

Can M. Aybek · Johannes Huinink
Raya Muttarak *Editors*

Spatial Mobility, Migration, and Living Arrangements

 Springer

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ISBN 978-3-319-10020-3 ISBN 978-3-319-10021-0 (eBook)

DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-10021-0

Springer Cham Heidelberg New York Dordrecht London

Library of Congress Control Number: 2014953790

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Printed on acid-free paper

Springer is part of Springer Science+Business Media (www.springer.com)

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Chapter 1

Migration, Spatial Mobility, and Living Arrangements: An Introduction

Can M. Aybek, Johannes Huinink, and Raya Muttarak

1.1 Introduction

Understanding the dynamics behind the spatial mobility of humans has been the subject of interest for many academic disciplines including archeology, history, geography, and economics. Throughout recent decades, sociology in particular has developed a strong interest in disentangling the factors that trigger spatial mobility and in explaining the consequences of different mobility patterns for individuals, families and societies in general. Since the 1970s, the development of research on international mobility has gained momentum in many Western societies (Vasta and Vuddamalay 2006). Bommers (2006) reports, for instance, that in Germany during the 1980s and 1990s research activities related to migration in different branches of social sciences such as education, social anthropology, sociology or political sciences were intensified. During this period working groups and research institutes dedicated to the issues of migration were established and by the mid-1980s experts in the field noticed that the number of publications had increased to such an extent that it was difficult for any single person to keep track of new empirical work (Treibel 1988). From the 1990s onwards, researchers from different Western countries increasingly began to collaborate, organize conferences, establish academic journals and launch joint research projects (Castles and Wihtol de Wenden 2006).

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The diversification of research activities in the last quarter of the twentieth century is partially due to new and complex patterns of migration that have emerged. In comparison to earlier industrial periods, the circumstances under which international migration takes place are different mainly due to the drastically increased imbalance between origin and destination countries in terms of labor supply and demand (Massey et al. 2005). While the proportion of unemployed young people is growing in many sending countries, societies in the economically developed destination countries are characterized to a greater extent by low birth rates and ageing populations which results in a rather limited supply of native labor. At the same time while new production technologies in these societies increased the need for a more qualified workforce, demand for unskilled labor for certain sectors of the economy continues to rise. Faced with a growing negative public attitude towards immigrants and rising domestic unemployment rates following the 2008 financial crisis, governments in most destination countries have increased their immigration control efforts. While labor migration of highly-skilled migrants is promoted, entry of unskilled labor is strictly controlled through measures such as the introduction of extensive border control, restrictions on family reunification and issuing of long-term residence permits, and deportation of those who entered illegally.

Accounting for these complex developments, research dealing with human mobility has not only become more specialized and acknowledged as a subdiscipline, but migration research has also been increasingly equated to studies on international migration. In many well-known scholarly publications on migration such as Castles and Miller's *Age of Migration* (1993), Weiner's *Global Migration Crisis* (1995), Cohen's *Cambridge Survey of World Migration* (1995), Bretell and Hollifield's *Migration Theory* (2000) and Bommers and Thränhardt's *National Paradigms in Migration Research* (2005), the term "migration" is frequently used as an equivalent of "international migration" (cf. King and Skeldon 2010).

In light of the theoretical debates over factors that cause and nurture international migration on a global scale that have taken place during the last decades, it seems that the theories of migration are to a great extent fragmented along disciplinary boundaries (Massey et al. 2005). Furthermore, a new academic field often referred to as "integration research" or "incorporation studies" has been established; here the research focus is not on mobility *per se*, but on how immigrants are incorporated into host societies as well as the ways in which they themselves influence these societies. This area is characterized by a separate research community with its own agenda and theoretical perspectives. The study of international migration is therefore divided into "mobility studies" and "incorporation studies" (Castles and Wihlto de Wenden 2006).

The term "mobility studies", however, is also used to indicate a different research area that has been expanding in parallel with the emergence and advancement of novel transportation and communication means that have transformed the lives of many people since the late twentieth century (cf. Lück and Schneider 2010; Schneider and Meil 2008; Schneider and Collet 2010). This research on spatial mobility of individuals – although focusing mainly on internal mobility – also represents a large and multidisciplinary research field. The theoretical approaches to the field are hence as

diverse as in the case of research on international migration. Lück et al. (2006) point out that macro sociological theories often discuss spatial mobility within the context of social modernization (cf. Bauman 2000; Urry 2003, 2010; Kaufmann 2002; Sennett 1998). On the one hand, mobility is presented as an important ingredient in the functioning of modern societies. Authors such as Sennett (1998) set forth that spatial mobility will drastically increase due to changing working conditions in a new capitalist system. On the other hand, the idea is put forward that being geographically mobile is becoming more difficult as institutional arrangements, such as border security policies or visa regulations, hamper it, and technological innovations make physical presence unnecessary. These assertions create a vagueness with respect to the function mobility fulfils on the overall societal level.

In order to develop our understanding with respect to the causes and consequences of spatial mobility, it has been suggested that instead of simplified causal argumentations or mechanical perspectives such as push-pull models, more dynamic approaches that take the reciprocal effects between micro-level decisions and macro-level conditions into account have greater explanatory power (de Haas 2010). King and Skeldon (2010) argue that the division between research on internal and international spatial mobility is arbitrary and inappropriate. They remind us that many of the early theoretical contributions developed to explain human mobility were based on the study of internal moves (e.g., Ravenstein 1885, 1889; Sjaastad 1962; Stouffer 1960; Todaro 1969; Wolpert 1965) and point out that national borders historically were not fixed. Thus, internal movers in the past would now be considered as international migrants due to the presence of modern national borderlines. The notion that international migration connotes long-distance moves is also problematic. Movement of people across borders can be very short and still includes a change of national territory (e.g., job mobility in the border regions of France, Belgium, Germany, and Luxembourg), whereas internal movement within large countries such as the USA or China can be over a very long distance.

This sharp distinction between the study of international migration and internal mobility is due in large part to the role of the state in regulating the entry into and exit out of its territory. Favell (2007: 271) underscores that "...the very process by which collectivities manage movers by naming and counting them, and thereby distinguishing them from nonmovers or residents, is the fundamental way in which the territorial nation-state society constitutes itself in the first place." In addition to immigration regulations and border controls implemented by state authorities, entering another national territory for individuals represents a change of jurisdiction and membership (Zolberg 1981). The influence of the nation-state is also reflected in the way migration research is conducted. As comparative perspectives show, methodological and theoretical approaches differ from country to country, as in each context they are shaped by long-term political and intellectual developments as well as illustrate the prevailing understanding of the relationship between the state, society and immigration (Vuddamalay and Vasta 2006). In France, for instance, research on immigration has been influenced by the historically developed republican idea of cultural and political assimilation of minorities into a dominant French culture (Brubaker 1992). The re-production of the nation-state view and the

disciplinary divide in the social sciences concerned with human spatial mobility is, according to some authors (e.g., Favell 2007; Wimmer and Glick Schiller 2002), an impediment for the theoretical and methodological advancement of the field.

After assessing the common and diverging functional and theoretical features of international and internal mobility, King and Skeldon (2010) suggest that they be considered as two faces of the same coin. Their argument is based on empirical studies showing that in some cases initial internal mobility may trigger international migration, whereas in other circumstances international mobility may be followed by internal moves or various combinations of other types of mobility. They conclude that mobility in the internal and international sense form an integrated system.

One example of the resemblance of internal and international mobility is the consequence of such movement on family-related issues both for the migrants themselves and for the place that they migrated to. Migration can involve a movement of one or several family members – ranging from an unmarried person, a couple, a married person leaving a spouse and children behind, to the whole family. Migration thus changes conventional family relations since family members frequently undergo a period or periods of separation which affect familial relationships and living arrangements.

In this sense, the study of international migration shares common ground with mobility research (e.g., job mobility can involve changing place of residence and introduce multi-local family systems). International migration and mobility can thus be treated as life course events that are consequential to couple and family dynamics. Since family members' lives are interdependent as presented in Elder's concept of "linked lives" (Elder 1994), residential mobility – internationally or domestically, of one family member or more – changes all aspects of family dynamics from partnership selection, living arrangements, intimate relationships, intergenerational relations and fertility decisions to union dissolution. At the same time, other life course events such as transition to adulthood, parental divorce or retirement can trigger migration or mobility which in turn affects family relations.

Within this book we set out with the intention to consider the interconnection between migration/mobility and other life course experiences. The chapters of the volume illustrate that analytical approaches which are developed in the study of internal and international spatial mobility can be integrated under a common conceptual framework. Nonetheless, each of the contributions focuses on certain aspects of spatial mobility and relates to specific phases and constellations in the life courses of individuals as will be outlined below. Before going into these features of the chapters, it is however necessary to develop some basic thoughts with regard to different types of mobility and the functions they may fulfill.

1.2 Some Theoretical Concepts

Before introducing the chapters of this volume, we propose a conceptual framework which allows us to bring different strands of research together in a systematic way. This is accomplished in four steps. First, we introduce a simple classification of

types of spatial mobility. Second, we distinguish two functions of spatial mobility for individual welfare production over the life course. Third, we address the embeddedness of spatial mobility in and its consequences for individual life courses. Finally, we briefly discuss the particular relationship between spatial mobility and family development.

1.2.1 Spatial Mobility: A Classification

There are many attempts to classify different kinds of spatial mobility in fairly great detail (e.g., Rossi 1980; Limmer and Schneider 2008). Here we distinguish between two main patterns of spatial mobility:

1. circular mobility
 - (a) everyday life mobility at the place of living (e.g., going to do grocery shopping, seeing a doctor or taking children to a kindergarten)
 - (b) short and long distance commuting (e.g., commuting to the workplace daily or commuting to see a partner living in a separate household)
2. non-circular mobility or relocation
 - (a) residential mobility (i.e., a small distance move) which does not lead to a dramatic change of the social environment one lives in (e.g., intra-urban relocation or moving to suburban areas)
 - (b) migration (i.e., a long distance move) which leads to a considerable change of the social environment and disruption of “the basic ties with the local community and is a move that prevents commuting at least at any reasonable cost” (Clark 1986: 20). Migration can involve crossing the national borders.

Following this classification we conceive migration as a particular type of spatial mobility.

1.2.2 Function of Spatial Mobility

If one agrees upon the assumption that individuals pursue appropriate goals to obtain and sustain a satisfying level of subjective wellbeing throughout their life course, we can consider spatial mobility as an “instrumental” goal. In general, certain activities can contribute to wellbeing directly (e.g., instance consumption of a certain good) or indirectly (e.g., by earning money as a tool for accessing the good one would like to consume). Employment, for example, can enhance wellbeing both as a direct source of enjoyment and indirectly as one possible way to earn money to purchase wellbeing resources.

In regard to spatial mobility we assume that primarily it is a tool and not a direct source of wellbeing. The act of spatial mobility (e.g., commuting or migrating)

is usually perceived as a costly action. The cost is taken, nevertheless, because it supports other kinds of activities and improves potentials for producing subjective wellbeing. A person moves or commutes to improve the conditions of welfare production in other life domains, but not because he/she enjoys commuting or moving as such. Individuals subsequently perform circular or non-circular spatial mobility if the expected improvement of the conditions of welfare production exceeds the cost of mobility. Spatial mobility allows an individual to engage in a job at a place distant from the current place of living by migration or commuting. Spatial mobility may also be pursued by every member in a family such as when a family aims to improve quality of living by moving to a region with better family-related infrastructure.

Accordingly, spatial mobility is regarded as a tool for improvement of the conditions of the individual's welfare production, which can be analytically distinguished into two functions, bridging distances and improving the living environment.

1.2.2.1 Bridging Distances

Spatial mobility allows individuals to bridge distances and coordinate activities that are conducted at diverse locations. If we pursue a certain action at a distant place then naturally we have to be spatially mobile. One example is a person who finds an attractive job elsewhere or someone who falls in love with another person living at a distant place. In both cases one can consider to change the place of residence and move to a new workplace or the residence of the partner. The alternative could be to commute to the workplace or to live 'apart together' with the partner. Regardless of whether a non-circular or circular type of mobility is chosen, mobility enables a particular individual to (better) perform activities at a place distant from the (previous) place of residence which then directly or indirectly contributes to a sufficient improvement of his/her wellbeing.

1.2.2.2 Improving the Living Environment

Spatial mobility, particularly non-circular mobility, also allows changing the local living conditions by changing the place of living. Living conditions encompass physical, social and infra-structural aspects of the living environment referred to as "housing bundle" (Rossi 1980: 40ff). Individuals and households might be motivated to relocate as the "place utility" (Wolpert 1965) of a particular place changes because some components of the housing bundle have altered over time. This can also be the case because individuals change their aspirations in regard to their housing and living environment. Life course events, such as a child birth, can lead to shifts in needs and expectations of individuals and households regarding the dwelling they live in or the infrastructure around it. Individuals might also be motivated to move because the opportunity structure of their current locale has changed and no longer meets their aspirations.

Analytically these two functions of spatial mobility can be easily distinguished from each other. In many cases, the two functions of spatial mobility contrast with one another. One example is international labor migration where the destination is usually not chosen because of favorable living conditions but for the main motivation to profit from economic benefits which outweigh the migration costs and the cost of living under unpleasant conditions. In this case, mobility as a tool to bridge distance from work opportunities is given a priority over the improving of living conditions function. In other cases both functions can go hand in hand and are not completely separable. If somebody has to move because of job mobility, the basic motivation is not to improve the living conditions. However, when he/she moved away for job reasons, where to live becomes a crucial issue and a person might use this opportunity to improve his/her living conditions also. At the same time, being unsatisfied with the current place of residence can motivate searching for a job elsewhere and again both aspects come together.

1.2.3 Embeddedness of Spatial Mobility in the Life Course

In considering the embeddedness of spatial mobility in the life course of individuals, we can distinguish between three phases: the pre- and post-mobility phases and the mobility event itself. This distinction is primarily relevant for the commuting and non-circular forms of spatial mobility.

1.2.3.1 Pre-mobility Phase

The pre-mobility phase is the phase when the potential option of spatial mobility is first considered and when a decision in favor of mobility is taken. This phase can therefore be split up into a sequence of stages, a pre-decisional stage and a post-decisional or planning stage (Kalter 1997; Kley 2009). It is important to be aware of the fact that already considering mobility as an option might impact aspirations, decisions, or behavior in various life domains. For instance, being open for migration makes a difference in regard to pursued or perceived opportunities on the job market or while searching for a partner. During the pre-mobility phase the spatial radius of activities is larger and might lead to more social mobility – independently of whether this always leads to spatial mobility or not (Huinink et al. 2014). Usually the final decision in favor of mobility is taken and planning only begins after the occurrence of a life event, e.g. job mobility, that induces the need for mobility.

1.2.3.2 Mobility Act

With the realization of mobility, the cost of mobility is materialized. In the case of circular mobility, this happens over a longer period of time. However, for both types of spatial mobility one should take into account that a planned mobility is not always realized (Kalter 1997; Kley 2009).

1.2.3.3 Post-mobility Phase

One consequence of spatial mobility is that individuals or households have to adapt to a new situation and are faced with the task of re-orientation. It is important to distinguish between the two types of spatial mobility in regard to its consequences. Circular mobility takes place over a longer period of time and becomes an integrated part of the everyday life and as such always influences the organization of life. Negative impacts can accumulate over time as shown in the study on the stability of couples where partners commute over long distances (cf. Kley in this volume). Although circular mobility could be a practical solution to pursue one's career without relocation of the whole family to the new work place, mobility can disrupt the way of life and daily relationship between partners. Meanwhile, non-circular migration has consequences of a different kind. Particularly in the case of international migration, migrants have to become acquainted to a new socio-cultural environment and have to adapt to new routines of life in a more comprehensive way. Cross-border migration thus can have considerable impacts on different life domains from work, schooling to family formation.

Moreover, one can further distinguish between intended and non-intended consequences of spatial mobility, which can be either positive or negative. It is reasonable to assume that on the intentional side the beneficial consequences dominate, otherwise the individual would not have initiated the mobility process. It is likely that the negative consequences are the unexpected ones.

1.3 Interdependence Between Family Dynamics and Spatial Mobility

Using this conceptual framework, the interdependence between family life and spatial mobility can be investigated systematically. Causality within this relationship runs in both directions; commuting between different places or moving away from one's place of origin can have consequences on family dynamics while different stages in the life course and family life may also trigger spatial mobility. Here we discuss potential positive and negative effects of circular and non-circular spatial mobility on different aspects and phases of family dynamics. In the following we will elaborate on the manner in which spatial mobility can support or hinder the welfare production in family life from a general perspective. While we will cover many aspects of family dynamics, we are not going to discuss the voluminous research literature dealing with these diverse fields of research, but will rather refer to the chapters in this volume.

1.3.1 Positive Effects of Spatial Mobility on Family Dynamics

Spatial mobility, in general, can improve the conditions of establishing and practicing satisfying relationships in couples and families. It can lead to more spatial closeness of family members (bridging function) or to a more convenient environment

for family life (improving living environment). The benefits of spatial mobility usually materialize during the post-mobility phase or – in case of circular mobility – during the time when mobility takes place.

For non-circular spatial mobility, partners move together and this enables them to live with each other in a common household. Avoiding commuting costs could be a reason for residential mobility or migration of a whole family to close the spatial distance between a family member's workplace and avoid time consuming and stressful circular mobility. Another typical positive benefit of non-circular mobility is when ageing parents move to live close to the residence of a child. Under other conditions, if it is not reasonable or possible for family members to live together in one place, circular mobility is practiced to bridge distances. A family may stay in one place while its members are gainfully employed at different places. One of the members commutes to the workplace because it is too costly for the others to give up their prosperous job at the place where the family is located. Whether circular or non-circular mobility is a better solution to bridge distances depends on the particular circumstances of a couple or family.

Another family related reason for spatial mobility is to adjust the quality of the residence to changing demands, to move to more appropriate environment for family life and raising children or to reconcile family and non-family activities. Usually non-circular residential mobility or migration is performed in this case. However, non-circular mobility might induce new efforts on circular mobility because some household members may have to bridge new distances (e.g., to the workplace).

1.3.2 Negative Effects of Spatial Mobility on Family Dynamics

Paradoxically, the strategy of using spatial mobility to improve family life at the same time can have negative effects on it. Although the impacts vary according to the particular circumstances of families or couples, there are generally costs associated with spatial mobility during the pre- and the post-mobility phase as well as at the time when mobility takes place. All types of spatial mobility consume physical and psychological energy, money and time. In this sense spatial mobility competes with other life domains for resources, particularly family life. Usually all types of spatial mobility are preceded by a period of discussion and decision making (pre-mobility phase) which can be a source of dissent and conflict regarding the “right” allocation of resources and the most suitable kind of mobility. In many cases the choice between residential mobility/migration and commuting is an issue. All types of spatial mobility imply efforts to adapt to a new situation during the mobility phase (commuting) or in the post-mobility phase (residential mobility and migration). In particular, in the case of international migration this effort is crucial and may have problematic effects on family life of various kinds. For instance, partnership formation for children of migrants would involve different opportunities and preferences as compared to a setting where migration has not taken place. Likewise, the social networks from the place of origin may get lost or the communication with members of those networks may fade out.

Further, certain negative effects are related only to a particular type of spatial mobility. For example, in the case of non-circular mobility, it is probable that one of the household members will suffer from the relocation as a tied mover. This is a realistic scenario especially in the present day when intimate partners are gainfully employed. Given a demand for more spatial flexibility of employees, coordination of the partners' careers in spatial terms becomes more complicated. Although circular mobility can be one solution to the problem just mentioned, at the same time it can be hazardous to family life and jeopardize the stability of couples and family relationships since commuting is a stressful practice.

1.3.3 Effects of Family Dynamics on Spatial Mobility

As previously discussed, family dynamics can have substantial impacts on mobility. The choice of circular or non-circular mobility is also related to the dynamics of the family. On the one hand, the early and very late phases of family life in particular can generate a demand for spatial mobility because this improves the families' potential to improve well-being of its members and help avoid unwanted developments. For instance, young parents relocate because they find schools elsewhere that promise a better education for their children. Meanwhile, in search of care and emotional support, ageing parents move to the area where their children live. Generally, certain family-related transitions in the life-course such as family formation, child bearing and divorce normally trigger spatial mobility since relevant individuals must change their place of residence due to new life circumstances. On the other hand, in certain stages in the life-course (particularly when children have grown up, a career has been established, or house ownership has been achieved), spatial mobility can disrupt and disturb family life, making mobility cost very high especially in the case of non-circular mobility. Under these circumstances, commuting may be the optimal solution for the problem of bridging distances.

1.4 Structure of the Volume

Based on our conceptual framework, we now introduce the chapters of this volume in more detail. Throughout this volume, three major fields of research on the relationships among different types of spatial mobility, family dynamics and living arrangements will be addressed. The three chapters in the first part concern the relationships between international migration and union or family formation. The second part consists of three chapters which focus on the consequences of various forms of work-related mobility on family life and couple relationships. The last part of the volume comprises four chapters that scrutinize the relationships between specific life-course stages and transitions, such as the situation after parental divorce or the period after retirement, and different forms of mobility.

1.4.1 Part 1: Union and Family Formation, Partner Choice and International Migration

The chapters in this section touch upon how mobility is closely intertwined in family formation processes and how post-mobility, especially the experience of international migration, can influence partnership choice. It is evident from the chapter by Aybek et al. which focuses on the dynamics of marriage migration from Turkey to Germany that mobility is a tool to bridge distances. The chapter deals with the processes of partnership formation between one spouse residing in Turkey (migrating partner) and the other residing in Germany (receiving partner). Since the distance to bridge in this case involves crossing national borders, the couples are subjected to many stressful affairs not only regarding the decision where to live but also about how to fulfil certain legal requirements to migrate. The legal regulations on marriage migration since 2007 in Germany require a joining spouse to have a certified knowledge of German language prior to migration. This poses a constraint to transnational marriages and could delay cohabitation. In this context, mobility is part of marriage arrangement processes and is a prerequisite for the success of union formation.

Meanwhile, the chapter authored by Glowsky which investigates fertility patterns of female marriage migrants and their German husbands presents mobility as a means to both improve the living environment and to bridge distances. Focusing on marriage migrants from Eastern Europe and South-East Asia, he argues that marriage migration is one of the few legal options for women from poorer countries to migrate to more affluent countries like Germany and there is evidence that economic security was mentioned as one important reason for marrying German nationals. This clearly fits with the framework that mobility is a tool for improving the living environment. However, similar to Aybek et al.'s chapter, the union formation in this setting requires cross-border migration since the couples were not residing in the same country prior to marriage. Hence, driven by an incentive to improve living conditions, mobility is also a fundamental tool to bridge distances.

Mobility itself is a transitional process which can disrupt life course events such as childbearing. Since the migrating person has to adjust to a new environment, his/her fertility might be temporarily depressed. Although Glowsky does not directly deal with this aspect in his chapter, he shows that the fertility of couples with German men and marriage migrants is lower than that of couples where both spouses are German. While it is possible that migration does disrupt a person's life cycle and has negative influence on fertility, pre-mobility characteristics may also play a role on family formation. For instance, the findings that marriage migrants and their German husbands are more likely to be older and have children from previous relationships than German-German couples show that there is a selection in demographic characteristics of transnational couples. This in turn could influence both mobility decisions and fertility behavior.

After mobility has taken place, the fact that individuals moved from their place of origins to a new environment can have consequences on family formation.

Migrants not only have to adjust to a new socio-cultural setting, but they may also struggle to maintain their ethno-cultural identity while living in a foreign country. Differences in norms and cultures between the country of origins and the destination country could influence partnership choice. Born and brought up in the destination country, children of immigrants differ from both their migrant parents and their native-born counterparts. The chapter by Topgül takes on this aspect by thoroughly investigating partner choice of second generation Turkish origin women in Switzerland. While technically the second generation can freely choose among partners from other ethnic groups, they could be under pressure by their family to maintain endogamy in order to preserve internal cohesion and homogeneity of the group. Socialized in Switzerland with upbringing from parents with Turkish origins, second generation women may have different partner preferences than those of their family. Analysing how interviewees negotiate and interact with their family while maintaining their “agency” in partner choice, Topgül’s chapter reflects how mobility could influence partnership formation under the context of the consequences of international migration.

1.4.2 Part 2: Job-Related Mobility and Its Impacts on Consensual Unions and Familial Relationships

The set of three chapters in this part address how different kinds of mobility – circular and non-circular – affect partnership quality, stability of the relationships and family life. The chapter by Viry and Vincent-Geslin provides an empirically rich analysis for understanding the functions of mobility as a tool to bridge distances for job-related reasons. The chapter examines why certain groups of individuals perceive recurring forms of long-time mobility (≥ 2 hours per day) between their home and workplace to be a burden whereas others do not assess this negatively. More specifically the authors ask under which socio-economic and mobility related circumstances individuals may regard the exercised mobility as part of their life and develop a positive, lasting vision of their mobility practice. A central concept Viry and Vincent-Geslin use in their approach is “motility” (cf. Kaufmann 2002; Kaufmann et al. 2004), which refers both to the physical and material capacity of being spatially mobile as well as the individual knowledge about and interest in different mobility opportunities. Their empirical analysis indicates that everyday mobility activities tend to be viewed negatively among people who have to commute long distances and are faced with a poor transportation infrastructure. For others who have better access to different modes of transportation as well as skills to organize social life accordingly (cf. also Schier in this volume), being spatially mobile is considered to be a necessary and inherent part of their life. The results presented in this chapter indicate that restricted access to means of transportation combined with certain individual characteristics such as being female, being a single parent, or commuting to a low status

job contributes to a negative perception of spatial mobility. Whereas a high motility situation combined with characteristics such as being male, being self-employed, or working in a job with high social prestige often leads to a positive assessment. Acknowledging these findings, one may ask if particular circumstances accompanying recurrent forms of spatial mobility may lead to an individual perception of mobility as an asset that contributes to a higher life satisfaction rather than being a tool that first and foremost fulfils the function of closing the gap between the occupational and private realms of life.

Meanwhile, the chapter by Feldhaus and Schlegel shows how mobility is a main tool to bridge distances between partners who live apart as well as to enable a person to pursue work outside their residential area. This chapter provides insight into how partnership quality may differ by the motivation to move. One major difference is that while men in long-distance relationships report lower satisfaction of partnership quality, those who commute to work show higher partnership satisfaction as compared to their non-mobile counterparts. It is explained that while long-distance relationship is a stressful practice, mobility for job reasons can be fulfilling since it allows a person to pursue both career and family aspirations. This finding highlights the importance of inquiring into the driving forces behind mobility and how different reasons can affect familial relationship in different ways.

In the third chapter within this part, Kley investigates how job-related mobility and intentions to migrate could trigger union dissolution. While job-related spatial mobility is a fundamental tool to bridge distances between place of residence where a family lives and place of work, long-distance commuting could have unintended consequences on familial relationships. Indeed, Kley finds that long-distance commuting between home and work significantly enhances the risk of separation for couples, but only in the case where women commute. In addition, she also finds that couples who were considering or planning to migrate have higher risks of separation. While the migration intention might be intended for improving the living environment, moving is a stressful event and can ultimately influence partnership quality. These findings vividly illustrate how mobility and migration are well-embedded in family lives.

Another notable and consistent finding from all three chapters in this part is that the impacts of mobility on familial relationships have gender specific dimensions. Long-distance commuting for job reasons poses negative familial consequences but this applies only to women. Couples where women commute long-distance for work reason have higher risk of separation as found by Kley. Similarly Feldhaus and Schlegel find in their extended analysis that job-related mobility is negatively related to partnership quality for women when children are present in the household. An explanation for these findings can be found in Viry and Vincent-Geslin's chapter that commuting is perceived in a positive way, particularly for men because it is a tool to achieve career goals. On the other hand, job-related mobility adds another dimension of stress for working women who usually already have to juggle between employment and household chores (Bianchi and Mattingly 2003; Killewald and Gough 2010).

1.4.3 Part 3: Spatial Mobility and Its Relation with Family Life Course Events and Living Arrangements

The final set of chapters deals with a range of constellations of spatial mobility that are related to specific phases of individuals' life courses. The two initial chapters examine forms of mobility that take place in early adulthood, the subsequent chapter focuses on mobility arrangements and parental practices in the post-separation period of couples with children and the last chapter addresses patterns of residential mobility in relation to the retirement period and family events in later stages of the life course.

The chapter co-authored by Arpino, Mutarak and Vitali contrasts living arrangements among young immigrants of similar country of origin in different destination countries with those of the respective native-born population. Based on harmonized census data (IPUMS-I) from Spain and the United States, the authors investigate to what extent the age at migration and country of birth of immigrant young adults affect their status in terms of a transition into adulthood. The focus of their empirical analysis are living arrangements that mark the transition into adulthood, i.e. whether young adults aged 18–35 years are currently living alone, with their parents, in an extended family household, or with a partner or spouse. Their analyses show that immigrants of any origin have more similarities in living arrangement patterns to natives of the host society than to their fellow immigrants who migrated to different countries of destination. Age at migration and the region of origin prove to be important predictors. For instance, living arrangements of immigrants who emigrated at an early age from a western European country to Spain or the United States resemble to a greater extent the patterns that can be found in the respective host society. Arpino et al.'s findings thus illustrate that the socialization in a specific context clearly affects the pattern of living arrangements during the transition into adulthood.

The chapter by Lützelberger also deals with transitions that are experienced during the earlier life course. Based on interviews with students attending university in Germany and Italy and their respective parents, Lützelberger aims to capture the perceptions of her interviewees concerning the potential benefits and drawbacks of being spatially mobile during the period of university education. Next to students who have been mobile for study purposes, young people who chose to stay and attend local tertiary education institutions were also included in the sample. The results indicate that individuals are more inclined to view spatial mobility as a means to improve their employability if they believe that the competition for open positions on the job market is going to be highly meritocratic. Many of the students interviewed in Germany assume, for instance, that having been mobile and profiting from different training programs during their tertiary education will be evaluated positively by most employers. Students in Italy, in contrast, believe that access to jobs is to an important degree regulated by the strength of family networks. Spatial (im)mobility in both contexts seems to fulfil the function of improving or securing future living conditions. Moreover, this chapter also illustrates the multi-layered

nature of motivational factors of spatial (im)mobility, that also involve norms and expectations concerning the adequate age and mode of residential independence for the younger generation which differs substantially between societies in southern and northern Europe.

The subsequent chapter authored by Schier investigates how couples and children handle spatial distances and communication in order to maintain close relationships after parental separation/divorce. Schier departs from the basic observation that in many Western societies increasing divorce and separation rates among couples with children lead to new strategies to adapt and perpetuate the relationship between children and their separated parents. The empirical material in this chapter comes mainly from a multi-sited ethnographic study on living arrangements of post-separation families in Germany and is supplemented by findings from a large-scale survey. Schier describes how parents as well as children are engaged in diverse forms of circular spatial mobility with the purpose of bridging spatial distances between maternal and paternal homes. The author underscores that children within these spatial and temporal arrangements play an active role and at times act as competent social actors who exercise mobility in a self-determined manner. Her findings also illustrate that the strategies to cope with spatial distances between old and new parental homes alters the frequency and quality of contact between children and their parents.

The final chapter by Milewski and Loth centres on the later life-course stages and explores the role of transitions and changes in life on the residential mobility of individuals. Using event history analysis methods and data from the German Socioeconomic Panel Study, the authors examine to what extent events such as entering the retirement period trigger spatial mobility among individuals taking into account changes in family life. Their results indicate that the probability to have a residential move generally increases with retirement, especially for birth cohorts that have retired more recently. This is probably because the retirement period lasts longer due to higher life expectancy. Other family life events such as partnership dissolution, death of a spouse or formation of a new partnership also increase the probability of residential mobility. The findings indicate that, after a period of relative consolidation during work life, the retirement period is characterized by a higher degree of residential mobility.

Taken together, this edited volume contains ten original empirical studies which are related to the dynamics among mobility, family lives and the life course. While many case studies in the book focus on Western Europe as a region, the findings have much broader implications. The phenomena discussed in this volume, such as transnational marriages, job-related mobility, or mobility patterns in specific life-course phases, are not country-specific but rather are events that can be observed in many societies. Since the book focuses on empirical analysis, covering a wider range of countries is inherently dependent on the availability of data sources. Although the findings might not always be generalizable (i.e., we show that institutional contexts matter), the ten chapters describe the dynamics between spatial mobility and family lives and show what patterns one could expect to see in other environmental settings.

In addition to bringing together traditionally separate fields of study, namely, spatial mobility and international migration, each chapter also makes considerable contributions to advancing research in the area in a number of ways. First, many studies have an original research design and data sources which have not yet been widely used in mobility and migration studies. This ranges from a longitudinal study of transnational couples to a child-centric multi-local approach. Using a dyadic approach, Aybek et al. conducted a unique longitudinal study of transnational couples both before and after migration took place. Exploiting the language requirement for marriage migrants from non-EU countries for joining their spouses in Germany, the study repeatedly interviewed both the migrating partner initially living in Turkey and the receiving partner residing in Germany. Likewise, a three-wave panel data of mobility behaviors, employment patterns and family relationships used in Kley's paper also represents a unique data source which contains information on residence and work histories of both partners. This type of research design enables the researchers to capture a complete picture of mobility and family formation dynamics from the perspectives of both partners. This addresses the core issue in mobility and migration research whereby a family should be considered as a unit of analysis since migration decision and familial consequences are not isolated individual matters (Stark and Bloom 1985). In addition, taking a child-centric approach, Schier conducted a multi-local study of children who are regularly mobile after the separation of their parents. The study followed the movements of post-separation children between two parental homes enabling us to observe the dynamics of circular mobility in a rather particular context where children are the movers. This type of research fits with a growing call to consider the perspective of children in migration research (Adsera and Tienda 2012).

Second, many chapters in this volume give importance to gender specific differences both in mobility patterns and familial consequences. Aybek et al. and Glowsky clearly show how union and family formation processes are highly gendered. The Turkish marriage rituals and practices discussed in Aybek et al.'s chapter from the very beginning display a clear distinction between the role of men and women. In the case of transnational marriage arrangements, whether the joining spouse is a man or a woman matters considerably for the decision where to live (i.e., in Turkey or in Germany), the timing of the marriage, and the responsibility for covering the costs of the waiting period before the couple is able to move together. Likewise, the sample setting in Glowsky's chapter is essentially based on gender differences in social exchange patterns whereby the marriage migrants are women from poorer countries and the receiving spouses are German men. His study fits with the neo-classical economic theory of marriage (Becker 1973, 1974), i.e., the migrant wives aspire to improve their living conditions in Germany whereas the native German men, facing age-related marriage squeeze, benefit from having attractive wives. In addition, a series of studies on the impacts of mobility on familial relationships by Feldhaus and Schlegel, Viry and Vincent-Geslin and Kley, as discussed above, also highlight how the consequences of job-related mobility varies substantially by gender. Studies that do not consider such gender disparities in partnership choice, family formation processes and family relationships would not be

able to adequately provide a thorough understanding of the dynamics between mobility and family lives.

Third, a couple of studies are conducted in a comparative perspective allowing us to consider the role of contextual characteristics on mobility, family lives and the life course. Comparing living arrangements of immigrant young adults in Spain and the United States, Arpino et al. show the importance of destination contexts in shaping living arrangement patterns. By selecting two countries with fundamentally different welfare systems, they show how young adult immigrants despite coming from the same country of origin are incorporated into the socio-economic settings of the host country and have diverse living arrangements. Similarly, Lützelberger explores the transition into adulthood in Italy and Germany, the two countries with different socio-cultural settings both in terms of norms of leaving parental home and institutional structures. She finds that indeed social networks and labor market prospects influence the decision to leave the parental home, suggesting that life-course transition is determined to a certain extent by the context in which one lives. Such comparative approaches provide a broader perspective for understanding the relationship between different patterns of mobility and the life course.

As the empirical studies in this volume show, spatial mobility – be it for bridging distances or improving the living environment – is a consequential action in our family life. Given that international migration and spatial mobility have intertwined in our everyday life, understanding the relationship between such movements, family dynamics and living arrangements allows us to better evaluate potential consequences for life courses in modern societies.

Acknowledgements The authors are grateful to Matthew Cantele for his careful editing.

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Part I
Union and Family Formation, Partner
Choice and International Migration

Chapter 2

Marriage Migration from Turkey to Germany: Risks and Coping Strategies of Transnational Couples

Can M. Aybek, Gaby Straßburger, and İlknur Yüksel-Kaptanoğlu

2.1 Introduction

This paper is about marriages concluded between Turkish immigrants¹ living in Germany and their spouses who at the beginning of the relationship were residing in Turkey. In recent years, the public debate in Germany about ongoing marriage migration from non-EU countries has been almost exclusively concerned with the legal regulations of marriage migration and the numbers of annual marriage migrants as documented in official statistics. Existing sociological studies about the topic have focused on questions related to the marriage behaviour of first- and second-generation immigrants living in Germany (Baykara-Krumme and Fuß 2009; Kalter and Schroedter 2010; Schroedter 2006).

With the aim of studying the dynamics of marriage migration from Turkey to Germany, in this paper we examine the perspectives of both the *migrating* partner in Turkey and the *receiving* partner in Germany while they are still living in two countries. In this time period the partner in Turkey is preparing for the move, including learning German in order to acquire a language certificate, one of the necessary

¹In this paper we use the term “Turkish immigrant” to denote a region of origin of the person and/or her/his parents. This region of origin refers to the territory within the current borders of the Republic of Turkey. We do not assume that all individuals originating from this territory necessarily share a specific ethno-lingual origin and/or religious affiliation.

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documents when applying for a family unification visa. The partner residing in Germany is also preoccupied with fulfilling the legal demands of family unification and is preparing the environment in which the couple is going to lead a married life. From the perspective of such transnational couples the visa requirements that are applied to Turkish citizens are often perceived as a risk for the stability of their relationship. This paper focuses on these risks and other stress factors of transnational relationships as they were reported by migrating and receiving partners, and discusses various coping mechanisms developed by them.

We start with a basic description of marriage migration from Turkey to Germany based on the available official statistics and a discussion of selected results from quantitative research about the patterns of spouse selection among Turkish immigrants living in Germany. Next we present the project methods, including our sampling procedure. That is followed by an analysis of how events and rituals are timed and organized in marriages between partners who live in two different countries. We then describe the perceived potential risks reported by the interviewees engaged in a transnational relationship and the strategies they followed in order to cope with these risks. The paper concludes with a summary of the main findings.

2.2 Marriage Migration to Germany and Spouse Selection Among Turkish Immigrants

The conditions for immigrating with the aim of establishing a new family are regulated by the legislation of the destination country (cf. Kofman 2004; Kraler and Kofman 2009; Kraler 2010). In Germany the right to join a spouse who is a legal resident of the country could, in principle, be considered to be a basic right. This right is not only codified through international human rights conventions, but is also incorporated into the constitution, as according to article 6.1 of the German *Grundgesetz* marriage and the family enjoy the special protection of the state.

This rights-based perspective, however, has been contested by political initiatives taken since the beginning of the 1980s (Joppke 2001). Through regulations introduced in the subsequent three decades the possibilities for family migration have been increasingly restricted. In 2007 the German government introduced an important change in the conditions for spousal migration: New legislation requires most third country nationals (among them Turkish citizens) who want to join their partner in Germany to prove a basic knowledge of the German language prior to migration.²

²According to section 30.1 of the German Residence Act, a person would be exempted from the obligation to provide a proof of basic German language knowledge if she/he is not capable to do so on grounds of a physical or mental illness or handicap. Individuals who have a tertiary educational diploma and are therefore regarded to be able to adapt quicker to a life in Germany are also exempted. Furthermore the spouses of foreigners who have residence permits as highly skilled worker, researchers, business person, and are themselves recognized refugees or EU citizens or citizens of Australia, Israel, Japan, Canada, New Zealand, South Korea, or the USA do not have to fulfill this condition.

The share of transnational marriages among all marriages concluded by individuals originating from Turkey and living in Germany is not accurately known. In a first attempt to determine that share, Straßburger (2000, 2004) analysed official marriage statistics of German and Turkish authorities for the year 1996 and found that approximately half of the registered marriages of Turkish citizens were concluded with a person living in Turkey. By contrast, Schroedter's in-depth study (2006) based on the German census data indicates that only a quarter of the marriages of Turkish nationals in Germany are transnational ones, although the author herself says her method of analysis probably leads to a strong underestimation of this type of marriages. Nevertheless, the results she presents are very interesting: She finds that among females of Turkish nationality the share of transnational marriages is higher for second-generation immigrants than for first-generation immigrants, increasing to 24.8 % from 11.5 %. For males, however, Schroedter observes a decrease from 29.9 to 25.8 % between the first and second generations (Schroedter 2006, p. 428). A similar observation is made in a follow-up study by Kalter and Schroedter (2010) based on the same data. In that study the previous observation is further specified by indicating that for Turkish females living in Germany the propensity to conclude a transnational marriage increases over the marriage cohorts, though growing in a non-linear, manner. The authors assume that these periodic effects are related to legal regulations concerning visa and naturalization affairs (Kalter and Schroedter 2010, pp. 22, 30–31). Other authors have also found that the tendency to marry someone living in the country of origin does not increase for second generation Turkish males, but does for females (Baykara-Krumme and Fuß 2009, pp. 149–150).

Information on current developments concerning spousal migration provided by German visa statistics indicate that, within just a few years, from 2002 to 2006, the number of visas issued to spouses joining a person residing in Germany decreased from 19,430 to 10,208 (Kreienbrink and Rühl 2007, Tables 3, 7). A more recent report published by the German federal government illustrates that this trend continues, with the total number of spousal unification visas granted to Turkish citizens dropping to only 6,905 in 2009 (Deutscher Bundestag 2010, p. 33, Table 12; see also SVR 2011, p. 100).

As some of the observations reported above already illustrate, reliable and comprehensive data is still missing, and the overall picture concerning dynamics of marriage migration from Turkey to Germany remains blurry and requires more investigation.

2.3 Research Design, Sampling and Research Questions

Next to the above mentioned quantitative research that generally aims to measure the impact of a given set of predictors on the decision in favour of a specific type of spouse, there is also a need for in-depth qualitative studies that are based on the narratives of the individuals who are involved in transnational relationships.

Such studies may follow the goal of exploring and understanding different dimensions of the marriage decision and the contexts in which those decisions are taken (cf. Straßburger 2003).

The German government's legislation obliging spouses who wanted to join their partners in Germany to obtain a German language certificate created the opportunity to conduct a study by contacting potential marriage migrants already in language courses in the country of origin – in our case Turkey. These 'migrating partners' were sampled from among students who had registered for a German language course offered by a language institute in Ankara.³ Ankara seemed to be a good location to conduct this research, as most of the family reunification visas in Turkey are issued by the German Embassy in Ankara (Deutscher Bundestag 2011, p. 17). In terms of access to data, it was advantageous to be able to limit our search for people engaging in transnational marriage to these courses, rather than have to look within general population.

Initially 26 individuals in Turkey who were already married or engaged to a partner living in Germany participated in the study. The selection into the sample was based on two simple theoretical assumptions: First, that the migration and family formation processes will be experienced in a highly gender-specific manner. And second, that the level of education will affect how individuals approach an array of issues, including language acquisition. Based on these considerations the initial sample contained an equal representation of females and males, and similar shares of low and highly educated migrating spouses. As indicated above, the obligation to provide a language certificate applies only to spouses who do *not* have a tertiary educational degree. Consequently, the highest educational background in the sample refers to university dropouts and the lowest education to individuals who visited elementary school.

In terms of age, most of the interviewees attending the language courses were quite young (most of them in their 20s). If they were already married, they had married a relatively short time ago ($\leq 1\frac{1}{2}$ years). There were a few exceptions: Cases in which, for instance, the couple had been married a much longer time, perhaps as long as 5 years, and had initially started their family life in Turkey. For such 'outliers' the advice of Miles and Huberman (1996, pp. 269–270) was followed and the information obtained through these cases was considered valuable in order to discuss and evaluate competing explanations or to reexamine ideas that had been developed on a more general level.

For this study we chose a longitudinal design (see Fig. 2.1), as our interest was explicitly in the course of events. One important aim was to obtain information on the accumulated experiences of individuals, including turning points and transitions in their life courses. Hence, the subject of interest was not only migration, but also the spouse selection process and the timing of marriage-related events and rituals. A longitudinal design was for these purposes very advantageous for reliably gathering information

³We primarily went through the Goethe Institute in Ankara, one of the main providers of these preparatory language courses and – more important – the main organization providing the necessary language certificate.

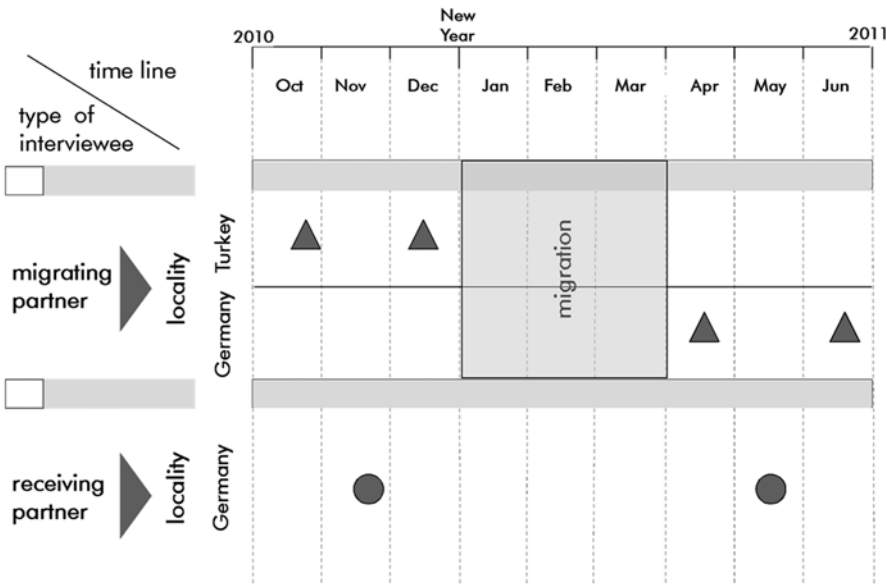


Fig. 2.1 Research design (Source: own illustration)

about ongoing processes and real-time perceptions (Neale and Flowerdew 2003; Lewis 2007; Corden and Millar 2007; Thomson and Holland 2003).

Keeping in mind the potentially sensitive nature of studying intimate partnerships, the female interviewees were interviewed by female members of the research team and the males by a male interviewer. The interviewing method combined a narrative and semi-structured style: Each interview began with biographical narrations and probings, and then, once the narration had ended, addressed a set of predetermined themes (cf. Rosenthal 2004). Migrating partners each participated in a total of four interviews, which had the following thematic foci:

- 1st Interview: life story leading to a transnational relationship and a marriage decision
- 2nd Interview: language course environment and upcoming examination
- 3rd Interview: life as a couple: establishing a common life and integrating into a new family; first impressions and experiences once they arrived in Germany
- 4th Interview: integrating into the new social environment and participating in a course provided for new immigrants by the government

The corresponding content of the two interviews with the receiving partner living in Germany basically followed the scheme for the first and third interviews described above, but from the opposite angle.

The intervals between the interviews conducted with the migrating partners were, compared to some other longitudinal studies, rather short – sometimes just four to five weeks. However, such an intensive tracking was meaningful, as the

individuals we interviewed went through a dense biographical period. Furthermore, this dense interviewing schedule possibly also enhanced the ability to sustain contacts with the interviewees and encourage a readiness for further participation in the study. Although a number of individuals for various reasons dropped out of the study, the data collection resulted in a total of 70 interviews with the marriage migrants and their partners.

A twofold approach was followed for the analysis of the collected data material: The first approach consisted of developing a coding scheme that reflected the topics addressed through the research questions. Then, based on the coded data, thematic matrices were created to allow us to compare data across individuals and, by following themes over time, to analyse patterns of change in issues of particular interest. The second approach consisted of biographical case studies for which the data was not segmented – as it was in the first approach – but rather was analysed in a more holistic manner (cf. Rosenthal 2004).

Having sketched out the methods employed in our research project, we now turn to the main questions addressed in this paper:

- How are events and rituals concerning marriages altered in the context of transnational marriages?
- What are the perceived risks and the coping strategies adopted by transnational couples?

2.4 Alterations of Rituals Concerning Marriages in the Transnational Context

The events that lead up to a marriage in the Turkish context are “highly choreographed” (Tekçe 2004, p. 180) and typically follow a specific sequential order and timing.⁴ Roughly speaking (see Fig. 2.2), the mentioned events include: *kız isteme* [marriage proposal in the familial context], *söz kesme* [positive response of the female’s family and a small celebration], *nişan* [engagement ceremony], *kına gecesi* [‘henna night’, celebration at the house of the bride prior to the wedding], *resmî nikâh* [official marriage at the registry office], *dinî nikâh* [marriage concluded in the presence of an imam], *düğün* [wedding celebration], and *balayı* [honeymoon]. Some of these events, such as *nişan*, are optional; others, such as *balayı*, depend on the financial resources and Western orientation of the couple. It should be pointed out that before celebrating events, such as the *kına gecesi*, *nikâh*, and *düğün*, many organizational preparations are necessary. This may include shopping for clothes and jewelry; buying furniture, appliances, and decoration for a new household;

⁴For an in-depth analysis of the structure of events of marriages in Istanbul and the various meanings that might be attributed to the events by the spouses themselves, as well as for insights into different ways in which desires and actions of individuals and families fit together, see Tekçe 2004.

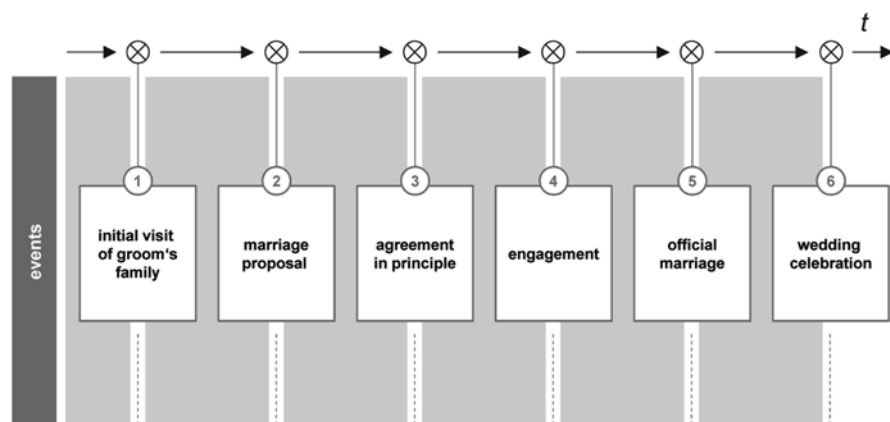


Fig. 2.2 Timing of events and rituals in the context of local marriages (Source: own illustration)

booking a wedding hall; printing wedding invitations; buying sweets for the *nikâh*, among many other things.

Although there is always some variation in this ideal-typical sequence of events and in the associated tasks (cf. Tekçe 2004), the deviations occurring in a *transnational* context seem to be of a specific nature. To start with, if we assume that in most cases the focus of activities in the pre-migration period lies in Turkey, the timing of the events depends strongly on the opportunities of the receiving spouse and his/her family to be in Turkey. In order to accomplish certain things the migrating partner has to wait for his/her partner to be present. If the wedding is planned to take place in Turkey, a date has to be found that would fit the vacation schedule of the majority of family members living abroad. Many of the arrangements can be communicated via phone or internet, but others demand ideally the presence of both spouses. In all our cases, after certain rituals are performed during the receiving spouse's visit to Turkey, he/she returns to Germany. This separation of the couple typically begins after a series of events, e.g. the proposal, engagement ceremony, takes place in a condensed manner. The couple comes again together when the official marriage should be concluded.

From a female perspective this condensation of rituals is often criticized. Many interviewees perceive the fast sequence of events to be overhasty, not giving opportunity to enjoy the preparation for an important life event.

Six, seven months later they [i.e. the (receiving) husband's family] came and quickly the official marriage was done. Again within a week. They had little vacation. Within a week, within a day even – instantly we concluded the marriage. Within a day we managed to complete the procedures. We changed our identification cards straightaway. After one week – not even one week he had to be in Germany. On Monday we officially married. On Friday we sent him off to Germany. Everything was done and finished within a week. Everything was accelerated. (Source: Sanem_JS1_65:65)

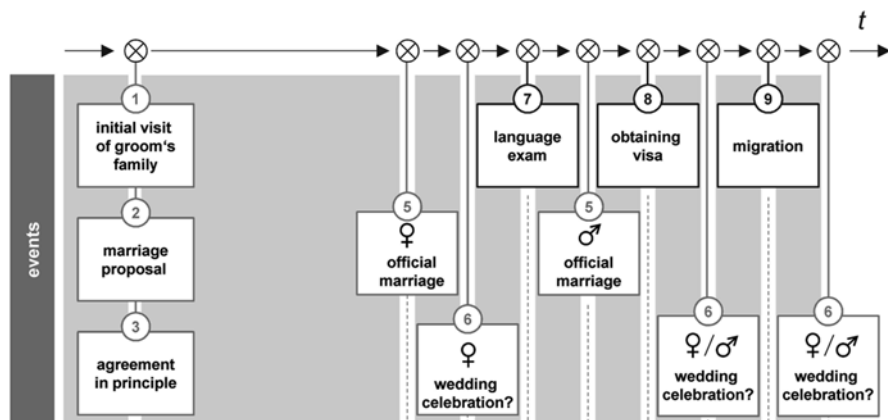


Fig. 2.3 Gender-specific timing of events and rituals concerning marriages in a transnational context* (Source: own illustration)

*The symbols used in the events numbered 5 and 6 refer to the sex of the migrating spouse

Sanem⁵ was married in 2009 and at the time of the interview (2010) was still trying to pass the language exam after failing three times. She complained about the acceleration of the events related to her transnational marriage and the fact that despite the high speed of the marriage events she was not allowed to join her husband in Germany but had to remain in Turkey.

Figure 2.3 shows an ideal-typical timing of events and rituals concerning marriages in a transnational context. Some rituals (1–3) take place within some weeks when the family of the receiving partner comes to Turkey during their annual vacation. Those events that are necessary for leading a family life in Germany (7–9) take additional time and may be taken as a prolonged period of waiting before establishing a common household. The timing of the official marriage and wedding celebration shows some gender-specific variations as will be explained below.

An important difference of transnational marriage processes in comparison to local marriages was pointed out by several of our interviewees when they said that they had contracted the official marriage well ahead of the wedding celebrations in order to settle the formalities concerning the visa application process in the intervening months. One might argue as well that an official marriage gives a guarantee that the burdens both sides shoulder are not in vain. Our sample, even though not representative, in this context points at an important difference between migrating males and females: Whereas all of the females we interviewed during their attendance of the language course were already officially married, only a few of the males were. In two cases the males we interviewed had been married a long time and had previously lived with their wives in Turkey.

Traditionally the bride moves to the household of her husband on the day of the wedding celebration; indeed, only after the wedding celebration has taken place is the marriage considered to be completed. A transition from the parental home to the

⁵ All names are pseudonyms.

new home is, however, impossible in a transnational setting unless the wedding is postponed to a day when migration is possible. Many of our interviewees chose this option and clearly separated the time of the marriage at a registry office (*nikâh*) from the time of the celebration of the wedding (*düğün*). While legal marriage was the precondition to get a visa for migration, the wedding became, among other things, also a symbol of having mastered the legal problems of family migration.

The above-described period leading up to the wedding celebration is also a time when the partners have to deal with risks. In the following we discuss the risks that confronted the migrating and receiving partners and the strategies they adopted to cope with those risks.

2.5 Risks Perceived and Coping Strategies Followed by Transnational Couples

The individuals we interviewed did not deliberately seek out a transnational marriage. The migrating partners did not look for a partner in Germany, nor did the receiving partners seek someone in Turkey. Quite to the contrary, the necessity to migrate due to marriage led to discussions among all couples.

The decision whether Germany or Turkey was going to be the common place to live was related to various risks that were perceived to be part of the marriage migration process. In the following we focus on risks that were considered in the context of a move to Germany, as the couples we interviewed decided to lead a life together there. Had they decided to live together in Turkey, the expected risks and adopted coping strategies would presumably have been different.

Based on the data we collected during interviews conducted prior to migration, we present the gender- and migration-specific risks that we identified, and discuss the strategies that our interviewees pursued in order to minimize or avoid those risks.

Figure 2.4 distinguishes between female and male on the one hand and between individuals living in Turkey (migrating partners) and living in Germany (receiving partners) on the other. The figure shows which risks of transnational marriages were typically perceived by the respective group of our interviewees.

2.5.1 Increased Risks of Virilocality Due to Transnational Migration

Not only transnational couples, but couples in general are faced with deciding where to set up a common household. Marriages concluded in Turkey generally follow the norm of virilocality, in which the bride moves to the *community*⁶ where the groom lives. The migrating female spouses we interviewed basically followed this pattern,

⁶The virilocality norm is different from patrilocality as it does not require necessarily the bride to move into the household of the groom's parents, but to the community where the groom resides in a broader sense (cf. Barnard and Spencer 2010, p. 790).

	migrating partners in Turkey	receiving partners in Germany
females	• risks due to spatial distance to own family and friends • risk of limitation and control through in-law family • risk of being left by partner due to failed language examination	• risk of divorce or of obligatory move to Turkey if partner fails in language exam • risk of greater need for assisting and accompanying the partner after migration
males	• risk of financial and/or social dependency & loss of social status • risks due to being an 'içgüvey'	• risk of dissolution of partnership during the language course • risk of greater need for assisting and accompanying the partner after migration

Fig. 2.4 Risks of transnational marriages as perceived by migrating and receiving partners (Source: own illustration)

but many of them also explained that taking this decision had not been easy. They were concerned about being so far away from their natal family and their friends, and they imagined how difficult it would be to adapt to the conditions in a foreign country and to learn a new language.⁷ Confronted with a number of disadvantages and insecurities, many of the women questioned the virilocal residence norm and tried to convince their partner to set up the common household in Turkey where they had been living. At the same time, the migrating female spouses had an understanding for their husbands' concerns about finding an adequate working opportunity in Turkey. They therefore agreed to move to the place where their partner was living in Germany.

Some of the women felt some relief when their partners said they could imagine returning to Turkey together once their employment career was over or if their wife had great difficulties in adapting to the life in Germany. Still, during the pre-migration period – and probably much beyond that – it remained open whether such plans and promises would eventually be realized. For the female marriage migrants the question of where the new life as a couple would take place had been clarified before the marriage was concluded, but the decision to move to

⁷At this point it seems worthwhile to comment on the implications of the rigid visa requirements that are applied to Turkish citizens who intend to travel to Germany. These legal restrictions actually prevent women (and actually also men) and their family members from traveling to Germany to check for themselves the living circumstances of the prospective husband before they agree to a marriage. Instead the women have to rely on what the men and their families tell them, including how they present the prospective husband's socio-economic situation. This creates a rather risky situation for the migrating female partners in transnational marriages.

Germany had not been easy. A strategy to minimize the risks in case of experiencing difficulties was to reach an agreement with their partner that this arrangement would also be reversible.

In addition to the question of where the common household will be, the composition of the household is also significant for a newly married couple. Although the nuclear family has been the most common form of household in Turkey, for a long time (Timur 1972; Kıray 1990, p. 72; Koç et al. 2010, p. 249), patrilocal residence of newlywed couples is also traditionally observed. Although various definitions of the term patrilocality exist (Fortunato 2011, p. 108), here the term is defined as residence with or near husband's patrilinear kin (Murdock 1967). According to demographic surveys of Turkey, the percentage of households of a patriarchal extended family type⁸ among all households has declined from 19 % in 1968 to 7.4 % in 2008 (Timur 1979, p. 121; Koç et al. 2010, p. 249).

In our sample, female migrating spouses often expressed their unwillingness to live with their families-in-law. For example, Umay explained that her decision to accept a transnational marriage was based on the promise of her husband to have a separate household:

Up to now, all the people who came to ask for my hand said that we are going to stay with the family-in-law only for two years...Only two years! Why am I going to stay with my mother-in-law for two years?... They [the family of her husband] directly said at the beginning, they are going to separate the house and buy the furniture for our apartment... When I talked with him [her husband] about our marriage, I asked him about his opinion, and he promised that we will have a separate house. (Source: Umay_JS1_121:121)

The few female migrating spouses who agreed to share a household with their husband's family emphasized that they accepted this arrangement only as a temporary period in the initial phase of their relationship. By emphasizing the temporary character of this living arrangement the female migrating spouses also introduce a measure to limit the risk of a lengthy co-residence with the family-in-law.

2.5.2 *Labor and Social Status – Chances and Risks*

The discussion about where to live, in comparison to other constellations, was more intense for couples in which the migrating spouse from Turkey was male. This is to a great extent related to gender role differences. From the perspective of the migrating men, fulfilling the breadwinner role was very important. Most migrating women, on the other hand, either did not yet have working experience or were no longer working. Therefore they accepted the traditional gender roles and expected their husband to provide the family income, and envisaged that they themselves would play the role of homemaker.

⁸The patriarchal extended family type refers to a co-residence of the newlywed couple with the husband's parents and his married brothers and their families.

Some of the males, whose living conditions and income level were already good or very good for Turkish standards, worried that a move to Germany would be accompanied by social and economic downward mobility. Therefore they were – probably realistically – concerned that they would not be able to preserve their professional status and would have to accept cuts in their relative income level.

Other males, in contrast, were not worried so much about losing their job but rather were unsatisfied with their economic situation anyway. The possibility of migrating to Germany created the potential of a more prosperous life for them and their future families, although it remained open whether they would really be more successful. In cases of overall limited human and economic capital, the risk of experiencing difficulties on the labor market is quite high while the chances of limiting the loss through a re-migration to Turkey are in these cases rather low.

The case of Cihan represents an exception as it deviates from both of the above-described groups: Cihan was already very satisfied with his working conditions in Ankara and he also had quite secure prospects for the time after his arrival in Germany. From the beginning it was clear for him that he would work in one of the flourishing businesses of his father-in-law once he arrived in Frankfurt/Main. His wife Ceren had been working in the family corporation for a long time. Cihan, in this sense, was not expected to play the typical role of a breadwinner, but through marriage he was integrated into a family business environment.

Another issue addressed by the male marriage migrants during our interviews was the housing conditions they would find in Germany. The males residing in Turkey had agreed, in difference to the virilocal residence norm, to move to the community of the bride. The term used for describing such constellations is to refer to the groom as an *içgüvey* (or *içgüveysi*). In a narrow sense this term refers to a groom who lives in the household of the bride's parents. A wider interpretation could also entail a meaning that the groom is in a situation where he is socially and economically dependent on his wife's family (Stirling 1965, p. 43). Such a dependency often occurs for joining spouses in the context of marriage migration (cf. Strasser et al. 2009).

Many of the migrating males displayed a critical attitude toward a life in the extended family of their wife in Germany. Some of them also followed an active strategy to avoid that: They were planning to take a sufficient amount of money with them to be able to secure their economic independence and pay the rent for an apartment where they would live with their wife in the initial period after their arrival.

2.5.3 Biographical Experiences Promoting the Readiness to Migrate

Having considered various risks that migrating partners connect with their marriage migration experience, we now examine some of the factors that promote a readiness to migrate. The data from our research project do not cover the full range of factors that may be relevant, but our findings still provide certain insights based on a gender specific comparison of biographical experiences.

Among our interviewees, more of the migrating males than females reported on immigration experiences in their families. Altan, for instance, has relatives who live in Germany. He visited them repeatedly for longer periods. Batu did not make any personal experiences in Germany, but his mother grew up there and returned to Turkey when she married. Harun was the owner of several internet cafés and had been to Germany for business reasons. One of his brothers married a woman who lives in the Ruhr region and joined her there. Another brother married the daughter of a family who is from Harun's hometown; she had migrated to Australia and Harun's brother joined her there after marriage. And Ilgaz, who is from a town in the Blacksea region in Turkey, reports about the many relatives he has in Germany. His grandfather, for instance, went to Germany as a young man and worked in a car factory for a long period. The male interviewees thus provided rather detailed accounts about the migration experiences in their families and their contacts to their relatives who live in Germany. This may indicate a greater feeling of security in terms of coping with the challenges of a migration and, if necessary, relying on the assistance of relatives.

Another relevant characteristic of the male migrating partners was that several interviewees reported that they had work experiences in business sectors such as the hotel business, gastronomy, or tourism. Working in these branches they had encountered foreigners, especially German tourists, on a regular basis. Such experiences can be regarded as bringing knowledge that may lower the perceived level of risk that a marriage migration creates. One can assume that somebody who has made the experience that a couple of words of German are sufficient for communication, who has had positive personal encounters with Germans, and who has had the chance to collect information about life and opportunities on the labor market in Germany may have fewer concerns about taking a decision to emigrate.

In contrast to this, the biographical narrations of female migrating spouses contain different arguments that may have contributed to the decision of taking the risk of a marriage migration. Some women had had negative experiences in previous relationships and expressed the hope that they would not encounter such problems with a partner who grew up in Germany. Even though one should not conclude that negative experiences in prior relationships led to a deliberate search by these women for a partner who lives in Germany, such experiences might have contributed to a greater readiness to engage in a transnational marriage and hence an acceptance to emigrate. Our analysis of the biographical data contained in the interviews with female migrating spouses leads to the hypothesis that for some women it might be advantageous to look beyond the local marriage market and include members of the Turkish migrant community abroad. Since in Turkey marriage is universal – only four per cent of women in their late thirties have never been married (Ergöçmen et al. 2009, p. 107) – and divorce is rare, the outlook for older and divorced women in the local marriage market is potentially rather dim.⁹ An example is Ruhsar, a 47-year-old migrating spouse who had not previously been married; her chances of finding a partner in the local marriage market can be realistically considered to be quite low.

⁹In Turkey the median age at first marriage for females is 20.8 despite some variations by region and by certain background characteristics (Ergöçmen et al. 2009, p. 109).

2.5.4 *Risks of Failed Examinations*

In comparing the information gathered about the civic status of course participants in Ankara, a puzzling first observation was, as mentioned above, that all female respondents were already married, whereas the majority of the males were still bachelors. This led to the question of why female migrating spouses formalized their marriage before they enrolled in a language course while most male migrating partners were supposed to get married afterwards. In both cases, it seemed, females – migrating as well as receiving ones – implemented a kind of gender-specific risk avoidance strategy.

Apparently the female receiving partners had an interest in ensuring that they could lead their married life in Germany. Therefore they or their families insisted that the potential groom demonstrate that he is able to fulfill the conditions for family unification. Marriage was only an option if he passed the language examination. In this sense the obligation for the migrating males to pass the language exam in order to be eligible for a family unification visa mitigates for their partners a risk of not being able to lead their marriage in Germany. If the women were to agree to marriage and the men were not able to pass the exam, the women would be confronted with the alternatives either to migrate to Turkey or to get divorced. The women apparently circumvent both of these options by postponing the official marriage.¹⁰

From the point of view of most of the female migrating spouses, marriage represented a pre-condition of investing time and effort into language learning. Only after they had ensured the long-term perspective of the relationship through an officially contracted marriage were they willing to take on the burden of attending a language course, which sometimes involved moving to a different city and living temporarily with relatives, in hostels, and so on.

Our assumption is that the male marriage migrants would also have liked to proceed like that – formalizing the marriage before passing the language exam – if they had had the opportunity; in first attending the language course they ran the risk of putting a lot of effort and money into language acquisition in vain, should they not be able to get married in the end. However they obviously did not have the means to insist on an earlier date for marriage, as their prospective wives living in Germany had the opposite interest and the power to set the conditions.

These observed differences are on the one hand due to the power imbalance in favor of the receiving partner induced through legal regulations (cf. George 2005; Strasser et al. 2009). On the other hand, in the above-cited cases of Turkish couples, they also conform in a certain way to the protective role of the bride's family that can claim – as divorce has to be avoided under all circumstances – to act in favor of the bride's legitimate interest when postponing the official marriage until the eligibility of the potential groom for a family unification visa is ensured.

¹⁰This situation also had consequences for the collection of our data, as it was far more difficult to arrange interviews with the female partners living in Germany. A number of our male interviewees in Ankara were in principle willing to provide access to their fiancées in Germany, but became hesitant because they were not yet married. It seemed to them risky to ask their fiancée to participate in the study.

2.5.5 Prolonged Time of Separation – A Risk and Burden on Transnational Partnerships

The receiving males object strongly to the language requirement because it increases the time of separation from their wives. If the partnership had not been a transnational one, the couple would have moved to the common household immediately after the wedding celebrations. Even in a transnational relationship in which the partners decide to live together in Turkey no waiting period would be required. For a marriage that is going to be led in Germany, however, the couple is confronted with a waiting period during which they are married, but live in spatial distance from each other. As a partial transition into the men's family, some of the female migrating spouses in our sample had left the household of their natal family and were living with relatives of their husband. Most of the others were still living with their own parents.

Many of our interviewees consider this stressful waiting period as a threat to the stability of their relationship. From the male point of view it is not easy to cope with the lack of clarity due to the unknown outcome of the language examination of their wife; to constantly support her emotionally; and, at the same time, to handle the situation that their wife is participating in a course that is also attended by many unmarried men for a period of eight weeks.

We observed during our fieldwork, and were also told by some female migrating spouses, that during the course period some of the husbands living in Germany contacted their wives very frequently. During such phone calls they would ask, for instance, how she was dressed on this particular day when she went to the course, what she did after the course was over, which one of the classmates she thought was nice, and to whom she had established a better contact.

Such behavior might be interpreted as a type of social control being established from a distance, but one has to keep in mind that the language course and the circumstances around it form *the* dominating issue during this time period in the life of the couple and therefore make up a significant share of the communication between the partners. The great interest of the male receiving spouses can therefore also be interpreted as an effort to share the experiences and to give emotional support.

2.5.6 Who Covers the Costs of the Course and Waiting Period?

The language course period also puts financial strain on the transnational relationship as this period consumes material resources. To what extent this was seen as a burden differed very much among the interviewed individuals depending on the material resources available to them. From a gender-specific angle, however, we could make the interesting observation that the male marriage migrants in general had to rely on their own resources, whereas the vast majority of the female migrating spouses were financed by their husbands in Germany. In certain cases, where the female had come to Ankara from another place, this included the costs for a hotel or

	migrating partners in Turkey	receiving partners in Germany
females	• spatial distance to own family and friends → questioning the norm of virilocality • limitation and control through in-law family → avoiding co-residence • risk of being left by partner due to failed exam(s) → official marriage before starting a language course	• risk of divorce or of obligatory move to Turkey if partner fails in language exam → official marriage only after the test is passed • risk of greater need for assisting and accompanying the partner after migration → supporting the acquisition of German language skills (excluding the sponsoring of language course fees)
males	• risk of financial and/or social dependency & loss of social status → ensuring financial independence • risks due to being an 'içgüvey' → avoiding co-residence with in-law family	• risk of dissolution of partnership during the language course → phone calls, visits, company and accommodation offered by relatives • risk of greater need for assisting and accompanying the partner after migration → supporting the acquisition of German language skills (including the sponsoring of language course fees)

Fig. 2.5 Risks perceived and coping strategies followed by transnational couples (Source: own illustration)

daily expenses. This different mode of covering the costs of the course period could be strongly related to gender roles and the official status of the partnership. While the female marriage migrants were already married and could refer to their husbands in traditional terms as the provider of material resources, the male partners initially living in Turkey had a much weaker position.

Figure 2.5 summarizes the risks of transnational marriages as they are perceived by migrating and receiving partners and the gender- and migration-specific strategies they pursue to cope with them.

2.6 Conclusions

In the analyses above, we discuss some of the risks faced by individuals engaged in a transnational relationship and the strategies they adopt to cope with those risks. Risks associated with transnational marriage migration generally can be distinguished from risks caused by the recently introduced German regulations on marriage migration. Among the more general perceived risks that emerged from the reflections of the migrating partners we interviewed was the concern that due to the establishment of a spatial distance to their own family and friends their own support network would be weak and the potential dependence on the in-law family as well as limitations and control exercised through them could be high. In addition, particularly among migrating males the perception existed that due to the move the risk of experiencing unemployment or downward social mobility could increase.

Besides identifying the perceived risks, the analyses also provided insights into factors that may have contributed to a decision in favour of a transnational marriage. A potentially higher inclination to face the risks that are attributed to transnational marriages seem to be related to gender-specific biographical experiences. For some male marriage migrants the perceived level of risk associated with moving to Germany was apparently diminished if the potential migrant had professional experience in the tourism sector or if he or his family had some history of migration in their family. The skills and experiences that these men had gained made the hurdles to migrating seem relatively lower. It appears that these experiences and skills decreased the uncertainties about migrating to Germany and about how successfully they would be able to integrate into a new society.

The biographies of several female migrating spouses suggest reasons different from those of their male counterparts for deciding to enter a transnational marriage despite the perceived uncertainties that come along with marriage migration. Some of the women had had negative experiences in previous relationships that – even if they did not lead them to deliberately search for a partner in Germany – might have contributed to a greater readiness to engage in a transnational marriage and eventually accept to emigrate. Others had limited chances to find acceptable partners on the Turkish marriage market since they were divorced and/or far beyond the average age for a first marriage; for them, we might interpret their decision to migrate for marriage as their only option to marry.

Since 2007 spouses from Turkey have had to provide a language certificate that proves a basic knowledge of the German language in order to join their partners in Germany. The possibility that they might fail the exam is obviously perceived as a significant risk to entering a transnational marriage. Migrating spouses are afraid of being left by their partner, while receiving spouses – if their partner fails the language examination – are faced with choosing between an obligatory move to Turkey or divorce. In order to minimize or avoid these risks female interviewees pursued differing strategies with regard to the timing of events concerning marriage and migration. Female migrating spouses generally attended the course only after they were officially married. They thus ensured the reliability of the relationship and a final marriage before they took steps towards migration. Female receiving partners – in contrast – in most cases insisted that the potential groom demonstrate he is able to fulfill the conditions for family reunification; marriage was only an option once he had passed the language examination.

As the results presented above indicate, for transnational marriages the temporal order of events is often characterized by short time periods of accelerated activities in which rituals are performed in a condensed manner on the one hand, and by long periods of minor steps and waiting on the other. In particular, the legal requirement to obtain a certain knowledge of German takes time and prolongs the period of separation transnational couples face. In some cases this creates serious challenges and tensions for couples and hence represents a probation period for their relationship.

The period of language acquisition also puts strain on the relationship of the transnational couple in terms of material resources. Language courses cost money, and the full cost is higher if the attendee needs to additionally pay for accommodation and living costs. The gathered data about conditions of attending a language

course revealed different modes of covering the costs that reflected gender roles and the official status of the partnership. When the couple was already married – as was the case for all female migrating spouses – language course participants could refer to their partners as the provider of material resources. Male marriage migrants, however, generally had to cover the costs themselves, sometimes with help from their families. Poorer males – receiving as well as migrating ones – may eventually not be able to cover the additional expenses incurred due to the language-proficiency requirement.

The data we obtained through interviews at the same time clearly provide evidence for the agency exercised by individuals who engage in a transnational relationship with respect to anticipatory actions and cautionary measures. Potential female marriage migrants not only insisted on an official marriage before they put any effort into learning German, but they also tried to guarantee better starting conditions prior to their emigration by reaching an agreement with their future husband to establish an autonomous household as soon as possible instead of living with the extended family. For males migrating from Turkey, ensuring financial and residential independence was also a high priority goal.

Some of the receiving female partners had a strong preference to lead their married life in Germany. Therefore contracting the marriage was postponed until the result of the language exam was obtained and it was clear that the prospective husband could actually immigrate. Both male and female receiving partners generally supported their partners' efforts to learn German emotionally, but only the males also financed the period during the language course in Turkey for their wives.

The pre-migration period in general and the time of the language course and the subsequent exam in particular were perceived to be difficult for all parties involved. In order to give emotional support, receiving partners who could afford it visited or at least contacted their spouses by phone or via internet.

In summary, the analyses presented here aim to deliver a better understanding of the effects of spatial distance not only on organizational aspects such as marriage rituals, but also on the perceptions of individuals who are engaged in transnational partnerships. This includes both their immediate concerns and their concerns about the future. Through the combination of external and perceptual aspects, the aim was to present a fine-grained picture of the social and individual dynamics that characterize marriage migration processes involving Turkey and Germany.

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Chapter 3

Family Influence on Partner Choice of Second Generation: What Are the Experiences of Turkish Origin Women in Switzerland?

Ceren Topgül

3.1 Introduction

The question of partner choice of children of immigrants has become a topic in many European countries in the last decade, yet the topic has been little explored in Switzerland. This paper aims to fill the vacuum with a particular focus on children of Turkish immigrants in Switzerland. I briefly describe Turkish¹ immigration to Switzerland in this chapter (Sect. 3.1). After discussing various theories of partner choice as background for the research questions of this study (Sect. 3.2), I detail findings mainly based on qualitative data (Sect. 3.4.2), as well as quantitative data (Sect. 3.4.1).

Turkish citizens in Switzerland are one of the largest of Switzerland's non-EU immigrant groups: with a total of 70,000, they represented 4.1 % of the foreign population in 2010. Immigrants from Turkey to Switzerland proceeded in four waves: first as workers for socio-economic reasons until the end of the 1970s, second as political refugees following the military *coup d'Etat* of September 1980, third as a result of Turkish governments' suppression of Kurdish people since 1986 and finally in the form of family-related migration from 1990s onwards. Thus, it is important to keep in mind the complexity of the seemingly homogenous "Turkish community" living in Switzerland. This complexity is primarily based on the different reasons for leaving Turkey, as each wave and people joining these waves have different characteristics, resulting in a variety of migration projects. Because

¹As there are various ethnicities in Turkey (Kurdish, Armenian, Greek, etc.), "Turkish" refers to national origin, i.e. people from Turkey – Türkiye, not the ethnicity of people/immigrants from Turkey. When "Turkish origin" is used to define children of immigrants, i.e., second generation, it refers to their parents' country of origin.

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of their parents' diversified migratory paths, second generation of Turkish origin do not form a homogenous group either (Fibbi et al. 2004).

In this context, this paper focuses on the family influence on partner choices from the perspective of second generation women involved. Is family influence exerted on the partner choice of young adults? Is it associated with a specific type of partner? How different is family influence in the case of an exogamous partner choice or choice of a co-ethnic partner in the host country? Is it different than transnational endogamy? What is the role of the intervening family members? What means do parents use to influence their children's partner choice? Which arguments are put forward by families? How do young adults perceive this influence and how do they negotiate if they want to challenge family expectations? Are young people looking for acceptance in the case of possible tensions with these expectations? What are the outcomes of family negotiations?

This paper aims first to investigate the influence of family on partner choices of second generation, with respect to their type of partner, and to illustrate the diversity of experiences of young women. With the help of interviews, I try to seek contrasting experiences to the culturalist explanations for marriage patterns ("culture-bond theories" as Straßburger (2004: 212) puts it), which assumes that marriage choices are determined by cultural rules or preferences alone, or by the dichotomy of modern versus traditional family formation, based on Western values of romantic relationship.

3.2 Partner Choice Theories

Interaction opportunities, individual preferences and third parties intertwine with each other in influencing the process of partner choice (Kalmijn 1998) of young people of immigrant descent.

Alternative partner choices of youth with a migratory background might be exogamy (out-group – Swiss/other nationality – partners), local endogamy (co-ethnic partners living in the host country) and transnational endogamy (co-ethnic partners from the country of origin). Between the two types of endogamous choices, transnational endogamy has received the greatest attention among researchers as well as policy makers, as it involves international migration of a partner. According to the Swiss Census 2000, the majority (60 %) of Turkish second generation had a partner with a certain extent of socialization experience in Switzerland, i.e. either exogamy or local endogamy.

Third parties, i.e. individuals or groups who are not directly involved in the marriage, may take actions in the partner choice of individuals in order to secure the best match for the young person, which is often spelt in terms of maintaining endogamy since mixed marriages are thought to threaten the internal cohesion and homogeneity of the group. Family, religious institutions and the state are three important parties that exert influence on people. In the international migration context, the immigrant community in the host country, non-migrant members of the family and community in the country of origin can be added to the list of third parties. There are

two ways in which social groups influence individual choice and prevent exogamy: by group identification (through socialization process and intergenerational transmission of preferences – Kalmijn et al. 2006) and group sanctions (Kalmijn 1998).

When the sense of *group identification* is stronger (especially in the racial and ethnic groups), people more often internalize norms of endogamy; they are more likely to marry endogamously. Not complying with external pressure may result in *group sanctions*. An individual's closest circle, including his or her family, relatives and friends, may withdraw their emotional and/or financial support or cease their contact if they do not approve of an individual's choice.

In all ages and in almost every society, families have played a decisive role in the marriage projects of their children, and even more so when those unions involve family interests and capital (Bourdieu 1980). Thus, among the third parties, ways in which family might influence the marriage behaviour of individuals are more often discussed, especially in the context of international migration.

In the literature, transnational marriages are often associated with strong family influence (Lievens 1999; Timmerman 2006; Milewski and Hamel 2010).

Migrant parents might prefer a marriage partner from the same region of origin for their marriageable children in order to guarantee matching ideas and customs (Lievens 1999). Nauck (2007) argues that the children of immigrants anticipate and internalize the expectations of their parents to a high extent and show high willingness to comply with the solidarity expectations with no gender-specific differentiation.

The existence of strong ties between migrant groups and their communities of origin provides the necessary means for arranging marriages over the borders, i.e. family-forming migration (Lievens 1999) although Straßburger (2004) correctly underlines the importance of the quality of these ties rather than their mere existence. Non-migrants might exert influence on the emigrant members of the family or community through these networks (Böcker 1994), especially when marriage is the only legal way to immigrate. Many migrant parents give in to the pressures of their community of origin, particularly if they feel grateful to them for their support to emigrate. According to Lievens (1999), transnational partner choice could be interpreted as a mechanism caused by a fit of interests between migrants and non-migrants in the country of origin.

Transnational marriages are nowadays treated as a gender issue rather than an immigration one, especially when it comes to women, as these marriages are framed as arranged or forced (Ballard 2008). However, they are not always organized or influenced by families because of family honour or because of obligations/commitment to kin from the country of origin. They can be a matter of individual preferences and/or interaction opportunities.

3.3 Data and Methodology

The analyses of this study are based on quantitative and qualitative data sources. To provide answers to “if and how” family exerts influence on partner choice of Turkish origin youth, Swiss TIES (The Integration of the European Second Generation)

Survey 2007 is analysed. TIES Survey is a recent quantitative survey on second generation in Europe.² It provides information on youth of Turkish origin (N=449) and their partners in selected urban agglomerations of Switzerland (Zurich and Basel). The data gives wide range of information on family formation/partner choice of Swiss-born Turkish origin second generation.

By conducting in-depth interviews, my aim was to grasp the subjective meaning of the partner choices of young adults with a migratory background. To understand the reasons and mechanisms behind their partner choices thoroughly, I carried out an exploratory qualitative analysis. I decided to define a sampling design a priori, taking into account several dimensions that are important for an understanding of the partner choice process of young adults in different groups: my sample aimed at reflecting differences according to gender, type of partner³ (exogamy, local endogamy, transnational endogamy), ethnicity (Turkish-Kurdish) and religion (Alevi-Sunni, no religious affiliation). I defined quotas based on the first two dimensions and tried to select cases that were as different as possible in the variation of the other dimensions (maximal variation goal, Flick 2006: 138). Different ethnicities and religious affiliations needed to be represented in the sample, as strong demographic differentials are found to exist across these lines – for ethnicity (Koç et al. 2008) and for religion (Erdem 2009). Moreover, I tried to include second generation in the sample according to their parents' motive of immigration to Switzerland (labour migrants, political and Kurdish refugees) to reflect different family situations and migration projects based on different migration waves (Fibbi et al. 2004).

While reaching potential respondents, I used a snowball technique; I used a variety of different networks so that “a wide distribution of life situations” (Prieur 2002: 55) and family histories could be obtained. I contacted key informants in various institutions in different regions of Switzerland: local integration offices; NGOs; religious, social and political (immigrant) associations; and universities. Personal networks played a role as well. Most of the informants were able to recommend potential respondents. As a result, I carried out 26 in-depth interviews with youth of Turkish origin: 14 women and 12 men. All individuals in the sample are married or living together with their partners, except one case of divorce. I studied not only the Swiss-born but also the foreign-born young adults who were socialised in Switzerland (arriving in the country until the end of compulsory education, up to the age of 13 – see Straßburger 2004).⁴

A semi-structural interview guide was used during interviews to obtain in-depth information on the life experiences of second generation, including their partner choices. Topics of interest in this guide are young people's family/community characteristics (migration story, socialization process, group feeling and living conditions), expectations

²TIES survey countries included Austria, Germany, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Spain and Sweden. Turkish origin youth were interviewed in every country except Spain.

³Based on parents' country of origin and migratory status of the partner, i.e. whether living in Switzerland or in Turkey prior to union formation.

⁴Multivariate analysis of Swiss Census 2000 data revealed a difference in partner choices of second generation by their country of birth (Turkey versus Switzerland) (Topgül and Wanner 2009).

about union formation, partner choice processes/experiences and future plans regarding family life and migration. Interviews were completed with transcription of tape recordings,⁵ interview summaries and detailed notes of observations. A coding system (thematic coding, Flick 2006: 307; Braun and Clarke 2006) mainly on the basis of theories on partner choice was systematically developed and applied using computer program MaxQDA. I tried not only to describe the partner choice process, find a pattern behind it and identify the underlying factors, but also to “reconstruct the structures generating actions and meaning” (Flick 2006: 21). I was interested in bringing respondents’ voices to the fore and developing concepts based on their reported experiences.

Due to the public and political discourses around the partner choices of women, framing their transnational marriages as forced or arranged, and the empirical findings pointing out that family influence operates mainly as a social force affecting women’s choices (including Swiss TIES results presented in Sect. 3.4.1, see also Kalmijn and Van Tubergen 2010), I chose in greater detail to analyse in-depth interviews carried out with Turkish origin women living in Switzerland in order to explore whether families play a role in partner choice process, how and why families exert influence and how daughters perceive and react to such influence.

3.4 Understanding the Family Influence on Partner Choice of Second Generation Women

In this section, family influence on partner choices of Turkish youth in Switzerland is discussed from quantitative and qualitative perspectives. First, the quantitative analysis from the TIES survey furnish us a with general view of the family influence on partner choice process; second, the qualitative analysis makes it possible to achieve an in-depth understanding of the role of family on young women’s partner choices.

3.4.1 Family Influence in TIES Survey

What is the importance of family influence in the marriage choices of second generation youth who have been born, socialised and who are living in Switzerland? One way of addressing this issue is to portray the family pressure perceived by the respondents both in the sense of supporting or opposing the selection proposed by them. The other way is to figure out the role of the family in shaping the occasions of encounter and in framing the marriage market for the children (Fibbi et al. 2010).

⁵ All interviews were taped with the permission of interviewed young adults.

Family influence on union formation can take the form of advice and pressure on the marriage/dating behaviour of young people: how strongly, and how frequently, do families take a stand on the marriage/dating choices of their children? According to the Swiss TIES survey, native-born youth of Turkish descent are rarely confronted with some family pressure (in the sense of either supporting or discouraging) while choosing a partner, whatever the migratory status of the partner is (Table 3.1). The issue concerns women almost exclusively (19 % of married women: 13 % discouraged and 6 % encouraged to marry) compared to 7 % of married men. Yet, women who were discouraged still married the spouse who was initially opposed by the family, which means that the daughter's choice triggered a negotiation in the family.

Families may frame the encounters of their children with potential partners. In the TIES survey, respondents select from among pre-determined (exclusive) circumstances the ones in which they first met their partner: individually framed encounters (at work, at school, through friends, in associations, in night clubs, in public places and during holidays) or family framed encounters (through parents or through parents' friends and during family celebration). Couples who met "during holidays in Turkey" are more ambiguous to classify: according to the qualitative interviews I conducted, these encounters are individually as much as family framed. We will see some examples of this point in the following section (Sect. 3.4.2.2).

One fifth of the Turkish TIES respondents (21 % of those in unions) in Switzerland met their partners in family framed settings: men and women to a similar extent (Table 3.2). These encounters often took place during celebrations (11 % of men and women), especially during weddings, family gatherings, gatherings of the immigrant community in the host country and of the transnational community in Europe (according to in-depth interviews). It is very rare (3 %) for parents to directly introduce their daughter or son to a future partner.

Table 3.1 Families who encouraged or opposed marriage of Turkish origin men and women

	No family influence	Family influence			N
		Encouraged	Discouraged	Overall	
Men	93.2	2.3	4.5	6.8	45
Women	81.4	6.1	12.5	18.6	54

Source: Swiss TIES Survey 2007–2008

Table 3.2 Circumstances of first meeting of Turkish origin men and women with their partner

	Individually framed encounter	Family framed encounter				During holidays in Turkey	Other	N
		Overall	Parents introduced	Family celebration	Family network			
Men	57.1	21.4	3.6	10.7	7.1	17.9	3.6	57
Women	49.2	22.1	3.4	11.9	6.8	22.0	6.8	65

Source: Swiss TIES Survey 2007–2008

Note: Both married and cohabitating couples are selected for this table. Individually framed encounters include friend circle, school or work environment, associations, social clubs, political parties, public space, night club and during holiday somewhere else than Turkey

As a matter of fact, the majority of Turkish youth (78–79 %) met their partner in settings where they were active on an individual basis. Holidays in the parents' home country appear to be an important opportunity to meet a future partner: it concerns one fifth of Turkish second generation men and women. Those findings confirm Straßburger's (2004) results; studying Turkish youth in Germany, she notes that "'old' transnational ties with the country of origin based on kinship are increasingly complemented by 'new' transnational ties of friendships that start during summer vacations or on similar occasions" (p. 228). French TIES results suggest a higher family involvement in Turkish youth's union formation process in France (Milewski and Hamel 2010). Family pressure, in the sense of encouragement and discouragement, is exerted on half of the young adults.⁶

3.4.2 *Family Influence from a Qualitative Perspective*

In-depth interviews of Turkish origin women⁷ make it possible to explore, in greater detail, perceptions of family/third party influence on partner choices as well as the coping strategies employed by young women. I find a variety of ways in which families influence partner choices and point out how young women negotiate their choices.

3.4.2.1 *Autonomy Versus Heteronomy*

My interest is to highlight to what extent a young woman's choice of a partner can be conceived as heteronymous, i.e. "rule by someone else" or as autonomous, according to her own perception. In line with Tekçe's (2004) statement, I do not associate "choice" only with "resistance to familial desires, or social norms and traditions" (p. 195).

Perception of an autonomous decision among the interviewed women is highly present and not reserved to exogamous partner choice. Berfin comes from a family in which consanguineous marriage is (or rather used to be) a norm. Berfin and her husband are the last couple in her generation to be involved in this type of marriage. She has a very strong relationship with her immediate family. She always asks their opinion; her marriage decision was an exception. She talks about autonomy in the case of consanguineous partner choice:

Ours wasn't because they wanted so; it was because we decided so. They didn't tell [me] that "you have to marry him, you have to marry your cousin"; I mean it used to be like that in old times. (Berfin, 25, transnational endogamy – cousin marriage)

⁶In Milewski and Hamel's (2010) study, the proportion of young adults who are subject to family pressure is not given for men and women separately.

⁷All names of informants in this paper are pseudonyms.

Some of the young women exercise autonomy by choosing not to involve in consanguineous marriages: Elif was completely against cousin marriage⁸ while Güniz ran away with her co-ethnic husband living in Switzerland to avoid marrying her cousin. These women could not think of their cousins as future spouses; they considered them as brothers.

Autonomy and heteronomy often interplay in the decision making process. In the following stories, a change takes place that is somehow related to the present location of the women (Turkey versus Switzerland). Elif and Güniz were encouraged to marry potential candidates in Turkey: a neighbour in the village of origin for Elif and one of her cousins living in Turkey for Güniz. Both women were quite young at that time (16–18 years old).

Elif has a distant relationship with her father, which, she says, is due to lack of communication. Her mother is the dominant/strict figure in Elif's and her sisters' lives, trying to impose the norms of her culture of origin on them. In Elif's case, the decision making process regarding partner choice started with autonomy: there was an emerging romance between Elif and the potential candidate as they spent a lot of time during holiday in Turkey. They were not officially in a relationship but they were flirting. Elif had some feelings for her future husband but she says she was too young at that time (16 years old) while criticising her parents for not objecting to her marriage decision. Still, she somehow accepted her husband's marriage proposal.

Güniz's family was going to Turkey to vacation every summer while she was growing up. After a certain point, there were marriage proposals for Güniz each year but her parents never tried to convince her about a candidate, and did not even tell her most of the time, until her uncle came to the scene. Then, heteronomy predetermined the process in Güniz's case: a possible marriage with her cousin was arranged against her will by her father and her uncle. From the beginning, she objected to this arrangement and raised her voice. At that time, she already knew the man who later became her husband and had feelings for him.

Asking a father's (or family's) permission for marriage is a common ritual in Turkey, even in the case of autonomous marriage decisions. While in Turkey for holidays, marriage candidates for both women came to ask their father's permission for marriage. Elif's mother, at this point, played a role in inclining Elif towards her husband: she was in favour of this marriage as opposed to a possible consanguineous marriage. Each woman was asked to give a formal approval: they were asked to endorse their father's decision so that there was no outspoken violation of their will.

After returning to Switzerland, both women realized that it was a mistake and that they did not want to get married to the promised men. This shows autonomy and might be framed by the location; being in Switzerland changed their opinion. Elif says:

One week after [the promise] I came back [to Switzerland]. I mean spontaneously there was a shift [in my ideas about four months later]. I said to myself I did something but can I take it? All in all I know him for three weeks. What did I do? (Elif, 31, transnational endogamy)

⁸Like Feride and Sibel.

Both women confronted their parents and claimed a right to autonomy. Neither Elif nor Güniz's father liked their daughters' choosing to express their own voices after the promise for marriage was already given. This was a threat for their own credibility, so they both enforced their decisions.

In both cases we note a "location effect", which might be related to the higher negotiating power of women in Switzerland, where they have their own networks compared to the village of origin in Turkey, where they are surrounded by extended family and the family network.

Family influence is an important factor in the marriage decisions of many young adults of Turkish origin, both to exert endogamy or exogamy. Yet, young women still express autonomy, sometimes by resisting to the pressure, in their experiences. Family approval is very important in the partner choice/marriage decisions of most of the young women, which brings about a certain level of heteronomy. Yet, this generally coexists with autonomy (at least to some extent), which is in line with Boos-Nünning and Karakasoglu's (2004) finding on immigrant women living in Germany and Tekçe's (2004) findings on couples in Istanbul.

3.4.2.2 Intervening Family's Role (Encouragement Versus Discouragement) and Means of Intervention

This section explores whether family influence associated with a specific type of partner choice (exogamous marriage/cousin marriage/transnational marriage). Moreover, I intend to investigate whether family influence results in endogamy and more specifically transnational endogamy. Do families always encourage co-ethnic partner choice (local or transnational endogamy) and discourage exogamy?

The experiences in my sample reveal a variety of situations regarding family influence: far more various than family encouragement of endogamy and discouragement of exogamy.

Encouragement for a certain partner is more pronounced and direct when family wishes for a partner they approve- whatever their criteria are, not necessarily due to the wish for a co-ethnic partner. Sibel and Güniz were faced with pressure even when they had co-ethnic partners. Both families were opting for consanguineous marriage rather than a co-ethnic one.

Discouragement of exogamy is generally indirect but strongly internalized by women like Sakine: she had a Ghanaian boyfriend but she thought it would be too much to ask her parents to accept a black man.

Eventually I decided to give him a chance. It had to be secret from my family; my family is open-minded but I don't know if they were that open-minded and if it was possible with a black man? (Sakine, 33, local endogamy, talking about former Ghanaian boyfriend)

Their relationship did not last very long before she decided to break up with him. She did not take the risk of conflict with her family.

Discouragement of exogamy, as in Emel's case, can be based on the fear of cohabitation, which is thought to jeopardise honorability. Emel is the only divorced woman I interviewed: her ex-husband is a co-ethnic from Turkey while her current boyfriend

is Tunisian. Emel's brother is against her current exogamous relationship mainly because Emel lives alone and he is afraid the couple might live together.

Family influence does not always mean "traditional" partner choices. First, the family may discourage transnational endogamy. Emel's parents opposed her choice of a 'traditional' partner (i.e. direct from Turkey – her former husband), who she chose in an autonomous way. Second, families may encourage exogamy. Zeliha's uncle, a young man Zeliha trusts, encouraged her to start a relationship with her Swiss partner. He said that "it won't be a problem if he is nice." Then he met Zeliha's husband and approved of him, telling Zeliha that he was a nice person. Zeliha's uncle was not the only person who encouraged Zeliha; one of her best friends also played an encouraging role in her decision. The role of peers on second generation's exogamous partner choices is also documented in other studies in Europe, such as by Huschek et al. (2012).

Family approval of the partner choice is an important encouragement for some women. Feride met her co-ethnic husband autonomously in Switzerland; they started dating. After a while, she told her mother and (elder) brother about her relationship. Her elder brother met her future husband and talked to him to understand his personality and intentions. At the same time, Feride's father investigated him by asking questions of people in the Turkish community. The family then approved her relationship.

Most of the families do want their children to have a co-ethnic partner, often someone from their religious, ethnic or family group. Family influence might take the form of discouragement when women choose a partner out of the favoured group or identity.⁹ The influence seems to be less related to the migratory status of the partner. Depending on the family criteria, any type of partner (exogamous, cousin or transnational marriage) can be viewed as less valuable and transnational marriage is sometimes discouraged by migrant and/or non-migrant families. Observed broken transnational marriages in Turkish community in Switzerland were mentioned by some respondents (like Hacer) as a reason for the change in their families' attitudes towards this type of marriages.

Let us now look at the (direct or indirect) means that intervening families use to encourage or discourage their daughters' partner choices.

Sanctions are one of the direct means third parties use to discourage partner choice. In Sibel's case, her mother exerted sanctions on Alevi (Kurdish) Sibel by not talking to her Sunni (Kurdish) boyfriend (now husband). Moreover, due to a horrible sanction that her friend was subject to, an attempt to "honour killing",¹⁰ Sibel broke up with her boyfriend, shocked by the dramatic experience of her friend:

We broke up because we both knew our families would oppose [to our relationship]. I said "it's impossible, ok we love each other but it won't work because our families will make a big trouble" (...) A friend of mine ran away because her father didn't want [her relationship with a Kurdish man] and her cousin shot both the girl and the boy. (Sibel, 28, local endogamy)

⁹Like the case of Güniz, Sibel and Diyar.

¹⁰So called "honour killings" are by no means typical sanctions (or particular to the migration context); they are extreme types of domestic violence and abuse (Williams 2010). There is a range of other (financial and emotional) sanctions exerted by family or social group to influence young people's behaviour.

Yet, Sibel's break up did not last very long. She and her boyfriend decided to confront their families and eventually got married. During this period, Sibel's younger brother talked to their mother and helped her to accept the situation; yet, her reaction literally changed with the marriage.

One specific way in which families can offer encouragement might be through shaping the circumstances in which their daughters meet potential candidates (as we discussed in Sect. 3.4.1). Yet, the majority of young women I interviewed met their husbands autonomously in settings other than family-related circumstances, whatever their partner choice became (Emel during vacations in Turkey, Feride in public space in Switzerland, Sibel and Sakine through a friend in Switzerland, Deniz during holidays in Egypt, Hacer at a workspace in Switzerland, Zeliha and Diyar at school and Nigar at an association in Switzerland). Some of the women I interviewed then looked for the approval of their family: like Feride (local endogamy); some did not: like Diyar (exogamy). Only Berfin (transnational endogamy) and Sultan (local endogamy) are related to their husbands. Family somehow played a role in Inci and Elif's meeting their co-ethnic spouses in Turkey. Güniz met her co-ethnic husband (who is from the same place of origin in Turkey) in Switzerland through someone in the family network.

An important indirect means of influence is young women's evaluation of partner choices within their circle of family and friend. The experiences of others might well influence how women act in their own relationships. An example that affected Feride's partner choice concerns her best friend:

My best friend was dating a Swiss boy. She told her brother. [Then] She was obliged to break up with her boyfriend because it was impossible because her parents strongly opposed and wouldn't talk to her. (Feride, 24, local endogamy)

Feride herself never dared to go out with a Swiss boyfriend.

Direct means, like sanctions or family framed encounters, do not come to the fore in my sample. The setting in which young women meet their partners is often non-family related, even in the case of transnational endogamy. Indirect means appear to influence young women's partner choices to a large extent, especially family reactions to "different" types of partner choices in the family or friend circle.

3.4.2.3 Family Arguments Behind the Influence

Families have their own reasons for exerting influence. Parents' wishes for a certain partner often relates to what they think is right for their children and what they believe will offer their child the best chance of happiness. What are the arguments families put forward?

Arguments to Maintain Endogamy

Arguments to maintain endogamy, such as ethnic or religious cleavage, are typically believed to be the main arguments put forward by families in order to exert influence, yet there are often other underlying reasons.

For instance, the outstanding reason why Sibel's mother was strongly against her partner choice was the religious cleavage of her potential spouse; Sibel is Alevi and her partner is Sunni. Here the religious cleavage rules out ethnic cleavage, since they are both Kurdish. Sibel's mother is a single parent¹¹; she is very protective. She does not want Sibel to marry someone outside the family, especially a Sunni, because she associates these attributes with (domestic) violence as a result of her own experience.

"He's your uncle's son, he won't do any harm to you, you won't be subject to domestic violence," [my mother said]. My mother, she out-married, as my father is from Adıyaman and my mother is from Maraş.¹² And she was subject to violence, a lot of violence and their marriage ended because of domestic violence. (Sibel, 28, local endogamy)

In fact, protecting Sibel from violence was the main reason behind her pressure on Sibel. She thought that if Sibel married a relative, a cousin, then she herself could control and mediate whatever Sibel might experience in her marriage.

Ethnic cleavage is the main argument put forward by Emel's elder brother to discourage her current relationship with a Tunisian man. Her brother seems to be afraid of the possibility that they might live together.

Moreover, Emel is now exposed to the same kind of attitude from her Tunisian boyfriend's family. They exert a strong pressure (in the sense of discouragement) on Emel's boyfriend while putting forward arguments such as Emel's ethnic cleavage (not Tunisian), the age difference (7 years) between Emel and their son, and Emel's social status (coming from the working class). Emel's boyfriend's parents even threatened to disinherit him if he continues his relationship with Emel.

Thus, pressure can come from both families. Not only in her current relationship but also in her former marriage, Emel's in-laws exerted influence on her husband due to their concern regarding their son's professional career. Emel's ex-husband was at the university in Turkey and he did not speak French; his parents did not want him to waste his career by coming to Switzerland. Ethnic and/or religious arguments are sometimes not as genuine as they appear since they may hide substantial, less acceptable, socio-economic reasons.

Emel thinks another reason for family-in-law influence was their perception of Emel as "too European"; she does not know what they mean. It might mean they were afraid that Emel would not take care of them in their old age.

Family-in-laws' discouragement of transnational marriage does not correspond to the idea that frames transnational partner choice as a mechanism of "fit of interests" between migrant families and non-migrant families in the country of origin (Lievens 1999). According to this approach, non-migrant parents have certain ambitions to improve their way of life (their socio-economic well-being) through the emigration of their children to Western Europe and existing socio-cultural tradition regarding marriage (strong family involvement in their children's partner choices)

¹¹ Sibel's parents are divorced and her father was (and still is) living in Turkey at the time Sibel met her husband in Switzerland.

¹² Adıyaman and Maraş are two provinces of Turkey.

allows them to realize their goal (Timmerman 2006) when marriage is the only legal way to immigrate.

Family expectations, as an argument, arise from time to time when young women talk to their parents, even when there is not a potential candidate at that moment. These wishes, expressed across different conversations, often do not have strong enforcement. Yet, for Elif, who strongly internalized her family's expectations and thus the norms of endogamy, these expectations were as enforcing as any other type of influence. She knew that her parents opted for a Kurdish, an Alevi, someone from their village of origin in Turkey. And because the marriage candidate met all criteria, her parents, especially her mother, encouraged her about this marriage. She wanted her family's approval, so she was directed to choose her husband without any difficulty: "*it wasn't involuntary*," she says.

Family commitment to extended family (in Turkey or in Europe), contrary to the role of "family expectations", may lead to a direct and strong pressure. Güniz's father and uncle exerted a strong pressure on her to marry her cousin who was living in Turkey. Their reason d for the marriage was to let her cousin acquire a legal residence status in Switzerland. During this period, Güniz thought about going to a women's shelter to escape from the pressure.

Arguments Concerning Daughters' Happiness

For some parents, ethnic or religious cleavage is not the primary/relevant argument when it comes to exerting their role as parents, i.e. caring for the welfare of their child.

Güniz's parents, besides their commitment to extended family, tried to discourage her marrying a co-ethnic in Switzerland¹³ although her partner is from the same place of origin in Turkey. They argued her husband who was living in Switzerland without legal papers was only seeking a way to get legal residency in the country. Güniz did not think so. To prove his true intentions, her husband considered making a marriage of convenience with someone else, getting the permit and then getting divorced in order to marry Güniz.

Zeliha's father was afraid that his daughter's relationship (with a Swiss man) might affect her education. Yet, Zeliha successfully completed university. Thus, another argument put forward by parents is concern for the education of their children. Some parents are afraid that their daughters will quit school in order to marry. This is more linked to the marriage decision rather than partner choice, yet the two may well be connected. This finding seems peculiar to Switzerland, as it contrasts with the attitudes of Turkish parents in the Netherlands who have a higher preference for their daughter's early marriage than her extended educational career (Crul and Doornik 2003).

¹³When they first met, Güniz did not want to start a relationship with her husband because he was 6 years older than she was. Then, the two started talking on the phone and seeing each other. His family came to ask Güniz's father's permission for marriage a couple of times. Güniz's uncle hindered the process in order to arrange a marriage between Güniz and his son.

Family commitment to the extended family in Turkey does not appear to be a main argument behind family influence, contrary to some literature reports¹⁴ (Beck-Gernsheim 2007) the idea that marriages in migrant communities are about “reviving the bonds with the region of origin” (Timmerman 2006: 128). Families are often concerned with their daughters’ happiness in marriage (so they question husband’s true feelings) or success in life (so they worry about their daughter’s educational achievement). In a parallel study, Shaw and Charsley (2006) note that Pakistani parents in Britain see the marriage of their daughters to close and trusted kin as a way of “reducing social and emotional risks of making a transnational marriage” (p. 419), underlining the emotional discourse in transnational marriage arrangements.

3.4.2.4 Daughters’ Perception of Family Influence

How do young women perceive the arguments families put forward? Do young women feel that the reasons for family pressure are legitimate or not?

Most of the young women feel that partner choice should be a personal decision, whether they consider family arguments to be legitimate or not. One exception to this is Sultan, who does not understand how young people can act according to their own wishes and ignore what their families think (and out-marry). While giving her opinion about other people’s choices, she says:

I was saying, “no way I would get married to people as such”. They say they are adopted here [in Switzerland] and that they need to acquire its culture. They didn’t care what they saw in their families, they didn’t care at all about their family’s culture. (Sultan, 36, local endogamy: marriage with a relative)

Sultan is a perfect example of identification with the family norms and values; she is one of the few women who do not have post-compulsory education.

Young women’s reactions to family influence (whether they accept it or not) can be grouped into four categories according to their perceptions (whether they find it legitimate or not) (Table 3.3): Identification, when women find the influence legitimate and accept it; Enforcement/Compliance, when the influence is not legitimate from women’s perspective but still accepted; Negotiation, when women do not accept the influence yet think the family has legitimate reasons; and Rebellion, when women neither find the arguments legitimate nor accept the influence.

Each category is illustrated by at least one of the experiences of young women I interviewed, except “Enforcement/Compliance”. Elif’s reaction to family influence is an example of Identification (A); Sibel and Emel’s cases are of Negotiation (C) and Diyar and Güniz’s cases are of Rebellion (D).

Although we see examples of enforcement in Sibel’s and Diyar’s cases, when parents exert sanctions by not talking to their partners, young women do not accept the pressure in either case. Sibel feels that her mother has a legitimate reason to

¹⁴ Beck-Gernsheim (2007) lists loyalty to kin and obligations of family solidarity as one of the motivations of settled immigrants to become involved in marriage migration (Corijn 2009).

Table 3.3 Daughter’s perception and reaction to family influence

Daughter’s acceptance	Perception of family pressure	
	Legitimate	Illegitimate
Yes	A – Identification	B – Enforcement/Compliance
No	C – Negotiation	D – Rebellion

exert influence (her trauma from domestic violence), thus the “Negotiation” starts (C). On the other hand, Diyar’s perception of family influence results in “Rebellion” (D): she has no understanding for her parents (especially her father) who have a negative attitude towards her Swiss boyfriend. She says:

I asked them many times: “What were you thinking when you come here? Did you say let’s go there and live in our little corner and be closed to outside because they are different?” (Diyar, 28, exogamy)

Diyar is the youngest among five siblings and she has been living away from home since university. In this case negotiation seems to be less urgent compared to the case of Sibel, who was living with her mother during her relationship.

In the story of Elif, there is an urge to understand the influence of her family and at the same time to rebel against it. Elif thinks her parents should have acted in a different way and opposed to her marriage at quite an early age. She says she would never allow her own daughters to do what she did. At the same time, she excuses their encouragement on the basis of their rural background and lack of education.¹⁵ Moreover, where they come from in Turkey, girls are often given in marriage at a very young age. At the end, identification dominates Elif’s decision (A).

Legitimizing family influence in some cases appears to be a sign of higher negotiating power of women in the family. For instance, Sibel did not accept the family authority and instead challenged it, but at the same time she somehow legitimized the influence. This can be seen as her attempt to soften the opposition and find excuses for it in order to preserve her relationship with her family.

3.4.2.5 Second Generation Women’s Reaction to Family Influence, Negotiation in the Family and Its Outcome

How do young women react to influence exerted by the families? To answer this question, we borrow the typology of economist Albert Hirschman (1970), which he developed to categorize alternative responses to unsatisfactory situations (conflicts) in a firm, organization or country: *Voice*, *Exit* and *Loyalty*. *Voice* is the attempt to repair or improve the relationship through communication of the complaint, or setting forth a grievance or proposal for change. *Exit* is withdrawal from the relationship. *Loyalty* is not a separate reaction but a response that operates

¹⁵ Elif’s parents do not have formal education. Only her father knows how to write and read.

in concert with the other two in determining whether to use Voice or Exit. When there is loyalty to the organization, exit may be reduced, especially in cases in which options to exit are not so appealing.

Voice is understood here as confrontation and eventually negotiation in the family, *Exit* as rejection and avoidance of confrontation in the family, and *Loyalty* as compliance with the parental order or wish. Taking the level of negotiation into consideration, we differentiate between two aspects of *Voice*: *Confrontation* (almost no negotiation) and *Mediation* (negotiation). When there is mediation, by definition, one or more family members play the role of mediators. These reactions are not exclusive and one or more might exist throughout an individual's partner choice experience.

Avoidance (*Exit*) seems like a common reaction of young women to the family limitation on having a boyfriend. Generally family influence on pre-marital relationship is an indirect one some women have the impression that they should not have a boyfriend before marriage (either that they should not have a boyfriend at all or that they should not do so unless they are in a serious relationship that will lead to marriage). This impression comes from conversations with the family in general, reactions of parents to other relationships or conversations of parents with other people inside or outside the family. Most of the time, young women say "because you know in our culture you cannot have a boyfriend..." without stressing boyfriend's nationality, ethnicity, or migratory background. They continue "...so I kept my relationship as a secret for some years." These women do not respect the traditional rules regarding having a boyfriend but they do their best to avoid confrontation with the family and subsequent escalation. They do not overtly challenge the power of the family on this point.

The abovementioned influence is a similar to the indirect influence wielded by families on daughters regarding having an exogamous marriage. However, women seems to consider out-marriage as a bigger risk compared to having a boyfriend because most women who said that somehow they knew that endogamy was their only alternative did not end up out-marrying (Sakine for example).

Loyalty was the reaction of both Elif (who has some feelings for her future husband) and Güniz (who is totally against a possible cousin marriage) to their parents' encouragement to consider a marriage candidate in Turkey. Güniz explains how her reaction changed from raising her voice (*Confrontation*) before going to Turkey to accepting her father's decision (*Loyalty*) in Turkey:

At the beginning, I showed that I didn't want [to marry my cousin]. Last time [his family] came [to ask my father's permission to marry], I couldn't react. (...) Later, we learned that they casted a spell on us; I don't know how much of it is true. That year we came here by boat and passed through a lot of water that the spell was broken. (Güniz, 32, local endogamy, talking about a possible marriage with her cousin in Turkey)

Güniz experienced a moment of total lack of will to stand against the arranged marriage with her cousin and she could not say anything; it was a strong feeling that she compared to being under a spell.

Güniz confronted her family after coming back to Switzerland, just as Elif did (*Confrontation*). Both families refused to accept their daughters' wish to break the promise for marriage, which might threaten the family's credibility. Güniz ran away

with her co-ethnic partner in Switzerland to marry her autonomous partner choice (*Voice*).¹⁶ Her parents accepted her decision within 3 days and in 2 weeks they organized her wedding themselves. On the other hand, Elif married to the family's preferred candidate obediently; "like a sheep" Elif says (*Loyalty*). What might be the reason behind the different outcomes for these two women who confront family influence over their partner choices? Güniz has two younger brothers; Elif is the second among five siblings (she has an elder brother). They are both the first daughters to marry in their families. They were born in Turkey; Elif arrived in Switzerland before finishing primary school (at the age of nine) while Güniz arrived just after finishing primary school (at the age of 12). Güniz dropped-out of school after compulsory education because her family did not allow her to do an apprenticeship far from where they lived; Elif finished vocational training. They both were very young (16–17 years old) at the time the promise for marriage was given. Number of siblings, age at arrival and educational level do not seem to explain these two women's different reactions to family influence sufficiently (as Elif had a longer duration of stay and higher education). After coming to Switzerland, Elif did not have any friends and experienced social exclusion; Güniz had many Turkish friends. Elif's family is of Kurdish origin with a rural background, while Güniz's family came from an urban setting and is of Turkish origin. Yet, these women are similar in terms of the family education they received while growing up (see Santelli and Collet 2012¹⁷): both families had negative attitudes towards premarital relationships and girls' going out. Elif says she was educated to be an obedient child. This, together with her pre-marital (romantic) feelings towards her future husband, can help us to understand her loyalty. Likewise, the romantic feelings of Güniz for her husband enabled her resistance against cousin marriage.

Elif's reaction to family expectations is also different from her younger sister's. In spite of the strong family discouragement and even sanctions (all members of the family stopped talking to her), Elif's sister got married exogamously (to a Guinean) (*Voice*). In this process, Elif played a role as mediator and their mother accepted her marriage only when Elif's sister had a child. How did Elif's sister manage to raise her voice and negotiate while Elif stayed loyal to the expectations of her family? Elif's sister was autonomous not only in her partner choice but also in other social spheres: she quit vocational training and left home to live alone. Elif says that her mother gave in to her sister's raising her voice after realizing it was impossible to control her. The generational difference in partner choices of siblings noted here is found also in Sayad's (1979) study: he observes a family acculturation

¹⁶Güniz decided to raise her voice after considering all options. Yet, it was not an easy process for her; she experienced depression because she had to run away instead of leaving her parental home in a wedding dress (symbolising purity). Moreover, people continued talking about her and the choice she had made for some time.

¹⁷Santelli and Collet (2012) mention four factors that constitute a "pre-conjugal socialisation phase" and that are particularly influential in the partner choice of second generation in France: the residential environment, schooling, family education, friends and meeting places.

process – changing attitudes – towards partner choices of their children in the direction of “acceptance” in an immigrant family from Algeria in France.

In Elif’s family, her younger sister is not the only one who out-married; her elder brother’s second marriage is with an Algerian. She says:

And now [my parents] consider [exogamy] as natural and they accept it. That means they needed time, they needed to experience and see [it]. (Elif, 31, transnational endogamy)

Thus, siblings’ partner choice experiences in this case illustrate how family influence can change over time. Exposure to less “traditional” or common partner choices, exogamous or heterogamous ones, in the surrounding community, is very likely to affect not only parents’ but also young adults’ future reaction.

Diyar’s narrative accommodates Avoidance, Confrontation and Mediation at different stages. At the beginning, thinking that their reaction would be negative, Diyar avoided telling her parents about her Swiss boyfriend for 3 years. This created tension within the couple. She explains:

Having a boyfriend isn’t common where we come from [in Turkey]. When you meet someone, you immediately tell your mother “this is the person I’ll get married [to],” then it’s ok. But I didn’t want to get married, so I hid (my relationship) for three years. It was easy for me because I wasn’t living with my parents. (...) but it was difficult for my boyfriend. He was telling me ‘I don’t know what you’re doing when you’re there, as if you’re living in another world... a world that is closed to me. (Diyar, 28, exogamy- Swiss partner)

During the 3 years of her relationship, Diyar avoided confrontation with her parents about her Swiss boyfriend (*Avoidance*). After building up age as a resource to better negotiate approval, she confront with them (*Confrontation*). Her father’s reaction was complete rejection of the situation; he did not talk to her for a while. Diyar’s mother and brothers stepped in as mediators; they took her side and helped her to negotiate (*Mediation*). As a result, her father started talking to her; yet, he still does not talk to her about her boyfriend nor does he want to meet him.

Not only in exogamous relationships, have women sometimes avoided confrontation with their families about their co-ethnic boyfriends. Sibel kept her Kurdish boyfriend a secret for almost 2 years (*Avoidance*) because her mother did not approve of premarital relationships and was afraid of gossip in Sibel’s father’s absence. Sibel did not want to upset her mother. As a couple, they dealt with the situation by going to the neighbouring town by train to be able to live their relationship freely, i.e. to be able to walk around holding each other’s hands. After learning about their relationship, Sibel’s mother rejected Sibel’s autonomous partner choice and barely talked to her husband (which was a strong enforcement on Sibel) until they got married. Then she had to accept the situation. Sibel’s younger brother talked to their mother and elder brother to start negotiations and resolve the tension (*Mediation*).

The possible situations concerning family influence and a daughter’s decision might be schematised in the following way:

There are three possible inputs from the parents in the process of (or in reaction to) their daughters’ partner choices: first, they may encourage endogamy or discourage exogamy; second, they may encourage exogamy or discourage endogamy; and third, they may not exert any influence. Their action may or may not affect their daughters’

decisions. When there is (perceived or direct) family influence, women may diverge to or converge from the family expectations, ideals or norms about partner choice. An endogamous partner choice is (convergent and) “traditional” (A) when the decision of the individual and direction of the family influence match in the sense that a continuum of group norms is guaranteed. A partner choice is re-ethnicised when a young woman chooses an in-group partner either without any influence of the family (E) or even when endogamy is discouraged (or exogamy is encouraged) (C). On the other hand, in the lack of influence, an exogamous partner choice for young women is an innovative one (F). When the family is for exogamy (or against endogamy) and the individual’s decision matches the family influence (D), innovative behaviour is observed at both the individual and family levels. An exogamous partner choice is divergent and “individualized” (B) when the influence is against exogamy.

The term “re-ethnicised” is used to define the partner choices that may have the effect of either establishing new or retaining renewed or stronger ties with the origin group, whereas the word “innovative” is used for choices in which the individual chooses to move away from the dominant endogamic behaviour (i.e., “traditional” partner choice).

All experiences of women I interviewed can be found empirically on this typology (Table 3.4).

Elif respected her parent’s decision/influence for endogamy: she made a convergent “traditional” partner choice (A). In spite of family influence against exogamy, Sibel (religious heterogamy), Güniz (out-family partner choice), and Diyar (ethnic exogamy) chose out-group partners: we qualify this as divergent “individualized” partner choices (B).

Emel’s former marriage with a co-ethnic partner from Turkey is an example of divergent “re-ethnicised” partner choice (C): she married endogamously in spite of her parents’ discouragement. Zeliha’s exogamous partner choice fits in the D-case: it is both convergent and “innovative” because her family encouraged her for exogamy.

Diyar’s exogamy (B) confirms most assimilationist hypotheses: she had a long socialisation in Switzerland (she arrived at the age of two); she had only Swiss friends growing up; she’s the youngest in her family and she has a university degree. The other examples fitting in the B-case (Sibel and Güniz) do not share these characteristics with

Table 3.4 Family influence and partner choice

Direction of family influence	Daughter’s decision	
	Endogamous/Homogamous couple	Exogamous couple
Influence in favour of endogamous couple (or against exogamy)	A – Convergent “traditional” partner choice	B – Divergent “individualised” partner choice
Influence in favour of exogamous couple (or against endogamy)	C – Divergent re-ethnicised partner choice	D – Convergent innovative partner choice
No influence	E – Re-ethnicised partner choice	F – Innovative partner choice

Diyar. They all have different educational levels and different ranks among siblings. Sibel and Güniz arrived in Switzerland completing primary school in Turkey. Diyar and Sibel are Kurdish Alevis while Güniz is Turkish Sunni. Thus, background characteristics do not sufficiently explain their divergent individualised partner choices. One common element in Sibel and Güniz's stories is their strong stand against cousin marriage – which was the alternative to both women's current partner choices.

It is important to note that in most cases, there is no (direct or expressed) family influence. “Re-ethnicised” partner choice (E) and “innovative” partner choice (F) concern more than half of the young women in my sample.

When women meet their partners autonomously, when these partners meet some sort of family expectations (are acceptable to their families in some sense) and when women think it is not too difficult to be with this person (for instance in terms of language), they negotiate and confront with the family discouragement. Thus, negotiation in the family is possible if the partner complies with other types of family expectations (and/or individual aspirations). A university education and living away from parental home are also factors that seem to play a role in facilitating exogamous relationships.

3.5 Conclusions

Directly or indirectly, families shape their children's decisions; partner choice is not an exception. Though women are influenced by their families, this does not mean that they do not have a choice. Likewise, showing autonomy does not necessarily mean that they are free to choose. Sometimes the choice is more complex and difficult, and women have to negotiate. How and why families choose to intervene varies considerably – not necessarily by the type of partner. The desire of family members to protect their daughters from the potential consequences of what they think may prove to be an unfortunate partner choice experience comes to the fore as a reason of intervening among the families in my sample.

There are a variety of ways in which families may influence partner choices: from framing of the encounters to giving advices to pressuring young people regarding their marriage/dating behaviour. I found that many young women meet their partners in individually framed settings. Thus, the influence of family often co-exists with autonomy, as most of the young women seek family approval. This behaviour is not limited to young women of Turkish origin in Switzerland; Tekçe (2004) notes, as a result of her ethnographic study in Istanbul, Turkey, a combination of “individual initiatives and desires with those of family members” (p. 180) in the marriage processes of the couples she interviewed, with no exception.

When family influence is directly exerted, most women still have “agency”¹⁸ and they take action. They often confront and negotiate in the family; mediators

¹⁸I share the point of view of Kağıtçıbaşı (2005: 404) who says “agency refers to motivated action with a sense of efficacy, toward a desired outcome. The dictionary definition of autonomy includes self-rule and volition. The construal of autonomy (...) is in terms of agency that also involves volition”. In this study, autonomy and agency are thus seen as overlapping.

in the family (especially siblings and mothers) play an important role in helping women to avail themselves of voice. Women in my sample appear to be “the central players in their own lives,” in Williams’ (2010: 34) words, rather than the victims of social control and oppressive structures, although their options are somehow limited by circumstances and by structures.¹⁹ This point is often neglected in studies on the partner choices of youth with a migratory background, with a few exceptions: For example, in her study on global cross-border marriages, Lucy Williams (2010) emphasizes migrants’ *agency*, which is defined as “the interaction between our self-conscious self and the social context we find ourselves in” (p. 38).

All the young women of Turkish origin I interviewed had been living in Switzerland for a very long time, if not for all their lives; their families (most of whom are still in Switzerland) have also gone through a drastic social change in terms of their views and attitudes, including their attitudes towards the partner choice/marriage behaviour of their children. This generational difference is mostly reflected in siblings’ different partner choice experiences, which is also found in Sayad’s (1979) study on an Algerian family in France: he noted a difference in experiences between siblings born in Algeria and born in France.

Exogamy does not seem to be an obvious alternative for all young women who value family approval; most of them choose someone from their culture of origin “unconsciously” (re-ethnicised partner choice): a point Santelli and Collet (2012) also observed for young women of immigrant descent in France. Of course, women’s definition of culture and their distance to culture are not static.

Based on Turkish migration history in Switzerland, there might be a difference in family influence on daughters in line with the migration project of the family. However, we did not observe a sharp difference between the experiences of Turkish women (mainly children of labour migrants) and Kurdish women (children of Kurdish refugees).

Overall, the variety of observed situations concerning family influence and daughters’ decisions sheds light on the complexity of second generation women’s life experiences.

This qualitative part on how and why families exert influence and how daughters perceive and react to such influence needs to be completed by an analysis of the in-depth interviews of men in order to explore the similarities and differences of the partner choice experiences of men and women and to understand whether the arguments put forward and young people’s reactions differ along gender lines. This point is my future work. Moreover, my qualitative analysis might inspire future quantitative work.

¹⁹ In Williams’ (2010) study, *structure* is defined “by the systems and policies of governments, but also by social and cultural structures governing communities and families whose members migrate through marriage” (p. 2).

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Chapter 4

Fertility in Marriages Between German Men and Marriage Migrants

David Glowsky

4.1 Introduction

Western European countries have seen declining fertility rates over the past decades. As it becomes foreseeable that the population of rich states, such as Western European countries, will decline and age considerably over the coming decades, remedies for this seemingly negative demographic change are being discussed. One strategy brought forward is “replacement migration”, i.e. migration that has an amplitude sufficient to compensate for sub-replacement fertility of the native population (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2001). Such projections include not only migrants of the first generation in their models, but they also assume that the first generation will reproduce and that their children will further contribute to a reversion of the population decline. Research has shown that fertility of first generation migrants is often even higher than fertility among the native population of their country of origin. After their migration, these migrants thus contribute to sustaining the current population by having more children than the average population. In Germany, migrant fertility has been analyzed mainly for “guest workers” and their descendants. This paper wants to direct the focus to another group which has been underrepresented in social research so far: marriage migrants, i.e. individuals whose marriage is temporally and causally closely connected with their migration to Germany. We will focus on marriages between female marriage migrants from poorer countries and their German husbands. These marriages feature several characteristics which distinguish them from the marriages of most first generation migrants: whereas female first generation migrants from the “guest worker” countries were married to a husband from the same country of origin, marriage migrants marry a German man around the time of their migration.

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First, a marriage migrant's decision to marry a German man is often causally connected to the possibility of migrating to a rich welfare state, rather than being connected to the search for a partnership. Second, they enter a bi-national union with a husband who may be more or less familiar with their culture. Third, German men who marry marriage migrants differ systematically from average German men in several ways relevant to fertility: they are older than average men at the time of partnership formation, they have been married previously and they have children from earlier partnerships. The article will examine the couple as a whole, hypothesizing that fertility depends on the characteristics and decisions of both partners.

4.2 The Special Case of Marriage Migrants and Their German Husbands

Marriages between German men and female marriage migrants stand out in several ways. This section will first provide a general description of these marriages and then develop a set of assumptions about childbirth for such couples.

4.2.1 The Marriage Migrants Phenomenon

Since the late 1970s, Western European marriage markets have internationalized. Marriages between Western European men and women from distant countries have become a common occurrence. In these marriages, the wedding usually coincides directly with the woman's migration to the man's home country. Women in these marriage constellations usually come from countries which are relatively poor compared to Western Europe, namely countries in Eastern Europe and South-East Asia (Klein 2000; del Rosario 1994).

Reasons for the growing prevalence of marriage migration can be found in (a) incentives for women from poor countries and (b) incentives for men from rich countries to enter into such a union, as well as in (c) changed opportunities for these couples to meet. The main explanation lies in the economic gap between the countries of origin of both partners:

- (a) Low-skilled persons from poor countries who want to partake in Western prosperity are faced with growing immigration restrictions. For example, an individual with only primary schooling from a non-EU country has practically no perspective to migrate legally to the EU in order to work and live there. Apart from illegal immigration, one of the few remaining migration options is marriage migration (Müller-Schneider 2000). Empirical work has shown that the desire to migrate to a richer country is indeed a major reason for women from poorer countries to marry a Western European husband. In the study by Beer, most of the interviewed

Filipinas cited “economic security or the legalization of their stay in Germany” as the second most important reason for marrying their German husband (Beer 1996; see also Lauser 2004; Ruenkaew 2003; del Rosario 1994).

- (b) For German men, two major patterns have been shown which explain marriage to a marriage migrant from a poorer country: on the one hand, German men who have difficulties finding a German partner due to an age-related marriage squeeze or unattractive physical appearance tend to marry marriage migrants (Glowsky 2011). German men beyond the age of 28, up into their 60s, are subject to a marriage squeeze in which more single men are looking for a partner than single women (Martin 2001). Men within this age range have lower chances of finding a partner within their national marriage market. Also, men with a particularly high Body Mass Index (>28) tend to remain unmarried. With growing difficulties in finding a partner on their home marriage market, they relocate their search to the marriage markets of poorer countries, where they can use their German nationality as an additional asset.¹ On the other hand, German men who have a strong preference for young and slim women tend to search for partners from poorer countries, where they also find younger and slimmer women than they could expect to find in Germany (Glowsky 2011). The reason for this also lies in the economic difference between the countries of origin of both partners: the average age of first marriage and the average Body Mass Index of a country’s population is strongly correlated with the country’s Human Development Index (HDI). In highly developed countries, people marry several years later and have a Body Mass Index several points higher than in medium- and low-developed countries.
- (c) Furthermore, the opportunity structure for these couples has changed. Over the past decades, increasingly affordable international flights, the availability of the internet, but also the fall of the iron curtain have facilitated meetings between couples from different countries and continents.

4.2.2 Fertility of Migrants

Although no research on the fertility of marriage migrants exists thus far, various studies have analyzed the general effect of migration on fertility. The following two hypotheses will be taken into account: (a) the socialization hypothesis and (b) the disruption hypothesis (Hoem and Nedoluzhko 2008; Milewski 2010).

¹ In contrast to age and BMI, socio-economic indicators such as education and income do not have a clear predictive power for the choice of a wife from poorer countries. Rich and poor men as well as highly educated and low educated men alike choose women from these marriage markets. However, there are country-specific differences. Whereas men who marry women from Thailand have below average education, men with Brazilian wives tend to have a slightly higher income than the average population (Glowsky 2011).

- (a) The socialization hypothesis assumes firstly that adult migrants keep the values which they acquired in their home country after arrival in the receiving society, secondly that these values remain stable for at least a certain amount of time, and thirdly that these values influence their fertility behavior. Accordingly, it assumes that migrants from countries with high fertility will display high fertility in the receiving country, more or less independent of fertility rates of the new society. However, childbearing intentions fluctuate over a person's fecund period. Men and women adjust their desired total number of children upward or downward according to social influences (Iacovou and Tavares 2011; Balbo and Mills 2011). We can assume that a person's socialization affects expected and actual fertility, but that a change in social circumstances, as caused by migration, generally leads to an adaption of fertility towards the host society's average fertility. Evidence from Germany supports this assumption: first generation migrants from poor countries have a higher Total Fertility Rate (TFR) than the native German population, but slightly lower than TFR in the country of origin (Nauck 2007).
- (b) Migration causes big changes in a person's life and it often coincides with cultural misunderstandings, loss of social status and other factors leading to psychological strain. Also, around the time of migration – contrary to situations involving marriage migrants – there is an increased probability that partners are separated for a certain period. According to the disruption hypothesis, all disturbances in a person's life course caused by migration will lead to a temporary decrease in childbearing. Empirical evidence for this effect is mixed, however. For several countries, including Australia and Canada, a weak temporary disruption effect after migration could be shown (Abbasi-Shavazi and McDonald 2000). For Western Europe, two studies could not confirm this effect (Milewski 2010 for Germany; Andersson 2004 for Sweden).

4.2.3 *Marriage Migrants and Childbirth*

Female marriage migrants from poor countries and their husbands from Western Europe compose a special group of couples characterized by certain features, which assumedly influence the couple's fertility to a considerable extent. In this section, we will combine observations about marriage migrants and their husbands as well as elements from various theories on fertility and develop hypotheses which will later be tested empirically. In regard to theory, this paper favors a – broadly defined – rational approach in line with theoretical approaches which are commonly used to explain fertility. Economic theories, like those by Leibenstein (1957) and Becker (1991), the value of children approach (Nauck 2001), as well as the life-course approach (summarized by Huinink and Konietzka 2007) fundamentally stipulate that couples have children if these children seem (in some way) useful to them.

Difference in TFR. The couples analyzed here are characterized by differences on the macro level between the countries of origin of both partners. Most marriage migrants stem from countries that are poorer than the husbands' country of origin.

The economic gap between the countries of both partners is closely related to a difference in fertility: up to an HDI of about 0.9, which is already very high, the correlation between HDI and TFR is linearly negative. A general rule of thumb says that countries with a low HDI are characterized by a higher Total Fertility Rate. However, a small number of countries (24 countries out of 175 in the 2002 HDI) climbed above the 0.9 threshold, beyond which TFR rises slightly again, with Germany being one of these countries (Myrskylä et al. 2009). This means that countries with an HDI similar to that of Germany probably do not have higher fertility. If the economic gap is large enough, however, women in the marriage migrant's country of origin have more children on average than women in Germany. We also know that a society's TFR correlates highly with desired fertility in the country (Bongaarts 1990). According to the socialization hypothesis, we can assume that marriage migrants will stick to the fertility values they acquired in their home country, even if this effect is attenuated by the host society's fertility. It follows that more children should be born in marriages with marriage migrants from high-TFR-countries than in marriages between two German partners (Hypothesis H1).

This hypothesis will be contrasted by several observations which lead us to assume that fertility is lower among marriage migrant-German couples than in German-German couples:

Partnership biography. Marriage migrants and their German husbands often have partnership biographies that reach back further than those of average German married men and women. First, they often had one or more longer relationship(s), and a relatively large share of them were married prior to the present marriage. Second, they often have one or more children from prior relationships. Third, in connection with the characteristics mentioned before, they marry their new partner at an above-average age (Glowsky 2011). We assume that this "long" partnership biography has an attenuating effect on the fertility of marriage migrants, for biological and social reasons: on the one hand, age is a major indicator of women's and men's fecundity. Women's fecundity starts to decline in their late 20s (Dunson et al. 2002), men lose their fecundity from their late 30s onward (Hassan and Killick 2003). Women aged 35–39 have 31 % lower fertility than women aged 20–24 (Menken et al. 1986). And after the age of 30, the success rate of assisted reproduction technology declines by 11 % per year (Wang et al. 2008).² So with increasing age, starting at around 30, it becomes increasingly difficult for men and especially women to have a child of their own. On the other hand, men's and women's childbearing intentions change over the fecund period. The expected number of children can be modified upwards and downwards, depending on various influences. One overall trend stands out: on average, the expected number of children decreases with age (Iacovou and Tavares 2011).

From this array of empirical results, we can deduce three assumptions about the effect of long partnership biographies on fertility in marriages between German men and women from poorer countries. First, age is a major predictor for fertility.

²Out of all childless men and women in Germany above the age of 30 who do not plan to have a child, 19 % name an unfavorable health status for their decision (Ruckdeschel 2007).

We assume that an above-average age at partnership formation leads to lower fertility (H2a). Second, marriages between German men and women from poorer countries have been shown to have a disproportionately high number of children from prior relationships. Previous parenthood will presumably lower the probability of childbirth in the new relationship (H2b). Third, German men and their marriage migrant wives have experienced partnership disruptions more often than German men married to German wives. We assume that childbirth in a second marriage is less likely than in a first marriage (H2c).

Partner preferences and gender role attitudes. Under the rational choice paradigm, we assume that couples determine whether they have children or not. This decision is partly influenced by the couple's attitudes and preferences. German men who marry women from poorer countries emphasize certain partner preferences more strongly than those who marry German women (Glowsky 2011). Most pronounced is their preference for an attractive partner. When asked what they find important in a partner, they place higher importance on youth, slenderness and a beautiful face than men who marry a German woman do. Considering that pregnancy and birth are physically very strenuous and that they have a lasting effect on a woman's physical appearance in most cases, men who place high importance on their wife's youth, slenderness and beauty may avoid having children with their partner. We assume here that they rather want to conserve their wife's young and beautiful figure to the highest extent possible. Accordingly, fertility should be lower if the husband has an increased preference for a physically attractive wife (H3).

It has been shown that persons who support traditional gender roles, assigning men to working life and women to household tasks, are more likely to have children than persons who share egalitarian values (Leete 1999). Whereas couples with traditional values tend to live the single earner model, which allows one partner to take care of the child while the other works, both partners are more likely to be employed if couples share egalitarian values. This correlation, however, has to be seen as a syndrome rather than as a causal connection. An individual's living arrangements also influence the person's value system (Surkyn and Lesthaeghe 2004). Yet we assume that persons who support traditional values prior to migration tend to have more children than those who have more egalitarian values. It has been shown that couples made up of German men and women from poorer countries adhere to more traditional gender role values (Glowsky 2011) – accordingly, fertility should be higher in marriage migrant couples (H4). This assumption supports H1 insofar as that it offers a test of the socialization hypothesis on the individual level.

Openness to partner's culture. Among the couples under observation here, both partners differ (considerably) in their cultural backgrounds, i.e. language, gender role values, etc. Cultural heterogamy can complicate a couple's interaction: couples with different racial and cultural backgrounds have an above-average divorce rate (Roloff 1998; Kalmijn et al. 2005; Fu and Wolfinger 2011; Bratter and King 2008). Instability has a negative effect on fertility. According to the life-course approach, individuals only decide to have children when their personal future is stable (cf. Rupp and Blossfeld 2008). There are two broad explanations for this phenomenon. On the one hand, group boundaries can lead to social exclusion and mounting

pressure, which causes tensions within the couple. On the other hand, the internal communication and construction of a common reality influence a couple's stability (Berger and Kellner 1964). Understanding the partner's family heritage is an intricate task, and even more so for intercultural couples. Partners with differing cultural backgrounds have to translate their family-in-law's actions and codes in order to comprehend their meaning and to adapt them into the couple's identity. This translation process, we assume here, is facilitated by the partners' intercultural competence. Ideally, partners should be familiar with the other's culture and speak the other's language to construct a functional couple identity. We assume that if the German husband is familiar with the wife's native culture, the couple experiences less interpersonal dissonances and children are more likely to be born (H5).

A further observation regards the motivation to enter into wedlock in marriages between German men and marriage migrants. As explicated above, from the women's perspective, the marriage often does not primarily serve the purpose of partnership formation. Previous research has shown that instead of looking for a partner, many marriage migrants rather see the marriage as an opportunity to migrate to a wealthier country. Seen from the life-course approach, we can assume that women who enter into a marriage under these circumstances will probably refrain from having children in this marriage. Children would strengthen the ties to the husband with whom they may not plan a very long-lasting future. Consequently, the consumption utility (Leibenstein 1957) would be diminished if the couple separates and the child's time has to be divided between the parents. However, due to lack of data on the woman's motivation to marry her husband, we will not be able to test this effect.

4.3 Data

Analyses of fertility usually use large datasets with thousands of cases. Yet such data are not available when analyzing the fertility of special groups such as marriage migrants, which make up only 5 % or less of the overall population. This paper uses the "Berlin Couple Survey", which was conducted in 2008 at the Institute of Sociology at Freie Universität Berlin, funded by the Fritz Thyssen Stiftung. The survey was originally designed for the analysis of couple formation processes between German men and marriage migrants from poor countries. For this survey, a random sample was drawn from the Berlin population register. Whereas common samples from the population register refer only to individual persons, the Berlin Couple Survey was able to access couples by combining attributes of both partners. Only those couples were drawn in which the wife was a foreign national and the husband a German national. For the survey, four nationalities of foreign spouses were selected: Polish, Thai and Russian, which are the three most frequent nationalities of foreign spouses of the year 2002, as well as Brazilian, which is the most frequently represented nationality from Latin America of the same year. These couples were supplemented by a random sample of couples with German women for the sake of a comparison group. Altogether, 4,451 couples were contacted: 1,000

couples, each with German husbands and wives from Poland, Thailand, Russia and Germany as well all 451 couples available with wives from Brazil. Both partners filled out a questionnaire each; the questionnaire for the foreign women was bilingual. A total response rate of 26 % was achieved. For the analysis, only those couples were selected in which the husband was born in Germany or had German nationality since his birth and at least one of his parents spoke German as native language. Foreign women had to be born abroad and not have German nationality at birth. The total sample used in this paper contains 729 couples, consisting of five subsamples, divided by the wife's country of origin: Germany 268; Thailand 144; Brazil 69; Poland 134; Russia 114.

The questionnaire focuses on partnership biography, partnership formation and individual resources, but it also contains two questions on children. Both spouses were asked whether they have children from prior relationships and whether they have children together with their current partner. Those respondents who answered "yes" to either of these questions were asked to enter the number of children.³

4.4 Analysis

This section will proceed in two main steps. In the first step, descriptive, bivariate statistics will provide a first insight into the assumed correlations. In the second step, a regression analysis will test multivariate effects.

4.4.1 Fertility in the Present Marriage

Hypothesis H1 assumes that in marriages between a German husband and a wife from a country with fertility higher than in Germany, more children will be born than in marriages between two German partners. Before analyzing fertility in our sample, we will take a look at the difference in fertility rates between the countries involved and Germany, as presented in Table 4.1. The mean ideal number of children was calculated from the World Values Survey 1995 (no data available for Thailand); the TFR and the HDI were taken from United Nations reports.

On average, men and women in Germany view 2.2 children per family as the ideal family size. The populations of Brazil, Poland and Russia idealize slightly larger families. The TFR appears in a somewhat different order. Women in Poland have slightly fewer children than women in Germany, women in Russia have approximately the same number of children. In Thailand, the TFR surpasses German

³ Out of all couples, 7.5 % disagree about the number of children in the current relationship, which may be due to differing views about whether children from earlier relationships who live with the couple should count as "children with the current partner". Since this issue cannot be resolved, these couples were excluded from the analysis.

Table 4.1 Ideal number of children 1995, TFR 2005–2010, HDI 2002 in five countries

	Wife's country of origin				
	Germany	Thailand	Brazil	Poland	Russia
Ideal number of children 1995	2.2	–	2.5***	2.6***	2.3**
Total fertility rate 2005–2010	1.36	1.85	2.25	1.23	1.34
Human development index 2002	0.925	0.768	0.775	0.850	0.795

Sources: (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2007; World Values Study Association 2012; United Nations Development Program 2002). Significance levels of country dummies in a linear regression (ref: Germany, weighted for East/West split design): ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$

Table 4.2 Number of children (all couples, per cent)

	Wife's country of origin				
	Germany	Thailand	Brazil	Poland	Russia
No children	21.0	62.2	49.3	40.3	49.1
1 child	31.1	28.0	29.0	27.6	35.1
2 children	38.6	9.1	17.4	27.6	14.9
3 or more children	8.6	0.7	4.4	4.5	0.9
N	267	143	69	134	114

Source: Berlin Couple Survey. The difference between the groups was tested using Mann-Whitney tests. The couples in the groups with marriage migrant wives have significantly ($p < 0.001$) less children than couples with German wives

TFR by 0.5, whereas women in Brazil have almost one child more during their lifetimes than women in Germany do. The ideal number of children and the TFR provide mixed evidence. The results suggest that couples that involve women from Poland and Russia will have equally many or slightly fewer children than German-German couples, whereas couples that include women from Thailand and Brazil should have more children than couples consisting of two German partners. To test this, Table 4.2 displays the number of children born to each of the five types of marriages. Children from prior relationships are not included here.

One result clearly stands out: all couples with foreign wives have fewer children than couples made up of two German partners. Whereas only around one-fifth of German-German couples are childless, this is the case for 40 % of couples involving women from Poland, and for half of all couples involving women from Brazil and Russia. Of the couples with women from Thailand, 62 % have no children; this is three times as many as among German-German couples. The share of families with two or more children is higher among German-German couples than among marriage migrant couples. When interpreting this result, we have to keep in mind that marriages with foreign partners are a relatively recent phenomenon. As a consequence, we have an unbalanced distribution of marriage duration in our random sample. Marriages between two German partners are on average older than the other couples here, which leaves German-German couples more time for childbirth. Mean duration of marriage is 22.9 years for the German sample, compared with much shorter periods for the other samples: Thailand 9.5 years,

Brazil 9.1 years, Poland 12.2 years, Russia 8.0 years. Also, according to the disruption hypothesis, we can expect lower fertility among marriage migrants within the first few years after migration. However, the above result remains very similar when we only take couples into account which have married within the past 5–10 years: 20.9 % of couples in which the wife is German are childless in contrast to 75.5 % of couples in which the wife is Thai, 56.3 % of couples in which the wife is Brazilian, 47.6 % of couples in which the wife is Polish and 50.0 % of couples in which the wife is Russian.

On the basis on these first analyses, we have to dismiss hypothesis 1. Marriage migrants from countries with high fertility rates who marry German men have considerably less children with their German husbands than German women have with their German husbands. The assumed influence of the wife's socialization in her home country does not take effect here. Instead, fertility of women from Thailand and Brazil, two countries with higher fertility rates than Germany, is lowest within this sample. In the following sections, we will try to explain this effect by looking at individual characteristics of the partners, starting with their partnership biography.

4.4.2 Partnership Biography

We have seen that partnerships between German men and marriage migrants have lower fertility than German-German marriages. One explanation for this phenomenon could be a “long” partnership biography, since this should contribute to lower odds of childbearing in a new relationship. We assume that the couples under observation have less children because they have been married before, had children before their current marriage and because they marry at an above-average age. In order to test these assumptions, we will now compare the partnership biographies of German men who married women from Germany with those who married a marriage migrant. Table 4.3 displays how often German husbands were married before the current marriage, Table 4.4 provides this information for the women, by the women's country of origin.

German men who married women from Thailand, Brazil, Poland or Russia were married before the current marriage more often than men who married a German wife. The difference is most pronounced for men with Thai and Russian wives – more than 40 % of them were married before, and roughly 10 % were even married twice or more often. The difference is weakest and not significant for men with Polish wives, of whom 27 % were married before. Those with a German wife were married before in only 19 % of the cases. Among the wives, we find a similar pattern. Women from Thailand, Poland and Russia were married more often than women from Germany, with a difference of more than 20 % between Russian and German women. Only the share of women from Brazil married before this marriage is lower than that of German women. Overall, this descriptive result supports the assumption that prior marriages have an attenuating effect on fertility. The multivariate regression will have to show to what extent prior marriages have explanatory power when compared to other influences.

Table 4.3 Husbands: marriages before current marriage (per cent)

	Present wife's country of origin				
	Germany	Thailand	Brazil	Poland	Russia
Never married	80.7	56.1	69.2	73.3	59.0
Married once	15.3	33.0	26.9	21.2	31.2
Married twice or more	4.0	10.9	3.9	5.5	9.8
N	295	164	78	146	122

Source: Berlin Couple Survey. The difference between the groups was tested using Mann-Whitney tests. The significance levels in the comparison with the German-German group are: Thailand $p < 0.001$; Brazil $p < 0.05$; Poland not significant; Russia $p < 0.001$

Table 4.4 Wives: marriages before current marriage (per cent)

	Country of origin				
	Germany	Thailand	Brazil	Poland	Russia
Never married	84.4	67.7	87.0	75.3	61.3
Married once	13.2	31.1	13.0	21.9	32.8
Married twice or more	2.4	1.2	0.0	2.8	5.9
N	289	161	77	146	119

Source: Berlin Couple Survey. The difference between the groups was tested using Mann-Whitney tests. The significance levels in the comparison with the German-German group are: Thailand $p < 0.001$; Brazil not significant; Poland $p < 0.05$; Russia $p < 0.001$

We assume that those who had children prior to the current marriage show a lower probability of having children with their current partner. Tables 4.5 and 4.6 show whether the survey participants had children before marrying their current partner.

German men who marry marriage migrants tend to have had more children before the current marriage than German men with German wives. Whereas 23 % of men with German wives had children before their present marriage, 37 % of men with Thai women and even 39 % of men with Russian women had children before their present marriage. Among the men presently married to Thai women, the number of those who had 2 or more children before their current marriage is even twice as high as among men married to German women. This result corresponds directly to prior marriages: those groups including men married before the current marriage also show a higher propensity to have had children. We see a similar, but weaker pattern among the women. With the exception of Brazilian women, marriage migrants had children before the current partnership more often than German women. The difference is clearest for women from Thailand – they were mothers of one child in 24 % of the cases and 15 % of them even had two children. These results offer a further explanation as to why marriage migration couples have children less often than German-German couples: they already had children and may not feel the desire or have the means to have more children. Again, we will have to see in the multivariate regression how strong this effect is.

Table 4.5 Husbands: children before current marriage (per cent)

	Present wife's country of origin				
	Germany	Thailand	Brazil	Poland	Russia
No children	77.3	63.2	75.4	73.9	61.4
1 child	13.6	18.1	16.0	9.7	22.0
2 or more children	9.1	18.7	8.6	16.4	16.6
N	264	144	69	134	114

Source: Berlin Couple Survey. The difference between the groups was tested using Mann-Whitney tests. The significance levels in the comparison with the German-German group are: Thailand $p < 0.01$; Brazil not significant; Poland not significant; Russia $p < 0.01$

Table 4.6 Wives: children before current marriage (per cent)

	Country of origin				
	Germany	Thailand	Brazil	Poland	Russia
No children	87.6	60.6	88.4	84.7	73.9
1 child	8.7	24.1	4.4	12.2	20.7
2 or more children	3.7	15.3	7.2	3.1	5.4
N	265	137	69	131	111

Source: Berlin Couple Survey. The difference between the groups was tested using Mann-Whitney tests. The significance levels in the comparison with the German-German group are: Thailand $p < 0.001$; Brazil not significant; Poland not significant; Russia $p < 0.01$

Whether a couple has children depends to a large degree on their age. As explicated above, increasing age leads to a decrease in fecundity. Women's fertility starts to decline in their late 20s, men lose their fertility from their late 30s onwards. Furthermore, individuals adjust their expected fertility over time. Although upward revisions account for up to 40 % of all changes, the overall trend shows a downward adjustment of expected fertility over time. Figure 4.1 shows the distribution of the husbands' and wives' age at partnership formation.

Men who marry marriage migrants and their wives tend to be older at partnership formation than men and women in German-German couples. Men who marry women from abroad are on average older than 34 years (wives from Poland, Brazil, Russia) at couple formation. Men who marry wives from Thailand are even older than 40 years on average at couple formation. In contrast, men who marry German women are only 27 years old on average when they enter into a relationship with their future wife. The mean age at couple formation is 24.5 years for German wives. Women from abroad are several years older, between 27.3 years (Poland) and 30 years (Russia). These are considerable differences. Men who marry marriage migrants, especially women from Russia and Thailand, meet their partners at an age when their biological fertility starts to decline. The same is true for marriage migrants themselves. They meet their partners when their fertility starts to decrease.

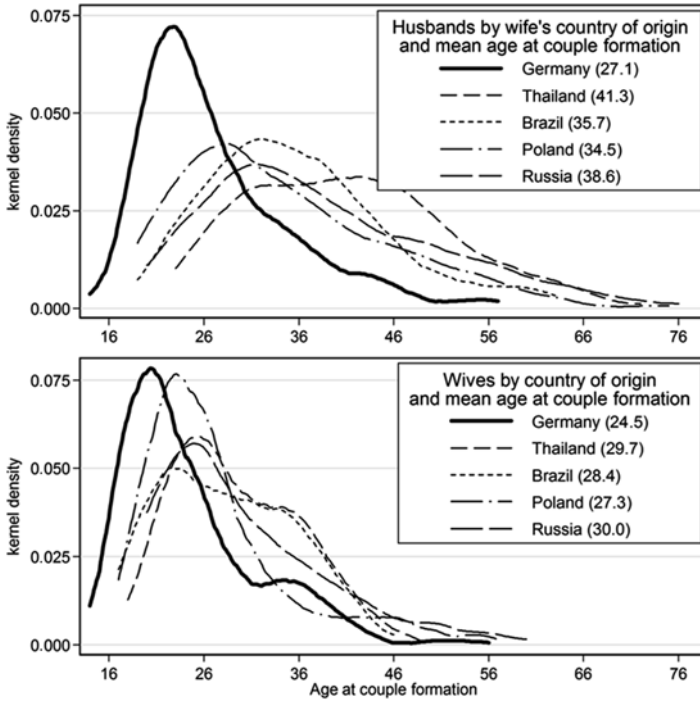


Fig. 4.1 Age at partnership formation (Data: Berlin Couple Survey. All differences compared to German-German couples are significant ($p < 0.001$))

4.4.3 Husband's Partner Preferences and Gender Role Attitudes

We assume that German men who marry marriage migrants have an elevated preference for a young and attractive wife and that this has a negative influence on childbearing. In the next step, we will test whether the preference for an attractive wife is differently distributed between men who marry a German wife and men who marry a marriage migrant. The Berlin Couple Survey asked men what makes a woman attractive to them. Four out of eleven items referred to physical attractiveness: “a beautiful face”, “a beautiful body”, “a slender body”, “youthful appearance”. The importance of the items was rated on a scale from 0 (“not important at all”) to 10 (“absolutely important”). The four items represent one factor in an analysis of the item battery, and show a Cronbach's alpha of 0.69. An additive index was generated out of these variables, which also ranges from 0 to 10.

As Table 4.7 shows, men in a union with marriage migrants place slightly higher importance on the wife's youth and beauty. The difference is significant for men with Thai, Polish and Russian wives. This result supports the hypothesis. Husbands in these couples place higher emphasis on the wife's attractiveness, and childbearing

Table 4.7 Husbands: preference for a young and attractive wife

Wife's country of origin	Mean	Standard error
Germany	6.4	0.1
Thailand	6.8*	0.1
Brazil	6.8	0.2
Poland	6.9**	0.1
Russia	6.9**	0.1
N	799	

Data: Berlin Couple Survey. Asterisks: significance of t-test in comparison to men with German wife. * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

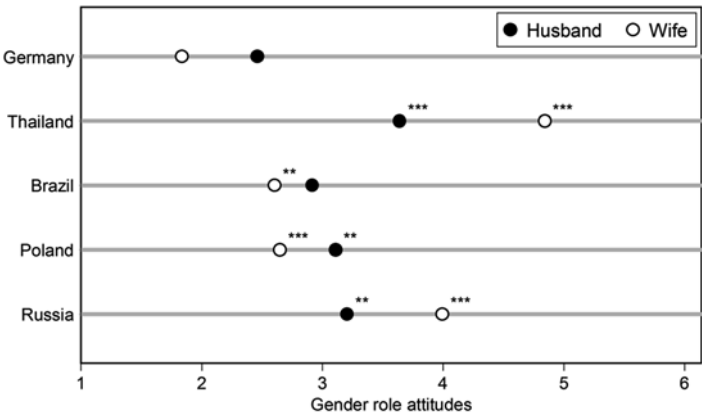


Fig. 4.2 Gender role attitudes (Data: Berlin Couple Survey. Additive index 0–10. High values represent traditional attitudes. Predicted values from linear regressions, controlled for year of birth and education. Significance levels of country dummies in the regression (ref: Germany): *** $p < 0.001$; ** $p < 0.01$)

for these couples is less common. Although the differences are significant, they are not very large. The regression will have to show whether this effect persists in a multivariate test.

According to the socialization hypothesis, marriage migrants should adhere to pronatalist norms more than German women. We can also assume that German men who marry a woman from abroad are more traditionalist than men who marry German women. Figure 4.2 tests the groups for differences in their gender role attitudes (Hypothesis 4). The variable for gender role attitudes was composed by an additive index from three questions. The respondents to the Berlin Couple Survey were asked to rate their agreement with the following three questions on a five-point scale from “fully agree” to “fully disagree”: “A job is alright, but what most women really want is a home and children”, “A man’s job is to earn money; a woman’s job is to look after the home and family” and “Men and women ought to share the household chores”. Out of these three variables, an additive index from 0 (not traditional at all) to 10 (very traditional) was constructed.

The groups of women in this sample show a much higher variance than the groups of men. Whereas German women score below 2.0, Thai women reach a predicted value close to 5.0. All marriage migrant groups score significantly higher, i.e. as more traditional than German women. Although the overall difference is rather small, obviously men who are in a partnership with a marriage migrant agree more with the traditional attitudes than men who are married to a German wife. The differences are significant for men who are married to Thai, Polish and Russian women. It seems as though those couples with fewer children – couples made up of marriage migrants and German men – also support more traditional gender roles. In Hypothesis H4, we assumed that couples made up of German men and women from poorer countries adhere to more traditional gender role values, which would correlate with higher fertility. Together with the results in Table 4.2, this hypothesis has to be rejected. These couples indeed report more traditional values, but their fertility is lower than that of German-German couples. Traditional values and fertility seem to be decoupled here. The regression will show whether and in which direction gender role attitudes have an effect when controlled for the other indicators.

4.4.4 *Husband's Openness to Wife's Culture*

Hypothesis 5 stipulates that more children will be born if the husband is familiar with the wife's culture. The Berlin Couple Survey contains two questions which make it possible to test this hypothesis. One question asked the men how well they spoke their wife's native language. The other asked whether they had lived abroad prior to their current marriage. We will test whether those men who spoke their wife's native language well and whether those who lived abroad prior to their current marriage have more children with their present wives.

The question "how would you rank your skills in your wife's native language?" could be answered on a five-point scale from "very poor" to "very good". We combined these answers into two categories, one ranging from "very poor" to "medium" (low skills) and the other ranging from "good" and "very good" (high skills). Table 4.8 compares the language skills between those men who have children with their foreign wives vs. those men who have no children.

Those men who speak their wife's native language at least "well" have children more often with their wives than men who have medium or low language skills. Among men with high language skills, the share of those who have children with their respective wives is 17.1 % higher than in the other group. It has to be kept in mind that these differences in language skills might be endogenous, i.e. although the language skills are assumed to precede the childbirth, they might have developed *after* the birth of the child, which we cannot control for here. But even then they would be an indicator for the husband's willingness to familiarize himself with the wife's culture and to build a stable partnership.

The other indicator for the husband's openness to the wife's culture measures the husband's experience with other cultures in general, as represented by whether

Table 4.8 Husband's language skills in wife's native language

	Low skills	High skills
No children	54.5	37.4
1 or more children	45.5	62.6
N	356	99

Data: Berlin Couple Survey. Couples with foreign wives only. The difference between the groups in the number of children was tested using a Mann-Whitney test. Couples in which the husband has high skills in his wife's native language have significantly ($p < 0.001$) more children

Table 4.9 Husband lived abroad before meeting wife

	No	Yes
No children	53.6	40.2
1 or more children	46.4	59.8
N	358	102

Data: Berlin Couple Survey. Couples with foreign wives only. The difference between the groups in the number of children was tested using a Mann-Whitney test. Couples in which the husband has lived abroad have significantly ($p < 0.001$) more children

he lived abroad before meeting his current wife. This indicator does not imply he lived in his wife's country of origin; it might have been any other country. We assume that persons who lived abroad have expanded their openness for cultures other than their own.

The result in Table 4.9 resembles very much what we have seen above, although to a smaller extent. Among men who lived abroad, the share of those who have children with their present wives is 13.4 % larger than among those who did not live abroad. This indicator is not at risk of endogeneity, since we know the stay abroad preceded the encounter with the wife.

Marriages between German men and marriage migrants are burdened with cultural differences which may lead to problems in the communication and negotiation between the partners. This, in turn, can lead to low fertility if one or both partners have doubts about the stability of their partnership. We tested the hypothesis that there is a correlation between the husband's openness to the wife's culture and childbirth in the marriage. Indeed the results provide moderate evidence for this hypothesis: bi-national couples that involve men who speak their wife's language and who have experienced cultures other than their own have children more often than couples in which this is not the case. Unfortunately, these indicators cannot be entered in the regression below since they are not available and would not make sense for German-German couples. A separate regression was calculated for marriage migrant unions only (not presented due to space restrictions). It shows that when also controlling for partnership biography, the husband's openness to the wife's culture has a weak positive effect on fertility.

4.4.5 *Regression Model*

The descriptive analyses offered support for several hypotheses. Couples made up of German men and marriage migrants have lower fertility than German-German couples; furthermore, they have been married more often, they have more children from earlier partnerships, they marry at a higher age, they have more traditional gender role attitudes and the men prefer attractive women. In the following regression, we will test to what extent these effects persist when they are taken into account simultaneously. The logistic regression has the dependent variable “child: yes/no”. Successively, we enter the wife’s country of origin, the relationship biography, both partners’ gender role attitudes and the husband’s preference for an attractive wife into the model. We also control for the husband’s income, following the assumption that the economic situation of the family will impact the probability of childbirth. The wife’s country of origin is represented by dummy variables. In addition, “children from prior relationship”, “married before” and “net income” are dummy variables. The attitude and preference variables are scaled from 0 to 10, with high scores representing traditional values and high preference for youth/attractiveness. Table 4.10 presents the regression with standardized logits.

In Model 1, we see the differences between the groups as compared with Table 4.2: childbirth is significantly lower in marriages with marriage migrants, with the strongest effect for marriages to Thai women. The relationship biography explains a large part of the variance, but we see several differences compared to the bivariate results. Hypothesis 2c has to be rejected, since the regression coefficient of “married before” is positive. We have seen that prior marriages are more prevalent among couples with partners who are marriage migrants, but in the multivariate test this indicator does not lower the probability of childbirth. Interestingly, the coefficient – albeit not significant – is positive from Model 3 onwards. It seems as though prior marriages even increase the probability of childbirth when controlling for previous children and age at partnership formation.

Hypothesis 2b is confirmed for men. Children from prior relationships, especially on the husband’s side, have a clear significant negative effect. While the coefficient for women is not significant, it is also negative. Hypothesis 2a is likewise confirmed. The wife’s age at partnership formation has the strongest effect in the final model. The older the wife at the beginning of the marriage, the smaller is the probability of children being born in the marriage. The husband’s age at marriage is indicated in the “age difference”, which also has a negative effect on childbearing, although not significant. The seemingly paradox negative effect of “marriage duration” can be explained with a high inter-correlation of the marriage groups. If we look at the groups separately, the effect is positive.

Hypotheses 3 and 4 are not confirmed. The attitudes and preferences, added in Model 4, have very weak, non-significant and contradictory effects. The more traditional the wife’s gender role attitudes, the lower the probability of childbearing in the partnership is. Contrary to this, the effect of the husband’s gender role attitudes points

Table 4.10 Childbirth in the current marriage (yes/no)

Model	1	2	3	4	5
Wife's country of origin^a					
Thailand	-0.74***	-0.65***	-0.45*	-0.40	-0.41
Brazil	-0.38***	-0.45***	-0.32*	-0.31*	-0.32*
Poland	-0.35***	-0.34**	-0.24	-0.21	-0.16
Russia	-0.48***	-0.33**	-0.17	-0.13	-0.14
Relationship biography					
Married before (wife)		0.20	0.35	0.36	0.42
Married before (husband)		-0.02	0.24	0.27	0.33
Children from prior rel. (wife)		-0.32	-0.25	-0.21	-0.26
Children from prior rel. (husband)		-0.87***	-0.68**	-0.72**	-0.72**
Age at partnership formation (wife)			-0.75**	-0.77**	-0.92**
Age difference			-0.37	-0.38	-0.62
Marriage duration			-0.07	-0.04	-0.18
Attitudes and preferences					
Gender role attitudes (wife)				0.04	0.15
Gender role attitudes (husband)				-0.30	-0.26
Young/beautiful attractive (husband)				-0.08	-0.07
Net monthly income (husband)^b					
Up to 500 €					-0.40
500–1,000 €					-0.13
1,500–2,000 €					-0.30
2,000–2,500 €					0.12
More than 2,500 €					0.09
Income missing					0.20
N	665	665	665	665	665
R ² (McFadden)	0.08	0.18	0.24	0.25	0.27

Data: Berlin Couple Survey. Standardized logits; *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

^aReference category: Germany

^bReference category: 1,000–1,500 €

in the opposite direction. The coefficient for the husband's desire for an attractive wife is extremely weak. Overall we have to conclude that differences in childbirth between the couples examined here are hardly influenced by the couple's gender role attitudes.

Altogether, the group differences can be explained to a large degree. The strong effects of the country dummies in the first model are successively diminished up to the last model. The differences between the groups mainly lie in more children from prior relationships and higher age at partnership formation. Attitudes and partner preference, on the other hand, do not seem to play a role. Nevertheless, a certain effect remains, negative for all groups and significant for marriages with Brazilian women. Even when controlling for all other influences which can be tested with the dataset, an unexplained variance remains, causing couples with marriage migrants to have less children than German-German couples do. Marriage migrant marriages seem to differ from German-German marriages in further aspects. One possible explanation, which we cannot test for with the dataset at hand, might lie in the motivation to marry in the first place. Unions between men from Germany and marriage migrants may not serve as the foundation of a family with children.

4.5 Conclusions

One of the solutions being discussed regarding the population decline in Western European countries refers to an increase in "replacement migration". When projecting the effect of replacement migration, it is assumed that immigrants will reproduce and contribute to the population development with their children. We know that first generation migrants usually have higher fertility than the native population. This paper asked whether marriages between German men and marriage migrants from poorer countries also contribute disproportionately highly to fertility in Germany. A comparison of 268 German-German couples with 461 couples made up of German men and women from Thailand, Brazil, Poland and Russia shows that this is not the case. Marriages with marriage migrants remain childless far more often than marriages among German partners. A large part of this can be explained by the partnership biography of husband and wife – especially children from former relationships and a higher age at partnership formation. The differences could not be fully explained here, but we can only speculate about other factors. It is suggested that the partners do not regard having children as a goal of their marriages, but that they rather understand their marriage as a partnership of convenience. However, we cannot prove this assumption with the data available. Further investigation in this direction is necessary.

It could also be shown that those bi-national couples are more prone to have children in which the husband is familiar with the wife's culture. If the husband speaks the wife's native language well and if he lived abroad before meeting his wife, childbirth is more probable than if he is ignorant of the wife's culture. The majority of the husbands in this sample did not speak their wives' language well, nor had they lived abroad, which strengthens the assumption that the marriages analyzed here are not necessarily characterized by very close and future-oriented relationships.

It has become clear that marriages between marriage migrants and their German husbands are very special constellations which stand out for a number of reasons. Marriage migrants are – with their relatively high age and “long” partnership biography – a special group of immigrants who cannot be compared directly to other groups of immigrants. We can conclude that an increased influx of female marriage migrants will not lead to increased fertility rates – the opposite is the case. It was shown that the effects assumed by the socialization hypothesis can strongly and permanently be disturbed by other factors. It has also become clear that couple interaction plays an – often underestimated – role in fertility. It is not sufficient to sum up the individual characteristics of both partners to understand differences in fertility. Rather, we have to look at ways in which the couple communicates and negotiates. This path should be followed further.

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Part II
Job-Related Mobility and Its Impacts
on Consensual Unions and Familial
Relationships

Chapter 5

Under Which Conditions Can Intensive Commuting Be a Way of Life?

Gil Viry and Stéphanie Vincent-Geslin

5.1 Intensive Spatial Mobilities as a Way of Life

Over the past decades, long-distance daily and weekly commuting as well as frequent business trips far from home have increased in the most industrialized and urbanized regions in the world. These forms of work-related spatial mobility, called sometimes *recurring mobilities* to distinguish them from migration or moving, are characterized by the intensive use of high-speed transport infrastructures (highway, high-speed train and airplane travel). The speed potential of these mobility systems allows people to commute instead of relocating, and thereby to remain locally rooted (Vincent-Geslin and Kaufmann 2012). Today, around 10–15 % of the working-age population in Europe practise at least one form of spatial mobility requiring frequent absence from (the main) home for job reasons and/or long commuting time – a figure that rises to 50 % when we include individuals who had such mobility experiences in the past (Schneider and Meil 2008). These forms of mobility are not new but are increasing due to a number of recent structural changes, including the rise of dual-earner couples, centralization of jobs in urban areas, unpredictability of the job market and the growing requirement for spatial flexibility of employees (Boltanski and Chiapello 1999; Callaghan 1997; Hardill and Green 2003; Harvey 1989). By offering options other than moving, recurring mobilities in part address the challenge of mobility requirement in the age of modernity.

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While these intensive forms of mobility represent adaptation to changes in the job market, they are also intrinsically linked to attachment to places and persons, especially close relatives and friends (Sandow 2011; Viry 2011). These forms of mobility make possible social and spatial combinations that once were unimaginable and unrealizable prior to the era of high speed travel (Urry 2007). Having a job in a major urban area is for instance no longer incompatible with having a family home in the countryside many miles away. When the distance is too great and does not allow for commuting on a daily basis, opting for a second residence near the workplace makes it possible to maintain the family unit in its familiar environment. Commuting in any form is therefore an alternative to moving that allows individuals to continue to care for an aging parent, allow one's children to continue attending the local school or combine two jobs within the couple (Schneider and Meil 2008; Schneider and Collet 2010; Vincent-Geslin 2010). The importance of regular meetings with good friends, clubs, neighbours, colleagues, in brief one's whole network of significant persons, may also foster people to choose to travel intensively rather than to move (Belot and Ermisch 2009; David et al. 2010; Vincent-Geslin 2010). The involvement in local activities such as an association, the political local life or a community, accounts also for staying rooted. Finally, some people are reluctant to move to another area because they are firmly attached to their place of living for its aesthetics, atmosphere, culture, services and facilities, climate or topography (Vincent-Geslin 2010; Vincent-Geslin and Kaufmann 2012). These recurring and intensive mobility practices are then paradoxically associated with a strong residential immobility. People travel faster and further to keep their local roots and to settle in one place. By mobile people and mobile way of life, we then refer in this paper to individuals and practices characterized by this particular relationship to space consisting of both firm residential rootedness and intensive recurring mobility.

Mobility forms that necessitate frequent travel and regular absence from (the main) home are not however without consequences for mobile individuals and their family. Previous research shows that this kind of high mobility requires strong adaptation capacities and management skills in light of various constraints (i.e. Hardill 2004; Kümmel 2005; Schneider et al. 2002; Willis and Yeoh 2000). Such constraints include most notably the additional stress resulting from long commutes (Blickle 2005; Häfner et al. 2001; Rapp 2003; Stutzer and Frey 2004), greater unpredictability in daily organization and fear of marital breakdown resulting from physical distance/absence (Biehl et al. 2005; Collmer 2002, 2005; Schneider et al. 2002), gender inequalities and less investment in family life by the mobile partner (Schneider et al. 2002; Hardill 2004; Hofmeister 2003), fertility delay and childlessness, particularly in the case of mobile women (Schneider et al. 2002; Meil 2010).

The difficulties of combining intensive work-related mobilities and family life leads some individuals – at least those who have the possibilities and resources to do so – to reduce or stop their mobility practices once they have a child and a good position in the labour market. In this situation, intensive mobilities are associated with pre-child/early career life stages (Viry et al. 2008). A longitudinal study in Germany showed, however, that the chances of practising such recurring forms of mobility remain stable over the career (Viry et al. 2014). Evidence from this and other studies

suggest that other work-family balance strategies are adopted in the long run, such as shifting the responsibility of household tasks and child care to the non-mobile partner (usually the woman) (Schneider et al. 2002; Schneider and Meil 2008) or kinship network (Vincent et al. 2010), decreasing investment in friendship ties and community involvement (Schneider et al. 2002) or delaying/foregoing childbearing (Schneider et al. 2002; Meil 2010). In such cases, recurring mobilities seem not so much to be associated with a specific life stage, but rather a veritable way of life.

A mobile way of life should be understood in this study as the result of a process gradually driving individuals to incorporate their intensive mobility practices into their daily and family life and to shape a positive, lasting vision of this practice – as do their close relatives and friends. Through their job career, these individuals would learn both to practise spatial mobility – even to find pleasure in them or at least to see their advantages – and to build a positive image of themselves through this mobility. This acquisition and internalization process thus concerns both objective facts (practice of an intensive form of spatial mobility over many years, acquired skills) and perceptions, motivations, and desires of the individuals. Mobile individuals and their close relationships would gradually organize their lives according to the mobile living arrangement. Likewise, perceptions of the individuals' mobility by their peer group (friends, colleagues) and family are likely to crystallize over the course of the mobility experience. When both mobile individuals and their social network perceive their mobility practice as something valued and compatible with social and family life, intensive mobility may be seen as a way of living. For instance, purchasing a family home far away from the workplace or practising an occupation requiring frequent absence from home are such living arrangements where spatial mobility may well be integrated in the family organisation and be perceived as such. In this case, mobile individuals and their family see the mobility practice as something advantageous, or at least necessary, and plans to continue being so in the long term, because it is part of a general balance achieved between job, family and housing.

However, this process leading to a mobile way of life is contingent. In some situations, mobility practices can be seen as something temporary or negative. Being on the move may be perceived as something external to private and family life; and in some cases as something that hamper it (Widmer et al. 2010). The perception from closest friends and family may also be in dissonance with the perception of the mobile individuals themselves. This situation of disagreement may create frustrations and conflicts, in particular between partners (Schneider et al. 2002; Viry et al. 2010).

This study aims to assess under which socio-economic and mobility conditions can intensive forms of mobility be a way of life. It addresses three questions: (1) What are the different ways to practise recurring mobilities in terms of duration and perception of these practices; (2) How do these ways relate to socio-economic characteristics of people and (3) their capacity for being mobile – motility (Kaufmann 2002; Kaufmann et al. 2004)? The basic assumption of this study is that people acquire and internalize gradually, and through mobility practices, the skills, behaviours, meanings and specific values associated with mobile living. Should recurring forms of mobility be seen as a stage in personal life course, or a

long-term practice? Should living in several places far away from one another, commuting over a long distance and regular business trips be understood as merely a specific moment of transition in the life course or a particular relationship to space that interweaves with family life and continues throughout one's life, like a mobile way of life?

Entering a mobile way of life or not depends on a complex interplay between the form of the mobility practised, the space and time constraints associated with different job and family activities, attachment to places and persons, the family organisation, the resources available to actors (financial, relational and mobility resources, or motility), their personal value system (i.e. promotion of time spent together vs. individual autonomy, job vs. family) and their level of self-mastery (mobility perceived as stemming from strategic decisions made by actors or imposed by the structural constraints of the environment). As complex as this process is, these different elements are likely to interact with basic socio-demographic characteristics and mobile living arrangements of people, so that patterns of intensive mobilities can be observed and analysed. This contribution begins by describing the data and measures used. It then develops an empirical typology of the different ways intensive mobilities are practised and perceived by respondents. Finally, we examine the social determinants of a mobile way of life by linking this typology with different variables associated with individuals' position in the social structure and the life course, the form of mobility, as well as their mobility resources, or motility. This last point opens up to the study of mobility skills needed to enter a mobile way of life.

5.2 The Job Mobilities and Family Lives in Europe Survey

The data come from the *Job Mobilities and Family Lives in Europe* (JobMob) survey.¹ This survey is the first large quantitative study examining the interactions between family life, professional career, and intensive forms of work-related spatial mobility in Europe. All respondents aged 25–54 were selected randomly and questioned in 2007 by phone on the basis of a standardized questionnaire within six European countries (Belgium,² France, Germany, Poland, Spain, and Switzerland). Highly mobile people were oversampled. For the present study, only individuals practising one or several forms of intensive mobility for job reasons at the time of the interview were included (population of interest). Three forms of mobility were considered: long-time daily commuting (home-work commute of 2 h or more roundtrip), people in long-distance relationships, wherein individuals lived more than one hour's drive from their partner for job reasons and all forms of work-related travel that required spending 60 nights or more a year away from the (primary)

¹For more information on the project, go to <http://www.jobmob-and-famlives.eu/>

²For the present study, the Belgian data were excluded from the analyses as questions regarding motility were only partially posed in this country.

residence (second home near the workplace, business trips, seasonal work). This third group was referred to *overnighters*. Individuals who combined more than one of the forms described above were referred to *multi-mobile*.³ Of the 6,128 subjects who participated in the survey, 1,336 practised at least one of the aforementioned forms of mobility at the time of the interview. Out of the latter, 36 % were long-time daily commuters, 25 % overnighters, 17 % multi-mobile and 5 % were in long-distance relationships. The five countries were fairly equally represented, with a small overrepresentation of Spanish mobile people.

A logistic regression was used to determine the socio-demographic predictors of practising a recurring form of mobility. Gender, age, household structure, household income, level of education and hierarchical position at work were included in the logistic equation. Highly mobile people differ from the working population in several respects (Table 5.1). Men had 1.6 times higher odds of being mobile than women. Young people and middle managers (compared with employees without managerial responsibilities) were also overrepresented among the mobile population. Finally, education was also a significant predictor of recurring mobility practices, with a curvilinear relation. People having a basic education and those having a degree from a high school or university had higher odds of being mobile than people with a diploma from a lower secondary school. Interestingly, the household structure had no significant impact on being mobile when age was included in the logistic model. When this latter variable was excluded from the model (analysis not shown), people living alone ($p < 0.05$) and those living with a partner ($p < 0.1$) were found to be more mobile than respondents living with partner and children. Apart from those in long distance relationships, the fact that young single people also practised recurring forms of mobility suggests that a local attachment is not only due to the presence of a partner or young children, but also to people beyond the nuclear family (see Sect. 5.1). A temporary contract may also discourage young people to move.

Some qualitative material drawn from in-depth interviews were also added to illustrate some results of the present study. This qualitative corpus comes from the Eurocities DATTA project, for which long-time commuters (2 h or more per day) were interviewed in France, Switzerland and Belgium.⁴

5.3 Diversity of the Ways Recurring Mobilities Are Experienced

In order to analyse the different ways individuals practise and perceive their recurring mobility – and in some cases adopt a mobile way of life – we focused on four aspects: the actual duration of the intensive mobility, how mobile individuals

³ Student population (whose mobility would warrant a study in its own right) was not included in the analytic sample.

⁴ For more information on the project, go to <http://www.eurocities-datta.eu/>

Table 5.1 Logistic regression of practising a recurring form of mobility

	Odds ratio
<i>Gender</i>	
Woman	–
Man	1.60**
<i>Age</i>	
25–34	1.29**
35–44	1.12
45–54	–
<i>Household structure</i>	
Living alone	1.15
Living with a partner	1.14
Living without a partner, with children	0.95
Living with a partner and children	–
<i>Education level</i>	
Basic education	1.75**
Lower secondary education	–
Upper secondary education	1.32**
University	1.69**
<i>Household income</i>	
Low income	–
Middle income	0.96
High income	1.11
<i>Hierarchical position</i>	
Supervisor	0.82
Middle and lower level manager	1.30**
Employee	–
Self-employed	0.88

Model Chi² = 151.89**, Df = 14, N = 4,972

**p < 0.01; *p < 0.05

imagined their mobility in the future (will it continue or not), its overall evaluation (is it something positive or negative, an opportunity or a constraint) by the mobile individuals and by their close relatives and friends.

In the JobMob survey, two questions related to how mobile individuals imagined their mobility in the future: *Will you be taking concrete steps to reduce or stop being mobile for your job in the next 12 months?* (Response categories were 1 = *Yes, to reduce it*, 2 = *Yes, to stop it*, 3 = *No*) and *Do you think of your job-related mobility more as of a temporary solution or more as of a permanent way of life?* Three other questions had to do with the overall perception individuals and their close relatives and friends had of their mobility: *Thinking about your personal experiences, would you say that other people usually perceive this kind of mobile life you live as something good and positive, something neutral and normal or something problematic and negative? How do you yourself perceive your mobility...as something good and positive, something neutral and normal or something problematic and negative?*

Table 5.2 Distribution of variables (%) (n = 1,336)

Steps to reduce/stop mobility in the next 12 months		Others' perception of your mobility	
Do nothing	75	Good and positive	19
Reduce	16	Neutral and normal	51
Stop	9	Problematic & negative	30
Total	100	Total	100

Your mobility: temporary or permanent		Your own perception of your mobility	
Permanent	60	Good and positive	31
Temporary	40	Neutral and normal	50
Total	100	Problematic & negative	19
		Total	100

Duration of mobility		You see your mobility rather as...	
0–2 years	31	An opportunity	34
2–5 years	22	A need	50
5–10 years	23	A coercion	16
>10 years	24	Total	100
Total	100		

Do you think of your job-related mobility rather as an opportunity, a need or a coercion? Table 5.2 shows the distribution of the responses. The duration of the current mobility experience is also presented in four categories.

We see that 60 % of mobile people perceived their current mobility practices as something permanent. Three-quarters of the sample did not plan to take any steps to reduce their mobility in the year to come. Half perceived their mobility as neutral and a necessity, while a third perceived it as positive and an opportunity. The close relatives and friends of mobile individuals were more critical than the individuals themselves: 30 % of respondents said people perceived their mobility as negative, vs. 19 % for their own perception of their mobility. Finally, the sample shows strong heterogeneity with respect to the actual duration of the mobility experience. A third of respondents had practised an intensive form of mobility for less than 2 years, while slightly less than half had done so for a period of between 2 and 10 years, and the last quarter for more than 10 years.

In order to group individuals with similar responses profiles, a principal component analysis was performed on the standardized variables listed in Table 5.2. A cluster analysis with the Ward's method and the squared Euclidian distance was then run on factor scores. Rather than describing individuals one variable at a time, this statistical technique builds types (clusters) showing how the variables in similar profiles interact with one another (Everitt 1993; Lebart et al. 1997). The obtained types, named here *mobility patterns*, represent specific ways of experiencing and perceiving one's mobility. The interpretation of mobility patterns was based on a comparison of average scores between types (Table 5.3). For instance, although individuals' self-perception of their

Table 5.3 Mobility patterns (average)

	Negative short-term	Negative long-term	Neutral short-term	Neutral long-term	Positive short-term	Positive long-term	Total	Eta ²
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI		
Size of cluster (%)	9	8	19	26	14	24	100	
N	118	106	249	351	186	326	1,336	
<i>Perception of the duration of mobility</i>								
No steps to reduce mobility	0.53	0.93	0.64	0.99	0.68	0.95	0.83	0.28**
Mobility seen as permanent	0.09	0.92	0.11	0.98	0.10	0.94	0.60	0.75**
<i>Duration of mobility</i>								
# years of mobility practised	4.2	10.1	4.1	11.0	3.6	8.3	7.3	0.18**
<i>Overall perception of mobility</i>								
Others' perception: positive	0.06	0.07	0.36	0.38	0.72	0.68	0.44	0.44**
Self-perception: positive	0.05	0.08	0.47	0.52	0.82	0.86	0.56	0.61**
Self-perception: opportunity	0.25	0.17	0.52	0.50	0.83	0.86	0.59	0.46**

*p < 0.05; **p < 0.01

mobility was typically neutral or positive (Table 5.2), the two first mobility patterns included individuals who, on average, developed a more negative perception of their practices than other mobile individuals. These two types are then identified as individuals for whom mobility practices were perceived as negative compared to other types.

A six-group typology was used for its clarity, parsimony and homogeneity.⁵ The results of this analysis are presented in Table 5.3.

- Type 1, *negative short-term mobility pattern*, 9 % of the sample, was comprised of individuals who had been practising intensive forms of mobility for only a few years (four on average). They perceived this mobility negatively, as a coercion or a need at best, and did not imagine they would continue it long term. Half planned to reduce or stop being mobile in the year to come. They declared that their closest people also perceived their practices as negative.
- Type 2 individuals, *negative long-term mobility pattern*, 8 %, like the preceding group had negative feelings about their mobility. Nonetheless, these persons had been engaged in their mobility practices for a higher number of years, 10 on average, and were not considering putting a stop to them. Despite a negative perception, they saw their mobility as a permanent way of life. Because they saw themselves primarily as forced by external circumstances to be mobile, they were *locked* into mobile living arrangements they would have otherwise left. They could also be called *mobility-locked* (by reference to the concept of job-lock).
- The third group, Type 3, *neutral short-term mobility pattern*, 19 %, was comprised of individuals whose feelings regarding their practices, which they considered as normal and necessary, were generally neutral. Their close relatives and friends were somewhat more critical. They had been mobile for relatively few years and saw it as a temporary experience.
- Type 4, *neutral long-term mobility pattern*, represented the largest group in the sample (26 %). Like for the preceding group, individuals in this group saw their mobility as neutral and normal, as did their closest people, though the latter's feelings were slightly more mixed. They had been practising their mobility, which they saw as a permanent way of life, for 11 years on average, and planned in no way to reduce or end it in the near future.
- Type 5 individuals, *positive short-term mobility pattern*, 14 %, saw their mobility experience as something positive and an opportunity. Their close relatives and friends were more reserved, tending to have an opinion ranging from neutral to positive. They had been practising their current form of mobility for only a short time (3.6 years on average) and saw it as a temporary condition, in some cases planning to reduce or end in the year to come.

⁵This grouping was likewise clearly interpretable from the two main axes of the factor analysis – positive perception vs. negative perception and long term vs. short term (33 % and 23 % of the explained variance respectively).

- The final type, Type 6, *positive long-term mobility pattern*, represented a fourth of our sample (24 %). They also saw their mobility very favourably and as an opportunity. Like the preceding type, their entourage's perception was more critical than theirs, with neutral or positive opinions. These workers had been mobile for 8 years on average and saw their mobility as a permanent way of life and as such did not envisage reducing or ending it in the near future.

The cluster analysis showed contrasting types of mobility patterns based on duration and perception of mobility practices. Only individuals of Type 6, and to a lower extent, of Type 4, long-term positive and neutral mobility, can be considered people who have adopted a mobile way of life, meaning practising mobility over a long period of time and perceiving it as advantageous. Negative long-term pattern can be seen as a *forced way of life*. People in this category experience mobility as an obligation stemming from external constraints (e.g. lack of job opportunities in the area of residence, bad access to transport facilities, unaffordable housing costs close to the workplace). Rather than integrating their intensive mobility into their family lives, they see the former as a burden of the latter. Finally, individuals who fell into the three short-term mobility patterns can be seen as in the early stages of their mobility experience, which they would like to change in the near future. Though it is impossible to know whether or not these individuals will continue to practise mobility in the years to come, they consider it a life stage.

These results induce two important remarks. Firstly, none of the categories described earlier corresponds to a situation of strong dissonance, wherein mobility is experienced positively by actors and condemned by their close relatives and friends. Although closest people perceived the mobility practice slightly more critically, a situation characterized by the reprobation of mobile individuals by their relatives and friends because of their intensive mobility was too rare to form a specific category. Individuals whose relatives and friends were critical themselves tended to have negative feelings with regard to their mobility. This observation may be explained by the fact that mobile people gradually surround themselves with people with similar mobility practices or who accept/tolerate their practices, in order to build a positive image of themselves. This finding should be interpreted with caution, however, as respondents are likely to project their own perception on that of their closest people, even more so when the other people are undefined. Nonetheless, this finding tends to show that intensive mobility cannot be interpreted strictly on the basis of the individual's acceptance, or refusal. It rather supports the hypothesis that long-term mobile living arrangement develop in the context of a collective support from the social network, especially from coresident family members. This can be explained in part by the fact that individuals who have positive feelings about their mobility see the advantages of being mobile (earning more money, having a more interesting job, enabling both partners to work), advantages which may be also beneficial to their closest people, and their partner first and foremost. Similarly, the inconveniences that result of mobility (absence from home, lack of investment in family and friendship relationships, increasing stress) are likely to impact close relatives and friends as well. Finally, those closest to mobile individuals accept their

mobility all the more when the individuals themselves experienced it as positive. Because they perceive the latter's mobility as more of a personal decision than an external constraint, they are more likely to see it in a positive light.

Secondly, the empirical typology suggests that mobility perceived as a permanent way of life is built gradually, over the duration of the mobility experience. In particular, no group was composed of people who had recently begun being mobile and perceived it as a permanent practice. When individuals have been mobile for the past few years, they perceived their mobility as temporary. Conversely, when they have been mobile for many years, they usually saw it as a permanent way of life. This change in the personal perception of mobility practices over the job career confirms that intensive mobilities cannot be understood solely as characteristics acquired once or before the mobility experience begins (skills, meanings given by actors). An alternative explanation has to do with an age cohort effect. According to this, young people would be more likely to see their mobility as temporary because of the socio-historical changes of the professional world and the new role spatial mobility plays in it. In the new model of social success, mobility can be understood as more of a short-term professional project – something one does before moving on to a new mobile or non-mobile project in an ever-changing work environment (Boltanski and Chiapello 1999). Only panel data with repeated measures would allow us to positively conclude for a cohort effect or a life course effect.

5.4 Mobile Way of Life Determined by Gender, the Position at Work and the Mobility Form More Than the Level of Education

A multiple correspondence analysis was run to determine the interrelations between the six mobility patterns, the forms of recurring mobility (daily commuters, people in long-distance relationships, overnights and multi-mobile) and basic socio-demographic variables (gender, age, level of education, household income, hierarchical position at work and household structure). Results are presented in Fig. 5.1.⁶ Several effects can be observed.

⁶The goal of a correspondence analysis is to identify the main underlying dimensions (or factors) that can explain covariations among the multiple variables. The two orthogonal axes represent the two major explanatory factors, on which the categories of the different variables are localized (factorial scores). All the parameters were selected as active variables, meaning that they contribute to the construction of the factorial axes. The two factorial axes can be interpreted based on the categories of the variables located at the extremes of the two axes and contributing more to the interpretation of the factor. The horizontal axis (first factor) is related to respondents' position in the life course. People at early life stages (young people, people living alone) had high scores on the axis, while people at later stages (supervisors and managers, older people) had weak scores. The vertical axis (second factor) was primarily defined by three parameters: the type of mobility, gender and the single-parent family category, which holds a marginal position. Overnights and men figured on the top half of this axis, while long-time commuters, women and single parents figured on the lower half.

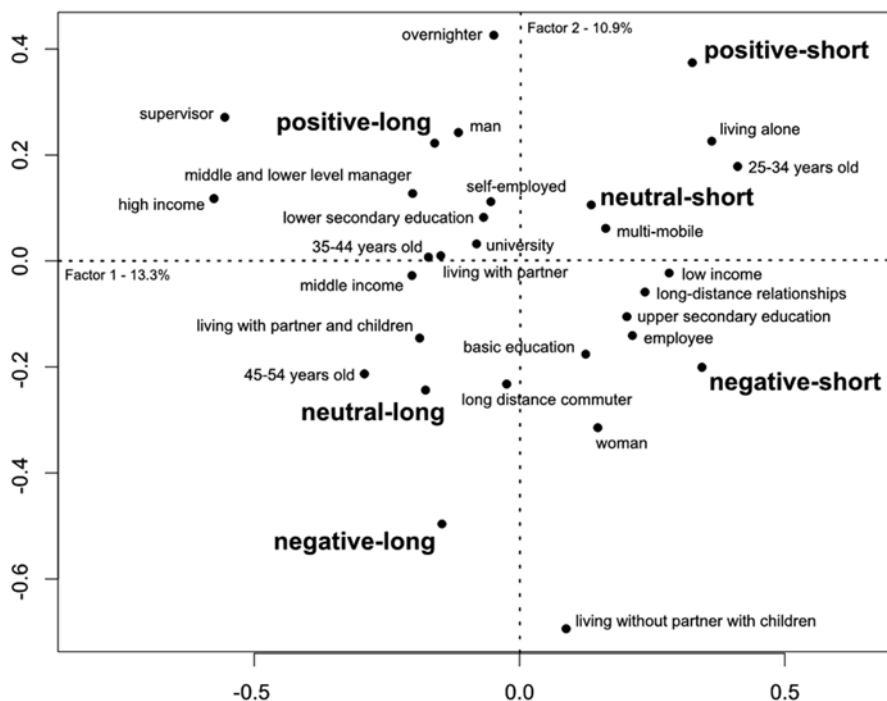


Fig. 5.1 Social embeddedness of mobility patterns (multiple correspondence analysis of mobility patterns, forms of mobility and socio-demographic variables)

- *Life course effects.* Individuals following a short-term mobility pattern, especially those positive and negative, tended logically to be at early stages of the life course: young people, living alone, with low incomes and no hierarchical responsibilities. By contrast, long-term patterns, especially those neutral or negative, were linked to more advanced life stages: older people living with partner and children. The positive long-term pattern was strongly related to high occupational positions, high incomes and self-employment, while the positive short-term pattern was typically associated with young single people. Finally, respondents living in a single-parent family, mostly women, were more likely to follow a negative short- or long-term mobility patterns.

The overrepresentation of positive short-term patterns among young people without partner and children may be explained by the fact that these people experience less time and space constraints associated with family obligations, so that they have a more positive perception of intensive mobility.

- *Gender effects.* Positive short-term patterns and, most notably, positive long-term patterns were associated with men. On the other hand, negative short-term

patterns, as well as neutral and negative long-term trajectories were more associated with women.

- *The effects of the form of mobility.* The gender effect coupled with another effect – that of the form of mobility. As such, positive mobility patterns, both short- and long-term, were often associated with overnighting. On the other hand, negative short-term patterns, neutral long-term patterns and mostly negative long-term patterns were associated with long-time commuting. Individuals who combined several forms of intensive mobility (multi-mobility) were more likely to adopt neutral short-term patterns and those in long-distance relationships either a neutral or a negative short-term pattern, associated to earlier stages of the family life course.
- *Education level was only weakly associated with mobility patterns.* Respondents with a basic education tended somewhat to adopt negative mobility patterns, but, unexpectedly, highly-educated people had no higher probability of adopting a positive one. Having a university degree had little influence on mobility patterns and people with an upper secondary education were more likely to follow a negative short-term pattern than a positive one. This finding, also observed when only education level was included in the analysis, goes against the prevailing idea that individuals with high educational attainment perceive their intensive mobility more positively and longer-term, because they have more resources to be mobile and to take advantage of it for their career than less-educated individuals. We can think that some highly educated individuals use their high credentials and employability to find career solutions enabling them to stop intensive commuting, either by moving or finding a new job closer to home. Mobile respondents with a university degree are significantly more willing to move to another region to get a better job than less-educated, mobile people (69 % against 58 %, $V=0.11$, $p<0.01$). The difference is even more striking regarding a move to a foreign country (61 % against 46 %, $V=0.14$, $p<0.01$).

To summarize, individuals adopting a mobile way of life were of two kinds.

- (1) Persons seeing their mobility practices as positive and as a career opportunity tended to be men, to have high occupational positions or to be self-employed, with high salaries and who were often absent from home for professional reasons.
- (2) Persons seeing their mobility in a neutral light or as a necessity tended to live with a partner and children and be daily long-time commuters. In both cases, education did not influence the likelihood of adopting a mobile way of life. Individuals with a forced way of life tended to be women, lone mothers and daily commuters.

5.5 Motility as a Resource in Adopting a Mobile Way of Life

Through recurring mobility practices, individuals acquire specific skills, allowing them to organize their daily life in different places far apart from each other. It both includes knowledge regarding transport solutions as well as organizational and

relational capacities in general. As such, they learn working out complex activities schedules by juggling various offerings, locations and time. They likewise develop skills for getting around at a lower cost, both cognitively and physically, by carrying as little as possible and by using transport networks they already know. They learn how to deal with absence from their family and friends, for instance by using digital technologies, to adapt to and take possession of places quickly or to feel at home easily in different places (Elliott and Urry 2010). Developing such mobility competences may therefore facilitate the process of adopting a mobile way of life. In order to test this hypothesis, the concept of motility was used.

Motility refers both to the capacity of people to be spatially mobile and to the way individuals use and take over the realm of possibilities to develop projects as far as movement is concerned (Kaufmann 2002; Kaufmann et al. 2004). Motility then comprises those factors that allow individuals to be mobile in space: physical capacity, financial means, aspirations towards mobile way of life, technical systems of transport and telecommunications along with their accessibility, acquired skills like driving licence or international English for travel. Motility remains often potential and is transformed in movement in situations of opportunity.

Four dimensions of motility were considered from the JobMob data: (1) contextual accessibility (good access to a motorway, a railway station, an airport); (2) personal accessibility (having a car/motorcycle, a laptop and internet access at home); (3) mobility skills (knowledge of languages, how to read a map and orient oneself); (4) propensity for spatial mobility (willingness to practise different forms of intensive mobility to obtain a promotion). Based on a new cluster analysis, a six-group typology was established to measure both the *degree* and the *characteristics* of motility acquired by the respondents⁷:

- Individuals with weak motility characterized by poor personal access, weak mobility skills and a low propensity for job mobility regardless of the form.
- Individuals living in residential contexts where access to transportation facilities is poor.
- Individuals with weak language skills (especially English) and who are more willing to commute or travel regularly than to move abroad.
- Individuals who are 'rooted' in their place of residence and are very unlikely to move to another region or country for professional reasons.
- Individuals with a non-recurring motility characterized by a weak willingness to any form of recurring mobility (daily or weekly commuting, frequent business trips), but a strong willingness to move, excellent contextual and personal access and strong mobility skills.
- Individuals with strong motility characterized by excellent access and mobility skills, as well as a strong propensity for work-related spatial mobility in any form.

In order to test the interaction between motility and mobility patterns, a series of logistic regressions was run. Separate regressions were performed for each type of

⁷For more information on this typology, see Kaufmann et al. 2010.

Table 5.4 Logistic regressions of mobility patterns on motility types (odds ratio)

	Negative short-term	Negative long-term	Neutral short-term	Neutral long-term	Positive short-term	Positive long-term
<i>Motility (contrast = deviation)</i>						
Weak motility	1.60*	1.19	1.06	0.89	1.05	0.84
Poor access	1.40	1.69*	0.90	1.07	0.82	0.82
Weak language skills	1.02	0.92	1.24	1.31*	0.74	0.82
Rooted	1.33	1.04	0.69*	1.42**	0.86	0.99
Non-circular	0.82	1.35	1.49*	0.82	1.03	0.92
Strong motility	0.40**	0.39**	0.83	0.68**	1.78**	1.93**
<i>Gender: Woman (ref)</i>						
Man	0.79	0.68	1.21	0.84	0.94	1.43*
<i>Age: 45–54 (ref)</i>						
25–34	2.05**	0.27**	1.88**	0.46**	4.82**	0.69*
35–44	1.41	0.67	1.41	0.69**	2.21**	0.97
<i>Living arrangement: partner & child (ref)</i>						
Living alone	0.81	0.39**	1.16	0.76	1.65	1.41
Living with partner	1.04	0.80	1.22	0.80	1.05	1.20
Living without partner, with children	0.89	0.49	1.65	0.73	1.56	1.13
<i>Education level: lower secondary (ref)</i>						
Basic education	0.79	0.57	0.83	1.29	1.99	0.84
Upper secondary education	0.87	1.39	1.51	1.00	0.89	0.70
University	1.33	1.40	1.19	0.98	1.23	0.60**
<i>Household income: low (ref)</i>						
Middle income	0.94	0.57*	0.81	1.31	0.90	1.23
High income	0.52	0.36**	0.85	1.16	1.23	1.68**
<i>Hierarchical position: employee (ref)</i>						
Supervisor	0.69	0.88	1.51	1.36	0.98	0.54
Middle and lower level manager	0.63*	1.56	1.32	0.80	1.26	0.89
Self-employed	0.54	1.06	0.69	0.68	1.17	2.00**
Chi ²	47.42**	63.31**	35.86**	67.88**	83.55**	73.11**
R ² Cox & Snell	0.04	0.05	0.03	0.06	0.07	0.06

N = 1,196; df = 19

**p < 0.01; *p < 0.05

A deviation contrast method was used to handle motility effects, allowing us to estimate the impact of each category of covariant in comparison to its overall effect. The odds ratio corresponds to the ratio of the probability of following one given mobility pattern over all the other patterns. The odds ratio of 1.60 at the top of the table, for instance, means that individuals with weak motility had 1.6 times higher odds of following a negative short-term pattern than any of the five other mobility patterns. When the coefficient was greater than one, the association between motility types and mobility patterns was positive, when less than one, the association was negative

mobility pattern and socio-economic characteristics were added as control variables (Table 5.4). Because motility may be influenced and shaped by the way people perceive and experience high mobility, these regression models cannot be regarded as strictly causal, but as a way to test the strength of the relationship between motility and mobility patterns. In the next paragraph, we only describe associations which proved to be significant at the 0.05 level.

As a general rule, individuals with high motility often followed positive mobility patterns, both short- and long-term. Because of their strong propensity for mobility, these individuals coped better with the difficulties associated with intensive and regular trips and even saw them in a positive light. This suggests that these individuals use motility as a resource to achieve career or family goals, whether short term (working at a job far away for several years) or long term (having an occupation requiring a great deal of travel, living at the outskirts of large cities and commuting everyday to the centre). Conversely, individuals following a negative mobility pattern were less often those with high motility, and in the case of short-term negative patterns, they were more likely those with weak motility. Because of their weak propensity for movement and/or their poor accesses to transportation facilities, these individuals probably suffered the burdens inherent to their business trips, such that they perceived their mobility in a negative way and desired to stop it rapidly.

Mobility patterns, though closely associated with the degree of motility, were also linked to the characteristics of motility. Negative long-term patterns differentiated themselves from other patterns because they tended to concern individuals living in residential contexts with poor access. These individuals most likely had long daily commutes and were captive car users due to poor access to other means of transport. Individuals in a short-term neutral pattern were more often characterized by a weak propensity for any form of recurring mobility and a strong readiness to move. This type of motility may explain their will to reduce or stop their recurring mobility shortly. Moreover, their short period of mobility did not let them enough time to develop other dimensions of motility. Finally, rooted individuals as well as those with weak language skills (and reluctant to move abroad) had higher odds of following a neutral long-term pattern of mobility. These individuals perceived their long commutes less negatively than those with poor access to transport facilities, probably because their mobility was seen as more of a residential choice or career-family trade-off. Their mobile living arrangement may enable them to stay close to their personal network, have a good living environment or combine two jobs within the household.

5.6 Short-Term Mobility Patterns: Recurring Mobilities as a Life Stage?

Individuals with short-term mobility patterns tended to be young, to live alone, to have lower incomes and no hierarchical responsibilities and to be in long-distance relationships or to combine several forms of intensive mobility (see Sect. 5.4). Those

individuals saw their mobility as temporary at the time of the interview. Although they expressed the desire to put an end to their mobility quickly, whether or not they will actually do so in the years to come, is uncertain. Career path, family or living circumstances could lead them to continue in a more established mobility. For these young people, recurring mobilities could simply be a step in their careers, but could also gradually become a way of life. It is at least possible that this phase will last longer than originally thought, as the demand for employee flexibility is increasing and goes hand in hand with a greater demand for spatial mobility.

Short-term patterns can be seen as intermediate step in mobility histories. It is interesting to look at why these individuals intend to stop their practices at this stage in their mobility experience. One possible explanation is that the construction of the family and desire for a child is related to the desire to end intensive mobility practices. The analysis of the advantages and disadvantages mentioned by the respondents regarding their mobile living arrangement offer some possible answers to this question. A list of pros and cons that are likely to be associated with their mobility practices was mentioned during the interview. Respondents were asked to indicate whether or not they applied to them. Table 5.5 presents four types of disadvantages through cross analyses: the feeling that mobility resulted in not feeling really at home anywhere and not having enough time with the partner, the children and important people in general.

Table 5.5 Mobility patterns by the opinion that mobility resulted in not having enough time with the partner, the children and important people and not feeling at home anywhere (%)

	Too little time with the partner ^a			Too little time with the children ^a		
	No	Yes	Total (N)	No	Yes	Total (N)
Negative short-term	27	73	100 (91)	21	79	100 (56)
Neutral short-term	44	56	100 (180)	35	65	100 (117)
Positive short-term	48	52	100 (117)	43	57	100 (65)
Negative long-term	43	58	100 (87)	38	62	100 (80)
Neutral long-term	56	44	100 (276)	49	51	100 (222)
Positive long-term	64	36	100 (236)	57	43	100 (180)
Total	51	49	100 (987)	45	55	100 (720)
Cramer's V	0.22**			0.21**		
	Neglecting contacts to important people			Not feeling at home anywhere		
	No	Yes	Total (N)	No	Yes	Total (N)
Negative short-term	40	60	100 (116)	58	42	100 (118)
Neutral short-term	53	47	100 (246)	71	29	100 (246)
Positive short-term	65	35	100 (185)	75	25	100 (184)
Negative long-term	46	54	100 (105)	65	35	100 (105)
Neutral long-term	72	28	100 (350)	85	15	100 (343)
Positive long-term	68	32	100 (325)	84	16	100 (321)
Total	62	38	100 (1,327)	77	23	100 (1,317)
Cramer's V	0.22**			0.21**		

^aOnly respondents having a stable partner and children, respectively

** $p < 0.01$

The feeling of not having enough time for close friends and family, especially children, was more marked in people who started being mobile recently. The latter result is probably reinforced by the fact that their children are younger and require more investment in care and education. The same was true for the feeling of not having a home, a sentiment that is caused by multiple trips between several living places or even residences. These two reasons could in part explain their desire to end their mobility in the future. They only very marginally explained, however, that of individuals who perceived their short-term mobility practices as positive. Nonetheless, it must be noted that childless individuals are overrepresented among this type of pattern (see Sect. 5.4). We can assume that a certain number of these young people envisage ending their mobility once they have children. But once again, our results only partially support this hypothesis, given that among those in this category who had children, 43 % did not see their mobility as preventing them from spending more time with their offspring.

Young respondents considering their intensive mobility practices as short term have probably not established themselves durably in an accommodation and the labour market. This situation leads these people, even those with children, to consider their mobility pattern as temporary. However, the wish to be physically closer to the workplace once they have children, a dwelling and a job they like is not always possible, depending on their resources, the nature of the job itself and the one of the partner. To adapt to this situation, other arrangements can be adopted, i.e. telecommuting or decreasing investment in friendship and community ties. Such arrangements may then allow individuals to continue being mobile when they have children without seeing it necessarily as an obstacle to spend time with partner and children. These mobile living arrangements are then likely to last longer than expected and to be a step towards a long-term mobility pattern. Longitudinal data on mobility behaviours would be necessary to determine if intensive mobilities are but a stage in the lives of these individuals.

5.7 Long-Term Mobile Patterns and Mobile Ways of Life

Individuals who have been involved in intensive mobility practices for a long time and consider them permanent had very segmented social characteristics depending on whether they perceived these practices as positive, neutral or negative. They constitute therefore three different ways to acquire and internalize the skills, behaviours and specific values associated with mobile living.

5.7.1 Forced Practices: The Double Burden of Lone Mothers

The negative long-term pattern aptly illustrates the forced dimension of mobility practices. Despite a negative perception of their practices, individuals in this category continued to be mobile because they had gotten caught up in a web of geographical

Table 5.6 Mobility patterns by the opinion that mobility resulted in hardly having any leisure time (%)

	No	Yes	Total (N)
Negative short-term	26	74	100 (118)
Negative long-term	28	72	100 (106)
Neutral short-term	47	53	100 (245)
Neutral long-term	58	42	100 (348)
Positive short-term	54	46	100 (185)
Positive long-term	64	36	100 (324)
Total (N)	51	49	100 (1,326)

Cramer’s V =0.25; p<0.01

and professional constraints that forced them to travel or commute extensively for work. They saw these practices as permanent because they could not foresee the possibility of freeing themselves from this mobile living arrangement. These individuals were identified as those who tended to have weak motility or poor access to transport facilities, women, long-time commuters and single parents. These individuals probably consider that their mobility is more a consequence of the context (bad access to transportation facilities, financial and housing difficulties to move closer to the workplace or school) than a consequence of their own choice.

Here do we find the typical case of lone mothers, who alone must assume the constraints of time and space brought about by their occupation and child care (Maksim 2010). Time as a resource is extremely important to them, which results in them having a negative perception of their commute. This strong time constraint is illustrated in Table 5.6: three-quarters of the individuals in this category saw their mobility as an impediment to having more free time and also felt their mobility had led to them neglecting those who were important to them (see Table 5.5).

5.7.2 The Building of Mobile Ways of Life

Individuals who had had intensive mobility practices for a great many years and saw it as something permanent, either neutrally or positively, can be related to those who pursued a mobile way of life. As such, they had adopted not only mobility skills but also a kind of mobile identity, and did not see changing it. They have fully incorporated their intensive mobility practices into their private lives, and no longer questioned them. Rather, they simply experienced them as a normal, even advantageous, part of their daily lives:

There are times when, I always say when I get tired of travelling, ‘I still have an hour and a half train ride.’ To me, that’s a clear outward sign that I need a vacation. But otherwise, no, I don’t even think about it.... For some people it’s a disadvantage. For me, it’s almost an advantage, the fact that I have to take the train home in the evening. It kind of sets the pace for the day. It’s a milestone, and so I avoid falling in the trap some of my colleagues who don’t have a train to catch fall into – ‘I’m just going to finish up this one thing, I’m in no hurry.’ And those five minutes, they suddenly realize they’ve stayed 30–45 minutes longer to finish some document they’re working on...But this whole pacing the day thing, I think

it's good. Some people see it as a disadvantage because they see it as a routine. But I don't see it that way. Plus, each time, I take each trip with other people. I meet up with friends or other people. It's a different thing every time. The weather's different each time, the landscape changes.' (Michel, 54, Switzerland; Eurocities DATTA project)

[The trips] are really a part of my life that I think I really like, in fact. I mean, I think that if I didn't like it, I'd do something to make it different. In fact, I'm changing jobs July 1st and going to Liege. That's not really going to make my commute any longer, but the trip from the train station in Liege to my job will be longer. In fact, I like it. In any case, I don't dislike it. Now, that all depends on the day, but it's still an escape hatch – a time to do something if I want and, sometimes, just time for me to do things that aren't for work and that I don't have time to do otherwise. Or read. I also think it was when I started commuting that I started reading the newspaper regularly and that's not so bad either. (Philippe, 33, Belgium; Eurocities DATTA project)

Another catalyst behind a mobile way of life is an appreciation and affirmation of autonomy in conjugal and family relationships. These individuals, especially those who experience long-distance relationships, dual location households and regular absence from home, have probably developed a family organisation based more on individual autonomy and personal characteristics than on values of similitude and time spent together (Kaufmann and Widmer 2006). Their mobile way of life thus allowed them to develop and maintain greater autonomy, especially from family relationships and family obligations. In Table 5.7 we see that many of the individuals in these two categories saw their mobility as a way of 'being more independent'. It was also the case for those with positive short-term patterns, although this category was overrepresented by young people living without partners or children.

Among all the potential disadvantages caused by mobility and mentioned by the interviewer, only a small percentage of people of these two categories felt these disadvantages applied to them, compared to the other types (see Tables 5.5 and 5.6). Mobility as an obstacle to spending more time with children rated the highest for these individuals. But here also, barely half of them felt this was a personal disadvantage. One possible interpretation for this trend lay in how time spent with close friends and kin, especially children, is experienced. Those who spent time away from home tended to emphasize the heightened intensity of their interactions with their partner and children when they were home, in particular during the weekend:

Table 5.7 Mobility patterns by the perception of mobility as a way of being more independent (%)

	No	Yes	Total (N)
Negative short-term	59	41	100 (118)
Negative long-term	57	43	100 (105)
Neutral short-term	34	66	100 (245)
Neutral long-term	25	75	100 (349)
Positive short-term	21	79	100 (183)
Positive long-term	14	86	100 (319)
Total (N)	29	71	100 (1,319)

Cramer's V=0.33; p<0.01

My son is in a football club, and every Saturday morning there's a match. My husband goes with him and stays with him until noon, just the two of them, man to man. Then they come home, and in the afternoon we do things together. When he [my son] complains that his father isn't there all week, I take the little boy he comes home from school with to go to the neighbour's house as an example, whose father comes home every night but never plays with him. Yes, because I love to play – board games and things like that –, and so do my kids, and so in the evening we always play a game.... And that, he definitely realizes he's lucky, even though he doesn't see a lot of his parents, he has parents who take care of him. I do his homework with him, I don't do it for him, but I'm there to explain things when need be, and then we always play a game, do an activity... There, and so I tell him 'look at Pierre's father. He's home everyday but never plays with him...' (Valerie, 39, Belgium; Eurocities DATTA project)

Although individuals in these two patterns featured significantly different socio-demographic profiles (individuals attached to their residential location and long-time commuters for neutral long-term patterns, men with high motility, with managerial positions/self-employed and overnightriders for positive long-term patterns), they gave similar answers regarding the advantages and disadvantages of their mobile living arrangement. As such, they have developed a veritable expertise in mobility throughout their experience. This expertise includes both knowledge, especially regarding transport solutions (i.e. transportation networks, timetable, fares, comfort depending on schedule or material), and social and organizational capacities in general. They succeeded in combining their intensive mobility practices with their daily and private life. Future research using longitudinal and qualitative data should explore how specifically these mobility experts and their close relatives adjust to their mobility practices.

5.8 Conclusions

This study examined the different ways to perceive and experience intensive mobilities for job reasons. One specific goal was to determine under which socio-economic and mobility conditions a mobile way of life is adopted, i.e. a situation where individuals incorporate their intensive mobility practices into their daily life and shape a positive, lasting vision of them. Six mobility patterns were identified, including three long-term patterns through which people built distinctive perceptions and meanings of their mobility practice. These mobility patterns proved to be strongly related to socio-economic characteristics, mobility forms and mobility resources (or motility) of actors. Some persons with strong motility built a very positive perception of their long-term practices, which they saw on a permanent basis and as a career opportunity. These persons tended to be men, to have high occupational positions or to be self-employed, with high salaries and who were often absent from home for professional reasons. In such cases, mobility was an integral part of their long-term career goals – like for instance having a job requiring a great deal of travel –, in which mobility makes sense for actors.

A second type of long-term pattern is comprised of persons who saw their mobility in a neutral light, or as a necessity. These persons tended to be firmly settled in their

area of residence, live with a partner and children and be daily long-time commuters. In this case, mobility made sense in light of their residential choices, which had been guided by life choices. Their intensive mobility, for instance, enabled them to stay close to their family and friends, live in a pleasant neighbourhood, keep their children in their familiar environment or enabled both partners to work. These two types of pattern may be regarded as a mobile way of life that is built over time and through practice, involving not only intensive mobility experience but also a way of talking advantageously about their practices that also gradually evolves throughout the career. The knowledge and skills that make these individuals veritable mobility experts develop in tandem with their practices and motivations.

However, not all long-term mobility patterns that are seen as such by actors are mobile ways of life per se, as the individuals themselves do not necessarily adhere to this way of life. In fact, intensive mobility practices can be seen as negative, even by those who have practised them for a long time. This was most notably the case for those with weak motility and poor access to transportation facilities. Single parents, women and daily long-time commuters were more likely to follow such mobility pattern. These individuals were captive car users in their long daily commutes due to poor access to other means of transport. This situation and their weak motility have resulted in them seeing their work-related mobility mainly as a hindrance to private and family life.

The expectation that better-educated persons perceive their mobility practices more positively and longer-term than less-educated ones because spatial mobility would benefit their career advancement was not verified in this study. Education had a strong impact on the probability to practise a recurring form of mobility, but very little impact on the probability to adopt a mobile way of life. Gender, the form of mobility and the hierarchical position at work were better predictors of a mobile way of life than education. The higher readiness of well-educated people to migrate to another region or country for job reasons, as well as their high resources and employability to find a job close to the living place could explain this finding. We can suppose that some highly educated individuals desire to stop being mobile once they are well-established in professional work, in particular to invest time and influence in their local community. The now classic studies by Fielding (1992) in the UK and Bassand et al. (1985) in Switzerland on the links between upward social mobility and residential mobility have highlighted such a role of migration in the early career development. Further research would be necessary to investigate more accurately at what stages of the career and family cycle, and in which social conditions, individuals stop their intensive mobilities.

There is some evidence from this study that the skills, behaviours and specific values associated with mobile living are built over time and are not acquired once the mobility experience begins. This is in particular the case for the perception of mobility as a permanent practice, which is built gradually, over the duration of the mobility experience. Future research projects should be developed based on panel data with repeated measures of mobility practices over the career. The socializing effects at work in the gradual building of a mobile way of life could be accurately analysed in this way. Likewise, qualitative data based on targeted interviews with

both partners would be necessary to closely analyse the stages that mark the process through which people gradually integrate mobility in their private and family life and reinforce an identity of a mobile person.

Acknowledgements The authors wish to express their heartfelt thanks to John Urry for his insightful comments to earlier versions of this paper, although he is not necessarily in agreement with the authors' point of view.

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Chapter 6

Living Apart Together and Living Together Apart: Impacts of Partnership-Related and Job-Related Circular Mobility on Partnership Quality

Michael Feldhaus and Monika Schlegel

6.1 Introduction

For the analysis of living arrangements in partnership formation processes, it is often insufficient to distinguish merely between cohabitation and non-cohabitation. This common, simple dichotomy ignores the fact that cohabitation can be a process in constant flux, with different intermediate states. A larger variety in living arrangements is most certainly present when we consider the issues of partner-related spatial mobility. Partner-related mobility can be an indicator or a result of the process of institutionalizing the relationship, from dating to mating. It can also be a purposefully chosen living arrangement that offers couples more autonomy and independence (Schneider 2009), especially in light of the fact that couples in intimate relationships are increasingly confronted with the job-related necessity of guaranteeing residential and circular mobility (Schneider et al. 2002; Schneider and Meil 2008). Furthermore there are two types of particular job-related mobility: Residential mobility means moving one's household for employment reasons, and circular mobility, on the other hand, refers to any kind of commuting behavior, and this will be the focus of the following analysis.

Both types of spatial mobility, partnership-related and job-related, set boundaries on couples' structures in the areas of interaction processes, daily household organization, leisure time activities, and, in general, time spent together. Thus, it is argued that different types of spatial mobility have different effects for intimate partnerships, and empirical work lends credence to this speculation (Schneider et al. 2002; Schneider 2005; Limmer 2005; Meil 2008; Viry et al. 2010).

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With regard to circular mobility, different types of commuting are distinguished on the basis of indicators such as commute time or the number of nights spent away due to job reasons: such as short- and long-distance commuters, varimobiles, and shuttles (Limmer and Schneider 2008). In principle, each of these different types of commuting behavior should influence intimate relationships differently, but the empirical evidence is ambivalent. Some studies show that circular job-related mobility has a negative impact on partnership quality, particularly for women, while other studies have failed to confirm these findings (Schneider et al. 2002; Viry et al. 2010; Reuschke 2010; Kley 2012). Previous findings suggest that these contradictory results can be disentangled by including additional mediating and moderating variables that account for differences in the relationship between the underlying partnership dynamics and spatial mobility (Schneider et al. 2002; Viry et al. 2010). This, indeed, is the intention of the analysis presented here, which incorporates mediating information with regard to conflicts, sexual satisfaction, relatedness, autonomy, and commitment.

Thus, in addition to job-related mobility, we suggest including different types of partnership-related spatial mobility. Relying on standard indicators of job-related mobility, mentioned above, we look at commute time and number of nights spent in the partner's household. In this way, we are able to differentiate between short- and long-distance relationships and pick up on a group we call 'overnighters'. We analyze the impact also of these types on partnership quality with a view towards the underlying mediating processes. In this way, we extend the current state of research by introducing a more elaborated differentiation of partnership-related mobility types. Such a strategy has been suggested in previous research (Schneider 2009) but has yet to be carried out in this way. Thus, this paper focuses the question of how far job-related and partnership-related spatial mobility influences partnership quality by looking also at the indirect influence of intermediating partnership dynamics variables.

6.2 Previous Findings, Theoretical Remarks and Hypotheses

Norbert F. Schneider and colleagues have made important conceptual and empirical contributions in the field of commuting and other forms of job-related mobility (Schneider et al. 2002; Schneider and Meil 2008; Limmer and Schneider 2008; Schneider and Collet 2010; Rüger et al. 2011). Relevant indicators for distinguishing different types of commuting behavior are the time to commute and the frequency of work-related overnights outside one's own household. In line with this research we differentiate the following categories. *Long-time commuters* travel at least 1 h to the workplace one way. *Short-time commuters*¹ commute less than 1 h one way. *Varimobiles* are recurrently but irregularly absent from their home for work reasons for more than five nights per month over the course of the previous year; and finally

¹We used the term short-time or long-time commuters instead of short-distance or long-distance, because time is the main dimension. But the category its operationalization is similar to the concept from Schneider and Meil 2008.

Shuttles maintain a second apartment near their workplace and commute back to their place of residence on the weekends (Limmer and Schneider 2008; Lück and Schneider 2010; Reuschke 2010). Short-time and long-time commuters who are also varimobiles or shuttles are categorized in the last mentioned group, because the demands of mobility should be higher (Rüger et al. 2011). Aside from these groups, we also distinguish *non-mobiles*, employed persons who work at home (e.g. home-office, agriculture) or whose irregular mobility requirements do not fit within the other types.

For understanding the impact of spatial mobility on intimate relationships, we must go beyond job-related commuting behavior alone and look also at the different types of partnership-related spatial mobility. Both forms of mobility have a large influence on the opportunity structure of intimate relationships. Therefore the idea of this paper is, to use these conceptual criteria of job-related mobility for constructing different types of partnership-related mobility. In this regard partnerships can be distinguished as either *cohabiting couples* (married or non-married) or couples living apart together. Relationships in which the partners' households are separated by less than 1 h commute time are designated as *short-distance relationships* (SDR). Relationships in which the partners' households are separated by more than 1 h commute time are designated as *long distance relationships* (LDR). Furthermore, we distinguish the group of *overnighters*, or couples who, irrespective of the distance separating their two households, spend four to five nights together per week. Compared to the concept of Schneider and Meil (2008) the term 'overnighter' is used in a different meaning. Overnighter in their terminology is used for describing people spending nights outside the common household due to job reasons (Rüger et al. 2011). If a partner lives in a short-distance or long-distance relationship and is also an overnighter, then this person is categorized as an overnighter.

In the following we argue that job-related and partnership-related mobility define the opportunity structure of a couple's daily life in complex, interactive ways. Spatial mobility is the result of the job and partnership situation, but it also creates both restrictions and opportunities for the ongoing partnership. In general, for specifying the influence of spatial mobility on partnerships we assume the following: First, time spent together differs for certain types of job-related and partnership-related mobility. Cohabiting couples as well as non-mobiles or short-time commuters theoretically have more time for each other compared to couples in long-distance relationships, long-time commuters, and varimobiles. Spending more time together or living together with a partner is often associated with denser interaction and more information about each other's daily activities. Second, we assume that the needs and demands for organizing the daily life and coping with ongoing daily hassles are higher for cohabiting couples, and that the burden of household activities increases with more demanding forms of job-related mobility because less time is available and persons are more exhausted from commuting. Third, it can be assumed that types of mobility differ in their effect on perceived autonomy in the relationship. Non-cohabitation can be associated with more autonomy and less social control by the partner as compared to cohabitation (Huinink 1999; Kopp et al. 2010). These effects could be similar for long-time commuters or varimobiles. Based on these

assumptions, several hypotheses about the direct effects of spatial mobility on partnership quality can be developed.

In general, according to job-related mobility commuting longer times is of course more time-consuming and can therefore reduce time spent together with the partner. It increases physical stress and lowers subjective well-being which, in sum, could have a negative effect on partnership quality (Koslowsky et al. 1995; Stutzer and Frey 2007). Thus, we assume a direct negative effect of more time-consuming forms of job-related mobility. Although this should be the case for both men and women, we argue that this negative effect should be stronger for women. Even in this day and age, women bear more of the burden of household labor and child-rearing. Therefore, long-time commuting or being a varimobile may present an additional burden for women.

For partnership-related mobility, we assume that non-cohabiting persons are less satisfied with partnership quality compared to those living together with their partners, for various reasons. First of all, cohabiting couples may be a relatively selective group. Cohabiting couples have the longest partnership duration, which is also an indicator of partnership quality or at least of partnership stability. Furthermore, couples faced with more time-consuming types of mobility may spend less time together, as spending time together requires more time and money. Thus we assume negative effects particularly for long-distance relationships as compared to cohabiting couples. The group of overnighters may represent an exception from the general assumption that long-distance relationships bring negative effects, because this could be a group which is more or less on the way to cohabitation and therefore more similar with cohabiting couples.

As mentioned above and in accordance with recommendations of previous research, analyses should include more mediating variables such as sexual satisfaction, conflicts, relatedness, autonomy, and commitment (Schneider et al. 2002; Viry et al. 2010). It is argued that partnership satisfaction is only a global measurement, which combines many different dimensions. Therefore it seems useful to include particular those variables, which are related to both, spatial mobility and partnership satisfaction. Therefore, in the following we develop some hypotheses regarding which variables can be expected to have mediating effects.

6.2.1 Sexual Satisfaction

In attachment theory (Sydow 1998), the hypothesis is offered that the bonding and sexual motivation are always antagonistic. On the one hand, a high degree of personal intimacy in everyday life can lower sexual attraction; on the other hand, too much time spent without the partner can lead to alienation and dissolution of the partnership (Sydow 1998). Noyon and Kock (2006) confirm these theoretical considerations: studies indicate that couples who do not live together report higher sexual satisfaction. It is also assumed that in long-term partnerships, sexual relations can become “boring.” Picking up on these considerations, we assume that

non-cohabiting couples are more satisfied with their sexuality than cohabiting ones. This could in turn create a positive effect on partnership quality. In regard to job-related mobility, the argument is not quite clear. For varimobiles the attachment-theory line of argument could hold. But we also assume that commuting is tiring to a degree corresponding with commute time; exhaustion is associated with stress and health problems (Koslowsky et al. 1995), which in turn could negatively impact sexual satisfaction.

6.2.2 *Conflicts*

The negative relationship between conflict and partnership quality has been repeatedly confirmed empirically (Kersting and Grau 2003). Unfulfilled expectations, a lack of mutual understanding, differing attitudes, stress, and feelings of alienation are often cited in partnership research as key indicators of lower marital satisfaction and as predictors of separation. More time spent together as well as the needs and demands of organizing daily activities is associated with higher partnership-specific organizational and coordination needs, which increases opportunities for conflict (Noyon and Kock 2006). Halford et al. (1992) also show that conflicts occur more frequently on weekdays than on weekends, especially when daily stress is associated with negative interaction sequences. We therefore assume that partnership-related mobility reduces the frequency of conflicts, which then should have a positive indirect effect on partnership quality.

For occupational mobility, again the situation is not clear. Previous research finds that conflicts in partnerships correspond to commuting behavior due to stress, exhaustion, health problems, difficulty in organizing the housework and child care. Thus we hypothesize increasing conflicts due to more time-consuming commuting and, by way of this mechanism, decreased relationship quality. But there is also an alternative hypothesis in regard to the relation between conflicts and job-related mobility. Some empirical studies have found that in relationships with higher forms of mobility, available shared time is regarded as very valuable (Schneider et al. 2002). If time is seen as very valuable, then frequent absences might decrease conflicts over daily hassles because couples seek to maximize enjoyment of the limited amount of time they have together. Thus, the alternative hypothesis is that higher forms of mobility decrease conflict, which in turn should lessen the negative effect of conflict on partnership quality.

6.2.3 *Intimacy and Relatedness*

Time spent together is usually associated with interaction densities and increasing multiplexity (Rhoades et al. 2009). Thus during the partnership period, there is an intensification of the relationship in emotional-affective ways, and there is

increasing amount of information in regard to preferences, life goals, attitudes, intentions, sexuality, desires, and dislikes (Lenz and Nestmann 2009). This leads to high values on intimacy and relatedness. It has been confirmed many times that the quality of couple relationships depends on such feelings of intimacy and relatedness with the partner (Neff and Harter 2003). Therefore, we assume that cohabiting couples should place higher value on intimacy and relatedness compared to non-cohabiting couples, which should then have a positive impact on partnership quality. Here again, one exception could be the overnighter group. Furthermore, Schneider et al. (2002) showed that longer separations entail the risk of alienating partners from each other. These longer isolation periods are characteristic of long-distance relationships and for long-distance commuters, or varimobiles. In these constellations, commuters spend more time with other people and build their own individual networks, which could lower the stability of the current partnership. This suggests the hypothesis of lower intimacy and relatedness for more time-consuming types of job-related mobility.

6.2.4 *Autonomy*

Several authors have pointed out that cohabiting leads to more intense social control, which possibly is seen as a limitation on personal independence (Huinink 1999; Kopp et al. 2010). In line with this are findings that in some cases, living alone is considered as an expression of one's lifestyle and is coupled with the desire for independence, self-determination, and self-actualization. Following Deci and Ryan (2000), autonomy is not meant as total independence, but rather a condition in which individuals are aware of their personal goals and in which they try to realize it – often taking into account the needs of their partner. Thus autonomy does not stand in contradiction to intimacy and relatedness. In a well-functioning relationship, these dimensions are balanced, which in turn has a positive influence on relationship satisfaction (Neff and Harter 2003). These theoretical and empirical findings suggest that respondents who are not cohabiting and engage in more demanding forms of job-related mobility are more likely to feel autonomous, which should then correlate with higher relationship satisfaction.

6.2.5 *Commitment*

Commitment indicates 'a feeling of being involved in a relationship, to be committed to the other' (Rusbult et al. 1994). It is one of the key partnership variables and a predictor of the continuation of the partnership. It is a significant factor for partnership quality. More highly committed partners show higher positive values on partnership quality. Constant interaction and an increasing amount of interrelated social actions lead to a better and deeper knowledge of the partner in many ways

(Hill and Kopp 2006). Following Hill and Kopp (2006), commitment should increase as interrelations and connectedness between partners increase. Therefore, we assume that in long-term partnerships, particularly in cohabiting partnerships, commitment should be stronger as compared to non-cohabiting couples. The same arguments hold for job-related mobility. More demanding commuting behavior should be associated with lower perceived commitment, which should then have a negative indirect impact on partnership quality.

6.3 Data and Methods

We use data from the first wave of the German Family Panel (called *pairfam*) (Huinink et al. 2011). The *pairfam* project is a representative, interdisciplinary longitudinal survey on intimate relationships and family dynamics. It offers the possibility of distinguishing among different types of spatial mobility. The survey is based on a cohort sequence design. By focusing on the oldest cohorts, respondents are between 25 and 27 or 35 and 37 years old. We restrict our sample to partnerships last have lasted longer than 3 months and in which the anchor person was employed. Altogether, 3,944 individuals were included in the descriptive analysis. Weighting reduced the sample size to 3,490.

Included variables:

- ‘global partnership satisfaction’ as our dependent variable is a combination of two items: ‘My partner can fulfill my needs very well’ and ‘Overall, how satisfied are you with your relationship?’; measured from 0=very dissatisfied to 10=very satisfied
- ‘sexual satisfaction’ is measured from 0=very dissatisfied to 10=very satisfied
- ‘partnership conflicts’ and ‘intimacy and relatedness’, each of them consists of two items, adapted from the network-relationship inventory (Furman and Buhrmester 1985), measured on a scale from 1=never to 5=always
- ‘autonomy’ was captured by three items on a scale from 1=not at all to 5=absolutely (Schneewind and Kruse 2002).
- ‘commitment’ captured the planning or expectation of a long-term future with the partner and is measured on a scale from 1=not at all to 5=absolutely
- the measurement of further included covariates are described in the section about descriptive findings

We used path analysis and run regression models with manifest variables (Kline 2005). The dependent variable is partnership quality. For job-related and partnership-related mobility we built dummies indicating short-time commuters and cohabiting couples as reference groups. As mediating variables, we introduced sexual satisfaction, conflicts, intimacy and relatedness, autonomy, and commitment. First, we run a model that includes the main independent variables of spatial mobility separately for job-related and partnership-related mobility as well as for men and women. Then, we include the mediating variables. Based on the results of Model 3 and 6, we

estimated indirect effects (Preacher et al. 2007; Muthén 2011). Given the fact that the mediating variables were not independent from each other, we estimated indirect effects simultaneously (allowing correlation) utilizing a procedure called multiple mediation analysis (Preacher and Hayes 2008). For testing the effects of the moderating variable sex, we run separate models for men and women.

6.4 Empirical Descriptive Results

The following analysis shows some initial descriptive results, starting with frequency distributions. Referring to previous findings, we then note the distribution of relevant social indicators thought to be predictive of spatial mobility behavior (including sex, cohort, education, childlessness, and marital status). Further, we report employment characteristics (occupational status, full-time and part-time employment) as well as important indicators of partnership quality (duration of the partnership, traditional attitudes,² current salience of the job and the partnership,³ and partnership quality). Finally, we include regional indicators (east/west, community size classes). All in all, this leads to a more comprehensive picture of job and partnership mobility among couples.

Looking first at partnership-related mobility (Table 6.1), 84.4 % of the individuals in the sample cohabit with their partner and 15.6 % practice some form of mobile partnership, including 7.3 % as short-distance relationships, 3.6 % as long-distance relationships, and 4.8 % as overnighters. Looking at job-related mobility, we see that 9.1 % of respondents living in partnerships are non-mobile, 74.0 % are short-time commuters, 7.0 % are long-time commuters, 9.3 % are varimobiles, and only 0.6 % have an additional household for job reasons. Aggregating the last three groups, we see that about 17.0 % face more demanding types of job-related mobility in their partnership. The most predominant case is the cohabiting partnership with at least one short-time commuting partner. Unfortunately, we are not able to capture the commuting behavior of the partner in this analysis.

Table 6.2 shows the data on partnership mobility broken down by selected social indicators. As expected, the distribution of partnership-related mobility differs among the age cohorts significantly. The younger cohort (25–27 years old) spends less time together in a common household with their partner and shows higher values for long-distance relationships and overnighting. No substantial differences among men and women appear. As expected, the majority of cohabiting couples are married, and childlessness is overrepresented among couples who do not live

²Three items measuring traditional values were selected on the basis of a factor analysis: “You should get married if you permanently live with your partner,” “Marriage is a lifelong union which should not be broken,” and “Couples should marry at the latest after a child is born.”

³The respondents have to distribute 15 tokens to assess the current relevance of different domains of the life course (education and career interests, leisure time and hobbies, friendships, and partnership and children).

Table 6.1 Frequencies of partnership-related and job-related mobility in partnerships (weighted data; N=3,944 before using weights)

		Types of job-related mobility					
		Non-mobiles	Short-time commuters	Long-time commuters	Vari-mobiles	Shuttles	Total
Types of partnership mobility	Cohabiting couples	277	2,173	206	273	15	2,944
		9.4 %	73.8 %	7.0 %	9.3 %	0.5 %	100 %
		86.8 %	84.1 %	84.8 %	84.5 %	68.2 %	84.4 %
	Short-distance relationships	20	195	16	21	2	254
		7.9 %	76.8 %	6.3 %	8.3 %	0.8 %	100 %
		6.3 %	7.5 %	6.6 %	6.5 %	9.1 %	7.3 %
	Long-distance relationships	11	91	9	13	2	126
		8.7 %	72.2 %	7.1 %	10.3 %	1.6 %	100 %
		3.4 %	3.5 %	3.7 %	4.0 %	9.1 %	3.6 %
	Overnighters	11	124	12	16	3	166
		6.6 %	74.7 %	7.2 %	9.6 %	1.8 %	100 %
		3.4 %	4.8 %	4.9 %	5.0 %	13.6 %	4.8 %
	Total	319	2,583	243	323	22	3,490
		9.1 %	74.0 %	7.0 %	9.3 %	0.6 %	100 %
		100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %

Data Source: pairfam, wave 1
For the description we use the dxpsweight; see Brüderl et al. (2010)

Table 6.2 Frequencies and social indicators, partnership-related mobility types (%)

	Total	Cohabiting couples	Short-distance relations	Long-distance relations	Over-nighters	Chi ² -Test
N=	3.490	2,944	254	126	166	
		84.4 %	7.3 %	3.6 %	4.8 %	
<i>Social indicators</i>						
Cohort 25-27	38.9	33.4	70.5	64.6	69.9	0.000
Cohort 35-37	61.1	66.6	29.5	35.4	30.1	
Women	45.4	45.1	47.5	44.5	49.4	0.645
Married	54.9	64.5	2.4	3.9	1.8	0.000
Childlessness	48.4	41.5	82.7	85.9	88.6	0.000
Certificate of secondary education	17.1	17.7	15.3	11.7	13.8	0.060
General certificate of secondary education	37.7	37.9	37.3	30.5	40.1	
University entrance diploma	30.8	30.1	32.9	36.7	35.9	
University degrees	14.3	14.3	14.5	21.1	10.2	
<i>Occupational indicators</i>						
ISEI 16-40	44.3	44.7	42.7	38.6	44.8	0.678
ISEI 41-65	37.0	36.6	38.8	39.4	40.6	
ISEI 66-90	17.8	18.0	16.9	21.3	13.9	

(continued)

Table 6.2 (continued)

	Total	Cohabiting couples	Short-distance relations	Long-distance relations	Over-nighters	Chi ² -Test
Fulltime employed	69.0	67.9	73.6	75.0	78.3	0.010
Part-time employed	20.8	21.8	18.5	14.8	11.4	
Self employed	10.2	10.3	7.9	10.2	10.2	
<i>Regional indicators</i>						
West	82.8	82.9	82.3	84.4	80.1	0.769
Living in cities ≥100 k inhabitants	67.0	66.2	67.3	77.2	74.1	0.015
Living in cities between 20 and 100 k inhabitants	20.7	20.8	24.0	15.7	16.9	
Living in cities ≤20 k inhabitants	12.3	13.0	8.7	7.1	9.0	
<i>Partnership-related indicators</i>						
Duration (in years.)		9.61	3.51***	2.95***	3.60***	
Traditional attitudes		2.93	2.73**	2.62**	2.62**	
Salience job		3.30	3.82***	3.73**	3.57*	
Salience partnership		4.40	3.91***	3.71***	4.00**	
Partnership quality		7.90	7.81	7.84	8.21*	

Data source: pairfam, wave 1, weighted data

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$

together. Persons with higher education live more frequently in long-distance relationships. The same can be said for occupational status: partners living in long-distance relationships are overrepresented in higher status classes (ISEI-class 41–65 39.4 % to 37.0 % in the total, or ISEI-class 66–90 21.3 % to 17.8 % in total). In sum, the distribution of partnership mobility among different occupational status types is not significant. Looking at employment status, however, we see that among for cohabiting couples, fulltime employment is somewhat underrepresented (67.9 % vs. 69.0 % in the full sample). In contrast, fulltime employment is overrepresented in short-distance relationships, long-distance relationships, and among the group of overnights. This could be the result of cohabiting partners, particularly mothers, who work part-time.

There are no significant differences in partnership mobility among those living in eastern and western Germany. But if we look at the population size of respondents' place of residence, we see that individuals in big cities more often have long-distance or overnights relationships. The opposite is true for those residing in small cities. The possibility that those living outside big cities also have more traditional attitudes about relationships may help account for these differences. Furthermore, the distance between households in big cities may be greater than 1 h more often for couples living in big cities.

Finally, there are some interesting differences in the partnership indicators. There are clearly significant differences in comparison with cohabiting couples, the refer-

ence group. Cohabiting couples show the longest partnership duration and have higher values on measures of traditional attitudes. On the other hand, people practicing partnership-related mobility report higher values on the salience of work and lower values for the salience of the partnership. Regarding the partnership quality, overnighters are significantly more satisfied with the partnership as compared to cohabiting couples. Those in short-distance and long-distance relationships report insignificantly lower values.

In sum, looking at mobile partnership formations introduced here, long-distance relationships as well as overnighter relationships present an interesting contrast to cohabiting couples. Partners in long-distance relationships show higher values for educational attainment and occupational status and lower partnership durations. They more often live in big cities and emphasize more the salience of their job compared to that of the partnership. Furthermore, the overnighters are in a strongly partnership-emphasizing phase, as indicated by their very high reported values on partnership quality. For this reason, overnighters may serve as good examples of a ‘pure relation’ (Giddens 1993). Such partnerships are not burdened by having to combine family and work and are less burdened by the daily hassles of household organization. These are common sources of partnership-related conflicts. Thus, overnighter relationships can be described as highly emotional, and satisfying.

Turning now to the empirical distribution of job-related mobility types (Table 6.3), note that we subsumed the shuttles, which includes only a very small number of individuals, under the group of varimobiles. With respect to age groups, varimobiles and non-mobiles are more often in the older cohort, while

Table 6.3 Frequencies and social indicators, job-related mobility (%)

	Total	Non-mobiles	Short-distance commuters	Long-distance commuters	Vari-mobiles	Chi ² -Test
N=	3,490	319	2,583	243	345	
		9.1 %	74.0 %	7.0 %	9.9 %	
<i>Social indicators</i>						
Cohort 25-27	38.9	30.7	40.1	40.8	36.5	0.008
Cohort 35-37	61.1	69.3	59.9	59.2	63.5	
Women	45.4	45.8	48.5	40.8	25.2	0.000
Married	54.9	60.2	54.9	52.9	50.7	0.092
Childlessness	48.4	37.5	48.7	53.9	52.5	0.002
Certificate of secondary education	17.1	21.9	17.2	13.1	15.4	0.055
General certificate of secondary education	37.7	33.5	38.6	33.9	37.4	
University entrance diploma	30.8	30.1	30.0	35.5	34.5	
University degrees	14.3	14.4	14.2	17.6	12.8	

(continued)

Table 6.3 (continued)

	Total	Non- mobiles	Short- distance commuters	Long- distance commuters	Vari- mobiles	Chi ² -Test
<i>Occupational indicators</i>						
ISEI 16–40	44.3	47.0	44.7	33.1	47.1	0.000
ISEI 41–65	37.0	39.5	37.3	40.4	30.5	
ISEI 66–90	17.8	12.2	17.3	25.3	21.8	
Fulltime employed	69.0	36.7	69.7	78.0	87.2	
Part-time employed	20.8	26.0	23.4	12.2	2.9	0.000
Self employed	10.2	37.3	6.9	9.8	9.9	
<i>Regional indicators</i>						
West	82.8	84.3	83.8	78.4	76.7	0.002
Living in cities ≥ 100 k inhabitants	67.0	71.5	66.6	71.3	63.1	0.121
Living in cities between 20 and 100 k inhabitants	20.7	17.9	21.0	15.6	24.4	
Living in cities ≤ 20 k inhabitants	12.3	10.7	12.3	13.1	12.5	
<i>Partnership-related indicators</i>						
Duration (in years)		9.02	8.68	8.29	8.18	
Traditional attitudes		2.78*	2.91	2.92	2.87	
Salience job		3.48	3.34	3.40	3.46	
Salience partnership		4.29	4.31	4.53*	4.24	
Partnership quality		7.83	7.88	8.04	8.09*	

pairfam, wave 1, weighted data

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$

short-time and long-time commuters are more frequently in the younger group. The more frequent appearance of varimobiles and non-mobiles is an effect of higher professional independence, which is seen also in employment status, particularly for non-mobiles. It is clear that women are less often long-time commuters or varimobiles. This finding affirms other investigations showing that working women prefer short-time commuting due to family responsibilities (Meil 2010a, b; Eckey et al. 2007). We also find that fewer married individuals and more childless individuals are involved in the more demanding forms of job-related mobility (c.f. Meil 2010a; Rüger et al. 2011). It appears also that partners putting in higher commuting times and varimobiles also have higher education and higher occupational status relative to short-distance commuters; they are also much more likely to have fulltime employment. Part-time employment and self-employment is more frequent among non-mobile individuals and short-time commuters. These differences are significant between mobility types. Couples in eastern Germany are significantly more frequently associated with more time-

consuming forms of job-related mobility. Long-time commuters and varimobiles are underrepresented in western Germany compared to the total sample. This could be the result of weaker labor markets and infrastructure in eastern Germany. Not so clear and also not significant are the findings regarding the effect of city size. In big and small cities, long-time commuters are slightly less frequent; this may be the result of longer travel distances in rural areas and of longer commute time in the metropolitan context.

With respect to included partnership indicators, there appears to be a surprisingly similar picture between the different types. There are no significant differences in regard to partnership duration. Surprisingly the non-mobiles are less traditional compared to the other groups. Further analysis show that these are particular self-employed, non-mobile women. Much more interesting is the result that particular long-time commuters show a higher salience in regard to the partnership compared to those who commute for a short distance. Also surprising is the result that particular varimobiles are more satisfied with their relationship compared to the other types. These maybe some first hints that particular job-related mobility is not seen in a negative way, but may be more as a tool to combine both work and partnership/family.

From the descriptive findings we conclude that neither partnership-related nor job-related mobility is restricted to a small group. The results also confirm previous findings about the significance of education, occupational status, employment, family status, childlessness, marital status, and region. By using partnership-related indicators, we find interesting differences tied to partnership duration, traditional attitudes, salience of work and partnership, and partnership quality. In the next step of our analysis, we go deeper into partnership dynamics by using multivariate analysis (Table 6.4). We therefore include our mediating variables. Due to missing values, particular with regard to information about sexual satisfaction, commitment and intimacy, the sample size reduces to N = 3,636 (unweighted).

Table 6.4 Means and standard deviations for the dependent variable with mediating factors (men and women)

	Men		Women	
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std.</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std.</i>
Partnership quality	8.00	1.74	7.90	1.86
Sexual satisfaction	6.94	2.64	6.95	2.63
Conflicts	2.51	0.64	2.58	0.64
Relatedness	3.75	0.77	3.95	0.73
Autonomy	3.43	0.76	3.92	0.75
Commitment	4.76	0.56	4.77	0.58
N=	1,919		1,717	

Data source: pairfam, wave 1

6.5 Results of Multivariate Analysis

In Table 6.5 we present the regression results for partnership quality separately computed for men and women, focusing on the impact of the main independent variable, spatial mobility. In model 1 and 4 only dummy variables for partnership and job-related mobility are included. In our first hypothesis we mentioned that more time-consuming job-related mobility should lead to a lower partnership quality. This hypothesis is not confirmed by our data. We find, in fact, positive effects for men that hold even when further covariates and mediating variables are considered. We find no significant effects for women.

Table 6.5 Regression of job-related and partnership-related mobility on partnership quality with mediating and control variables, men and women

	Satisfaction					
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
	Men	Men	Men	Women	Women	Women
<i>Independent variables</i>						
Non-mobiles (ref.: STR)	0.076	0.083	0.001	0.045	0.120	0.145
Long-time commut. (ref.: STR)	0.263⁺	0.227	0.205⁺	0.297	0.258	−0.015
Varimobiles (ref.: STR)	0.217⁺	0.189	0.199[*]	−0.028	−0.065	−0.168
Overnighter (ref.: cohabiting)	0.098	0.021	−0.224	0.136	0.086	−0.002
Short-dist. rel. (ref.: cohabiting)	−0.082	−0.151	−0.084	0.036	0.029	−0.181
Long-dist.rel. (ref.: cohabiting)	−0.184	−0.205	−0.506^{**}	0.383	0.365	−0.096
<i>Mediating variables</i>						
Sexual satisfaction			0.207^{***}			0.191^{***}
Conflicts			−0.501^{***}			−0.692^{***}
Relatedness			0.317^{***}			0.450^{***}
Autonomy			0.355^{***}			0.421^{***}
Commitment			0.637^{***}			0.621^{***}
<i>Control variables</i>						
Higher (ref.: lower)		0.124	0.139⁺		0.043	0.038
University degree (ref.: lower)		0.203	0.168		−0.084	−0.030
Age cohort 35–37 (ref.: 25–27)		0.004	0.083		−0.215[*]	−0.151⁺
Part-time (ref.: fulltime/self)		−0.245	−0.229		0.068	0.039
ISEI 41–65 (ref.: ISEI 16–40)		−0.063	−0.024		−0.089	−0.029

(continued)

Table 6.5 (continued)

	Satisfaction					
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
	Men	Men	Men	Women	Women	Women
ISEI 66–90 (ref.: ISEI 16–40)		−0.287*	−0.126		0.189	0.040
Salience job		0.025	0.038+		−0.021	0.012
Salience partnership		0.113***	0.046		0.155***	0.093***
Childlessness		0.528***	0.331***		0.362**	0.069
Married		0.257*	0.162+		0.074	0.063
R ²	0.004	0.030	0.374	0.003	0.032	0.422
=	1,918	1,918	1,918	1,717	1,717	1,717

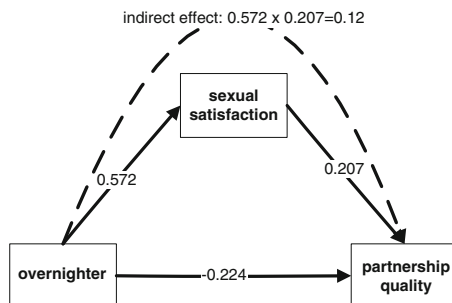
***p<0.001; **p<0.01; *p<0.05; +p<0.10

With regard to partnership-related mobility we assumed that couples faced with partnership-related mobility should report lower partnership quality than cohabiting couples. This is confirmed by the data, particularly for men living in a long distance relationship. For women we find positive but insignificant effects in Models 4 and 5. The direction changes if we include our mediating variables, but the relation remains insignificant. Thus the hypothesis that living apart together correlates general with lower partnership quality as compared to cohabiting couples is not confirmed by the data. On the other hand, we assume that overnighters as a special group (with high satisfaction and low daily hassles) should report higher partnership quality. But again, we find no clear empirical evidence in support of this hypothesis.

Referring to included mediating variables in Model 3 and Model 6, our expectations from previous research are confirmed. Higher values for sexual satisfaction, relatedness, perceived autonomy, and commitment correlate significantly with partnership quality. Perceived conflict is negatively related to partnership quality. We also see that if we include the mediating variables of partnership dynamics, some effects of spatial mobility changes. This indicates the presence of indirect effects (Frazier et al. 2004), and we assume that there is a correlation between our mediating variables, the different types of partnership or job mobility, and partnership quality.

For testing the following hypothesis about indirect effects, we undertook a mediation analysis as shown in Fig. 6.1. This is done by two regressions: at first we regress partnership quality on commuting types, controlled by other covariates (estimations for men and women are shown in Model 3 and 6). Then we regress the mediating variable on commuting behavior (which is shown in Tables 6.6 and 6.7 for each type of commuting and each mediating variable, separately for men and women). The product of both regression effects is the resulting indirect effect (see Fig. 6.1), which is also tested for significance. We run this mediation analysis for all included mediators simultaneously, a procedure called multiple mediation analysis (Preacher and Hayes 2008; Preacher et al. 2007).

Fig. 6.1 Direct and indirect effects between overnights, sexual satisfaction and partnership quality for long-distance commuting (LDC) men



In Tables 6.6 and 6.7, the results for the mediation analysis are presented. Focusing first on partnership-related mobility. For both men and women, we find significant positive effects (excepting only men in short-distance relationships) linking higher sexual satisfaction to overnights, short-distance and long-distance relationships as compared to cohabiting couples. This means that living in these partnership formations is associated with higher sexual satisfaction, which then correlates positively with partnership quality. This confirms our hypothesis. We find similar results for conflicts. Living in any type of living apart together is associated with lower conflicts, and this reduction of conflicts in turn correlates positively with partnership quality. Furthermore, we find a positive, significant correlation between living in a long-distance relationship and relatedness, which also is associated with higher partnership quality. This contradicts our theoretical assumption. With regard to autonomy, as expected, we find positive correlations with different types of partnership mobility. The indirect effects of autonomy on partnership quality are also significantly positive. This holds in particular for men but for women only among those who live in a long-distance relationship. Thus our hypothesis of autonomy is confirmed. Finally, we find strong evidence for our assumption about the effect of commitment. In particular, men involved in partnership-related mobility are not so strongly committed to the partner, which then correlates negatively with partnership quality. For women, this effect is only confirmed for short distance relationships. In sum, our mediation analysis for partnership-related mobility confirms our hypotheses about sexual satisfaction, conflicts, autonomy, and commitment for both men and women. We do not find empirical evidence to support our hypothesis regarding intimacy and relatedness. This point is discussed below. We also find that the differences between overnights, short-distance relationships, and long-distance relationships are not as strong as expected. It seems that the more relevant point is cohabitation or non-cohabitation. One exception, however, is long-distance relationships. For this type, we find in most cases significant differences compared to cohabiting couples.

For job-related mobility, the results are not as clear as expected. We find no empirical support of the hypothesis that sexual satisfaction is reduced among those involved in more time-consuming types of job mobility, either for men or for women. We find some support for our alternative hypothesis regarding conflicts.

Table 6.6 Regression of job-related and partnership-related mobility on the mediators for men (value for indirect effect in parentheses)

	Mediators				Commitment
	Sexual satisfaction	Conflicts	Relatedness	Autonomy	
<i>Partnership-related mobility</i>					
Overnighter (ref.: cohabiting)	0.572* (0.120*)	-0.181** (0.091*)	0.087 (0.027)	0.323*** (0.115***)	-0.101 ⁺ (-0.064)
Short-distance relation (ref.: cohabiting)	0.353 (0.073)	-0.017 (0.009)	0.076 (0.024)	0.263*** (0.094***)	-0.358*** (-0.228***)
Long-distance relation (ref.: cohabiting)	0.780* (0.162*)	-0.180* (0.090*)	0.230* (0.073*)	0.248** (0.088*)	-0.164* (-0.105*)
<i>Job-related mobility</i>					
Non-mobiles (ref.: SDR)	-0.187 (0.039)	-0.066 (0.033)	0.006 (-0.002)	0.040 (0.014)	-0.025 (0.016)
Long-time commuting (ref.: SDR)	-0.248 (-0.051)	-0.127* (0.064*)	0.023 (0.007)	-0.062 (-0.022)	0.053 (0.034)
Varimobiles (ref.: SDR)	0.055 (0.011)	-0.040 (0.020)	-0.024 (-0.007)	-0.009 (-0.003)	-0.030 (-0.019)
N=	1,918	1,918	1,918	1,918	1,918

Data source: pairfam, wave 1
***p<0.001; **p<0.01; *p<0.05; +p<0.10

Table 6.7 Regression of job-related and partnership-related mobility on the mediators for women (value for indirect effect in parentheses)

	Mediators				
	Sexual satisfaction	Conflicts	Relatedness	Autonomy	Commitment
<i>Partnership-related mobility</i>					
Overnighter (ref.: cohabiting)	0.600* (0.115*)	-0.075 (0.052*)	-0.026 (-0.012)	0.045 (0.019)	-0.032 (-0.020)
Short-distance relation (ref.: cohabiting)	0.761** (0.146**)	-0.193** (0.134**)	0.052 (0.023)	0.087 (0.037)	-0.141** (-0.088**)
Long-distance relation (ref.: cohabiting)	0.914* (0.175*)	-0.196* (0.135*)	0.231* (0.104*)	0.206* (0.087*)	0.006 (0.004)
<i>Job-related mobility</i>					
Non-mobiles (ref.: SDR)	-0.116 (-0.022)	-0.082 (-0.057)	0.055 (0.025)	-0.008 (-0.003)	-0.040 (0.025)
Long-time commuting (ref.: SDR)	0.172 (0.033)	-0.101 (0.070)	0.174* (0.078*)	0.157* (0.066+)	0.095 (0.059)
Varimobiles (ref.: SDR)	0.018 (0.003)	-0.065 (0.045)	0.038 (0.017)	0.130 (0.055)	0.044 (0.027)
N=	1,717	1,717	1,717	1,717	1,717

*** p<0.001; ** p<0.01; * p<0.05; +p<0.10, pairfam, wave 1

In relationships with higher forms of mobility, occasions for conflicts may be reduced or the shared time available to the couple may be seen as especially valuable (Schneider et al. 2002). In the sum this leads to a reduction of conflicts, which then correlates with higher partnership quality. But in most cases, the effects are not significant. Furthermore our hypothesis of lower relatedness in more demanding forms of job-related mobility is not confirmed. Again we find a relationship in the opposite direction, here for long-time commuting women. Being involved in this type of mobility is related to higher positive values of relatedness, which in turn has a positive influence on partnership quality. Another interesting finding is that with regard to autonomy, we find again a confirmation only for long-time commuting women. Finally, our hypothesis that higher forms of job-related mobility are associated with a lower commitment is not confirmed by the data, neither for men nor for women.

6.6 Conclusions

The purpose of the analysis presented in this article was a better understanding of the influence of partnership and job mobility on the quality of partnerships. Therefore, the well-known indicators for distinguishing different types of job mobilities (commute time and overnighing) are used to construct categories of partnership mobility. These include three types of job-related mobility (short-time commuter, long-time commuter, varimobiles, non-mobiles) and three types for partnership-related mobility (cohabitation, overnighers, short-distance relationships, and long-distance relationships).

In our descriptive analysis, we show that about 16 % of couples among the age cohorts included in the sample (25–27 and 35–37) do not live together with their partner. The average duration of these relationships is much lower than cohabiting couples. Thus living in a non-cohabiting type of partnership may indicate being in an early stage in the process of partnership institutionalization. We also find that 17 % of couples are faced with more demanding job-related mobility. We argued that both types of mobility, partnership-related and job-related, define the partnership's opportunity structure in regard to time spent together and the needs and demands of household organization. This, in turn, we expected to have an impact on partnership quality.

With regard to partnership quality, we distinguish between direct and indirect effects. We argue that couples faced with more demanding job-related mobility as well as couples who do not live together perceive lower partnership quality. This thesis is confirmed only for male long-distance relationships, particularly after controlling for important mediating variables. This means that after we control for sexual satisfaction, conflicts, relatedness, autonomy, and commitment, further variables (which cannot be included in our model) related to being in a long-distance relationship lower partnership quality, e.g. physical stress, lower subjective well-being or general dissatisfaction with the situation. In regard to job-related

mobility we find positive effects for commuting in regard to partnership quality for men, contrary to our hypothesis. In further analysis we find that this effect increases particularly if we focus on cohabiting couples with children (results not shown). Thus for men we assume that this positive effect is related to the fact that commuting enables them to better combine work and family, which is then associated with a positive partnership quality. For women, we find, as expected, negative effects, but these are not significant. In further analysis we find that these effects are stronger if we focus only on cohabiting couples with children (results not shown). This supports the thesis that women are more highly burdened by job-related mobility, particularly if children are in the household (Meil 2010b). These results indicate that for future analysis of the impact of job-related mobility, it is important to focus more on cohabiting couples and differentiate between couples with and without children in the household.

Furthermore, we analyzed variables that have been emphasized in previous research as important and relevant mediating factors. We computed the indirect effects of sexual satisfaction, conflicts, relatedness, autonomy, and commitment on partnership quality. Our results show that among individuals with partnership-related mobility, sexual satisfaction, conflicts, relatedness, and autonomy have positive indirect effects for men and women on partnership quality. Taking into account that these partnerships show a lower partnership duration, and the fact that they are less committed and less often faced with the burden of daily household activities, we assume that these relationships are in the early phase of institutionalization and may be more frequently in 'honeymoon' and 'exploring time' stages as compared to those who have been living together for a long time. It seems that the observed effects are more the effect of (non-)cohabitation and not the result of living in one specific type of partnership mobility.

With regard to job-related mobility, we find no empirical evidence of our hypothesis of reduced sexual satisfaction. We find evidence that conflicts are reduced in these types of mobility, perhaps explainable because partners perceive their reduced shared time as especially valuable (Schneider et al. 2002) or because occasions for daily conflicts are reduced. But it is also plausible that commuting is chosen as a strategy to avoid conflicts in the partnership, may be related to a discussion about a residential move. Therefore we can't say anything about the causality behind this. Further evidence supporting these explanations must be generated by future longitudinal research. For women, long-time commuting is associated with more relatedness, which in turn has a positive effect on partnership quality. This result is quite surprising. It could be that for women long-time commuting is also associated with a more stimulating job and other positive circumstances (networks), which in turn are related to higher subjective well-being and therefore – which is not yet proven – to higher partnership quality. Furthermore it could be that this group of women is selective in the sense that they are more job-oriented and value autonomy more in their concept of what a fulfilling partnership means. Both factors are more often related to long-time commuting, which together could increase subjective well-being and partnership quality. But again, this has to be further disentangled in future research. Finally, our hypothesis that more demanding forms of job-related

mobility are associated with a lower commitment is not confirmed by the data, neither for men nor for women. Thus we can summarize that with regard to job-related mobility, our findings are less convincing. As mentioned above, an analysis of the impact of job-related mobility in a sample of cohabiting couples would seem to be more useful because these partners face more bluntly the effects of demanding forms of commuting than couples not living together.

The analysis is limited due to its cross-sectional nature. Although we control for important variables, the results are based on correlations. Thus it is an open question whether these findings hold in the long-run, using panel data. For the *pairfam* data used here, however, longitudinal data will be available in the near future. Furthermore, it will be very useful to concentrate analysis of job-related mobility on cohabiting couples and to differentiate among those with and without children in the household. As argued in previous research, the burden of job-related and household-related activities and tasks are not equally distributed. Thus, more demanding types of job-related mobility could be an additional burden, which could in turn increase the negative effects of commuting behavior.

In this analysis we concentrated on a mediation analysis of variables known from previous research to be important. But we also have to think about the fact that additional moderating effects may be relevant and could ultimately change the argument. It could be that the effect of long-time commuting or of long-distance relationships depends on the level of expected autonomy or commitment in partnerships or on partners' concepts of fulfilled sexuality. For analyzing these variables, we would have to include different subjective expectations or concepts of a fulfilled partnership. This represents another potential strategy for future analysis. Finally, more information from the partner would be desirable. It would be ideal if we could obtain full commuting-behavior information from the partner. The burdens of commuting times in couples are higher if both are employed and have to commute longer distances. Furthermore, in future research the impact of commuting behavior of the partner on other types of family relationships, particularly on parenting, should be investigated. Thus, although the findings we provide here give a much deeper insight into the interaction of spatial mobility and partnership dynamics, they represent but one step and need to be followed by more.

To put it into a nutshell: our results indicate that with regard to partnership or job-related mobility for partnership satisfaction it matters more whether they live together or not. Thus, for this sample including both types of mobility, it is more relevant the fact of living apart together, than of living together apart.

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Chapter 7

The Impact of Job-Related Mobility and Migration Intentions on Union Dissolution

Stefanie Kley

7.1 Introduction

Commuting between home and work demands resources in terms of time, money, and health, at least if the one-way commute exceeds a certain distance (Koslowsky et al. 1995). According to data from the German Socio-Economic Panel Study, one fifth of employees whose journey to the workplace exceeds 30 min consider the commute between home and work a great mental and physical burden (Stutzer and Frey 2008). Moreover, subjective well-being declines as the journey between home and work lengthens. Commuters accept this burden because they strive to realise career opportunities offered beyond the boundaries of the home town and to stay embedded in close relationships at the place where they live. A great proportion of commuters is married or lives together with a partner without being married, and the couples often have children (Schneider et al. 2008: 129; Kley 2010).

However, changing the place of residence in order to avoid commuting costs might also be considered an option for long-distance commuters. But migration is more ‘expensive’ for couples than for single persons, because different interests have to be balanced (Kalter 1998; Abraham et al. 2010). This is all the more the case if both partners are employed and if school children are part of the family. These considerations raise the question of whether and under which circumstances the burden of long-distance commuting might spread into other spheres of life and might increase the risk of separation for couples.

To analyse this question properly a threshold for the commuting distance has to be chosen that separates expensive from less expensive distances. The analysis therefore concentrates on long-distance commutes, defined as 1-h or longer

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commutes between home and work. This definition draws on the international study ‘Job Mobilities in Europe’ (Limmer and Schneider 2008: 34). The terms ‘union dissolution’ and ‘separation’ are used interchangeably; both refer to the self-reported end of a marriage or partnership.

In studies of divorce usually cohabiting couples are analysed (Amato 2010; Lyngstad and Jalovaara 2010). However, since this contribution analyses the influence of spatial mobility on the separation of couples, the whole range of possible household arrangements should be considered because these arrangements have a spatial component, too. Therefore, couples with separate homes are included in the analysis. Living together and being married are understood as characteristics of a partnership that indicate the degree of its institutionalisation (Arránz Becker and Hill 2010). A second domicile should be considered too because it impacts on the couples’ possibilities for interaction – irrespective of the question whether job-related or other reasons were decisive for having a second domicile.

All these issues are challenges for the research design, which must be organised as a panel study providing detailed information on the places of residence and of work for cohabiting and non-cohabiting couples. A relatively small but in this regard so far uniquely detailed study stems from the project ‘Migration Decisions in the Life Course’ (Kley and Huinink 2010). The data is based on random samples among residents aged 18–50 years drawn in two German cities (Magdeburg in Eastern and Freiburg in Western Germany) and contains monthly data about the residence and work histories of both partners during the observation window of 3 years. The analysis draws on information from 890 respondents, who had at least one partner during the observation window, and who remained part of the panel until the last wave (N~26,000 person-months). Making use of discrete time event history models the relative risk of separation is analysed dependent on long-distance commuting. Spatial household arrangements and the usual predictors of divorce are controlled for. Finally, the estimated effects of commuting on the risk of separation are depicted for different characteristics of partnerships in more detail, and the results are discussed in the light of popular theories of divorce.

7.2 Theoretical Perspectives and Current Research Findings

The most common theoretical explanations prominent in German studies on divorce are based on the micro-economic theory of divorce or the social exchange theory (Wagner and Weiß 2003). These theories were elaborated in the 1960s and 1970s and refer to matrimony, but from a theoretical point of view this might not inhibit their use for non-marital partnerships. From an empirical point of view, one may argue that in many western societies unmarried cohabitation has become more common. In Germany, unmarried cohabitation appears to have replaced marriage as the most important reason for leaving the parental home in early adulthood (Konietzka and Huinink 2003; Kley and Huinink 2006). Furthermore, since nowadays in

Eastern Germany 60 % and in Western Germany 27 % of children are born out of wedlock, one can hardly assume that non-marital relationships are generally 'less serious' than marital ones.¹

7.2.1 *Theoretical Perspectives on the Stability of Intimate Partnerships*

The *social exchange theory* draws on Thibaut and Kelley's (1959) theory of interdependence that refers to the unfolding social exchange process both between the partners and between members of the partnership and others (Karney and Bradbury 1995). Early applications of the theory on marital stability analysed three bundles of influences (Levinger 1965): *Attractions of the relationship*, the *barriers to leaving the relationship*, and the *presence of attractive alternatives* outside the relationship. Lewis and Spanier (1979) suggested a causal model to explain marital stability in which the quality of the marriage is the most important predictor. Marital quality is thought of as dependent on pre-marital characteristics like homogamy and material resources; on the satisfaction with the current life style, for instance with the current socio-economic position and that of the partner, and with the number of children; and, finally, on 'rewards' through the marital interactions, for instance attention, love, and care (Hill and Kopp 1999: 30).

The *micro-economic theory of marriage* is not a fundamentally different paradigm to the social exchange theory (Hill and Kopp 1999: 36; Wagner 1997: 97). With regard to union dissolution and separation, both theories lead to similar empirical hypotheses and also to similar analytic strategies. In micro-economic theory (Becker et al. 1977) the benefit derived from the partnership is central for its stability. Important determinants of the benefit from having a partner are the '*partner match*', *forms of division of labour*, and *investments in couple-specific capital*.

Partners invest in many different 'assets' like possessions, skills, information, and children. Some of them lose value if a separation occurs. According to the theory this is the case, for instance, for shared home ownership and for children. These 'assets' therefore unfold an effect of stabilisation on a partnership.

The 'partner match' is thought of as being interwoven with labour division within the couple. It would be optimal for marital stability if certain characteristics of the partners correlated positively whereas those that substitute each other correlated negatively (Hill and Kopp 1999: 33). Among the characteristics that should be similar are, for instance, age and socio-economic background of the partners, because this results in similar tastes and preferences. Characteristics that substitute each other are different wage earning powers. The theory suggests that practicing the male breadwinner model should stabilise partnerships because both partners gain most from specialising in their roles as breadwinner and housewife respectively

¹Data from the Statistisches Bundesamt; <http://www.zeit.de/news/2011-08/gesellschaft-jedes-dritte-kind-wird-unehelichgeboren-12115204>

(Becker et al. 1977: 1145 f.). This expectation rests on the assumption that women generally have a lower educational level and therefore a lower earning potential than men. Gender role beliefs are not mentioned explicitly; they are part of the (largely unchangeable) preferences that already came into effect when both partners formed the partnership.

There was and still is much objection to these premises. On the basis of double-earner couples it was shown that in times of increasing labour market potentials of women, the division of labour within the couple is often the result of a bargaining process (Abraham et al. 2010). In bargaining models the result of the couple's joint decision-making about the optimal allocation of the household's resources depends then on the relative bargaining power of each partner, and the distribution of power within the couple changes with every re-adjustment of labour division (Engelhardt 2002: 42 ff.). Although (cooperative) bargaining models generate similar hypothesis to micro-economic models in regard to the stability of partnerships, the explanation of the underlying mechanisms leading to separation is different: in micro-economic models the final separation is due to a mismatch between the partners that has persisted since the beginning of the partnership because the preferences of the partners are thought of as widely stable. In contrast, the bargaining model allows explicitly for changing preferences, for instance with regard to the labour division within the couple.

How does job-related spatial mobility fit into these theoretical considerations about the stability of partnerships? Accepting a job that is far away is costly, because it involves either migration or commuting between home and work. Migration is a challenge for the partnership because either one partner moves and leaves the other behind, at least temporarily, or the couple moves jointly, which normally benefits one partner more than the other (Bielby and Bielby 1992; Kalter 1998; Nisic 2010). Commuting is another form of spatial mobility that might be chosen to avoid migration (Kalter 1994; van Ham 2002; Clark and Huang 2003). Both forms of spatial mobility could also be intermingled, for example, if the long-distance commuter takes a second flat at the place of work, but returns home regularly at the weekends (weekend-commuter). It is therefore important to control for migration and if possible its predecessor, migration decision-making, to avoid the overestimation of commuting effects.

According to the social exchange theory, one can expect that *long-term commuting generally enhances the risk of separation for couples (H1)* because the partners have less time for joint social activities. Instead, commuters spend more time in environments where their partners are not present, for instance on their journeys to work and in the surroundings of their workplace, especially if they stay overnight. This might broaden their perceived alternatives to the current partnership, for instance because at the place of work acquaintanceships independent from the partner are maintained or because at the place of work a second residence is established.

Besides, it has to be considered that having such independent spheres from the partner and the family usually is associated with gainful employment. Living alone might then be perceived as an alternative to the partnership, too. On the other hand,

especially housewives who are economically dependent on their husbands would seldom perceive such option. Against the background of the micro-economic theory gainful employment of the woman might enhance the risk of separation for the couple because both partners benefit less from the partnership as they would with specialised roles (Becker et al. 1977: 1145 f.) Therefore one can expect *gainful employment of women to enhance the risk of separation generally (H2)*.

In the last decades, women's average educational levels and labour market potential have increased considerably. Therefore, the prevalence of more egalitarian gender role beliefs has presumably also increased (Huinink and Röhler 2005; Treas and Drobnic 2010). One may assume that the labour force participation of women generally is no longer a threat to the stability of partnerships. On the other hand, we know that housework is still a female domain and that the combination of gainful employment and the responsibility for housework and childcare leads to a double burden of women (Künzler 1999; Huinink and Röhler 2005; Treas and Drobnic 2010). The time women spend on housework (van der Lippe 2010) as well as the degree of conflict with regard to the division of labour between the partners (Röhler and Huinink 2010) depend on their attitudes towards gender roles. These conflicts may initiate separation, especially for women (Frisco and Williams 2003). Since positive attitudes towards female labour force participation are more widespread in Eastern Germany than in Western Germany (Huinink and Röhler 2005), according to the bargaining model it can be expected that the *labour force participation of women in Eastern Germany puts partnerships at risk to a lesser extent than in Western Germany (H3)*.

Strong labour market participation and egalitarian gender role beliefs do not necessarily find their expression in everyday practice, though. It was shown that gainfully employed women are often responsible for the main share of housework, despite both partners' egalitarian attitudes (Huinink and Röhler 2005; Röhler and Huinink 2010). This requires strict time management, which might be sabotaged by lengthy commutes. Women might feel forced to demand a greater contribution to the housework from their partners. This situation could lead to conflict between the partners, it might undermine their perception of the partnership as egalitarian, and it might therefore endanger its stability. Therefore, it is expected that particularly *lengthy commutes of women increase the risk of separation (H4)*.

7.2.2 Current Research Findings

There are few findings on the impact of commuting from home to work on the risk of separation. In her dissertation, Sandow (2010) found on the basis of Swedish register data that commuters with a distance of at least 30 km one way run a significantly higher risk of separating than other couples. She examined a 10-year period and analysed married and cohabiting couples.

Viry et al. (2010) investigated the impact of job-related spatial mobility on the perceived quality of the partnership. They did not find a net effect because two

opposite influences were at work: if the social network induced job-related mobility, the effect on the perceived quality of the partnership was negative. On the other hand, if becoming mobile was perceived as enforced by the job market, it was connected to an increase in partnership quality. These findings support the idea that individual perceptions and attitudes shape the effects of job-related spatial mobility. Hence, as the analysis was based on cross-sectional data, the causality of these effects remains questionable.

Additionally, geographical characteristics were found to be important. A higher risk of separation from their partners was found for commuters who live in rural areas compared to those who live in urban areas (Sandow 2010). Other studies also find varying separation rates in different areas, which are normally explained by differences in the 'partner market' and in the distribution of socio-demographic characteristics (South 2001; Lyngstad 2011). From these findings one can draw the conclusion that the type of area should be controlled for in analyses of partnership stability.

The finding that women are more seldom long-distance commuters than men is usually explained with the double burden of women by labour force participation and household responsibilities, which make long journeys to the place of work especially unattractive (Kalter 1994; Limmer 2005; Schneider et al. 2008; Kley 2010). Research on the influence of gender in connection with long-distance commuting on the probability of separation does not exist to my knowledge; but there are findings in this respect for general labour force participation. Schmitt and Trappe (2010) analysed the influence of female labour force participation on the risk of separation in connection with gender role beliefs, comparing East and West German couples. In the East German sample they did *not* find a negative effect of female labour force participation on partnership stability, but in the West German sample they *did*. In the West German sample they found the risk of separation for couples with a more egalitarian labour division significantly enhanced compared to couples practising a male breadwinner model (man works full-time, woman not in paid employment). If the woman worked part-time, no effect was found in Western Germany, but in Eastern Germany the risk of separation was halved compared to the male breadwinner couples. These findings support the view that the labour force participation of women is generally no threat to the partnership stability of couples with more egalitarian gender role beliefs. Hence, it should not be ignored that the societal acceptance of female labour force participation is higher in Eastern Germany, which finds its expression in a better availability of childcare facilities and therefore better general conditions for (full-time) employment of women (Pfau-Effinger 2010; Röhler and Huinink 2010).

In the light of these findings, two goals can be specified for this article: firstly, the findings about the differential influence of female labour force participation in Germany on the risk of separation should be replicated. Secondly, the question whether long-distance commuting between home and work enhances the risk of separation (additionally) will be analysed.

There are a range of findings on the predictors of divorce, but only few of them have reliably been found to be of significant influence across studies. The following

outline concentrates on findings based on the social exchange and the micro-economic theories. The sources are a meta-analysis of German studies published between 1987 and 2001 (Wagner and Weiß 2003), and literature reviews of studies on divorce published in Europe and the United States in the past two decades (Amato 2010; Lyngstad and Jalovaara 2010):

- (a) *Indicators for the 'partner match' or attractions to the partnership.* Marrying at an early age was found to strongly enhance the risk of divorce, whereas additional years of age at marriage were found to diminish this risk. Homogamy with regard to ethnicity, education, and religion was only found to be influential in the USA but not in Germany and the North European countries.
- (b) *Indicators for the division of labour.* Findings about the influence of labour division between the partners give some support to the hypothesis that female labour market participation enhances the risk of divorce, although more recent evidence about the strength and even the direction of this association for subgroups is mixed. In a cross-country comparison it was found that in Western Germany the risk of divorce is enhanced if the woman contributes a somewhat greater share to the household income, whereas in the USA the most egalitarian partnerships proved to be the most stable ones.
- (c) *Indicators for couple-specific capital or barriers to end the partnership.* The birth of the first child, the presence of a common child, home ownership, being Catholic and church marriage were all found to diminish the risk of separation in Germany, whereas living in a big city where social control is possibly lower compared to the countryside was found to enhance this risk. Additionally one may argue that living together in a joint household is an important step towards institutionalising the partnership and may therefore be seen as an investment in couple-specific capital. It was shown that living together diminishes the perception of instability in a partnership to a comparably extent as marriage (Arránz Becker and Hill 2010). Marriage is often the next step, and it is well known that matrimony is a strong barrier to ending the partnership: the rates of dissolution are generally higher for cohabitants than for married couples, even in the more open Scandinavian societies.

7.3 Data and Methods of Analysis

The data come from the study 'Migration decisions in the life course', a three-wave panel with event history data, which was funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG) (Kley and Huinink 2010). The data were gathered randomly among the residents of two German cities aged 18–50 years. The respondents were selected via Random Digit Dialing (Gabler et al. 1998) and the interviews were carried out as Computer Assisted Telephone Interviews (CATI). In the first wave, the participation rates in the two cities were 52 and 47 %. In wave three, 69 and 72 % of the initial interviewees could be reached. The information about the partner stems from the

respondents.² The observation period covers the duration of the panel study and runs from January 2006 to December 2008, which is 36 months. To avoid left-censoring, information about the start of the first episodes was also collected.

Apart from different economic conditions due to their location in East (Magdeburg) versus West Germany (Freiburg) the two cities are quite similar. They both have about 200,000 inhabitants, both have universities, and both are not located near another important city within short commuting distance. With regard to the finding that the influence of long-distance commuting on the risk of separation varies between rural and urban regions (Sandow 2010), the data restriction to urban areas might be seen as an advantage. With regard to the 'partner market', the two cities might nevertheless be different because of discrepancies in the educational distribution and in the prevalence of marriage between Eastern and Western Germany. In the East German city, for instance, the share of respondents who reached a medium level of schooling is higher, whereas the shares of respondents who reached at most a lower secondary level and of those who reached a higher secondary level are lower compared to the West German city (Kley and Huinink 2010). In addition to the educational level, the place of sampling is therefore also controlled for in the analysis.³

The investigated range of age spans 18–50 years in the first wave; however, adolescents still enrolled at school were excluded from the sample as they had not yet entered the training and job markets. Likewise excluded were persons who were married but separated at the beginning of the observation window. They are about to separate from their partners, and having separate homes is an expression of this separation. After data cleaning, 890 respondents out of 944 who had at least one partner during the observation window remained.⁴ A distribution of characteristics of male and female commuters compared to other men and women can be found in the appendix.

Methods for discrete time event history analysis are suitable for the analysis of the research questions. A logit transformation is used because the antilog of the estimated coefficient (e^{coeff}) can be interpreted as the change in the relative risk of the dependent event effected by a one unit change in the predictor, holding all other predictors constant (Long 1997: 80). The dependent variable refers to the self-reported end of the partnership. Within the observation period of 36 months, 141 separations were observed, i.e. separations occurred within 16 % of the couples (not weighted). Calculated on the basis of the longitudinal dataset, separation is an

²The German Socio-Economic Panel Study (GSOEP) also includes some information about places of residence and work, and it has the advantages of nationwide samples and direct responses of the respective partner of the target person. However, a downside of this data is that it does not include occupational and residence information about partners who do not cohabit with the respondent. Moreover, it does not include proper information about migration intentions.

³Restricting the samples to respondents who were born in the respective city only marginally changes the distribution of educational levels.

⁴In order not to lose more cases due to missing data on the work history of the partners, missing values at the start or end of a work spell were imputed using mean values. The gender of the partners was not asked for so in the following heterosexual couples are assumed.

extremely rare event that took place in 0.5 % of the observed 26,014 person-months. Starting with the first month of the observation window in January 2006, the hazard of separation from the first partner with whom a relationship existed or was entered into during the duration of the panel is estimated.

The predictors are explained below. Table 7.1 shows their distribution in the sample and the level of measurement. Furthermore, the count of months the respondents spent in each of the categories during the observation period (exposures) is given as well as the count of separation events within these categories (occurrences) and their proportions (occurrences/exposures in per cent).

Labour force participation and commuting are estimated according to gender for both partners. Full-time employment comprises at least 35 working hours per week, part-time employment refers to all jobs with fewer working hours. Both employees and self-employed persons are considered. The category 'not working' includes homemakers, unemployed persons, persons in training or education, and retired persons. Employment was given priority if there were competing statuses. Long-distance commuters are persons whose journey between home and work lasts at least 1 h in each direction. Short-distance commuters with a journey to work of less than 1 h and persons who work at the place of residence were combined; they are denoted as employed in the vicinity. Preliminary analysis showed that the separation risk of persons employed at the place of residence and short-distance commuters does not differ. To analyse the labour market participation and commuting of women and men in relative detail but without excess complexity, six categories are formed for the models: full-time employed woman (vicinity); part-time employed woman (vicinity); full-time employed man (vicinity); woman is long-distance commuter (employed full-time or part-time); man is long-distance commuter (employed full-time or part-time). The reference category is formed by women and men who are currently not employed and by part-time employed men who work in the vicinity.⁵

Migration decision-making was estimated prospectively in each panel wave and the two short contact interviews that took place between the waves. First the respondents were asked whether they recently have considered leaving the city of residence to live somewhere else. Those who answered affirmatively were then asked whether they were planning to migrate within the next 12 months. The movers as well as the stayers were followed up. The figures in Table 7.1 show that especially the two stages of migration decision-making (considering and planning a move) but also migration behaviour are associated with a higher risk of separation.⁶

The prior duration of the partnership at the time of the first interview is carried forward each month the respondent participated in the survey to account for unob-

⁵Preliminary analyses showed that the risk of separation for part-time employed men is not different to that for non-employed men.

⁶A part of the moves that actually occurred is a small number of inner-city moves. The inner-city moves did not have a different impact on the risk of separation compared to other moves.

Table 7.1 Distribution of variables in the observation period January 2006 to December 2008 (weighted) and number of exposures and occurrences

	Per cent (Mean; Std. Dev.)	Min	Max	Exposures	Occurrences (O/E in %)
<i>Dependent variable</i>					
Separation	0.5	0	1	26,014	141
<i>Work and spatial mobility</i>					
♀ full-time (≥ 35 h/week)	40.5	0	1	10,278	60 (0.6)
♀ part-time (< 35 h/week)	32.4	0	1	8,562	38 (0.4)
♀ not working	27.0	0	1	7,174	43 (0.6)
♂ full-time	69.6	0	1	17,907	64 (0.3)
♂ part-time	11.5	0	1	3,023	21 (0.7)
♂ not working	18.9	0	1	5,084	56 (1.1)
♀ long-distance commuter (≥ 1 h per journey)	4.0	0	1	1,251	12 (0.9)
♂ long-distance commuter	8.7	0	1	2,502	8 (0.3)
Migration: not at all	69.2	0	1	15,904	61 (0.4)
Considering	16.6	0	1	5,323	42 (0.8)
Planning	7.9	0	1	2,688	23 (0.9)
Move	6.2	0	1	2,099	15 (0.7)
<i>Time and place</i>					
Partnership duration (years)	(10.8; 8.9)	0	36.7		
Age at start of partnership	(25.6; 7.0)	15	50		
Residence: Magdeburg	51.6	0	1	12,488	56 (0.4)
Freiburg	48.4	0	1	13,526	85 (0.6)
Second residence	8.4	0	1	2,389	15 (0.6)
<i>Homogamy: educational level</i>					
Both tertiary	32.2	0	1	9,356	31 (0.3)
Both upper secondary	26.4	0	1	6,165	40 (0.6)
Both lower secondary	0.9	0	1	162	2 (1.2)
♂ higher than ♀	19.5	0	1	4,934	34 (0.7)
♀ higher than ♂	21.0	0	1	5,397	34 (0.6)
<i>Couple-specific capital</i>					
Living together	75.1	0	1	19,017	33 (0.2)
Youngest child: no child	51.5	0	1	13,646	120 (0.9)
Under 3 years	12.7	0	1	3,253	2 (0.06)
3 years and older	35.8	0	1	9,115	19 (0.2)

The predictors are time dependent, except for the following which are constants measured in the first wave: age at the start of the partnership, place of residence, educational level

♀ = woman, ♂ = man

served heterogeneity in the models. A quadratic term captures the non-linear trend of the separation risk (Wagner 1997: 209; Engelhardt 2002: 63 ff.).

Additionally, the age of the respondent when the current partnership began is considered. The age of the partner is not included due to strong correlation with the age of the respondent and the duration of the partnership. But whether the

couple or one of the partners has a second domicile is accounted for, since – like the place of residence and commuting – it belongs to the spatial features of the partnership.

The educational level of the respondent and his or her partner were coded in three categories according to the ISCED⁷ classification (Schroedter et al. 2006). A lower secondary level of schooling comprises all respondents who completed at most ten years of schooling (*Hauptschulabschluss*, *Realschulabschluss*). An upper secondary level comprises all respondents who attained a certificate that allows them to study (e.g. *Fachhochschulreife*, *Abitur*) and those who completed an apprenticeship (e.g. *Ausbildung im Dualen System*, *Berufsschule*). A tertiary level of schooling comprises respondents who completed further studies (e.g. *Fachschulabschluss*, *Meister*, *Techniker*, *Bachelor*, *Master*, *Diplom*, *Magister*).

Whether the respondents moved together to share a home and whether eventually one of the partners moved out again was measured time dependently. Since marriage is strongly confounded with the main predictors, it is not considered additionally in the analysis.⁸

To capture the influence of children on the risk of separation the age of the youngest child living in the household is considered, whereby having at least one child below 3 years of age is distinguished from having older children. There are very few stepchildren in the sample. If a birth occurred during the observation window, the information about children under three was updated.⁹

Since persons who were considering leaving the city were over-sampled in the first wave, the descriptive analysis must take the stratification of the sample into account by applying frequency weights. Since selective panel attrition among those who considered moving likely yields an under-representation of actual movers (Kley 2011), longitudinal design weights were constructed that also correct for the probability of staying in the survey.¹⁰ The longitudinal analyses are not weighted because the variables of stratification are uncorrelated with the dependent variable, and because the items of stratification are included as predictors (Winship and Radbill 1994).

⁷ISCED stands for International Standard Classification of Education and is compiled by UNESCO.

⁸Among the couples who live together, 61 % are married, but among those who live separately only 2 %. Furthermore, female labour force participation and commuting is confounded with marriage: among the married women, 38 % work full-time compared to 44 % among the not married; the percentage of female commuting is cut in half with marriage (from 5 to 2 %).

⁹For the sake of parsimony, additional variables that were found to influence the risk of separation in the literature were not included because they did not show sizeable and significant results: the subjective importance of career and income, the number of children, whether the respondent was born in the city of residence, and home ownership.

¹⁰Information on the design of the longitudinal weights can be given on request.

7.4 Results

Whether job-related spatial mobility and migration intentions increase the risk of separation for couples was analysed in five steps. In the first and second model, the impact of labour market participation and commuting between home and work for men and women is analysed, whereby the place of residence in the first wave is considered (Freiburg in Western versus Magdeburg in Eastern Germany). In the third model, migration intentions and migration behaviour of the respondent are added. In the fourth model, time and area characteristics are additionally controlled for. Finally, in the fifth model, additional information about the educational homogamy of the couple and indicators for couple-specific capital are added.

The effects estimated in Model 1 (Table 7.2) generally meet the expectations derived from the micro-economic theory of divorce: full-time work of women increases the risk of separation for the couple, although not significantly, whereas full-time employment of men strongly decreases this risk. For female part-time work a negative but not significant effect is estimated. The main question of this paper, whether long-distance commuting enhances the risk of separation for couples, can be answered with “it depends”. If the commuter is female, the risk of separation is estimated to be almost doubled compared to a male breadwinner. If the commuter is male, a negative but not significant effect on the risk of separation is estimated. The place of residence exerts a significant influence, too, which will be examined in the next model.

On grounds of the greater prevalence of the male breadwinner model in West Germany, one may expect that female full-time employment has a more negative effect on partnership stability in Western than Eastern Germany. Therefore, in Model 2 (Table 7.2) two interaction terms are added that depict the influence of female full-time employment and commuting in interaction with the place of residence on the separation risk. The odds ratios show indeed that only in Freiburg does female full-time employment increase the risk of separation for a couple; it is doubled compared to couples in which the woman is a homemaker (odds ratio = $0.66 \times 2.92 = 1.9$). In Magdeburg, the East German city, female full-time work in the vicinity is estimated to rather reduce the risk of separation (odds ratio = 0.66, not sig.). But when it comes to female commuting, a strong increase in the separation risk for East German couples is estimated. Compared to couples in which the woman is not working, a four times higher risk of separation is estimated (odds ratio = 4.47) for commuting women in East Germany. For West German women, long-distance commuting does not significantly add to the already enhanced risk of separation due to female full-time employment (odds ratio = $4.47 \times 0.21 = 0.9$). The main effect of the place of residence is now close to 1.0 and no longer significant, i.e. the higher probability for separation in the West German city estimated in the first model is explained by the higher risk seen for full-time employed women. A first conclusion is that female labour

Table 7.2 Relative risks of separation for couples due to job-related spatial mobility

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Binomial logistic regression	Exp(b)	Exp(b)	Exp(b)	Exp(b)	Exp(b)
<i>Work and spatial mobility</i>					
♀ not employed, ♂ part-time (vicinity) or not employed	1	1	1	1	1
♀ full-time (vicinity)	1.27	0.66	0.71	0.99	1.02
♀ part-time (vicinity)	0.78	0.85	0.92	1.19	1.27
♂ full-time (vicinity)	0.38***	0.39***	0.42***	0.57***	0.71*
♀ long-distance commuter (full- or part-time employed)	1.69*	4.47***	3.88***	3.38***	3.33***
♂ long-distance commuter (full- or part-time employed)	0.76	0.76	0.76	0.85	0.83
Residence: Freiburg (Ref. Magdeburg)	1.38*	0.98	0.95	0.98	1.02
♀ full-time × residence Freiburg		2.92***	2.94***	2.14**	1.92*
♀ commuter × residence Freiburg		0.21**	0.23**	0.32*	0.37
Migration: not at all			1	1	1
Considering			1.79***	1.38	1.28
Planning			1.75**	1.21	1.07
Move			1.52	1.05	1.14
<i>Time and place</i>					
Partnership duration (years)				0.90***	0.98
Partnership duration (years) squared				1.31*	0.95
Age at start of partnership				0.99*	0.99
Second residence				0.89	0.77
<i>Homogamy</i>					
Educational level: both tertiary					1
Both upper secondary					1.26
Both lower secondary					3.72*
♂ higher than ♀					1.44
♀ higher than ♂					1.04
<i>Couple-specific capital</i>					
Living together					0.20***
Youngest child: no child					1
Under 3 years					0.28*
3 years and older					0.81
Constant	0.01***	0.01***	0.01***	0.01***	0.01***
Number of person-months	26,014	26,014	26,014	26,014	26,014
LR Chi ² (degrees of freedom)	44.0(6)	56.8(8)	66.8(11)	128.2(15)	189.1(22)
Model significance	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
McFadden's Pseudo-R ²	0.025	0.032	0.038	0.073	0.108

*p<0.10; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

force participation is still able to put couples under pressure, in the West German city if it is full-time, in the East German city if it is combined with long-term commuting.

In Model 3 (Table 7.2) the respondent's migration decision-making and migration behaviour are added. Each of the migration decision-making stages additionally increases the risk of separation significantly. Actually moving also has a positive but not significant effect (probability of error 15 %). This finding is plausible because the move is the last step that finally executes the decision formed earlier. A decrease in the odds ratio for female long-distance commuting from 4.5 to 3.9 indicates that its influence would be overestimated if migration decision-making were not considered. Among those who are considering migration, the share of long-distance commuters is higher compared to those who are not considering migration (6 % versus 4 %); the same pattern is observed with regard to planning migration (8 % versus 5 %) and actually moving (7 % versus 5 %). But nevertheless we still find a high impact of female full-time employment for West German and of female commuting for East German couples on the risk of separation.

In Model 4 (Table 7.2) the duration of the partnership, the age at the start of the partnership, and whether the couple has a second home are considered. The influence of commuting and of migration decision-making and behaviour on the risk of separation is diminished once the duration of the partnership is considered. The partnership duration is intertwined with both commuting and migration decision-making, which can be displayed in the form of differences between mean partnership durations (t-tests, all statistically significant with 5 % probability of error): long-distance commuters have been in their current partnership for 7.1 years on average, compared with 9.3 years for persons who do not commute. Female long-distance commuters have an especially short mean duration of partnership (6 years). Therefore, the estimated impact of female long-distance commuting on the risk of separation is somewhat diminished, but the odds ratio of 3.4 is still significant. A similar picture can be observed with regard to migration. Respondents who are considering migration have been in their current partnership for 6.5 years on average, whereas those who are not considering it have been partnered for an average of 10 years. The respective figures for those who are planning migration are 4 years of partnership and for those who actually move 3.5 years. It appears that migration decision-making and female labour-force participation might be a threat to recently formed partnerships.

With each year the partnership has already lasted, the risk of separation is estimated to be diminished by about 10 %. But the decrease in the separation risk becomes more flat as the duration of the partnership increases. Furthermore, it is estimated that with every year the respondent was older when he or she formed his partnership, the risk of separation is significantly diminished, but to a rather low extent. Whether the couple has a second home seems to have no sizeable influence. Further analysis revealed that for long-distance commuters a second home

diminishes the risk of separation more strongly compared to other groups. This contradicts the hypothesis that having a second home may increase the risk of separation because it provides extra room for one of the partners. For long-distance commuters, a second home appears to have more the character of a resource that helps decrease the stress of this mobile lifestyle.

In Model 5 (Table 7.2) the educational homogamy of the couple and couple-specific capital are considered. Educational homogamy is estimated to exert no effect on the risk of separation for a couple but the educational level does. If both partners reached at most a lower secondary degree of schooling the risk of separation is estimated to be tripled compared to partners who both reached a tertiary level of education. Living together decreases the odds of separating strongly and significantly by 80 %. Having children additionally deters partners from separating, especially if the youngest child is under 3 years of age. This finding seems remarkable because having children is confounded with both the job status and living together.¹¹

The negative effects of female labour force participation for West German and of commuting for East German women on partnership stability are quite robust against the influences of these barriers to ending a partnership. However, the parameters of time – both the partnership duration and age at the start of the partnership – lose significance. Obviously, the partnership duration is strongly confounded with living together: those who do not share a home have been in their partnership for 1.7 years on average, whereas those who live together have been partnered for an average of 11.9 years. Furthermore, the respondents who do not share a home with their partners were significantly younger when they formed their partnership compared to those who live with their partners (20.3 compared to 24.9 years).

Post-estimation on the basis of Model 5 in Table 7.2 (not shown) reveals that the marginal effects of long-distance commuting of women on the risk of separation are significant in both cities.¹² The marginal effect shows to which extent the risk of separation is influenced by a particular parameter while all other parameters are held constant (Long 1997: 71). In the West German city, the risk of separation for full-time working women is increased by 0.40 % points each month due to long-distance commuting; in the East German city it is increased by 0.55 % points. For female commuters who are employed part-time the figures are quite similar. Since Model 5 estimates the average risk of separation for

¹¹ Compared to childless respondents, those with at least one child share a home with their partner much more often (95 % versus 57 %). With regard to long-distance commuting, significant differences in opposite directions for men and women are observed: women who have at least one child are more seldom long-distance commuters (5 % versus 3 %), whereas their male counterparts commute more often (6 % versus 11 %).

¹² The average marginal effects were calculated using the command *margins* in Stata 12.1; the level of significance is up to 5 %.

couples to be 0.54 % per month, the increase due to the commuting of women is considerably. On the basis of the estimated marginal effects it can be concluded that long journeys between home and the workplace of women are harmful for partnership stability, in both parts of the country.

7.5 Discussion

In this article, the hazard for union dissolution of married and non-married couples was estimated with a focus on job-related spatial mobility, taking migration intentions and behaviour, and the living arrangements of the partners into account. As a threshold for a lengthy commuting distance a one-way journey of at least 1 h between the place of home and work was chosen. Shorter commuting distances were combined with being employed at the place of residence. Predictors for separation were derived from the social exchange theory, the micro-economic theory of marital stability and based on a literature review. These predictors were then empirically tested with discrete time event history analyses, using data from the German panel study 'Migration Decisions in the Life Course'.

The first hypothesis, derived from the social exchange theory, could be clearly refuted: *Long-distance commuting does not generally increase the risk of separation for couples*. The analysis showed that the influence of commuting varies with both the sex of the commuter and being employed per se. Female full-time work was found to increase the risk of separation significantly – but exclusively in the West German and not in the East German sample. The micro-economic argumentation that a gender specific division of labour between the partners should be beneficial for the stability of partnerships is therefore exclusively supported for West Germany, where 'traditional' gender roles are more widespread. The second hypothesis, according to which *female labour force participation generally increases the risk of separation* for a couple, is *not* supported either.

The analysis shows that *female full-time employment endangers partnership stability to a lesser extent in Eastern Germany* than in Western Germany, corresponding to the third hypothesis. However, in Eastern Germany long-distance commuting of women increases the risk of separation strongly. For East German couples the risk of separation was found to be tripled if the woman is a long-distance commuter, whereas for West German couples the already enhanced separation risk due to female full-time employment is not additionally increased significantly through female commuting. But in sum and corresponding to the fourth hypothesis, in both parts of Germany *partnership stability is endangered by lengthy commutes of working women*.

These findings support explanations of the enhanced separation risk for spatially mobile couples on the basis of bargaining theory whereby gender role beliefs

and spatial arrangements of everyday life appear to play a prominent part. In couples with more egalitarian gender role beliefs, female full-time employment is generally no threat to the partnership. One should keep in mind that an egalitarian division of labour between the partners depends on good provision of childcare facilities, which is more the case in Eastern Germany. But female full-time employment becomes a risk if it puts too great a burden on women, i.e. in the form of long-distance commutes, because women on average perceive commuting as more stressful than men. Studies have shown that this perception is rooted in the fact that women often feel themselves to be mainly responsible for the housekeeping and childrearing, even if they are in full-time paid employment (e.g. Röhler and Huinink 2010).

Therefore, it is logical that the full-time employment of men is a stabilising factor in today's partnerships, and whether commuting has to be accepted or not is of minor importance. The analysis showed a significantly reduced risk of separation for couples if the man worked full-time compared to part-time or other activities. If the man has to commute over long distances, the separation risk is diminished further, although not to a significant extent.

These findings proved robust against additional influences like migration intentions and behaviour, the duration of the partnership, the age at the start of the partnership, the educational level of both partners, household characteristics like living together and having a second domicile, and having children. Whether the couple has a second home does *not* play an important part according to the estimates. But the investment in couple-specific capital that may act as a barrier to ending the partnership was found to be influential, too. Whether the couple shares at least one home or whether it lives completely separately was found to be most important. Having a child was found to decrease the risk of separation additionally, especially if the youngest child is under the age of three.

In this paper spatial mobility was analysed in a more comprehensive way because the whole range of living arrangements of couples were taken into account. Couples with separate homes should not be neglected in this branch of research, as they were found to comprise 25 % of 18–50 year old inhabitants of two cities in this survey. The findings were based on random samples of 890 respondents and their partners, and longitudinal methods of analysis were used. Still, some features of the data may inhibit the generalisability of the results. The samples were drawn in two cities and not nationwide, and the observation window of 3 years was rather short. Lastly, heterosexual couples had to be assumed in the analysis because the gender of the partner was not asked for in the survey. Until the results have been replicated with other data, the findings should therefore be interpreted with caution.

Annotation The main findings of this article were first published in Kley, S. (2012): Gefährdet Pendelmobilität die Stabilität von Partnerschaften? *Zeitschrift für Soziologie*, 41(5): 356–374.

Appendix

Table 7.3 Characteristics of long-distance commuters (person-months, weighted)

	Female commuters	Other women	Male commuters	Other men
<i>Work and spatial mobility</i>				
Employed: no	–	0.27	–	0.20
Full-time	0.56	0.41	0.92	0.68
Part-time	0.44	0.32	0.08	0.12
Migration: not at all	0.57	0.71	0.73	0.71
Considering	0.21	0.16	0.16	0.16
Planning	0.13	0.07	0.07	0.07
Move	0.09	0.06	0.03	0.06
<i>Time and place</i>				
Partnership duration (years)	8.2	10.9	13.8	10.4
Age at start of partnersh.	26.4	23.5	23.4	23.7
Residence: Magdeburg	0.43	0.52	0.65	0.50
Freiburg	0.57	0.48	0.35	0.50
Second residence	0.08	0.08	0.10	0.08
<i>Homogamy</i>				
Educ. level: both tertiary	0.54	0.31	0.39	0.31
Both upper secondary	0.11	0.27	0.15	0.27
Both lower secondary	–	0.01	0.02	0.01
Man higher	0.20	0.20	0.17	0.20
Woman higher	0.14	0.21	0.28	0.20
<i>Couple-specific capital</i>				
Living together	0.69	0.76	0.88	0.74
Youngest child: no child	0.65	0.51	0.38	0.52
Under 3 years	0.11	0.13	0.15	0.13
3 years and older	0.24	0.36	0.47	0.35

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Part III
Spatial Mobility and Its Relations with
Family Life Course Events and Living
Arrangements

Chapter 8

Comparing Living Arrangements of Immigrant Young Adults in Spain and the United States

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8.1 Introduction

Transition to adulthood is a crucial stage in the life course when young people face important life decisions. One of the first major transitions they encounter is leaving the parental home, which goes hand-in-hand with the completion of education, obtaining stable employment and forming their household and family (Goldscheider and DaVanzo 1985). Living arrangements of young people depend on many factors such as labour and housing market conditions, economic conditions, peer decisions, circumstances within the parental home as well as norms and cultures (Aassve et al. 2013).

Meanwhile socioeconomic status of young adults is closely associated with their living arrangements. Living outside the parental home generally means a decline of

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disposable income for the young adult. It is found that leaving parental home increases the risk of entering poverty for young people (Aassve et al. 2006, 2007). While remaining in the parental home beyond mature age may facilitate young adults in pursuing higher education or obtaining a desirable job, they concurrently delay their independence including partnership formation and fertility (Chiuri and Del Boca 2010).

Apart from whether young adults live inside/outside parental home, another important aspect of the living arrangement for young adults is whether they live with a partner. It is important to consider their partnership status because this can be associated with a decision to leave home, which is typically the case for Mediterranean countries (Iacovou 2002). Young adults living outside parental home with a partner are found to have less risk of being in poverty compared to their counterparts living alone due to the fact that poverty rates are lower in a two-adult than in a single-adult household (Aassve et al. 2007). Likewise, living in a multi-generational household or with an extended family is also found to reduce the risk of entering into poverty for young adults, especially during hard times (Kochhar and Cohn 2011).

With the new wave of mass immigration into the United States and Europe since the 1970s and now that young immigrants have entered adulthood, this raises an important question whether the same pattern of living arrangements holds true for immigrant populations. The fact that immigrant young adults have grown up and lived outside their country of origin implies that their living arrangement models could differ from those of the native population. Immigrants are of diversified background in terms of social, economic, legal status and cultural norms and these fundamental differences can shape their living arrangement decision. Besides, with whom immigrants migrated is also crucial in determining how they would live when they enter adulthood. Those who migrated at young age are more likely to have migrated with their parents or relatives while those who migrated in their teens or older might have migrated alone for study, work or other reasons. Thus, age at migration could reflect different living arrangement options available when these migrants become adult.

At the same time, age at migration can affect young adult living arrangements in a similar way as other outcomes related to social integration such as schooling outcomes (Böhlmark 2008; Cortes 2006; Gonzalez 2003; Van Ours and Veenman 2006), labour market success (Lee and Edmonston 2011; Myers et al. 2009) and residential segregation (Åslund et al. 2009). Living arrangements can reflect the level of social integration of immigrants because it reveals both their cultural preferences for a particular living arrangement and social conditions which shape the motives, opportunities or restrictions and costs associated with their living arrangement decision. It has been widely reported that immigrants who migrated to the receiving society at young age, particularly at pre-school age, achieved fairly similar socioeconomic outcomes to the native-born. Accordingly, we expect the living arrangement patterns of these immigrants when they enter adulthood to be more similar to those of the natives as compared to living arrangements of young adults immigrated at older ages. With the growing number of foreign born population in

many industrialised countries (Grieco 2010; Muenz 2006), it is thus important to investigate immigrant young adults living arrangements separately from those of the native born population.

While the literature on living arrangements of immigrant young adults in the United States and Canada is well developed (Boyd 2000; Burr and Mutchler 1993; Glick and Van Hook 2002; Goldscheider and Goldscheider 1988, 1989; Mitchell 2004; Mitchell et al. 2004; Rumbaut and Komaie 2010; Treas and Batalova 2011), to our knowledge, there are few studies that focus on Europe (De Valk and Billari 2007; Stone et al. 2011; Vitali and Arpino 2013; Windzio 2011; Zorlu and Mulder 2011). Cross-national studies of living arrangements of immigrants are even scarcer and usually limited to a small number of groups of immigrants.

This paper aims to add to the literature by conducting a comparative analysis of living arrangements of immigrant young adults in Spain and in the United States across immigrant groups. Host country contexts are found to substantially contribute to variation in immigrants' outcomes in different countries of destination from education (Holdaway et al. 2009; Levels et al. 2008), health (Steven et al. 2006) to labour market performance (Adsera and Chiswick 2007). This suggests that immigrants are constrained to social, economic and political contexts of the host country. That Spain and the United States have different social structures and norms related to leaving parental home is expected to result in differentials in immigrant young adults living arrangements likewise.

The two destination countries are chosen for two reasons. First, living arrangements for the native-born in these two countries are fundamentally different. Young adults from the United States still have a relatively early exit from home by international standards (Furstenberg 2010). Nonetheless, the sequence of transitions has become less orderly and less predictable. In the present day young American adults do not necessarily leave their parental nest for family formation but for many other reasons such as attending college, gaining independence and the like. On the other hand, in Spain, young adults leave parental home at older ages and usually for family formation (Corijn and Klijzing 2002; Fokkema and Liefbroer 2008; Holdsworth 2000). Compared with countries in Northern and Western Europe, leaving home in Spain has been protracted (Fokkema and Liefbroer 2008). Because of lack in state support and strong cultural norms of long period of co-residence with parents, young adults in Spain and other Mediterranean countries leave home at much later age than those from other parts of Europe, especially Nordic countries (Billari et al. 2001). The living arrangements of immigrant young adults in the United States and Spain thus are expected to be different due to the disparities in economic and institutional structures and cultural norms between the two countries. That the norms of transition to adulthood and leaving parental home in Spain and the United States differ considerably provides an interesting context to examine whether young adult immigrants would follow the same pattern of living arrangements as the natives of the country they migrated to.

Second, Spain and the United States are under different welfare-state regimes. Educational systems and labour market regulation can substantially influence life

trajectories of young people. The United States is characterised as a “liberal welfare-state regime” where the market is the main provider of benefits while Spain fits into a “Mediterranean regime” where the family is the strong key provider of social benefits complementary with rudimentary benefits provided by the state (Esping-Andersen 1990, 1999). Despite its stronger employment protection compared to the United States, the introduction of temporary employment contracts for young people during the late 1980s and 1990s place young Spaniards in a vulnerable position with high uncertainty of their labour market prospect (Breen and Buchmann 2002). The high degree of employment protection in Spain nevertheless favours male adult workers (typical head of household). This kind of labour market policy makes young Spaniards delay their transition into a stable full-time job and consequently have to rely heavily on family resources and prolong their dependency on the family. Besides, Spain and the United States are different in educational systems where the average age of completing education is the youngest in liberal welfare regimes and much later in the Southern European regimes (Smeeding and Phillips 2002). The differences in welfare policies as indicated by the age of completion of full-time education and the labour market opportunity of young adults consequently result in different living arrangement patterns in the two countries.

Based on this comparative approach, this paper investigates living arrangements of immigrant young adults comparing them with: (1) the native population; (2) fellow immigrants by age at migration; (3) fellow immigrants by country of birth; and (4) fellow immigrants who migrated to a different country. The remainder of the paper is organized as follows. Section 8.2 describes the data and Sect. 8.3 explains methods used in the empirical analysis. The results are presented in Sect. 8.4. Section 8.5 summarizes and concludes our findings.

8.2 Data

This study is based on individual data for 5 % of the households extracted from the 2000 U.S. Census of Population and Housing (U.S. Census Bureau) and from the 2001 Spanish Census of Population and Housing (Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas, INE).¹ The data are obtained from the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series

¹Note that there are slight different definitions in the Spanish 2001 Census and the U.S. 2000 Census. In the Spanish 2001 Census, the resident population refers only to individuals whose regular residence is located in Spain when the census is performed (*de jure* population). A household refers to a group of persons resident in the same family dwelling, that is excluding dwellings which are used exclusively for other purposes such as offices, workshops and warehouses (INE 2001). In the 2000 U.S. Census, the population to be included in the census refers to individuals whose usual residence was in the United States regardless of the person's legal status or citizenship. Usual residence refers to the place where the person lives and sleeps most of the time regardless of his/her legal residence or voting residence (U.S. Census Bureau 2003).

International (IPUMS-I) produced by the Minnesota Population Center, University of Minnesota. IPUMS-I harmonizes and freely distributes census microdata for a variety of countries around the world. Variables are harmonized across countries and census years so cross-country and temporal comparisons are allowed. Apart from individual and household socioeconomic information, IPUMS also provides information on individuals' country of birth and year of immigration. This allows us to identify individuals with immigration background and distinguish between different ages at migration.

One of the main advantages of the IPUMS data is its large samples. Unlike survey data where only a few countries of origins of immigrants can be examined due to their limited sample size, IPUMS allows us to study immigration from multiple countries of origins simultaneously. Besides, being census data, the response rates are high.

The data supplied by IPUMS nevertheless are not without limitations. First, since censuses only collect basic demographic information, other relevant information that might affect living arrangement decisions such as preferences, attitudes, and intergenerational relations is not available. Besides, there is no retrospective information so it is not possible to identify, for instance, cases of re-entry into the parental home. Also, depending on individual incentives, young adults who are currently living independently from their parents might not have registered as such, and thus are enumerated as still living with parents in the census. Another drawback of the IPUMS data is that the censuses usually do not collect information on parental country of birth. This information can be identified only in the case where an individual lives in the same household with their parent(s). Lacking information on parental country of birth, we cannot distinguish between those born to immigrant parents and to native parents in the destination country. Accordingly, we are not able to identify native-born second generation with immigrant background.

Focusing on living arrangements of young adults with immigrant background, the sample selected for the analysis includes those: (1) aged between 18 and 35 years old; (2) with non-missing information on country of birth, date of arrival in the destination country, gender and relation with household head; and (3) entered into the destination country at age 1–16 years old. We limit our sample to those who came into the destination country at age 16 or lower because the interest is to compare living arrangement patterns between immigrant and native young adults. Those who came to the destination country at older age are more likely to migrate independently unaccompanied by their family and their living arrangements would differ from those of the natives in the first place. Our analysis includes a sample of 518,882 natives and 7,620 immigrants in Spain and 1,836,401 natives and 192,205 immigrants in the United States.

Natives are defined as individuals who were born in the countries studied i.e. Spain or the United States. Immigrants are individuals who were born outside these two countries.

8.3 Methods

Our outcome variable, living arrangement is categorised as follows:² (1) living in a one-person household (living alone); (2) living in parental home, no spouse; (3) living with a partner/spouse (both cohabitation and marriage);³ and (4) living in an extended family (with relatives and in some cases also with parents).

Since our outcome variable is nominal, multinomial logistic regression model is employed to estimate how the likelihood of the four types of living arrangements varies with demographic and socioeconomic characteristics. Living in parental home is chosen as the baseline category.

Independent variables included in the multivariate analysis are:

- *Gender* (female is the reference category).
- *Age* specified as a set of three binary variables: (1) 18–23 (reference); (2) 24–29; and (3) 30–35. This variable captures the effects of age-norm and age-graded transitions in the life course.
- *Age at arrival* is divided into three categories: (1) 1–6 (reference); (2) 7–12; and (3) 13–16. This variable captures the effect of the nature of migration processes and social integration. The lower the age at migration, the more similar the living arrangements are expected to be to those of natives.
- *Education* represents the highest level of educational attainment, divided into three categories: (1) no education or primary level (reference category); (2) secondary level; and (3) tertiary level.
- *Economic activity* represents an individual economic status, divided into three categories: (1) employed; (2) unemployed or economically inactive (reference category) and (3) being in school.
- *Country of birth* is divided into ten groups based mainly on geographical proximity and to a certain extent cultural proximity. These groups are (1) native (born in Spain or born in the United States, reference category); (2) Caribbean and Central America; (3) South America; (4) West Europe including Canada, Australia & New Zealand; (5) East Europe; (6) South Europe; (7) East & Southeast Asia; (8) Middle East & North Africa; (9) rest of Africa; and (10) rest of the world. Note that for the US data, we further distinguish between racial/ethnic background of the natives, namely, white, black and other natives.

²In principle it would be worth including three more categories of living arrangements, namely, living as a single parent (with (a) child(ren) without a partner/spouse), living in parental home (marital status is married, divorced, widowed), living with other (non-kin members). We include these categories in the descriptive analysis but not in the multivariate analysis because the proportion of individuals living in such living arrangements is too small to perform a meaningful statistical analysis.

³We do not distinguish between marriage and cohabitation because particularly for the United States, cohabiting with an unmarried partner has become a common reason for leaving parental home.

8.4 Results

8.4.1 Descriptive Results

Table 8.1 displays living arrangement patterns of young adults by age at migration and country of birth in Spain and the United States. Given a similar age distribution of individuals ages 18–35 of the native-born in Spain and the United States, we find remarkable differences in living arrangements between young adults born in the two

Table 8.1 Percentages distribution of living arrangements by age at migration and country of birth for Spain and the United States

	Alone	Single parent	With parents (single)	With parents (not single)	With partner/spouse	Extended family	Other	N
Spain								
Natives	4.8	0.9	48.2	2.2	27.4	15.7	0.9	540,452
All immigrants	5.4	1.0	33.5	2.4	27.2	27.1	3.3	8,288
<i>Age at migration</i>								
1–6 years old	5.2	1.1	36.9	2.6	33.5	19.1	1.7	3,814
7–12 years old	5.4	0.9	36.2	2.2	24.0	27.8	3.5	2,554
13–16 years old	6.1	1.0	23.2	2.5	18.9	42.3	6.0	1,920
<i>Country of birth</i>								
Africa	5.6	2.0	8.6	1.0	18.3	55.3	9.1	197
North Africa & Middle East	5.3	0.6	18.0	2.4	15.9	53.1	4.7	904
Caribbean & Central America	4.2	1.2	32.3	2.4	18.1	36.5	5.3	337
South America	4.7	1.3	35.2	2.8	16.2	35.9	4.0	1,667
West Europe	6.0	1.0	39.4	2.5	35.6	14.2	1.4	4,490
East Europe	5.1	0.9	24.9	0.9	13.4	44.7	10.1	217
South Europe	4.8	1.2	11.5	0.8	38.1	36.1	7.5	252
East & Southeast Asia	3.2	0.0	20.3	3.8	8.9	56.3	7.6	158
Rest of the world	4.6	0.0	31.8	1.5	9.1	37.9	15.2	66
United States								
All natives	8.0	4.4	18.2	2.1	44.1	16.7	6.5	2,638,280
White natives	8.2	3.1	18.1	1.9	48.1	13.5	7.0	2,087,169
Black natives	8.1	12.7	17.5	2.9	26.7	28.6	3.5	334,198
Other natives	5.7	4.2	20.5	2.9	32.5	28.2	6.1	216,913

(continued)

Table 8.1 (continued)

	Alone	Single parent	With parents (single)	With parents (not single)	With partner/spouse	Extended family	Other	N
All immigrants	4.3	2.3	17.0	3.0	30.6	37.6	5.1	214,762
<i>Age at migration</i>								
1–6 years old	6.3	2.8	20.5	2.9	32.8	28.5	6.2	63,558
7–12 years old	4.1	2.2	19.8	3.4	28.6	37.3	4.7	68,630
13–16 years old	3.0	2.1	12.1	2.8	30.5	44.8	4.7	82,574
<i>Country of birth</i>								
Africa	8.6	2.6	21.3	2.0	27.1	29.0	9.4	2,939
North Africa & Middle East	7.7	1.2	24.6	2.9	34.9	22.0	6.8	3,788
Caribbean & Central America	2.4	2.8	11.8	3.3	30.9	45.3	3.6	121,741
South America	4.4	2.1	23.1	4.1	27.4	33.8	5.0	10,227
West Europe	10.1	3.2	17.4	1.9	43.1	14.2	10.1	15,335
East Europe	6.3	1.0	37.2	2.3	26.4	20.6	6.4	6,089
South Europe	7.2	2.8	19.1	2.8	47.0	16.2	4.9	4,029
East & Southeast Asia	6.3	1.2	24.1	2.6	25.8	33.2	6.8	40,982
Rest of the world	6.1	0.8	28.7	3.3	26.0	28.7	6.5	9,632

Source: 2000 U.S. Census and 2001 Spanish Census (IPUMS-I)

countries. Overwhelmingly, living with parents is the most common living arrangement pattern of the native-born young adults in Spain. Living alone in a single-person household or living with other people rather than their parents, relatives or spouse is uncommon. In the United States, on the other hand, the majority of native young adults live with their partner/spouse and only about a quarter still live with their parents. Another substantial difference between the two countries is the proportion of those in single parenthood, that is living with their children but not together with their partner/spouse. Note that in the United States, among the natives, living arrangements also vary considerably by race. Non-whites and especially blacks have much lower proportion of young adults living with their partner/spouse and higher proportion of those living in an extended family compared to white natives.

Interestingly, although the living arrangement patterns of migrants differ substantially from those of the natives, in both host countries, the living arrangements of migrants resemble more the living arrangements of the natives than the living arrangements of immigrants of the same origin who migrated to a different host country. This pattern holds in particular for those who migrated to the host country at younger ages. For young adults who migrated to Spain at age 1–6 and 7–12, the

proportion living with parents (37 % and 36 %, respectively) is almost as high as that of the natives (48 %). Similarly, for those who migrated to the United States at age 1–6 and 7–12, the proportion living with parents (21 % and 20 %, respectively) is very close to that of the US natives (18 %). Both in Spain and the United States, almost half of migrants who migrated at age 13–16 live with extended family members or non-kin members (42 % and 45 %, respectively). This is probably because the older the age at migration, the less likely that these migrants migrated with their parents.

We also observe substantial variation in living arrangements both by country of birth and country of destination. For many immigrant groups in Spain such as those born in Africa, Middle East & North Africa, East Europe, and East & Southeast Asia, living in an extended family is the most common pattern of living arrangement. Many groups also have high rates of living in parental home similar to the Spanish natives such as those from Caribbean & Central America (32 %), South America (35 %), and West Europe (39 %). In fact, apart from those born in West or South Europe, young immigrants in Spain are found to live in two main living arrangement settings: with their parents or with extended family. This might reflect cultural preferences of those born in Caribbean & Central America, South America and East & Southeast Asia since their counterparts in the United States also have relatively high percentages of those living in an extended family. On the other hand, for immigrant groups who were born in Africa and South Europe, despite having a similar origin, have different demographic and socioeconomic characteristics resulting in diversified living arrangements.

8.4.2 *Multivariate Results*

Multivariate analysis is introduced to examine: (1) socioeconomic factors influencing living arrangement patterns and whether the association is in a similar direction for immigrants and natives; and (2) whether after controlling for demographic and socioeconomic characteristics, there remains a variation in living arrangement outcomes between immigrants and natives, and among immigrants across age at migration and country of birth.

Table 8.2 displays the multinomial logistic regression estimates of living arrangements of natives and immigrants in Spain and the United States separately. This allows us to compare the factors associated with living arrangement outcomes between immigrants and natives, and across the two destination countries. Note that the results provided in Table 8.2 for the US natives only refer to White natives. The direction of the association between demographic and socioeconomic characteristics associated with living arrangements for Black natives and other natives are in general similar to that of White natives⁴ (see Appendix 8.A).

⁴The exception is for the association between educational attainment and the likelihood of living with partner/spouse for Other natives. For this group, the higher the educational qualification, the lower the chance of living with partner/spouse similar to the immigrant population.

Table 8.2 Multinomial logistic regression estimates of living arrangements (baseline: living with parents) for natives and immigrants in Spain and the United States

	Spain				United States			
	Natives		Immigrants		White natives		Immigrants	
	β	s.e.	β	s.e.	β	s.e.	β	s.e.
Living alone								
Men	-0.050	0.014	-0.239	0.112	-0.181	0.007	-0.025	0.025
<i>Age (ref: 18–23)</i>								
Age: 24–29	1.301	0.021	0.885	0.158	1.809	0.008	1.615	0.033
Age: 30–35	2.455	0.022	1.861	0.163	2.741	0.009	2.685	0.038
<i>Age at migration (ref: 1–6)</i>								
Age at migration: 7–12	–	–	0.242	0.129	–	–	-0.248	0.029
Age at migration: 13–16	–	–	1.081	0.141	–	–	0.016	0.031
<i>Education (ref: lower than secondary-level)</i>								
Secondary-level education	-0.071	0.015	-0.108	0.121	0.878	0.013	0.346	0.044
Tertiary-level education	-0.151	0.022	-0.385	0.189	1.691	0.015	1.089	0.048
<i>Employment status (ref: unemployed/inactive)</i>								
In employment	0.443	0.021	0.744	0.165	0.560	0.008	0.531	0.029
In school	-0.077	0.025	0.035	0.198	2.838	0.057	3.265	0.208
Constant	-3.732	0.026	-3.333	0.214	-3.320	-0.015	-3.269	0.053
Living with partner/spouse								
Men	-0.793	0.008	-0.953	0.069	-0.844	-0.005	-0.740	0.015
<i>Age (ref: 18–23)</i>								
Age: 24–29	2.272	0.016	1.891	0.119	2.481	0.006	2.299	0.019
Age: 30–35	4.044	0.016	3.497	0.122	3.737	0.007	3.849	0.026
<i>Age at migration (ref: 1–6)</i>								
Age at migration: 7–12	–	–	-0.059	0.077	–	–	-0.051	0.018
Age at migration: 13–16	–	–	0.452	0.096	–	–	0.348	0.019
<i>Education (ref: lower than secondary-level)</i>								
Secondary-level education	-0.481	0.009	-0.581	0.074	0.407	0.007	-0.786	0.019
Tertiary-level education	-0.970	0.014	-1.199	0.118	0.515	0.009	-1.169	0.026
<i>Employment status (ref: unemployed/inactive)</i>								
In employment	-0.104	0.010	0.110	0.085	0.269	0.005	0.249	0.016
In school	-1.103	0.015	-0.908	0.114	3.045	0.053	3.357	0.190
Constant	-2.079	0.016	-1.498	0.134	-1.018	-0.007	-0.352	0.024

(continued)

Table 8.2 (continued)

	Spain				United States			
	Natives		Immigrants		White natives		Immigrants	
	β	s.e.	β	s.e.	β	s.e.	β	s.e.
Living with extended family								
Men	-0.282	0.008	-0.316	0.061	-0.532	-0.005	-0.267	0.014
<i>Age (ref: 18–23)</i>								
Age: 24–29	0.338	0.010	-0.058	0.074	1.196	0.006	1.056	0.016
Age: 30–35	1.055	0.011	0.379	0.087	1.899	0.008	1.874	0.025
<i>Age at migration (ref: 1–6)</i>								
Age at migration: 7–12	–	–	0.352	0.071	–	–	0.283	0.016
Age at migration: 13–16	–	–	1.161	0.079	–	–	0.774	0.017
<i>Education (ref: lower than secondary-level)</i>								
Secondary-level education	-0.433	0.009	-0.661	0.067	-0.118	0.007	-0.892	0.017
Tertiary-level education	-0.686	0.016	-1.037	0.124	-0.672	0.011	-1.658	0.026
<i>Employment status (ref: unemployed/inactive)</i>								
In employment	-0.158	0.011	-0.042	0.079	0.053	0.006	0.232	0.014
In school	-0.461	0.013	-0.419	0.090	1.860	0.057	1.568	0.197
Log likelihood (df)	-498,116.51 (21)		-7,992.58 (27)		-1,802,505.30 (21)		-197,546.46 (27)	
N	518,882		7,620		1,836,401		192,205	

Source: 2000 U.S. Census and 2001 Spanish Census (IPUMS-I)

Note: Statistically significant results at the .05 and .10 level are highlighted in *bold* and *italicized* respectively

Controlling for age and gender, socioeconomic characteristics associated with living arrangements of the natives in Spain and the United States differ considerably. In Spain, the likelihood of living alone as compared to living in the parental home decreases as educational attainment increases. The opposite is true for the United States whereby the higher the level of education, the higher the likelihood of living alone. Similarly, while those who are still in school are less likely to live alone or live with their spouse/partner in Spain, their counterparts in the United States are significantly more likely to do so. These results are consistent with previous studies on leaving parental home in both countries. It is common for young people to live away from home for higher education in the United States (Mulder et al. 2002) whereas in Spain, living with parents enables young adults to pursue higher education with low financial cost (Aassve et al. 2002).

Likewise, in the United States where cohabiting unions are more common, many young people cohabit with their partner while pursuing higher education. This

explains why those who are in school are more likely to live with their partner/spouse in the United States but less likely to do so in Spain. Correspondingly, the likelihood to live with a partner/spouse rather than with parents increases with educational attainment. In the United States where living apart from parents is perceived as a milestone in the transition to adulthood (Settersten 1998), this finding might reflect a better socioeconomic position of the more educated young adults which allows them to form an independent household more rapidly. On the other hand, in Spain, the likelihood to live with a partner/spouse rather than with parents decreases with educational attainment. This can be explained by the fact that those with higher education often postpone their family formation. Meanwhile, those who are in employment, being economically more independent, are more likely to live by themselves, rather than with parents, both in the United States and Spain and more likely to live with their partner/spouse in the United States. Note that in Spain, the native-born who are in employment are less likely to live with their partner/spouse as compared to living with their parents. Despite being in employment, it is plausible that these young adults decided to continue to reside in the safety 'ne(s)ts' of their parental home until a stable job position is obtained (Aassve et al. 2002).

Both in Spain and the United States, natives with higher education are less likely to live in an extended family as opposed to living with their parents. Likewise, those who are in employment and in school in Spain are also less likely to live in an extended family. This might reflect household socioeconomic conditions whereby those with poorer socioeconomic resources cannot afford to form a nuclear family thus they have to live in and rely on an extended family at least in the beginning of their family formation.⁵ In the United States, on the other hand, those who are in school and in employment are more likely to live in an extended family as opposed to living in their parental home. It might be the case that these people move to pursue their education or career away from their parental home and an extended family provides a primary shelter until they settle down and move on to live by themselves later on.

Turning to living arrangements of young immigrants, we find that socioeconomic characteristics associated with living arrangements of natives and immigrants generally are in the same direction in both countries. In other words, the effects of the correlates of living arrangements of immigrants in Spain are more similar to Spanish natives than to their fellow immigrants in the United States. This is probably due to macro-structural characteristics of the destination country. For example, with smaller housing markets for renting, staying in the parental home while pursuing higher education is common in Spain. Thus, both the natives and immigrants who are in school are not necessarily more likely to live alone like in the United States where going away from home for college education is more common.

⁵Note that the causal direction can be reversed. Living in an extended family means a larger share of household resources between generations and among relatives. Thus, an individual growing up with extended family might have less chance to invest in their human capital because the household might decide to use economic resources for other household members.

In the subsequent analysis, we examine the association between country-of-birth-specific age at migration and living arrangement outcomes taking into account demographic and socioeconomic characteristics. We estimate multinomial logistic regression of living arrangements for immigrants and natives combined. This allows us to directly test the relationship between age at migration and living arrangements by comparing different categories of age at migration against the outcomes of the natives (Appendix 8.B). Besides, we also examine how the association between age at migration and living arrangements varies with country of birth (Appendix 8.C). In order to make the results easier to interpret, we compute predicted probabilities of living arrangement patterns for the natives and immigrants by age at migration (migrated between ages 1–6, 7–12 and 13–16) and educational attainment (secondary and tertiary level) in Spain and the United States, controlling for demographic and socioeconomic characteristics. Predicted probabilities are calculated for a hypothetical man in employment aged 24–29 years. Figure 8.1 presents predicted probabilities by level of education based on multinomial logit estimates in Appendix 8.B.

Figure 8.1 shows that both in Spain and the United States, living arrangements of immigrant young adults vary substantially according to age at migration, with age at migration gradients being slightly larger in Spain. The higher the age at migration, the greater is the difference in living arrangement outcomes between immigrant and native young adults. In the case of Spain—a “latest-late” transition to adulthood country—it is noteworthy to compare the predicted probability of living with parents between native and immigrant young adults. For example, the predicted probability to live in the parental home for native men in the age group 24–29 and with tertiary-level education equals to 0.54. Immigrant young adults with the same demographic characteristics have a predicted probability of living in the parental home which equals to 0.45 if they migrated before the primary school age (1–6), reducing to 0.42 if they migrated during the primary school age (7–12) and it drops to 0.30 if they migrated in their teens (13–16). The same pattern is observed for young men with the same demographic characteristics as above but with secondary level of education, with a predicted probability to live in the parental home equals to 0.47 for natives and equals to 0.37, 0.34 and 0.23 for immigrants migrated at ages 1–6, 7–12 and 13–16, respectively. In the case of the United States, having tertiary education reduces the gap in all living arrangement outcomes between immigrants and natives as well as among immigrants of different ages at migration. The disparities in the distribution of living arrangement patterns are smaller among those with tertiary education compared to their counterparts with secondary education.

In Fig. 8.1 we considered immigrants as a homogeneous group, irrespective of their country of birth. Next, we examine how living arrangements vary by country of birth and age at migration. Figure 8.2 presents predicted probabilities for the four living arrangement outcomes by age at migration and country of birth in Spain and the United States for a hypothetical man, aged 24–29, employed with secondary education based on the multinomial logit estimates presented in Appendix 8.C. Note that only some countries of birth are presented here for simplicity of the graphs. Countries of birth are selected to represent different world regions.

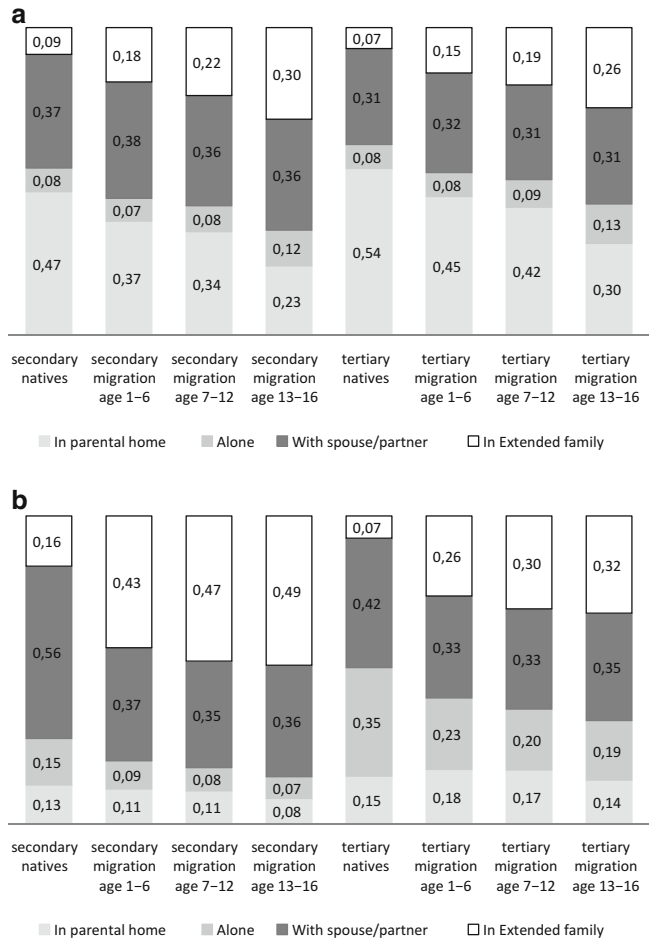


Fig. 8.1 (a) Predicted probabilities of living arrangement patterns for the natives and immigrants by age at migration and educational attainment in Spain. (b) Predicted probabilities of living arrangement patterns for the natives and immigrants by age at migration and educational attainment in the United States (Source: 2000 U.S. Census and 2001 Spanish Census (IPUMS-I))

Notes: (1) Secondary and tertiary refers to individuals with secondary and tertiary education respectively. (2) Predicted probabilities are calculated for a hypothetical person who is male, aged 24–29 years in employment

The age at migration difference is particularly evident for the outcomes living with parents and living in an extended family. In the case of immigrants, it seems that the two living arrangement patterns replace one another. Migrants migrated at age 1–6 years are more likely to be accompanied with their parents than those migrated at older age. Thus, the former have higher propensity to live with parents

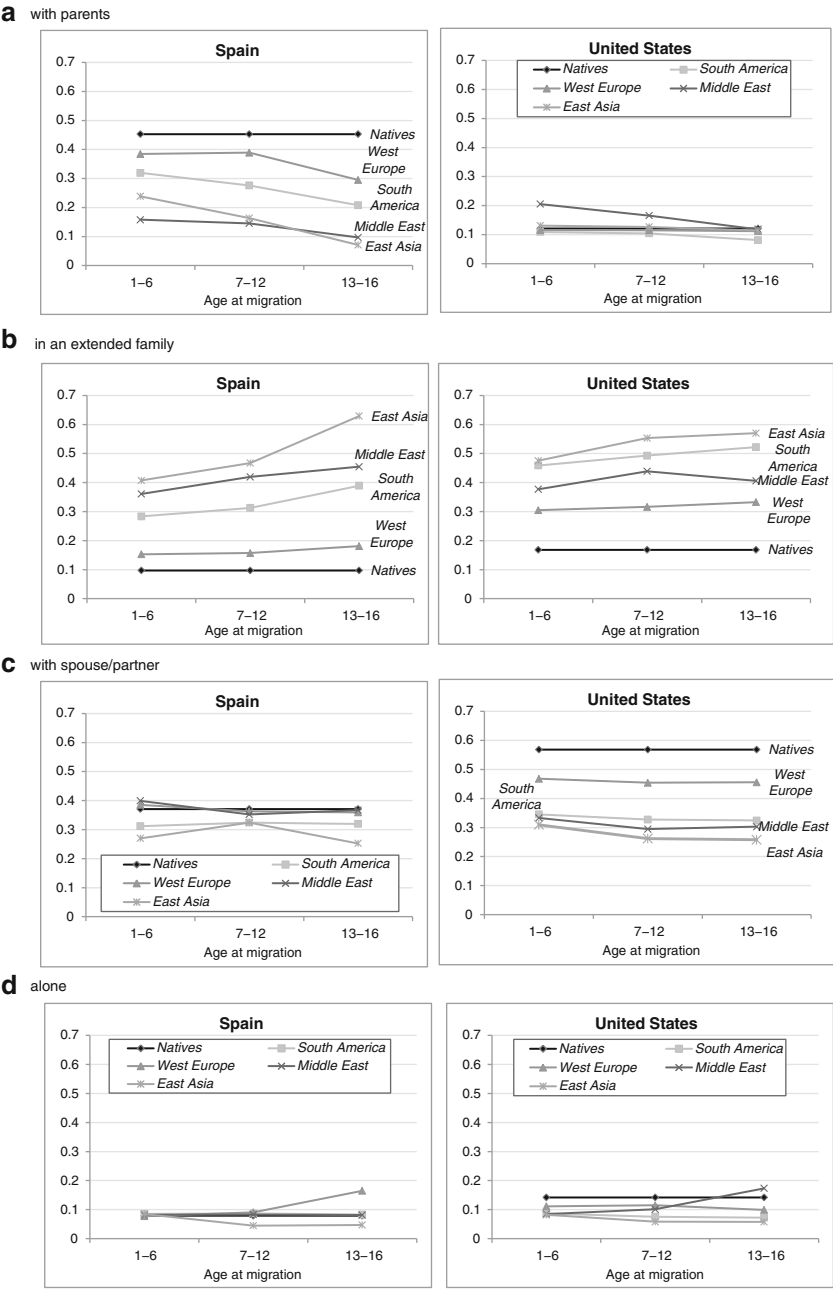


Fig. 8.2 Predicted probabilities of living (a) with parents, (b) in an extended family, (c) with spouse/partner, and (d) alone for the natives and immigrants by age at migration and selected country of birth in Spain and the United States (Note: Predicted probabilities are calculated for a hypothetical person who is male aged 24–29 years in employment with secondary education)

while those migrated at older age have higher propensity to live in an extended family, possibly as a substitute for parental home. Meanwhile, there is substantial country of birth variation in the likelihood of living in parental home and in an extended family. In Spain, the native-born have the highest propensity to live with parents and no immigrant groups supersede that. In the United States, many groups, i.e. those born in West Europe and East & Southeast Asia, have almost the same probability of living with parents as the US native-born. Both in the United States and Spain, young immigrants born in East & Southeast Asia have the highest propensity to live in an extended family, followed by those born in the Middle East & North Africa and those born in South America.

With respect to the propensity to live with a spouse/partner, those migrated at age 1–6 years old are more similar to the natives but this varies substantially by country of birth and country of destination. The native-born in Spain have lower likelihood of living with a spouse/partner than their counterparts born in the United States and this is also true for immigrants in Spain. In the United States, those born in East & Southeast Asia, South America and Middle East & North Africa have the lowest likelihood of living with a spouse/partner.

In Spain, the probability of living alone is well below 10 % both for the natives and immigrants except for those born in West Europe. In the United States we observe variation in the propensity to live alone both by age at migration and country of birth. Those migrated at 1–6 years old have more similar propensity to live alone to the natives than those migrated at older ages.

Overall, both in the United States and Spain, immigrants born in West Europe have the closest distribution of living arrangement outcomes to the natives and vice versa for those born in East & Southeast Asia.

8.5 Conclusions

We have analysed living arrangement patterns of young adults in Spain and the United States comparing natives and immigrants and immigrants with different age at migration and origin. Our results show that living arrangement of immigrant young adults is related to international migration experience as evident in the diversity in living arrangement outcomes by age at migration, country of birth and country of destination.

While cultures and norms from the country of origin might affect preference in the choice of living arrangement, we find that the context of the country of destination plays a key role in shaping living arrangement outcomes. Our findings indicate that the socioeconomic characteristics associated with living arrangement patterns affect immigrants in a similar way to the native-born both in Spain and the United States. This implies that immigrant young adults are subjected to similar macro-structural characteristics influencing their living

arrangement choice to the natives. For instance, the lack of affordable rental housing market in Spain (Ortega et al. 2011) constrains native as well as immigrant young adults to live in their parental home or with an extended family while pursuing education whereas the opposite is true in the United States. Hence, we observe that although in both countries living arrangements of immigrant young adults differ from those of the natives, they do resemble more those of the native-born than their fellow immigrants in another country of destination.

The only case where socioeconomic factors work differently for immigrants and natives is the association between educational attainment and the likelihood of living with partner/spouse in the United States. Having higher educational qualification lowers the likelihood of living with a partner/spouse for immigrant young adults in the United States whereas the opposite is true for the natives. According to the “minority group status” hypothesis (Goldscheider and Uhlenberg 1969), minority group members delay their family formation in order to invest in education, an important mean for achieving upward mobility. To set up an independent household, young adults also need to secure remunerative and relatively secure employment. Thus, it is possible that immigrant young adults with high education have high aspiration to achieve a middle-class style of life and would not leave their parental home to live with their partner/spouse until they gain sufficient financial independence.

Meanwhile, living arrangements vary with age at migration, with those migrated at young age (1–6 years) having more similar living arrangement patterns to the natives than their counterparts migrated at older ages. It is possible that cultural preferences and norms in living arrangements weaken for immigrant young adults who came to the destination country when they were very young because they would have been socialised and exposed to the host country environment for a substantial period of time. This finding is in line with previous empirical studies on generational disparity showing that those born in the host country (second generation) or migrated at pre-school age (1.5 generation) generally achieved similar socioeconomic outcomes to the majority population than first generation migrants (Heath et al. 2008). However, based on cross-sectional data, our study cannot distinguish between the role of age at migration and the role of duration of stay in the destination country on living arrangement patterns.

Apart from determining when immigrants started their socialization in the destination country, age at migration is also related to with whom migrants might have migrated. We observe that the likelihood of living with parents decline with age at migration and vice versa for the likelihood of living in an extended family. Intuitively those migrated at very young age are likely to be an accompanying family member of adult migrants while those migrated at older age might have come at their own will such as for schooling or job purpose. Thus, naturally for the latter, they do not have their parents to live with in the destination country and an extended family can serve as an alternative for parental home.

This finding is in accordance with previous literature showing that migrants, especially those who recently arrived in the host country, often live in an extended family as a survival strategy because extended-family members can provide social and financial support to dependent kin (Kamo 2000; Tienda and Angel 1982; Van Hook and Glick 2007).

Furthermore, there is substantial country of birth variation in living arrangement patterns, which could partially be related to culture and norms associated with young adult choice of living arrangements. For young adult immigrants born in Western Europe, their living arrangements are the most similar to the native-born both in Spain and the United States. Previous studies focusing on different outcomes reported a similar result ranging from educational attainment, family formation, and labour market achievement. Apart from cultural proximity, it is possible that human capital acquired in Western European countries is more easily transferrable in Spain and the United States as compared to immigrants from other countries of origin. Thus, the living arrangement patterns of young adult immigrants born in Western Europe converge to those of the natives more than other groups. On the other hand, those born in East & Southeast Asia and Middle East & North Africa exhibit rather diverse living arrangement outcomes from the natives. For example, the proportion living in an extended family for these groups is much greater than that of the natives, which could be partly due to cultural preferences since living in extended families remains common in many countries in Africa, East & Southeast Asia and in the Middle East & North Africa (Chu and Jiang 1997; Ram and Wong 1994). With limitation of our data, we are not able to distinguish cultural aspects such as values and norms which can influence living arrangement decision. Our results however is in line with previous studies such as that of Windzio (2011) which argues that cultural differences explain variation in the patterns of leaving parental home between Turkish immigrants and native Germans.

Our findings on the strong association between country of birth and living arrangements are consistent with previous studies investigating the pattern of living inside and outside the parental home of young immigrants in the United States (Giuliano 2007) and Spain (Vitali and Arpino 2013). Both studies have argued that culture and values inherited from the country of origin could play a major role in determining living arrangements. By comparing immigrants in two destination countries, the United States and Spain, this chapter has shown that immigrant young adults are subjected to similar macro-structural and socioeconomic influences to the native-born in making their living arrangement decisions. This means that the context at destination is also important for living arrangement patterns of young immigrants. Furthermore, this chapter adds that age at migration is critical in shaping living arrangement outcomes both in terms of opportunities (i.e. who young adult immigrants migrated with) and preferences (i.e. those migrated at young age acquired similar norms to the natives).

Appendices

Appendix 8.A: Multinomial Logistic Regression Estimates of Living Arrangements for Black and Other Natives in the United States (Baseline Comparison: Living With Parents)

	Black natives		Other natives	
	β	s.e.	β	s.e.
Living alone				
Men	-0.391	0.016	-0.126	0.022
<i>Age (ref: 18–23)</i>				
Age: 24–29	1.661	0.021	1.692	0.028
Age: 30–35	2.489	0.023	2.707	0.032
<i>Education (ref: lower than secondary-level)</i>				
Secondary-level education	0.563	0.027	0.567	0.040
Tertiary-level education	1.243	0.034	1.266	0.046
<i>Employment status (ref: unemployed/inactive)</i>				
In employment	0.525	0.017	0.598	0.026
In school	3.018	0.128	2.908	0.163
Constant	-2.649	0.029	-3.320	0.043
Living with partner/spouse				
Men	-0.605	0.012	-0.805	0.014
<i>Age (ref: 18–23)</i>				
Age: 24–29	2.172	0.016	2.261	0.017
Age: 30–35	3.249	0.018	3.487	0.023
<i>Education (ref: lower than secondary-level)</i>				
Secondary-level education	0.385	0.018	-0.082	0.019
Tertiary-level education	0.197	0.026	-0.517	0.028
<i>Employment status (ref: unemployed/inactive)</i>				
In employment	0.558	0.013	0.403	0.015
In school	3.598	0.120	3.316	0.143
Constant	-1.592	0.019	-0.758	0.020
Living with extended family				
Men	-0.716	0.011	-0.516	0.013
<i>Age (ref: 18–23)</i>				
Age: 24–29	0.906	0.013	1.046	0.016
Age: 30–35	1.464	0.016	1.699	0.023

(continued)

	Black natives		Other natives	
	β	<i>s.e.</i>	β	<i>s.e.</i>
<i>Education (ref: lower than secondary-level)</i>				
Secondary-level education	-0.160	0.014	-0.376	0.016
Tertiary-level education	-0.787	0.025	-1.179	0.028
<i>Employment status (ref: unemployed/inactive)</i>				
In employment	0.092	0.011	0.112	0.013
In school	1.517	0.126	1.540	0.151
Constant	0.494	0.014	0.434	0.017
Log likelihood (df)	-309,964.06 (21)		-206,599.95 (21)	
N	270,495		188,355	

Source: 2000 U.S. Census and 2001 Spanish Census (IPUMS-I)

Note: Statistically significant results at least at the 0.05 and 0.10 level are highlighted in bold and italicized respectively

Appendix 8.B: Multinomial Logistic Regression Estimates of Living Arrangements in Spain and the United States (Baseline: Living With Parents), Natives and Immigrants Combined

	Spain		United States	
	β	<i>s.e.</i>	β	<i>s.e.</i>
Living alone				
Men	-0.123	0.087	-0.060	0.023
<i>Age (ref: 18–23)</i>				
Age: 24–29	1.058	0.126	1.639	0.030
Age: 30–35	2.098	0.130	2.699	0.034
<i>Age at migration (ref: native)</i>				
Age at migration: 1–6	0.058	0.105	-0.368	0.033
Age at migration: 7–12	0.344	0.120	-0.614	0.035
Age at migration: 13–16	1.209	0.129	-0.344	0.036
<i>Education (ref: lower than secondary-level)</i>				
Secondary-level education	-0.189	0.095	0.419	0.041
Tertiary-level education	-0.206	0.136	1.117	0.045
<i>Employment status (ref: unemployed/inactive)</i>				
In employment	0.626	0.127	0.533	0.027
In school	-0.016	0.154	3.051	0.186
Constant	-3.516	0.164	-2.932	0.053
Living with partner/spouse				
Men	-0.886	0.053	-0.749	0.014

(continued)

	Spain		United States	
	β	<i>s.e.</i>	β	<i>s.e.</i>
<i>Age (ref: 18–23)</i>				
Age: 24–29	2.027	0.093	2.316	0.018
Age: 30–35	3.685	0.095	3.829	0.024
<i>Age at migration (ref: native)</i>				
Age at migration: 1–6	0.240	0.060	–0.373	0.023
Age at migration: 7–12	0.220	0.074	–0.414	0.023
Age at migration: 13–16	0.758	0.091	0.003	0.024
<i>Education (ref: lower than secondary-level)</i>				
Secondary-level education	–0.533	0.056	–0.685	0.018
Tertiary-level education	–1.188	0.090	–1.014	0.025
<i>Employment status (ref: unemployed/inactive)</i>				
In employment	0.024	0.065	0.259	0.015
In school	–1.049	0.090	3.209	0.168
Constant	–1.846	0.102	–0.081	0.027
Living with extended family				
Men	–0.320	0.049	–0.298	0.013
<i>Age (ref: 18–23)</i>				
Age: 24–29	0.075	0.058	1.069	0.015
Age: 30–35	0.641	0.069	1.865	0.023
<i>Age at migration (ref: native)</i>				
Age at migration: 1–6	0.395	0.062	0.433	0.024
Age at migration: 7–12	0.799	0.065	0.721	0.024
Age at migration: 13–16	1.637	0.073	1.222	0.024
<i>Education (ref: lower than secondary-level)</i>				
Secondary-level education	–0.558	0.053	–0.820	0.016
Tertiary-level education	–0.971	0.098	–1.565	0.025
<i>Employment status (ref: unemployed/inactive)</i>				
In employment	–0.046	0.063	0.218	0.013
In school	–0.481	0.073	1.448	0.176
Constant	–0.543	0.073	0.151	0.026
Log likelihood (df)	–13,097.95 (30)		–223,593.91 (30)	
N	12,860		217,054	

Source: 2000 U.S. Census and 2001 Spanish Census (IPUMS-I)

Notes:

1. Statistically significant results at the 0.05 and 0.10 level are highlighted in bold and italicized respectively
2. A 1 % random sample of natives in Spain and the United States is extracted in order to avoid the skewing of the estimation due to a much larger size of the native population compared to the immigrant population. The random sample is drawn on the basis of province/state sample size in the original sample

Appendix 8.C: Multinomial Logistic Regression Estimates of Living Arrangements in Spain and the United States (Baseline: Living with Parents), Natives and Immigrants Combined

	Spain		United States									
	Living alone		Living with partner/spouse		Living in extended family		Living alone		Living with partner/spouse		Living in extended family	
	β	s.e.	β	s.e.	β	s.e.	β	s.e.	β	s.e.	β	s.e.
Men	-0.128	0.088	-0.896	0.053	-0.355	0.051	-0.064	0.023	-0.773	0.014	-0.325	0.013
Age (ref: 18–23)												
Age: 24–29	1.100	0.127	2.059	0.094	0.270	0.061	1.650	0.030	2.309	0.018	1.042	0.016
Age: 30–35	2.137	0.132	3.732	0.097	0.931	0.072	2.705	0.035	3.833	0.024	1.869	0.023
Education (ref: lower than secondary-level)												
Secondary-level education	-0.136	0.097	-0.484	0.057	-0.453	0.055	0.393	0.043	-0.383	0.019	-0.483	0.017
Tertiary-level education	-0.173	0.137	-1.148	0.090	-0.951	0.100	1.164	0.048	-0.452	0.027	-0.947	0.026
Employment status (ref: unemployed/inactive)												
In employment	0.640	0.128	0.032	0.065	-0.010	0.066	0.488	0.027	0.236	0.015	0.212	0.014
In school	0.019	0.155	-1.031	0.090	-0.434	0.076	2.982	0.186	3.249	0.169	1.556	0.177
Age at migration & country of birth (Ref: native)												
Age at migration: 1–6												
Africa	1.164	1.171	2.178	0.690	2.859	0.634	-0.110	0.149	-0.406	0.116	0.131	0.114
South America	0.257	0.213	-0.071	0.140	0.861	0.113	-0.240	0.058	-0.435	0.041	0.395	0.039
West Europe	-0.035	0.114	0.180	0.065	-0.101	0.075	0.095	0.051	-0.059	0.039	-0.150	0.043
East Europe & Russia	0.503	1.081	0.669	0.627	2.168	0.447	-0.662	0.121	-0.725	0.084	-0.416	0.087

South Europe	-0.225	1.043	1.738	0.356	2.062	0.324	-0.516	0.096	-0.491	0.069	-0.382	0.076
East & Southeast Asia	0.476	1.054	-0.019	0.820	1.555	0.406	-0.552	0.045	-0.859	0.033	0.184	0.032
Middle East & North Africa	0.697	0.387	0.594	0.249	1.645	0.211	-0.637	0.118	-0.646	0.083	-0.304	0.087
Caribbean & Central America	-1.048	1.025	0.025	0.375	0.889	0.277	-0.711	0.054	-0.049	0.030	0.977	0.029
Age at migration: 7–12												
Africa	-14.068	1,386.104	0.562	0.566	2.438	0.402	-0.303	0.147	-0.717	0.110	0.418	0.097
South America	0.492	0.223	0.192	0.152	1.162	0.107	-0.380	0.060	-0.466	0.040	0.533	0.037
West Europe	0.117	0.145	0.004	0.088	-0.094	0.096	0.121	0.076	-0.095	0.060	-0.108	0.065
East Europe & Russia	-14.222	1,021.306	0.151	0.489	1.337	0.277	-0.763	0.102	-0.842	0.067	-0.347	0.062
South Europe	1.994	0.637	1.656	0.503	1.879	0.435	-0.891	0.154	-0.603	0.098	-0.460	0.107
East & Southeast Asia	0.335	1.048	0.755	0.557	2.128	0.346	-1.034	0.049	-1.074	0.033	0.418	0.031
Middle East & North Africa	1.075	0.342	0.597	0.246	2.059	0.161	-0.590	0.126	-0.737	0.089	-0.057	0.087
Caribbean & Central America	0.479	0.488	0.507	0.307	1.052	0.237	-0.698	0.052	0.109	0.028	1.261	0.027
Age at migration: 13–16												
Africa	2.039	0.876	1.924	0.624	3.766	0.524	0.102	0.130	-0.427	0.101	0.743	0.086
South America	0.761	0.253	0.494	0.171	1.740	0.119	-0.167	0.064	-0.198	0.043	0.878	0.040

(continued)

	Spain				United States			
	Living alone		Living with partner/spouse		Living alone		Living with partner/spouse	
	β	<i>s.e.</i>	β	<i>s.e.</i>	β	<i>s.e.</i>	β	<i>s.e.</i>
West Europe	1.109	0.180	0.399	0.140	0.419	0.138	0.419	0.138
East Europe & Russia	0.067	1.035	1.505	0.399	2.023	0.294	2.023	0.294
South Europe	2.339	0.593	2.316	0.473	2.659	0.447	2.659	0.447
East & Southeast Asia	1.129	1.102	<i>1.164</i>	0.699	3.309	0.479	3.309	0.479
Middle East & North Africa	2.021	0.247	1.105	0.208	2.349	0.152	2.349	0.152
Caribbean & Central America	0.088	0.737	1.142	0.307	1.795	0.228	1.795	0.228
Constant	-3.572	0.167	-1.883	0.103	-0.745	0.076	-0.351	0.028
Log likelihood (df)	-12,711.58 (102)				-218,175.40 (102)			
N	12,860				217,054			

Source: 2000 U.S. Census and 2001 Spanish Census (IPUMS-I)

Notes:

- 1. Statistically significant results at the 0.05 and 0.10 level are highlighted in bold and italicized respectively
- 2. A 1 % random sample of natives in Spain and the United States is extracted in order to avoid the skewing of the estimation due to a much larger size of the native population compared to the immigrant population. The random sample is drawn on the basis of province/state sample size in the original sample

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Chapter 9

The Residential Independence of Italian and German University Students and Their Perception of the Labour Market

Therese Luetzelberger

9.1 Introduction

The early residential independence of young adults, during education and early career, seems to be deeply rooted in northern European culture and social structures, while the living arrangements of young southern Europeans are characterised by traditionally strong family ties and the co-residence of parents and their grown-up children (Reher 1998; Billari and Liefbroer 2010; Heady and Kohli 2010).¹ While most southern Europeans leave their parental home at marriage, northern Europeans usually live away from their parents before they have a stable partnership (Billari et al. 2001). Social scientists increasingly explain the different southern and northern European patterns of leaving home by a combination of various institutional and financial conditions and cultural factors, such as social norms and interpretations of reality (e.g., Holdsworth and Morgan 2005; Rusconi 2004; Giuliano 2007). Culture and institutions, however, influence and reinforce each other mutually (Berger and Luckmann 1991). This paper aims to contribute to a better understanding of this interrelation by analysing the influence of labour market structures on the departure from the parental home during higher education from the subjective perspective of individual actors in Italy and Germany.

In Italy, a high percentage of university students (76 %) live with their parents, while in Germany, the majority of students live away from their families (73 %) (Eurostudent 2008). The high percentage of students living away from the parental home in Germany is somewhat puzzling because leaving home as a student is

¹I will use the term ‘southern Europe’ for Italy, Greece, Portugal and Spain, whereas the term ‘northern Europe’ refers to the continental, western and Nordic parts of the European continent (excluding Eastern Europe).

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costly and most students in Germany, as well as in Italy, depend financially on their parents. Only about one fifth to one quarter of the students in Germany receive financial support from the state (Isserstedt et al. 2007: 261). Even though this is a bigger share than in Italy, it can hardly explain the high percentage of home leavers among German students because, in contrast to Italian public support, German students are supposed to return up to 50 % of the funding received after their studies. This poses the question as to why students and their parents in Germany are willing to defray high costs, and even go in debt, for residential independence during higher education, while Italian students and parents prefer to save money and use their financial resources instead to become home-owners at a relatively young age (Dalla Zuanna et al. 2008). In Italy, home-ownership is far more common than in Germany and often already starts with the beginning of married life. The rental sector of the Italian housing market is relatively small. In Germany, in contrast, renting is more affordable compared to the high costs of buying a home (Kurz and Blossfeld 2004). In the two countries, however, mortgage rates are similarly low (Bičáková and Sierminska 2008). While Italians usually prefer to save money to buy a property, Germans spend their resources on early independence. As a consequence, many Germans remain tenants in a rented home throughout their whole lives. In the two countries, however, home-ownership serves as an important individual provision for old age. Thus, when it comes to old-age provision, German young people seem to behave irrationally since they will be at a financial disadvantage later in life compared to their Italian peers. These considerations show that explaining the different patterns of leaving the parental home as a mere result of the size of the rental sector in the housing market is too simplistic. The differences in leaving the parental home in northern and southern Europe are in fact a more complex matter. One reason for this complexity is that national housing markets are shaped by both forces, supply *and* demand.

A part of the explanation for the different patterns of leaving home can be found in different historical traditions. Historical studies provide evidence that, in northern Europe, there has been a centuries-old tradition of premarital residential independence according to which young men and women of all social classes left the parental home to work or study and gather experience outside their home environment as travelling journeymen, domestic servants, governesses, live-in farm hands, university students or travelling noblemen. Besides educational purposes, the spatial mobility of young, unmarried workers also served to relieve tense local labour markets and the household budget of their families in times of economic hardship. Southern European families, by contrast, usually attempted to solve economic problems together instead of sending their youthful children away. Young southern Europeans thus remained in or near the parental household when they started their own family while northern Europeans more often settled down at a greater distance from their parents (e.g., Laslett 1977; Reher 1998; Mitterauer 2004; Van Poppel et al. 2004; Fauve-Chamoux and Wall 2005). Over time, these different patterns of leaving home and residential mobility contributed to the development of different network structures, different labour market regulations and different welfare institutions in northern and southern Europe (Laslett 1979; Reher 1998). Moreover, these different traditions led to different subjective interpretations of the departure from the parental home.

In this paper, I investigate with qualitative methods how students and parents in Italy and Germany make sense of residential independence during higher education with regard to their future expectations concerning the job search after graduation. This topic emerged from the interviews and has rarely been analysed by previous research in this field. This brings some aspects to the foreground which have frequently been neglected by earlier studies, such as the perception of meritocracy and the relevance of kin networks in the labour market. The results suggest that the interviewees who perceive the allocation of jobs as largely based on 'merits', that is on educational achievements, work experience and credentials, and on contacts from work situations, consider residential mobility as more useful and valuable than the interviewees who regard the labour market as not very meritocratic and more influenced by kin networks. The discussion of the findings in the final section includes a closer look at statistical data regarding the Italian and German labour markets and points to related insights from historical studies. The results indicate mutual causal relations at the institutional level: residential independence and mobility during education are not only a consequence of meritocratic competition in the labour market; but they also contribute to reducing the strength of family networks and, therefore, have a positive effect on the development of meritocratic structures.

9.2 Method

The aim of this study is to reconstruct the underlying patterns of meaning that influence the departure from the parental home in northern and southern Europe. It follows the phenomenological tradition of the sociology of knowledge, in which the subjectively shared interpretation of reality is regarded as crucial in the explanation of human behaviour (Schütz 1953; Berger and Luckmann 1991). To gain insight into the shared patterns of interpretation, I conducted interviews with 17 university students and 10 parents in Germany, as well as 11 students (plus one young employee)² and four parents in Italy in 2009.³ The interviewees came from different social classes, including young people from less well-off families who were living either in or outside the parental home, and young people from better-off families who were either living with their parents or away from home. The students were at different stages of their studies. Most interviewees in both countries were Catholic. Amongst the German interviewees, there were two students whose fathers had emigrated as young men from southern Italy. This sampling strategy aimed to investigate the intergenerational transmission of meanings and norms (see Luetzelberger 2014).

The young Italian interviewees were recruited in Florence, in the region of Tuscany. The German interviewees mainly studied in Bonn, which is situated in the federal

²The young employee was the sister of a student participant. She participated in the interview spontaneously.

³The interviews reflect the situation of the interviewees before the Italian debt crisis starting in 2011.

state of North Rhine-Westphalia. The contact to the parents was established through the students who participated in the study. With North Rhine-Westphalia and Tuscany, I chose two predominantly Catholic regions. The two regions are also similar in that they are relatively wealthy and offer good job opportunities for university graduates.

The interview questions had a retrospective autobiographical focus. They were designed to generate narratives about the process of enrolling in higher education, including the choice of university and the living arrangements as a student. Later in the interviews, I asked questions concerning the financing of studies, the relationship with parents, possible future plans, and other related aspects. For the combination of narratives with explanatory parts, this interview strategy is comparable to the “episodic interview” developed by Flick (2002). The duration of the interviews was between 30 min and 2½h: most lasted approximately 1 h.

For the analysis of the interviews, I used the ‘documentary method’, which is suitable for the reconstruction and understanding of different patterns of meaning. It draws on the theoretical ideas of the sociology of knowledge as formulated by Karl Mannheim (1982, 1997). According to Mannheim, people who share the same cultural background are able to understand each other and their cultural ‘documents’, such as written text, pictures, sounds, symbols, etc., because they share unspoken knowledge, which does not need to be made explicit in the communication process. The goal of the ‘documentary method’ is to reconstruct this atheoretical, implicit knowledge. Its key procedure in the analysis is the consistent comparison of the interview sequences concerning a specific topic of interest within one interview and also across interviews. The systematic change of perspective through the consistent comparison enables the researcher to become aware of the atheoretical, implicit knowledge on which the interviewees base their communication and behaviour (Bohnsack 2010; Nohl 2010).

In my analysis, this procedure of consistent comparison, for example, helped to uncover that the tacit perception of the German job market as rather meritocratic influenced the living arrangements of the German interviewees: When asked about their strategies for finding a job after their studies, the German respondents frequently talked about their ideas to increase their competitiveness and to improve their CVs. Residential mobility played an important part in these strategies. However, only the comparison with the Italian interviews revealed the importance of meritocracy as an underlying pattern of interpretation which became explicit only because several Italian students lamented the lack of meritocracy on the Italian labour market. Without the comparative perspective, the existence of meritocracy as an underlying assumption in the German perspective would have gone unnoticed.

9.3 Results

The patterns of interpretation identified in the analysis can be categorised according to the interviewees’ motivations for leaving or remaining in the parental home during their studies. Section 9.3.1 deals with the interpretations of the interviewees

who regard residential independence during higher education as a preparation for residential mobility in the future because they expect to relocate after their studies. Section 9.3.2 presents the patterns of interpretation according to which residential independence and mobility are seen as useful strategies to increase one's skills and qualifications. Section 9.3.3 is dedicated to the patterns of meaning opposing those of the former (*i.e.*, those examined in Sects. 9.3.1 and 9.3.2). Thus, the latter addresses the patterns of meaning which perceive residential mobility as useless or unnecessary for avoiding unemployment. Section 9.3.4 describes the two different forms of 'contacts' that the interviewees regard as helpful in the job search.

9.3.1 Residential Mobility in Preparation for the Future

The analysis conducted indicates that the interviewees who anticipate living away from their home region after their studies also have positive attitudes regarding the departure from the parental home as students. To them, residential independence during higher education is an anticipation of the residential mobility they expect in the future, either because they find it personally enriching to live in different places or because they perceive it as a requirement of the job market.⁴

9.3.1.1 Residential Mobility as a Welcome Part of Future Life

Paolo (23) in Italy studies international relations. He expects to work outside Florence after his studies, maybe even abroad. Having this in mind, Paolo considers it important to learn to live independently as a student:

also to be able to create a future beyond one's own reality, [beyond the place where you originally came from or grew up], especially for those of us studying international relations, which means to detach yourself from the family environment to understand how to manage your life [...], how to live alone, how to give yourself a future perspective outside your environment, outside your natural habitat. (Paolo, 23, Italy, living away from home)

Tommaso (32) left his home city in southern Italy to attend business school in Florence because he was generally unsatisfied with how things work in the South, even though he had a job there. He sees Florence as a stepping stone on the way to moving yet farther away from home towards more promising opportunities and personal development:

I would like to get experience in the North. In Florence, we Italians still feel a bit as if we were in middle Italy because Florence has some characteristics of the North and others of the South and it brings both together, [...]. I know the Northeast because I did my military service there, [...]. And it's very interesting regarding work, society, and the quality of life. [...] That's why I would like [...] to have the opportunity to move there and work there for a short period of time, or even longer. (Tommaso, 32, Italy, living away from home)

⁴All names of interviewees have been changed.

What the interviewees in this group have in common is the fact that they are expecting to be residentially mobile after their studies because they are curious about getting to know different places. They deliberately choose to move away for a job after their studies, and see their relocation as students as a preparation for a mobile or international professional life.

9.3.1.2 Spatial Flexibility as a Normal Requirement of the Job Market

There is another prevailing interpretation regarding the choice of residence after graduation from university, especially in those interpretations of the German respondents. The German interviews display a great readiness to move away from family and friends for the mere reason of finding a job. Many German students and parents in this sample declare to be ‘open to everything’ regarding the place of living in the future. Different from most Italian interviewees in this sample, they more strongly hesitate to determine the place they would prefer for their future residence, as this quote of a German mother shows:

Of course, as a mother, I hope that they [her children] don't get a job that is too far away, [...] so that we can [...] see each other frequently. Of course, I would like it this way. But I would never try to influence them. (Louise's mother, 54, Germany, children left home and live in cities nearby).

The predominance of this interpretation becomes apparent in the way the German interviewees talk about their future plans. That is, the students use very similar, almost standardised formulations to express their willingness to be residentially mobile in the future as regards the job search. Their formulations are variations of the sentence “I'm flexible, I'm open to everything”. Thomas, for example, says: “I'm not completely bound to [hometown]. There are also other cities where you can find something interesting. I would be absolutely open to this” (Thomas, 20, Germany). Similarly, Simon formulates: “I'm open to everything. [...] I'm not set on any one place, very flexible” (Simon, 23, Germany). Also Louise (23), even though a bit more carefully, says: “it completely depends on whether I find something here. [...] And then I'm relatively open” (Louise, 23, Germany). The standardisation of these formulations suggests that this interpretation is strongly shaped by the prevailing social expectations in Germany which advocate relocating for a job. In the Italian interviews, a comparable standardisation regarding this topic is absent. Some Italian interviewees even openly declare that they see no sense in moving away from their families and friends for job reasons: this is the case, for example, of Lidia, who clearly does not interpret residential mobility as a viable strategy to avoid unemployment:

Last year there was a crisis all year long. My fiancé, with a degree in computer science, couldn't find a job; it was impossible. The only opportunities were far away from here – “away” meaning in Puglia [about 700 km away from Florence in southern Italy], and there was even an offer in Miami! [speaking in a loud and indignant voice] What a ridiculous idea! [to expect someone to go so far away for a job] I wouldn't go there! (Lidia, 19, Italy, living with her parents)

9.3.2 Residential Mobility as a Source of Knowledge

The subjective expectations of the respondents regarding their future work life influence their perceptions of residential independence and geographical mobility during their studies in various ways. They do not only interpret a change of location during education as a preparation for residential mobility in the future; they also see it as a chance to increase their skills and capacities. In this view, leaving home becomes an investment in future employability.

9.3.2.1 Different Places – New Knowledge

Some interviewees interpret residential mobility as helpful to extend professional know-how, and to broaden academic training and improve its quality. Francesco (25, Italy, planning to leave home), for example, who studies in Florence, coming from a small town close by, says that he plans to write his final dissertation in the United States where he expects to get to know certain technologies which are not available in Florence.

Thomas (20) in Germany argues that a change of university within Germany can improve one's academic training:

In order to get a good job, it's important that you have good marks, good references and the fact that you've studied in various universities could be a plus, as well as having done internships and so on; and not having only had experience only at one university [...]. You see this in the careers of various great personalities; they studied at more than one university [...]. Every professor has a different focus, so every university has its own speciality. (Thomas, 20, Germany, living with parents; parents from Poland)

9.3.2.2 Different Places – More Creativity and Independence

Besides the improvement of one's training, the interviewees argue that leaving home and residential mobility are sources of experience that makes a person more interesting, more creative and therefore more competitive on the job market. Anna from southern Italy, for example, perceives her relocation to Florence not only as beneficial for her education, but also as favourable regarding the development of her personality and creativity:

It is necessary to look around: you have to be able to have something to say, to tell. If you don't do anything, what can you tell? Nothing! You don't have anything to tell. (Anna, 20, Italy, left home)

Very similar interpretations can be found in the interviews of German respondents. Letizia, for example, explains why she thinks that residential mobility within Germany, for example moving to Berlin, constitutes an advantage for the professional career in the creative industries:

[...] in any case, it looks good on your CV. People see that this person is more open-minded and can adapt to new situations, instead of wearing blinders and being always at the same

place, or always working in the same agency next-door, without being interested in what is going on in the world. Especially with regard to your job, it is so important to always be curious about the things that are happening everywhere. (Letizia, 25, Germany, planning to leave home; father from Italy)

Louise (23, Germany, left home) adds that the capacity to work independently is a required skill on the labour market. In her view, independence is not only important in daily life, when managing one's own household, but also in professional life. Living away from the parental home during education is seen as a suitable way of acquiring independence and individuality before entering the labour market.

In this perspective, leaving home and residential mobility not only are prerequisites for expanding knowledge and skills; they are also considered to promote individuality, independence and creativity. Residential independence and mobility during education hence constitute an investment in the future that is worth its financial and emotional costs. This perspective, however, requires the subjective perception of meritocracy. If individuals do not perceive the job market as meritocratic, it would not make sense to them to invest in residential independence and residential mobility during education to improve their employability.

9.3.3 Residential Mobility Perceived as Unnecessary or Useless

The interviewees presented above have in common that they agree on the usefulness of geographical mobility during education and job search as a strategy to succeed in the job market. However, not all interviewees apply this strategy, as we will see in this section. Another group of interviewees do not even recognise its usefulness. In the following sections, I will describe three patterns of meaning, in which residential mobility is perceived as unnecessary, useless or even counterproductive as a strategy in the job market. In the first pattern of meaning, meritocracy is considered strong but competition is perceived as weak due to the availability of suitable job offers. The other two patterns of meaning are characterised by the perception of a lack of meritocracy.

9.3.3.1 Optimism and Certainty About the Professional Future

In the first of these three patterns of meaning, relocation as a strategy to improve one's education and chances in the job market appears to be unnecessary because future employment is perceived as a certainty. One student who follows this pattern of interpretation is Marco (23) in Florence. His family owns a company where he wants to work after his studies. He enjoyed living in the family household during his undergraduate studies. For his Masters he plans to remain in Florence, too. He also

plans to carry out the internship, which is required for his degree, in the family firm. Only if the university does not accept this placement will he look for another company to do the internship. He recognises that a placement in another company could be even more interesting, but he, nevertheless, prefers to focus on the perspective of the family firm:

Well, maybe it would be even better to gain experience somewhere else. So at least I would get a more general idea of the matter by working with somebody else before working in my parents' firm. But ... well ... (Marco, 23, Italy, living with parents)

Similar to Letizia and Thomas, cited above, Marco recognises that spatial mobility can be beneficial to education and training, but prefers to remain close to the family. These students are particularly optimistic about their chances on the local job market and thus permit themselves to avoid residential mobility during education and job search while enjoying being close to their families and friends at home. Thomas studies a subject that offers excellent job opportunities throughout the whole country. Letizia considers her hometown as particularly favourable regarding her professional field and Marco has the opportunity to work in the family firm. These interviewees, thus, do not feel the need to relocate to increase their competitiveness even though they consider spatial mobility as a useful strategy for finding a job and also perceive the labour market as meritocratic.

9.3.3.2 Fatalistic Attitudes About the Job Search

In contrast, in the second pattern of interpretation, employment is seen as depending so strongly on luck and arbitrariness that individual efforts to improve one's employability become pointless. Lidia (19), for example, an Italian student of psychology, who lives with her parents and commutes to Florence for her studies, has this fatalistic view regarding her reality. When asked what she thinks is important for finding a job she replies that the place in which one lives is important because greater distances between one's home and the workplace cause "problems of travelling". Referring to her own situation, she continues:

But in general, at the moment, regarding myself, I think that qualifications don't count for anything in the working world. Even if you have them — but at least in Italy — for example, you can basically have two, three, four, five university degrees; but if you are too old, if the boss doesn't like you, or you have a number of other issues — then they fire you and hire someone else. [What seems to count] is that maybe somebody has recommended you; or you are younger, or more beautiful than other candidates... It depends. [...] I know how to use a computer and I took language classes. Basta! (Lidia, 19, Italy, living with parents)

In Lidia's interpretation, acquired qualifications that would distinguish a candidate for a job from other candidates are not relevant because, in her perception, the result of the selection process depends on factors that she cannot influence. Hence, residential mobility during education or for job reasons appears as a useless effort.

In this fatalistic view, trust in personal relationships and family bonds becomes a source of stability which is not worth putting at risk by geographical distance:

Lidia: Prato, Prato! I'm staying in Prato.

Interviewer: And is it the same for your boyfriend?

Lidia: Yes, he told me, 'I hate Florence'. We don't like Pisa, we don't like Pistoia ... Prato!

[...] Simply because my life is here. I don't have anything objectively against people from Pistoia or from Pisa. But it's just not the same as my city. There is nothing in Prato. It's ugly. There's nothing. It's very ugly. But I have my life there. So I'm going to stay there. I could move a bit up into another neighbourhood of Prato. But I won't move farther than that. (Lidia, 19, Italy)

9.3.4 '*Contacts*' in the Job Search

The importance of 'contacts' in the job search also influences the interviewees' decisions regarding residential mobility. The interviewees differentiate between private networks and work contacts. This distinction corresponds with Granovetter's concepts of "family-social" contacts and contacts "known from a work situation" (Granovetter 1995: 41). Family-social contacts, so-called 'strong' ties, are persons known from outside the work context, usually family members, friends, neighbours, and other members of the personal network. By contrast, work contacts, so-called 'weak' ties, are usually persons known from one's own work experience. The latter, thus, depend on one's activities, whereas the former are strongly dependent on the family network into which one is born. The interviews illustrate how networks of strong ties can limit residential mobility, while weak ties might promote relocation.

9.3.4.1 Strong Ties – Family-Social Contacts

Family networks tend to be limited to a certain geographical area. Hence, geographical mobility might have the consequence of leaving the reach of one's network and thus reduces the chances of finding a job, as the following example shows. In his interview, Tommaso explains that he could benefit from his local network in southern Italy to find a job after his studies, but prefers to move to the Northeast of Italy, where he hopes to find employment on the basis of his qualifications:

I would only go back [to my hometown] if I really don't ... don't find ... don't have a job or if I lose too much time looking... that is ... in that case, yes. In that case, I would go back because it's perhaps easier. Perhaps you know a friend who can tell you something or who can introduce you to somebody because in the South it works like that [...]. So from this point of view it's easier because I'm not searching alone because lots of people know me there [back home] and this means that the opportunities multiply [...]. So this would be my alternative if things really ... [don't work out in the North.] But I don't think this will be the case. I've seen that it's not so difficult [...]. (Tommaso, 32, Italy, left home)

Strong local family ties on the labour market might not only prevent young people from moving away from their network but also constitute an obstacle

for ‘outsiders’ to enter the local job market. In general, young people have two options in this situation: They either adjust their interests and professional goals to the (often limited) possibilities of their own network, or they move further away and try to find a place where family connections play a less dominant role, as in Tommaso’s example.

Not only the southern Italian interviewees, but also some interviewees from Tuscany show a strong awareness of ‘strong’ family ties in their region and in Italy in general. Lorenzo (23), in Florence, says that it is essential:

- Lorenzo: [...] to know certain people. I’m realising that, in reality, that’s what counts. I’m not saying that I like it but in my opinion, that’s just the way it is.
- Interviewer: That the family knows these people?
- Lorenzo: Exactly.
- Interviewer: Or could you also do an internship and this way you get to know ...
- Lorenzo: That would be an esteemed way, doing an internship to show what you are capable of doing, and how you work and that you are good: that would be the best way to go about it, but the reality of the job market is not like that [...]. (Lorenzo, 23, Italy, living with parents)

Lorenzo would prefer ‘weak’ ties and to be able to find a job through individual efforts and not through family connections. At the same time, he is convinced that finding a job without family connections is extremely difficult in Florence and Italy in general.

9.3.4.2 Weak Ties – Contacts Known From a Work Situation

In the German interviews, networks also play an important role in the job search, albeit a different kind of network that is independent from family contacts. The kind of networking that the German interviewees describe as most useful depends on the initiative of the students, and on the contacts that they make on student jobs, internships and at university, as Linda (21) explains:

- During law school you have to do two internships; one with the public administration and one at a law firm. So you can try to get in touch with a lawyer and intern there. And, of course, when you know what specialisation you want to choose you can try to do an internship in a law firm where you would like to work later on as well, if they are looking for someone. This way, you can make contacts. Or you can work for professors in the various departments as a student assistant, and they, of course, have contacts to law firms. But in general, it is quite easy to get in touch with these people. (Linda, 21, Germany, living with parents)

This kind of contact differs from the definition of contacts as personal relationships within a local network of family members and friends. The ‘weak’ network of work contacts, instead, can be expanded according to the students’ interests and according to the places where they study or gain work experience. Residential mobility during education can thus be beneficial to a student’s job prospects. It allows students, for example, to build up contacts in regions that are economically more prosperous than their home regions. Moreover, it can help them to make suitable contacts that better match their individual interests than, perhaps, their family contacts.

9.4 Discussion

The interviews reveal that the expectations regarding one's future professional life and job search after graduation influence how the interviewees interpret the usefulness of residential independence and mobility during higher education. The interviewees who perceive the job market as relatively meritocratic interpret residential independence and residential mobility as a means to improve their employability. For them, it is an investment in their skills and personal development. It is possible to find this interpretation in all German interviews in this sample and also in some of the Italian interviews. However, moving away from family and friends for job reasons seems to be socially more accepted or even expected among the German respondents. In the Italian social context, it appears to be more tolerable to avoid residential mobility, even if the consequence is unemployment, as in Lidia's example (see Sect. 9.3.3.2). The Italian interviewees, moreover, stress the importance of family contacts on the Italian job market, while the German interviewees are more confident to build up their own individual network of contacts through work experience.

We need to bear in mind that these findings are based on a small sample of research subjects. Moreover, this study focussed on one group of young people only, namely on university students. This research design and methodological approach allowed reconstructing a detailed picture of the interviewees' subjective perspective. However, how widespread these patterns of meaning are among the German and Italian society, or in northern and southern Europe in general, can only be assessed with quantitative methods and a larger number of cases.

Considering the results of related quantitative studies investigating the labour market conditions for young people in Italy and Germany, the subjective interpretations of the interviewees appear rather realistic. Data from the Eurobarometer surveys (1991) prove the Italian interviewees to be right in their perception of the Italian labour market as not being very meritocratic, as well as being strongly subjected to the influence of family networks. The majority of young Italians (65 % in 1990) find employment through family contacts or are employed by family members. In Germany (West Germany), this applies only to a fifth (21 %) of the young population (Eurobarometer 34.2 1991: 39). Moreover, the Italian economy is characterised by a high number of family firms (OECD 2007), which contributes to the large group of young Italians who find employment through their families.

Another feature of the Italian labour market, which makes it less meritocratic, is a strong 'insider' protection. Bernardi and his colleagues show that neither the level of education, nor the class of origin, nor the attendance of vocational training have any influence on the duration of the first job search in Italy. The authors explain this as an effect of the "collectivist mechanism of exclusion" operating against first time job seekers in Italy (Bernardi et al. 2000: 237). This is different in Germany. Here, an increase in education enhances the chances of first-time job seekers to find employment (Buchholz and Kurz 2008). The integration of young people into the labour market thus appears to be more meritocratic in Germany than in Italy.

This suggests that investing in better education and training pays off in Germany. An investment in residential mobility can contribute to the quality of education because it allows choosing among a wider range of universities and places of training. In contrast, in Italy, where the labour market is less meritocratic, increasing the costs of education through residential mobility to receive better and more competitive training may appear pointless. Whereas German students consider a change of university as a common strategy to increase their employability (Multrus 2007), Italian students more often continue their education at one institution only (Lindberg 2009).

Quantitative studies reveal that work experience during education, for example internships and student jobs, helps German graduates to find employment relatively quickly (Briedis and Minks 2004). It is a useful strategy for obtaining contacts to overcome the insider-outsider barriers, which also exist on the German job market (Kurz et al. 2008). Italian students, in contrast, gain less work experience during their studies (Lindberg 2009). For Italian students, it may not make sense in their social context to 'waste time' on student jobs or serve poorly paid internships if family contacts are more effective for finding a job while practical training does not contribute much to overcome insider-outsider barriers.

While family ties and the widespread desire for early home-ownership constrain the spatial mobility of Italians, Germans more often get pushed away from their homes by another cultural feature: In Germany (and other northern countries), it is considered a negative signal for employers if young people spend a prolonged period of time in search of their first job (Bausch 2006). Young people, therefore, feel strongly motivated to relocate if this helps avoiding a long 'gap' in the CV between education and employment. In Italy, instead, a long period of job seeking between the end of education and the first job usually has no negative consequences on further career prospects. 'Waiting' can thus be an appropriate strategy until getting the desired entry job into the labour market (Kurz et al. 2008). Under these circumstances, young Italians have fewer incentives for moving than their German peers. In contrast, the benefits that an early departure from the parental home yields to young people in Germany contribute to offsetting the high financial costs of early residential independence for university students and their parents.

Low residential mobility in the labour market is not only typical for young people and students in Italy, but also for southern European societies in general as compared to northern Europe (OECD 2000, 2005). This can even be observed in second-generation immigrants of southern European origin. Economists point out that second-generation immigrants with strong family ties in the United States are more often unemployed or have lower wages than second-generation immigrants with weak family ties, who are more inclined to relocate for a job (Alesina et al. 2010). Spatial mobility helps balance supply and demand in the labour market. Since strong family networks limit residential mobility, employees with strong family ties are more at risk of remaining unemployed if they lose their job than employees with weak family ties. As a consequence, societies characterised by strong family ties, such as the Mediterranean countries, tend to have more rigid labour market regulations to protect workers against unemployment. These regula-

tions help individuals avoid relocation for job reasons and allow close-knit family networks to flourish so that their members benefit from them. At the same time, however, low spatial mobility makes economies less efficient (*ibid.*).

The residential mobility of young people shapes the economic conditions of a society in various ways, and not only by enhancing the spatial flexibility of the labour force. It probably also reduces the strength of family networks because greater spatial distances and fewer visits and phone calls between family members reduce their possibilities to help each other (see, e.g., Höllinger and Haller 1990; Kohli et al. 2005). On the other hand, weak family networks can diminish the opportunities, for example of officials, to give preference to family members and, thus, constitute a limitation to nepotism, as historical studies show (Kintzinger 1991). The greater spatial mobility of young people during education and job search thus is not only a consequence of reduced meritocracy but also needs to be analysed as one of its causes.

Many interviewees perceived the departure from the parental home and their relocation to another city as an enriching experience, not only with regard to the quality of their education. They find that living independently and in a new place broadens the mind and increases their creativity because new input enriches the imagination. They, therefore, feel better prepared for their jobs and for competition in the labour market. In this regard, it is interesting to note that northern European economies are more innovation prone than the Mediterranean countries (Roxburgh et al. 2010). Rodríguez-Pose argues that the exclusion of young people from the labour market in southern Europe “constitutes a serious social barrier to the assimilation of innovation, since younger, more dynamic, and frequently better prepared prospective workers are kept out of the labour market” (Rodríguez-Pose 1999: 96). The interview results suggest that it is not merely the labour market participation of young people, but particularly of those individuals who are able to assume different perspectives and who have gained widely varied experience, also because they left their home environment at least temporarily, that helps increase the innovative strength of a society. In sum, residential independence and mobility during education and early career yield benefits to society as a whole because they can probably foster meritocracy, innovation capacity and economic growth. Our knowledge regarding the causal effects of the departure from the parental home on the related institutions, however, is still rudimentary. Further research in this field would, thus, be fruitful and desirable.

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Chapter 10

Post-Separation Families: Spatial Mobilities and the Need to Manage Multi-Local Everyday Life

Michaela Schier

10.1 Introduction

Divorce and separation rates have been increasing since the 1960s in Europe, although there are large differences in the level of divorce across European countries. In West Germany, which is the focus of this paper, the divorce rate (the number of divorces per 10,000 married couples) increased from 39.2 in 1965 to 61.3 in 1980 and to 108.2 in 2010 (BiB 2013). Almost half of the marriages dissolved in 2011 involved one or more minor children at the time of divorce (Statistisches Bundesamt 2013). Official statistics do not account for the separation rates of non-married parents, but these probably are also increasing. This information gap can be partially obtained using available survey data. At present, every sixth family with minor children in Germany is a post-separation family, according to the German Youth Institute's (DJI) integrated survey 'Growing Up in Germany', shortened to AID:A (2009). This means that at least 12 % of underage children have biological parents who are separated or divorced (Schier et al. 2011).

Most of the time, families do not break up after separation or divorce; rather, they go through processes of spatio-temporal, emotional, and social reorganisation (Ahrns 1979; Hater 2003; Schier 2009). As a rule, more or less intense contacts between children and both parents are maintained after the dissolution of the parental union.

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Three different but interwoven forms of spatial mobility play a role in post-separation family life. First, 'relocation', or 'residential mobility',¹ as a rule accompanies the dissolution of a cohabiting partnership, as the separating partners divide the common household and re-establish themselves independently. This process of separation is normally accompanied by negotiations about the children's living, care, and contact arrangements. Thus, we can say that the spatial split up often signifies the beginning of a dynamic multi-local living situation for the family members now distributed across different households (Schier 2009: 55). Second, accompanying this process of 'multi-localization', 'circular spatial mobility', as a tool to see each other and to maintain intimate relationships, becomes an important element of daily family life. And third, for adults a special form of 'escorting mobility' emerges. Especially if the children are very young, adults have to take them to or pick them up from the distant living parent.

Little research and few statistics concerning the issue of post-separation families and spatial mobilities and their consequences for family members and their daily life are available. Moreover, most research commonly treats children in post-separation families as passive subjects rather than as active agents in the living arrangements and daily life management after parental separation. This paper aims to address this deficiency by introducing a multi-local approach to investigate how spatial mobilities play a role in post-separation family life for both children and their separated parents. What requirements for children and their parents

¹ Because terms are used differently in diverse research fields, it seems important to explain my terminological use. In the following, I will use the terms 'relocation', 'residential mobility' and 'moves' synonymously for the acts of separated parents changing their usual residence including short or long distance migrations. Thus my use of the term 'relocation' will not be reserved for those situations where a parent's request to move with a child becomes part of a contested legal case, as it is widely done in legal-oriented research literature. Furthermore, my terminological use also differs from distinctions between 'residential mobility', 'internal' and 'international migration' used mainly in migration research (Newbold 2010). The distinctive criteria used in these definitions such as distance, the impact of legal aspects on migration as well as the change or otherwise of activity space as a result of a residential move point out important aspects for the problems discussed in this article. But conventional terms are not really suitable for the issue of interest here, that is the consequences of parental residential moves and the resulting residential distances of family members to each other for the 'doing family' and the everyday life in post-separation living situations (i.e. the alternating of children between their parents' homes). To address this issue, a terminology which refers to the distances established through the move of a separated parent *relative to* the residence of an ex-partner is needed. Thus, I will use the terms 'short distance' or 'local-scale' to label intra-urban moves that enable maintaining the previous activity space for relocators. Such a distance between the parents' households is easy to handle by walking, bicycling, or using public transport. Older children may visit the parent in a self-determined manner without accompaniment or involvement (i.e. financial) of the other parent. I will use 'middle distance' when referring to moves involving changing activity space for relocating parent and children, but the residence of the ex-partner remains at a distance that is relatively easy to reach (up to about one hour travel time) as well as 'long distance' to characterize interregional or international relocations involving changing activity space, and probably cultural environment for the relocating parent as well as children and distances between the residences of parents which entail more than one hour travel time and the necessity of using transport such as a car, train or plane.

arise with the residential moves? And how do families handle the multi-local living conditions?

In the first part of the paper the current literature on the issue of separation, divorce, and spatial mobilities is reviewed. The second part presents findings on spatial mobilities in multi-local post-separation families and their implications for family practices and everyday life using empirical research into post-separation multi-local families in Germany. We begin by explaining the central conceptual assumptions regarding ‘family’ and ‘family practices’ as well as ‘separation as a process of multi-localization’. Afterwards, information on the methodological design of the study is provided followed by the discussion of the results. The final section briefly sums up the main points.

10.2 Separation, Divorce and Geographical Mobility: A Literature Review

10.2.1 Residential Mobility and Housing Decisions After Separation

Information for Germany concerning residential mobility, housing decisions after separation, the distances between the households of separated parents, and their consequences for daily life management is scarce (Andreß et al. 2003; Gerber 2011; Schmitz 2000; Schier et al. 2011). If a partnership dissolves through divorce or separation, this normally entails negotiations about who stays in the once common home and who moves out in addition to decisions about where to move and about finding new housing that meets the new needs of the post-separation situation. Previous studies suggest that ex-partners who get custody, live with and predominantly take care of the children – often the mothers – are more likely to remain in the formerly joint home. Furthermore, those who initiate the separation or who have formed a new partnership are much more likely to move out (Andreß et al. 2003; Gerber 2011; Mulder et al. 2012; Feijten and van Ham 2007, 2011; Gram-Hanssen and Bech-Danielsen 2008; Mulder and Malmberg 2011).

As Feijten and Van Ham (2007) pointed out, moves triggered by divorce are both urgent and financially and spatially restricted. Although the majority of separated parents in Germany have joint legal custody, children usually spend more time with one parent – usually the mother – than the other, and a ‘visiting’ arrangement – often including overnight stays – is made with the other parent. This means that the ex-partners have to live apart at a distance which permits the children to alternate between both parents on a regular basis. Also, both parents must have homes suitable for regularly having children around. Thus, separated parents are likely to desire to remain in close proximity to their children. This is reinforced in

cases when parents share responsibilities and agree on shared residence.² But there are also cases in which separated parents have intentionally sought accommodation in a different area in order to make a fresh start, to move back to where family and (old) friends live, or to avoid contact with the ex-partner and his/her family (Symon 1990).

10.2.2 Post-separation ‘Spatial Careers’ and Their Implications

Post-separation family arrangements and their ‘spatial careers’ – that is, the occurrence, distance, and direction of moves over the life course (Feijten and van Ham 2007: 625) – are highly dynamic. Nevertheless, there is little research on the dynamics of post-separation relocations and their consequences for the living situations and everyday life of family members over time. First, the literature suggests that separated people tend to move repeatedly, in contrast to people in other living arrangements. This is because separators often make temporary arrangements in the first months after the separation. Thus, they need several moves to attain satisfactory accommodation (Gram-Hanssen and Bech-Danielsen 2008). Smyth et al. (2008: 27) found that the likelihood of moving is much higher for non-residential parents³ than for residential parents. Furthermore, people in a new relationship also move considerably more often than people in a first relationship (Feijten and van Ham 2007). Thus, downward moves on the housing ladder following a separation are often only temporary, and housing conditions tend to change over time. Moreover, other reasons such as new job requirements in addition to child-related reasons can result in new moves. Second, although findings indicate that separated parents tend to move over shorter distances than married people (Feijten and van Ham 2011; Smyth et al. 2008), the distances between parent’s residences steadily increase over the years following separation (Smyth et al. 2008; Schmidt-Denter and Beelmann 1995). Thus, in addition to other changes in post-separation arrangements (e.g. remarriages, changes in economic resources, enrolment of children in school) (Smyth and Moloney 2008) quite frequent moves of parents, with or without children (Braver et al. 2003, Smyth et al. 2008), reorganize the post-separation living and housing arrangements and consequently the nature and frequency of contacts between parents and their children in the years following a separation.

² Shared residence refers to the situation where children reside in equal amounts of time with each parent after divorce or separation.

³ Although the terms ‘external parent’ and ‘non-residential parent’ are not well suited for the study of post-separation families from a multi-local perspective, both terms are used synonymously in this article to describe the parent with whom the child lives less often.

10.2.3 Consequences of Post-separation Residential Moves for Parents and Children

Regarding the consequences for parents and children of post-separation residential moves, previous studies concentrate on the *repercussions for housing quality and changes of the housing environments* (Feijten and Mulder 2005; Feijten and van Ham 2010; Dewilde 2008), *economical situation* (Andreß et al. 2003) and *children's well being*. Generally, moving can be a difficult transition for household members, especially for children, as a result of changes and the loss of familiar spatial environments, social relationships, and social institutions (e.g. new school/kindergarten) and the need to start afresh with many aspects of daily life. Research findings concerning the effects of moving on children are contradictory: some indicate beneficial effects, while others reveal harmful outcomes (e.g. behavioural problems or lower educational attainment) for children (Horsfall and Kaspiw 2010; Taylor and Freeman 2010; South et al. 1998). However, recent studies widely agree that whether relocation will be harmful for children or not depend on specific family circumstances and a combination of various factors, including socio-economic factors, frequency of moves, time interval between moves, reasons for relocation, and parents' attitude towards it (Kaspiw et al. 2011). Differences in children's feelings and their choice of coping strategies with (repeated) changes of residence are documented (Moxnes 2003).

Different strands of literature deal with the *significance of residential distances for the quantity of external parent-child contacts*. Most studies show that the closer the parents live to each other, the more often the children are in contact with the external parent (Schmitz 2000; Tazi-Preve et al. 2007; Smyth 2005).

Finally, a few studies point out that the residential split-up after parental separation or divorce is accompanied by diverse *requirements on circular spatial mobility for children* (Lauritzen 2011; Jensen 2007, 2009; Smart 2002). Until now, however, little has been known about the travel arrangements in post-separation families, the mobility experiences and mobility practices of children, or of the consequences of commuting between homes for the everyday lives of the children. A Norwegian analysis based on parental reports suggests that distance is important for children's welfare. Children travelling long distances (more than half an hour by private car or public transport) are disadvantaged compared to those with parental homes within walking distance. The greater the distance is between the parents' places of residence, the less influence the children usually have on the plans and decisions concerning when and for how long they will visit the other parent. Moreover, commuting is more stressful for children, who increasingly travel alone by bus, train, or plane (Jensen 2009). Studies based on children's reports indicate that children comment both on difficulties as well as positive aspects of commuting between parental homes. As Smart (2002: 311) states, children moving between their parents traverse not only physical space, but also emotional and psychological space. That involves practical issues, questions of feeling at home in places the children temporarily inhabit as well as the switching between differing emotional zones and between

different lifestyles and routines in the parental households. Studies that focus on the adults' escorting or visiting their children at the other location are very rare. The Cologne longitudinal study on "Family Relationships after Separation and Divorce" (Schmidt-Denter and Beelmann 1995; Schmitz 2000) indicates that in most cases the fathers pick their children up and bring them back to the mother's home. The proportion of children commuting between their parents' homes unaccompanied increases the longer the separation continues.

10.3 Spatial Mobilities – A Central Element of Multi-local Post-separation Family Life: Findings from Germany

10.3.1 Conceptual Assumptions

10.3.1.1 Family as a Social Network – Doing Family

In order to study post-separation family arrangements, family notions based on relational space concepts are helpful. In the following, family is understood as a social network of a particular character, often stretched across several households. It is based on emotions and centred on personal relationships between generations and genders (Bien and Marbach 1991; Widmer and Jallinoja 2008). In taking a family network perspective, the significance of exchange relationships across households in particular is stressed.

Furthermore, family is a culture-dependent, changing social construction. Family life has to be created by all family members through a set of everyday practices (Morgan 2011; Schier and Jurczyk 2007; Schier 2011). In the words of Silva and Smart (1999: 11): 'families 'are' what families 'do''. Accordingly, 'doing family' must always be seen as embedded in certain contexts. We always perform 'family' in tackling social, spatial, temporal, economic, and cultural framework conditions.

10.3.1.2 Separation as a Process of Multi-localization

In the following, we suggest interpreting separation as a process of multi-localization. The duplication of family residences during the separation can be seen as a social-spatial practice to enable children, mothers, and fathers to live at least periodically together after a union dissolution. Multi-localization, hence, is often a compromise.

As pointed out above, families do not break up after separation or divorce. The parents' decision to reside in two places leads, among other things, to new spatio-temporal patterns of family life. These are shaped by the number of family members who actively live multi-locally. Furthermore, they are characterized by the location of and distances between parental residences, as well as by the duration, the frequency, the rhythms, and the regularity of the children's commuting between

the two residences. Consequently, the collective life of family members is reshaped. The number of family members living together in one place changes periodically; long or short periods of co-presence alternate with long or short periods of absence of family members; and circular spatial mobility becomes an important element of daily family life. Thus, particularly the actively multi-locally living family members must manage a ‘double’ (or ‘half’) everyday life at different places of residence, including transitions from one to the other and periodically commuting in between. This means that families must develop new everyday practices. Everyone – that is parents, children, and other members of the family network – has to develop new ways to manage daily family life (Schier 2011; Schier and Proske 2010; Morgan 2011). Moreover, they must maintain their family relationships spread over various places (Parrenas 2005; Gardner and Grillo 2002; Wilding 2006; Jurczyk et al. 2009).

10.3.2 Data and Methodology

This article is based on data from an ethnographic study on “Multi-Local Post-Separation Families” and a secondary data analysis of the DJI-integrated survey ‘Growing Up in Germany’, or AID:A (2009), both conducted by the Schumpeter Research Group “Multi-Local Families”.⁴

10.3.2.1 The Methodological Design and the Sample Structure of the Ethnographic Study on “Multi-local Post-separation Families”

The central question of the ethnographic study was how family life is ‘done’ in situations where parents and their minor children periodically live at some distance apart from each other.⁵ A mix of qualitative methods and a multi-perspective approach, including the perspectives of separated mothers, fathers, and their new partners and children, were used. The sample was recruited in Germany, seeking maximum variation across demographic characteristics (age of children, educational level, income, household composition), as well as variation in children’s post-separation residence arrangements and distances between parental households.

The sample consisted of 11 post-separation family networks, including 16 actively multi-local children between 2 and 18 years old (see Table 10.1). Semi-structured interviews enriched by narratives were conducted with 28 adults (separated mothers, fathers, and their new partners) and with 13 out of 16 actively multi-local children between 6 and 17 years old. Two visual methodological

⁴The Research Group is funded by the Volkswagen Foundation and hosted by the German Youth Institute (DJI) in Munich. For more details see www.dji.de/multilokale_familie

⁵Data analysis of the ethnographic study is largely the result of the teamwork of Anna Monz, Diane Nimmo, Nina Bathmann, and Michaela Schier.

Table 10.1 Sample information

Distances between parental homes	Children's living arrangement (commuting rhythm)	Age of commuting children (ac. = accompanied by adults/al. = unaccompanied)	Means of transportation	Travel time between homes
short distances: same village or city, <3 km (n=6)	shared residence (one week/one week) (n=3) primary residence with the mother (each weekend) (n=2) primary residence with the father (every other weekend) (n=1)	10 (al.), 8 (sometimes ac. mother), 9 (al.), 6 and 4 (both ac. mother/father), 2 (ac. father), 3 (ac. father), 16 (sometimes ac. mother)	walking, bicycling, tram, car	5–20 min
middle distances: 20–30 km (n=2)	primary residence with the mother (every other weekend) (n=2)	2 (ac. father), 10 (ac. father)	car, sub-urban railway	~45 min
long distances: 230–560 km (n=3)	split-residence (n=1) ^a primary residence with the mother (every other weekend) (n=2)	10 and 13 (both ac. father), 12 and 16 (both al.), 12 and 14 (both al.)	train, plane and by car to the airport or train station	4–6 h

Source: Ethnographic study “Multi-local life of post-separation families”

^a‘Split-residence’ means that at least one child in the family lives with each parent who has responsibility for that child’s daily care. It means that siblings are separated in their day to day living.

elements were integrated in the interviews with the children. Furthermore, we carried out mobile participant observation in 7 out of the 11 family networks, usually supported by video. We accompanied the children moving from one parent to the other and sometimes back again.

The families lived at 12 different locations, mainly in cities. In all cases except for one the parents had joint legal custody, and they had been separated for more than 2 years. Most parents were highly educated;⁶ in all cases except for one fathers were in a better financial situation than mothers. The living arrangements of the children and the distances between the homes of their parents varied considerably. In addition, the family constellations varied in terms of whether separated parents live with or without new partners, are in a living-apart-together situation, or reside together, as well as in terms of the existence of half or step children.

⁶We suppose that this is a sampling bias resulting from the wording “separated parents and their children living here and there” in our recruitment announcement. Although we tried to recruit separated parents with low education or income, we had little access to this group.

10.3.2.2 DJI-Integrated Survey ‘Growing Up in Germany’ (AID:A)

The DJI-integrated survey ‘Growing Up in Germany’, or AID:A (2009) investigates the life situation of children, adolescents, adults, and families in Germany. The first major AID:A survey took place in 2009 and is based on a representative sample of about 25,000 persons. We processed information on the distribution of different forms of post-separation families in Germany and their ‘geography’ (residential distances, contact frequency and mode, location of family residences) as well as on socio-demographic characteristics of post-separation families (Schier et al. 2011).⁷ The results presented here include living situation and family forms of children aged 0-17 years (n = 12,412 target persons).

10.3.3 *Relocation Following Parental Separation – The Formation of New Time-Spatial Patterns for the Everyday Life of Families*

As mentioned above, the residential changes of parents and children during and following the process of break-up bring about various spatio-temporal patterns of post-separation family life which have various consequences for parents and children. Our results indicate that each spatio-temporal pattern entails special requirements for managing post-separation daily family life as well as for maintaining family relationships.

10.3.3.1 Findings Based on the German Youth Institute Survey AID:A (2009)

The German Youth Institute survey AID:A (2009) allows to describe the patterns of post-separation spatio-temporal arrangements and their consequences for the organization of issues in order to maintain contact between spatially separated family members. It shows – similar to previous studies (see Sect. 10.2.1) – that the majority of parents in Germany live relatively close to each other after a separation.

Looking at the frequency of personal contacts between children with an externally living parent and the residential distances between parental households (n = 1,417), we clearly see that the geographic distance between the places of residence of both parents has an important impact on whether and how children live multi-locally (see Fig. 10.1).

Living close to each other makes frequent personal contacts easier. Although residential proximity is not a guarantee for regular contacts, it does create opportunities.

⁷Data analysis of the AID:A survey (2009) was done by Sandra Hubert, researcher at the German Youth Institute in Munich, Germany.

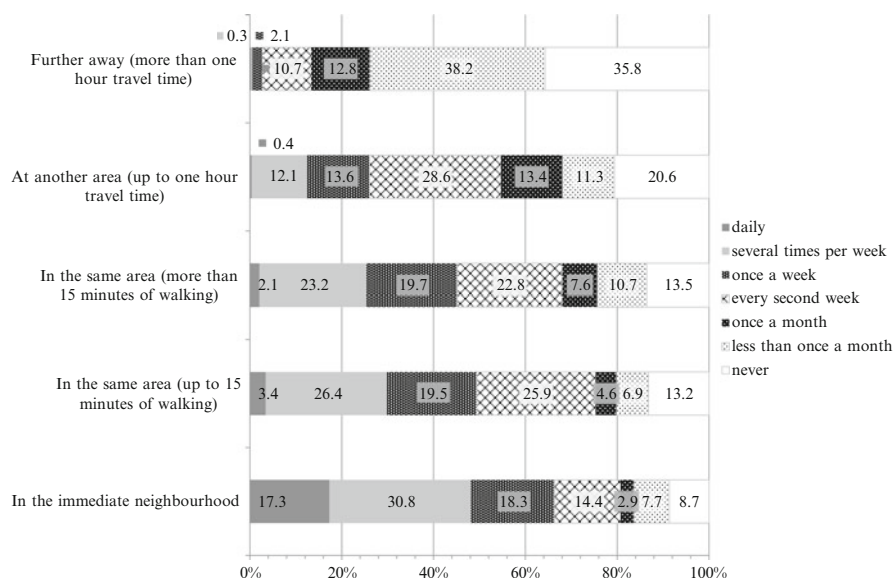


Fig. 10.1 Heterogeneity of post-separation time-spatial patterns: contact frequency and residential distances between parental households in Germany (N=1,417) (Source: DJI-Survey AID:A (2009): 0–17-year-old children, weighted data)

Figure 10.1 illustrates the varied rhythms of the post-separation living arrangements in each distance category. While 48 % of those residing in the same neighbourhood met each other daily or various times a week, this proportion drops to 25 % when parents live in the same area but with more than 15 walking minutes away. About 40 % of those living within one hour of travel time met each other every week or every second week as compared to only 13 % of those living further away (traveling time > 1 h). On the other hand, nearly three quarters of children living at distances more than an hour's travel away reported meeting the other parent less than once a month or never. If they were living in a different city or town less than 1 h away, about 30 % had rare or no contact with the non-residential parent. If they lived in the same city but at a distance of more than a 15 minute-walk, a third of the children had rare or no contact. Even when children and the external parent lived in the same vicinity, 16 % rarely or never met. The high proportion of weekly or fortnightly personal contacts can be read as an indication of the cultural dominance of 'weekend visits' in German post-separation families.

Next, the question of how far children in post-separation families in Germany commute in order to stay with the other parent is addressed. This analysis aims to evaluate how many children in post-separation families are confronted with what kinds of mobility requirements and what the consequences for their everyday life are (see Fig. 10.2). For that, the proportion of children meeting their external parent at least once a month according to residential distances between parental households is shown.

About half of the children in the sample stay in the same area, regardless of whether they move from the mother's to the father's home or vice versa. This indicates that although the two homes are not necessarily in the same neighbour-

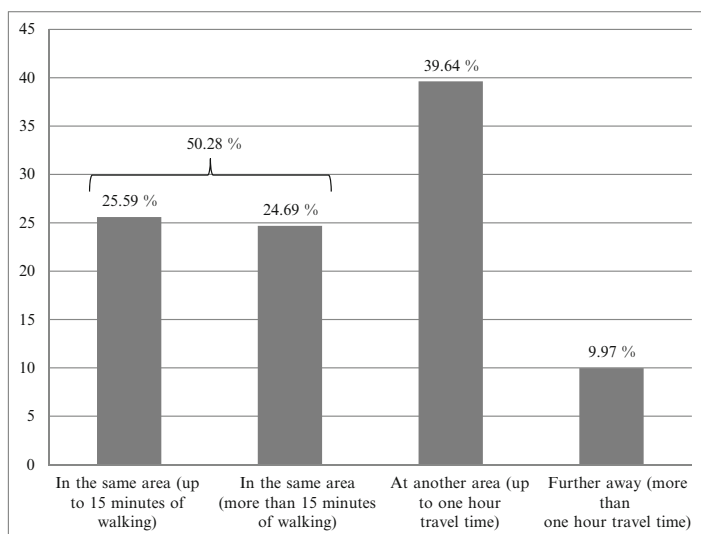


Fig. 10.2 Proportion of children meeting their external parent at least once a month according to residential distances between parental households (N=883) (Source: DJI-Survey AID:A (2009): 0–17-year-old children, weighted data)

hood, the other parent's home is reachable by foot, bike, car, or public transport. Nearly 40 % of the children commute between different areas and have to cope with up to one hour's travel. And 10 % of all children are long distance commuters. They need more than 1 h travel time to reach the other parent. In case of such long distance, different means of transportation, such as car, train, or plane, are used in order to reach the home of the other parent.

To sum up: neither spatial distance between residential homes nor the observed frequency of contacts are sufficient to explain the consequences of residential mobility for parent–child-relationships and for the management of daily life after a separation. This is because the frequency of contacts does not capture length and modality of contacts or the quality of the relationship (Werneck 2004; Amato and Gilbreth 1999; Walper and Gödde 2005), and residential distance does not say much about transportation infrastructure, travel costs, or mobility and contact practices.

While the analysis of the AID:A (2009) survey describes patterns of multi-local living arrangements, it does not address the way children and their separated parents manage multi-locality, how they cope with post-separation life, or how they adapt to new living arrangements.

10.3.3.2 Findings Based on the Ethnographic Study

Our ethnographic study on multi-local post-separation families addresses these issues and provides new insights into post-separation moves, the emerging multi-local way of life after a separation and their consequences for parents and children.

First of all, when deciding to relocate and establish a specific post-separation residential arrangement, including transition arrangements⁸ for the children between the parental homes, mothers and fathers must find a way to combine different interests, such their own wishes for their future life, their ideas about the best way to raise their children, social norms and legal guidelines. Additionally these decisions were often framed by psychological or legal consultations, but in none of the cases by court decision.⁹ How the ex-partners handled their conflicts with each other as well as how mothers and fathers conceptualized the other parents' role for the children after the split up turned out to be important for the way the decisions were taken (Schier 2013a).

Relocation Trajectories

The relocation trajectories of the families studied are highly diverse. In one case, the parents had never cohabited: their son lived since his birth primarily at his mother's residence. The distance between the parents' residences remained an average of 20–30 km over 10 years. In five cases the children remained with one parent in the former joint residence, but after a while changes occurred: in one case one daughter struggled to live primarily at the other parent's place of residence,¹⁰ thus the parents changed their post-separation residential arrangement from 'bird's nest model',¹¹ to 'long distance split-residence model'. In two other cases the non-residential parent moved into various arrangements, including staying with friends or in a small apartment and cohabiting with a new partner. But in both cases the distance to the other parent remained similar. Finally, in another case, 1 year after the separation a mother decided to move with the children to another city several hundreds of kilometres away. As a result, the father returned to the former joint residence until he was able to sell it, afterwards moving again within the same city. In four other cases both parents moved out of joint residence, but searched specifically for a new residence in the same neighbourhood or nearby. All of them stayed there until the time of the interview. In one last case the mother had suddenly relocated with her two children to another city to cohabit there with her new partner. This arrangement was the most problematic one from the perspective of the children interviewed. The data from our

⁸As a rule, separated parents agree with each other on when, how, and where the change of the children from one parental home to the other occurs.

⁹The determination of the child's post-separation residential arrangement is generally not a legal issue in Germany. The right and obligation to determine the child's place of abode ("Aufenthaltsbestimmungsrecht") is regarded as part of the parental responsibility for the child (§ 1631 para. 1 German CC). Mothers and fathers can choose various arrangements to care for their children after a separation, although the law, as well as most divorce professionals, take the so-called primary residence model as the default option (Dethloff and Martiny 2005).

¹⁰Because of her job, the mother in this family had been a long-distance weekly commuter for many years before the break-up.

¹¹This is a post-separation living arrangement where the parents go back and forth from a residence in which the child/children reside.

ethnographic study indicates that relocation generally requires adjustments to new circumstances and environments, but in some cases it might also result in a return to a well-known place where previous experiences and social contacts already exist.

Finally, our findings show that children adopt an active role in the relocation processes, sometimes interfering with the moving plans of their parents by opposing them. In three out of our eleven cases young adolescents insisted on spending more time with the other parent than had been expected or planned. Two of them successfully changed their primary living place. In both cases this meant that the 'new' residential parents had to look for new adequate housing; in one of the cases the 'new' non-residential mother moved to a smaller apartment after her son moved his primary residence to that of the father.

Practices for Temporarily Substituting Spatial Co-presence

Generally with the post-separation establishment of two households, times when the parents and their children can be together need to be arranged actively. Family members reported following different *practices for temporarily substituting spatial co-presence*. In order to maintain a close relationship during the occasional time periods when parents and children could not meet in person, they invented practices such as ritualised daily phone calls, ritualised postcard writing, or the exchange of gifts. Modern communication technology, especially telephone and cell phones, played a major role in maintaining intimacy during times of separation. Nevertheless, most parents thought that contact via telecommunication was no replacement for physical co-presence with the child (For details on practices described in the following see: Proske and Bathman 2011; Schier 2013b). Children in particular found it difficult to postpone and substitute spontaneous needs for closeness with a telephone call. This also depends on the age of the children. Older children had proper skills to handle the various means of communication, whereas the contact with smaller children was more difficult. Despite the age and the abilities of all the concerned parties to express emotions, both parents and children recognized the problem of phone calls, which offered no possibility to touch or to see each other.

Different Residential Distance

In all cases studied the parental decision to live apart signified the beginning of a commuting career for the children. Our ethnographic study demonstrates that *different distance between residences, whether short, middle, or long* have different consequences. Besides the children's age, the actual distance influenced the choice of the means of transportation (see Table 10.1) as well as the possibilities for the children to determine how they would travel to reach the other parent. Parents and children reported *various mobility practices* they used to overcome the sometimes significant geographical distance between their homes. The need to plan journeys increases with residential distance as is the difficulty in coping with long travel

times. But in all cases travelling requires time and preparation. Greater physical distance also imposes increased financial demands because of travel expenses.

In all three long distance families in our sample, 10–16-year-old siblings made the round trip to the other parent every second weekend by train or in one case also by plane (see Table 10.1). In order to visit the distant parent, they depended on adults who had to manage the journey or at least pay for it. In two of these cases the children had to change trains along the way, and this was the reason why in one of these families the father escorted them on the four-hour train journey every other weekend. But even if the children travelled alone, their fathers and mothers regularly picked them up or brought them to the railway station or airport. In the case of the split-long-distance-residence arrangement this meant that father and mother drove nearly every Friday and Sunday to the airport to take or to pick up one of their daughters.

A problem expressed especially by non-residential parents, mostly fathers, with respect to *long residential distances* was the inability to participate in the child's daily life (e.g. no opportunities to attend school events, dance recitals or to pick up children at school), share the same experiences or even the same environment, know the places and the streets where their children hang out and move every day or the persons with whom their child goes around. The parents felt like outsiders in their children's lives. All long distance non-residential parents interviewed made an effort to learn about the everyday lives of their children at the other place and tried to participate in special locally based events (for example, school enrolment or school festivals). Additionally, in rotation with the children's stay at their home, some long distance fathers spent some weekends in the area where the mother lives with the children.

In contrast to long residential distances *living in middle or short distances* enabled the non-residential parents to have more time to be involved in the children's lives in a spontaneous and regular way. But not all non-residential fathers took advantage of this opportunity. In the two cases where parents were living between 20 and 30 km apart from one another, the fathers pick up and bring their two-year-old respective 10-year-old children from their primary residence at the mother's home by car or suburban railway. Even though the 10-year-old boy could cope with travelling alone, the father nevertheless escorts him because he has to transfer on the way. The travel in both cases lasted about 45 minutes. In six cases parents lived within walking or cycling distance and it took between 5–20 minutes to reach the other parent. In three of these cases the change of residence took place at school or kindergarten. In these families all children over the age of 8 walked, cycled, or took public transport on their own to travel to the other parent; younger children walked escorted or were picked up or brought by their mothers or fathers with a bike or car. Older children took advantage of the short distance to spontaneously visit the other parent on their own. And children hung out with the same friends, whether they were with their mother or father. Geographical nearness of parental residences can also complicate the post-separation everyday life because overlapping life worlds can produce conflicts and behavioural uncertainty.

Costs of Circular Mobility

Even if most of the 6–16-year-old children did not take much baggage with them, living at two places meant for them: organizing clothes, toys, and school work; ensuring their friends knew where they were, and remembering where they should be at certain times. Most children referred to the time it took to get used to periodically changing their homes and to living in two places, but they also stated that everything is fine for them now because they have become used to it (Schier 2013a; Smart 2002). For some of the children regularly commuting long distances, the travelling was a strain, but they saw it as a necessary means to reach their distant parent, with whom they did not want to miss spending time. All in all the children tended to normalize such mobility requirements as being “just the way it is”.

Additionally, it becomes apparent that fathers for the most part bore the travel costs of the children even if they were the residential parent. Furthermore, the responsibility of picking up and returning the children fell to the non-residential parents, mostly the fathers. However, when the changes of residence took place at institutions such as schools or kindergartens or when children travelled long distances alone by train or plane, both parents, mother *and* father, have been involved in taking and picking up their children.

The Establishment of Two Homes

Spatial proximity seems not to be the only factor influencing the capacities of children to cultivate friendships and enjoy leisure activities at both parental domiciles. Some of the children were able to renew old social contacts from their earlier residential experiences at the living places where they had spent only a short period of time after the parental split. Furthermore, some other children built up new friendships at the living places where they spend limited time since the separation: with children in the neighbourhood as well as with the children of their non-residential parents' new partners. This happened regardless of whether the non-residential parent had moved to a place unknown to the children or was still living at a well-familiar place. For the children's handling of the new multi-sited living situation the awareness on the part of the mothers and fathers of the importance of independent social contacts for their children as well as their active commitment to support friendships and leisure activities at both places turned out to be important (see also Moxnes 2003). Children especially valued being allowed to contribute to the decisions about when and for how long they will stay at the other parent's home, as well as the openness of their parents to postpone a stay in case of, for instance, an invitation to a friend's party (cf. also Jensen 2009).

Our study points to different *parental practices to help their children feel comfortable with the new residential situation*. Nearly all mothers and fathers expressed that to offer the children their own living space was as an important way to support feelings of being at home. Parents usually tried to provide a room for each child in each household – even when this was linked with personal limitations

for them. Sometimes, the position of the child's room in the household was regarded as significant in order to express symbolically an equivalent central family membership. Only in four cases did children have no room of their own at the non-residential parent's home, but a certain place or a piece of furniture was always assigned as theirs. Another practice parents developed to make their children feel at home was to involve their children in the process of renovating and designing the flat. This was meant to help the children to become more familiar with the surroundings. These findings illustrate how the new apartments are actively turned into homes. Thus, work on floor plans, renovating and decorating homes can be understood as efforts that are strongly linked to maintaining family relations and identity (cf. also Gram-Hanssen and Bech-Danielsen 2004). Additionally, parents also employed verbal strategies with their child such as "here you are at home".

Furthermore, parents tried to make the children feel involved in the wider area beyond the home itself. For example, some of the parents invested considerable time and effort so that their children could rebuild friendships with other children in the neighbourhood or so that their children could get to know the surroundings after relocating, even though in some cases the children actually spent only a little time in this household. Other parents tried to encourage their children to practice their hobby such as playing tennis at both homes.

10.4 Conclusions

The results presented above provide insights about different dimensions of post-separation residential mobility that correspond to a great extent with evidence from previous research. Generally, separation and divorce lead to an increase in spatial mobilities (Feijten and van Ham 2007). Our findings confirm those of prior studies pointing at the high dynamism that characterizes post-separation living arrangements (Gram-Hanssen and Bech-Danielsen 2008; Feijten and van Ham 2007; Flowerdew and Al-Hamad 2004; Smyth et al. 2008). Repeated relocations in some cases lead to changing distance between the maternal and the paternal homes as well as to changing living situations. This often has consequences for the forms of contact as well as on the quantity and quality of time mothers and fathers spend together with their children. Furthermore, it has an impact on who is commuting as well as on the rhythms of commuting and the choice of transportation means.

Although children are unlikely to initiate moves in separation processes and have little influence over the conditions of relocation, their active role in moving processes has been overlooked until now. In this regard, taking children seriously as competent social agents in their own right and empirically investigating their actual practices promise significant gains in knowledge for science, policy, and practice.

Furthermore, these findings highlight various practical needs that result from a spatially-separated family life such as handling short, middle, or long distances between residences, times of absence, or life in two places. The analyses illustrate the

multifarious practices developed by parents and their children in order to deal with these requirements. Our findings indicate that a multi-local family life – especially in case of long distances between homes – always creates the need either to change old rituals and routines in order to adjust them to the new living situation or to create new ones.

As shown above, different post-separation spatio-temporal patterns result in diverse forms of circular mobility and influence the possibilities for children to travel independently and in a self-determined manner between the mother's and the father's respective homes. Until now the literature about divorce has generally assumed that commuting between two households as well as the localization of children in them has negative consequences for their development. In contrast, our findings and those of a few other studies (Sieder 2008; Haugen 2010; Smart et al. 2001) also identify some positive aspects of the multi-sited living situation for children (Nimmo 2011). The commute that children make between their parents' houses has an influence on their lives and on those of the adults and non-commuting siblings living with them. This occurs regardless of the distance between the parental residences. New tasks in terms of organization and coordination such as managing the children's commute, negotiating the time schedules of the separated parents, arranging the logistics of necessities in both places, or managing the choreography of temporary joint everyday life emerge. Hence, effective planning seems to become more important for daily life. It is also shown that in addition to the necessity to provide for their children's escort, new mobility requirements for parents result in part from their efforts to maintain a close relationship with their children living at some distance. Although multi-local post-separation family networks are a widespread phenomenon in Germany and other countries, we still know very little about post-separation moves, the subsequent spatio-temporal living arrangements, demands for spatial mobility, and new everyday practices. Because social, legal, and normative changes in the past years suggest that multi-local post-separation living arrangements will increase, further research into these topics is urgently needed.

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Chapter 11

Residential Mobility in the Second Half of Life: The Role of Family-Related Transitions and Retirement

Nadja Milewski and Anett Loth

11.1 Introduction

The demographic developments of the previous decades indicate that elderly people are enjoying increasingly good health in their retirement years, and that the proportion of the life span spent in retirement is growing (EHEMU 2009). The entry into retirement may offer both new opportunities, such as having more leisure time than in the past; and new constraints, such as having health problems or more limited financial resources. Previous studies noted that the retirement may also be associated with increasing spatial mobility (Warnes 1992).

From a life-course perspective, the events that typically trigger a move among elderly men and women are the transition to retirement, the loss of a spouse, the deterioration of health (Rogers and Serow 1988; Longino and Smith 1991; Speare et al. 1991; Warnes 1992; Chevan 1995), and changes in income and living conditions (Clark and White 1990). Research on residential mobility also suggested that the roles of adult children and of the extended family network (Clark and Wolf 1992; Mulder 2007; Cooke 2008; Mulder and Cooke 2009) should be included in studies on residential mobility.

While the topics of elderly mobility and retirement migration have long been studied in North America and some parts of Western Europe, relatively little research has been published on the issue of the residential mobility of elderly people in Germany. The existing studies on the mobility of seniors in Germany have so far

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primarily looked at moves abroad. These include case studies using qualitative approaches of people who moved to the ‘sunshine states’ of Southern Europe: e.g., Germans in Mallorca (Friedrich and Kaiser 2002), Germans in El Poblets and Costa Blanca (Buck 2004), and Germans in the Canaries (Breuer 2005). These studies have generally focused more on the question of where these mobile seniors move, and less on who moves and when they do so.

Our study aims to address the latter questions. At the individual level, the question of whether an elderly person needs to adjust his or her housing in response to changes in health and in household composition is an important one. Given the increase in old-age poverty, financial constraints may also play a role. At the macro level, internal migration and residential mobility have an impact on demographic developments in the areas of origin and of destination. If, for example, an area has negative net migration among people in the age group 15–25, who tend to participate in education and the labor market, but gains among migrants of retirement ages, these migration movements would change the age structures of the population in both the sending and receiving areas. Local policies may need to shift in response to such developments, as the demand for health and health care services, as well as for assisted living arrangements for the elderly, may rise in demographically aging areas. In order to estimate the consequences of internal migration for the demographic and social structure of the population, as well as for the regional infrastructure and economy, it is necessary to know not just the numbers of in- and out-migrants, but also their socio-demographic characteristics.

Our paper contributes to the literature by investigating the question of what triggers residential mobility among people living in Germany in the second half of their lives from a life-course perspective. We use longitudinal data to examine the risk of moving to a new home among people aged 50–90. The main objective of our study is to identify the individual characteristics which determine the residential mobility behavior of elderly people. We pay special attention to the role of life-course events, including the transition to retirement and family-related transitions, as well as health status. We investigate the transition rates to a move separately for people who were living in single households and in multiple-person households at the age of 50. The longitudinal data used come from the German Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP), waves 1992–2010. The analysis was carried out using intensity-regression techniques.

11.2 Background

11.2.1 Theoretical Considerations and Previous Research

At the individual level, the human capital theory suggests that mobility decreases as a person gets older. Since future benefits that may be anticipated from a move decline with increasing age, the likelihood of migration decreases. For older people, the costs incurred by moving may not be compensated for by gains at the

destination. Therefore, assuming that people act rationally, the propensity to migrate should reduce with age, as no maximum benefits can be achieved (Speare 1971). By contrast, life-course approaches are based on the assumption that it is not the age of the person that influences residential mobility, but rather particular life-course events (Rossi 1955). The life course up to age 50 can be divided into three stages: i.e., early adulthood, a family phase, and a phase of consolidation (Kley 2011). The phase of consolidation is considered to be between the ages of 30 and 50. It is often argued that the likelihood of moving during this phase is rather low, as the goal of most middle-aged people is to consolidate both their family and their professional careers.

Beyond age 50, however, several life-course events may trigger spatial mobility: the beginning of retirement, the loss of a spouse, and the onset of disability (Warnes 1992; Chevan 1995; De Jong et al. 1995; Walters 2000). The reasons for moving are often related to these events, and may include health concerns, a desire to live close to family members, or a desire for greater economic security or comfort (De Jong et al. 1995). Analyzing mobility from a life-course perspective, Litwak and Longino (1987) identified three stages of mobility among people aged 60 and older. First, residential mobility occurs in connection with retirement. While migration during a person's working life tends to be motivated by supply and demand in the labor market, this reason for moving loses its importance after the person leaves the labor force. Thus, older people tend to move to regions that offer amenities such as a good climate. This type of migrant is, relative to the average retiree, younger, healthier, wealthier, and more likely to have an intact marriage (Litwak and Longino 1987: 267). These migrants are sometimes referred to as '*amenity migrants*.' Most research found that retirees prefer to move to a region with a good climate (Clark et al. 1996; Frey et al. 2000), or from an urban to a rural region (Warnes 1992). Access to medical care at the destination also tends to attract mobile seniors (Duncombe et al. 2003), as studies on Germans in Southern Europe have shown (Friedrich and Kaiser 2002; Buck 2004; Breuer 2005).

The second type of later-life mobility, according to Litwak and Longino (1987), arises in response to the onset of chronic impairments, as health problems can make it more difficult for retirees to lead an independent life, leading them to seek assistance with daily activities ('*assistance migrants*'). These impairments may interact with other, family-related factors such as the loss of the spouse and spatial distance from children or other relatives. The loss of a spouse is one of the most stressful events in life, and it has a significant influence on the well-being of the widow or the widower. Compared to married men and women, widowed people are more likely to suffer from depressive symptoms (Schaan 2009). Emotional support from family members and friends can help widowed people cope with their situation and maintain their mental health (Ha et al. 2006). If this assistance is difficult to obtain due to spatial distance, the widow or widower may relocate (Chevan 1995). A combination of these factors may lead an elderly person to move closer to adult children or other people who can provide the support the person needs to be able to continue to live independently in normal housing (Clark and Wolf 1992; Warnes 1992).

The third type of migration is related to a further deterioration in the elderly person's health, as the person's needs can no longer be met by caring family

members. Litwak and Longino (1987) therefore defined a move to a nursing home as the last move, or '*migration in response to severe disability*.'

In addition to being triggered by health and family-related transitions, moves may be facilitated or impeded by factors at the place of destination and at the place of origin, such as the pull of amenities and the push of community characteristics (e.g., infrastructure); as well as by intervening obstacles, such as moving costs (Lee 1966). A number of personal characteristics determine residential mobility, especially education and income. People with high incomes may wish to move to take advantage of amenities, while people with very low incomes may relocate in response to high housing costs, or stay where they are due to high moving costs. Older people with higher educational levels are more likely to move than their counterparts with lower educational levels. Better educated seniors may have a greater ability to access and make use of information on potential destinations. Moreover, previous mobility experience is associated with moves at older ages. People who have successfully moved in the past are more inclined to move again than those with a history of residential stability (De Jong et al. 1995).

11.2.2 *Context and Working Hypotheses*

In recent decades, life expectancy has risen continuously in Germany, as it has in other countries worldwide. One reason for the overall rise is an increase in the number of years lived at higher ages. Between 1990 and 2008, the remaining life expectancy for men aged 50 and older increased from 26 to 29 years. Women of the same age had a remaining life expectancy of 34 years. For women aged 65, the remaining life expectancy increased from 18 years in 1990/1992 to about 20 years in 2006/2008. This development raised the question of whether longer life is accompanied by better or worse health. Between 1995 and 2001, the number of healthy life years¹ among women over the age of 65 decreased slightly, from 4.9 to 4.4 years; but it increased among men, from 3.9 to 4.7 years. In 2006, the proportion of years spent with serious health problems was relatively low for both sexes: 25 % (5.2 years) among women and 19 % (3.2 years) among men (EHEMU 2009).

The rise in life expectancy, the overall increase in healthy life years, and the decline in birth rates have been creating new challenges for the labor market and the social security system in Germany. In anticipation of future demographic changes in the labor supply, the standard retirement age in Germany was raised from 65 years to 67.² The realized average retirement age has, however, remained under the age limit, and did not change from 1993 to 2008 (DRV 2010), when it was about 63 years for both men and women.

¹The concept of 'healthy life years' allows to split life expectancy into healthy and unhealthy years. To perform the calculation, a conventional life table and the age-specific prevalence rates of a selected health indicator—e.g., the GALI question (Global Activity Limitation)—are used.

²The retirement age is 65 for the birth cohorts up to 1946. It increases stepwise to age 67 starting in 2012 for the cohorts 1947–1963. The new age limit applies to all those born in 1964 or later.

In sum, German retirees tend to leave the labor market at relatively young ages, even as their health status has been improving. We may anticipate that the length of the phase of retirement spent in good health will continue to grow. This trend offers opportunities for elderly migration, as the constraints of the labor market, which generally require people to live near their places of work, no longer apply after retirement.

In fact, according to the migration statistics published by the Federal Statistical Office, the mobility of individuals aged 50+ increased in Germany over the past decade, but varied by age (Statistisches Bundesamt 2010). We estimated the mobility between the federal states within Germany (gross migration rates). An overall increase in mobility was found for both sexes after 1993. The peak for men and women aged 50–65 was in 2001, when about 12 out of 1,000 men and about 10 out of 1,000 women moved. Among people aged 65 and older, the share who moved was smaller, and decreased after 2000. In 2010, the gross migration rate among people aged 65+ was about 8 % among women and about 7 % among men (own calculations based on Statistisches Bundesamt 2010).

To address our research question of what triggers residential mobility in the second half of life, we derived our working hypotheses from the theoretical framework as follows:

Transition to Retirement We assume that a residential move may occur in response to retirement. The exit from the labor market is generally accompanied by a reduction in people's discretionary income and by changes in social networks. At the same time, retirement allows people to pursue leisure activities and personal interests that were previously neglected due to a lack of time while working. Thus, the transition to retirement may cause people to re-evaluate and reorganize their lives.

Family-Life Transitions We assume that family-related events trigger residential mobility. First, people who are widowed are more likely to move (Chevan 1995). The reasons for moving might include a desire to live closer to relatives or friends, changes in income, or a decreased need for living space. In addition to recognizing that the loss of a spouse is a risk factor for married couples, we consider the potential family dynamics among people living in single households. In a time of relatively high divorce rates, the likelihood of forming a subsequent partnership—marital, non-marital, or living apart together—may increase, and this new partnership may also increase the risk of a move.

Health Status and Social Factors As a person grows older, his or her health status may become increasingly important, as health tends to decline at higher ages. When the first physical impairments appear, instrumental support may become necessary, even as the person maintains a semi-independent life. If a person's health declines further, care needs may arise which cannot be fully met by other household members. Health impairments and care needs are therefore assumed to trigger a move to a location closer to family members or to a living arrangement more suitable for seniors (Litwak and Longino 1987).

11.3 Data, Covariates, and Method

11.3.1 Data

The data used in this study come from the German Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP). Respondents in West Germany have been questioned annually since 1984. Respondents in East Germany have been included in the SOEP since German unification in 1990 (Wagner et al. 2008). Since our analysis was on mobility in the second half of life and since we wanted to include people from both eastern and western Germany, our study used data from those respondents who were aged 50–90 in the years 1992–2010.

For our analyses, we worked with two sub-samples that refer to the household type at the beginning of the process time. One sub-sample included people who were living in single households, the other one those living in multiple-person households. The initial household type was defined at age 50 or – in those cases when a respondent entered the survey later or when information was not available – at the respective age up to age 65. The main reason for using the age range 50–65 years was that the risk of retirement increases from age 50 onward and that age 65 was the official retirement age in Germany until 2011 (respondents for whom the household type could not be constructed up to age 65 were not included; respondents who retired before age 50 were excluded from our sample as well since we assumed that these respondents are a selective group who retired primarily because of disability). Hence, the oldest respondents in our samples are those who were born in 1919 and were 65 in the first wave of 1984 and were 90 in 2009; the youngest ones were born in 1959 and were aged 50 in 2009. If a respondent stopped participating in the survey, emigrated from Germany, or died, the observation time ended with the last interview recorded (censoring).

The event under study was residential mobility, defined as moving to a new home. Respondents of the SOEP have been asked annually whether they live in the same housing unit as they did in the previous year. The answer ‘no’ implied that a move has taken place. Respondents for whom no information (observation) on mobility was given were excluded from our sample. In this study, residential mobility was defined as every change of residence from one private to another private household within the borders of Germany. It included all moves within a building and within a town or city, as well as any moves between regions (c.f. Kley 2011). In the following, the terms mobility and move are used synonymously³.

The total sample for the analysis of residential mobility consisted of 7,924 women and 7,743 men. We carried out separate analyses for those individuals who were living alone at age 50 or who were living alone when they first participated in the survey (861 women and 696 men, for whom 418 moves are reported) and for

³Ideally, the distance between the origin and the destination would be used in order to differentiate between several types of residential mobility. The number of cases may, however, be too small to allow for a further distinction between short- and long-distance moves.

those who were living in multiple-person households at this age or at the time of the first interview (7,036 women and 7,048 men, with 2,829 moves counted in total) (see Table 11.1 for sample statistics).

Table 11.1 Sample statistics – exposure time (person years) and occurrences (moves)

Covariates	Single household at age 50			Multiple-person households		
	Exp.	Exp. in %	Occ.	Exp.	Exp. in %	Occ.
<i>Sex</i>						
Men	4,594	39.9	186	56,588	49.2	1,405
Women	6,920	60.1	232	58,382	50.8	1,424
<i>Family status (tv)</i>						
Not married	2,913	25.3	73	1,664	1.4	42
Married 1–2 years	132	1.1	20	583	0.5	36
Married 3+ years	582	5.1	23	95,301	82.9	1,934
Separated 1 year	10	0.1	3	310	0.3	104
Separated 2+ years	541	4.7	35	1,103	1.0	69
Divorced 1 year	68	0.6	6	267	0.2	44
Divorced 2+ years	4,134	35.9	165	5,196	4.5	291
Widowed 1–2 years	145	1.3	6	1,870	1.6	88
Widowed 3+ years	2,989	26.0	87	8,671	7.5	221
<i>Duration in new partnership (tv)</i>				NA		
1–2 years	774	6.7	52			
3+ years	1,339	11.6	55			
No partner	9,401	81.6	311			
<i>Labor force participation (tv)</i>						
Working	4,174	36.3	164	45,050	39.2	1,212
Non-working	3,269	28.4	136	37,343	32.5	1,052
Retired 1 year	578	5.0	26	5,071	4.4	113
Retired 2+ years	3,493	30.3	92	27,506	23.9	452
<i>Partner's labor force participation (tv)</i>	NA					
Working				37,881	32.9	837
Non-working				32,149	28.0	786
Retired 1 year				4,037	3.5	85
Retired 2+ years				22,041	19.2	323
NA				18,862	16.4	798
<i>Household size (tv)</i>	NA					
1–2 persons				79,604	69.2	2,122
3+ persons				35,366	30.8	707
<i>Disability (tv)</i>						
No	8,733	75.8	312	91,346	79.5	2,219
Yes	2,781	24.2	106	23,624	20.5	610

(continued)

Table 11.1 (continued)

	Single household at age 50			Multiple-person households		
Covariates	Exp.	Exp. in %	Occ.	Exp.	Exp. in %	Occ.
<i>Worries about health (tv)</i>						
No, mv	5,346	46.4	165	53,654	46.7	1,195
Yes	6,168	53.6	253	61,316	53.3	1,629
<i>Feeling lonely (tv)</i>						
No	10,297	89.4	378	107,949	93.9	2,621
Yes	1,217	10.6	40	7,021	6.1	208
<i>Birth cohort</i>						
1911–1929	2,195	19.1	53	16,974	14.8	223
1930s	3,667	31.8	118	39,896	34.7	891
1940s	3,867	33.6	158	40,148	34.9	1,188
1950s	1,785	15.5	89	104,252	90.7	527
<i>Immigrant status</i>					0.0	
Non-immigrant	9,838	85.4	344	95,903	83.4	2,110
Immigrant background	1,676	14.6	74	19,067	16.6	719
<i>Education</i>						
No degree, mv	261	2.3	8	3,799	3.3	143
Primary (Hauptschule)	5,314	46.2	179	56,152	48.8	1,240
Lower secondary (Realschule)	2,250	19.5	77	18,836	16.4	435
Upper secondary (Fach-/Abitur)	1,521	13.2	75	14,536	12.6	469
Tertiary	2,168	18.8	79	21,647	18.8	542
<i>Homeownership (tv)</i>						
No	11,028	95.8	408	107,905	93.9	2,736
Yes	486	4.2	10	7,065	6.1	93
<i>Place of residence (Federal state) (tv)</i>						
Berlin	912	7.9	41	4,070	3.5	158
Schleswig-Holstein	358	3.1	10	3,210	2.8	86
Hamburg	452	3.9	7	1,283	1.1	21
Lower Saxony	688	6.0	27	10,706	9.3	262
Bremen	182	1.6	12	893	0.8	15
North Rhine-Westphalia	2,471	21.5	94	23,622	20.5	521
Hesse	853	7.4	26	8,670	7.5	192
Rhineland-Palatinate	458	4.0	12	5,994	5.2	144
Baden-Wuerttemberg	1,344	11.7	42	14,053	12.2	338
Bavaria	1,589	13.8	58	15,558	13.5	310
Saarland	128	1.1	2	856	0.7	16
Brandenburg	332	2.9	14	4,762	4.1	148
Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania	285	2.5	12	2,902	2.5	85
Saxony	653	5.7	18	8,483	7.4	256
Saxony-Anhalt	377	3.3	22	5,134	4.5	173
Thuringia	432	3.8	21	4,774	4.2	104
<i>Total</i>	<i>11,514</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>418</i>	<i>114,970</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>2,829</i>

Source: Calculations based on SOEP, 1992–2010; event: move (residential mobility)

Note: The categories ‘separated’ include also LAT couples including cases in which one partner lives abroad; *tv* time-varying covariate, *mv* missing values, *NA* not applicable/no answer

11.3.2 *Covariates*

We used four groups of covariates: labor force participation/retirement, family transitions, health indicators, and other socio-demographic variables.

The SOEP allowed us to construct a time-varying covariate of the labor force participation of the respondents that distinguished between work and retirement. Since we considered the transition to retirement crucial, the duration of retirement was taken into account as well. The variable labor force participation had the following categories: working, non-working, 1 year in retirement, and two and more years in retirement. For those respondents who were living with a partner, we also used a time-varying variable on the partner's labor force participation status, which had the same categories.

The analysis then used the marital status as a time-varying covariate. Like the labor force participation/retirement covariate, it accounted not only for the different statuses, but also for the length of time spent in each family status. The variable accounts for marriage and union dissolution; i.e., for separation/divorce or the death of the spouse. This variable has the following categories: not married, married for 1–2 years, married for 3+ years, separated for 1 year, separated for 2+ years, widowed for 1–2 years, and widowed for 3+ years.

The analysis of respondents who were living alone at age 50 contained an additional indicator for a new partnership. It showed the presence of a partner in a respondent's life (but who did not necessarily live in the same household). This time-varying variable capturing a new partnership had the duration categories of 1–2 years and 3+ years (a third category contains the cases for whom no partnership was reported). Among the single households in the sample, household sizes of more than two people were very rare. By contrast, among the multiple-person households in the sample, about 31 % had three and more household members. Therefore, this analysis included a time-varying dummy variable for households in which three or more people were living.

The third group of factors under consideration was related to health status and social networks. The survey provides a number of opportunities for measuring the respondent's health status. Not all of them were, however, consistently available for the period used in this analysis, and some of them contained shares of missing values above 50 %. We used the time-varying dummy variable indicating disability (limitations in activities of daily living). A second health indicator did not capture health as such, but rather worries about health, which was constructed as a time-varying dummy variable that indicates the presence of worries. The survey also includes a large number of indicators on social networks, but again, these were not consistently available. As we believe that the number of social contacts and the individual perception of satisfaction with these contacts is likely to vary greatly between individuals, we used an indicator for feeling lonely, which is a dummy variable (time-varying).

The analysis also controlled for socio-demographic variables. The variable birth cohort had the categories 1911–1929, 1930–1939, 1940–1949, and 1950–1959. A

dummy variable indicated whether the person had an immigrant background; i.e., whether he/she was born abroad and immigrated to Germany as an adult or as a child with his/her parents, or whether he/she was born in Germany as the child of one or two immigrant parents. Education was categorized as follows. For a small share of the respondents, no information on schooling was available. The category of primary education included respondents who attended the *Hauptschule* (corresponding to 9 years of schooling). The category of lower secondary degree included respondents who completed the *Realschule* (corresponding to 10 years of schooling). The category of upper secondary degree was for respondents who passed the *Abitur* or *Fachabitur* (corresponding to 12 or 13 years of schooling). The last category captured respondents with tertiary education, or more than 15 years in schooling; i.e., those who had a university degree. Having a higher level of education was assumed to be associated with a higher level of mobility (Wagner 1989; De Jong et al. 1995; Granato et al. 2009).

The time-varying dummy variable of homeownership measured whether the respondent owned the flat or house in which he/she lived. We hypothesized that ownership of a house or an apartment would decrease the likelihood of changing residence (Chevan 1995; De Jong et al. 1995). The time-varying variable place of residence indicated the 16 federal states of Germany (for sample statistics, see Table 11.1).

11.3.3 Method

We analyzed the transition to a move and applied piecewise-constant intensity-regression models as a form of indirect standardization (Hoem 1987, 1993; Blossfeld and Rohwer 1995). The model can be formalized as follows:

$$\ln h_i(t) = \ln h_0(t) + \sum_l \alpha_l x_{il} + \sum_m \beta_m w_{im}(t),$$

where $h_i(t)$ denotes the hazard of a move for individual i at time t , and $\ln h_0(t)$ represents the baseline log-hazard, which is specified as piece-wise constant. The process time is age, measured in years. The term $w_{im}(t)$ represents the effect of a time-varying variable (such as labor force participation and marital status). The term x_{il} denotes the effect of a time-constant covariate (such as birth cohort and education). The process started at age 50. The end of the respective process time (censoring) was either at a move, at the age of 90, or at the last interview in which no residential change was reported. For individuals who entered the survey in any year between their 50th and 65th birthday, no information was given about events that occurred before the observation started. Therefore, these cases were left truncated; i.e., their process time started at the respective age at the entry into the survey (Klein and Moeschberger 1997).

The analyses were carried out separately for those respondents who were living in a multiple-person household at age 50 or at the time of survey entry up to age 65, and for those who were living in a single household at this age. The analysis on the individuals in multiple-person households was done separately for women and men, while the analysis on single households included both sexes because the sample size was relatively small; here we used a control variable for sex.

11.4 Results

Table 11.2 (women) and 11.3 (men) present the results for the multiple-person households at the beginning of the process time.

Model 1 The first model in the intensity-regression analyses included the socio-demographic control variables (age was the baseline, displayed in absolute risks). The effects were found to be similar for women and men. The risk of moving was higher the later the women and men were born, and the risk was about twice as high among respondents born in the 1950s relative to those born before 1930. Respondents with an immigrant background were found to have higher risks of residential mobility than non-immigrants. By contrast, education did not significantly affect the risk of moving among women or men. Overall, the effects remained similar in direction and degree of significance when further variables were added to the models.

Model 2 The next step included the two variables that account for family-related transitions and labor force participation/retirement. Changes in marital status were shown to be crucial for the mobility risks of both sexes: separation naturally caused at least one of the partners to move, and the risk of moving was more than 10 times higher among respondents in the first year of separation than among those living in a non-marital union. The risks were lower following a divorce. However, mobility was significantly elevated during the years immediately following a divorce, which indicated continuing residential instability. The loss of a spouse increased the risk of moving as well, although this effect was smaller than that of the other transitions, and it was significantly higher only in the first year of widowhood. Finally, getting married also increased the risk of moving, particularly in the first year after marriage. Marriage and moving as a couple coincided here in the majority of the cases.

Changes in labor force participation appear to have had different effects on women and men: for women, no significant differences were found between those who did not work and those who had been retired for 1 year compared to the women who were still working. The risk of moving decreased significantly with longer periods of time spent in retirement, however. For men, residential mobility was significantly elevated during non-working phases and slightly higher in the first year of retirement.

Model 3 Since in many couples there is a gap between the ages of the partners and the ages at which each partner retires, it may be the case that residential mobility will not be triggered when a woman leaves the labor force, as her partner may still be working. If either of the partners—usually the man—is still attached to the labor

Table 11.2 Factors influencing the transition to a move of women in multiple-person households (relative risks)

Covariates	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
<i>Birth cohort</i>						
1911–1929	1		1		1	
1930s	1.50	***	1.44	**	1.36	**
1940s	1.90	***	1.81	***	1.73	***
1950s	2.11	***	1.85	***	1.86	***
<i>Immigrant status</i>						
Non-immigrant	1		1		1	
Immigrant background	1.58	***	1.57	***	1.73	***
<i>Education</i>						
No degree, mv	1.17		1.22		1.36	*
Primary (Hauptschule)	1.06		1.04		1.06	
Lower secondary (Realschule)	1		1		1	
Upper secondary (Fach-/Abitur)	1.12		1.16		1.22	°
Tertiary	1.08		1.04		0.98	
<i>Family status (tv)</i>						
Not married			1		1	
Married 1–2 years			1.41		1.68	
Married 3+ years			0.68	°	0.90	
Separated 1 year			11.56	***	12.18	***
Separated 2+ years			1.98	*	2.10	**
Divorced 1 year			4.85	***	4.97	**
Divorced 2+ years			1.83	**	1.80	**
Widowed 1–2 years			1.71	*	1.61	*
Widowed 3+ years			1.14		1.14	
<i>Labor force participation (tv)</i>						
Working			1		1	
Non-working			1.00		0.93	
Retired 1 year			0.86		0.83	
Retired 2+ years			0.73	**	0.71	**
<i>Partner's labor force participation (tv)</i>						
Working					1	
Non-working					1.31	**
Retired 1 year					0.93	
Retired 2+ years					1.16	**
NA					1.38	**
<i>Household size (tv)</i>						
1–2 persons					1	

(continued)

Table 11.2 (continued)

Covariates	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
3+ persons					0.68	***
<i>Homeownership (tv)</i>						
No					1	
Yes					0.56	***
<i>Feeling lonely (tv)</i>						
No					1	
Yes					1.22	*
<i>Worries about health (tv)</i>						
No, mv					1	
Yes					1.1	
<i>Disability (tv)</i>						
No					1	
Yes					1.18	*
<i>Place of residence (Federal state) (tv)</i>						
Berlin					1	
Schleswig-Holstein					0.82	
Hamburg					0.52	*
Lower Saxony					0.73	*
Bremen					0.51	°
North Rhine-Westphalia					0.61	***
Hesse					0.63	**
Rhineland-Palatinate					0.68	*
Baden-Wuerttemberg					0.63	**
Bavaria					0.54	***
Saarland					0.46	*
Brandenburg					1.02	
Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania					0.86	
Saxony					0.98	
Saxony-Anhalt					1.07	
Thuringia					0.73	°
<i>Age in years (baseline)</i>						
50–60	0.0126	***	0.0160	***	0.0171	***
60–70	0.0126	***	0.0174	***	0.0181	***
70–90	0.0130	***	0.0190	***	0.0194	***
<i>Log likelihood</i>	–3819.10		–3629.38		–3548.46	

Source: Calculations based on SOEP, 1984–2010; event: move (residential mobility)

Note: The categories ‘separated’ include also LAT couples including cases in which one partner lives abroad; *mv* missing values, *NA* not applicable/no answer; significance: *** $p < 0.001$; ** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$; ° $p < 0.10$. $N = 7,036$

Table 11.3 Factors influencing the transition to a move of men in multiple-person households (relative risks)

Covariates	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
<i>Birth cohort</i>						
1911–1929	1		1		1	
1930s	1.86	***	1.83	***	1.69	***
1940s	2.58	***	2.38	***	2.18	***
1950s	2.37	***	2.13	***	2.00	***
<i>Immigrant status</i>						
Non-immigrant	1		1		1	
Immigrant background	1.82	***	1.79	***	1.99	***
<i>Education</i>						
No degree, mv	1.12		1.11		1.23	
Primary (Hauptschule)	1.07		1.08		1.14	
Lower secondary (Realschule)	1		1		1	
Upper secondary (Fach-/Abitur)	0.91		0.96		1.04	
Tertiary	1.01		1.03		1.04	
<i>Family status (tv)</i>						
Not married			1		1	
Married 1–2 years			3.33	***	3.86	***
Married 3+ years			0.92		1.13	
Separated 1 year			13.58	***	13.25	***
Separated 2+ years			2.24	**	2.54	***
Divorced 1 year			7.02	***	6.83	***
Divorced 2+ years			2.53	***	2.52	***
Widowed 1–2 years			3.36	***	3.13	***
Widowed 3+ years			1.33		1.28	
<i>Labor force participation (tv)</i>						
Working			1		1	
Non-working			1.30	***	1.21	**
Retired 1 year			1.25		1.15	
Retired 2+ years			1.01		0.92	
<i>Partner's labor force participation (tv)</i>						
Working					1	
Non-working					0.99	
Retired 1 year					1.07	
Retired 2+ years					0.94	
NA					1.23	*
<i>Household size (tv)</i>						
1–2 persons					1	

(continued)

Table 11.3 (continued)

Covariates	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
3+ persons					0.74	***
<i>Homeownership (tv)</i>						
No					1	
Yes					0.53	***
<i>Feeling lonely (tv)</i>						
No					1	
Yes					1.04	
<i>Worries about health (tv)</i>						
No, mv					1	
Yes					1.08	
<i>Disability (tv)</i>						
No					1	
Yes					1.03	
<i>Place of residence (Federal state) (tv)</i>						
Berlin					1	
Schleswig-Holstein					0.82	
Hamburg					0.35	**
Lower Saxony					0.76	°
Bremen					0.47	°
North Rhine-Westphalia					0.63	***
Hesse					0.60	**
Rhineland-Palatinate					0.74	°
Baden-Wuerttemberg					0.67	**
Bavaria					0.59	***
Saarland					0.46	°
Brandenburg					0.98	
Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania					0.88	
Saxony					0.93	
Saxony-Anhalt					1.07	
<i>Age in years (baseline)</i>						
50–60	0.0105	***	0.0092	***	0.0122	***
60–70	0.0101	***	0.0085	***	0.0108	***
70–90	0.0093	***	0.0085	***	0.0108	***
<i>Log likelihood</i>	–3696.27		–3486.07		–3430.65	

Source: Calculations based on SOEP, 1984–2010; event: move (residential mobility)

Note: The categories ‘separated’ include also LAT couples including cases in which one partner lives abroad; *mv* missing values, *NA* not applicable/no answer; significance: *** $p < 0.001$; ** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$; ° $p < 0.10$ N = 7,048

market, while the other partner has retired, the weighing of the costs and the benefits of moving for the individuals in that couple will be different than it is for the individuals in a couple in which both of the partners are retired (Kalter 1997). We therefore included the partner's labor force participation in the Models 3. For a woman, the risk of moving was not affected by a change in her own labor market status, but it was influenced by her partner's exit from the workforce. For a man, the risk of moving was similar regardless of his own work status, and it was not affected by the work status of his partner.

This model also added the variables on household composition and residence. For both sexes, the risk of a move decreased significantly when three or more persons were living in the household and when the respondent owned the apartment or house in which he or she was living. The variable on the place of residence shows the risk of moving compared to the reference category Berlin. Compared to respondents living in the capital, women and men living in the eastern part of the country (except Thuringia) had similar risks of moving. Those living in the western part of Germany had significantly lower levels of residential mobility. Finally, the Models 3 included the variables on health and loneliness. Whereas for men none of the three variables affected mobility, women were much more likely to move when they reported limitations in their activities of daily living and when they felt lonely.

When we controlled for all of the covariates, we found that the effects for the changes in family life and in work life decreased slightly, but that their impact on mobility risks nevertheless remained very significantly elevated.

The analyses of the respondents who were living alone at age 50 produced similar overall results (see Table 11.4). There were, of course, also differences based on marital status: getting married or entering a new partnership was associated with an elevated risk of moving, particularly in the first 2 years (Model 2); as was separation and divorce. The effect of leaving the labor market—regardless of whether it was due to unemployment or retirement—lost its significance when we controlled for the region of residence, which did not itself have a significant effect (except for Hamburg, where mobility risks were low). Homeownership decreased the risk of a move whereas the variables on disability, health, and loneliness were found to have no significant effects.

11.5 Discussion

Our study addressed the question of what factors trigger residential mobility in the second half of life. We analyzed residential moves among people aged 50–90 within Germany in the years 1992–2010. The main objective was to identify the life-course events and individual characteristics that determine the mobility behavior of elderly people.

One conclusion we can draw from the analyses is that leaving the labor market triggers residential mobility. Retirees and people who were no longer working were shown to have a higher propensity to move than men and women of the same age who were still active in the labor market. Thus, the hypothesis on the impact of the transition to retirement on residential mobility can be partly supported. The support

Table 11.4 Factors influencing the transition to a move in single households at age 50 (relative risks)

Covariates	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
<i>Sex</i>						
Men	1		1		1	
Women	0.96		1.05		1.07	
<i>Birth cohort</i>						
1911–1930	1		1		1	
1930s	1.48	*	1.31		1.18	
1940s	2.02	***	1.74	**	1.59	*
1950s	2.54	***	2.19	**	1.79	*
<i>Immigrant status</i>						
Non-immigrant	1		1		1	
Immigrant background	1.14		1.09		1.10	
<i>Education</i>						
No degree, mv	0.88		0.95		0.99	
Primary (Hauptschule)	1.08		1.04		1.03	
Lower secondary (Realschule)	1		1		1	
Upper secondary (Fach-/Abitur)	1.41	°	1.38	°	1.42	°
Tertiary	1.03		1.04		0.99	
<i>Family status (tv)</i>						
Not married			1		1	
Married 1–2 years			6.61	***	6.74	***
Married 3+ years			1.75	*	1.74	*
Separated 1 year			10.25	***	9.25	***
Separated 2+ years			2.27	***	2.29	***
Divorced 1 year			3.05	***	3.08	***
Divorced 2+ years			1.49	**	1.44	*
Widowed 1–2 years			1.67		1.63	
Widowed 3+ years			1.27		1.25	
<i>Duration in new partnership (tv)</i>						
1–2 years			2.07	***	2.12	***
3+ years			1.23		1.23	
No partner			1		1	
<i>Labor force participation (tv)</i>						
Working			1		1	
Non-working			1.21		1.12	
Retired 1 year			1.54	°	1.43	
Retired 2+ years			0.85		0.78	
<i>Homeownership (tv)</i>						
No					1	
Yes					0.58	°
<i>Feeling lonely (tv)</i>						
No					1	
Yes					1.07	

(continued)

Table 11.4 (continued)

Covariates	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
<i>Worries about health (tv)</i>						
No, mv					1	
Yes					1.14	
<i>Disability (tv)</i>						
No					1	
Yes					1.07	
<i>Place of residence (Federal state) (tv)</i>						
Berlin					1	
Schleswig-Holstein					0.65	
Hamburg					0.36	*
Lower Saxony					0.90	
Bremen					1.52	
North Rhine-Westphalia					0.85	
Hesse					0.68	
Rhineland-Palatinate					0.64	
Baden-Wuerttemberg					0.70	
Bavaria					0.80	
Saarland					0.31	
Brandenburg					0.97	
Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania					0.98	
Saxony					0.65	
Saxony-Anhalt					1.44	
Thuringia					1.07	
<i>Age in years (baseline)</i>						
50–60	0.0183	***	0.0113	***	0.0149	
60–70	0.0187	***	0.0125	***	0.0166	
70–90	0.0261	***	0.0218	***	0.0275	
<i>Log likelihood</i>	–925.36		–884.61		–868.325	

Source: Calculations based on SOEP, 1992–2010; event: move (residential mobility)

Note: The categories ‘separated’ include also LAT couples including cases in which one partner lives abroad; *tv* time-varying covariate, *mv* missing values; significance: *** $p < 0.001$; ** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$; ° $p < 0.10$. N = 1,557 (861 women and 696 men)

is only partial because the effect was observed only for men. Moreover, it was less the retirement as such, but rather the exit from the labor market that seemed to matter. The risk of moving was particularly elevated in non-work phases. Among elderly people, a non-work phase most likely means that unemployment preceded retirement, and it can therefore be interpreted as an exit from the labor market. It should be noted that for both sexes the propensity to move to a new home was shown to decrease with increasing time spent in retirement. This confirms the assumption according to the human capital model that gains due to migration and mobility decline in older ages (Speare 1971). The shorter the period in which an investment in a move is likely to pay off, the less likely the person is to move (Ruppenthal et al. 2006).

Furthermore, our results on housing status were consistent with the human capital model, which assumes that people rationally weigh costs and benefits. The findings support the hypothesis that homeowners are less likely than renters to relocate. It is possible to argue that homeownership is a result of past and present investments, which are associated with disproportionate costs in the event of a move. Ruppenthal et al. (2006) described property ownership, especially in Germany, as a substantial barrier to mobility. They noted that the costs of buying and selling residential property are particularly high in Germany relative to other countries, and that residential ownership has a high social value, especially in a society with a mobility culture based on the norms of property ownership and permanence. They further observed that residential property is not simply purchased, lived in, and then later sold as needed; instead, the acquisition of residential property is seen by many Germans as a worthwhile final goal in life (Ruppenthal et al. 2006: 99).

In addition, the results of our analysis demonstrated the importance of family-related transitions in the decision to move. Union dissolution was found to be the biggest trigger for a move. While this may appear to be self-evident in the case of separation/divorce, as at least one of the partners has to move out of the joint household; the death of a spouse was also shown to increase mobility risks, particularly in the first year after the death. The mobility risks decreased later on. Since the case numbers in the sample were rather small, we were only able to divide the length of time spent in widowhood into rather large intervals: i.e., the first 2 years and 3 years or more after the death. The change in a person's life circumstances with the loss of a spouse may trigger a relatively rapid decision to move, as financial constraints and/or the need for support could make a move necessary. However, the process of preparing for a move, finding a new apartment or house, and coping with the new set of circumstances may take some time. The elevated risk of moving found for the first 2 years of widowhood suggests that a move may occur as an adjustment to the loss of the spouse. Three years after the loss of the partner, the risk of moving was shown to decrease, indicating a consolidation phase. On the other hand, widowhood may not lead directly to a move, but it may influence levels of health and/or social integration. If a person is widowed and his or her health then deteriorates to the point where care assistance is anticipated or needed, the risk of moving may nonetheless be elevated.

We therefore also tested the hypothesis that disability and worries about health status affect residential mobility. It could be supported for women only. Our results indicated that being restricted in activities of daily living was associated with higher residential mobility. These individuals may fit Litwak and Longino's (1987) definition of assistance migrants, based on the assumption that people who are widowed or in poor health are more likely to move. We can, however, only hypothesize that women tend to seek more assistance than men when moving (De Jong et al. 1995). Furthermore, men may have more family networks than women to rely on since women tend to outlive their partners. Moreover, we have to bear in mind that this study only looked at moves between private households. People in need of care may try to stay in their homes as long as possible by modifying their living environments and relying on outside support. A move may occur only when a senior's need for care is so great that he or she can no longer live independently, and therefore has to move into institutionalized care.

Interestingly, the effect of loneliness was found to be related to a higher risk of moving only among women who were originally living in multiple-person households, and not among respondents who were living alone in their 50s. We assume that people who had been living on their own for a long period of time, or at least for a certain period of time after a union dissolution, were used to living on their own, and had established social contacts outside of their household. For people who had lost a partner, the new situation may have been even more challenging, as they had fewer social contacts.

Moreover, we concluded that residential mobility among elderly people in Germany is increasing in general, as the later birth cohorts were shown to have a higher risk of moving. Using the typology of Litwak and Longino (1987), we may classify people who moved upon entering retirement as amenity migrants assuming that these people adjusted their living conditions and area of residence according to their preferences. We acknowledge, however, that the use of the term ‘amenity’ may be questioned, as we can only speculate that people who left the labor market adjusted their living conditions voluntarily, and according to their preferences. We do not know to what extent people needed to leave their homes because they could no longer afford to live in them. In this context, the effect of immigrant status seems interesting: international immigrants were found to have been at higher risk of moving than people who were born in Germany. Since the socio-economic conditions of international immigrants are generally below the German average, and their pensions are especially small (Tucci and Yildiz 2012), they may be more exposed to the risk of poverty in old age, and may therefore be at greater risk to move.

Overall, our study provides ample evidence that family dynamics affect mobility in later life. Even after controlling for labor market participation and socio-demographic characteristics, family-related transitions were shown to be of crucial importance for elderly mobility in Germany. This applied not only to union dissolution—regardless of whether it was due to separation or the death of the spouse—but also to the formation of new partnerships and households, as well as (re)marriage. We conclude that residential mobility becomes increasingly important at older ages, following a phase of consolidation during middle age (Litwak and Longino 1987; Kley 2011). Changes in marital status and leaving the labor market are the crucial determinants of a residential move.

We suggest that future research into residential mobility among the elderly may take into account the characteristics of other family or household members, particularly of children. For example, residential proximity to children may play a role in the decision to move. Moreover, researchers may want to add an origin–destination comparison to the analysis, such as a comparison of the size of the home or the type of residence.

Acknowledgements This research was supported by the first author’s European Re-integration Grant within the Marie Curie Actions (FP7 People, PERG-GA-2009-249266 – MigFam) funded by the European Commission. The views expressed in this paper do not reflect the views of the funding agencies. The constructive comments of an anonymous reviewer are gratefully acknowledged as is the language editing done by Miriam Hils.

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