

# THE “INSTITUT D’ESTUDIS AUTONÒMICS”



THE MAIN OBJECT OF THE INSTITUTE OF AUTONOMIC STUDIES IS TO STUDY POLITICAL AUTONOMIES ALL OVER THE WORLD, UNDER FEDERAL AND REGIONAL REGIMES OF ALL TYPES, SO AS TO GAIN A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE CHARACTERISTICS, ADMINISTRATION AND DIFFICULTIES OF THE AUTONOMOUS COMMUNITIES, AND ESPECIALLY OF CATALONIA.

JOSEP M. VILASECA DIRECTOR OF THE INSTITUTE OF AUTONOMIC STUDIES



**T**he Institute for Autonomic Studies was set up by a decree of 22nd December 1984, and started work in April 1985, four and a half years ago.

The main object of the Institute of Autonomic Studies is to study political autonomies all over the world, under federal and regional regimes of all types, so as to gain a better understanding of the characteristics, administration and difficulties of the Spanish system of Autonomous Communities, and especially of Catalonia.

At the constitutional ceremony of the new institute, the President of the *Generalitat* said he hoped it would help us to gain more insight than ever before in these matters, because the more we know about it, the better we can defend our autonomy.

To achieve these objectives, the Institute has been working in various fields: providing grants for researchers to study the legal, economic and financial regulations of other countries (Germany, Italy, USA, Belgium, France, Great Britain, Canada, etc.) in matters similar to those that concern our autonomy; financial assistance for students wanting to complete a doctoral course at the Catalan universities; seminars involving university professors and senior civil servants of the countries mentioned above, covering areas of common inter-

rest related to political and administrative autonomies; organizing congresses and round tables with Spanish teachers and with members of other autonomous communities' administrations; commissioning studies on the main problems today; providing our universities with grants for the organization of seminars and short courses on the legislation and the activities of the Catalan institutions; attending conferences and meetings in Spain and abroad; exchanging publications, etc.

Its most important work includes its commentary on the "Estatut de Catalunya", a 2,400 page report by 124 teachers, civil servants and professionals; a study based for the first time ever on figures from Catalonia's financial balance within the Spanish state, now under preparation; an investigation into the development of the Catalan autonomy, already completed in the case of the "Departament de Política Territorial i Obres Públiques" and under preparation in the case of the remaining departments; the application of the law of the European Community for organisms below state level; the finances of the Autonomous Communities and the experience in Catalonia.

The Institute has published its own work whenever it has felt it best and has paid for others to be published by various institutions and publishers, so as to

reach a wider public. Many other works –about two hundred– remain in the archives unpublished but available to researchers; it also keeps press cuttings from all over the world on subjects in its speciality (so far 260 dossiers have been completed). It has purchased 1,228 selected books, which complete the specialist library of the Consultative Council (13,000 volumes), for joint use, and receives many visitors. All this material is stored on computer and can therefore be easily consulted.

Finally, along with the School of Public Administration of Catalonia, it publishes the four-monthly magazine "Autonomies", and issues a fortnightly bulletin of legal information of interest to the *Generalitat*, which it distributes together with the bulletin published by the Catalan Pro-Europe Foundation on European Community legislation. Both are directed mainly at providing information for the administrative organs of the *Generalitat* and the Catalan members of parliament.

To sum up, the Institute's concern revolves around two specific areas: the training of researchers in universities and the administration, so as to stimulate the vocation our country so badly needs in this field, and advice on these matters to the government of the *Generalitat*. ■