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Conclusion

State-of-the-Art of Mobility Research, Chapter 11

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XI. Conclusion

1. Overview of the empirical state-of-the-art in Europe

The literature review in eight European countries and in the United States shows the large plurality of perspectives analysing the phenomenon of job-related spatial mobility connected with the family life. There is research oriented towards macro-level studies of the spread of mobile living arrangements and their impacts on the private sphere, as well as research carried out through micro or meso-level studies linking spatial mobility with family dynamics or social networks. Regarding the mobility forms that are studied, the main division concerns the studies of migration and seasonal work in Poland, whereas other countries have been shifting their interests towards the "modern" forms of mobility, like weekly commuting.

In this conclusion we will firstly review the main empirical findings and then identify the gaps concerning the state-of-the-art in Europe. We will finish with some important insights of this literature review, partly detecting new aspects, partly confirming unverified assumptions, in connection with the research questions of the project.

2. Main empirical findings

The description of the empirical findings is structured into two axes: the first (sections 2.1 to 2.4) describes the *conditions* (structural, cultural, family- or social network-related), supporting or hindering job mobility, whereas the second axis (sections 2.5 to 2.7) summarises the *impact* of job mobility on family, social networks or quality of life. Despite this separation for descriptive reasons, the *conditions and impacts* of job mobility, to a large degree, are the same: Mostly, the identical phenomena, like the family background or people's social capital, are interacting with mobility in a reciprocal causal relationship, appearing as a *condition for* mobility and *influenced by* mobility at the same time.

2.1. *Individual socio-economic and family-related conditions, supporting or hindering job mobility*

Although representative data of the different mobility forms are missing, the national literature reviews show clear tendencies that occupational mobility is strongly structured socially. This leads to social inequalities regarding mobility as a resource and as a competence.

Firstly, occupational mobility is clearly linked with the education level and the job position (Schneider, Limmer, & Ruckdeschel, 2002b, De Miguel, 2002, Bancaja, 2005, Gobillon, 2001, Bonnet & Desjeux, 2000). Job-related mobility is then frequently associated with highly qualified workers (Haas, 2000, Büchel et al., 2002) or with managers (Guerrero, 2001). A first explanation of this relationship is that there is a definite demand of mobility for specially certain occupational groups, relatively high-positioned. Persons who choose such jobs have prerequisite skills of mobility and are highly career-oriented, so they willingly accept the demands of mobility as a precondition for career enhancement. Skilled workers have also greater opportunities to get a job through residential mobility (to large cities particularly) (Bassand, 1985). The case of (incomplete) migration and seasonal work of Poland is an exception, with a high demand of unskilled labour. In the case of daily or weekly mobility forms, the relationship between high social status and mobility is also explained by differences in the residential localisation. People with higher education live more frequently in the cities and in suburbs or outlying areas, where the time of commuting is longer (De Miguel, 2002). The spatial mobility of the poorest categories of the population can be also explained by the difficulties in the access of public transport, which can lead to new forms of spatial segregation and financial problems in accessibility by car (Kaufmann, 2002, Le Breton, 2005).

Secondly, the occupational mobility is strongly related with family structures. People who have the responsibility of small children are less mobile than those who do not. If the former are mobile, they also do not as far as the latter, staying in a regional proximity (Paulu, 2001, Schneider, Limmer, & Ruckdeschel, 2002b, Hagemann-White, 1996, Paéz, 1999, Montulet, Hubert, Huynen, 2005). Not surprisingly, it is then the categories of the younger people, the singles, the separated and the divorced that experience more mobile livings and these experiences are more desired (Gobillon, 2001, Paéz, 1999). Moreover, single-income couples are more mobile than dual-income couples. According to certain studies, this result is explained by the fact that the move is less advantageous if both partners work (Jürges, 2005, Kalter, 1997, Collmer, 2005). For Modenes (2000, 2004), the probability for single-income families to move to another residence is also higher, because the transition from renting to owning is financially more difficult.

The difference between couples (with or without children) and singles is yet not so well-defined. Whereas some studies (Kalter, 1997, 1998) show a higher mobility of singles, Bonnet, Collet and Maurines (2006d) have shown through a survey that people who live in a

couple are more liable to experience occupational mobility than those living alone. The authors explain this result by a question of age and by the fact that people of middle age and living alone are more likely to move closer to their place of work. Linked to this last explanation, some authors (Kaufmann, 2001, Ascher, 1998) have shown that the desire of families to live outside the city (in order to raise children in a detached house) can lead to an increase of the daily mobility of families. More constrained, the high commuting time of low income households, like mothers with children, can be explained by the localisation of low-cost homes in remote areas (ECVT, 2004, Kaufmann, 2002).

In a gender perspective, some studies show that women are less frequently mobile than men. This finding seems to be explained mainly by the gender-structured labour market and by the gendered division of domestic work. When these factors are controlled, significant differences between men and women disappear (Jürges, 2005, Casado, 2003). Schneider, Limmer, and Ruckdeschel (2002a) have moreover shown that mobile men establish families just as often as non-mobile of the same age group, whereas mobile women are older (specially long-distance commuters and weekly mobile) than childless moving-mobile or non-mobile women.

Different studies are interested in analysing the influence of family functioning on the mobility decisions. Challiol (1998, 2002) and Vignal (2005a, 2005b) focus, for example, their analysis on how the couple negotiates their professional and family roles within the household. According to these authors, a double-career couple, a single-career couple, or a couple where both partners subordinate their professions to family, will tend to choose different forms of mobile living. Kaufmann and Widmer (2006) suggest to go further in this perspective, in order to link the different dimensions of family functioning, i.e. the autonomy/fusion, the openness/closure and the regulation within the family, with specific forms of mobility and of mobility socialisation. For these authors, families oriented towards independence or openness could foster the mobility of the child on his own. This kind of family would then choose in the majority residential locations with a wealth of nearby amenities. In families valuing a prescriptive type of regulation, motility of the child would be controlled by strict rules, whereas in families based on contractual regulation, the independence of children would be seen more as an object that must be negotiated. The relationship between strong mobility and autonomy within the family functioning was not confirmed in the Spanish research (Meil, 1999, Alberdi & Escario, 2003, Diaz et al., 2004), whereas the study of Schneider, Limmer, and Ruckdeschel (2002a) establishes a link with

mobility strategies of families. Couples that place personal autonomy in the foreground frequently select the mobility forms shuttle and long distance relationship. Individuals who are family and/or partnership oriented choose more other forms like commuting.

Very few findings are known about the influence of family structures on the different living arrangements. The relationship between family structure and migration was illustrated in the Polish situation. It was shown that having children generally motivates men to undertake stable work abroad and seasonal work, whereas childless men undertake more frequently short-term, temporary migration (Korczynska, 2003, Jonczy, 2003).

2.2. Social network related conditions, supporting or hindering job mobility

The composition and the localisation of interpersonal relationship networks can be related with specific forms of spatial mobility or on the contrary with forms of immobility. Certain studies about the solidarity network in the family (Pitrou, 1978, Coenen-Huther et al., 1994) have showed that couples or individuals with low residential mobility belong to networks that are focused on family ties. By contrast, individuals with strong residential mobility have networks that are more open, more varied, less dense and less centred on the family. The strong ties constructed from an early age and existing within networks of relatives and friends were also identified as strong barriers of residential mobility (see next section on cultural conditions).

Moreover the presence of a network of relatives, in particular the presence of grandparents, can facilitate childcare and other kinds of help when the parents work different hours or are absent in case of migration (Dandurand & Ouellette, 1995, Attias-Donfut & Segalen, 1998, Messant-Laurent et al., 1993, Hirszfeld & Kaczmarczyk, 1999, Korczynska, 2002). These family networks can foster specific forms of spatial mobility. The migration network for example plays a key part in the migration process (Gorny & Stola, 2001). Conversely, the network of relatives and friends plays a significant role in the mobility strategies of individuals, for example, in their ability to react to a job loss by moving (Vignal, 2005a, 2005b).

Different research works (Pooley & Turnbull, 1998) bring out a new relation with space, characterised by the reversibility: The non-recurring of mobility (migration, move) are substituted by recurring forms (daily or weekly mobility). This substitution leads to a transformation of space-time temporalities of the long term into the short term. It also

corresponds to a modification of the impact of mobility on the social networks. When individuals travel rather than migrate, commute rather than move, the social networks and attachments can be maintained easier (Larsen et al., 2005).

2.3. Cultural conditions, supporting or hindering job mobility

Although no systematic analysis about mobility culture in Europe was carried out, it appears from numerous national empirical studies a strong yearning for sedentary life and residential stability. Rather than spatial mobility desires, people insist on the binding to hometowns and on the importance to keep the familiar circle of relatives and friends (see above the section social networks conditions). This desire seems to be connected to the fact that many people live in the same place as their parents, or close to them. The residential mobility beyond the borders of ones' own region is particularly rejected (Bassand, 1985, Schneider, 2005). This strong unwillingness to move is also confirmed when the residential mobility must be considered for professional reasons (in order to keep or to get a job) (Vignal, 2005a, 2005b, Allesklar.com, 2006). A change of residence is then often seen as one of the worst alternatives (Meier, 1998, Brixy & Christensen, 2002).

Except for some specific differences between countries (like regional identities in Spain or in Switzerland), the cultural reasons mentioned by national studies not to move are similar, mainly strong binding with the homeland region and strong family culture (Paéz, 1999, Bassand, 1985, Limmer, 2005 and for an example of weak attachment to the city leading to a stronger mobility willingness: Nahon, 2001). Beyond the importance of these two cultural factors, some studies insist on the influence of the combination of several factors, including structural ones (see next section), which influence the negotiation and the mobility decisions of the household (Vignal, 2005a, 2005b, Modenes, 2000, 2004).

Given the difficulty for people to change residence, some studies present the commuting as a more accepted mobile living (Kalter, 2004; Collmer, 2005). However, the acceptance to cover great distances by commuting also seems not to be high, even in the case of unemployed people in order to get a job (Allesklar.com, 2006). Even among the mobile persons, spatial mobility seems not to be positively evaluated as an individual achievement (Schneider, Limmer, & Ruckdeschel, 2002b), rather considered as unable to fulfil their roles of parent, of friend or of community member.

Freisl (1994) associates this rather negative evaluation of mobility in European Union

with the values systems and dominant norms. In contrast with the North American values of freedom and equality promoting spatial mobility, the European Union is characterised by values like property ownership and education which have hindered it.

Mobility is perceived some other way in Poland. In a country where spatial mobility is mainly linked to migration and seasonal work, mobile living is more seen as a normal part of life (Kaczmarczyk & Hirszfeld, 1999, Kaczmarczyk, 2001, Solga, 2002, Romaniszyn, 2002, Slany, 1997). The socialisation of children of migrants plays an important part in this migration culture (Hirszfeld & Kaczmarczyk, 2000, Lopacka-Dyjak, 2006).

2.4. Structural and economic conditions, supporting or hindering job mobility

In a context of economic liberalisation and opening up of markets for communication and workers, the national literatures confirm the increasing importance of the spatial job-related mobility. On a macro-economic level, occupational mobility is supported as fight against unemployment, by more job flexibility and an increased inter-regional mobility (Zühlke, 2000, Büchel, Frick, & Witte, 2002). The unemployment is particularly a push factor in Poland, in the case of migration and seasonal workers. The governments set up different kinds of incentives, such as improvement of the transport infrastructure (Ugoiti, 1999, Gutierrez, 1993, Kochanska, 2002), tax write-off (like in Germany), etc.

Nevertheless, according to the literature reviews, some structural, economic and political factors still are an obstacle to occupational mobility. A first set of factors is linked to the housing market. For example, the shortage of flats, the prices and the lack of legal private ownership in Poland (Krynska, 2001), the rigidity of the housing market and the strong and early home ownership in Spain (De Miguel, 2002, Modenes & Lopez, 2004), the high home owning rate in France (Vignal, 2005a, 2005b) or the high value of home owning in Germany (Wagner, 1989) restrict the residential mobility. For the Spanish authors, this aspect is even strongly associated with the increase in the commuting time. A second set of reasons is linked with economic factors, such as the lack of job opportunities, the persistence of the split shift system in Spain (Bentolila, 2001, De Miguel, 2002), the unequal prospect of employees in France, which facilitates mobility of certain skilled workers, whereas it hinders the mobility of others (Vignal, 2005a, 2005b), etc. A third set of factors are more political, like the political decentralisation, the regional distribution of income and the expansion of the welfare state and the trade union activity in Spain (Bentolita, 2001) or the decentralised political and educational system in Germany and Switzerland. For De Miguel (2002), the lack of mobility

in Spain is also explained by the heavily concentration of the population in urban communities, even in agricultural areas. For this latter country, but particularly for Poland, one main barrier of mobility remains the lack of road and public transport infrastructures.

2.5. Impact on partnerships and family relations, coping strategies

Very few studies explicitly deal with the interaction between job-related mobility and family lives. Nevertheless, a few tendencies emerge clearly from the national literature review.

A first strong tendency is that male job mobility reinforces the traditional division of labour in the partnership/family (with a female partner taking on the main burden of housework and child rearing and putting her own professional career on hold), whereas the female mobility leads instead to more equality in the division of labour between the two partners (Schneider, Limmer, & Ruckdeschel, 2002a, Limmer, 2004a, Bonnet, Collet, & Maurines, 2006a, 2006d, ECVT, 2004). However when the woman is mobile, she continues to invest considerably more than the man in the domestic sphere, even if she is fully employed (Limmer, 2004a, Bonnet, Collet, & Maurines, 2006a, 2006d). When the two partners are mobile, the woman generally chooses a job that is nearer to the place of residence than those chosen by the man, in order to take care of the home, but also because her lower salary and her shorter working hours reduce the cost-effectiveness of the commuting (Casado, 2003).

The double tasks of mobile women (home and work) lead them, when they have children, to face difficulties, unless they are supported by a social network or by a very well developed childcare infrastructure (Pelizäus-Hoffmeister, 2001). In the survey of Bonnet, Collet and Maurines (2006a) about high-ranking professions, certain women explain that they appreciate their higher autonomy while the male partner is away. In the case of long distance relationship or shuttles, the unequal division of labour in the household is not verified in the different studies, which were carried out about this issue. In the same way than the other studies, Soriano (2005) observes that mobility, in this case a separation of residence, increases the inequality in the division of labour. The small amount of participation by the man disappears almost entirely when he spends most of his time away from the household. Becerril (2003) presents quite the reverse with a very fair division of tasks taking place during the time the couple is together.

In the case of migration in Poland, this difference in the division of labour between mobile men and mobile women is also observed (Lukowski, 2001, Lopocka-Dyjak, 2006, Solga, 2002). When the man migrates, the woman is often overburdened with responsibilities and tasks (Solga, 2002). She develops new skills and personality traits, becomes more self-sufficient and independent (Kukułowicz, 2001). In many cases, the woman quits her job to fully take care of home duties and children (Solga, 2002). When it is the woman who migrates, the man is poorly coping with the domestic responsibilities, seeking assistance of relatives, especially in taking care of children, whereas the migrant woman tends to coordinate the family life even from distance (Lukowski, 2001). In the case of mother's migration, children get more involved in housework (Lopocka-Dyjak, 2006, Solga, 2002).

A second tendency is that in families of occupationally mobile individuals, certain problems are intensified (Schneider, Limmer, & Ruckdeschel, 2002a, Wendl, 2005a, Soriano, 2005, Becerril, 2003, Lopocka-Dyjak, 2006, Kaczmarczyk-Sowa, 1996, Grzymała-Kazlowska, 2001b, Romaniszyn, 2002). The main problem seems to be the lack of time shared with the family/partner. This leads to a plurality of difficulties, which can vary with the type of mobility. It seems that weekly commuting and other forms of mobility associated with long separation of the family are the most problematic. Certain mentioned difficulties are the decrease of parental authority over the children, the necessity to bring up the children on one's own, the children's suffering from separation, the decrease of closeness between family members or partners, loneliness and stress, the weekends overloaded with leisure activities, the fear that the relationship might fail, etc. The often less problematic form would be the residential mobility, with difficulties like the adaptation of children and partners into the new environment, the intercultural problems in case of travelling in foreign countries, and so on.

Occupationally mobile individuals primarily attempt to find relief from stress by developing strategies to adapt themselves and their family to their situation in life. These strategies can be of different kinds, such as the choice in the mobility form (Wagner, 1989, Schneider, 2002a), the implication of the mobile father maintaining involved in raising children and finding time for their children despite long absences from home (Schneider, 2002a, Montulet, Hubert, & Huynen, 2005), the usage of modern forms of communication technology (telephone, e-mails, internet) in place of physical proximity (Karczynska, 2003, Kesselring, 2005), the ability to deal with transport infrastructures (Kesselring, 2005), the adaptation of the couple in order to privilege the moments of interaction with the partner or with the family, finding time strategies in order to cleverly combine work and private life

between planning and improvisation (Montulet, Hubert, & Huynen, 2005), the reorganisation of the working time (part-time, work at home), and finding help from the extended family.

The study of Bonnet, Collet and Maurines (2006b, 2006c) links family functioning, family problems and mobility. It shows that when the man is mobile, the best arrangement is that the woman dedicates herself entirely to running the home while the man is away. In situations where the professional fulfilment of each partner exists, more constraints are attached to spatial mobility. When the mobility of one partner is clearly experienced as an impediment for self-fulfilment (in family/partnership life, in social life, in community life), the couple generally quickly puts an end to the situation of mobility.

2.6. Impact on social networks

Very little is known about the relationship between spatial mobility and social networks. A number of studies relate the difficulty for mobility people to form and maintain social networks. The main explanation is the little time for new acquaintances outside the close circle of family for high mobile people. Couples and families prefer to spend the little time they have together (Collmer, 2005, Becerril, 2003, Soriano, 2005). The contacts outside of the professional environment are delegated to the immobile partner (Schneider, Limmer, & Ruckdeschel, 2002a). However another set of studies focuses on the capabilities of mobile people to develop an extensive social network through their occupational mobility and the job-related contacts with other people. For Schmitz (2004), residential mobility and change of workplaces are not directly a handicap for integrating local social networks unless the initial difficulties. For Montulet and Kaufmann (2004), high-speed mobility is an essential competence for social and professional integration, for linking up the various sphere of life, thus being able to connect the different and spatially-separated networks.

2.7. Impact on health and quality of life

The different studies measuring the quality of life show that mobile people consider themselves to be more dissatisfied with the amount of free time they have (ECVT, 2004). The commuters feel more psychologically stressed (Stalder et al., 2000) and show an increased frequency of illnesses (Jüttner, 1976, Ott & Gerlinger, 1992). In contrast to the time spent on commuting, the distance travelled has little impact on health risks (Blickle, 2005, Rapp, 2003). Schneider, Limmer, and Ruckdeschel (2002) showed that stress experienced by mobility workers significantly depends on the actual form of mobility. The most stressed are workers with at least one hour one way to work, weekend commuters and "vari-mobile." At

the other end of this scale, the people in long distance relationship and people who moved are not or hardly more stressed than non-mobile people. Interestingly, mobility has also an impact on the well-being of the wives or partners of long distance and weekly commuters (Rodler & Kirchler, 2001, Schneider, Limmer, & Ruckdeschel, 2002).

3. Gaps concerning the state-of-the-art in Europe

In the past, job-related mobility has often been studied in economic terms with a focus on migration, and an interest in mobility of human resources in relation to the labour market and to unemployment. Secondly there is research on job-related mobility in terms of urban planning, with the issues of controlling traffic flow and pollution, addressing daily commuting only implicitly. Thirdly there are recent studies on the social and psychological consequences of mobility. Also research on the interaction between job-related mobility and family life exists. However, these and other studies are rather rare and address mostly highly selected groups and/or issues. The issues, interests, and state-of-the-arts vary strongly between countries. A systematic overview over the forms of job-related mobility with representative data is missing, for Europe as for each of the participating countries. Some developing mobile living forms, such as long distance relationships, shuttles or job nomads were hardly studied. Moreover the theoretical concepts related to job mobility have not yet been systematically applied.

3.1. Creating a systematic, holistic, representative empirical data-base

For most forms of mobile living, there is no representative data to describe them. Especially a cross-national comparison and European level-data are missing. So far, research has been either following a qualitative approach, or an explorative non-representative design, or it has focussed on a very specific sub-group, such as officers in the armed forces or seamen. So no data-base exists that would allow to describe the proportions of job-related mobility in European societies in general.

3.2. Providing a systematic, holistic description of the various forms of mobility or dimensions to do so

If job-related mobility is described, scientists usually focus on specific categories, such as migrants, movers or daily commuters. Due to the limited focus, the definition of these categories remains a formality that reproduces a conception already given in society. The categories people generally have in mind also serve as heuristic categories for the research. Scientists are looking for migrants, movers, and daily commuters, so it is migrants, movers,

and daily commuters which they find.

It is not known in which proportions these various forms of mobility – according to which definition – exist in European societies (and how relevant research on them is). Neither a systematic holistic description for one or more European countries has been made, nor a comparison between countries. It is not known how many further or "in-between" forms of mobility exist in which quantities that have not yet been studied or even labelled. Also some "modern" forms of mobility that are known to exist, like weekly commuting or "job nomads," have hardly been studied. Very little is then known about how these different forms of mobility may be combined.

3.3. Linking spatial mobility to other research fields: family, social networks, social structure, personality, and health

We know something about the consequences of precarious job-situations for private life. Yet, we know rather little about the consequences of job-related *mobility demands* for the private sphere, such as partner and family relations, social networks, health, and quality of life. With the exception of migration, we also know rather little about how the private sphere, how socio-economic or how demographic features influence decisions regarding becoming mobile. And we know even less about in what way these interdependencies need to be differentiated by the form of mobility or the (political, economical, cultural, or geographical) national context.

The different mobility strategies of families, as an alternative to moving, such as living in a long distance relationship or weekly commuting, are not well known. According to the interplay between mobility and private sphere, very few studies analyse how the family context and the interpersonal networks influence the mobility practices and mobility acceptance. Yet, we have good reason to believe that there are important consequences and significant variations.

3.4. Applying theoretical concepts

Empirical research, especially quantitative research on migration, so far has been strongly influenced by *Rational Choice theories*. However, there is reason to believe that an economic view on the decision to become mobile is not sufficient, especially not in explaining job-related mobility in every form. Also, a theory is missing for describing *consequences* of mobility for the private sphere.

On a theoretical level there is much literature about flexibilisation, globalisation, precariousness or vulnerability of occupations, as a broader category, and its effects on the private sphere. However, within these publications spatial mobility mostly remains an implicit aspect. And even if it is made explicit its assumed interrelation with the private sphere is hardly tested empirically.

A few more specific theoretical concepts have been designed, analysing job mobility explicitly, especially the concepts of *motility* or those of *family career*. The former insists on the potential and actual capacity of people to be mobile, i.e. the way an individual or a group appropriates the realms of possibility concerning mobility and puts it to use. The concept of *family career* analyses job mobility through the global perspective of family life course and the various contingencies of the family environment. However, these two concepts have not yet been satisfyingly applied in empirical research.

3.5. Summary

Basically, the literature reviews confirm that the gaps concerning the state-of-the-art in mobility research that have been thought to exist really do so. Research proposal and research design of *Job Mobility and Family Lives in Europe* have aimed to answer a number of major open questions in this research field. These questions were formulated as research areas based on a sound knowledge of the state-of-the-art. However, only a systematic in-depth research on the published research was able to confirm that none of the formulated questions has yet been answered. The gaps in the state-of-the-art that have been verified to exist are:

- A representative empirical data-base is missing that would allow a systematic study of occupational spatial mobility of all kinds. Also a data-base for cross-national comparative research on occupational spatial mobility is missing.

- Due to this lack of data, no systematic and holistic description has yet been made of the various forms of mobility in general. And, of course, a systematic comparison between European countries in this respect is also missing. Only specific sub-groups have been studied so far. Also a systematic description of relevant dimensions distinguishing forms of mobility does not yet exist.

- Occupational spatial mobility has not yet systematically been linked to other research fields, such as: family, social networks, social structure, personality, and health. Although several linkages have been reported, they have not been studied in a quantitative study, integrating various interrelated factors and potential causal interrelations, so the

significance of any of these linkages, so far, can only be estimated.

• The correlations and variations have not all yet been satisfyingly explained within a theoretical framework. And the existing theoretical concepts that are probably able to do so have not yet been satisfyingly applied in empirical research.

4. Insights concerning the research agenda of *Job Mobilities and Family Lives in Europe*[1]

In this section a number of significant insights are presented, which are emerging from the national literature reviews. Some of them have been anticipated, and now can confirm the research design in this anticipation. Others are new. For these, the possible consequences concerning the research questions of *Job Mobility and Family Lives in Europe* and/or the construction of its questionnaire are discussed.

4.1. The ideological dimension of spatial mobility

Like for most topics in social sciences, the issue of job-related mobility is connected to strong emotional associations and normative evaluations. And maybe more than in other research fields, the scientific debate is shaped by these evaluations. Whether considered positively (Kaufmann et al., 2004, Paéz, 1999) or in a more critical way (Lanoy, 2004, Boltanski & Chiapello, 1999), the ideological dimension of spatial mobility is strongly present in the literature reviews. In many studies spatial mobility seems indeed to be presented as a good or a bad thing. As analysed by Montulet and Kaufmann (2004), one reason is that the contemporary ideology of spatial mobility confuses spatial mobility and social fluidity: Mobility is interpreted as a symptom for the openness of societies for *social* mobility, as freedom for individuals to move upwards and achieve self-fulfilment. On the other hand the mobility demands of the labour market are considered a restraint or even a threat to partnerships, families, and people's social integration, arguing that the maintenance of social relations requires physical presence.

This insight emphasises the importance of mobility research maintaining emotional distance to the object of research. That includes neutrality in the way the questions in the questionnaire are formulated. In a more general perspective, it also questions our view of spatial mobility and spatial competences. It is often assumed that mobility is moving quickly and far away. However the lack of mobility is not necessarily a disadvantage or an advantage.

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[1] As to be formulated in their final version in deliverable 4 (D4)

Spatial competences are not simply composed of mobility competences. To be able to settle in an area, to link together sedentary and mobile life, to be able to put together the different activities in space and time are completely essential, in particular regarding the family and social integration issues.

It is fair and necessary that research is *informed* about positive and negative evaluations of mobility. It has to take these evaluations into account when interpreting the decisions people make regarding becoming or not becoming mobile, regarding the choice between relocation and commuting. It is even worthwhile to measure the evaluations people have in their minds empirically, so that effects on mobility decisions can be documented. However, like in every other field of social science, the researcher should avoid policy advice that take on any of these evaluations as necessarily and only true.

4.2. All forms of mobility are concentrated on specific societal groups

The literature reviews show clearly that certain categories of the population concentrate practically all forms of mobile living, whereas other categories are characterised by few mobility practices of all kind. The societal groups that are likely to become mobile are those with a high level of education, men, young people, single earner couples, etc.

More generally one can summarise that most studies underline the relation between mobility (competences, valuation and practices) and social structures (social status, occupational groups, gender, age, etc.), revealing notable inequalities to mobility between social groups (among others: Schneider, Limmer, & Ruckdeschel, 2002b, Jürges, 2005, Le Breton, 2005, De Miguel, 2002, ECVT, 2004, Bassand et al., 1985). The differences in mobility and in motility, in this perspective, are strongly linked with the social structure and appear as more as pure individual differences between actors (ability to be mobile, to cope with stress, to maintain relative networks, etc.).

This insight emphasises the view on motility as being socially structured, as being a dimension of social inequality. It emphasises the legitimacy of the research questions which groups in society are enabled or pushed towards or excluded from becoming mobile. However, this insight does not diminish the legitimacy of individual level analyses and psychological approaches to mobility.

4.3. Mobility and gender relations

The literature reviews confirm the fact that job mobility is differently experienced by men and women. The link between family and mobile life often hinges on this difference, with more or less opposite effects of men or of women facing job mobility demands. Whereas the man is often the mobile partner in the couple, the woman plays a crucial part in adapting the family life with the professional obligations of her spouse and in facing up the difficulties that it brings. They do so as much when the man is gone (childcare) as when he is home (socializing together) (Bonnet, Collet, & Maurines, 2006a). Several studies confirm the gender inequalities to mobility, in reinforcing the traditional division of domestic and professional labour (Schneider, Limmer, & Ruckdeschel, 2002a, Limmer, 2004a, Bonnet, Collet, & Maurines, 2006a, 2006d, ECVT, 2004). More frequently, the woman has to give up career plans when her partner is mobile. Furthermore, when she herself is mobile, she continues to invest more than the man in the domestic sphere.

This insight confirms that the research questions of *Job Mobility and Family Lives in Europe* need to pay a particular attention to the gender perspective in the mobility issues. It emphasises the importance of the female part within the mobile couple to deal with family and mobile life at once.

4.4. Mobility types may be combined with each other

The different studies quoted in the national literature reviews (among others: Schneider, Limmer, & Ruckdeschel, 2002b) bring out that the different spatial mobility forms sometimes are combined with each other, not only in the sense of affecting the same "risk groups," but also on an individual level. This can be true in a sense of two or more recurring forms of mobility happening at the same time (like long-distance commuting and frequent business trips with overnights away from home). It is even more likely to be true in a sense of a sequence of various singular forms of mobility (like a migration followed by a long-distance move within the country). Furthermore there are hybrid forms or "in-between" forms of mobility, as the following section is describing in more detail.

4.5. Mobility behaviour may be ambiguous regarding the category it belongs into

A further fact that has been anticipated is confirmed by the literature reviews: Mobility behaviour as found in the empirical reality can not always be clearly associated with a specific category or more general type. Often, frequent changes of mobility behaviour, simultaneous existence of more than one form or irregularities make the empirically found

phenomenon appear too complex and ambiguous to sort it into a simple system of categories.

This insight raises the question whether the typology of *Job Mobilities and Family Lives in Europe* is sensitive enough for ambiguity and whether any typology can be. It seems unavoidable to use some sort of pre-defined concept as a heuristic approach, and given the diversity of mobility forms, it seems unavoidable that this concept has to be some sort of pre-defined category system. However, it can be discussed how broad, open, and general heuristic categories should be, so that they allow capturing also ambiguous and unexpected forms of mobility. With a broad category system to start out with, more variation can be captured as it exists in the empirical reality. Later, the various forms of mobility can be described by using a more differentiated and precise typology, constructed on the grounds of existing data. These forms could be defined from the dimensions of spatial mobility: time of travel, frequency of travel (daily, weekly or yearly mobility, irregular mobility) and irreversibility of travel (move, migration). Beyond analytic types, it seems relevant to construct empirical mobility types through a cluster analysis for example.

4.6. Difficulty to isolate the professional cause in the movement

The national literature reviews show very clearly the difficulty to isolate the professional reason in some phenomena of mobility. The studies of Détang-Dessendre et al. (2004), of Gobillon (2001), of Debrand and Taffin (2005) or of Kaufmann and Widmer (2006), for example, show the simultaneous influence of many factors (economic, professional, family or residential) on spatial mobility at the same time. The increasing phenomenon of peripheral urbanisation illustrates this very well. Such localisation favours long distance commuting to the urban centres. However, this living arrangement can probably be partly explained by family reasons (to raise children in a detached house), by environmental ones (to take advantage of clean air, stillness), by the property market (to buy an affordable house), etc. The studies of Modenes (2000, 2004) show also the necessity of a multi-dimensional perspective to explain occupational mobility. The stronger commuting practices by mothers with children are understood by economic reasons and spatial localisation (living in more remote areas).

This ambiguity has not been foreseen in the research design in that extent. This raises the issue of how to deal with mobility that is *gradually* motivated by occupational reasons. One consequence for the research design of *Job Mobility and Family lives in Europe* might be to at least measure the motivation by occupational reasons as a gradual phenomenon that is on

a continuum rather than as a dichotomy.

4.7. Interactions between mobility and other social phenomena

Various studies of the national literature reviews (Kaufmann & Widmer, 2006, Vignal, 2005a, 2005b, Challiol, 1998, 2002, Korczynska, 2003, Jonczky, 2003) show clearly the reciprocal causality between mobility and *family structures and family functioning*. Mobility practices influence private life, but family context considerably influences in return mobility decisions. The family functioning and family structures (Kaufmann, Widmer, Korczynska, Jonczky), the "reciprocity rules" within the couple (Challiol), the "family logics" (Vignal) play an important part in spatial mobility acceptance and spatial mobility practices.

What is true for family dynamics is true also for other phenomena that are related to mobility: In most cases we find reciprocal causal influences rather than one-way impacts. The *life course* structures mobility by making it likely or unlikely for specific groups to be confronted with mobility, for example with young adults in the beginning of their professional careers being more affected than elder people. However, mobility can, in return, affect the events structuring the life course, for example by postponing the family phase to a higher age. A strong *social integration* in a specific geographical place might make mobility less likely or commuting more likely than relocating. In return, mobility, once it happens, (or non-mobility) has a strong influence on the social integration of an individual. Similar reciprocal causalities can probably be found for *inter-generational ties, psychological condition, quality of life* and other social or psychological phenomena.

This insight emphasises the view on job mobility as being embedded in a larger system linked to family dynamics, to life course, to spatial localisation and so on. It confirms that the research questions of *Job Mobility and Family Lives in Europe* need to pay a particular attention to interaction and not only to the unidirectional impact of spatial mobility on family lives. Generally this is already implemented in the research design. However, it might be worthwhile to be reminded and to systematically check assumed relationships for reciprocal relationships that might have been overseen. Furthermore, this insight highlights the importance to analyse the family and the professional life course through some diachronic questions in the questionnaire.

4.8. Social network, social capital and spatiality

Some studies (Grosetti, 2006, Schmitz, 2004, Kaufmann, Widmer, 2006, Larsen et al., 2005, Soriano, 2005, Becerril, 2003) focus on the interactions between social networks and spatial mobility. Although not many studies link these two scientific fields, the few findings suggest us to attach a great importance to this perspective. The job mobility is likely to modify the interpersonal networks, in terms of composition (status of the members), of localisation (near the workplace, the place of residence, the birthplace), of structure (density, connectivity), of strength of ties (weak or strong ties). In return, the networks and their characteristics can influence the mobility of people integrated into these networks. It is particularly the fact in the case of migration and seasonal work, as related in the Polish literature review (among others: Kaczmarczyk & Lukowski, 2004). However, the interpersonal network can also exercise an influence on daily forms of mobility. For example, a dense and broadened family network near the place of residence can hinder residential mobility and foster long-distance commuting, instead. Therefore, the network analysis is in a position to grasp mobility forms, also characterised by ephemeral time and extent space according to the definition of Montulet's space-time theory (Montulet, 2005).

Since network analyses are particularly in a position to understand the systemic structure of mobile phenomena (through the spatiality and the structure of interrelations), the research questions should integrate the network problematic in order to deal with issues linking mobility, family lives and social integration. It is important to recognize that not only the more *intense* networks of immediate family, kinship, and close friends, but also the broader networks of neighbourhood, community engagement, of memberships and voluntary activities in clubs, associations, unions, and parties may be significant.