nationality). Finally, the principal contribution of this chapter is the insight it provides into the transnational articulation of capital accumulation, shedding light on family social mobility strategies and trajectories from an intergenerational dimension. Indeed, our qualitative analysis reveals how various generations interconnect family social mobility strategies within the transnational space as a means of achieving their goals or tackling difficulties stemming from conditioning factors such as their initial social class and the social and historical context. The result is an intergenerational accumulation of various types of capital that are passed between families of migrant origin, namely economic capital, human capital, social capital of ethnic origin and legal capital (Spanish nationality). We will attempt to show how these types of capital are activated on both sides of the Atlantic in accordance with the opportunities available in each country over various periods, as well as a number of other factors.

After addressing the key methodological challenges, the text begins with an insight into migratory flows in Spain and Argentina, positioning them within their regional context (Europe and Latin America). This is followed by a quantitative analysis of the impact immigration has on the class structure in migrant host societies, including a comparison of Spain and Argentina. It analyses the intergenerational class mobility patterns of international migrants in each country, comparing them with those of the native population during the first decade of the twenty-first century. A qualitative approach is then taken to the social mobility strategies of migrant families in the transnational context, consisting of a comparison between migration from Galicia (historically one of the principal regions of origin of Spanish emigration) to Argentina during the last migratory flow (1040–1960) and Argentinean emigration to Galicia by their descendants in the wake of the 2001 crisis.<sup>1</sup> This sheds light on the highly specific nature of Galician immigration, comparing it with the social reality of immigrants from other geographical contexts.

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<sup>1</sup> The qualitative fieldwork with Galician migrants in Argentina was carried out within the framework of the following projects: Gender, transnationalism and intergenerational social mobility strategies (Oso 2011–2014); Gender, crossed mobilities and transnational dynamics (Oso 2015–2019). Financed by the Spanish Ministry of the Economy and Competitiveness (References: FEM2011–26110 and FEM2015–67164-R). Further funding was obtained from the Galician Autonomous Government (Xunta de Galicia) under the programme “Consolidation and Structuring of Competitive Research Units in the Galician University System” (GRC2014/048; Oso 2014–2017). The study into Argentinean migrants in Galicia was carried out within the Equal

### 8.3 Methodological Challenges: Data and Analysis Techniques

Our research involves a combination of quantitative and qualitative techniques: the exploitation of secondary statistical sources; the statistical analysis of surveys on stratification and social mobility, as well as biographical and semi-structured interviews with migrants of Galician origin that have moved between the Atlantic trans-national space (return migrations between Galicia and Argentina).

In order to provide a regional context for the migratory processes occurring in Spain and Argentina, we used various databases. The 2018 Eurostat database on population born abroad was used to provide an insight into the immigrant population stock. In the case of Latin America, the data were obtained from the Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre (CELADE in its Spanish initials), the population division of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), which holds the censuses for the countries included in the region, known collectively as the Observatory for International Migration in Latin America (IMILA in its Spanish initials). In this case we analysed the data for the CIRCA 2010 censuses. We also considered UN estimates in order to obtain a more accurate comparison with European countries.

The Municipal Population Census (PMH in its Spanish initials), drawn up by the Spanish Statistics Agency (INE in its Spanish initials) was used to determine the social and demographic characteristics of Spain's immigrant population. This provided an insight into the scale, origin and sex of the population born abroad. The Labour Force Survey (EPA in its Spanish initials, published by INE) provided the data used to analyse the level of education and the principal employment sectors of the foreign population in Spain.<sup>2</sup> In the case of Argentina, the evolution of the major migratory flows, level of education and the principal areas of employment were analysed using data obtained from the 2010 census.

The analysis of intergenerational social mobility patterns is based on surveys that include retrospective indicators on family class when respondents were aged 16. For Argentina, a database was used comprising three integrated surveys: the 2007 Stratification and Social Mobility Survey conducted by the Gino Germani Institute of the University of Buenos Aires; the 2013 survey conducted by the Gino Germani Institute of the University of Buenos Aires, both directed by Dr. Raúl Jorrat (for the country as a whole), and the Social Structure National Survey of the National Research Programme on Contemporary Society (PISAC in its Spanish initials) (for urban totals). In the case of Spain, we followed the guidelines of the study

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Convive Mais project (2005–2007), European Social Fund. FSE-EQUAL-2004 (Spanish Official Gazette [BOE] 29/03/2004).

<sup>2</sup>Unlike the Municipal Census Data, the Labour Force Survey does not provide a breakdown by country of birth (origin), but rather by nationality, thereby somewhat reducing the value of the naturalised immigrant (born abroad) classification.

conducted by Fachelli and López-Roldán (2017), based on the 2011 Living Conditions Survey conducted by the Spanish Statistics Agency (INE).

Our qualitative analysis is based on two previous case studies, carried out within the framework of other research projects.<sup>3</sup> The first was part of the FEM2011–26110 and FEM2015–67164-R projects, and consisted of biographical interviews held with Galician migrants who arrived in Buenos Aires between 1940 and 1960 and their descendants (children and grandchildren). The sample also include a number of families that migrated towards the end of the first wave (1930 and 1937) in order to provide a point of contrast and transition. This fieldwork was carried out in the city of Buenos Aires and its conurbation in 2010, 2012, 2014 and 2018 (Oso et al. 2019). The initial contact was with key informants from Galician associations (Casa de Galicia, Asociación Mutualistas Residentes de Vigo, Federación de Sociedades Gallegas), which enabled us to get in touch with a number of interviewees, although personal connections were also used as a means of accessing families outside the circle of associations. In some cases, biographical interviews were held with just one family member (12), whilst in other cases (7 families), several members were interviewed (husbands/wives, fathers/mothers, sons/daughters and even grandmothers/grandfathers). Contact was made with 28 people over the course of our fieldwork: 16 women and 12 men. Twelve of the informants were migrants who arrived in Argentina between 1940 and 1960; thirteen were the children of migrants; and three were grandchildren. Migrant generation interviewees were of rural origin and had a low level of education, in contrast to the children and grandchildren, whose level of education ranged between medium and high.

The second fieldwork took place in Galicia between 2005 and 2006 with immigrants of varying origin, as part of the Equal Convive+ research project and consisted of 50 semi-structured interviews (20 men and 30 women). The majority of interviewees had successfully completed secondary and higher education. In terms of their labour activity, the majority were self-employed. Particularly worthy of note was the number of entrepreneurs from those countries with a long-standing tradition of Galician emigration, namely Argentina, Uruguay and Venezuela. Most of those in paid employment worked in the retail and catering sectors, or in domestic service and care work, although a number were also employed in the building industry. Sixteen of those included in the study (seven men and nine women) had migrated from Argentina. Most were the descendants of Galician emigrants who travelled to Spain following the 2001 crisis in Argentina. Of the remainder of interviewees, 14 had migrated from countries that, like Argentina, shared ties with Galician emigration (Venezuela and Uruguay). Twenty migrants came from other contexts (mainly from Colombia, Peru, Brazil, Morocco and Senegal). Our work focuses particularly on the data obtained from the 16 interviews with immigrants from Argentina, whilst establishing a comparison with the social reality of immigrants from other countries (Oso Casas et al. 2006).

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<sup>3</sup>As already mentioned, the fieldwork with Galician migrants in Argentina was carried out within the framework of the following previous research projects (References: FEM2011–26110; FEM2015–67164-R; GRC2014/048; FSE-EQUAL-2004).



A final point for consideration is that our work follows a comparative approach based on four aspects:

1. A comparison between the social mobility patterns of Spanish immigrants in Argentina, specifically those of Galician origin, and their descendants (children and grandchildren), and those of immigrants from overseas and their descendants and later immigrants from bordering nations.
2. A comparative analysis of the impact of immigration on class structure in twenty-first century Argentina and Spain.
3. A study of the social mobility trajectories of Argentinean immigrants of Galician origin in Spain, compared with immigrants from other countries.
4. The social mobility of Galicians that emigrated to Argentina between 1940 and 1960 in comparison with the Galician descendants that migrated to Spain in the wake of the 2001 crisis.

After establishing the methodological approach, we will define the main migration trends in Spain and Argentina within their regional context.

#### **8.4 Migrations in Spain and Argentina Within the Regional Context (Europe and Latin America): A Tale of Comings and Goings**

Europe has traditionally been a continent of emigration. The colonial era was marked by the intense movement of individuals from Europe to the “New World”. In the nineteenth century, these migratory flows intensified. The transition towards market-based capitalist agriculture and developments in sea transport led large numbers of displaced agricultural workers in Europe to move to the United States, Canada and Latin America. Latin American countries, and Argentina in particular, held an irresistible appeal for overseas immigration in the wake of waning migratory flows from northern Europe, which was accompanied by a rise in the numbers of migrants travelling from southern Europe. Baily and Míguez (2003) estimate that around ten million people emigrated from Europe to Latin America between 1870 and 1930, three-quarters of whom were from the Iberian Peninsula (Spain and Portugal) and Italy. Of these, 91% travelled to just three countries: Argentina (50%), Brazil (36%) and Uruguay (5%). These migratory flows were related to earlier trends, as well as to the existence of social networks that originated during the colonial era.

In the case of Argentina, overseas immigration reached its height in the years between 1870 and 1930, despite being interrupted by World War I. Following World War II, immigration flows to Argentina were revitalised during a brief but intense period (approximately until 1958). This extended time span saw the arrival of around 7,600,000 immigrants, with an estimated residential rate of 56%. The principal

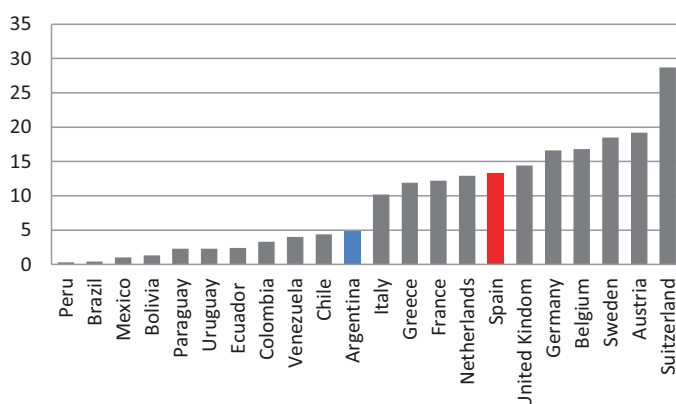


nationalities were Italians, Spaniards, Poles and Russians (including a considerable proportion of Jews), Germans, French, Britons and people from Arab nations (Devoto 2004). Within this migratory trend, around 65% of Spanish descendants in the city of Buenos Aires and Greater Buenos Aires were of Galician origin, forming the largest regional-ethnic group of overseas immigrants in Argentina (Pérez-Prado 2007).

The flood of immigrants brought substantial change to Argentina's social structure and a move away from a polarised and closed class system to another in which the middle classes gained influence, favouring the possibility of upward social mobility (Germani 1962).

History brought a sharp turnabout in the direction of migratory flows across the Atlantic. In the late twentieth century (1980s), Europe, and particularly those countries with a long-standing tradition of emigration to Latin America (Spain, Portugal and Italy), began to receive immigrants from the continent that had traditionally been the destination of their ancestors. During the 1960s and 1970s, northern European countries (the UK, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Germany) had acted as the principal host countries for European immigration, essentially their southern European neighbours. However, during the following two decades (1980s and 1990s), Spain, Italy, Greece and Portugal emerged as host countries for immigrants, mainly attracting flows from outside Europe. Eurostat data for 2018 reveal how more than 10% of the Spanish, Italian and Greek population is of immigrant origin, percentages on a par with other countries with a far greater tradition of immigration in Europe, such as France and the Netherlands (Fig. 8.1).

Spain experienced a sharp hike in the number of incoming migrants from the late twentieth century onwards, a trend that was further heightened at the start of the twenty-first century, coinciding with a period of economic prosperity. This would



**Fig. 8.1** Percentage of immigrant population in Latin America and European Countries (2017/2018). Source: ILO estimates for 2017 in Latin American countries and 2018 Eurostats data for Europe

continue until the financial crisis of 2008. The principal countries of origin of immigrants in Spain include Morocco (12.9%) and Rumania (9.3%), followed of some Latin American countries (Ecuador 6.3%. Colombia 6.2%. Argentina 4%. Venezuela 4% and Peru 3.2%) (2018 Municipal Population Census, Spanish Statistics Agency (INE in its Spanish initials).

Unlike the Spanish migrants that set sail for America during the first half of the twentieth century, many of whom were of rural origin and had a low level of education (illiteracy rates were high), the majority of immigrants to Spain of Latin American origin have an average-high level of education: 26% had completed the first stage of their secondary education; 24.4% the second stage and 24.2% had undertaken higher education (Working Population Survey-EPA in its Spanish initials] for the second quarter of 2019). However, despite their medium-high level of education, Latin American immigrants tend to be employed below their skills level, mainly in the catering, personal care, protection and retail sectors (28.6%), as well as in unskilled domestic service, farm labour, fishing, building, manufacturing and transformation industries (30.1%) (EPA for the second quarter of 2019).

From the mid-twentieth century onwards, the following migratory patterns emerged in Latin America: (1) in terms of immigration, a rise in interregional flows and a steady fall in total and relative number of overseas immigrants; and (2) extra-regional emigration to relatively more developed countries (the USA and Europe) (Pizarro and Rivera 2016).

Today, Argentina has the highest relative volume of immigrants in South America (4.9%) (ILO estimates for 2017). Since the late nineteenth century, Argentina received successive waves of regional migrants (in particular from its bordering countries) that comprised a relatively constant percentage of the country's population until 1990. From then on, the figures began to rise, attributable to the growing intensity of traditional flows from Paraguay (30.5%) and Bolivia (20.1%), and the emergence of new currents from Peru (9.4%), and more recently also from Colombia and Venezuela (2010 census). Both the Paraguayan and Bolivian groups generally have lower levels of education than the native population and their labour insertion tends to be in less formal areas of economic activity. On average, Peruvian immigrants have a higher level of education than the native population, yet they generally work in areas that require fewer skills. The main economic sectors that employ this regional immigration are construction, domestic service, provision of care for the elderly, fruit, vegetable and flower farming, construction, textile factories and the retail clothing and trade (Benencia 2016; Cerrutti 2018).

After providing a context for the migratory dynamics on either side of the Atlantic, the following section provides a detailed insight into the immigrant population in Spain and Argentina, taking into consideration their insertion in the class structure and their intergenerational class mobility patterns in relation to their family of origin.

## 8.5 Immigration and Social Mobility in Argentina and Spain

This section analyses the patterns of intergenerational social mobility among the immigrant and native populations of Argentina and Spain. It begins with a discussion of the patterns of insertion in the class stratification structure by the children of Spanish immigrants (who had arrived with the early immigrant flows) and of Spanish immigrants that arrived after the war in the Buenos Aires Metropolitan Areas in 1961. It then considers the class insertion of the Spanish ascendant population (children and grandchildren) today. This allows us to reconstruct the principal patterns of intergenerational social mobility among Spanish families in Buenos Aires. A final stage is to consider, within this perspective, the intergenerational social mobility patterns of immigrants and natives in Argentina and Spain, based on recent surveys. The aim is to determine the impact of immigration on the modern-day class structure of each country.

Between 1870 and 1930, Argentina became a major player in the global economy due to its meat and cereal exports. The expansion of livestock and farming activity and the manufacturing industry and associated service sector, turned the country into an attractive destination for large numbers of European workers who had been displaced following the shift to capitalist, market-oriented architecture. The flood of European immigration had a replacement effect on the relatively small native population. Overseas immigration was both a consequence and driving force for economic development. The social stratification profile underwent a radical transformation from a polarised and fairly closed society to one characterised by an emerging middle class that allowed for inter-class movement.

Growing employment opportunities led to an intense process of upward social mobility of a structural nature. European immigrants and their descendants were the first to generate or take advantage of these opportunities. For the immigrant generation, the road to intergenerational social ascent was dotted with small workshops, stores and agriculture and livestock farms that flourished within the context of a rising and relatively prosperous population. This was particularly true of the Pampas region, which was the driving force for economic growth. Yet the majority entered the emerging working class; for many the first rung on the ladder to upward mobility, away from rural activities. For their children, state education was a channel for social ascent, providing them with the necessary skills and knowledge to access technical or administrative jobs (intergenerational social mobility) (Germani 1962, 1963). European migrants and their descendants did not have to integrate into this society, as they were themselves responsible for its creation.

At the start of the second half of the twentieth century, Buenos Aires' metropolitan area (the city and conurbation of Buenos Aires) was characterised by its strong European social and cultural influence, the consequence of success migratory waves that arrived between 1870 and 1930 and 1945 and 1958. The 1961 survey conducted by Germani provides a panoramic vision of this influx 1961. Considering two generations, three quarters of the population were of European ascent (76%) and

Galician migration made a major contribution to the rising population. Practically a quarter of the population of Buenos Aires' metropolitan area was of Spanish origin (24%), and estimates from the studies referred to above indicate that some two thirds of this number (65%) were of Galician origin.

We will now examine the social mobility patterns of Spanish migrants, their children and grandchildren. The quantitative analysis based on Germani's survey reveals that by 1961 two thirds (66%) of the children of the Spanish immigrants that formed part of the early waves at the end of the nineteenth century and start of the twentieth century were members of the middle classes, with a considerable number forming part of the upper strata. In contrast, later arrivals were positioned in the working classes, and were mainly skilled employees or self-employed workers with a trade. However, a considerable proportion belonged to an adjacent stratum accessed mainly by setting up small food and beverage outlets (bars, bakeries and restaurants) (see Oso et al. 2019).

The typical intergenerational social mobility trajectory of the population of Galician origin in Buenos Aires involves two transitional phases. Firstly, the Galician migrants became labourers instead of farmworkers—the men were employed mainly in the service sector as restaurant waiters or kitchen assistants or milkmen, as well as in meat processing plants and other industries—, whilst the women were employed in domestic service or the textile industry. Secondly, following a period of settlement and consolidation, a considerable number of migrants experienced upward mobility, becoming small-scale retailers.

What is left of these trends in modern-day Buenos Aires? Using the Gino Germani Institute (University of Buenos Aires) surveys directed by Dr. Raúl Jorrot, we analysed the social mobility patterns of the children and grandchildren of Spanish migrants today. Regarding the children of Galician migrants from the post-war flows, we observed their insertion in the lower-middle classes, by either continuing with their parents' retail ventures or occupying technical or administrative posts. As with other groups of European origin, they enjoyed high rates of access to the upper-middle classes thanks to university qualifications, albeit at a slightly lower rate in comparison with the children of migrants from the first wave (between 1857 and 1936). This indicated that Galician families included in the more recent migratory trend (1940–1960) encountered a more consolidated and therefore possibly less accessible social structure, and therefore their upward social mobility trajectories were of a more modest nature. In turn, the grandchildren of Galician migrants form part of the management/professional class in a proportion on a par with other groups of European origin, thanks to their university qualifications. A considerable number originate from the lower-middle classes: their parents were shopkeepers, technicians or paid employees, indicating the continued upward social mobility experienced by several generations of families of Galician origin in Buenos Aires.

We will now compare the patterns of insertion in the class stratification structure of the immigrant and native population in Spain and Argentina in the second decade of the twenty-first century (Table 8.1) and analyse the intergenerational social mobility rates for each group (Table 8.4).

As indicated earlier, in the case of Argentina, most immigrants from Latin American have a greater relative degree of insertion than the native population in

**Table 8.1** Percentage distribution of immigrant and native insertion in the class structure. Argentina and Spain (2011)

Class position	Argentina		Spain	
	Natives	Immigrants	Natives	Immigrants
Service class (management and professional)	25.0	9.3	25.3	8.8
White collar workers	14.8	12.0	27.1	20.9
Petite rural and urban bourgeoisie	20.3	28.3	14.7	9.9
Skilled working class	11.3	13.8	10.3	16.8
Unskilled working class	28.6	36.6	22.6	43.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<i>N</i>	9,927	446	13,271	916

Source: the Gino Germani Institute (University of Buenos Aires) surveys directed by Dr. Raúl Jorrot and PISAC survey (Argentina) and the Spanish Statistics Agency's Life Conditions Survey (Spain)

**Table 8.2** Percentage of class origin and destination distribution and % of dissimilarity. Argentina (2011)

Class position	Natives			Immigrants		
	Origins	Destinations	$\Delta$	Origins	Destinations	$\Delta$
Service class (management and professional)	14.6	25.0	10.4	9.6	9.3	-0.3
White collar workers	6.8	14.8	8.0	3.3	12.0	8.7
Petite rural and urban bourgeoisie	28.1	20.3	-7.8	36.4	28.3	-8.1
Skilled working class	16.8	11.3	-5.5	11.3	13.8	2.5
Unskilled working class	33.7	28.6	-5.1	39.4	36.6	-2.8
Total	100.0	100.0		100.0	100.0	
<i>N</i>	9,927	9,927		446	446	

Source: the Gino Germani Institute (University of Buenos Aires) surveys directed by Dr. Raúl Jorrot and PISAC survey (Argentina) and the Spanish Statistics Agency's Life Conditions Survey (Spain)

the unskilled working/precariat classes and the petite bourgeoisie (comprising mainly self-employed retail traders and blue-collar workers). In Spain, immigrants experience a greater degree of insertion in the unskilled and skilled working classes than the native population.

The comparative analysis reveals two common patterns. Firstly, in both countries the class insertion of the immigrant population takes place within the polarised class structure that is a feature of the current capitalist context. Immigrants provide the labour that meets the demand for unskilled employment. This pattern is slightly more evident in Spain, which has a more consolidated class structure. A second characteristic, related to the first, is that by entering the class stratification structure on the lower rungs, international migrants exert a kind of "push up" effect on the native population.

Tables 8.2 and 8.3 reveal that degree of dissimilarity between origins (the father's class status) and the class destinations (the class position of respondents of both

**Table 8.3** % of class origin and destination distribution and % of dissimilarity. Spain (2011)

Class position	Natives			Immigrants		
	Origins	Destinations	$\Delta$	Origins	Destinations	$\Delta$
Service class (management and professional)	12.7	25.3	12.6	14.2	8.8	-5.4
White collar workers	12.1	27.1	15.0	13.3	20.9	7.6
Petite rural and urban bourgeoisie	26.4	14.7	-11.7	23.0	9.9	-13.1
Skilled working class	17.1	10.3	-6.8	15.4	16.8	1.4
Unskilled working class	31.8	22.6	-9.2	34.1	43.6	9.5
Total	100.0	100.0		100.0	100.0	
<i>N</i>	13,271	13,271		916	916	

Source: the Gino Germani Institute (University of Buenos Aires) surveys directed by Dr. Raúl Jorrat and PISAC survey (Argentina) and the Spanish Statistics Agency's Life Conditions Survey (Spain)

sexes) for both natives and immigrants in Argentina and Spain. This index provides an insight into the type of structural mobility experienced by immigrants in both countries.

In order to measure upward and downward social mobility, we calculated the *vertical mobility rate*, which crosses the principal hierarchical limits between social classes. This has traditionally been measured by grouping classes into three major categories, as a means of controlling horizontal movements. For the purpose of our study, we have followed the original grouping proposal of Erikson and Goldthorpe (1992: 45) readopted by Breen (2004).

In Argentina, immigrants tend to come from the lower classes and display a greater upward mobility in the host society, moving into the non-routine manual class, the skilled working class and the urban petite bourgeoisie made up of self-employed small retailers and tradesmen (Table 8.2). The table indicates a lower insertion percentage in the petite bourgeoisie in host societies, attributable to the fact that the origins of a considerable percentage lie in small-scale rural landownership (Class IVc). Furthermore, and as shown in Table 8.1, immigrants have a greater tendency than the native population for insertion in the petite bourgeoisie. In the case of Spain, employment in administrative work or the skilled manufacturing sector are also structural channels for moving upwards out of their parents' social class in the society of origin. However, it must be noted that in Spain, despite coming from higher classes in their society of origin and, as discussed in the previous section, having a higher level of education, a larger percentage joins the unskilled working class. This downward structural mobility in employment terms is offset by higher wages than in the society of origin. We will now study in greater depth the intergenerational social mobility rates of immigrants and natives in both countries (Table 8.4).

**Table 8.4** Descriptive rates of the intergenerational social mobility of international migrants and natives. Argentina and Spain

Intergenerational social mobility rates	Argentina		Spain	
	Natives	Immigrants	Natives	Immigrants
Upward vertical mobility	32.7	25.7	34.6	19.5
Downward vertical mobility	20.1	21.9	17.3	32.0
<i>Reason for UVM and DVM</i>	<i>1.6</i>	<i>1.2</i>	<i>2.0</i>	<i>0.61</i>
Mobility from the working class to the service class	15.4	6.2	18.6	4.6
Dissimilarity between origins-destinations ( $\Delta$ )	18.4	11.2	27.6	18.4
% service class at destination	25.0	9.3	25.3	8.8
$\Delta$ service class at origin	10.4	−0.3	12.6	−5.3
<i>N</i> (men and women)	9,927	446	13,271	916

Source: the Gino Germani Institute (University of Buenos Aires) surveys directed by Dr. Raúl Jorrat and PISAC survey (Argentina) and the Spanish Statistics Agency's Life Conditions Survey (Spain)

In both countries, immigration boosts upward social mobility due to its “push-up effect” on the native population. In Argentina, a considerable percentage of the native population is made up of the children of the latest migratory flow from Europe that occurred between 1949 and 1960 (mainly Italy and Spain). In both Argentina and Spain, the native population displays higher upward vertical mobility rates than immigrants.

Apart from this general shared pattern, both countries display a number of differences in terms of the absolute rates of intergenerational social mobility between immigrants and natives. Firstly, the upward vertical mobility rate of international migrants is higher in Argentina than in Spain. This is partly due to their humbler class origin, although a further factor may be that international migrants in Spain enter a more consolidated class structure and may therefore encounter higher levels of discrimination.

Secondly, whilst in Argentina the vertical downward mobility rate is similar for both immigrants and the native population, in the case of Spain, the rate for immigrants is almost twice that of the native population.<sup>4</sup> It is also considerably higher in comparison with the rate for immigrants in Argentina. These results provide a working hypothesis for further research. International migrants in Spain obtain higher income than in their countries of origin, even though they enter the lower classes, frequently below their skills level. In Argentina, international migrants may well need to achieve a short distance upward class progression in comparison with their family of origin in order to obtain higher income than in their society of origin.

<sup>4</sup>This pattern is similar to that identified by Fachelli and López-Roldán (2017). The variance in values is attributable to the fact that their research calculates upward and downward social mobility in  $5 \times 5$  tables and as indicated previously, in our case,  $3 \times 3$  tables have been used to calculate vertical mobility. The results obtained reaffirm those of the earlier study.



**Table 8.5** Log-linear model results of uniform differences (unidiff) by migrant status, origin class-destination class by country

	Phi parameters	
	Argentina	Spain
Natives	1	1
International immigrants	1.13	0.90
Goodness of fit <sup>a</sup>		
LR test (1 df)	0.5	0.9
Index of dissimilarity	0.02	0.03
BIC	8.7	8.6

\*\*\*  $p < 0.001$  \*\*  $p < 0.01$ ; \* $p < 0.05$ ; + $p < 0.10$   
Source: the Gino Germani Institute (University of Buenos Aires) surveys directed by Dr. Raúl Jorrat and PISAC survey (Argentina) and the Spanish Statistics Agency’s Life Conditions Survey (Spain)  
<sup>a</sup>In comparison with a constant association model

Our analysis so far has addressed intergenerational social mobility rates influenced by factors of a structural nature, including the variation in class positions in the distribution of origins and class destinations. We will now go on to consider the impact of immigration on the general degree of social fluidity in both countries (Table 8.5). By social fluidity, we refer to the connection between classes of origin and destination, which provides a measure of the permeability of class boundaries in a society; in other words, the degree of inequality in terms of the distribution of opportunities (Breen 2004). Does the class structure offer the same degree of openness to natives and immigrants? Are the patterns similar in Spain and Argentina? The hypothesis posited by Tyree et al. (1979) states that immigrant fluidity tends to be greater than that of the native population because by leaving their society of origin, they can no longer follow in their parents’ occupational footsteps. Fachelli and López-Roldán (2017: 312) offer a different hypothesis, namely that immigrants’ mainly unskilled working-class profile currently implies an increase in social immobility.

The comparison of the social fluidity of natives and immigrants in both countries does not reveal any significant differences. Spain is closer to confirming the hypothesis of Tyree, Semyonov and Hodge, although the constant fluidity model is preferable. Following Fachelli and López-Roldán (2017) we analysed the impact of immigration on social impact from the perspective of time. Given the limitations of the immigrant sample size—particularly in the case of Argentina—, macro-cohorts were used (Table 8.6).<sup>5</sup>

International migrants in both countries display greater rigidity when analysed from the time perspective using macro-cohorts. In the case of Spain, immigration showed greater social rigidity, which in turn slowed down the more fluid trend

<sup>5</sup>For the purpose of following Fachelli and López-Roldán (2017), we included the patterns presented in their study, based on the calculation of relative mobility using 5 × 5 tables. In the case of Argentina, the immigrant sample size advised the use of 3 × 3 tables.

**Table 8.6** Log-linear model results of uniform differences (unidiff) by migratory status, origin class-destination class, by country and macro-cohorts

	Phi Parameters						
	Argentina			Spain			
	Total	Natives	Immigrants	Total Natives	Male natives	Female natives	Immigrants
1951–1972	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
1973–1985	1.019	0.982	1.560	0.876	0.997	0.790	1.103
LR test (1 df)	Non-significant	Non-significant	Non-significant	Non-significant	Non-significant	* (significant)	Non-significant

Source: the Gino Germani Institute (University of Buenos Aires) surveys directed by Dr. Raúl Jorrat and PISAC survey (Argentina) and the Spanish Statistics Agency's Life Conditions Survey (Spain)

<sup>a</sup>In comparison with a constant association model \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$  \*\*  $p < 0.01$ ; \*  $p < 0.05$ ; +  $p < 0.10$

registered by the native population, led by women (Fachelli and López-Roldán 2017). Following Chiswick (1978), the authors consider that this pattern may be attributable to the fact that new immigration in Spain is currently at the initial phases of the “U-shaped” pattern (inverted J hook) of the classic intergenerational social mobility trajectory.

However, in Argentina, international migrants display a closer connection with the social class of origin among the younger cohort. This rise in the influence of the social class of origin in the destination is much clearer than amongst immigrants in Spain, although the notably lower numbers do not affect the native population's constant fluidity pattern. In both countries, current day immigration comes from relatively less developed countries, comprising a non-European population, an object of discrimination by the host society. These findings allow us to pose the following question. Within the context of a consolidated class structure and Eurocentric social and cultural imaginary, could international immigration be considered a factor that favours the increasing fluidity of the native population of Europe ascent?

The current context of more structurally and culturally closed societies—compared with Argentina's social structure of between 1880 and 1930—poses greater obstacles to upward mobility for families of Latin American immigrant origin in Argentina. Yet despite this, their dense social networks provide a means for short distance upward mobility based on blue-collar work and technical trajectories that provide access to a consolidated working class and the lower middle class. In turn, this provides their children with a secure springboard to access the upper middle classes (Dalle 2020). A similar insertion trend is also observed in Spain that is capable of boosting the upward social mobility of the younger generations, although we have also noted a considerable declassing towards the unskilled working class. However, in this case, the fact that the remuneration is higher means that this may also constitute a more solid base for the upward social mobility of their children.

In addition to factors related to labour market dynamics and class closure, the migratory policies applied in each country also shed light on the varying degree of difficulty experienced by the immigrant populations in both contexts in terms of upward social mobility. Immigration from overseas was a cornerstone of project to construct the Argentinean nation throughout the nineteenth century and the first period of the twentieth century. Migratory legislation included a series of benefits for European immigrants (e.g. access to land during the early phases of agricultural colonisation and exemption from military service), contributing, in part, to the upward social mobility of European immigrants and their descendants. Nevertheless, from 1960 onwards, and set within a context shaped by the end of overseas immigration and continuous migratory flows from bordering nations, legislation aimed at updating the original law became more restrictive. The approval of the Migration Law (25871), passed in 2003 and regulated in 2010, guaranteed equal treatment for immigrants and their families under the same protective and legal conditions as Argentinean citizens (Pacecca 2006).

As with other southern European countries, immigration policy in Spain has centred on border controls, combined with certain measures for the employment of immigrants (contingencies, hiring programmes in the country of origin). However, these measures have failed to meet the heavy demand for immigrant labour for the secondary labour market, leading to the emergence of irregular immigration and a strong immigrant presence in the underground economy, together with insufficient policies in term of immigrant integration (Arango 2000; Izquierdo Escribano and Fernández-Suárez 2009; Boswell and Geddes 2010). This has resulted in the declassing of the immigrant population, as well as the worsening of their working and living conditions.

As the qualitative analysis in the following section will show, in addition to the weight of structural determinants, migrants' agency also provides an insight into social mobility trajectories in the migratory context.

## **8.6 The Social Mobility Strategies of Migrant Families Addressed Through Compared Case Analysis: Comings and Goings Between Galicia and Buenos Aires**

*Making it big in America? Social mobility strategies of Galician migrant families from the latest migratory wave in Buenos Aires.*

As discussed in the methodology section, post-war Galician migrants (1940–1960) were essentially of rural origin with a very low level of education. An earlier study, whose conclusions are also reflected in this section (Oso et al. 2019), showed that the main strategy for upward social mobility deployed by these migrants was to embark on business ventures with fellow countrymen (restaurants, stores, bakeries and hotels), following in the footsteps of their predecessors that formed the first migratory wave in the late nineteenth century and encouraged by them.

Post-war Galician immigrants encountered a more closed class structure on arrival in Buenos Aires, in comparison with those that migrated in the late nineteenth century. Nevertheless, upward social mobility based on capital ownership, support from this group's dense social and business networks, forged and consolidated over the course of various migratory waves, helped them to make their way despite the less favourable context. This business strategy was also favoured by migratory projects. Unlike those that travelled to Europe in the 1960s and 1970s, post-war Galician migrants in Buenos Aires worked to consolidate their presence in the host context and centred their social mobility strategy on reinvesting their earnings in Argentina. In contrast, the migratory project of those that opted to migrate to Europe was of a more temporary nature, focused on saving up in order to return and invest in Galicia, effectively blocking their entrepreneurial strategies in Europe (Oso 2004), in comparison with those that chose to "make it big in America".

This entrepreneurial strategy was also based on working class endogamic couples who embarked together on a project for upward social mobility. They developed an austere and frugal lifestyle in which women played a central role, combining reproductive tasks in the home with work in the family business (Dalle 2013, 2016). Other studies (Núñez Seixas and Farías 2010: 70) have also pointed to a trend whereby values such as "hard work" and "saving" were passed from generation to generation, as a form of ethnic capital. In the case of the first generation of migrants, this took the form of the acquisition of properties, which were often then leased in order to boost income. The continuity of family retail enterprises cushioned the impact of periods of crisis for the descendants of these Galician migrants, and these inheritances acted as a means for continued upward social mobility. These inheritances proved to be a crucial intergenerational resource passed on to their children and grandchildren, favouring their access to classes with a higher socioeconomic status. In this sense, the accumulation of economic and patrimonial assets invested in Argentina represented one of the main strategies for intergenerational social mobility.

Secondly, migrants of Galician origin invested in human capital, facilitating the upward social mobility of their descendants thanks to their insertion in the Argentinean education system. However, the education achievements of the Galician migrants' children and grandchildren cannot be considered alone; they articulate with the other mobility strategies deployed, and in particular with the accumulation of economic and patrimonial assets. Indeed, the economic progress of their grandparents and parents' generations—the result of entrepreneurship—laid the foundations for the wellbeing that enabled their descendants to undertake secondary and university studies. Material accumulation was combined with socialisation within a culture of austerity, coupled with the desire for improvement (ethnic capital), encouraging them to grasp the opportunities provided by a dynamic context.

Gender, age and family position were further factors that influenced social mobility strategies. Our study revealed how university qualifications did not always lead to career achievements. Indeed, three devices were detected that effectively "blocked" educational mobility: gender inequality, position within the family and the time of migration within the life cycle. Elder children migrating with their

families of origin, or who were regrouped at a later stage, had fewer opportunities to follow long educational trajectories. This was particularly true in the case of elder daughters who were required to care for and bring up their younger siblings, therefore making it difficult for them to study. A large percentage of daughters of Galician families born in Buenos Aires managed to complete their secondary education, yet in the case of a number of women interviewed, chances of completing university degrees were blocked by motherhood.

Generally speaking, the children of Galician migrants tended to distance themselves from migrants' collective sociability spaces and networks in the hope of entering larger environments. This trend is stronger in the case of the grandchildren's generation. However, a number of families continued to socialise within the collective environment, thereby strengthening and increasing their social capital of ethnic origin, which would favour the processes of "getting back to their roots" adopted by those descendants that decided to return to Galicia, the land of their ancestors, in the wake of the 2001 crisis.

The study revealed how the various social mobility strategies do not occur in isolation but instead articulate others. Business and patrimonial strategies are underpinned by endogamic marriage, which in turn supports the education strategies for their children. Investment in co-ethnic capital also boosted entrepreneurship, whilst establishing a distance from the community provided opportunities for exogamic marriage as a means of upward social mobility.

As a result, in addition to education, there is also a complex network of articulated strategies, influenced by a migratory project rooted in the notion of settlement, which provides a crucial insight into the class trajectories of families of Galician origin in Buenos Aires. The predominant trend consists of long and short distance upward social mobility trajectories based on a succession of efforts and the accumulation of resources spread over several generations.

The Galicians' children and grandchildren inherited another type of capital that would prove crucial in order to migrate to Spain: Spanish nationality. Faced with the stagnation of the Argentinean economy during the final quarter of the twentieth century, those descendants of Galician families that were unable to convert their economic capital into a sufficiently high cultural capital, experienced a degree of downward mobility. Some of these children and grandchildren migrated to Galicia in search of better opportunities, as we shall see in the following section.

*Argentineans of Galician origin in Spain: the enterprising spirit as a "refuge strategy".*

The Equal Convive Mais project (Oso-Casas et al. 2006) revealed that in comparison with Spain as a whole, one of the specific features of Galicia as a receiving context for immigrants is the large number of descendants of Galicians who are "returning" to their ancestors' origins. As discussed previously, Galicia was one of the principal sources of overseas emigration in late nineteenth century and early twentieth century Spain. The principal destinations for Galician emigration were Argentina, Uruguay, Venezuela, Brazil and Cuba. Later, during the 1960s and 1970s, an alternative migratory flow to European countries emerged, essentially Germany, Switzerland, France and the United Kingdom. Between the late 1990s

and start of the twenty-first century, Galicia became a receiving region for immigrants, many of whom were returnees or the descendants of this historical Galician emigration. We can therefore distinguish between those migrants travelling from countries that are connected to Galician emigration (Argentina, Uruguay, Venezuela, Cuba, Germany, Switzerland, France and the UK), and those that do not share these connections, coming either from the bordering country of Portugal or forming part of the immigrant receiving dynamics that occurred throughout Spain and which we have discussed previously. In this latter case, the principal countries of origin are Colombia, Brazil, Morocco, Rumania and the Dominican Republic. Although in the past, Brazil had also provided a receiving context for historical Galician emigration, current flows of Brazilians do not correspond to returning migrants or the descendants of Galicians. Instead, they are related to the demand for labour, boosted by Galicia's proximity to Portugal and the considerable presence of this immigrant community in the neighbouring country.

A further conclusion drawn from the Equal Convive Mais project also showed that the majority of Argentinean migrants of Galician origin that migrated to their ancestors' place of birth, worked in paid employment in Argentina. They had an average-high income level and were employed in jobs fitted to their skills level, and in some cases had opportunities for promotion and training. However, and as we have seen earlier, the segmentation of Spain's labour market relegated these migrants to jobs that were far below their skills level (cleaning, care work, the building sector, catering and the retail trade). This is perceived as a sharp drop in their social mobility (Jiménez Zunino 2011). Faced with a more crystallised social structure, insertion is below their level of education, returning to the positions held by their grandparents at the start of the migratory cycle.

This leads many to opt for entrepreneurship, considered a kind of "refuge strategy" in order to move out of the precarious employment traditionally reserved for the migrant population. Opening their own business is seen as an alternative to the limited opportunities available on the Spanish job market. As Light (2002) stated, self-employment is a common phenomenon among immigrant workers due to the drawbacks of the labour market such as racial, ethnic and religious discrimination, but also to the difficulties in obtaining accreditation for their human capital. Indeed, this was a recurring theme amongst many of the interviewees, who perceived a breach in terms of their opportunities to enter the Galician labour market in comparison with Spanish workers.

"We start off trying to get paid employment. I worked as a waiter, bricklayer, painter; I did a bit of everything, whatever I could find, I tried a bit of everything. But as I was unable to find a good job, I had to work long hours for a pittance, we had the idea of setting up our own business". (Alfredo, an Argentinean entrepreneur) (Oso-Casas et al. 2006: 132).

"I worked as a kitchen assistant, cleaning houses and in a dry cleaner's. That's how things were at the start. Back in Argentina, I worked for an accounting firm, but I couldn't find anything here (...). So my husband and I decided to open a bar. It took us eight months" (Gloria, Argentinean, a bar owner) (Oso-Casas et al. 2006: 133–134).

The children and grandchildren of historical Galician emigration flows find it easier to set up their own business than immigrants from countries that are not

associated with Galician emigration. This is due to a series of capitals passed down to them by their ascendants who migrated to Latin America. These migrants bring with them a baggage that is not merely filled with dreams, but also inherited capital that will contribute to smoothing the path to entry in the host society and the creation of their own business. We will now take a closer look inside that baggage, from the perspective of the conclusions drawn from previous studies (Oso-Casas et al. 2006).

Since childhood, many of the Argentineans descended from Galicians had the chance to acquire a series of self-employment skills, based on the example set by their parents, most of whom were entrepreneurs in Argentina, as discussed previously. Socialised in their parents' family business, they have a seemingly greater ability to set up a business in comparison with immigrants in Spain from other countries. Several mention that their parents taught them the importance of saving in order to invest capital in the business and the need to be prepared to take risks. These skills were part of the socialisation process of several of our informants who were the descendants of Galician entrepreneurs. Indeed, many of those interviewed appear to play down the disadvantages of self-employment, considering it a natural option, even though they had been in paid employment in their country of origin and had never had their own business. They have inherited a particular form of ethnic capital from their parents: the enterprising spirit.

The regular legal status enjoyed by many Argentinean migrants of Galician origin in Spain, further fuels the feasibility of this entrepreneurial strategy in comparison with informants from countries that do not share ties with Galician emigration (Colombia, Peru, Brazil, Morocco and Senegal), whose status is irregular or who are required to take up paid employment in order to obtain regular legal status.<sup>6</sup> Indeed, many of them are Spanish citizens prior to their arrival in Galicia, another form of capital passed on by their parents and grandparents (legal capital). Furthermore, Argentineans of Galician origin who arrived in the wake of the 2001 crisis were classified as "returnees" by the Xunta de Galicia (the autonomous community government), entitling them to a number of social benefits, including a financial subsidy during the months following their arrival in Spain. This gave them more time (as they were able to support themselves without working during this period) to sign up to entrepreneurship programmes, which on occasions also provided access to micro loans. Regular legal status and return subsidies proved essential for Argentineans of Galician descent that wished to embark on entrepreneurial initiatives, particularly in comparison with other Latin American immigrants who did not have access to these initial benefits.

Just like their parents and grandparents who travelled to America before them, the Galician descendants that came to Galicia in the wake of the 2001 crisis had a migratory project based on settlement. These settlement projects also favoured

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<sup>6</sup>Spanish migratory policy requires that initial work permits are given practically exclusively to those in paid employment. In the case of Galicia, it is easier to obtain permits for jobs in the secondary market, in those encompassing labour niches reserved for the immigrant population in Galicia (domestic service and the construction and catering industries) (Oso-Casas et al. 2006).



entrepreneurial initiatives, as the migrant families were seeking to invest their savings and settle down “to a new life” in Galicia. This set them apart from other migrants from countries who were not associated with Galician emigration (Colombia, Peru, Brazil, Morocco and Senegal). This latter type of migration is characterised to a greater extent by people who initially migrated alone, leaving family members behind in their country of origin who they have to support. Many of them have a shorter initial migratory project centred on saving and return, thereby making it more difficult for them to set up their own businesses.

Moreover, Argentinean migrants of Galician origin have a social capital in Spain (family members contact networks), smoothing their arrival and providing support at the time of the initial insertion in the host society. Right from the start, self-employment was the preferred option for many respondents. Their Spanish family networks provided them with inside information regarding the labour market in Spain, the problems involved in obtaining accreditation for their studies, as well as the difficulty of finding a steady job in keeping with their qualifications and skills level. This social capital is also activated when seeking support to obtain financing for the initial investment in the business, such as bank guarantees.

The hardest part (in reference to setting up a business) is the initial capital. Of course you can do it if you have a bank loan, but you have to have the means to apply for one, ask for it and then have it approved (...) We had no trouble in that sense because I have a lot of family members here; so it wasn't hard at all: an uncle of mine signed for me (in reference to the bank guarantee) (Antonio, an Argentinean with a bar in Vigo) (Oso-Casas et al. 2006: 147).

Finally, many possessed properties or financial capital that on occasions had been inherited from their ascendants and that they chose to sell prior to leaving Argentina in order to invest in Galicia. Unlike immigrants of the Galician descent, those with no connections to Galician emigration (from Colombia, Peru, Brazil, Morocco and Senegal) not only lacked this initial capital, but also often were in debt on their arrival in Spain. In addition, many have to send remittances back to their country of origin, further reducing their investment options. Galician descendants also experience less “discrimination” or hostile attitudes from the autochthonous population, factors that are conducive to greater opportunities for the children and grandchildren of historical Galician emigration.

In reference to the money invested in the business: “It was all savings. We didn't have to borrow anything (in reference to the bank). It was as simple as that; what we brought over, saved up throughout our entire lives, was invested here”. (Alfredo, Argentinean, owner of a newsstand). (Oso-Casas et al. 2006: 142).

This testimony reveals how certain Galician descendants managed to embark on entrepreneurial projects shortly after their arrival in Galicia. This contrasts sharply with immigrants from other countries that have no ties with Galician emigration, who took years to achieve their dream of setting up a company. The following table (Table 8.7) provides a comparative summary of the factors that condition successful entrepreneurial trajectories and favour immigrants from countries associated with Galician emigration.

**Table 8.7** factors conditioning the success and failure of immigrant business ventures

Factors favouring the entrepreneurial trajectory among the returned population or migrants of Galician descent (associated with Galician emigration) (Argentina, Uruguay, Venezuela)	Factors blocking or hindering the entrepreneurial trajectory experience by the immigrant population with no associations with Galician emigration (Colombia, Peru, Brazil, Morocco and Senegal)
Socialisation since childhood, within a context of self-employment	No previous experience in self-employment
Possession of Spanish citizenship	Irregular legal status
	Having to have previous paid employment in order to regulate their legal status
Access to benefits (financial aid for returnees, etc.)	Working in paid employment and not having enough time to take part in entrepreneurship programmes
Access to aid programmes for entrepreneurs (access to microloans)	
Having sufficient free time to attend training courses	
A migratory project based on settlement	A temporary migratory project based on saving and return

Source: Reworked on the basis of the chart drawn up by Oso-Casas et al. (2006: 161)

It is therefore clear that the accumulation of this set of capitals (economic, legal, social and ethnic capital, and an entrepreneurial spirit,) many of which were inherited from the Galicians that emigrated to Argentina in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and passed down from generation to generation, are of value on both sides of the Atlantic, within the framework of transnational social mobility strategies.

A transnational vision of migrants' social mobility strategies reveals that entrepreneurship represented a social mobility strategy for the Galicians that migrated to Argentina (combined with endogamic marriage, recourse to ethnic capital, including a mentality rooted in frugality and the need to save). In turn, this favoured the intergenerational strategy of achieving social mobility for their descendants, mainly through education (human capital).

However, for the children and grandchildren that chose to migrate to Galicia in the wake of the 2001 crisis, self-employment provided a "refuge strategy", protecting them against a loss of social status, in the light of a labour market that limited opportunities for the immigrant population to low-skilled jobs. The skills acquired during childhood by these children and grandchildren of Galician entrepreneurs (ethnic capital, such as an enterprising spirit and socialisation amongst the Galician collective), as well as their financial capital (properties and accumulation of economic resources) and social capital (family networks in Galicia), are reworked and used as a buttress against the risk of becoming ensnared in the secondary sector employment niches traditionally reserved for the immigrant population in Spain.

Our work highlights how social mobility feeds on the intergenerational accumulation of capitals. Yet in addition to focusing on economic, human and social capital,

it also reveals how migration provides a channel for the transmission of alternative forms of capital (legal and ethnic), which are used by migrants within the framework of transnational and intergenerational social mobility strategies.

## 8.7 Conclusions

A journey marked by comings and goings reflects the social and spatial mobility of migrant families on both sides of the Atlantic. In Europe, men and women packed their bags in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and set sail for Latin America. Yet the late twentieth century saw a change of direction from Latin America towards Europe. A reverse migratory flow emerged, which in some cases included the descendants of those earlier European emigrants, who began to see their ancestors' "old world" as a solution to the social stagnation that was spreading through their region of birth. In turn, some Latin American countries such as Argentina, also became the recipients of interregional immigrants.

What impact did these migratory flows have on the destination societies and on the social mobility trajectories of the migrants and their descendants?

Early migration from Spain to Argentina has already fomented social mobility in Argentina, generating a "push-up effect" among the descendants of European immigrants. In turn, the Latin American migration to Spain that emerged in the late twentieth century, also acted as a boost for the native population in the Spanish class structure.

Nevertheless, a difference can be drawn between the Spaniards that migrated to Argentina between 1940 and 1960 and the Argentineans that have moved to Spain in recent decades. In the former case, the population came mainly from rural areas with a low level of education, whilst in the latter case the level of education was average-high. Whilst the Spaniards in Argentina (nineteenth century and early twentieth century) experienced a marked upward social trajectory, attributable to their initially low status within the social structure, many of the Argentineans that migrated to Spain from the late twentieth century onwards experienced a process of declassing, the result of a segmented labour market that limited their opportunities to low-skilled manual work.

Our quantitative analysis of immigrant insertion in the class structures of the host societies (Argentina and Spain) makes a number of contributions. Firstly, it reveals that the migrant population in both Spain and Argentina fills the demand for low-skilled/manual work. However, it must be stressed that this trend is slightly stronger in Spain due to its more consolidated class structure. Their entry at a lower point in the class stratification structure means that international migrants exert a kind of "push-up effect" on the native population.

Secondly, international migrants in both countries displayed greater rigidity than the native population (i.e. the greater weight of the original social class over the class attained in the destination). Indeed, they enter a consolidated class structure at the low-skilled and precarious levels of the working classes, and a large proportion

of them never move out of them. Finally, immigrants in Spain obtain higher incomes than in their countries of origin, even though they enter the class structure on a lower rung, often below their skills level. In Argentina, the indications are that migrants need to achieve a short distance upward class mobility in order to boost their income.

Our quantitative analysis also provides an insight into the way the social mobility trajectories of families of migrant origin are influenced by a series of structural factors. The arrival phase of the various migratory trends, linked to the degree of economic dynamism, the labour market situation and growing occupational/educational opportunities are all conditioning factors. Another key element in this sense is the way class boundaries are structured in the host society. Finally, state migratory policies are also a major determining factor.

However, our qualitative approach indicates that in order to analyse the connection between migration and social mobility, other factors related to the social mobility strategies implemented by migrant families in the transnational space must also be taken into consideration, thereby complementing the results obtained from the analysis of the secondary data.

The primary contribution of our fieldwork, conducted within the framework of other research projects,<sup>7</sup> is that social mobility strategies are intergenerationally linked and take place within the transnational space. Galician migrants in Argentina, who came from rural environments and had a low level of education, opted for entrepreneurship as a means of securing upward social mobility. The accumulation of wealth and the transmission of a culture based on hard work and austerity (ethnic capital), targeting educational achievements, formed a solid base that boosted the upward mobility of their children and grandchildren who obtained educational qualifications.

The 2001 economic crisis drove a number of these descendants of Galicia to migrate to Spain where their university qualifications failed to secure success on a labour market that failed to acknowledge these credentials and where immigrants were pushed to accept manual/low-skilled work. In the light of this situation, many Argentineans of Galician descent opted for entrepreneurship, taking advantage of their social and financial capital as well as their beneficial legal status (citizenship) inherited from their antecedents. They championed the entrepreneurial spirit (ethnic capital) instilled in them by their parents and grandparents as a “refuge strategy” against social declassing.

The baggage of migrants of Galician descent is filled with a series of economic, legal, social, cultural and ethnic forms of capital based on a positive self-assessment of the endo-group, as well as a set of skills, knowledge and behaviour patterns, part of the legacy passed on by their parents and grandparents. They exploited this legacy in order to curb the social declassing experienced by other Latin American immigrants in Spain. Indeed, the succession of intergenerational strategies, passed on and connected by various generations of migrants within a transnational setting,

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<sup>7</sup>(References: FEM2011–26110; FEM2015–67164-R; GRC2014/048; FSE-EQUAL-2004).

explains the greater resilience experienced by migrants of Galician descent to social declassing (i.e. employment below their skills level).

One of the main contributions of our work is that it highlights the importance of an analysis capable of articulating the explanations provided in the light of a number of structural determinants (i.e. the labour market and migratory policy), together with the social mobility strategies of migrants and their families within the transnational space. This indicates the agency capacity of the players in this tale. Migrants have their own social mobility dreams and expectations, and migratory projects may vary in accordance with the characteristics assumed by endo-group migrants in the host society and their ties with the society of origin. Migratory projects, combined with migrants' dreams of social ascent (based on a project of saving and return or settlement) determine the social mobility strategies deployed within the transnational space.

Our work also contributes to scientific debate by showing that social mobility strategies may be of an alternative nature (beyond education and employment, traditionally the main focal points of literature), such as economic or asset based, or through marriage.

The originality of our approach also includes our findings on the intergenerational mobilisation dynamics within the transnational space of various forms of capital, namely social, wealth/asset-based and citizenship. Ethnic capital, is another type, comprising the group's own culture (in terms of shared codes and values, attitudes, aspirations and skills acquired over time), as well as the self-valuation of their own culture and the habitus passed on from generation to generation (including the entrepreneurial spirit). This capital, together with social capital, plays an essential role that leads to unequal opportunities for upward social mobilities among the various groups.

This series of inputs leads us to a final reflection addressing the link between social and spatial mobility, which forms the main conclusion and contribution of our chapter to scientific production. If migration has a positive effect on the social mobility of the native population, it also has the capacity to reproduce social inequality for the migrant population within a context of more closed social structures and restrictive migratory policies. This situation blocks migrants' dreams of social ascent due to the ethnic segmentation of the labour market. Nevertheless, considering the relationship between migration and social mobility from a transnational dynamic that looks beyond the host country, allows us to identify the social mobility strategies (not only related to employment and education, but also wealth/assets and marriage, etc.) deployed by social actors. These strategies, coupled with the activation of different forms of capital, passed down from generation to generation (economic/asset-based, social, ethnic, citizenship) within the transnational space, enable migrants and their descendants to tackle the social blocking and "immobility" devices operating in the societies of origin and destination. Baggage filled with capital in varying forms that travels from one side of the Atlantic to the other, cushioning the blows in the struggle to achieve dreams of social mobility.

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