


# Biography of Jordi Pujol i Soley

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## Biography of Jordi Pujol i Soley

Jordi Pujol i Soley was born in Barcelona in 1930. He became a Doctor of Medicine after studying at the University of Barcelona.

From the age of 16, he was involved in the resistance movement against the regime of General Franco via political and cultural Catholic organisations that advocated democracy, the Catalan identity and particularly the Catalan language and culture, all of which were persecuted by the dictatorship. These activities led to his arrest in 1960, and he spent two and a half years in prison. After his time in prison, he worked for the establishment of cultural, economic and social infrastructures in Catalonia; he was involved in founding a bank and in the creation of the 'Great Catalan Encyclopædia'.

In 1974, he played a decisive role in the founding of the Democratic Convergence of Catalonia (*Convergència Democràtica de Catalunya*), a political party which would remain clandestine until the end of the Franco regime.

Following the establishment of democracy in Spain, he was elected Member of the Spanish Parliament for the Convergence and Union coalition (*Convergència i Unió*). In 1980, he stood in the elections to the Catalan Parliament with the Convergence and Union coalition, and he was appointed President of the Generalitat (the autonomous government of Catalonia). He was re-elected President in 1984, 1988, 1992, 1995 and 1999.

During this time, he worked for the cultural, social and economic revival of Catalonia, implementing strategies for effective, modern governance in Spain.

Having been an enthusiastic pro-European since his formative years, he was appointed President of the Assembly of European Regions from 1992 to 1996. At this time, he helped boost Catalonia's presence on the international stage by advocating a value system that was compatible with the notion of competitiveness.

He has written a number of works, including: *Fer poble, fer Catalunya*, published secretly in 1965; *Des dels turons a l'altra banda del riu*, written in prison and published in 1978; *Construir Catalunya* (1979); *Los desequilibrios territoriales en España* (1978); *Afirmación catalana del europeísmo* (1985); *The Regions of Europe in the perspective of 1992* (1989); *Estado y sociedad* (1987); *Pensar Europa* (1993); *Sobre Europa (i altres coses)* (2004); *Idees i Records* (2006); *Una reflexió necessaria* (2006); and *Jordi Pujol. Memòries (1930-1980)* (2007).

Jordi Pujol i Soley has been honoured by governments and institutions in the United Kingdom, France, Belgium, Spain, the United States, Chile, Quebec, Portugal and Mexico, among others.

Since 2004, after withdrawing from the front line of politics, he has been President of the private foundation *Centro de Estudios Jordi Pujol*, whose mission is to promote the intellectual and political ideas of Jordi Pujol.