



Ph.D. Program in Political Theory

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Rethinking social mobility through life chances: a problem of trust?

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To be a good human being is to have a kind of openness to the world, an ability to trust uncertain things beyond your own control, that can lead you to be shattered in very extreme circumstances for which you were not to blame. That says something very important about the condition of the ethical life: that it is based on a trust in the uncertain and on a willingness to be exposed; it's based on being more like a plant than like a jewel, something rather fragile, but whose very particular beauty is inseparable from that fragility.

Martha C. Nussbaum, The Fragility of Goodness

For many young people social mobility means a bus down to the job centre.

Harriet Harman

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Thesis Abstract

Inspiration for this analysis flourished within the context of the profound crisis that Western democratic liberal countries have been called to face in the last decade. Nowadays we are literally bombarded by news on economic crisis: first, stock exchange market severely revealed its fallacies through the banking crunch, while now we are undergoing the unceasing attack to the euro currency. Nevertheless, it is more and more evident that economic institutions are not the unique to have been put under discussion. And, above all, they are not the most important. A serious debate is emerging concerning the necessity to revise radically our social institutions: the costs of organization for our societies appear on a long term unaffordable and welfare regimes show signs of strain under the pressure of ever growing fluxes of immigration and emerging countries present alternative model of social organization.

The etymology of the word crisis is pushing us exactly to reflect on these points: *krisis* is the Greek word used by Hippocrates to indicate the turning point in a disease. It is also extraordinary to think that the word crisis in Chinese language is composed by two ideograms which separately mean respectively “danger” and “opportunity”. Crisis leads us to review our certainties. It is, therefore, a duty to interrogate ourselves about the integrity of the principles which we put at the basis of our society, to look at the path we routed up to here and to make the effort to provide with some good sketches for the future.

I believe the idea of a society where individuals enjoy the right to develop and change their job, interests, places and way to live in their lifetime, independently from their social and economic origins and within the safeguard of the respect of other present and future members of the community, is a key value for every liberal and democratic society. This also represents a crucial condition for the realization of what we can refer to as a just society. It follows that interrogating ourselves about the principles needed to implement this condition, and to which extent these have been pursued so far, it is a duty and probably also the only way to get out from moral and economic crisis.

Moving my research from these presupposes, I firstly needed to recognize that this idea is not new in the academic debate, and that this interest has been generally gathered round the concept of social mobility, conceived as “the movement or opportunities for movement between different social classes or occupational groups, and the advantages and disadvantages that go with this in terms of income, security of employment, opportunities for advancement and so on” (Aldridge, 2001:2).

My primary task has been, therefore, to comprehend and put in a proper perspective the existing enormous body of thought in this field of investigation. In this view, the first chapter aim is two-fold: firstly, defining borders and content of the concept; secondly, developing the theoretical background needed to analyze its dialectical interactions.

For what it concerns the first purpose I need to remark here that, while it is probably not possible to provide one single definition of social mobility shared by all scholars, an overview of the available definitions in use (e.g. relative/absolute; inter or intra generational) reflects the fact that an analysis of social mobility can be conducted within different academic domains. Nevertheless, what I suggest is that these analyses focus on mechanisms of mobility which are all inter-connected the one with the other. Having clarified these points, I point out the reasons why social mobility is generally considered so important within our societies. With regard to this, I identify three direct and positive implications that social mobility is reputed to bring to society: a stimulus to economic growth; a factor enhancing social cohesion within community, as well as a prerequisite to the empowerment of individuals social rights.

Nevertheless, as I said, the key motivation to explain the constant interest about social mobility has to do with a rather more basic, but powerful intuition related to the idea that social mobility is able to provide a possible measure of equal opportunity available to individuals within a certain society. Therefore, in the second chapter I explain how the concept of social mobility implies, both in the academic and political debate, an attempt to offers the operationalization of the idea of equal opportunity. As pointed out by an eminent scholar: “The level of mobility in society is seen by many as a measure of the extent of equality of economic opportunity. It captures the extent to which a person’s circumstances during childhood are reflected in their success in later life, or, on the flip-side,

the extent to which individuals can make it by virtue of their own talents, motivation and luck” (Blanden et al., 2005:4).

However, I also highlight how scholars have almost exclusively focused on a quantitative measurement of movements, on weighting the role of diverse resources in individuals’, and how they often make confuse references to the idea that mere estimation of movements from one position to another fully coincides with opportunities to move assigned to individuals (Swift, 2002).

Instead, I believe, including the notion of opportunity within the concept of social mobility would practically imply to switch the analysis from the level of what individuals achieved (mutation of positions: e.g. in term of social class, status, income or educational achievement) to the level of what it would be possible for them to achieve (life-chances). All individuals are called to take choices that, one after the other, shape their life-course. These choices require making a complex calculus about what we have, what we want and what we could obtain, choosing one thing instead of another and, if this is the level of analysis on which we want to focus, then, I believe the idea of *life chances* is the one that better respond to our analytical needs.

Referring to a not so well-known Dahrendorf analysis, I affirm that life chances are what it results from the intersection of two different sets, the first containing “options” while the second includes “ligatures”. Both sets are independent the one from the other and are dimensions of social structure, since they are “given as elements of social roles rather than objects of people’s will or whim” (1979: 34). Options represent “possibilities of choice, or alternative of action”, while ligatures are “allegiances; one might call them bonds or linkages as well” (30). Options are for individuals what we would define, with refer to the society, as opportunities: they include, after all, all the possibilities which individuals could consider when taking a choice. Options and choices are two faces of the same coin and that “choices are the subjective side of options” (31). Ligatures are given by social positions and roles: they may be restrictions, but at the end of the day they are the values which fill up individuals assigning to them a context of reference (i.e. family, religion, local origin are all typical elements of linkage).

Life chances appear as a function of these two elements: “a maximum of options is not by itself a maximum of life chances, nor is a minimum of options the only minimum of life chances” and “ligatures without options are oppressive, whereas options without bonds are meaningless” (31). Ligatures are a necessary result of every social contract; hence, their demolition could firstly help to enhance options, but after it would constitute a threat to the social contract itself. Nevertheless, it is possible to imagine a function of ligatures and options which express a maximum of life chances and, in this perspective, the maximization of life chances should be considered as a central challenge for our societies. I argue this conceptualization of life chances provides a good starting point to push a step forward the analysis about mobility, since it aims not only at addressing the dimension of the achieved, but also to grasp that of the achievable, which should be the one relevant when focusing on a social justice debate.

A reflection concerning mechanisms and procedures of life chances distribution is on the ground of our duties towards others. In other words, I sustain that a fluid society, through the enhancement of individuals' life chances, represents one of the “circumstances of justice” for both moral and rational reasons. The moral argument is not new and it is based on the acceptance that all human beings, regardless all differences, as well as the idea of equal moral significance of individuals, contemplate the necessity to guarantee some degree of fairness and this generally implies some forms of equality of opportunity. In particular, it is unproblematic to sustain that in every democratic and liberal society will be reputed as unfair for less competent candidates to be chosen over more qualified candidates, or for individual sharing the same inborn talent to face diverse obstacles in competing for preferential positions. Of course, this does not mean that moral speculations regarding criteria of distribution to adopt in order to guarantee equal life-chance necessarily lead to the same conclusions. Conversely, contents and borders of what it falls within the categories of just and unjust can vary widely depending on the assumptions adopted and priorities. Nonetheless, what I believe it is undeniable at this stage, recognizing freedom and equality of individuals as the two pillars holding up all modern moral theories, it is that the combination of these two principles necessarily presuppose the provision of

some equality of opportunity, in other words, they presuppose some principle as security for adequate life chances for members of the community.

While, when coming to rationality we can reasonably feel at ease affirming that life chances are based on what I shall define as *expected results*. Where individuals are free to grow up and to develop themselves in an open community, then the normal result will be individuals cultivating interests and occupying positions which are not pre-determined by their socio-economic origins. How does this argument involve rationality? I state that if this presuppose is true, then in every liberal and free society rational individuals will be encouraged to pursue their interests and to develop their ideas, making investments and act on the basis of the fact that all these behaviors are based on rational expectations to obtain some adequate rewards (the nature of the rewards meant here is, of course, not just economical, but in a broader acceptance it also includes nonmaterial rewards such as gratification or public recognition). If these expectations are disregarded, then serious distortions of individuals' behaviors arise and public interventions can be only partially successful in avoiding or changing them. It is from this consideration that I also move my critique to the pure meritocratic principle, which does not provide with any help in the definition of the life chances distribution and attribution mechanism. The vagueness of the concept, in fact, is caused by the fact that its content depend on values and opinion which may change for each individual. The English language allows a further distinction and it divides merit, which is referred to a natural characteristic, from desert, which indicates the posses of certain skills necessary to carry out a services. Nevertheless, the distinction does not resolve the problem, as some scholar affirms that meritocracy includes both merit and desert (see Lucas, 1995), while some other sustains that a meritocratic society should just involve desert (Miller, 1999) since if merit would be based on natural qualities, then it would resemble a beauty contest: but which is the merit to be born more beautiful than others? In addition, other problems emerge related with the role of luck in the merit system of distribution, as well as to the fact that the notion of desert recognizes a key role to abilities and competences which individuals acquire during their life-course. Nevertheless, in real life this distinction is more problematic than in theory: beauty, for example, could require an effort and, similarly, effort seems to play a crucial role also in the

process of acquisition of abilities and skills. Moreover, as far as our genes influence our inclination to develop a certain skills, the notion of desert is not shelter from luck.

While other problematic aspects concern the fact that neither merit nor desert provides the possibility to include, in their evaluation process, the fact that certain individuals put more effort to convert their ability in performances, nor the motivation which lies under their performances, as well as the fact that the distribution process is based on the transitory value assigned to natural abilities or acquired skills within the community of reference. All these argumentations highlight the main critical points which arouse from a careful reflection on meritocratic system as “the Answer” to our interrogative concerning the roots and the real meaning of individuals’ life chances in contemporary society. Briefly, society must offer a “level playing field” (Roemer,1998) and it is exactly from this evidence that arouses the necessity to overcome an approach based on desert and to introduce a formulation of the principle of equal opportunity which requires that circumstances do not have to affect individual prospectus for outcome or paraphrasing Rawls (1971:63-64) that individuals with equivalent effort face “the same prospects of success regardless of their initial place in the social system” since inborn talents are “affected by all kinds of social conditions and class attitudes”.

Justice has, therefore, to be understood as what communities choose to do about these unequal. But, how could this be feasible? My argument is that too little attention has been devoted on exploring the fundamental mechanism on which the idea of social mobility and life chances are embedded, which is *expectations* which, in turn, depend, I believe, by an imperfect application of the principle of *reciprocity* in our society. Reciprocity between other individuals and toward the community in which individuals live represents a pillar of the liberal and democratic tradition, since it deeply influences all the other principles which regulate a “well-ordered” society.

In the III chapter I clarify the link between reciprocity and trust and explain how the latter constitutes a *condition sine qua non* for a fluid society.

Reciprocity can be generally understood as the human disposition to returning back a benefit or responding with hostility to harm. This common idea is normally recognized as a social norm taking various forms in diverse areas of social life. However, the general schema applied is that of giving and returning as a feeling of obligation perceived in response to someone other behaviour more or less conscious or interested. These elements seem to be well summarized by Taylor when he affirms that reciprocity is “a combination of what one might call short-term altruism and long-term self-interest” (1971:28). People learn from personal experiences as well as observing others’ behaviour and, thanks to these, a pattern of reciprocity arises and it becomes stable and replied by all actors in similar situations. This suggests that what it makes possible reciprocity is what it can explain the fact that individuals accept to take a risk in prospect of an expected return in the future, which we normally refer to as trust.

In this perspective, I argue that the principle of reciprocity finds its correspondence and strong equivalent in human relations in the idea of trust, concept which is also more frequently used in social sciences where it is generally included within the literature on social capital. The latter, I need to admit, it is a well-known theoretical paradigm for scholars committed with the topic of mobility: the idea that our relationships with others have a meaningful impact on our future fluidity within society is –I would say- almost intuitive and it has been inflected in all possible ways: a widespread literature about the relationships with others, with a special consideration for the influence played by the so-called “relevant others” (e.g. family members and relatives, friends, neighbours, classmates, professors and so forth. See Billari. 2007), and an increasing interest on the mechanisms of creation, entrance to and exit from social networks (e.g. associations, party, social category and so forth) testifies a ceaseless attention to the concept. Moreover, the bond between social mobility and capital is a well-established one: many research have been devoted to the various aspects of social capital and its possible impact on social mobility. We know, for instance, that weak social ties have shown to be the most useful when looking for a job (Granovetter, 1973) or that strong family relations tend to have negative effects on mobility for children coming from less advantaged background (Hutter, 1970). Nevertheless, while a great attention has been dedicated to the study of micro dimension of social

capital under the mobility perspective, scholars have not focused on exploring the *meso* level of social capital analysis which refers to the mechanisms that make possible the existence itself of social capital and their interactions (Lin, 2001). On this assumption, I identify trust as a founding principle of the social capital theory. In particular, I argue that well established behaviors of reciprocity are the basis on which individuals develop and strengthen their personal disposition for trust.

In a nutshell, reciprocity can be considered as a form of trust which, in turn, also represents a key source of social capital. The idea of putting themselves in someone else's shoes (Rawls would call this capacity reasonability) is always at the core of reciprocity. However, its application finds a fundament in society only when this mutual recognition met a positive expectation and transforms the feeling in trust. This capacity is, according to many scholars, the crucial feature of trust: in other words, it refers to the "intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intention of the behaviour of another" (Rousseau et al., 1998). It follows that each situation of trust always involves some degree of *risk*. As Hume noticed, it is "impossible to separate the chance of good from the risk of ill" (1978). In fact, in the act of trust individuals *bet* something, this "something" can be traduced in practice with *opportunities* -since he renounce to all the other possible alternatives- and costs, which are surely costs of evaluation but they might also be real investments in term of time, money and effort. Therefore, when individual trusts he/she takes two different risks: the risk of failure and missing its opportunity (missed gain) and the risk of wasting efforts (loss). On the other hand, distrust leads to dismiss opportunities. In this way, the idea of trust appears like a complex attitude which is a result of mental conscious and unconscious mechanisms of individuals. It is from these considerations that the analysis of trust as something rational emerges and lead me to enlighten a new aspect of the social mobility theory: trust is based on expectations and these are determined by a precipitate of rationality and cognitive elaboration of personal experiences; on turn, the level of trust that individuals develop along their life influences dramatically scope and quality of their life chances. Therefore, trust represents the basic ingredient and should be considered as playing a role in the determination of individuals' life chances. Life chances regard perspectives about the future. These perspectives are, hence, determined by the possibility that each individual has to visualize his/her

“gain” (I use here the expression “gain” to refer to individual’s desires and ambitions), but not only. Life chances are also significantly influenced by his/her capacity and possibility (enablement) to make a correct assessment of what he/she can really expect from the future. I think this kind of process – which I define as “*image of life chances*”- is essential in the determination of individual’s possibilities of mobility and it is directly influenced by the generalized level of trust that individuals feed toward society. In this view, trust -as *positive expectation of gaining a return*- becomes the key-element of social capital since it crucially shape individuals’ life choices (e.g. deciding to enrol or not to university; leaving the old job for a new one, and so on). As Simmel noticed trust is not neutral for agents’ behaviour, rather, it is “a hypothesis certain enough to serve as a basis for practical conduct” (1950:318). This means that both when an individual takes –in a more or less conscious way- an important life-decision or even in daily behaviors; his/her beliefs toward the society within he/she lives inevitably and profoundly influences his choices and behaviors causing a reduction or, rather, an empowerment of his personal life chances. Instead, every choice of trust is –as already argued- based on a complex combination of rationality and beliefs which, together, create that positive expectation which proves to be fundamental in order to transform attitude in concrete actions. This mechanism is valid either when an individual decides to trust another individual; either when he/she decides to trust society expecting to receive back in the future a positive gain as a reasonable correspondence to the efforts, investment and risk carried on. It is clear that here the use of the expression “society” is generally referred to the ensemble of norms, habits and set of more or less formal institutions that compose a social structure and which can be equalized, using an artifice common among political theorists, to the cluster of rules and conventions composing the social contract. And it is in this sense that I refer to an enlarged conception of trust –I call it “*generalized trust*”- based on the beliefs that individuals develop through their interactions with other people (either close to them or unknown/anonymous), as well as with local and central institutions (such as public schools, officials, public offices and so forth). The idea of generalized trust can be interpreted as a crucial form of trust which characterizes supra-individual level of interactions; it overcomes close relationships, such as family or friends, and simple interactions between two individuals. It can be also affirmed that this

kind of trust is a consequence of human progress and of the permanent human individuals' exposition to the others in current societies. This generalized trust deeply shapes individuals' expectations, sketching into their minds inner borders of their own aspirations and, lastly, influencing his/her life chances by acting directly on the sets of options and ligatures available to them.

In other words, I argue, ensuring larger and better distribution of life chances to individuals requires not only a certain degree of trust for interactions between other single individuals, but it is also required to develop a generalized trust based on expectations toward the community within we live and their adherence to shared value and rules as well as towards that institutions that ensure our life within the community. Similarly for what it happens in self-fulfilling predictions, these expectations determine the borders of individuals' vision of life chances and lead them to inefficient behaviours. In society where social trust is low, individuals are deprived of their expectations of positive gain as a trade-off of their reliance to the social contract and in the attempt to minimize possible lost, they develop distortive behaviours which are damaging for both their own life-chances and, overall, have a negative impact on the rest of society. In order to clarify my hypothesis, I conclude the chapter taking as an example the individuals' choice to stay or not in education after the end of compulsory school. As a general premise, we should give account of the fact that today education is widely considered in all liberal and democratic societies as the key and privileged tools for the enlargement of life chances. Indeed, a classical explanatory paradigm of social mobility is represented by the alleged role assigned to education as a means of mobility. After the end of II World War, scholarization average level in all economically advanced countries has permanently increased. In these countries primary and secondary education today has become almost universal and even the higher stage of schooling process has raised impressive rates of participation. Nevertheless, looking through the Eurostat and OECD statistics, we may observe that, with few exceptions, there is still a persistent percentage of the population which does not take part to or does not complete the higher stage of the educational processes. *Prima facie*, these data might appear not problematic, but it has been systematically shown that people which do not take part to higher education are much more strongly likely to come from a poor socio-economic background and that –in case they decide to go forward in their education path-

they will have an higher probability to not accomplish their studies compared to people coming from a higher socio-economic milieu (Jaeger and Holm, 2003; Iannelli and Paterson,2005; Furlong and Cartmel, 2009, Yelland, 2011), this situation is spread in all countries although in some cases (e.g. Italy, US, UK), more than in others (e.g. Norway, Sweden). In an attempt to analyse this social dilemma we should now try to make an effort and consider the situation of two young individuals, one coming from a poor socio-economic background and the other coming from an advantaged socio-economic background, both taking their decision about enrolling or not to university and showing very similar performances in terms of school GPA (Grade Point Average). I shall firstly sustain, without major doubts to be contradicted, that their decisions will be firstly determined by a cluster of external and internal factors interacting one with the other and that are usually classified as primary and secondary effects, according to the distinction proposed by Boudon (1974) and widely accepted by sociological and economic literature. Nevertheless, I argue, apart from primary and secondary “social class effects” the university choice is powerfully and hidden influenced by our trust to get a reasonable reward from them. With this I mean to say that, given a certain advantaged and disadvantaged background and taking into account the fact that public policies have a direct effect on balancing the opportunity to make or not a certain choice; the individuals, in making their choice, will always be influenced by their expectations about what they could get from a certain investment and only in case they will have a full positive expectation they will decide to expend all their material and immaterial resources in change of a future gain. For instance, students could also live in a country where education is free or highly incentivized, but when there are very few expectations that the attainment of a certain degree will increase the opportunity to obtain a certain job or position, individuals will be strongly discouraged to trust the system and to get engaged on further education. Of course, the institutional organization of education (its structure, monetary or other kind of incentives such as taxes exemption, availability of grants based on income or/and merit, open or restricted access, students accommodation; access to discounts for public transportation or books, and so forth) certainly constitutes an influencing variable affecting the individuals’ decision to enrol to university or not. But, I would insist, that even in case the institutional architecture is particularly oriented to guarantee the

access to people coming from a less advantaged milieu, the choice to stay in education will certainly be not “fully embraced” in case students are not persuaded that education will enlarge their life chances. When I use the expression “fully embraced” I refer to the fact that even if there is a strong state intervention in higher education for the implementation of a free and public university system, students will have their life chances constrained in case they could not expect the system is trustworthy and their participation will lead to achieve a certain position. Therefore, in order to minimize their risks the students in such a situation will probably decide to behave in a way that try to maximize the short term benefits and minimize the future loss: in fact, the limit or the absence of positive expectation (*trust*) will bring them to behave in a rational way, but in this condition their rationality will cause strong distortions and even neutralize the expected effects of public redistributive policies. Briefly, in order to get individuals fully engaged on a university program a minimum requirement would be that they expect that this choice will broaden up their chances to be socially fluid and get ahead in life. Indeed, the individual’s development of a positive expectation concerning the value of being engaged on a university program as mean to enlarge his/her own life chances exercises a crucial and prior importance in his/her choice. In this perspective, trust can also be considered as a sort of preliminary and enabling condition in order to allow individuals to take a “free choice”: this is valid for what it concerns getting or not enrolled to a university program, as well as other choices. This last argument, I want to highlight, is valid also in case individuals make their university choice in an institutional framework which guarantee an access to education through grants, free services or other kind of incentives as it happens in Italy: since public measures can not eliminate the basic element of risk which is implied in engaging in a university program and that determines a necessary investment in term of material and immaterial resources that individuals should reserve to this goal rather than any others. Indeed, what we can expect to happen in a situation where individuals are called to take such a choice, having a low degree of trust about the future rewards they will receive, but with the perspective to benefit of strong incentives in case they decide to engage: a standard behaviour in such a case will probably be to decide –whenever possible- to enrol to a university programme on the basis of a logic aimed at taking advantage of the state incentives

provided as far as this is possible (e.g. non or low tuition-fees; access to low cost or free accommodation; discount for public transportation and so forth), and in the meanwhile trying an exit option which will probably be looking for a job that allow them at least to have open an alternative path in case the university choice does not provide expected results. The more common consequence of this kind of “*two-feet-in-one-shoe*” strategy is very frequently a high percentage of students that at some point decide to drop out the university combined with another substantial percentage of students that take a long time to achieve their degree (since they have considered prior to preserve/look for a job, which tarnished their time dedicated to university).

In chapter IV I ask myself which is the most suitable way to capture this alleged correlation between trust and life chances. The attempt to answer to this question lead me to introduce the different methodologies and illustrate the most significant attempts carried out by scholars to assess life chances and trust, in this view, I also remark the main limits of these analyses. After this, I explain why I have chosen to examine a panel of data based on individuals perceptions of life chances and how trust is implicated. Scholars use to divide trusting behaviour in two components: preferences and beliefs. In theory these two elements are easily distinguishable, although when individuals take a choice their behavior is always a result of a combination of these two elements (Sapienza, Tolgra, Zingales, 2010:14). In fact, per a given type of preferences, a person who has a higher expectation about a potential future gain deriving from certain behaviour will invest more than another person who has lower preferences of that given type. Therefore, we can deduct that expectations are influenced by beliefs, but not by preferences. In addition, we can argue that expectations represent, *per se*, a good measure of trust –meant as individuals’ positive expectation of gain- which, in turn, constitutes a pre-condition and a factor which influence life chances.

Following these considerations, my cross-country comparison is based on the will to explore the variation of individuals’ expectations. Hence, representing the key element which links trust with life chances, individuals’ expectation is the factor to look at in order to assess variations of life chances among different countries. In other words, expectations can be consider as a reflection of the

generalized trust individuals have toward the society they live in, and these expectations are relevant since they have an impact on individuals behaviours by shaping their life chances. In other words, the use of perceptions allows us to get a bit closer to a concept of mobility capable to clutch the tricky idea of “life chances” and, therefore, encompassing opportunities and monitoring obstacle present within our societies.

At this point, I explain the methodology used for my cross-country comparison analysis where I included a selected group of EU countries in order to satisfy a certain balance of both homogeneous (in terms of shared values, economic development and institutional organization levels) and heterogeneous features (including countries belonging to different welfare regimes). Moreover, I provide basic information related to the data collection and the ISSP (International Social Survey Program) project introducing relevant details about the ISSP methodology.

Therefore, I comment evidences emerged from the table and remark how Italy presents an anomalous trend in comparison to other countries involved in the study. In fact, respondents’ perceptions show how expectations about the functioning of mobility mechanisms are weaker than in other countries since factors of ascription seem to have a stronger impact on individuals’ life path and, most important, Italian people reveal much lower positive expectations whereas a serious lack of reciprocity is highlighted by a lack of trust toward the relations with others and how these are used to get ahead in life.

Finally, in chapter V, I sketch my conclusions and propose a selected cluster of guide-lines for reform which useful for national policy makers sincerely committed with ensuring the enlargement and empowerment of individuals’ life chances.