

Principal Researcher: Diederik Boertien – Centre d'estudis demogràfics (UAB)

Title: Increasing wealth inequality in Spain: Who is falling behind and why?

Main purpose of the project: First, this project will document the sources of increasing wealth inequality in Spain. Second, it will show how various disadvantaged groups have fared in terms of wealth over the last two decades. Who accumulated wealth and who entered into debt?

Design/methodology/approach: The project will use various data sources on wealth held by households in Spain including the Encuesta Financiera de las Familias 2004-2017. Trends in wealth inequality and correlates with background characteristics will be presented and decomposition techniques will be used to study the importance of wealth components in these trends.

Potential results: The project will document which wealth components are behind increases in wealth inequality in Spain. What is the role of home ownership, and how important are other investments in real estate? Second, the project will show how the wealth of disadvantaged groups has changed over time, including women and individuals from poor family backgrounds.

Social relevance of the research: Differences between the wealthy and the rest are becoming greater in Spain. Most noticeably, access to housing is ever more reserved for a select group of individuals. This project will provide the first detailed evidence on how the distribution of wealth is changing and for whom; the first step necessary to design policies.

Originality/value of the project: This is the first comprehensive project documenting the role of social background and gender in the accumulation of wealth. Wealth is becoming ever more important in Spanish society, as well as other rich countries, and the unequal distribution of wealth might strengthen existing social cleavages in society.