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Literature on Job Mobility in Germany

State-of-the-Art of Mobility Research, Chapter 5

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V. Literature on Job Mobility in Germany

1. Job Mobility in Germany

This section addresses general aspects of occupational mobility in Germany. These aspects include political structures, the actual job market-related mobility, the extent of mobile living arrangements, the necessity for mobility based on economic conditions as well as the mobility culture in Germany.

1.1. Basic political conditions: Demand for more mobility

When we look at political and societal development, it appears that the mobility demands on workers have increased. This increase is visible worldwide and especially in Europe and consequently in Germany as well. From a political point of view, the barriers to mobility should be decreased on the international level in the course of European unity and social cohesion as well as international migration should be enhanced[1]. Increased job mobility would essentially help contribute to cultural integration, competitiveness on the world market and the dismantling of social inequality. Employees should follow the flow of money, goods and other transfers to allow for an optimal allocation of workers (for the legal basis of the European job market see Berthold & Neumann, 2004). Highly-qualified workers and management personnel as carriers of knowledge and specific cultures are to strengthen the economy in a knowledge based society on a European level. Concomitant problems, for instance the differences in educational degrees, will thus become an ever more important topic and must be reduced (about inequality and non-transparency of educational degrees in the European Union see, for example, List, 1996 or the anthology of Mytzek & Schömann, 2004).

As on the European level, German politics likewise tries to support job market mobility. For the most part, the debate about the necessity for more mobility in the job market substantially focuses on the process of equalisation between east and west and the problem of unemployment[2]. The current opinion is that we can fight unemployment in particular by changing jobs (Zühlke, 2000) and by increased inter-regional mobility (Büchel, Frick, & Witte, 2002). Instead, for instance, the basic conditions for the unemployed were altered. To

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[1] For example, in 2002 the program *Skills and Mobility* was created European wide.
[2] Of importance are the factors: geographic mobility, change of occupation, change of employer.

achieve this goal, the sum of 180 million Euro allocated to unemployment offices for "mobility assistance" in 2003 has almost doubled compared to 2001. Comparing these two years, we find that the number of persons, who used this support has also increased by about 75% to 290,000. This increased use of support is also related to the changed criteria of burden. According to the new guidelines, unemployed persons can basically be required to either move, have dual households or commute up to 2.5 hours daily (for full time positions) when starting a new job. Exceptions can only be made for the care of children or other family members.

A special issue with respect to the basic economic conditions of job mobility is the travel expense tax write-off[3]. This so called 'Pendlerpauschale' compensates for travel expenses between home and regular place of work and can be claimed on tax returns. For each full kilometre driven, employees can claim 0.30 Euro on their tax returns. Starting in 2007, however, this tax break will only be granted for travel distances over 20 kilometres. National savings are the goal of this change. An additional regulation that provides financial compensation for expenses with respect to certain living arrangements is the tax reduction for dual households. A result of this reduction is relief for people who live, for instance, in a long distance relationship.

Despite these attempts to enhance mobility, specific barriers to mobility are disappearing only very slowly in Germany. One barrier is rooted in the educational system of the states of the Federal Republic of Germany. During university studies, it is, for example, difficult for students to change from one state university system to another because of different curriculum and examination requirements; teachers, in particular, are strongly limited in their mobility because of different degree requirements and educational systems.

Whether occupational mobility has actually increased in West Germany is debatable at least based on empirical data (see Büchel, Frick, & Witte, 2002). Whereas Haas sees a clear rise in regional mobility between 1980 and 1995 (2000), Erlinghagen failed to see an increase in job market mobility based on his study of IAB workers panel (2002)[4]. With respect to the European job market Berthold and Neumann also conclude that occupational mobility in

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[3] The write off is regulated by Article 9 Sec 1 Para 3 No 4 of the German Tax Code (Einkommenssteuergesetz (EStG) § 9 Abs. 1 Satz 3 Nr. 4)
[4] To compare these studies, we must distinguish between the different forms of occupational mobility. Haas examines interregional job fluctuation, whereas Erlinghagen looks at the fluctuation between business, job security and frequency of individual redundancy.

Europe has remained on the same low level (2002). Only 2% of European workers work in another EU country (Tassinopoulos & Werner, 1999, p. 6 cited in Berthold & Neumann, 2004).

Little is known about the extent and the different types of mobility in Germany. Based on the results of the Microcensus and the German Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP) Schneider, Limmer, and Ruckdeschel assume that every sixth worker between the age of 20 and 59 is occupationally mobile either as a long distance commuter, or vari-mobile person[5], or residentially mobile worker or shuttle or lives in a long distance relationship. This number corresponds to 16% of the working population in this age (Schneider, Limmer, & Ruckdeschel, 2002b, p. 55ff.). Within this group, long distance relationships make up 5%, the most frequent life style followed by long distance commuting (4%) the second most frequent. The portion of the vari-mobiles is 3% and shuttles and residentially mobile 2% each. In contrast, 45% of immobile persons have lived in the same place or region since birth.

Social science research has also focused special attention on cross-border mobility. This mobility behaviour has been analyzed from the perspective of transportation studies as well as in the context of migration research (see Kreutzer & Roth, 2006; Verwiebe & Mueller, 2006; Weiß, 2005). In the last few years, commuter streams and obstacles for commuters along inner European national borders have been investigated within the project "Cross-Border Commuting in the EU: Obstacles and Barriers" (CROBOCOB)[6]. In Germany, 9 % of all workers are foreign nationals, the largest portion of whom originates however from none-EU or none-EU associated countries, the so-called Drittstaaten. In Germany, workers from European Union countries comprise 3 % of the domestic work force (Janssen, 2002, p. 26). With its 78,000 EU workers, Germany is thus the second most important host country for cross-border commuters that pay into the social welfare system, preceded only by Switzerland. Although this cross-border exchange activity is substantial in the border regions, it is nevertheless insignificant for Germany as a whole even after the opening of national borders. As in the rest of Europe, the job market in Germany continues to be dominated by native workers. Mobility barriers noted in the research include: differences in the social welfare systems (for example different types of health insurance coverage, unemployment

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[5] Vario mobile are people with varying job related mobility demands. The duration of absence form home and their place of work change constantly. They are for example consultants, stewards, stewardesses or truckers. Shuttles have a second residence near work and return home on weekends.
[6] The six borders investigated are Finland/Sweden, Sweden/Denmark, Denmark/Germany, Germany/Netherlands, the Netherlands/Belgium and Italy/France.

benefits as well as pension rights); differences in tax systems and assessment practices; differences in educational systems, making comparisons between educational degrees problematical; inadequate knowledge of the language of the host country; inadequate and inaccessible information about cross-border job markets, cultural differences and prejudices as well as mental barriers ("border in the heads") to name just a few (Janssen & van the Velde, 2003, p. 31ff.).

1.2. Economic basic conditions: Increased demand for mobile workers

The transition from an industrial to a service society has had far-reaching consequences on the demand for workers by individual companies. Highly complex production processes and research areas that require specific know-how, increasing technological innovation and shorter product life cycles have all led to a continuous demand for highly qualified skilled workers. Less qualified and older workers are increasingly required to undergo additional training. Other workers are forced to switch jobs because of the pressures of quickly evolving occupational fields (Kraemer & Bittlingmayer, 2001). Increasing globalisation reinforce this process of change in the workplace. In particular, companies that operate globally look for competencies that are linked to mobility such as language skills or knowledge of foreign markets and cultures (Winkelmann, 2002).

According to a 2002 study by the management consultant firm Pricewaterhouse Coopers, 47% of the European business enterprises interviewed indicate that their demand for mobile workers will rise and 22% even expect a strong increase (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2002). In qualitative interviews, personnel managers of the Deutsche Bank AG stress the essentiality of the mobility experience for their employees, in order to shape business culture and to train their workers to be flexible and farsighted. Here we are not simply dealing with work-related travel. Employees are not simply sent back and forth from the main company office. Instead their movement has a "multi-lateral" dimension, as workers carry out responsibilities in several sequential stations along their career path. In particular, these mobility requirements are addressed to highly-qualified specialists and management personnel and directed towards mobile workers within Germany (Paulu, 2001, p. 4)[7].

The increased demand of the German economy for mobile workers can also be seen in

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[7] Overall, the banking sector exhibits a lesser tendency towards global mobility. International markets are predominantly managed by local employees. This point is underscored by the study of Beaverstock, which examined the 20 largest London banks with international operations (according to Paulu 2001, p. 4).

the debate about the "Green Card" in Germany. Due to a striking lack of IT specialists, many business enterprises tried to bring workers from countries outside the European Union into the job market. The German Green Card regulations, a far more rigid regulatory measure than its namesake, the American Green Card, went into effect in August 2001. At the end of September 2001, nearly 10,000 workers from outside the European Union had started jobs in Germany (Werner, 2002).

To determine the number of internationally mobile and highly qualified skilled workers in firms, the IZA International Employer Survey 2000 was conducted[8]. These data reveal that 39% of the firms in Germany employ highly qualified foreign workers. The portion of these workers with respect to the total number of all highly qualified workers is 9%[9]. Two different hypotheses build the foundation for an analysis of reasons to employ foreign workers. According to the substitution hypothesis, companies need foreign workers because there is a lack of skilled workers in the area and personnel has to be found elsewhere. According to the complementary hypothesis, companies seek foreign workers because they add special skills. The reasons for hiring highly skilled foreign workers as stated by the companies speak for the complementary hypothesis. As the companies themselves claim, they hire foreign workers because of their good English language skills or their knowledge of foreign markets (Winkelmann, 2002, p. 290 f.).

Wolters regards the migration of highly-qualified workers in a somewhat different perspective. One goal of his studies is to compare the relation of production factors of "high-skilled labour" to the production factor of capital. One result of the study is that the direct investments in Germany are a regulating factor for the migration of highly-qualified workers into Germany (Wolter, 1997, p. 246). In a later essay entitled "From the enterprise-internal to the enterprise-induced migration of high skilled workers in Europe," Wolters ends with the statement that the current view of business enterprises contributing to mobility through internal job markets is outdated. Rather migration is no longer bound to a single firm and its branch offices. "High-skilled labour" is consequentially developing into a production factor independent of location, since it no longer depends on the branch system of its own employer

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[8] This project was carried out in cooperation with the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung) as well as the IZA. The survey included 850 companies, 340 companies headquartered in Germany, 170 in France with a corresponding number in both Great Britain and the Netherlands (Winkelmann 2002, p. 287).

[9] The rounded portions for other countries are: France 34% and 11%; Great Britain 50% and 11%, Netherlands 33% and 17%) (Winkelmann 2002, p. 289)

(Wolter, 1997, p. 53).

1.3. Mobility culture in Germany

Mobility culture is understood here as the sum of attitudes towards and the collectively shared experiences regarding mobility. These attitudes are formed, among others, by generally accepted norms, Leitbilder of mobility, structures that favour or hinder mobility, existent phenomenology of mobile living arrangements, the spread and the dynamic of mobility and the demands to become mobile. These experiences can be, on the one hand, characteristic for the whole society. On the other hand, it is assumed that, in different environments, occupational groups, generations and regions, there is a specific mobility culture, which leads to different evaluations of mobility. These different mobility cultures can in turn influence the decision for different mobile and/or immobile ways of life.

A systematic analysis of the interrelations between mobility culture and mobility in Germany is for the most part lacking. Within the context of research on traffic mobility, however, studies do attempt to come to an explicit understanding of 'mobility culture'. They examine, for instance, attitudes towards using different means of transportation, environmental awareness, the socialisation process by parents and the influence of road safety training in schools and kindergartens (see Kohler, 2002; Mobiplan-Projektkonsortium, 2002; Schulz, 2003; Tully, 1999).

Nevertheless, we can derive certain assumptions about mobility culture in Germany from numerous studies on mobility and mobility acceptance. A recent survey conducted in the job market section of the internet site meinestadt.de in spring 2006 reveals details about the willingness of job seekers to move or to commute. Approximately 10,000 job seekers were interviewed. Only about 28% of them were willing to move to get a new job. The willingness to commute is also low. Of those interviewed, 25% would commute up to 50 km and 10% farther than 70 km. (allesklar.com AG, 2006)

The German Ageing Survey (Deutscher Alterssurvey) gives us an impression of the degree to which Germans feel bound to their hometowns. Of the 40 to 54 year-olds, 48% live in the same place as their parents and only 17% live more than two hours away from their parents (Kohli, Kühnemund, Motel, & Szydlik, 2000, p. 186). Furthermore, only every sixth person of this generation has made a long distance move at least once. The German Socio-Economic Panel supplies similar data. According to their own information, 45% of the 20 to

59 year-olds have lived in the same place and/or in the same region as their parents since birth (Schneider, 2005, p. 118). A study by the research institute for regulatory policy (Forschungsinstitut für Ordnungspolitik) (FIO)) reflects the same attitude to stay within a familiar social and spatial environment. Mobility and job rotations within a region are acceptable; mobility beyond the borders of one's own region is, however, rejected. These findings seem to be the result of and proof for a "mobility culture," which is more in line with immovability than change. The familiar circle of friends and acquaintances, the well-known paths, club memberships, leisure-time facilities, etc. ought to remain the same. "In Germany, the sense of departure means to be able to come home again," whereas in the USA, for example, leaving home is based on the idea of a new beginning and adventure (Schneider, Limmer, & Ruckdeschel, 2002b, p. 21).

The unwillingness to accept mobility can also be detected in an evaluation of personal life style by the mobile persons themselves. Data suggest that job-related spatial mobility is not the norm and does not set the standard for everyday actions and personal conduct. Mobile persons themselves consider their way of life as deviation from the norm. This personal assessment applies in particular to residentially mobile workers and to shuttles (Schneider, Limmer, & Ruckdeschel, 2002a, p. 240ff.). The fact that mobility itself is actually not positively evaluated or honored as an individual achievement becomes clear from the reactions of the social environment of mobile persons. According to their personal experience, mobile persons meet with a lack of understanding, pity, or even reproaches about their way of life. These expressions are a reaction to the failure (or inability) of mobile individuals to fulfill their required roles as friends, and family or community members (see ibid, p. 246ff.).

This rather negative connotation of mobility and the strong hometown roots could offer an explanation for the fact that, even in the case of unemployment, mobility is only understood to a limited extent as a necessary option. Thus, in a 1995 survey by the Allensbach institute for demographics (Institut für Demoskopie Allensbach), only 31% of those interviewed agreed to the following statement: "which changes are reasonable for unemployed persons in order to get a job? Reasonable changes are, [...] that the person changes his/her residence" (Meier, 1998, p. 21)[10]. Also in a recent interview of unemployed persons by the Institute for Employment Research of the Federal Employment Agency

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[10] In 1998, according to a survey by the Institute for German Economics (Institut der deutschen Wirtschaft (IW)), only 35% of employed persons were willing to work for a short period of time in a foreign country (Meier 1998, 48).

(Institut für Arbeitsmarkt- und Berufsforschung der Bundesanstalt für Arbeit (IAB)), a change of residence in order to reenter the workforce was considered the worst of all alternatives. In all, 66% of East German workers and 61% of West German rejected the idea of change of residence (Brixy & Christensen, 2002). In contrast, more acceptable alternatives included: change of profession, flexible work schedules, employment in jobs below workers' actual technical skill level and longer distances to work (ibid).

Freisl conducted a more comprehensive study about the causes for certain mobility cultures. His primary consideration was the "analytic question, how societal, economic and social orders … affect the mobility behavior of workers" (Freisl, 1994, p. 8). He compared the USA to the European Union. As the results of this study are not exclusive to Germany, it is difficult to develop a differentiated model that allows for a comparison between Germany and other European countries, yet they do allow us to draw tentative conclusions about basic socio-political conditions that promote or restrain mobility. Basically different value systems and orientations have developed in Europe and the USA as a result of different historical developments. In the USA, the dominant basic human values of freedom and equality have promoted mobility. In Europe however, property ownership and education have been the dominant values. These values have led to emotional ties to one's hometown and a hierarchical understanding of authority, which have hindered mobility (Freisl, 1994, p. 65f). At the same time, Freisl assumes that other values systems and norms restrict mobility as well, such as current post materialistic values, different education systems in the German states, language barriers as well as the non-transparent and incongruent structure of the job market. A highly regulated job market, for example dismissal protection, the well-established social safety net and the strong position of the European worker's union, contribute to a lower acceptance of mobility in Europe.

Who is how mobile? Since 1994, annual data on mobility frequency and the mobility behavior of the population has been collected in the German Mobility Panel (Deutsche Mobilitätspanel (MOP)). The survey includes, for example, information about when, why, and how people in Germany travel. Based on the data, Germans made on average 3.44 trips daily in 2004 - 1.93 of these trips were with privately owned motorised vehicles. On average, they traveled 38.1 km and spent 77.1 minutes on traveling. Long distance travel is rare and makes up only 1.3% of all trips in the MOP. Therefore, the mobility panel for long distance travel "IVERMO" (InterMOdale VERnetzung) under the direction of Dirk Zumkeller was added to the MOP, which, however, excludes long distance commuters. The data from 2001

to 2003 show that only 86% of the German population over 14 years are active in long distance travel (trips over 100 km one way except travel between home and work without overnight), 14% of the population never travel long distances in the course of a year (Chlond, Last, Manz, & Zumkeller, 2004). Of those surveyed, 50% are responsible for 90% of all long distance trips. An average German goes on 1.3 business trips, 1.5 holiday trips and 4.6 other private trips a year. In addition, Germans take 1.3 long distance commuting trips per capita per year. For the most part, 84% of all travel is within Germany and 74% of the trips are made by car.

2. Who is mobile? General factors of influence on mobility acceptance and mobility

Despite gaps in the current state of German research, a few fundamental statements about the factors that influence mobility behavior can be made. Both recent and older studies refer to those factors that either favour or hinder mobility. Among these factors are socio-demographic characteristics, hometown solidarity, mobility culture as well as existing partnerships and family concepts, all of which affect the form and range of spatial mobility and/or the choice of a certain mobile living arrangement (see Limmer, 2005). Most studies, mentioned in the following, limit their scope to relocation and commuting.

Gender: If we look at gender as an isolated dimension in a model of the effects on mobility and mobility acceptance, we can see that women are less frequently occupationally mobile than men (Limmer, 2004; Schneider, Limmer, & Ruckdeschel 2002a). They also show a lower mobility acceptance (see Allerklar.com AG, 2006). These results can be explained better by integrating intervening variables such as family condition and/or partnership and the presence and the age of children into the model. In particular for women, these factors restrain mobility (Beck-Gernsheim, 1995; Schneider, Limmer, & Ruckdeschel, 2002b). Jürges confirms these results as well. Based on his analysis that uses the data of the German Socio-Economic Panel, there are no fundamental differences with respect to interregional mobility between single men and single women (Jürges, 2005, p. 27). Other studies even document a higher mobility of single women compared to men. The results of Jahr et al. point in a similar direction. While women are even more mobile than men, before and during their university studies, this situation reverses itself once women enter the workforce (Jahr, Schomburg, & Teichler, 2003, p. 60). The results of Hagemann- White et al, who examine the motives for long distance and regional moves in their study, refer to gender typical mobility patterns based on partnership and children. There are no numerical differences between the genders in

terms of moving frequency; however, men and women differ in their reasons for moving. Women move for private reasons, men primarily for career ones. A substantial part of family moving is motivated by the occupation of the man, for example women move because their husbands' jobs require it (Hagemann-White, Hantsche, & Westerburg, 1996). On the contrary women can rarely count on their partners to move with them when confronted with job related demands for mobility (Schneider, Limmer, & Ruckdeschel, 2002a). Beck-Gernsheim problematised this relationship in the term "one and a half-person job." The organisation of a career in its present form presupposes "tacitly" that the person working can fall back on a support system of other individuals. Today this support service is usually still furnished by women (1995, p. 167). In the future such support services will become increasingly important as the demand for mobility grows. Examples of these services are the organisation of moving or raising a family alone while a partner is absent for long periods of time, a situation that already exists in the case of long distance commuters and will continue to increase in the case of shuttles, job nomads, seasonal workers or vari-mobiles. Beck-Gernsheim, therefore, speaks of the "mobility resource woman" "in the male career program" and sees women as those, who comprise the majority of the "social infrastructure of modern times" (ibid). Preißner and Hunnecke (2002) confirm these special mobility requirements for women and see the combination of several activities in a chain of short trips as a typically female characteristic of day-to-day mobility. These trips result from a number of duties imposed on women, who are still mainly responsible for household and family. Especially the demands on women to accompany children or the elderly have increased. Women must coordinate these duties in time and space. In this context, Best and Lanzendorf have studied the gender specific nature of mobility with respect to the division of work and point out the difference between men and women concerning the use of a car (Best & Lanzendorf, 2005).

Family status and partnership: In general, married couples and individuals in a long term partnerships in one household are less willing to move than divorcees and singles. The willingness to commute is likewise higher among single persons than other groups (Allerklar.com AG 2006). Actual mobility behavior also reflects this finding: persons, who live in a partnership in a common household, are usually substantially less willing to move than single persons (Kalter, 1997; Paulu, 2001). This effect is even stronger if both partners work. Dual earner couples are less mobile than single earner couples (Jürges, 2005)[11]. This

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[11] Jürges points out that, in dual-earner households, traditional and equalitarian gender ideologies influence the decision to move. Within traditional partnerships, neither the career of the wife nor her level of education

phenomenon is usually explained by the utility theory; the move must be advantageous for both partners, a situation that is made particularly difficult if both partners work (Kalter 1997; Jürges 2005; see also Collmer, 2005). Apart from monetary incentives for migration, social aspects, such as existing social networks and specific knowledge of the area, play a role in influencing the decision of both partners as they weigh the advantages and disadvantages of mobility (Kalter, 1997). According to Kalter, low mobility rates of couples can be explained relatively well based on these explanations as well as on additional variables such as children, age or residential property ownership. However, one aspect of this willingness to move still remains unclear. Kalter assumes that a partnership contains its own influential dynamics independent of these variables (1998, p. 286). He explains the influence of partnerships on decision making by pointing out that a decision to move is made on the basis of a negotiation process within the partnership. These negotiations are often difficult, cause expenses and also create a certain risk. In anticipation of the difficulties involved in this decision, the wish to move is not even discussed at all (ibid, p. 306). In an earlier model, Mincer (1978) assumes that separation is the final alternative, if partners cannot balance their needs and obligations. Newer studies show, however, that couples fall back on other mobility strategies as an alternative to moving, such as long distance commuting or living in a long distance relationship (Jürges 2005, p. 25; Collmer 2005). On the basis of the data of the Socio-Economic Panel, evidence supports the thesis that commuting increasingly becomes a replacement for migration and moving (Kalter, 1994).

Children: Children, and in particular the presence of smaller children, have a substantial influence on mobility acceptance and the selected form of mobility. According to the survey conducted in the job market section of the internet site meinestadt.de, 67.2% of people with children are not willing to move for job reasons. Persons, who live with children, are less mobile than those without children (Paulu, 2001; Schneider, Limmer, & Ruckdeschel, 2002b). They are not completely immobile; however, if they move, they predominantly stay in regional proximity (Hagemann-White, Hantsche, & Westerburg, 1996). Wagner also comes to the conclusion that founding a family hinders mobility, but people move regionally in order to improve their living situation (1989). When children are present and families do not want to burden them by changing their customary surroundings, the answer to the demand for mobility is found in an alternative to moving, such as long distance or weekend commuting

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influences the decision to move. In egalitarian partnerships, the educational level of both partners has a mutual influence on the decision to move.

(see also previous section). Heine and Mautz examined both automobility as an integral part of family life as well as the balancing act of women, confronted by a gender specific division of work, who are torn between family life and work (Heine & Mautz, 1999, 2000, 2001). Additionally, the 'working group sustainable transport' led by Martin Lanzendorf is conducting a research project entitled "Mobility Biographies: An explorative study on travel behaviour in the life course of parents with small children." The results of this study should be available in the near future.

Age: With respect to moving, age is a crucial characteristic according to Wagner (1989). Generally younger persons are more mobile than older ones[12]. The findings about age selective behaviour with respect to mobility can also be integrated into more general findings of family sociology. In the debate about the plurality of lifestyles, it is assumed that younger people live more frequently in non-conventional lifestyles, such as long distance relationships or living apart together. The portion of these lifestyles decreases in older generations. Approximately at the age of 30, individuals, who formerly lived non-conventional lifestyles, approach "normal biographies" (Schneider, 2002). Having established a professional career by that age, individuals establish a family and acquire property. This pattern seems to apply likewise to the observed mobility behavior of over 30 year-olds. A further explanation for age selectivity views decisions to pursue new career goals and the accompanying long distance move as an investment, which only pays off in the future (see Speare, 1971; cited in Kalter 1998, p. 286). The shorter the period in which this investment is likely to pay off, the less likely the decision to migrate. Another aspect concerning the current development of the job market should further enhance the degree of mobility of younger people. In Germany, changing jobs during your working life has been rare compared to other countries till now. In the future, however, the increased number of temporary positions and increased problems of entering the workforce and of establishing a career will lead to increasing occupational mobility among young people (see Blossfeld et al., 2005; Rolfes, 1996). A study conducted by Emnid in 1999 also verifies this tendency. According to the statements of personnel managers and headhunters interviewed, people who are just starting out in their career will switch jobs six times on average and in some fields up to eight times[13].

Residential property: Residential property restricts mobility at least with regard to

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[12] A recent evaluation of the employment statistics in Germany shows that in particular the regional vocational mobility of the 25 to 34 year olds is high (Haas, 2002).
[13] This study was carried out at the request of Immobilien Scout 24.

long distance moves (see Wagner, 1989). However, the desire for better living standards causes regional moves (Jürges, 2005). Since residential property is usually only acquired later in life, we can conclude a close relationship exists between the age effect and residential property effect (see also Knoll et al., 2003). Property ownership, especially in Germany, is likely to be a substantial barrier to mobility. The costs of buying and selling residential property are particularly high in Germany compared to other countries. In addition, residential ownership has high social value, especially in a society whose mobility culture is based on the norms of property ownership and permanence. Residential property is not simply purchased, lived in and then later sold as needed, but rather the acquisition of residential property is seen in itself as a worthwhile final goal in life by many Germans.

Education and occupational groups: The disposition for occupational mobility rises with the educational level and the job position (Schneider, Limmer, & Ruckdeschel, 2002b) see also Allesklar.com AG, 2006). A set of studies proves that especially highly-qualified workers are occupationally mobile (see Haas, 2000). In West Germany, 3% of the university graduates and only 1% of non-academics move within one year in connection with their jobs (Büchel, Frick, & Witte, 2002, p. 218)[14]. However, highly qualified German workers are considered rather immobile compared to their European colleagues (Jahr, Schomburg, & Teichler, 2002). With respect to specific occupational groups, we can assume that the choice of a certain occupation and the individual disposition for job mobility are interrelated to a considerable degree. Certain occupational groups are characterised by very specific (and usually probably expectable) demands on mobility. Persons, who choose such occupations, are aware of this situation and already have prerequisite skills to meet these demands. Thus, according to the graduation barometer of 2005 (Absolventenbarometer, 2005), the Foreign Office is still the top employer for law school graduates, because it offers both a professional career and an opportunity to experience living and working in foreign countries (trendence, 2005). The research project "Mobility Pioneers" makes clear that free lance journalists appreciate the high degree of independence and responsibility that comes with their job. At the same time, they must have a high level competency to deal with the demands of mobility (Bonß, Kesselring, & Weiss, 2004; Kesselring, 2005). On the other hand, we have to assume that initial job expectations are often revised on account of experiencing actual mobility and

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[14] An analysis of the data of the socio-economic panel by Büchel et al shows that in the years 1996-1998 academics (15.5%) were more willing to change their residence and move outside of Germany than non-academics (9.8%). These statistics refer to West Germany. In East Germany, the relation is 15.1% to 6.9% (2002, p. 217).

stress. Thus 50.6 % (n = 1442) of surveyed career soldiers indicated in a study by the central institute for marriage and family in society (Zentralinstitut für Ehe und Familie in der Gesellschaft (ZFG)) in co-operation with Catholic military chaplains that they had not imagined the mobility demands of their job in such a way; 44.8 % of those interviewed would not become professional soldiers again (Collmer, 2005)[15]. Likewise we can assume that highly career-oriented persons understand the demands of mobility and willingly accept them at first as a prerequisite for career enhancement. However, personnel managers of a large German bank discovered in interviews that job applicants were frequently dishonest about the questions related to job mobility (Paulu, 2001).

Ideals of Partnerships and Family: A mobility decision based on a consideration of partnership and family influences a person's reaction to mobility requirements. People and partnerships that place personal autonomy in the foreground frequently select the mobility forms shuttle or long distance relationship. In these partnerships, in which both partners usually work, career disadvantages can so be avoided (Limmer, 2005). Because their own autonomy is important, these persons consider their mobility options less of a burden than those individuals who are family and/or partnership oriented (Schneider, Limmer, & Ruckdeschel, 2002a). For this second group, closeness and sharing of everyday life are very important. Therefore they react to mobility demands by moving or commuting long distances (Limmer, 2005).

Mobility-Styles: In the last years, the concept of mobility styles has been applied in several research projects in Germany. Utilizing mobility styles, a relationship is drawn between lifestyles and day-to-day mobility (Götz, Jahn, & Schulz, 1998). This approach combines age and milieu specific variables for the classification of mobility behaviour. A research project directed by Joachim Scheiner on "city life" and "residential selection, urban space and transportation in the context of life style and life situations" has developed a classification to examine the complex interaction between life situation, life style, location demands, residential selection and mobility behaviour (day-to-day mobility). Life style characteristics include: leisure time behaviour, life goals, value systems and common aesthetic norms. By way of factor and cluster analysis, these characteristics were categorised into five different life styles (Scheiner, 2005a, 2005b, 2005c): adventurous (intensity,

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[15] Increased mobility demands on soldiers stem from the necessity for basic training and advanced schooling, for periodic transfers as part of a career path as well as for travel associated with temporary duty and deployments (Collmer 2005, p. 53).

traditional and self-realisation values); out-of-home sociability (highly developed social network, out-of-home leisure activities, self-realisation); distant (tendency to reject all the items); culturally interested (strong interest in culture, self-realisation, leisure time at home and activities outside the home, but few substantial contacts); and traditional (trivializing, little leisure time outside the home, few contacts, traditional values).The Institute for Socio-Ecological Research (Institut für sozial-ökologische Forschung (ISOE)) has also studied the relationship between lifestyle and mobility for the past 10 years (see Götz & Schubert, 2004). In his speech at the conference "Where does Europe travel?" Götz gives a kind of resume of European lifestyles in seven large lifestyle groups based on current research results (see Götz & Konrad, 2005): traditional (traditional, conventional and lower middle class orientation); modern main stream (traditional milieu, attempts to combine grass root values with a certain degree of individuality); ambitious (success and career oriented groups, imitate models from various successful milieus); experimental (non-conforming, individualistic, egocentric, creative, often trendsetters); intellectuals (social critical groups with higher educational levels, post materialistic value structure, environmental and ecology awareness); underprivileged groups (disintegrated, welfare recipients, low-income single parents, social outcasts, uprooted); established (elitist self-awareness, urbane).

Mobility culture and homeland solidarity: It can be assumed that a certain mobility culture promotes or restrains mobility acceptance and the fulfilment of mobility requirements. The mobility culture in Germany is characterised by strong local binding and permanence; mobile persons consider themselves to be outside the social norms and are perceived as such by others (see section 1.3). This culture should act mobility-restraining according to this assumption. Also a strong individual solidarity with the homeland region and a strong family orientation increase the probability that mobility requirements are rejected and/or that long distance commuting is accepted as the only possible mobile lifestyle (Limmer 2005; Kalter 1994). If people succeed in meeting high mobility requirements and at the same time have strong local, social and family bindings, they have high mobility skills. They correspond to a mobile immobile type (Bonß, Kesselring, & Weiss, 2004 p. 268), who has strongly developed capabilities (motility) and strategies, which Kesselring describes as centred mobility management (2005, p. 132).

Socialisation: Mobility also depends on socialisation experiences. People, who often moved in their childhood, are probably likewise more mobile in their later life (Hackl, 1992; Wagner, 1989). In the study by Schneider, Limmer, and Ruckdeschel, there is evidence that

past mobility experiences affect future mobility decisions. If a previous mobile life style had negative affects on a partnership, the willingness for further mobility is limited (Schneider, Limmer, & Ruckdeschel, 2002a).

3. The effects of mobility on family functioning, family development, family problems and ways of coping

In Germany few studies explicitly deal with the effects of occupationally caused spatial mobility on the division of labour within the family, family development and mobility-induced stress. The research group led by Schneider (Schneider, Limmer, & Ruckdeschel, 2002a) has presented a study based on fully standardised quantitative data and qualitative interviews that allow us first insights into this topic. The work of a group of researchers, under the direction of Wendl (Biehl, Keller, & Tomforde, 2005; Collmer, 2002; Collmer, 2005; Wendl, 2004, 2005a) that carried out a quantitative data survey of career soldiers supplemented by problem-centred interviews, offers hints as well. The qualitative interviews done in the project "Mobility Pioneers" in particular lead to preliminary conclusions regarding individual abilities to master a highly mobile way of life (Bonß, Kesselring, & Weiss, 2004; Kesselring, 2005; Pelizäus-Hoffmeister, 2001). In their studies, Rapp (2003) and Blickle (2005) supply important indications about ways to master burdens directly caused by the mobility of long distance commuters, as well. Since stress research has shown the central importance of individual-centred coping behaviour of stress levels within the family and partnership, relevant findings are also important within the context of this project (see among other Bodenmann, 1995). The findings of the previously mentioned studies are considered in the following section.

3.1. Division of housework and professional work

Apart from their role in reproduction, women are also still primarily responsible for housework in the Federal Republic of Germany. Despite a slowly developing change to an egalitarian division of labour, couples revert to traditional division of labour when they have children (Schulz & Blossfeld, 2006; for general research overview on the division of labour in partnerships, see Kassner & Rüling, 2005, pp. 237-242; for a current evaluation of the socio-economic panel, see Jürges, 2005). With respect to job mobility, we can expect to see two different developments against this background of family and children. On the one hand, the mobility of men leads to a traditional division of labour in a partnership and on the other hand, the occupational mobility of women requires an egalitarian division of labour. The results of the quantitative and qualitative data collected by Schneider, Limmer, and

Ruckdeschel (2002a) confirm these theses. The qualitative analysis shows that more than two thirds (70%) of occupationally mobile men live in traditional family arrangements. The female partner assumes the main burden of reproduction and child rearing and puts her own professional career completely, or to a large extent, on hold. Fully employed mobile women are relieved far less from their household activities. None of the occupationally mobile women were released from family work contrary to the men surveyed. If a woman is occupationally mobile, the arrangements can be called egalitarian (83%) when both partners are fully employed and divide the domestic tasks. Some working women (17%) even report that their partner is fully employed, yet that they are solely responsible for family duties. A tendency towards traditional division of labour and traditional gender roles is also detectable within the context of occupational mobility although a process of change towards more equality is clearly taking place (see Limmer, 2004).

Evidence of traditional gender roles can also be found in surveys of career soldiers who are frequently affected by transfers. Usually a transfer takes place every three years. Wives and children normally follow the soldiers to their new duty station. Occupational opportunities for women are of secondary consideration and largely limited to semi-skilled part-time work (Collmer, 2005, p. 60f.). With regard to younger couples in particular, however, a change seems to be taking place. Younger women are increasingly more qualified and have high incomes (ibid, p. 71). Faced with the decision to move, the majority of younger couples strives for an egalitarian or equitable solution (85.1% of the civilian partners indicated this preference.). Equally important, 82.6 % of the soldiers were opposed to their partners having to give up a professional career on account of a transfer. Remarkably soldiers also increasingly select alternatives to moving: long distance or weekend commuting or weekend relationships. About 59% did not move in one to three transfer situations, 26% still more often, only 15% failed to select alternatives to transfers and moved every time (Collmer, 2005, p. 63). Female partners in particular seem to be responsible for such decisions[16]. In addition, the inclination towards these alternative solutions rises with age and time in service in the German Federal Armed Forces.

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[16] Female spouses give the following reasons for their refusal to move: foremost, a desire to maintain their current job, concern about of the negative impact of moving on children, unwillingness to move into an army Ghetto, unwillingness to move again and the financial burdens associated with a transfer.

3.2. Family development

Today many people, especially women, are challenged by the need to ensure the compatibility of career, family life, and child rearing responsibility. More often than not, they are confronted with the alternative of pursuing a career or raising a family. It can be assumed that this conflict is further enforced by high mobility requirements. Mobile women will face difficulties when they have children, unless they are supported by a social network or by a very well developed childcare infrastructure (see Pelizäus-Hoffmeister, 2001, p. 141).

This predicament is confirmed by the results of Schneider, Limmer, and Ruckdeschel (2002a). The transition to parenthood is strongly related to a mobile way of life on the one hand and to gender on the other. Mobile men establish families just as often as non-mobile men of the same age group. The situation of mobile women, with exception of women willing to move their residence, is different and diverges strongly from a comparative non-mobile group: childless long distance commuters, weekend commuters and shuttles are substantially older, with an average age of 36, than childless moving-mobile or non-mobile women.

In the context of qualitative interviews, they were asked for the reasons for their childlessness. A majority (73%) give their job situation as a reason (100%: n = 60). Every third gives other reasons, such as a desire not to have child at the moment or biological reasons preventing pregnancy. However, the majority of those who are childless because of their job assume that they will still be able to realise their dream of having children some time in the future. This dream seems realistic for occupationally mobile men in light of their age structure, yet doubtful for occupationally mobile women, whether they are long distance commuters, weekend or shuttle commuters. This group of women who are faced with the biological clock sees no occupational alternatives and cannot imagine having children in their present situation. Thus, the either/or decision between career and family greatly influences the daily reality of occupationally mobile women.

3.3. Family problems and ways of coping from the mobile persons' point of view

The following pages deal with mobility-induced problems on the level of the family and partnership as well as strategies that families and individuals develop to cope with these exigencies. It can be assumed that the individual mastering abilities of occupationally mobile persons moderate the extent of mobility-induced problems, which arise for the family and/or couple.

Problems: In the study by Schneider, Limmer, and Ruckdeschel (2002a) about half of the persons questioned indicated familial problems caused by a mobile way of life. The form and the extent of the problems vary depending on the concrete form of mobility. While 75% of the weekend commuters are confronted with problems in this context, only few moving mobile describe corresponding difficulties. The occupationally mobile most frequently see a problem in their inability to spend more time with their families. They notice a certain alienation from their own family. This problem affects weekend commuters in particular, who for example report that their parental authority over their children decreases due to absences during the week. Interviewees see an additional problem in the mobility of one parent which leads to direct stress for the children. Families that move their place of residence report that their children have problems adapting to new surroundings and weekend commuters describe that their children suffer because of separation. Indication for stress due to relocation also comes from a study by Paul J. Boyle et al. (2006). The study finds that a single long-distance relocation tends to stabilise partnerships, whereas a career of multiple moves increases the risk of dissolution.

Approximately a third of all interviewees have problems in their relationships caused by a mobile way of life (Schneider, Limmer, & Ruckdeschel, 2002a). Here too, the type and extent of the problems vary depending on the concrete form of mobile lifestyles. Persons in long distance and shuttle relationships clearly report problems more frequently, than individuals who move or commute long distances to work. Similar to the problems affecting family life, occupationally mobile individuals see an analogous problem in their relationships with their partners. For the most part they have too little time to invest in their relationship and thus partners increasingly go their separate ways. Partners also complain about the lack of spontaneity in their relationship; their mobile life style allows them little time to share spontaneous adventures. Partner conflicts that are directly related to mobility are rarely mentioned. The qualitative data rather refer to spill-over effects, where the job stress of the mobile persons leads to conflicts and quarrels between the partners

The survey of German soldiers further indicates a functional relationship between stress factors and a specific mobile way of life. Commuters and partners in weekend relationships often feel as a "guest in their own home." To take advantage of their weekends at home with the family, they work more during the week. This situation leads to increased stress. At the same time, the weekend is often overloaded with leisure activities which cause additional leisure stress. The children in such relations orient themselves towards one partner.

This fixation can lead to alienation from the other parent or a glorification of the frequently absent parent (Wendl, 2005a, p. 123f.). Soldiers and their families are exposed to a very special form of occupational mobility. In addition to the times absent due to official travel or training, come longer spans of time on duty in foreign countries, which usually last six months. Since these duties are often performed under difficult and dangerous conditions, they are often connected with substantial stress for the families. Children, soldiers and partners suffer from the separation; spouses miss the closeness of family and sexual intimacy and develop a substantial fear of loss (Biehl, Keller, & Tomforde, 2005, p. 89ff.). In particular, younger couples predominantly fear that their relationship might fail (ibid. p. 98).

Coping strategies: The results of Schneider, Limmer, and Ruckdeschel (2002a) indicate that occupationally mobile individuals primarily attempt to find relief from stress by developing strategies to adapt themselves and their family to their situation in life. Mastering strategies that aim at alleviating work related issues and their underlining conditions are rarely presented. In particular, it can be shown that a successful partnership significantly depends on the ability of partners to communicate, to negotiate and to reflect. Strategies must be developed that take into account the interests of all family members. Recurring mobile fathers in particular must become involved in raising children, accept their role as a parent and find time for their children despite long absences from home. For example, some fathers telephone with their children before going to sleep each evening.

Studies by Rapp (2003) and Blickle (2005) refer to another kind of coping. They show that long distance commuters can reduce travel-related stress by employing certain strategies, for example finding meaningful ways to occupy time (see section 5).

Modern forms of communication technology can become an important replacement for direct physical proximity to a partner. They allow partners to exchange everyday concerns and to become part of each others' lives. The German Federal Armed Forces encourages soldiers to stay in contact with home to ensure the psychological well-being and performance level of the troops. In rank of importance, communication media include: the army postal service[17], regular telephone service, mobile telephones, E-mail and the Internet (Biehl, Keller,

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[17] Letters from home are for different reasons important to soldiers: They are something special and personal. They can be read over and over again, "you can see the partner's handwriting, and perhaps even smell the scent of her perfume." Conflicts at home are closer and easier to deal with. Writing letters offers soldiers a chance to reflect upon their experiences and to share their thoughts with their spouses more easily (Biehl, Keller, & Tomforde, 2005, p. 101).

& Tomforde, 2005, p. 100). Based on survey results of soldiers, Wendl recently published a how-to-guide to long distance relationships (Wendl, 2005b). It provides a helpful overview for partners as well as tips and rules for managing a successful long distance relationship.

The results of the project "Mobility Pioneers" provide a further hint regarding strategies for dealing with the demands of a mobile lifestyle. Ensuring long lasting compatibility of an occupationally mobile life and a family requires competencies in many areas. These include: dealing with public transportation and optimal use of infrastructures; the ability to make use of new media, such as the internet, - in fact, virtual mobility can be a substitute for various forms of spatial mobility (see Kesselring, 2005); organisational talents, for example proper scheduling would allow for job related travel to be used as an opportunity to maintain friendships (see also Pelizäus- Hoffmeister, 2001).

Within the last years in Germany several studies which analyse stress within mobile living arrangements and coping strategies of mobile people were accomplished. Nevertheless there is a deficit of studies that systematically examine the data on mobility-induced problems to determine their effect on families and the ways in which families develop mastering strategies to cope with the demands of mobility. Available findings point out that in families of occupationally mobile individuals certain problem situations are intensified. For example, quality time with the family or a partner is limited in families of occupationally mobile individuals compared to families, in which the partners live together and work in the area. The types of problems and the extent of their severity are considerably affected by the concrete form of mobility (see section 5). Individual-centred mastering strategies can reduce the burden of travelling times. However, few studies address the issue of how families effectively deal with mobility-induced problems.

3.4. Family problems and support systems from the perspective of businesses

Section 1.2 already pointed out that business enterprises have an increased need for mobile workers. Sending workers to branches in foreign countries is extremely costly; therefore, businesses are interested in avoiding problems and job terminations (for an overview of the state of research concerning costs and termination of foreign assignments see Lindner, 1999). For this reason, companies with expertise in managing foreign assignments and in advising companies, invest in studies that examine the factors conducive to successful foreign assignments. The results of two of these studies are briefly presented here. The first study, conducted by Management Mobility Consulting, surveyed 44 large companies from

different branches of the economy, which assigned workers from Germany abroad (Meinhold, 2002). This Consulting firm is a so-called "relocation agency" that helps employees abroad file official paperwork and deal with everyday problems. The second study, conducted by the management consultants PricewaterhouseCoopers, compares the opinion of employees and employers concerning foreign assignments (2005).

Problems that arise in foreign countries include: intercultural difficulties, language problems, integration into the new company, skill deficits, search for accommodations, locating a new school for the children and above all family problems. Foreign assignments often end in failure because accompanying partners have problems integrating themselves into the new environment. Due to these problems, a new trend is visible, "Euro Commuting." The employee becomes a weekend commuter and the family remains at home (Meinhold, 2002, p. 16). The surveyed firms offer their workers numerous monetary incentives to take a job in a foreign country: for example moving expenses or rent is reimbursed[18]. The results of the PricewaterhouseCoopers study indicate that companies overrate the financial incentives of foreign assignments. Employees worry less about financial compensation for the accompanying partner's loss of income and desire more practical support with the integration of children and partners into the new environment (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2005, p. 7). For businesses themselves, the return of their workers from foreign countries is a crucial phase; in many cases, workers can not be sufficiently reintegrated into the company. Yet, competencies, which employees have acquired in an expensive process for the company, make it easier for them to switch companies. Thus companies lose both workers and these competencies. PricewaterhouseCoopers believes, therefore, that managing this "career wobble" is essential (2005, p. 4). Employees assume foreign assignments with the clear goal of improving their career situation; companies often fail to present the whole range of career options to their employees. Although the actual career options are less favourable than employees had anticipated, 58% of employees remained in the same or similar job situation after an international transfer and 9 % were even demoted (ibid p. 18).

This situation is also an indication of the changing status of occupationally mobility in itself. Occupationally successful persons are usually mobile; however, highly mobile persons are no longer automatically successful in their jobs (see Collmer, 2005). Human resource managers at the Deutsche Bank AG point out that an occupationally mobile employee, within

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[18] Additional support includes: assistance locating accommodations, language courses, Look & See (a trip to the country to become familiar with it), intercultural training, cost of living allowance, and assignment bonuses.

the firm, can not expect career advancement through mobility (Paulu, 2001).

4. Social integration and social networks

There are only few empirical studies in Germany that examine the connection between occupation-induced spatial mobility and social integration and/or inclusion within a social network system. Two different hypotheses relate mobility and social networks. First of all, it is to be assumed that through occupational spatial mobility the social networks of mobile persons increase. This relationship could be explained by an increased number of contacts with unknown persons. Secondly it can be inferred that the formation, maintenance and upkeep of social networks is made more difficult by spatial mobility. The social networks become smaller, the intensity of contacts decreases and personal relationships develop a different intensity.

Both hypotheses do not seem to apply, however, on the basis of the few empirical indicators per se, but rather a bundle of different influencing factors seems to take effect here: the form of mobility, the job itself, the extent of perceived external control and/or autonomy and the personal ability to maintain the network.

With respect to their numerous relocations soldiers complain that their mobility causes "victims of mobility" (Collmer, 2005, p. 67; Collmer, 2002, p. 105). Their circle of friends cannot be maintained after relocation. Comrades at their new assignments offer fleeting contacts; more intensive friendships usually do not develop. Contacts outside the job are often only possible through spouses. If alternatives to moving are selected, as for instance weekend commuting, there is likewise little time for new acquaintances outside the close circle of family. The feeling of sacrifice and of the need to begin "at point zero" at each new duty station is intensified by the impression of being externally driven by others (Collmer, 2005, p. 67). Of those surveyed, 86.5% believe that the transfer practice hinders an independent lifestyle. In the eyes of over half of those interviewed transfers take place too often and often seem arbitrary and obscure (ibid, p. 68).

Persons presented as exemplary cases in the project "Mobility Pioneers" experience their professional and private situation quite differently. Here we are dealing with freelance journalists who, at least subjectively, selected their way of life and independency through self-employment. Highly mobile in many different ways, these people are able to maintain an extensive social network due to their job-related contacts with other people who share similar

professional interests. Moreover, by using certain strategies, some journalists maintain relationships with relatives, contacts in the community and with their friends (see Kesselring, 2005). It is likely in this situation that the personal competencies that are a prerequisite for a career in journalism also include the ability to form social networks. The persons surveyed have social skills, which they successfully utilise in their private lives. The first thesis applies to these people. Their social networks become larger due to their mobility.

The thesis about the erosion of social networks seems to apply, however, to the career soldiers as well as to those occupationally mobile persons surveyed by Schneider, Limmer, and Ruckdeschel (2002a). Job mobility reduces social integration for a majority of these people. In particular, recurring mobility makes contacts outside of the professional environment exceedingly unlikely. Such contacts are delegated to the immobile partner. Also community engagement, for example voluntary activities, is noticeably affected by the demands of mobility. There is simply no time for these activities. Exceptions here are long distance relationships; within this mobile living arrangement it is generally possible to maintain a close circle of friend.

5. Quality of Life

Psychological and physical health and well-being: German studies that examine the health of mobile workers refer exclusively to the group of recurring mobile daily commuters. In the 1970s, studies in the fields of occupational medicine and sociology described the health-endangering effects of commuting: on the whole commuters showed an increased frequency of illnesses and consequently an increased number of sick days (Jüttner, 1976; Ott & Gerlinger, 1992). If commuters were unable to compensate for sleep deprivation, the risks of accidents rose (Jüttner, 1976). These findings coincide with international results (see Haefner, Kordy, & Kaechele, 2001; Koslowsky, 1997; Novaco, Stokols, & Milanesi, 1990). Stadler, Fastenmeier, Gstalter & Lau (2000) show in their study that commuters - even before setting off to work - feel more psychologically stressed than non-commuters. A broad survey of employees who take the train to work[19] shows that, compared to the total working population, long distance commuters experience clearly higher psychological stress and significantly more frequent psychosomatic illnesses (Rapp, 2003). These health impairments can be attributed both to the strains of the travel itself as well as to the fact that commuters have less time for active and passive relaxation. As assumed by Rapp (2003), the negative

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[19] In this study, the travel time of a one way trip to work is on average 88 minutes.

health effects of this mobile life style might only become visible over the course of several years.

In contrast to the time spent on daily commuting, the distance actually travelled has little impact on health risks (Blickle, 2005; Rapp, 2003). A current study of commuters who predominantly drive to work with their own car or participate in car pools essentially confirms Rapp's findings (Blickle, 2005). In addition, this study reveals that passengers in car pools have a higher incidence of health-related problems than those who drive with their own car. The studies of Blickle and Rapp, were one of the first large scale studies, which provides evidence for the importance of individual stress management strategies for the health of commuters. If commuting time by train can be spent on activities, such as reading, working or sleeping, the commuters clearly report fewer negative health effects (Rapp, 2003). Commuters, who drive to work in their own car and experience negative traffic conditions, such as back-ups, as especially stressful, are clearly more affected in their well-being than commuters, who are able to use compensatory strategies in similar situations (Blickle, 2005).

Besides the data on the well-being of long distance commuters, there is also evidence about the well-being of the wives of long distance and weekend commuters (Rodler & Kirchler, 2001). Qualitative diary studies indicate that compared to wives, whose partners are employed locally, the feeling of well-being of wives of long distance commuters is clearly worse.

Experiencing Stress: One of the first german studies that describes the situation of long distance commuters in more detail shows that two thirds of these workers experience daily travel times as a strong or unreasonable burden (Ott & Gerlinger, 1992). The broadest survey about mobility-induced stress in Germany was submitted by Schneider, Limmer and Ruckdeschel (2002a). It reveals that mobile workers experience far more stress than employees, whose jobs are in direct proximity to their residence. But the stress experienced by mobile workers significantly depends on the actual form of mobility. Employees, whose daily one way commuting time to work is at least one hour, feel the most strongly stressed. Weekend commuters and persons, whose professional activities require stays of several days in different places (vari-mobile) are likewise clearly more stressed. People in long distance relationships report a slightly higher stress factor, whereas people who moved because of their job are no different from employees who are neither punctually nor recurring mobile with respect to their stress factor. The study proves furthermore that not only the mobile workers

themselves are more stressed but also their partners.

Life satisfaction of mobile workers: Based on the surveys of the German Socio-Economic Panel, Stutzer and Frey (2004) examine the effects of daily commuting[20] on subjectively perceived life satisfaction[21]. The analysis points out a close relationship between commuting time and life satisfaction. The measurement of life satisfaction of people, whose daily trip to work is 10 minutes or less, has a statistical mean of 7.24. This value corresponds to the life satisfaction mean of the total German population in 2003 as determined in the context of the European Survey of Quality of Life (see Böhnke, 2005). The life satisfaction of commuters, who have a daily journey of 30 minutes and more, has a statistical mean of 7.0 and is clearly lower. In addition, it has been proven that reduced life satisfaction, which is dependant on daily commuting time, is not only experienced by both male and female commuters themselves, but also by their partners (Stutzer & Frey 2004, p. 14).

The studies discussed above, which examine the quality of life of mobile workers in Germany, focus primarily on descriptive analysis of the quality of life of long distance commuters. Only few studies consider the broader spectrum of occupational mobility. All studies agree that daily commuting is a way of life, which substantially reduces the quality of life of those concerned as well as their partners. Additionally a broader comparative study of mobile and non-mobile ways of life points out that various concrete forms of job mobility have differing effects on the quality of life. Moreover the effects of mobility vary depending on individual ability to cope with stress.

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[20] Interviewees were asked how much time they spent commuting one way to work, in other words from door to door.

[21] Subjective life satisfaction, which is included in the German Socio-Economic Panel (SEOP) survey, corresponds to the question concerning personal assessment of life satisfaction in the European Quality of Life Survey. "All things considered, how satisfied would you say you are with your life these days? Please tell me on scale of 1 to 10, where 1 means very dissatisfied and 10 means very satisfied."