

# The social use of time in Barcelona

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY  
QUANTITATIVE REPORT



 INSTITUT D'ESTUDIS  
REGIONALS I METROPOLITANS  
DE BARCELONA

The study on the social use of time in the city of Barcelona offers extensive information on the time strategies of Barcelona's men and women, their perceptions and the organisational differences between the different time spheres.

The surveys used to produce the study were the following:

- The Survey on the population's living standards and habits, allows an understanding of what has been characterised as the social time of the everyday life of individuals. Survey data exist dating back to 1985 and the results of the four editions that exist (1985-90-95-2000) have been used. In coming months the results will be available for 2005 and can be included in the report.

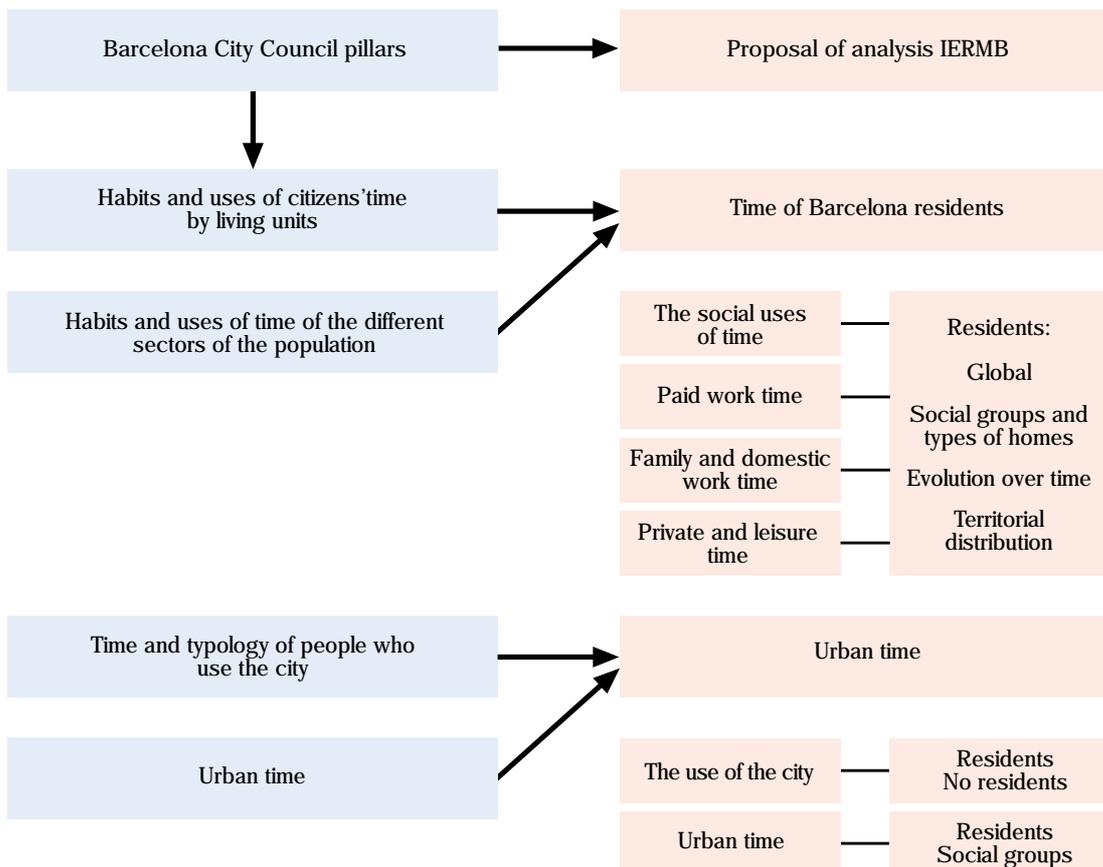
- Survey on Time Usage 2002-2003 carried out by the INE, the Spanish National Statistics Institute.

- Survey on Mobility on Working Days, (EMDF'04), carried out by the Barcelona Regional and Metropolitan Studies Institute (IERMB).

## Purpose and dimensions of study

The study of the social uses of time in Barcelona was proposed using a dimensioning process which, based on the sources available, gives an account of the uses of time in Barcelona. The correspondence between the main pillars put forward by the City Council and the dimensions of this analysis are illustrated below:

Figure 1. Dimensions of the study «The social uses of time in Barcelona»



The analysis of the social use of time in the city is structured based on four major issues:

A. Barcelona residents' time

1. The population's activities and time: the social uses of time

Determining what the social uses of time are of the population of the city of Barcelona.

2. The time of everyday life: combination of activities

Characterising which social uses of time are found in the city according to the different social groups.

B. Urban time

3. The use of the city

Understanding how the patterns of change glimpsed have varied and what specificity Barcelona has with respect to its territorial surroundings.

4. Urban time

Characterising the everyday reality of Barcelona residents when it comes to tackling the management of their time to determine which problems emerge, what clashes arise between the different time spheres and which groups are most vulnerable in this area.

## Main results of the study

The social uses of time in Barcelona are differentiated by social group (associated with individual life circumstances) and they depend on the structuring and use that is made of the territory.

A. The time of Barcelona's residents

The characteristics of individuals and their life circumstances clearly condition the social uses of time. It could be said that there are as many ways of using time as there are people. The results of the study allow affirmation that the use of urban time is not homogenous but that it varies by social group. The definition of such groups is based on three main structural elements:

- Relationship with the activity
- Gender
- Age

The uses of time have often been analysed based on the first two factors – gender and relationship with the activity – variables that are shown to be relevant to the way in which people manage their time. However, this research also adds a less common factor – age – which introduces new perspectives for analysis and offers more elements when it comes to the implementation of public policy actions.

The relationship with the activity is a key element for explaining what use each individual makes of their time. This relationship determines the possibilities for time management and presents important variations associated to other factors such as people's education level or social status.

Men and women have differentiated strategies in relation to their everyday life: they manage their time in different ways, they occupy it in activities that are also different and they express perceptions that are equally differentiated. Unequal participation in paid work activities and, especially, in family and domestic work activities, ends up meaning a greater global workload for women.

The Survey also allows explanation that the age factor linked to life circumstances is an element that clearly structures time use. Young people, adults and elderly people use and perceive time in diverse ways: they have specific responsibilities and face peculiar problems that precisely can be understood by the stage they are at in life.

Everyday life time is structured, therefore, in a different way for each social group. From data analysis it is concluded that the life cycle is the main structuring and explicative variable for the characterisation of social groups in terms of uses of time. Age is the factor that most clearly determines these uses and the way in which the daily activities are combined.

## B. Urban time

Time management also depends on the structuring and use made of the territory. The city of Barcelona is immersed in two territorial dynamics that are counterpoised but at the same time complementary to each other.

- Recent trends in territorial decentralisation and functional specialisation in the Barcelona area have generated greater openness and interrelations of its municipalities and this in turn has led to the extension of the real city. These dynamics have generated new imbalances and an increase in travelling time and especially in distances. This aspect has become central in time management to the point that time conciliation is, in part, a matter of territorial conciliation.

- The intensification of activities in people's own neighbourhoods, a phenomenon associated with the quest for proximity as a growing value in a society where time has become a scarce and limited resource.

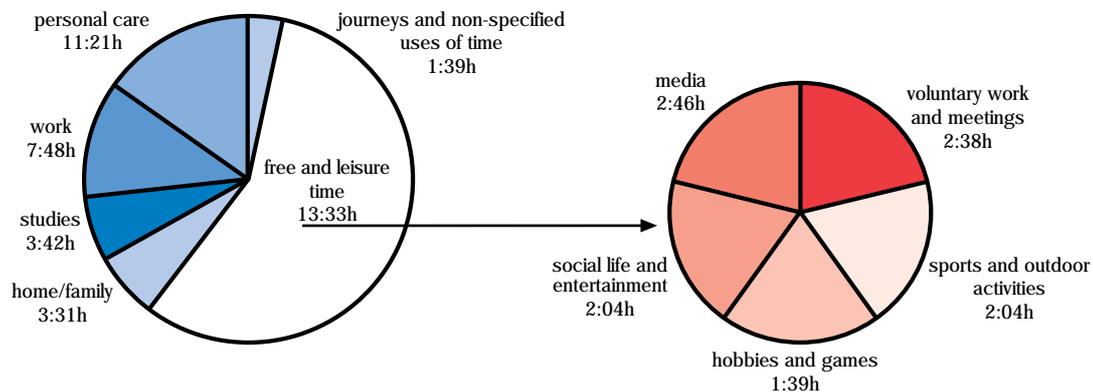
## A. The time of Barcelona's residents

### 1. The population's activities and time: social uses of time

The data available allow for analysis of the time of Barcelona's residents and how the latter behave in three spheres of activity:

- Paid work time
- Family and domestic work time
- Free time and leisure time

Distribution of time during the day. Barcelona 2000



Source: Survey on Time Usage. INE.

#### 1.1. Paid working time

The time that Barcelona's residents devote to paid work depends on socio-demographic characteristics as well as their occupation. The overall economic situation has an influence on social changes in this sphere and evolutionary analysis shows that no wide-ranging structural changes have taken place in the last fifteen years.

- In the year 2000, some 52.2% of Barcelona's residents were working between 35 and 40 hours per week with an overall city average of 40 hours 24 minutes. Although significant changes are not appreciated in this value with respect to other years, between 1990 and 2000 an increase can be observed in the number of people working less than 40 hours (from 24.3% to 30%) causing a fall in the number working more than 40 hours (from 34.1% to 29.1%).

- As for the number of days devoted to work, the men and women of Barcelona work an average of 5.1 days per week (2000), this average having been maintained since 1990.

- The majority of city residents, some 86.7%, work full-time and 57.2% work a morning and afternoon split shift (2000). In general, Barcelona residents are satisfied with their working day (a third state that they are very satisfied and some 42.1% say they are quite satisfied). Part-time working takes place above all among women, young people, and those employees with lower professional categories and educational qualifications.

- Employees devote more hours to work as their professional category and responsibility increase. According to data from the year 2000, higher professional categories devote most time to paid work (44 hours 3 minutes per week) investing 6 hours 30 minutes more than their counterparts in lower professional categories.

- The number of hours worked is uneven across the global population of Barcelona and varies according to two factors:

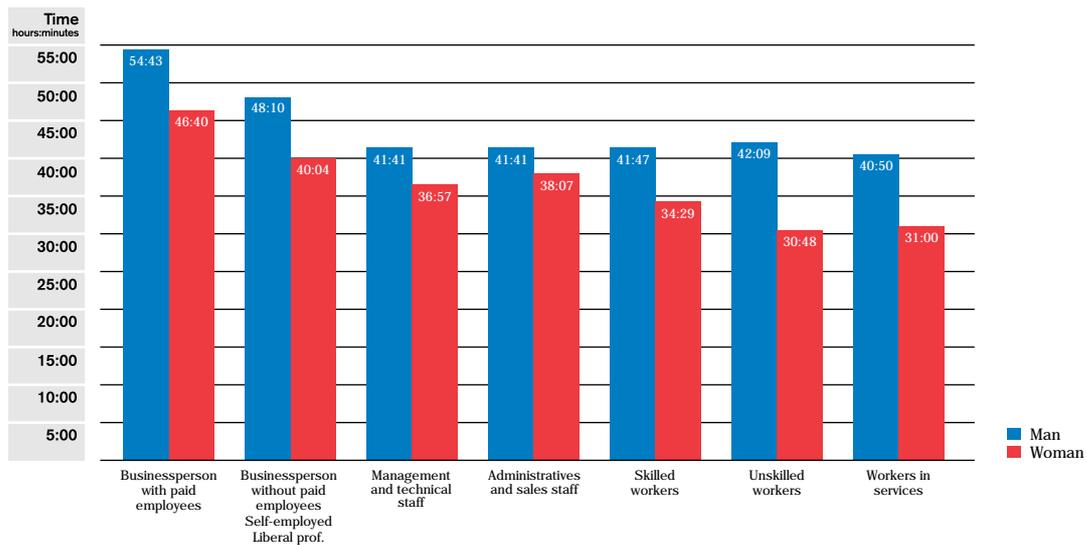
- Company characteristics:

In public companies, the average working week is 37 hours 12 minutes while in private companies the average is 41 hours 6 minutes per week. According to activity sectors, the sector in which most hours are worked is that of construction with 46 hours 12 minutes per week and the sector working least hours is the services sector, with 39 hours 42 minutes on average (2000).

- Worker characteristics:

According to gender, males work some 7 hours per week on average more than females, 43 hours 25 minutes in the case of males and 36 hours 25 minutes in the case of females (2000). This difference in working hours between men and women is also observed in terms of professional category, even though these differences vary in each category. The greatest difference is to be found between services workers and unskilled workers, and the smallest difference between administrative staff and sales staff.

Number of hours worked by the employed population during the last week according to professional category and gender (average). Barcelona, 2000.



Source: Survey on the population's living standards and habits. IERMB.

Residents in the city devote increasingly more time to travelling from home to the place of work. And the fact is that despite Barcelona having a high level of work-related self-containment, this has gradually fallen during the period under study.

- With regard to the location of the place of work and mobility patterns, Barcelona maintains a marked specificity with respect to the rest of the province. In the year 2000 some 76.6% of Barcelona residents worked in the city even though the trend in recent years has been a progressive increase in the proportion of those who go to work outside the city (from 15.4% in the year 1985 to 18.7% in the year 2000). The city's self-containment is higher in the case of women (85.5%) than in the case of men (69.6%) (2000).

- Travelling time to work is increasing. Currently Barcelona city residents take longer travelling from home to work in comparison with the rest of the province, 25 minutes 44 seconds on average, with an increase of more than 1 minute over 5 years (24 minutes 30 seconds in the year 1995).

- The most widely used means of transport for travelling to work is the private vehicle (41.7%), an average that is increasing as the majority of employees travel to work outside the city. The rest of travel is by public transport in 34.8% of cases and on foot in 18.7% (2000).

Time spent commuting to work (outward journey) by the employed population. Barcelona, 1985-2000.

	1985	1990	1995	2000
Less than 15 minutes	30,3	27,9	24,2	21,5
From 15 to 30 minutes	41,4	39,8	51,1	50,1
From 31 to 45 minutes	15,2	16,2	11,9	14,1
More than 45 minutes	8,6	12,2	7,3	6,8
No regularity	4,4	3,9	5,3	5,6
Don't know/no answer	0,1	0,0	0,2	1,9
Total	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0
Average time (in minutes)	-	-	24:30	25:44

Sub-sample formed by the employed population working outside their own home.  
Source: Survey on the population's living standards and habits. IERMB.

Working in more than one job is increasingly becoming more of an exception not only among Barcelona city residents but also among residents in the rest of the province.

- A second job is not very common among Barcelona residents and increasingly plays a residual role, with only 4.7% of Barcelona residents stating that they have a second job. The trend in the year 2000 was that they devoted to that second job less than 20 hours per month.

## 1.2. Family and domestic sphere time

Barcelona residents devote progressively less time to family and domestic work tasks.

- In the year 2000 Barcelona residents devoted 15 hours per week to family and domestic work, in other words 2 hours 9 minutes per day on average, half an hour less than 10 years previously.

Daily hours that people devote to household tasks (average). Barcelona, 1990-2000.

	1990	1995	2000
No hours	23,1	18,0	12,5
One hour or less	20,9	25,2	29,8
Between 1 and 2 hours	13,2	14,7	17,3
Between 2 and 3 hours	10,6	10,9	12,3
Between 3 and 6 hours	18,3	21,4	19,3
Between 6 and 10 hours	9,2	7,8	4,4
More than 10 hours	2,7	0,9	0,6
Don't know/no answer	1,9	1,3	3,8
Total	100,0	100,0	100,0
Average number of hours	2:39	2:25	2:09

Source: Survey on the population's living standards and habits. IERMB.

- This general reduction in time devoted to family and domestic tasks, in part, is compensated by the increase in the hiring of paid external staff.

Paid services present in homes where people interviewed live. Barcelona, 1985-2000.

	1985	1990	1995	2000
Daily home help (not live-in)	1,2	2,6	2,1	1,6
Home help by the hour	20,0	21,7	20,0	25,0
Babysitter	-	-	1,4	1,4
Staff for the care of ill or elderly people	-	-	-	0,7
Private teacher	-	1,9	3,0	1,8

Source: Survey on the population's living standards and habits. IERMB.

The time dedicated to family and domestic work is highly unequal between the different social groups, especially according to the gender of the individuals concerned. Overall, hints are observed of a structural change in which women reduce the time they devote to family and domestic work which means a slight increase in the time males devote to such work.

- Women devote over three times more hours than men to activities in this area: 3 hours 13 minutes per day as opposed to 58 minutes per day by men (2000). Since 1990 a reduction in the average daily time dedicated by women (nearly 1 hour less) is confirmed along with a slight increase in the time dedicated by men (10 minutes more).

- Care of children is a task that is fundamentally taken on by the mother or that is shared, but it is hardly ever taken on mainly by the father. In 1985, the care of children was taken on solely by the mother in 69.3% of cases and in the year 2000 that percentage had fallen to 47.7%. On the other hand, the care of other dependent persons is one of the responsibilities most equally distributed between household members, even though the main burden still falls mainly on women, in 50% of cases in the year 2000.

A changing trend is observed towards a reduction in the frequency of daily shopping, this being related to the process of reducing time devoted to family and domestic tasks.

- Barcelona's residents buy food for the household between 1 and 3 times per week (2000). The percentage of people surveyed who shop for food every day fell from 17% in 1995 to 12.9% in the year 2000.

- The main differences in this buying habit are related to age (young people concentrate their purchases more than adults) and educational level and professional category (higher categories go shopping less often).

### 1.3. Free time and leisure time

The sphere of free time and leisure time includes all those activities that are not an obligatory part of either paid work or family and domestic work or studies. In the city of Barcelona there is a tendency to carry out an increasing number of leisure activities coinciding with slight growth in the percentage of the population stating that they have little spare time. Dedication to these activities, and perception of the availability of free time, depend on the life circumstances of each individual, and especially age, work situation and social status.

- Within the home an average of 2.1 leisure activities were carried out in the year 2000, mainly watching television (56.9%), reading (52.2%) and listening to music (21.1%). The average of number of activities outside the home is 1.8, with a preference for taking a walk (56.3%).

- The leisure time of Barcelona residents is being filled, increasingly, with a greater number of activities. While in the year 1995 residents in the city who did 1 or 2 activities at home totalled 94.6%, in the year 2000 the percentage fell to 87.5% in favour of a greater number of activities. As for activities outside the home, between the year 1995 and the year 2000 the percentage of people who only do 1 or 2 activities fell from 85.3% to 72.2%.

- In general, the factor determining the greatest differences is age, as it is younger people who do more activities, especially outside the home.

- In the year 2000, the majority of city residents (65%) had the perception that they had quite a lot of free time available. On a scale of 1 to 9, the people interviewed scored their perception on its availability with an average of 4.9 (2000). The percentage of the population that perceives its free time as short progressively increased. In the year 2000, some 34% of Barcelona residents affirmed that they had little free time.

Opinion of people interviewed on their free time availability. Barcelona, 1995-2000.

	1995	2000
Little	31,6	34,0
A fair amount	34,4	5,1
A lot	34,0	29,9
Don't know/no answer	0,1	1,0
Total	100,0	100,0

Source: Survey on the population's living standards and habits. IERMB.

Life circumstances, especially age, job situation and social status all condition the availability and perception on free time.

- The most evident differences in the perception of free time arise according to age. People aged between 25 and 44 years are the ones who state the greatest dissatisfaction with their free time availability, with a score of 3.8 and 4.2 respectively, in the year 2000. On the other hand, those aged over 65 years give a high score, 6.9, to their time availability.

- According to job situation, considerable differences are also observed. People in paid work gave quite a low score to their free time availability, just 3.8 and the unemployed on average gave it a score of 5.3 out of 9, in the year 2000.

- According to the level of studies, considerable differences are also noted, which could be summarised by pointing out that the higher the level of studies completed the lower the perception of free time. People without studies gave an average score of 6.4 while people with university studies gave a score of 4.3 in the year 2000.

Habits in the city are more nocturnal than in the rest of the province. Rest time varies throughout the life cycle.

- Barcelona residents sleep for an average of nearly 8 hours per day and, while they maintain quite stable patterns with respect to previous years, they show a specific dynamic that differentiates them from the rest of the province of Barcelona, a dynamic marked by greater nocturnal activity which leads, in global terms, to the delay of the start and end of work with respect to the entire province overall.

- The population's hours of rest are not of a homogeneous nature. Men, young people, people with secondary and higher studies and people in work sleep for less time than the other groups, between 7 hours 10 minutes and 7 hours 38 minutes in the year 2000.

## 2. Everyday life time: combining activities

The life cycle perspective is the best perspective for explaining differences in the social uses of time. In it, life circumstances associated with the characteristics of individuals converge and structure differentiated patterns easily identifiable with the different ages. The groups established for this analysis are: young people (aged under 25), adults (aged 25 to 64) and elderly people (aged 65 and over).

- The group aged between 25 and 64 (especially those aged between 25 and 44) is the group that bears the greatest workload, 44 hours 11 minutes per week (2000), the time of maximum investment in paid work. This represents some 26.3% of weekly time occupied by work.

- The most negative perceptions on free time availability are also for the group aged between 25 and 64 years, which scored its free time availability at 4.2 out of 9 (2000).

- Despite devoting less time to paid work, women bear a global workload that is greater than that of men (45 hours 50 minutes as against 42 hours 41 minutes); people with a higher educational level, employees and housewives bear greater workloads than other groups.

- The youngest individuals bear a relatively low workload (19 hours 48 minutes) bearing in mind that study hours are not taken into account.

- The population aged 65 years and over is characterised by a relatively low global workload that represents a total work load of 20 hours and 47 minutes, and a perception of high availability of free time with values that fluctuated between 6.12 and 7.67, in the year 2000.

Total workload and evaluation of free time by age group. Barcelona, 2000.

	Paid work time	Family and domestic work time	Total weekly workload	Evaluation of free time availability	% Time occupied by work per week
Under 25 years	14:29	05:19	19:48	4,5	11,8
25-64 years	29:01	15:10	44:11	4,2	26,3
65 years and over	01:08	19:39	20:47	6,9	12,4

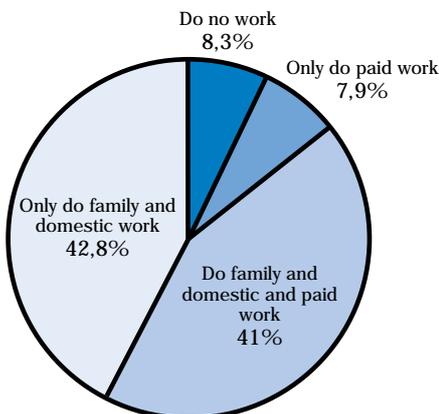
Source: Survey on the population's living standards and habits. IERMB.

Participation in work determines absolutely different strategies and uses of time.

- According to participation in paid and family and domestic work, four categories can be distinguished:

- Those not working at all represent 8.3% of the people interviewed.
- Those who only work in the paid work sphere represent 7.9%.
- Those who only work in the family and domestic sphere represent 42.8%.
- Those who work in both the paid work and the family and domestic spheres represent 41%.

Participation of Barcelona residents in work. Barcelona, 2000.



Source: Survey on the population's living standards and habits. IERMB.

## B. Urban time

The configuration of the territory and the use made of it by the population determines to a large extent the social uses of time. In this regard, the living space and the real everyday city that results from combining these particular spaces become a fundamental element for explaining the uses of time.

### 3. The use of the city

The city of Barcelona is immersed in two territorial dynamics that are counterpoised but at the same time complementary. Firstly, the extension of the real city, increasingly more interrelated in the metropolitan space. Secondly, the intensification of activities in people's own neighbourhoods, a phenomenon associated with the quest for proximity as a growing value in a society in which time is becoming a resource that is not merely limited but in short supply.

- The extension of the real city is the consequence of three interrelated territorial dynamics:
  - Dispersion of housing, of the population and of activities
  - Greater integration of the space, urban relation networks
  - Functional and social specialisation of the territory

Barcelona is characterised by a high level of self-containment in work and study terms, some 76.6% in the year 2000, despite a falling tendency in recent years. And the fact is that the city is immersed in a growing dynamic of extension of the everyday city's surface area. This is indicated by the rates of self-containment for work and studying and the increasing tendency to extend the space for social relations. At the same time, a certain preference of Barcelona residents for more immediate space when shopping for food, clothing and footwear, or doing leisure activities and sports is detected.

- Shopping for packaged food, clothing, and footwear and browsing the shops, self-containment of between 80.1% and 94.7% (2000).
- Working, studying, doing sports and meeting people, self-containment of between 74.6% and 77.5% (2000).
- Leisure activities, self-containment of between 44.3% and 54% (2000).

Destination of the employed population's journeys to work. Barcelona, 1985-2000.

	1985	1990	1995	2000
Same neighbourhood as residence	23,5	21,8	22,8	19,7
Other neighbourhoods in same municipality	59,7	60,7	55,4	56,1
First urban ring	9,7	8,9	9,9	10,3
Second urban ring	-	4,8	6,3	7,6
Rest of province	-	-	0,3	0,3
Rest of Catalonia*	5,9	1,0	0,7	0,6
Outside Catalonia**	0,8	2,9	0,1	0,5
No regularity	-	-	4,4	4,1
Don't know/no answer	0,5	0,0	0,2	0,8
Total	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0

Sub-sample formed by the employed population working outside the home

\*In the year 1985 this category includes the previous two categories and in the year 1990 it includes the previous one.

\*\*In the year 1985 and 1990 this category included the answer "No regularity".

Source: Survey on the population's living standards and habits. IERMB.

Place where household members usually buy clothes and footwear. Barcelona, 1985-2000.

	1985	1990	1995	2000
Own neighbourhood	40,9	43,5	54,2	50,9
Centre of municipality	19,8	7,0	17,1	21,6
Other neighbourhoods in same municipality	8,1	17,0	12,9	7,6
Other municipalities	1,2	1,0	0,8	1,1
Indifferent	29,0	29,0	14,3	18,1
Don't know/no answer	1,1	2,4	0,6	0,6
Total	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0

Source: Survey on the population's living standards and habits. IERMB.

Place where interviewees carry out leisure and free time activities (percentages of total of participants). Barcelona, 1995-2000.

	Browsing shops		Cinema		Bars, discos and pubs		Restaurants		Theatres		Museums and exhibitions	
	1995	2000	1995	2000	1995	2000	1995	2000	1995	2000	1995	2000
In own neighbourhood	40,8	48,5	6,2	19,4	18,3	19,9	9,9	12,9	2,5	5,0	1,9	4,3
In centre of municipality	35,5	30,4	47,5	29,4	27,3	19,1	18,8	14,6	55,5	42,8	43,2	32,9
Other neighbourhood in same municipality	11,2	8,3	23,0	17,2	25,7	22,4	24,1	16,8	24,5	16,7	25,6	16,8
Intermediate towns	-	0,1	0,4	0,4	1,2	1,1	0,2	0,3	0,1	0,1	-	-
Other municipalities	0,2	0,5	2,7	1,7	1,7	2,2	4,4	2,6	0,2	0,2	0,4	0,6
Indifferent	12,2	12,1	19,6	29,0	24,7	32,6	41,2	50,1	15,8	31,5	27,1	41,5
Don't know/no answer	0,0	0,1	0,7	2,9	1,1	2,6	1,4	2,6	1,3	3,8	1,8	3,9
Total	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0

Source: Survey on the population's living standards and habits. IERMB.

Even so, in recent years there has been a tendency towards greater opening of the municipality and an extension of the real city beyond its administrative limits, especially for work reasons. Increasingly, the population from the rest of the province of Barcelona, mainly from the first urban ring, travels to Barcelona.

- Some 12% of employees from the rest of the province travel to work in the city. Meanwhile 9.1% go there to shop for clothing and footwear. Between 8% and 12% go there for reasons involving leisure and consumption, and a third goes there to go to the theatre, museums or exhibitions. It is precisely those facilities related with leisure, consumption and health that are the aspects best valued among non-residents of the city.

Recent territorial dynamics have meant a change in the everyday life space of individuals which has been affected by the tendency towards decentralisation and specialisation. The location of activities has become a key issue in time management for residents to the point that time conciliation problems are in many cases a reflection of the lack of territorial conciliation. In this aspect, mobility becomes the central element of this issue.

- Work and studies are the cause of 22.2% of the journeys of Barcelona residents (2000). Some 7.2% of journeys on a working day take place for daily shopping while 26.4% take place for other more sporadic activities such as non-everyday shopping, visits to the doctor, etc.

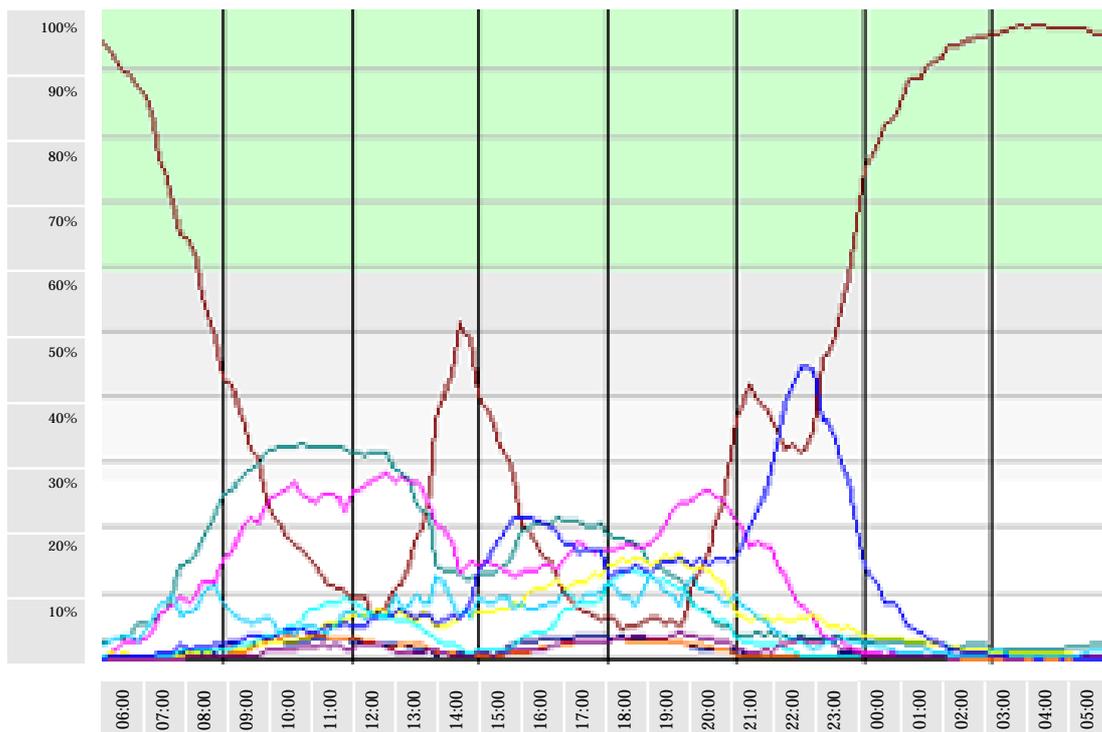
- Average duration of journeys in the year 2000:
  - Internal journeys within districts: 15 minutes 46 seconds.
  - Journeys between districts: 24 minutes 38 seconds.
  - Journeys from Barcelona to the Metropolitan Area: 31 minutes 7 seconds.
  - Journeys from Barcelona to the rest of the Metropolitan Region: 44 minutes 2 seconds.

#### 4. Urban time

Timetables are the strategy for time management and controlling the everyday life schedules of the population, and allow determination of the time dimension that each activity takes up during the day.

- Each of the activities of everyday life has certain associated timetables that determine the population's schedules and are reflected in urban time. Personal care time is concentrated into the corresponding time bands first thing in the morning, at midday and in the evening.

The population's schedules. Percentage of people who carry out activities by timetable sections. Barcelona, 2002-2003.



Source: Time Employment Survey. INE.

- Work activity is quite distributed across all the time bands even though there is a clear concentration in the morning from 9 a.m. until 2 p.m. and to a lesser extent in the early evening from 5 p.m. to 7 or 8 p.m. At midday, the proportion of people who are occupying their time with work falls considerably.

- Work dedicated to the home and family starts at 9 a.m. and carries on until lunchtime and then intensifies once more in the evening between 7 p.m. and 10 p.m.

- Voluntary work is also carried out within these timetable bands (from 9 a.m. to 12 noon and from 3 p.m. to 9 p.m.).

- Activities related with leisure: playing sports, enjoying social life and pursuing hobbies are activities that are carried out to a great extent after midday, and especially, in the afternoon.

- The start of daily activity takes place between 6 a.m. and 9 a.m., which is when most of the population devotes time to personal care. There are three main moments in which the majority of the population is devoted mainly to this activity: morning, midday and evening. Meanwhile, the morning and the afternoon are when the population diversifies its activities, especially in the afternoon, and therefore, these are the moments when a greater number of activities overlap each other.

- The population's schedules are not homogeneous presenting significant differences, among which those related to gender stand out. These differences come from unequal participation in the activities of everyday life, rather than through time patterns. The central element becomes participation in paid work and family and domestic work.